Opening the urban "black box"

The role of the local context in urban protest

Anna Subirats Ribas

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

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I Anna Subirats Ribas certify that I am the author of the work "Opening the 'urban black box'. The role of the local context in urban protest" I have presented for examination for the Ph.D. at the European University Institute. I also certify that this is solely my own original work, other than where I have clearly indicated, in this declaration and in the thesis, that it is the work of others.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses urban protest actions in the context of austerity urbanism in Southern Europe, attempting to better understand the conditions that lead to the mobilisation of urban protestors. To date, the literature on urban movements has tended to analyse the effect of macro-forces in transforming the urban environment, finding in them an explanation for protest. By contrast, local contexts – the political and institutional environments in which urban protest emerge – has been relatively unexplored. This is the case despite the fact that, empirically, we see significant variation in local protest despite similarity in the macro-problems effecting residents' lives.

Barcelona and Turin are examples of two cities that share many similarities in terms of large-scale processes and phenomena but nonetheless differ markedly in terms of the characteristics of their respective urban mobilisation. Both cities have transformed their economic model over recent decades, moving from an industrial base to the promotion of cultural and knowledge-based economic activity. Barcelona and Turin have also made notable efforts to promote themselves internationally with the aim of attracting foreign investment. Recently, both cities have been acutely affected by the financial crisis, suffering severe housing crises and being subject to fiscal constraints and austerity cuts. At the same time, both cities have a strong tradition of urban protest. Taking existing urban studies literature as a starting point, all of these factors would lead to an expectation of similar levels and forms of urban mobilisation in Barcelona and Turin, but this thesis shows that urban mobilisation in the two cities differs in significant ways.

This thesis explores the ways in which local contexts may be important in shaping expressions of urban protest. In doing so, I use protest event analysis and content analysis methodologies to collect, map and analyse 852 protest actions of urban movements in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015. Drawing on the broader literature on social movements, I argue that the nature and structure of local institutionalised power are important and under-studied aspects of the dynamics of urban protest. More broadly, the thesis suggests that in order to understand urban protest, it is necessary to look beyond the particularistic qualities and fragmentation of

a highly place-embedded activism and consider it in the deeper context of the local political process.

AKNOWLEDGMENTS

Over the course of this thesis I have experienced momentous changes in my life; I have lived in three different countries, met an extraordinary, diverse collection of new people, met my partner and had two children. Many years have passed since I began this long process and it is impossible to gather all the feelings and thanks that I would like to share. I would, however, like to mention a few of the people without whom this thesis would never had got close to this stage.

I have always found it difficult to focus on a single thing and, throughout my life, I have often regretted committing to too many things at the same time. Doing the thesis while starting a family has proved to be challenging, to say the least. I am now left with a bitter-sweet feeling. On the one hand I feel bad about not having completed this thesis in a more straightforward way, without asking so much support from those around me. On the other hand, I feel proud and happy; I look around and I have somehow managed to create and raise two little people at the same time as researching and writing this thesis.

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The thesis has been written and re-written in Florence, Newcastle and Barcelona. In Florence I spent four incredible years surrounded by amazing friends, colleagues and the EUI community in general. The experience in Florence has been truly life-changing for me, and I learnt so much from the multi-national and inter-disciplinary environment while working towards my PhD. I especially thank Juan, Ilaria, Daniela, Ludvig, Albert, Quique, Lucrecia, Itzea, Martín, Maca, and many others for making my years in Florence inspirational and enjoyable.

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The final years of the writing of this thesis have been spent in Barcelona. I thank my friends here for understanding why they never see me. I also especially want to thank my family. My parents and sisters – Joan, Carme, Clara and Berta – have been extremely supportive. Not only have they supporting me practically, but the way that they approach life and never stop doing things has always been an inspiration to me. Finishing this PhD is, to a great extent, thanks to them.

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This thesis is dedicated to Miquel (3 years old) and Tomàs (11 months), who until now have lived their whole lives with this thesis and still do not know what their mum is like when she doesn't have to work all the time. One of the games Miquel has played over the past year is to 'write a book' on his computer, just like me. I look forward to all the games we will play together as a family in the years to come.

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INTRODUCTION

The city of the early 21st century is a site bound up with processes of constant change. The shift from modernity to post-modernity and the increasing economic globalisation of the world – with the attendant displacement of state power towards more diffuse and cross-national structures of power and authority – have had a profound impact on the urban space. On the one hand, the city has emerged as a strategic global institutional arena (Salet 2007: 5), where financial capital, technology, information and skilled labour concentrate. From this point of view, the urban space emerges to provide the necessary concentration of creative and knowledge-based activity to ensure economic growth. On the other hand, cities have also become places with increasing levels of segregation and socio-spatial inequalities. Accordingly, cities produce wellbeing only for some and have become increasingly exclusive. The dissatisfaction of the majority of the urban population has been expressed in two ways: *exit* and *voice* (della Porta 2004: 7). *Exit* through migration away from cities and *voice* through the increasing emergence from the urban space of various forms of protest.

In the 1970s, the economic crisis that befell the western world opened up the city as a laboratory for neoliberal experiments (Harvey 2005). Since then, European Union initiatives, the OECD, Cities Alliance, the World Bank, SA Cities Network and other national and regional initiatives have been encouraging local governments to pursue entrepreneurial strategies, following an underlying logic that "economic growth is something which everyone in the community benefits from, directly and indirectly" (Pierre 2011:67). There is evidence to suggest that this dynamic of mobilising urban areas "as arena[s] for growth and market discipline" is related to the weakening of the welfare state model, which has led to sharpening socio-spatial polarisation and social exclusion (Mayer 2009: 365).

In urban studies research, this process has been conceptualised as the shift from 'urban managerialism' to 'urban entrepreneurialism' (Harvey 1989). David Harvey's analysis addressed the ways in which local governments move away from their collective and redistributive functions to proactively engage in promoting their respective economic spaces in a context of increased inter-urban competition (Jessop 2002: 88). Harvey,

Molotch (1976) and Molotch and Logan (1984) similarly conceptualised the tendency to mobilise cities as arenas for market discipline with the concept of the "urban growth machine" (1976, 1984).

The 'growth machine' represents a specific type of urban regime based on formal and informal agreements between select actors – not representative of the whole of society – whose interests lie primarily in efficiency, growth and the maximisation of resources. Most importantly, the 'urban growth machine' is framed around a 'win-win' notion; an apparent consensus between a range of actors and elite groups on the politics of economic growth, no matter how divided they may be on a specific issues or policies (Molotch 1976; Logan and Molotch 1987).

Swyngedouw et al. (2002) further addressed the general turn in the West toward 'urban entrepreneurialism', identifying the urban policies that cities develop under an 'urban growth machine' regime. They argue that the urban agenda linked to neoliberal urbanisation in Europe is primarily based on spatially targeted and place-based urban interventions – in contrast to universalist urban policies – that aim to reshape cities as global sites of consumption. The urban agenda focuses on investment in the urban environment and socio-economic landscape, increasing a city's attractiveness to potential investors and "solvent city users" (Borja 1994). The neoliberal urban agenda – especially in recent times of economic crisis and in the South-European context – has been also associated with new forms of governance, which are characterised as elite-driven and not highly democratic. Some of the associated policies include the commodification of urban resources, the outsourcing of public functions to private consultants, and the devolvement of control from publicly accountable institutions.

The consequences of this shift have been wide reaching. First, measures in favour of strengthening urban competitiveness have reduced or replaced the distributive role of urban politics in the majority of cities worldwide. Second, "even if we find an increased responsibility for collective consumption provision at the local scale, cities' fiscal capacity to carry out such responsibilities is absent" (Peck and Tickell 1994, in Miller and Nicholls 2013: 463). Accordingly, there has been an increase in urban socio-spatial inequalities around the world. Third, there has been a general growing mistrust of forms of institutional representation (Crouch 2004), which has promoted other types of political participation: more people have started to self-organise at the local level to cover their basic needs and work to participate in the process of local decision-making.

Finally, we have seen the emergence of new urban conflicts, such as those related to urban tourism, privatisation, policing and surveillance, and exclusion and segregation. Some researchers have gone so far as to argue that, in the 2000s, the most structurally significant social conflicts in the Western world concern the production, control and effects of urban structures and processes (Mayer et al. 2016: 24).

The urban space has, since the 1980s, been characterised by crisis: both a crisis of limited public resources and a governability crisis. However, the urban space has also increasingly been presented as an important political space and a crucial scale at which to address contemporary global challenges; through, for example, making cities more ecologically sustainable, more just, more diverse and more participatory. The institutional principles of the nation-state are in profound crisis and those of the private market are undergoing dramatic change. In that context, cities have been increasingly performing traditional state functions, such as engaging in foreign and diplomatic relations, addressing citizenship issues, confronting international problems [1] and regularly sharing knowledge.[2]

Despite this evolving global role of cities, political and financial limitations render them unable to effectively maintain their infrastructures and deliver their service provision for an increasingly complex and diverse society, which has led to steady degradation of the urban environment and quality of life within it, along with an increase in conflict within the urban space (Routledge 2010: 1166). More recently, under conditions of austerity, as the level of urban conflict has increased, so have hopes of making urban politics the driver of transformation. On the one hand, today "many cities are bearing the physical scars of disinvestment, disuse and decline; in vacant and abandoned spaces of private rescission and public retreat" (Tonkiss 2013: 312). On the other hand, 'municipalism' has emerged as a political project that aims to give more autonomy to cities and municipal regions and create a progressive common front to challenge the dominant economic and state logic (Martínez, 2013: 61). The political project of 'municipalism' (see Blanco et al. 2018; Rusell 2019) presents proximal spaces and everyday life as realities from which to reconstruct democracy, improve quality of life for all, and build a new and more inclusive form of citizenship (Martí i Puig et al. 2018).

[1] Such as climate change (see Dawson 2017; Bloomberg 2015).
[2] Though, for example, the Global Parliamentary of Mayors (see Potjer and Hajer 2017).

In the current context, characterised by a complex of crises,[3] the urban reality appears to be at the heart of the functioning – and the contradictions – of contemporary capitalism. Recent mobilisations – such as those that took place around the 'Gezy Park' in Turkey, 'Tahrir Square' in Cairo, the 'Umbrella Movement' in Hong Kong, 'Puerta del Sol' in Madrid, and the 'Occupy Movement' in cities across the world – have "prompted arguments about the importance of space, place and (perhaps above all) the city as an arena of political action" (Barnett 2014:1625).

Although the role of the city as a "space for the mobilisation and staging of protest" has, in recent years, increasingly attracted scholarly attention (Colomb 2016: 17), it is curious the extent to which the literatures on social movements and urban studies have for so long followed separate paths.[4] As Walter Nicholls (2009) asserts, the lack of cross-fertilization between these bodies of work is not only to the detriment of our understanding of urban movements and urban conflict, it also takes us away from robust inquiry into the strategic roles cities play in shaping conflicts and social mobilisation (2009: 843).

The majority of recent mobilisations – for example, 'Tahir Square' in Cairo, the revolutionary movements in Oaxaca or the 'Occupy Wall Street Movement' in New York – have tended to be considered as examples of urban mobilisation because of the simple facts of their emergence in cities and their participants' use of the urban space as a central platform for their struggles. Accordingly, some authors (see Miller and Nicholls 2013: 455) have considered that the urban studies approach is too narrow to capture the range of processes that arise in and organise life and conflicts in cities. Examining the literature, we can see two problematic understandings of what constitutes the 'urban' and 'urban mobilisations'.

On the one hand, urban movements have been often understood in the literature on urban sociology as NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) types of protest,[5] characterised as 'parochial' and 'particular', while it has been assumed that "the urban character of [social mobilisations] overrides concerns for broader structural issues" (Arampatzi and

[3] Environmental, political, economic, geopolitical and technological.
[4] Slater 1997; Miller 2000; Routledge 2003; della Porta 2004; Leitner et al, 2008; Nicholls 2008; Arampatzi and Nicholls 2012; Nicholls and Uitermark 2017 are notable exceptions.
[5] NIMBY protests represent types of mobilisation that emerge from the calculation of personal costs and benefits to reduce the former and increase the latter. Some types of interventions – called 'public bads' – are more likely to produce 'NIMBY' reactions, as they are often perceived as unjust.

Nicholls 2012: 2). From this point of view, urban movements' attachments to particular local communities render them incapable of overcoming their restrictively local focus and opening out towards broader processes of social mobilisation. In fact, in *The City and the Grassroots* (1983), Manuel Castells warned that the very reason for these movements' existence – their rootedness in proximal, everyday life – is also their fatal flaw; it isolates and fragments them, neutering their capacity to generate popular momentum. This identity based on residence predisposes such movements to focus on their particular places; something that Castells called "reactive utopias" (Castells, 1983) and Harvey later described as "militant particularism" (Harvey 1995).

On the other hand, we have recently seen a tendency to consider every social movement that develops in a city as an urban movement.[6] Urban-type movements contain the potential to create unity around a plurality of ideological positions (Martínez 2002: 43), developing around the issues of everyday urban life – the issues of all rather than a particular subset or grouping of the population. Moreover, in the context of the recent financial, social and economic crisis, the contradictions and conflicts of the urban reality have been characterised as being at the heart of the tensions of contemporary capitalism. To conceptualise all mobilisations originating in cities as urban mobilisations is, however, problematic in several ways. First, it leaves us ill equipped to understand the ways in which cities may incubate social movements that *go beyond* specifically urban issues (Miller and Nicholls 2013: 453). Second, such an approach also dilutes the concept of specifically *urban* mobilisations, denying it analytic purchase by eliding the distinction between urban and other kinds of struggles. To extend the concept of urban mobilisation to all movements that develop in cities precludes, therefore, the possibility that struggles about specifically urban issues are characterised by dynamics of mobilisation that are specific to them.

Although studying the urban from the perspective of social movements may hold promise, bringing the two bodies of literature into dialogue also presents challenges. Social movement studies have tended to take an approach that leans heavily on social scientific methods – often including comparative methods – that combine empirical observation and inductive reasoning in order to explain variation in the intensity and dynamics of social mobilisation. The study of mobilisation by urban studies scholars,

[6] The opposite extreme of the tendency to restrict understandings of urban conflict to NIMBY-type protests.

by contrast, has been characterised by a more social-theoretical approach; researchers in the political economy or neo-Marxist tradition of urban studies identify macro-level sources of grievances and use them as the lens through which to analyse processes of urban contestation, often reducing agency to a reflection of structure. Urban studies research has also been dominated by single-case studies – with cities and struggles understood as *sui generis* – and its scholars have been "slow in using comparison as a research strategy" (Pierre 2005: 446).

While social movement studies may be criticised for being overly rationalist and failing to capture the plurality of forms and logics that collective action can take, urban studies lacks a framework for going beyond individual campaigns and reflecting on the phenomenon of urban mobilisation in a systematic and more generalisable way. This has contributed to a tendency to locate urban mobilisation outside the conceptual scope of mainstream social movement literature (Nicholls 2008: 843). The longstanding separation between the study of urban-type mobilisations and the broader literature on social movements, however, is a symptom of conceptual and strategic myopia (Mayer 2000; Pickvance 2003). The separation is an obstacle to research being cumulative and is to the detriment of our understanding of urban mobilisation.

Urban studies research – particularly the Anglophone research conducted in the critical tradition – has identified various global phenomena that make intuitive sense as explanations for urban mobilisation. However, despite the tendency within urban studies to grant macro-structures – such as the 'global city', the 'neoliberal city' or austerity urbanism – an important place in descriptions of, and explanations for, urban mobilisation, we nonetheless see significant variation in urban protest even when such contexts are constant.

Urban studies are also a body of rich analysis of the dynamics of mobilisation in individual campaigns and individual grassroots actors. However, the literature typically lacks the theoretical and methodological resources necessary to compare mobilisations across cases; to the extent that urban studies scholarship engages in comparison, it does so in order to show similarity between mobilisations that share the same macro-structural context. It has not, however, developed the theoretical resources necessary to apply insights across cases, thus limiting the extent to which scholarship can build on existing empirical research, make predictions about developing dynamics of mobilisation or explain varying dynamics of mobilisation across cases. Social

movement studies, meanwhile, has been disproportionately focused on mobilisations and institutions at the national level, with the potential significance of the local scale – and of specifically urban issues – left relatively neglected.

In this thesis I draw on both urban studies and social movement studies to open the 'black box' of the local context and its relationship to both social mobilisation and macro-structures. As I will explain in the chapters that fcollow, I understand the 'local context' as a system of political opportunity structures – made up of five dimensions – which will serve as a framework to compare across cases both variation in local institutional and political contexts and variation in dynamics of urban protest. The purpose of the framework is to open a path to studying comparatively the relationship between local contextual dynamics and urban protest, moving beyond single campaigns and, ultimately, explaining variation across cases. The five dimensions constituting my conceptualisation of the 'local context' will be explained in Chapters 1 and 2.

By revisiting Manuel Castells' theoretical conceptualisation of urban social movements, I aim to refine the prevailing conceptions of urban protest within social movement studies and demonstrate the utility of studying social movements not just *in* the city, but *of* the city (see Thörn et al. 2016: 30). Moreover, by taking a comparative approach and employing theoretical resources from social movement studies, I attempt to bring that body of literature and urban studies into closer dialogue. In a moment where prominent social conflicts and processes of mobilisation are underway in cities across the world, it is crucial to understand the implications that new forms of urbanisation – and its associated grievances – may have for social mobilisation.

If urban mobilisation ought not to be understood as limited to protest over parochial and particular local issues, nor as every act of protest that takes place within an urban area, the question is begged of which qualities are specific to urban types of protest? And if urban movements are no more *sui generis* than any other kind of social movement, what characteristics do they share that make it useful to consider urban protest as a distinct analytical category?

The highly varying expressions of urban protest that co-exist despite shared macro-context dynamics affecting people's lives suggests that there are other significant factors shaping urban protest. The literature on social movements has written much about the fact that social protest is not a simple product of grievances held by people

but that organisational resources and the type of structures created by social movements, for example, are critical to take into account when analysing collective action. However, in social movement studies, the role of the *local* context and the implications for social protest of different urban forms is an area that has been largely left unexplored. Urban studies research, meanwhile, is suggestive of the local context as significant for understanding urban conflict but has, to date, only addressed it in a piecemeal fashion as part of studies of individual campaigns. The assumption seems to be that the uniqueness of cities makes it impossible for explanations at the local level to travel across cases. Both sets of literatures still lack a systematic investigation into local context that explores it as a potentially important political opportunity structure, with the potential to be a powerful analytic tool in studies of social mobilisation.

This thesis attempts to make a contribution to filling that gap, answering the following research question: *how did urban protest vary across Turin and Barcelona in the period 2011-2015, and what role did the 'local context' play in shaping that urban protest*? In answering that question, I explore urban conflict not just in relation to a single campaign or single organisation but, rather in its totality over a significant period of time. I also examine urban conflict across two cities, enabling a comparison of mobilisation across different local contexts with different institutional and political characteristics. The relatively large scale of this investigation lends itself to the use of theoretical resources to compare urban protest across cases. To do that would increase the capacity to which scholarship can address varying dynamics of mobilisation across cases and consider the ways in which local context may mediate between everyday grievances and macro-structures.

The central argument developed throughout the thesis is that to fully understand urban protest requires an understanding of the 'local context' and an acknowledgement that some aspects of particular, local political configurations and processes of urbanisation have implications for the development of protest action. The argument put forward is that the local context constitutes a system of political opportunities that shape urban protest, altering its capacity to re-scale upwards, connect with other localised urban conflicts and connect with broader mobilisation dynamics and discourses.

This thesis is organised in seven chapters. In Chapter 1 I address the conceptualisation of urban protest. I approach the *urban* through its capacity to generate particular objects of contention. Accordingly, and drawing on Manuel Castells, I understand urban protest

as a specific type of social mobilisation emerging from conflicts related to localised 'collective consumption' goods and services. These conflicts work as a basis for common political action and as a source of shared interest and collective identity. In Chapter 1 I also introduce the analytical approach of this research, laying-out my understanding of 'local context'.

In Chapter 2 I address in detail the framework of analysis and methodology guiding the thesis. The research addresses two main goals. Drawing on the cases of Turin and Barcelona (2011-2015), descriptively, the work aims to shed light on the dynamics of urban protest; its repertoires of action, discursive strategies and organisational structures. At the explanatory level, the research aims to better understand the different dynamics in relationship to the local political and institutional conditions in which urban protest takes place, using the analytical concept of 'political opportunity structure'. In Chapter 2, I define the unit of analysis addressed in the research and the dimensions of 'local context' that will be used to outline possible relationships with expressions of urban protest at the local level. I also address the methodology of Protest Event Analysis, which is the main source of data collection in this research and the 'most similar cases' comparative research design that I employ.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I focus on the political and social context of Barcelona and Turin, building up a picture of the two cases in terms of political and social context, as well as traditions of social protest. The purpose of these two chapters is to address the complexity of the two cases and outline the principal contours of dynamic relationships between the top-down implementation of urban models and bottom-up dynamics of contestation. These chapters allow us to identify the most salient contextual features when considering the two cities' varied contours of urban protest. In Chapter 3 I present the case of Barcelona and in Chapter 4, the case of Turin.

In Chapter Five I analyse the nature of the urban conflict in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015. I describe the levels of urban protest in terms of number of events and number of participants in relationship to the anti-austerity cycle of mobilisation. I also present the repertoires of action used in urban protest, corroborating that although the sources of dissatisfaction in Turin and Barcelona are similar, expressions of protest in the two cases vary. Finally, I present the relationship between grassroots actors and the municipality, arguing that the local state is the target of the majority of urban protest events. I also show that urban conflict in the Barcelona case

was mediated by the local administration – through the approval of plans and interventions – to a much greater extent than it was in Turin.

In Chapter 6 I present the framing strategies and the collective identities articulated through urban protest. I argue that through the use of framing strategies, and particularly through the employment of encompassing master frames to which local context is linked, it is possible to transcend the NIMBY logic and scale-up beyond the particularity of the conflict. I suggest that the type of urban planning that characterises a particular city promotes specific political opportunities. These opportunity structures influence and constrain the types of collective action developed by (and the discourses available to) the various actors involved. I identify three master frames – 'quality of life', 'use-value' and the 'urban commons' – that represent three collective processes of interpretation used by urban protestors in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015.

In Chapter 7 I present the types of actors participating in urban types of mobilisation, their main characteristics and their forms of coordination and aggregation. In doing so, I employ the concept of 'modes of coordination' (Diani 2013) to help differente, in a systematic way, between social movements and other forms of protest. I identify three forms of urban agents promoting protest events – non-organisational actors, pre-existing organisations, and ad-hoc platforms – and relate them to Diani's three modes of coordination: subcultural/communitarian, organisational and coalitional. I show that, over the period analysed, Barcelona exhibits a higher presence of coalitional modes of coordination, suggesting a process of the creation of a social movement.

CHAPTER ONE

Exploring the ground: urban conflict and the local context

The aim of this chapter is to lay-out the theoretical framework of the thesis. My starting point is a conceptualisation of specifically *urban-type protest*, for which I draw on Manuel Castells' conception of 'collective consumption'. I then introduce a number of theoretical resources developed by scholars of social movement studies in order to identify a number of modes of expression of that urban protest: *repertoires of action*, *organisational structures* and *framing strategies*. I do so in order to develop an analytical approach to address the role that *local context* plays in shaping the ways that urban protest does, or does not, develop. I argue that we can identify certain institutional variables at the local level that generate *opportunity structures* for the varied expression of urban protest. This approach, I suggest, enables analysis of urban mobilisation across cases in structurally similar cities.

A review of the existing research in both social movement studies and urban studies is suggestive of an important relationship between local context, the contours of urban mobilisation and the scalability of that mobilisation. The literature gives reason to believe that the local context within which urban protest is embedded may have important ramifications for the character of urban mobilisation and either facilitate or stymie its potential to transcend the local level, scaling-up to connect with other types of mobilisation.

An important aim of this research is to gain insight into the conditions specific to the local level under which urban protest is shaped and become more likely to move beyond its immediate space of action and connect with broader social, political and economic dynamics. When an urban-type of protest manages to rescale upwards, it is done primarily through framing and networking strategies. The creation of an analytical framework that understands the 'local context' as a system of political opportunity structures shaping urban protest enables urban studies can be cumulative; to build on existing empirical research and explore urban conflicts not just in relation to a single campaign or single organisation but as a general phenomenon. It is that analytical move that makes it possible to address the puzzle animating this research: why do the dynamics of urban mobilisation vary among structurally similar cities.

In this chapter I review the existing literature on urban movements and research from social movement studies – areas of study that, as noted above, to date have remained largely separate despite their overlap in analytical focus. In considering these bodies of research side-by-side, I illuminate important insights and limitations in the literature, arguing that the two sub-fields have the potential to be complementary and can, if combined, help further our understanding of contemporary urban protest. Through this review of existing literature, I also identify distinctive features of urban collective action that will guide the empirical analysis of the chapters that follow.

The chapter is structured in three sections. In the first section I conceptualise what I understand by the core phenomenon under investigation in this thesis: urban protest. In the second section, I present the nature of urban protest and general processes of urban mobilisation in terms of repertoires of action, framing strategies and organisational structures. In the final section I address what I understand as the 'local context', the specific local institutional, political and social conditions that can enable, inhibit and otherwise shape the nature of urban protest; I consider the conditions that facilitate the connection between these urban-type protests with more broader protests and movements that develop 'in the city'.

1.1. Urban Protest as the struggle for 'collective consumption'

Since the 1960s, critical urban studies research has treated the city as a reference point for political action and as a particularly important site of resistance and activism. Henri Lefebvre (1968), Manuel Castells (1977; 1983), and David Harvey (1973; 2012), among other scholars, have contributed greatly to the development of an understanding of the urban space and the urbanisation process as a social construction resulting from the exercise of power and conflict, rather than as an outgrowth of natural processes. From their work, a body of literature emerged that considers the urban space as a specific object of contestation with specific dynamics (Leitner et al 2008).

Manuel Castells (1977; 1983) coined the term *urban social movements,*[7] treating them not as marginal phenomena but rather as expressions of broad social, political and

[7] Following Pickvance (2003), I will use the term 'urban social movements' only when referring to the work of other authors that employ it. For my analysis, I will use the term 'urban movements'. As Pickvance (2003) noted, "terms like feminist social movement or environmental social movement have never been proposed in place of feminist movement or environmental movement" (2003: 104). I

economic phenomena that shape the urban conflict. Castells conceptualised them as a particular type of social movement, analogous to feminist movements or environmental movements. On his understanding, the particularity of urban social movements lies in both their emergence from a specific geographical location (urban areas) and their relationship to one of the major contradictions of late capitalism: use-value versus exchange-value (Thörn et al 2016: 21). In *The City and the Grassroots* (1983), Castells presented a theoretical framework that identified the sources of grievances from which to analyse processes of urban contestation: collective consumption, cultural identity and political self-determination. These three elements, and the theoretical framework encompassing them, have been highly influential on subsequent generations of critical urban scholars, especially in the Anglophone body of research.

One of the main contributions of Manuel Castells' work is that it represented an important shift of analytical focus from the workplace to the urban community (della Porta and Diani 2006: 10). In *The Urban Question* (1977), Castells proposed an adaptation of Marxist concepts to apply them to the urban environment, advocating for a "charging of the spheres of 'consumption' and 'everyday life' with political action and ideological confrontation" (Castells 1977: 2). This was a particularly important move as it implied that democratic and political rights were expressed, and recognised, in areas traditionally understood as organised according to other principles.

Castells (1977; 1983) defined the urban as a place of 'collective consumption'. He considered the satisfaction of the population's collective material needs (the availability of and access to collective goods and services) and post-material needs (understood as related to the meaning and management of urban life) as the principal sources of urban grievances. Out of the population's collective material and post-material needs, other sources of grievances related to processes of urban contestation emerge: cultural identity and political self-determination (Castells, 1983). In that sense, urban conflict should be understood as an expression of the traditional Marxian conflict between use-value and exchange-value (*collective consumption*), collective versus particular interests (*cultural identity*) and democratic versus technocratic management (*political decentralisation*) in the context of increasing urbanisation. Following Castells, an important body of urban studies research has been built up around this idea (see

understand urban movements as a particular type of social movement (analogous to the labour movement or the civil rights movement) I will, accordingly, refer to them as 'urban movements'.

Marcuse 2009; Purcell 2009, 2003, 2002; BAVO 2007; Healey 2007; Swyngedouw 2005; Albrechts 2004; Jessop 2002).

In this thesis, I adopt Manuel Castells' understanding of urban social movements as a way of approaching urban protest and general processes of urban mobilisation. Accordingly, I understand urban protest as a type of social mobilisation emerging from conflicts related to localised 'collective consumption' goods and services; some directly linked to the physical process of urbanisation (housing, water and electricity, among others) and others considered what Jordi Borja (1994: 9) called "personal public services". This latter group refers to elements of urban life that, while not intrinsic to the process of urbanisation as such, are nonetheless expected to be in place in an urbanised area – such as collective transport, open spaces, education, healthcare, social services, and cultural and entertainment facilities. Both types of goods and services are shaped by expressions of ownership, access, uses and meanings (Tonkiss 2005); as such, in addition to contributing to the good development of urban life, they also constitute "the material and social hierarchies" that structure it (Castells 1983: 319-20).

In contrast to thematic or sectoral social mobilisations, an urban-type of mobilisation emerges from the aggregation of interests in a limited territory. In them, collective goods and services function as a base for common political actions (Allasino et al. 2003) as well as being a source of interest and collective identity. Urban-type of mobilisations, therefore, have a territorial character (a characteristic that they share with nationalist-types of mobilisation, for example), which reinforces one of their fundamental characteristics: their capacity to create unity around a plurality of ideological positions (Martínez López, 2002: 43), prompting the participation of people from highly diverse political parties, associations and movements.

Ultimately, the aim of urban protest is to modify and transform the conditions of everyday life at the local level. It generally targets the local administration (in its various bodies) and draws attention to the subordination of its institutions to either private interests or dominant classes, or highlights their insufficiently democratic character. Accordingly, urban-type mobilisations have been responsible for legitimacy crises of the local state at various historical moments (Andreu, 2014; Martínez López 2011: 70). Crucially to understanding the character and dynamics of urban protest is that, although urban mobilisation is always linked to territorially defined struggles, the

main challenge of the actors promoting it is usually to rescale and move beyond their immediate space of action.

The conceptualisation of urban-type mobilisations used in this thesis does not, therefore, include all social mobilisations that take place within the urban space. The urban space is often an important stage for contesting power relations and elevating claims, and it is used by very different types of social movements. Accordingly, many contemporary movements suggest a quality of 'urban-ness' – for example, the *Indignados* in Spain or the *Occupy movement* in the US. However, an important distinction for this thesis is that between social movements 'in the city' and social movements '*of* the city' (Thörn et al. 2016: 30). This research focuses on protests considered 'of the city – 'urban' in the Castellsian sense outlined above. However, an important analytical purpose in this research is to address the conditions that facilitate the connection – the scaling-up – between these urban-type protests with more general protests and movements that develop 'in the city'. For example, although the No-TAV movement in Italy did not emerge from a highly urbanised territory, following the conceptualisation of urban mobilisation employed here it can be considered, at least in its emergence, as an urban-type of protest. This is because the movement takes the localisation of a 'collective consumption good' (the construction of a high-speed railway) and its impact on the everyday life of the people surrounding the infrastructure as the basis for common political action.

Even today, decades after Manuel Castells' work, 'collective consumption' remains the principal dimension around which urban meaning and urban conflict are structured, addressing questions such as: *how do we move around*? *what and how do we consume?* and *who decides these questions for us?* In fact, in the current 'post-Fordist' or 'Neoliberal' city, collective consumption seems even more significant than in the city's previous 'Keynesian' expression. Today in Western Europe, in the wake of the widespread economic crisis, the current context of 'austerity urbanism' has promoted – to a greater degree than ever before – the 'exchange-value' of the city and its commodification at the expense of an understanding of the city as a 'use value' space in which to sustain reproductive life.

In this section I have outlined a conceptualisation of the urban space that suggests that it should be understood as the outcome of specific power-relations and, thus, as an object of contestation. Following Manuel Castells, I have conceptualised urban-type

protest as flowing from the urban as a space of 'collective consumption' in which the population's collective material and post-material needs should be satisfied. Because collective consumption relates not only to the provision of urban services and facilities, but also to collective post-material needs,[8] distinctively urban claims also include those that challenge decision-making processes, resist the intrusion of the state and the market into social and reproductive life, and shape the meaning of urban life. This approach to urban-type protest does not include all social types of mobilisations taking place in the urban space. Rather, urban-type protest emerges from the processes of urbanisation itself; localised collective goods and services are the basis for common political action. Grievances of this nature yield protest that does not only take place *in* the city but is rather *of* the city.

In the next section I will present the different ways urban protest is expressed in relationship to *repertoires of action*, *framing strategies* and *organisational resources* – three analytical dimensions widely used in social movement research. I will present the different forms that urban mobilisation can take – in terms of its varying levels of disruptive protest, use of general interpretative master frames, and modes of coordination between urban actors – addressing the question of which strategies are more likely to develop and scale-up.

1.2. Dynamics of contention in urban movements

In this section I will analyse three axes of variation with respect to the ways in which urban protest is expressed: *repertoires of action*, *framing strategies* and *organisational structures*. Through these three analytical concepts – which are widely used in social movement studies but not in urban studies – I will discuss the significance that the character of urban protest can have on the likelihood of its developing and scaling-up.

I have two purposes in identifying various configurations of repertoires of action, networking and framing strategies that urban protest may take. The first is to refine the concept of urban protest by beginning to consider the range of variation in its expression that we find empirically. The second aim is to establish a range of variation of urban-type of protest which will guide the empirical investigation into its relationship with a

[8] Related to the meaning of the urban life and the collective management of urban resources.

system of political opportunity structures that I conduct in the chapters that follow. Before outlining what I understand by 'local system of political opportunity structure' and its relationship with the development of urban protest, I first introduce some of the types of actions, frames and networking strategies that are developed in processes of urban mobilisation.

1.2.1. Repertoires of action in urban protest

Charles Tilly (1986) defined 'repertoires of action' as the "whole set of means [a group] has for making claims of different types on different individuals" (1986: 2). The term 'repertoires' is evocative of "a stock of special skills, plays, and activities with which members of a group are already familiar and from which they select specific ones" (Klandermans et al., 2014: 2). Social movements use them to: (1) communicate their claims, (2) generate solidarity and identity between the actors participating in them, and (3) challenge adversaries (putting pressure on formal structures and opening up new opportunities for transformation) (Martí i Puig et al. 2018).

In expressions of urban protest, and in examples of social mobilisation more generally, one finds highly varied repertoires of action. Urban protest events can be more or less conventional and predictable (such as demonstrations or strikes), more or less innovative (with more or less intense use of digital media, for example), and more or less challenging and disruptive. Protest claims can also be delivered either inside or outside the local political system. In fact, the choice of the political arena in which actors express themselves is in itself an expression of its underlying message (Hutter 2014: 337).

In addressing the types of repertoires of action used in urban protest, I will focus on their varying degrees of disruptiveness; that is to say, the degree to which these actions are expected to interfere with routines and other actors (Tarrow 1989: 68). Drawing on Catani et al. (2012), Kriesi et al. (1995) and Tarrow (1989) I build a typology of

categories of increasing disruptiveness that goes from conventional actions, [9] demonstrative actions,[10] confrontational actions[11] to violent actions.[12]

Level of disruptiveness is a useful category for analysing variation in the repertoires of action as it encompasses numerous dimensions of urban protest, such as varying levels of predictability, innovation, and challenging capacity. Examining disruptiveness also enables one to differentiate whether the protest event has been developed inside or outside the local political system. Moreover, existing research suggests that the degree to which the repertoire of action of an urban protest event is disruptive will be an important factor in determining its likelihood to scale-up and become imbued with a character that goes beyond a concrete urban conflict. There is evidence to suggest that repertoires of action at either end of the scale of disruptiveness – conventional actions and violent actions – will be less likely to gain momentum and grow in scale.

In general, the existing literature on urban movements suggests that urban protest tends to be unspectacular and moderate as it is often related to "collective problem-solving in everyday life" (Jacobsson 2015: 10). In urban movements, therefore, protest-oriented actions understood in a traditional sense (demonstrations, gatherings, blockages, etc.) are considered as constituting only one part of urban-type protest actions. Neighbourhood assemblies, for example, are spaces where contentious claims are often developed in processes of urban mobilisation. It is also common to find contention in what has been conceptualised as practices of social innovation (for example, networks promoting alternative forms of economic and social development, consumption cooperatives or urban gardening). This is an issue that I will assess through the empirical analysis in the chapters that follow.

When analysing dynamics of urban mobilisation through protest events, a potential problem presents itself in that, intuitively it seems difficult methodologically to capture both unspectacular/moderate forms of protest and also protest actions that are spread over time and involve some element of service provision or prefiguration. However,

[9] Conventional actions involve lobbying, petitioning, active public participation, press releases, diffusion and taking legal action.
[10] Demonstrative actions involve exhibitions and celebrations, public assemblies, sit-ins, public rallies, demonstrations and protest camps.
[11] Confrontational actions involve strikes, interruptions of and disturbance of official meetings, boycotts, occupations and squatting, and obstruction and blockades.
[12] Violent actions involve mainly physical clashes with political opponents, clashes with police and property damage.

the actors participating in these types of experiences tend to be aware that the organisation of specific events provides opportunities for them to communicate their claims. In relationship to squatting, for example, evictions represent opportunities that movements have taken to communicate their claims, generate solidarity and identity and challenge their adversaries (Martínez 2002). As such, they constitute part of the repertoires of action of these movements.

Disruptive forms of protest are expected to produce polarisation between moderates and radicals, and polarisation has been shown to lead to demobilisation within protest movements (Jung, 2010: 29). Greater polarisation within a movement is expected to lead radical elements to continue to voice radical demands, diverging from the more institutionalised elements of the sector (Uitermark 2004: 688). This is another issue that I address in the empirical research of this thesis: do we see a relationship between 1) levels of disruptiveness, 2) polarisation within the urban movement sector and 3) general levels of urban mobilisation.

In this section I have presented the concept of *repertoires of action* and how it can be applied to the study of urban protest. In this thesis, I address urban protest through the lens of its varying degrees of disruptiveness, taking into account that the expectations from existing research is that urban protest tends to be unspectacular and moderate in its forms and that levels of disruptiveness have implications on the extent of urban mobilisation and the capacity of a struggle to scale-up and gain momentum. These are theoretical expectations that will frame the empirical analysis that follows

In the next section I will discuss *framing strategies* in urban protest, identifying two framing strategies and three general interpretive frames that are employed in urban-type protest. Urban conflicts emerge from particular and concrete struggles – struggles that have a concrete goal and that can, therefore, be won or lost. Urban struggles can, however, develop and "spill over to a range of other issues that exceed the city" (Arampatzi and Nicholls 2012: 2-3). These processes of scaling-up operate through networking and framing strategies that develop as part of urban mobilisations.

Part of the purpose of protest events is to make visible the collective identity of the actors participating in them and to consciously define the issue at stake. The concept of framing, which refers to people's "shared meanings and definitions" (McAdam et al. 1996: 5), mediates between political opportunity, organisation, and action.

1.2.2. Framing urban protest

In processes of urban mobilisation, the notion of collective identity is often attached to a specific locality. However, the development of framing strategies and the use of interpretative master frames allow urban protest to scale-up and operate in a space that Hamel et al. (2003) call the 'extra-local'. Drawing on the literature on social movements and urban movements, in this section I identify two framing strategies – *frame-bridging* and *frame transformation* – that allow urban protestors to scale up their discourses and move beyond particular struggles. I also identify three general interpretative frames – *use-value versus exchange-value*, *economic-development versus quality-of-life* and *democratic city versus technocratic city*, that are used in urban-type protest.

Social movements have been analysed not merely as a sum of protest events on certain issues, or specific campaigns, but as networks from where specific collective identities emerge and develop (della Porta and Diani 2006: 21). Polleta and Jasper (2001) describe collective identity as "an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution" which "reflect[s] what we believe, what we are comfortable with, what we like, [and] who we are" (2001: 284-285). Issues of collective identity relate to meanings, values and imaginaries that problematise interest formation, rather than taking them as stable and given.

Like organisational structures, collective identities are important for social movements as they can be maintained even after a specific initiative or campaign has finished, facilitating transitions between phases of greater and less activity. This is important as "movements often oscillate between brief phases of intense public activity and long 'latent' periods […] in which self-reflection and cultural production prevail" (della Porta and Diani 2006: 23).

A community is a (partly imagined) source of identity, and a sense of belonging to a group that creates a we-feeling in contrast to an exterior world (them). Although the idea of 'community' resonates with the idea of the local, 'community' can nonetheless be framed in various ways (Mullins 1987). Therefore, although the object of collective

action in urban movements tends to be localised,[13] framing strategies are a crucial step in the construction of the collective identities of urban movements and in determining their capacity to 'scale-up' and connect to the wider social movement space (Thörn et al. 2016: 29). Despite their significance, framing strategies have been widely ignored by the literature on urban movements.

As Caiani et al. (2012) assert, a frame is a concept that pertains to "the symbolic construction of the external reality" (2012: 13), and the process of framing relates to "conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam et al. 1996: 6). Three different dimensions of the process of framing have been identified in the literature: the *diagnostic*, the *prognostic*, and the *motivational* dimensions (Snow and Benford 1988). The diagnostic dimension has been defined as "the recognition of certain occurrences as social problems" (Caiani et al. 2012: 13). The *prognostic dimension* is the "identification of possible strategies to resolve these" problems (ibid), while the *motivational phase* is "the development of motivations for action on this knowledge" (ibid). As McAdam et al. assert (1996), "[a]t the minimum people need to feel both aggrieved about some aspects of their lives and optimistic that, acting collectively, they can redress the problem" (1996: 5). For social mobilisation to be successful, people need to be motivated and feel that they are part of a process of transformation.

In urban movements, the collective identity – derived from a defined sense of community linked to a specific territory – tends to work as a *motivational frame* of action, stemming from the recognition of a right to protect, defend and transform the territory in which a movement feels embedded. The identities of urban movements may be particularistic or universal depending upon whether their claims are more isolated or more connected.

The emergence of a specific urban conflict is reflective of growing citizen concern regarding the quality, resources and security of their living space (Nel·lo 2003). Identifying the issue at stake in an urban conflict is part of the *diagnostic dimension* of the process of framing. Urban movements can articulate local urban issues (such as

[13] For example, movements mobilised against highways, large redevelopment schemes, traffic congestion, displacement, polluting industries, insecurity and degradation of public spaces.

those concerned with housing, urban services or territorial defence) individually or they can go beyond specific claims and articulate them in relationship to democratic values, ideas about self-management, or the use-value of the city.

Finally, social movement research suggests that all protest events aim to achieve a particular goal, usually presented in the form of claim. *Prognostic framing* refers to the construction of possible solutions to the problem identified and feeds into the claim that is made. Tarrow (1989) differentiates between substantive types of claims from the expressive types of claims.

The empirical analysis conducted in this thesis attempts to examine the ways in which urban protest is articulated in relationship to the collective identities being performed and the framing strategies that are established. Della Porta (2004) distinguished between two principal types of strategies used by Italian 'comitati di cittadini' to scale-up their discourses and move beyond the 'NIMBY' (Not In My Backyard) label. In a study conducted in four Italian cities at the beginning of 2004, Della Porta showed that local committees sometimes connected their particular conflicts to broader dynamics and macro-structural phenomena (neoliberalism, democracy, austerity measures, etc.) – something that is referred in the literature as 'frame-bridging' or 'frame-extension' (Snow and Benford 1988). In other instances, local committees engaged in the articulation of "new" issues that were considered legitimate for their potential allies or the community they pretended to represent; this is similar to what Snow and Benford (1988) have described as a 'frame-transformation' strategy. Urban mobilisation can, therefore, be framed at different scales by connecting local, concrete struggles, with more general discourses, such as a broader critique of the capitalist system. This type of strategy enables the transfer of discourses from one setting, or one specific circumstance, to other similar settings and struggles, transcending particular conflicts. It is when these framing strategies take place that the cosmopolitan aspect of urban movements can develop, enabling them to simultaneously relate to multiple localities (Tilly 1995).

Another way that protestors can avoid particularism is to build a discourse around a 'new' idea. One example is the construction of the concept of 'NOPE' (Not On Planet eacrh) to defend against accusations of NIMBYism (della Porta and Piazza 2007). When confronted with the stigma and criticism of the public authorities and press for being selfish in relationship to facilities or interventions motivated by the common

good, protesters can respond by building arguments that frame their actions as opposition to abuses of power and absences of transparency in public decision-making, or as opposition to an alliance between government and business (ibid). In fact, della Porta (2004) highlights that it is often the case that institutional interventions are presented as for the common benefit but actually promote private asset value gains for privileged property owners.

'Interpretative frames' are collective processes of interpretation, attribution and social construction that mediate between opportunity and action (Caiani et al. 2012). The literature on urban movements identifies various 'interpretative frames' that urban protestors tend to use in the strategy to connect particular struggles to more general discourses. The first prominent interpretative frame brings together two different types of urban models: one based on the defence of the collective interest and another based on the defence of a minority. Put another way, it is an interpretive frame that brings into confrontation propriety individual rights and collective basic rights (Martínez 2002: 54), stressing the 'use value' of urban spaces and services (urban resources as the setting for daily life and social relations) against the 'profit-value' or the 'exchange-value' of urban resources, which understands them as commodities to be bought, sold or developed (Martin 2004: 591). Typical local conflicts that employ this frame are mobilisations that challenge the corporate project of the international business class[14] and mobilisations of the excluded and the poor.

The classic conflict that took place in Times Square in the 1980s "exemplifies the clash between the interests supporting commercial development and low-income residents fearful of losing their homes" (Fainstein and Fainstein 1985: 200). In that case, a development plan was approved without citizen participation and in service of the growth of the economy. As Fainstein and Fainstein (1985) noted, at the time "any private-sector endeavour that [added] to the city's economic base [was] welcomed, regardless of its effects on the employment situation or living conditions of the resident population" (1985: 202). A more recent example is the Gezi Park protest, which took place in Turkey in 2013. It has been presented in the literature as a conflict between the interest of capital and the interests of ordinary inhabitants of Istanbul (Baris Kuymulu

[14] For example, anti-gentrification mobilisations, struggles against anti-homeless and anti-squatter policies, anti-growth policy movements, action against urban policies aimed at 'cleaning' the public space, movements devising image-damaging actions in order to make their city less attractive to big investors and developers, and critical mass movements.

2013). Through the chant 'Sermaye defol, Gezi Parki bizimdir' ('Capital be gone, Gezi Park is ours'), people mobilised to defend the use-value of the city: "whatever arguments its proponents put forth to justify the construction of another shopping mall in the historic city centre, they could not legitimate building the 94th shopping mall in Istanbul" (Baris Kuymulu 2013: 276). The conflict began with a focus on the idea of the 'use-value of the city' and later evolved into a conflict over civil rights and individual and collective freedoms (ibid). As the protest progressed, it bridged from the defence of a specific urban park to broader democratic issues regarding how the country as a whole is organised.

A related, though distinguishable, interpretative frame is the frame that places 'economic development' in confrontation with 'quality of life'. This broad frame is also related to a critique of some dimensions of the capitalist system and the neoliberal city but, rather than stressing the idea of ownership of urban resources and services (in relation to the systemic displacement and dispossession of people from the spaces of everyday life, for example), it emphasises the idea of *liveability* in the urban space. This frame connects to environmental and development issues and puts the accent on the tension between "those who stress the need for economic development policies and those who make claims for social and environmental policies for the community" (Le Galés 1995). Mobilisations against urban and infrastructural plans and large-scale processes of urban renewal, for example, often use the frame 'quality of life' as a motivational frame to stress the need to build more human-scale cities (Uitermark 2004: 688). The 'urban machine' approach considers economic growth a primary goal and the conflict emerges when there is a group of people ready to affirm the priority of the defence of the environment and oppose large projects which are presented as economically necessary but which are perceived by residents as a threat to quality of life (della Porta 2004: 16).

Empirical research in several Italian cities conducted by della Porta (2004) has shown that in local organisations (*comitati di cittadini*) there is both a general will and a capacity to present urban struggles in a broad and complex way. In doing so, they shift from single-issue struggles (such as, the pedestrianisation of a neighbourhood or the control of crime in a specific urban area) to narratives of conflicts that extend the focus and embrace the defence of a broad community and its quality of life (2004: 20). Out

of the eighty-six citizens' committees[15] surveyed in Turin, Milan, Bologna, Florence, Catania, and Palermo, only 26.2 per cent were classified as NIMBY, while 22.4 per cent were classified as urban movement organisations and the rest either a neighbourhood or a single-issue committee (della Porta 2004: 21).[16]

A third broad interpretative frame used in urban struggles is the democratic frame, one that engages with the openness and participatory dimensions of the urbanisation process and has as a primary goal "achieving decentralised, territorially based self-management" (Miller and Nicholls 2013: 453). The democratic frame works as a mobilising frame that not only helps unite different local struggles across the contemporary world, but also different issues around which urban movements in particular cities mobilise. In that sense, specific urban conflicts can be connected to the general need for more citizen participation and even more self-management of urban resources. It is a frame related to *self-management* and the right to participate and produce urban collective goods, services and activities. More or less explicitly, urban conflicts can be identified as struggles to enhance local democracy and collective decision-making. A recent example is the conflict around the project Stuttgart 21 in Germany in the 2000s and the early 2010s. Stuttgart 21 triggered intense public debates on issues of local democracy, highlighting the legitimacy deficit of public decision-making and its lack of responsiveness to the confrontational dimension of local politics (Gualini 2015: 59). As Gualini (2015) notes, "[d]espite overall consensus on the need for restructuring the Stuttgart railway node, a participatory public discussion on how to frame the problem was never developed" (2015: 75).

A fourth interpretive frame identified in the literature on urban movements is that of the 'right to the city' , which is presented as a large, overarching frame that stresses the dimensions of 'use value' and 'quality of life' discussed above, but also the dimensions of 'justice' and 'democracy'. The concept, based on the works of Henri Lefebvre

[15] 'Citizens committees' are groups characterised by a localist identity, with participative, flexible and little-coordinated organisational structures, and with action strategies that favour protest (della Porta 2004: 7).

[16] This characterisation was part of a classification of 'citizen committees' in relationship to two variables: (1) number of issues around which a citizen committee is mobilised; and (2) the territorial level of its interventions. 'NIMBY committees' were limited to single-issue and limited territorial focus mobilisations. 'Urban movement organisations' were multi-issue and broad territorial focus mobilisations. 'Neighbourhood committees' were multi-issue mobilisations with limited territorial focus. 'Single-issue citizen committees' were single-issue mobilisations with a broad territorial-focus (della Porta 2004: 22).

(1996), has become a significant articulation (by both academics and activists) of progressive demands for social urban change around the world (Marcuse 2009: 246) and it is used today as a reference point to analyse urban conflict. As David Harvey (2008) has pointed out:

> "the right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is the right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the process of urbanisation" (Harvey 2008: 2).

Although the 'right to the city' frame is currently one of the most prominent frameworks in the analysis of urban movements, in this research I will not use it as an interpretative frame through which to analyse urban protest events. Following Uitermark et al. (2012), I consider the 'right to the city' a problematic concept as it tends to be projected on urban movements when "many of the movements organising within cities do not call for a 'right to the city'" (2012: 2547). Accordingly, the frame seems to be today more of a wish, a suggestion, or a promise than an umbrella frame that is empirically observable in processes of urban mobilisation. According to Uitermark et al. (2012), "as a political slogan, the concept of right to the city inspires at least some activists" but when used as an "analytical concept, it diverts scholarly attention away from understanding the role of cities in social movements within and beyond the city" (2012: 2548).

Urban protest is expected to develop, transform and bridge between different frames, using transferable claims that can simultaneously work for multiple interpretative frames. Although I have presented three distinct interpretative frames – which can be summarised as use-value versus exchange-value, economic-development versus quality-of-life and democratic city versus technocratic city – they are not necessarily mutually exclusive and are often articulated together by urban movements. My aim in this research is to shed some light on the extent to which these broad interpretative master frames are used in urban protest events and, by analysing together multiple protest events from the same urban campaign, to identify the strategies used to scale-up and go beyond the particularities of specific local conflicts.

In this section I have presented my approach to applying the ideas of collective identity and framing strategies to the analysis of urban protest. I have identified two possible ways in which the discourse surrounding urban mobilisation may successfully scale-

up[17] and outlined three broad interpretative frames[18] identified in the literature as used by urban protestors.

In the following section, I will address the prominent mobilising agents that participate in urban mobilisation processes and consider their respective characteristics and networking strategies. Although urban mobilisation tends to be presented in the literature as spontaneous, disorganised and temporary, collective contention always involves a certain level of coordination between grassroots organisations and groups. I will draw on Mario Diani's (2013) characterisation of coordination models in order to present the various forms of organisational dynamics that urban protest can display, and which will be employed later in the thesis as the basis for my empirical analysis of the actors and organisations conducting urban protest events.

1.2.3. Organisational structures in urban protest

In social movement studies, the *resource mobilisation perspective* stresses the fact that the capacity of a social movement to reduce the cost of actions, mobilise support and acquire and share resources depends on the types of organisations participating in the movement and the type of structures they create (della Porta and Diani 2006: 14). In that sense, resource mobilisation theory makes a clear distinction between, on the one hand, spontaneous, disorganised and temporary phenomena and, on the other, highly organised, sustained collective action that is "defined by conscious intentions in the shape of clearly defined political goals and clear targets" (Thörn et al. 2016: 18).

Whereas social movement studies have extensively used resource mobilisation theory to analyse the organisational forms that social protest takes, in the urban studies literature and the study of urban movements, the urban logic of action has tended to be presented as fluid and fragmented, characterised by unpredictability rather than rationally planned action (Boudreau 2017: 17). In the social movement literature, there is an understanding that for a movement to be sustained and to effectively advance its

[17] Through the development of frame-bridging and frame-extension strategies, or through frame-transformation.
[18] Use-value versus exchange-value; economic-development versus quality-of-life; and democratic city versus technocratic city.

cause, it needs to develop highly formal organisational and leadership structures (Turner and Killian 1987).

Instead of focusing on understanding mobilising resources and permanent forms of organisations, urban studies research has tended to focus on identifying the type of social groups that mobilise (for example, homeless people, immigrants, the creative class, etc.), the characteristics of temporary campaigns or platforms over the course of contention (for example, NIMBY coalitions), the types of partnerships established between urban grassroots and local administrations in working on specific issues (such as community-development initiatives) and, less often, the emergence of transnational interurban networks (alongside international organisations that engage in locally-based mobilisations). In the literature on urban movements is a tendency to limit the importance of pre-existing organisations and to focus only on specific campaigns emerging in the urban milieu. Luigi Bobbio (1999) is typical in this regard when he argues that, in urban conflicts, opposition is usually not promoted directly by pre-existing organisations (such as local associations, environmental organisations or citizen groups) but rather by mobilised citizens constituted in a platform. The aim of the platform is to increase the social base of the mobilisation, exercise pressure and become the interlocutors with the public administration (Bobbio 1999; Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010).

The urban movement literature has tended to stress the fact that urban mobilisation often does not have a clear structure and, instead, is constituted of loose and decentralised networks of people and groups that share a specific urban existence,[19] occasionally coordinating among themselves for a specific purpose (Mayer 2013: 11). The empirical research developed on urban movements supports this idea and confirms that, although tending to have informal structures with limited resources (often depending on external resources), the urban movement sector is able to persist over time. The city itself is presented as an organisational resource, or what Nicholls and Miller (2013: 63) call a "relational incubator" – a space that facilitates relational processes.

In fact, recent analysis of social movements suggests that approaching social movements limited only to highly organised, sustained collective action makes the term

[19] For example, the informal sector or the creative class.

too narrow to grasp a large part of the social mobilisation going on today (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). Social movement studies have, however, recently been moving towards finding better ways to understand political forms that are not clearly planned, organised and articulated. More than ever before, with new technologies and the Internet, organisations today often do not have a central role in processes of mobilisation and ordinary citizens are increasingly the agents accounting for protest in place of traditional mobilising agents. For example, the concept of *connective action* (Bennet and Segerberd 2012), in contrast to the traditional concept of *collective action*, accounts for novel organisational dynamics of contentious politics in which personal communication technologies enable individuals that do not have formal organisational ties or membership to organise, to become informed and interpret grievances, to create meaning and to diffuse shared cognitive resources through their social media networks (Anduiza et al. 2014: 10).

Although urban mobilisation has been shown not to depend on large and permanent organisations (Jacobs 2017), to an extent there is always, nonetheless, coordination and networking between different organisations and groups, which tend to provide mobilising resources (organisational, economic, logistic, personal, etc.) for the mobilising action. Some urban mobilisations are spontaneous and short-lived while others are more highly organised and enduring. Accordingly, urban movement research needs to be able to better understand the role and forms of organisational dynamics taking place in processes of urban mobilisation. In this thesis I aim to shed some light on the organisations and groups that driving urban protest and their levels of coordination. I also examine the extent to which urban collective contention depends on pre-existing organisation or whether the 'platform' itself can be considered the main mobilising agent in urban protest.

In the urban milieu we find a range of qualitatively different mobilising agents: social movement organisations, associations, collectives, kinship and friendship networks, and informal mobilising structures. Formal organisations coexist with informal, spontaneous and loosely coupled networks, shaping a multi-organisational field of action (Diani 2013). Although diverse in form, the urban mobilisation's field constitutes a decentralised urban network, highly rooted in its specific urban surroundings.

Considering the typology of movement-related organisation put forward by Kriesi (1996: 153),[20] the actors participating in urban-types of mobilisation tend to be *constituency-oriented* and are characterised by the *direct participation* of that constituency. Their grassroots profile differentiates them from other traditional political organisations such as unions, interest groups and political parties. While parties and interest groups pursue political goals just as social movement organisations, they do not normally depend on the direct participation of their constituents for attaining these goals. They have sufficient resources (such as institutionalised access, authority and expertise) to not require the mobilisation of their constituents (Kriesi 1996: 153).

Actors participating in urban types of mobilisation, therefore, tend to be urban grassroots types, with little resources and formalisation. However, there are other, more professionalised, organisations – such as those coming from the environmental movement or the feminist movement – that often participate in urban protest actions. In general, the expectation in the literature is that these more professional organisations function as interest groups; more ready to employ conventional tactics, but that nonetheless participate in mass mobilisations (Rootes 1999).

Della Porta and Diani (2006) distinguish between four different types of categories of movement organisations: public interest groups, voluntary associations, citizen committees and countercultural communities. With respect to citizen committees, in the urban studies literature, we find *neighbourhood associations* or *citizens' platforms*. In terms of countercultural communities, we find *squats* and *self-managed social centres*. Finally, in terms of voluntary associations and public interest groups, we see *community-based organisations* – that is, third or voluntary sector organisations and advocacy groups). In urban studies research, these actors are presented as the collective vehicles – informal as well as formal – that are available to urban activists. Borrowing concepts from social movement studies, they represent "grassroots mobilising structures" (McAdam et al. 1996: 4) or "collective building blocks" (ibid: 3) through which people mobilise and engage in collective action. Although they are not necessary conditions for urban mobilisation to take place, they are expected to frequently be implicated in processes of urban mobilisation. Accordingly, the literature on urban movements needs to better understand the role of these meso-level structures and their

[20] With its two axes of variation: (1) constituency/client-oriented organisation versus authorities-oriented organisation; and (2) no direct participation of constituency versus direct participation of constituency.

relationship with urban collective action. One of the aims of this research is to shed some light on the types of organisations participating in urban protest events and to empirically identify their role in urban mobilisations in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015.

In the literature on urban movements, *neighbourhood associations* or *neighbourhood committees* are presented as a type of civil society organisation based on residence. They are traditional actors in the urban conflict, highly locally based, with characteristics and dynamics that vary depending on the city and the neighbourhood in which they are embedded. Their origins, especially in Southern European countries, are often linked to the emergence of the labour movement. Although both the neighbourhood movement and the labour movement have generally occupied separate and autonomous political spaces from each other, both grew-up around a class problematic, even if the neighbourhood movement has subsequently taken on an inter-class character (Balfour 1994).[21] New populations arriving in European industrial cities in the mid-20th century to work in factories became urban residents in cities experiencing rapid transformations. In that context, as they settled, this new urban population politically organised themselves not only to improve their working conditions but also their quality of urban life. They created political structures, deeply rooted in the neighbourhoods where they were living, in order to struggle for better urban services and facilities to develop their everyday life.

In Southern Europe, neighbourhood associations have existed, therefore, since the mid-20th century and have been more or less active depending on the time period. In terms of their characteristics, they share a permanent, flexible and participative organisational structure, often combining protest with negotiation with the local administration. Ideologically, they vary notably and can be more or less progressive, environmentally conscious and inclusive. In general, however, they tend to confront speculative processes that are believed to be damaging their neighbourhoods and their everyday life, and to highlight the negative externalities and the lack of citizen participation in new development projects. In democratic local systems, they generally target local administrations. In European cities, they have been seen as both representative and as

[21] In Spain, the worker movement was organised into *'comisiones obreras'* (workers'commitees) – forms of social organisation that emerged in the 1960s and worked as decentralised and self-managed nodes up until the transition to democracy. Initially, they were a-legal and, subsequently, they were made illegal and went underground (see Magone 2018).

legitimising territorial institutions and they have taken on the role of channelling the protest of citizens, with the aim of gathering, transmitting and defending citizens' interests.

Social centres, *squats*, and *self-managed spaces*, by contrast, are often presented in the literature as the outcome of civil disobedience – practices of illegally occupying empty private proprieties or infra-used public spaces and transforming them into open and collective places (Andretta et al 2015: 207). There is no common international referent, with each squat house in the world having organised from its own history of local protest (Martínez 2002). However, the collective re-appropriation of abandoned facilities or spaces for public use and the production of alternative spaces for socialisation and consumption is, in general, a characteristic shared throughout the squat movement as a whole (Ibarra et al. 2002:20-21).

Social centres, squats and self-managed spaces constitute a long-lasting urban phenomenon in Western European cities, becoming prominent in the 1980s. Although it has traditionally been conceived of as a highly dissident activity (linked to radical ideas about autonomy, anarchism and various leftist organisations) contemporary squatting practices have become increasingly diverse and articulate varied political and social motivations. In many European cities there are squats and other self-managed spaces (for example, community urban gardens and temporary self-managed public spaces) that, after some years of instability and threats of eviction, now have agreements with their local administration. These spaces have become established and permanent institutions understood as legitimate territorial actors in local participatory processes.

Innovative practices, such as urban gardening or temporary occupations of public spaces, are realities that are constantly developing in cities, with moments of greater and lesser prominence and activity. These fluctuations are the product the specific structure of local opportunities and do not particularly follow the traditional logic of cycles of protest. Andrés Walliser (2013) uses the term New Urban Activists (NUA) – which he describes as a new form of social movement – to refer to the "occupation of public space ranging from short ephemeral concentrations that temporarily appropriate a public space (people gathering in a given square to have breakfast together convoked through social networks), to more permanent interventions such as community gardens

or self-managed open social centres in publicly owned plots or buildings" (2013: 329-330).

Taken as a whole, squatting practices and self-managed spaces represent a creative, counter-cultural and alternative political network of social facilities and local spaces that constitute an alternative social and economic structure in many contemporary European cities. They also tend to make visible territorial and social conflicts, generating local political spaces in neighbourhoods that are affected by processes of urban transformation (Miró 2010). Although they tend to frame their actions in a broader way, confronting the capitalist system and the imposition of specific social and cultural norms, they often target the local state – regardless of the ownership of the space they occupy or use – as they see it as the accomplice of the urban model imposed. Although some self-managed and squatted spaces become enduring over time, they are often loosely structured and ephemeral. Their sustained existence depends on their relationship to the local state (expressed through, for example, repression by the local state, or the existence of agreements) and the capacity of new generations to keep them running.

A final stable aspect of the urban milieu identified in the literature is composed of non-profit voluntary organisations, movement's associations, cooperatives, and advocacy groups.[22] Many such organisations are the product of previous cycles of social mobilisation and later serve as infrastructures for grassroots movements and urban campaigns. They also tend to manage services and communitarian programmes or deal with urban problems, such as social exclusion or neighbourhood decay and marginality – often in partnership with the local administration. Especially in Southern European countries there are also numerous enduring catholic organisations specialised in social and urban actions.[23] Such organisations develop activities of solidarity and assistance, often in collaboration with the local administration

Advocacy organisations participating in urban-type mobilisations are related to what Paul Davidoff (1965) called *advocacy planning*. In those cases, the organisations are formed by architects, geographers, sociologists and other professionals and engage in

[22] Such as friendly media, shops, community groups, consumption cooperatives, social rights offices, housing cooperatives, soup kitchens, and local exchange and solidarity networks.
[23] One prominent Catholic organisation working actively in countries like Italy or Spain, is 'Caritas Diocesana'.

the political process of planning as advocates of the interests of social movements, organisations, or individuals who are concerned with proposing policies for the future development of the community. The professionals engaging in such practices can be more or less involved with the social movement; sometimes they are part of the group themselves and in other instances they merely work as supporters at specific moments of time.

The three overarching categories briefly presented above – *neighbourhood associations*, *social centres*, *squats* and *self-managed spaces*, and *non-profit voluntary organisations* – are consistent with what Diani et al. (2018) call a "civic organizational field": a set of actors "engaged on a voluntary basis in the promotion of collective action and the production of collective goods" (2018: 638). They also represent three broad categories of urban reality existing today in South-European cities. They also all share certain elements, such as the fact of being rooted in their local surroundings (both targeting the local state and being affected by its politics) and in depending on the direct participation of their constituencies (especially in the case of neighbourhood associations, squats, social centres and self-managed spaces).[24]

In relationship to social movements' endurance over time, the literature suggests that they "rarely have clear beginnings or endings, and small hold-over networks of activists among the same aggrieved group often provide continuity for movements during periods of decreased opportunity and activity" (Taylor 2000: 222). All the groups and organisation-types presented above show a tendency to maintain some level of mobilisation even in the low periods of mobilisation cycles, and their continued existence often enables new possibilities for action (Miró 2010). The existence of these actors stabilises urban collective action, which, without them, would exhibit much higher levels of variability and a more limited capacity for action (della Porta and Diani 2006: 138). Such organisations, because of their tendency to self-perpetuate, are often a source of continuity for the movement, in terms of identity and action (della Porta and Diani 2006: 138), and often play a representative role on behalf of a movement.

In fact, some of the actors presented before often work as mobilisation structures for subsequent cycles of protest. The spaces they create at the local level are often

[24] Some other community associations or cooperatives have greater economic resources as a result of working in partnership with the local administration and, as a result, depend to a lesser degree on their constituencies.

"essential in the formation of identities, ideologies, and interests that precede collective mobilisation" (Polletta 1999) in processes of social mobilisation that go beyond the urban sector. The anti-globalisation cycle, for example, used local resources provided by urban groups and organisations as structures for action. In exchange, these local groups and organisations tend to use broader cycles of protest to give meaning to their practices and discourses – which are otherwise often perceived as minority, disperse and irrelevant – and achieve visibility and are able to network. The anti-globalisation movement, for example, created new organisations, groups and local spaces that are today actively engaged in the urban struggle in many cities.

A significant portion of the groups and organisations that today participate in the urban conflict in many European cities are the product of historic cycles of mobilisation. As Jacobsson (2015: 9) asserts, with the gradual evanescence of cycles of social mobilisation, activists often turn to the local in different forms of urban activism. This process not only involves a shift towards the local scale but also tends to involve some levels of institutionalisation of the movement. It often implicates the capitalisation of previous mobilising experiences in the creation of more permanent organisational structures, connected to the politics of everyday life and the urban environment. This has not only been the case with the anti-globalisation movement but also happened with the neighbourhood movement in the 1970s in many European cities (and the creation of the neighbourhood associations) and with the squat movement in the 1980s and the emergence of social centres.

Although collaboration across different groups and organisations is presented as a characteristic of a mature field of urban movements (Jacobsson 2015: 11), forms of inter-organisational collaboration[25] in the urban milieu tend to be highly informal and usually have to be renegotiated each time a new issue, opportunity or threat emerges (Diani 2013: 8). Under specific conditions, however, the various actors and groups at the local level are expected to generate synergies, complicities and support, and shift from atomised experiences (disconnected and particular urban dissidences) to collective subjects. These collective subjects share forms of solidarity and collective identities that encompass diversity and transcend specific groups and organisations (Allasino et al. 2003). This is what is described in the literature as the process of

[25] What in the literature on social movements is described as social movement organisations (SMOs); composed of groups or members of groups that mobilise for collective action with a political goal.

emergence of a social movement, which is principally "a process of strengthening the connections between actors that previously acted mainly independently from each other, privileging organisational modes of coordination or, at best, engaging in ad hoc instrumental coalition" (Kriesi 1988).

As noted above, this happens only under specific conditions. The empirical research developed in this work is not able to yield information on the dynamics of formation and emergence of social movements as it represents a fixed picture of the protest events developed in a specific period of time; it does not address the evolution over time of specific urban conflicts or campaigns. However, I do examine the modes of coordination between actors that underpin the urban protest events analysed. Mario Diani (2013) has distinguished between three different modes of coordination in processes of social mobilisation: coalitional, organisational and subcultural/communitarian. The coalitional mode of coordination can be considered as interchangeable with social movements, as "both consist of multiple, often heterogeneous, independent actors, sharing resources in pursuit of some shared goals" (Diani 2013: 11). However, according to Diani, coalitions have a goal-oriented nature and their function ends when their goal is achieved or when the cause has been lost, which is something that differentiates them from social movements. That said, Diani admits the possibility that coalitions of organisations "may gradually see the emergence of broader feelings of solidarity among their proponents", a development that facilitates "the formation of broader social movements" (Diani 2013: 11).

The organisational mode of coordination consists of "modes of resource allocation and boundary definition that do not involve systematic inter-organisational networking and take largely place within specific groups and organisations" (Diani 2013: 11). In these cases, the collective action is coordinated by actors that are autonomous from each other, which means that they do not lose their decisional capacity and "loyalties and attachments are largely if not exclusively focused on specific groups and organisations rather than on broader collectivities" (ibid).

Finally, the subcultural/communitarian mode of coordination of collective action represents "a process in which inter-organisational linkages are sparse, yet there are widespread feelings of identification with a much broader collectivity than the one represented by specific organisations, and a set of practices that support it" (Diani 2013: 12). This mode of coordination is based, therefore, on the existence of dense subcultural

networks with strong feelings of identity, facilitating the formation of spontaneous and informal mobilisation processes rather than a formal organisational structure.

In this section I have presented the principal "mobilising structures" (McAdam et al. 1996: 4) or collective vehicles available to urban activists. Such structures are also essential for the formation of identities, ideologies and interests that precede collective mobilisation. Under specific conditions, distinct urban actors are able to generate complicities and support, and their experiences shift from being atomised to constituting collective subjects. In the next section I will present the five contextual 'layers' which form my understanding of the 'local context' that I expect to be significant for the forms that urban protest takes. Even in cities with similar sources of dissatisfaction and general macro-structural dynamics we see highly different types of urban protest. Drawing from the assumption that the characteristics of urban protest are highly context dependent, in the next section I present the theoretical framework, based on the concept of 'political opportunity structure', used to examine the interactions between urban protest and the local context.

1.3. 'Local context' as a political opportunity structure

In processes of urban mobilisation, the highly varied expressions of protest that people engage in despite their lives being affected by shared macro-problems is suggestive of something at a more granular political level that is significant in the development of urban protest. The sources of dissatisfaction among urban populations around Western Europe are often similar from place to place – the displacement of populations and local activities, migration, or public service cuts, for example. However, the way that disgruntlement is expressed varies wildly. As Kerstin Jacobsson (2015) notes, "[c]ontestation can take many forms and the actual practices depend on the context in which contestants find themselves" (2015: 9).

The existing literature on social movements suggests that social mobilisation is not a spontaneous reaction to changes in macro-structure – such as economic recession or increasing globalisation – but is rather related to the existence of organisational, cultural, social and economic resources. These resources – found in urban grassroots, collective identities, and in institutional, political and social conditions external to movement actors – combine, enhance, inhibit and shape the nature of protest. The

concept of 'political opportunity structure' (POS) is a key conceptual pillar of social movement studies; it encompasses the external dimensions constituting institutional, political and social conditions, and establishes an analytical perspective through which to connect social mobilisation with changes in the political and social environment (see McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1989, 1993, 2011).

In social movement studies, the concept of 'political opportunity structure' has usually been applied at the national level, focused on the institutional structure of the political system and the configuration of power within such system (Kriesi et al. 1995). In such research, the four dimensions that have tended to characterise configurations of opportunity structures have been "the degree of openness or closure of formal political access, the degree of stability or instability of political alignments, […] the availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners [and] political conflicts within and among elites" (Kriesi et al. 1995, see also Tarrow 1998 and Tilly 2008). At the local level, and in relationship to urban protest, the concept has, however, had very little application. This thesis employs the concept of political opportunity structure and outlines a framework for future research to systematically analyse the relationships between, on the one hand, urban protest and, on the other, institutional, political and social dimensions particular to the local level.

Existing empirical research on urban mobilisation (coming from urban studies literature and urban sociology) has identified, although in a rather piecemeal fashion, some relationships mediating between sources of dissatisfaction and expressions of urban protest. I have drawn on this literature and employed those relationships as dimensions of political opportunity structure with respect to local institutional context. The three aspects of the local political opportunity structure derived from urban studies are: 1) the degree of political and administrative decentralisation at the local level; 2) the political responsiveness of the local state; and 3) the nature and goals of the urban policies and the urban plans developed at the local level. In Chapter 2 I will further develop the meaning of these dimensions and how I apply them in relationship to the 'local context'.

I also consider two further aspects of local context in my framework of political opportunity structures, which are drawn from research into social movements. These dimensions are: 4) the power configuration in the local political context, which includes the type of local government, levels of stability of the political-institutional elite, and

the structure of local alliances; and, 5) the existence (or not) of general cycles of protest and the level of openness of a city to international spheres.

In relationship to the power configuration of the local political context, the literature on social movements suggests that mixed governments or internally divided governments are expected to be the most conducive to mobilisations, as in these situations protest seems both necessary and opportune (Jung 2010: 28). Moreover, the existence of a left-wing or right-wing local government, the levels of stability of the political-institutional elite and the structure of local alliances (in relationship to the availability of potential elite allies for urban grassroots) are variables that are expected to have an impact on the type of social protest developed (Kriesi et al. 1995).

In Europe, the expectation with respect to left-wing social movements is that they are more likely to occur when right-wing parties are in power since those administrations are generally less sympathetic than left-wing parties to the issues those movements defend (Koopmans and Rucht 1995). Additionally, left-wing parties in the government opposition are likely to have more favourable attitudes towards protestors in order to appeal to those new constituencies for electoral gains. In relationship to the levels of stability of the political-institutional elite and the local alliance structure, the general assumption is that "splits among elites are a favourable condition for social movement mobilization because such a situation weakens the overall position of power holders, provides a chance for challengers to form alliances with parts of the elites, reduces the likelihood of repression, and raises hopes that high levels of mobilization can be translated into policy impacts" (Koopmans and Rucht 1995: 10).

On the other hand, the so-called 'cycle of protest' (Tilly 2004; Tarrow 1998) is an explanation for changing patterns of protest action that is rooted in a cyclical approach to political context. Social movement scholars generally identify three key phases in a cycle of protest: ascending mobilisation, climax and demobilization. According to Portos (2016a), "[t]he ascending phase of the cycle starts when new social movements that innovate in terms of mobilisation repertoires emerge, stimulating citizens' propensity to participate" (2016a: 188). As the cycle evolves, new mobilising agents emulate initiators and compete with them to reach new sectors of the population through more appealing performances, usually from key to peripheral sectors. This dynamic follows a tidal logic, until a climax of protest is reached (Tarrow 1993).

The political opportunity perspective in social movements suggests that social mobilisation tends to flourish during cycles of protest – times when the established political order can seem more receptive or vulnerable to challenge. As this research focuses on a temporal and geographic context acutely affected by the most recent economic and financial crisis – with its attendant anti-austerity cycle of protest – I should expect to find social protest emerging from the local level in response to the economic crisis, facilitated by the more general cycle of protest. However, as I will discuss in detail in Chapter 2, although the two cases examined in this thesis share a similar context of profound economic transformation and cycle of protest, they are nonetheless characterised by marked variation with respect to levels and forms of urban protest.

Although the urban studies literature has acknowledged a certain cyclical character to urban mobilisation, often characterised by "periods of intense and frequent disputes, followed by extended calms" (Dear 1992: 289), the tidal model of protest is nowhere near as prominent as in other social movement research, and various alternative protest dynamics have been identified. Many of the protest actions in which urban movements engage are neither intense, short-term eruptions of protest, nor crescendos of mobilisation that gather momentum as they develop. Rather, much of the activity of urban movements is continuous, taking place over days, months or years, while its intensity remains largely constant.

In relationship to the first three dimensions outlined before as part of the local system of political opportunities (the degree of political and administrative decentralisation at the local level, the political responsiveness of the local state and the nature and goals of urban policies and urban plans developed at the local level), the main expectation – taken from social movement studies – is that mobilisation will be more prominent in institutional contexts with some levels of openness and decentralisation but insufficient and inadequate accountability instruments (della Porta 2004). The existing social movement literature suggests that a greater application of integrative strategies by the local state will lead to more moderate forms of protest (della Porta 2004). The availability of participatory spaces tends to favour processes of institutionalisation of social movements (that is, a social movement's pursuit of its goals through established political channels). Moreover, the establishment of decentralisation mechanisms of the local administration and a greater proximity between the local institution and the local

residents are expected to produce a more fragmented urban grassroots milieu; participation at the neighbourhood level incentivises the splitting of more general issues into very narrow and immediate problems, ignoring the political dimensions of these problems and the dynamics of interrelations between different neighbourhoods of the same district (Fernández 2010: 56).

For local governments, a central dilemma is in developing methods that allow them to harness the value of grassroots actors while at the same time containing the risks associated with an overly autonomous and oppositional civil society (Nicholls and Uitermark 2017: 47). Local governments appreciate the value of a vibrant grassroots civil society while being wary of the culture of opposition that autonomy can open up space for. As Nicholls and Uitermark (2017) have argued, "[w]hen left unchecked, the urban grassroots can grow into a snarling tangle that can overwhelm the power of political elites and undermine their legitimacy" (2017: 47).

Along the same line, Walter Nicholls (2008) has argued that "when states reinforce their institutional channels, associations tend to become more specialised and professionalised in their narrow fields, making it more difficult for them to establish new political relations outside these domain" (2008: 851). It is rather when "institutional channels break down" that "opportunities open up for developing new types of connections with diverse others" (Nicholls 2008: 851). The literature on urban studies suggest that as more formal participatory spaces are created, there is less coordination between urban grassroots organisations and the urban movements sector becomes more heterogeneous, fragmented and polarised (Mayer 2009; Nicholls 2008: 851). The assumption, therefore, is that in a highly decentralised and participatory urban political system a strong coalition among critical civil society organisations is unlikely to emerge (Pickvance 1985; Domingo and Bonet, 1998; Nicholls and Uitermark 2017: 254).

Second, the literature also suggests that polarisation within the movements sector tends to lead to the emergence of more radical repertoires of action (Pickvance 1985; Domingo and Bonet, 1998; Nicholls and Uitermark 2017: 254). According to some studies, with the application of integrative and responsive participatory strategies, while part of the urban movement sector may institutionalise (participating in the local government program), the urban grassroots sector that is not included in institutionalised participatory spaces may radicalise, "shifting protest actions and

claims in a violent and extreme direction" (Jung 2010: 29). Such findings suggest that demonstrative actions, and some types of confrontational actions (not necessarily the more disruptive ones) are more likely to emerge in contexts where particular concerns of urban insurgents are not reinforced and where it is more difficult to articulate dissent through conventional channels.

Finally, the urban movement's literature suggests that the promotion of urban policies and urban plans can have wildly diverging effects. On the one hand, some empirical studies of specific urban campaigns state that municipal policies tend to deepen the existing divisions and oppositions among the different urban movement organisations and urban agents in general (Mayer 2013). Similar to what we see with respect to participatory channels, a greater diversity of urban policies applied can lead to less coordination between urban grassroots organisations and a more heterogeneous, fragmented and polarised urban movements sector (Mayer 2009; Nicholls 2008: 851). Groups and organisations at the urban level are affected by the same general contemporary dynamics. However, they "occupy very different strategic positions within the post-industrial neoliberal city" (Mayer 2013: 11). How associations are positioned within the local institutional web and the specific ideas promoted by particular urban policies can channel those associations into distinctive, mutually exclusive and non-overlapping geopolitical fields (Nicholls 2008: 851).

At the same time, however, urban interventions – the larger the better – have been shown to represent opportunities for urban movements to become organised and coordinated under a common framework of action and as part of a common struggle (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010). It has been argued that urban plans and projects that aim to initiate the redevelopment of urban areas create social pressure in the environment and stimulate urban protest (Ózdemir and Eraydin 2017: 727). From this point of view, large urban planning interventions represent an opportunity for urban grassroots to become organised and coordinate their struggles under a common umbrella. Social centres and squats also tend to be concentrated in areas undergoing urban restructuring and pronounced real estate speculation, or in places affected by urban plans for renewal or rehabilitation (Martínez 2002: 68). As Manuel Castells argued, "paradoxically, the more the state intervened in the consumption sphere the more numerous the grievances and conflicts it would spark off" (Pickvance 2003: 103).

Urban planning also tends to create spaces of confluence for urban actors (Cruz-Gallach and Solé-Figueras 2015: 134).

In this section I have conceptualised the 'local context' as a system of political opportunity structure – made up of five dimensions – which will serve as a framework to compare across cases both variation in local institutional and political contexts and variation in dynamics of urban protest. The purpose of the framework is to open a path to studying comparatively the relationship between the local context and urban protest, moving beyond single campaigns and, ultimately, explaining variation across cases. The five dimensions of the local context introduced above will be further developed in Chapter 2.

1.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the theoretical framework of the research. It brings together research from urban studies and the broader literature on social movements, arguing that synthesising insights from the two sub-fields can help us to further our understanding of contemporary urban protest. The point of departure of this research is to better understand the dynamics of urban protest; that is to say, processes of mobilisation that develop out of grievances regarding collective goods and services in relationship to the process of urbanisation. In this chapter, I have emphasised that urban protest is not a spontaneous reaction to changes in macro-structure – such as economic recession or increasing globalisation – but rather, is shaped by local institutional and political conditions.

Urban conflicts tend to emerge from particular and concrete struggles related to processes of urban transformation. Accordingly, there is the tendency to present them as 'parochial' types of social mobilisation. However, specific framing strategies and organisational forms developed by the actors participating in the urban mobilisation processes not only mediate between opportunity and action, but also allow these types of conflicts to scale up and transcend NIMBYism, operating in a space that has been described as the 'extra-local' (Hamel et al. 2000: 1-2).

Both urban studies and social movement studies give reason to think that the local institutional and political context within which urban protest is embedded has important implications for the character of urban protest and its potential to scale-up from the

local level. An important aim of this research is to gain insight into the conditions under which urban protest is more likely to move beyond its immediate space of action and connect with broader social, political and economic dynamics.

The literature suggests that a highly decentralised and participatory local institutional system tends to favour fragmented types of protest. Existing research also provides evidence that a polarised urban grassroots sector favours the simultaneous institutionalisation and radicalisation of potential mobilising agents, making it less likely that urban protest will scale-up. It is rather when participatory channels break down that opportunities emerge for urban protest to connect and articulate with other urban conflicts in relationship to framing strategies and organisations. On the other hand, large urban interventions, such as urban plans or the modification of urban land-use regulations represent opportunities for urban protestors to organise and coordinate under a common framework of action and as part of a common struggle. However, although these potential relationships between local context and urban protest can be extracted from the literature, there is, to date, a vacuum of systematic analysis that goes beyond single campaigns. As such, it is not possible to talk with confidence about general relationships between the two that hold true across cases. That is the absence that this research aims to address by adapting the social movement studies concept of political opportunity structures to specifically urban conflict.

CHAPTER TWO

Analytical Framework and Methodology

Having outlined the theoretical framework of the research in Chapter 1, in this chapter I lay out the framework of analysis and methodology that I employ. As detailed before, this work draws together urban studies and social movement studies literatures to gain insight into the dynamics of urban protest at the local level. The aim of this thesis is to facilitate a deeper understanding of specifically *urban*-type protest, characterising its plurality of forms and logics in relationship to the local structure of institutional and political opportunities – as introduced in Chapter 1 – which I refer to as the 'local context'.

I attempt to further our understanding of the dynamics of specifically *urban* protest by, first, adapting the theoretical lenses of social movement studies to the local level and, second, through an in-depth empirical investigation into the cases of Turin and Barcelona in the period 2011-2015. Specifically, the research attempts to answer two questions: "in which ways did urban protest vary across Turin and Barcelona in the period 2011-2015?" and "what role did the 'local context' play in shaping urban protest in Barcelona and Turin in the period 2011-2015?", aiming to shed light on the puzzle of how and why urban protest varies within similar macro-contexts. I use that investigation to lay out a framework for future research, making it easier for research into urban movements to be cumulative and opening a path to explaining varying dynamics of urban protest across cases with similar macro-contexts. I also attempt to identify conditions which affect the likelihood that urban protest will transcend its immediate space of action and connect with broader social, political and economic dynamics.

Drawing on urban studies literature – particularly the work of Manuel Castells – I conceptualise urban protest not as a function of scale or territorial location, but rather as a particular type of struggle, which is based on the satisfaction of *collective* needs. Urban protest may address either material needs – the *availability of and access to collective goods and services* – or post-material needs – whichrelate to *the meaning of urban life and the collective management of urban resources*). As I laid out in Chapter 1, this thesis does not attempt to address all types of protest taking place in the urban space. Rather, I focus only on those conflicts derived from the process of urbanisation

and which, consequently are related to a specific category of goods and services; those of that are for 'collective consumption'. In that sense, in this research the *urban* is approached in relationship to its capacity to generate particular *objects of contention*. These objects of contention are those that connect infrastructures of everyday life to political action.

As a consequence of this conceptual position, the units of analysis, addressed in this thesis are instances of urban protest (as defined in the paragraph above) that are open and collective acts of claim-making, and which express dissent or critique. Focusing on the *claims* rather than the forms of protest, makes it possible to cast a wider net and include varied forms of urban contention in order to give a fuller picture of the nature of urban protest. As such, I consider here all instances of urban protest that express a collective claim on behalf of a non-governmental actor or actors and that are conducted by those concerned with the issue.

Urban protest arises in response to injustices, grievances and societal strains. Large-scale factors – such as profound economic transformations, increasing exposure to the negative effects of globalisation, rapid immigration or political crisis – play an important role. However, as Taylor (2000) argued, "a rich tradition of social movement research has demonstrated that such facilitating conditions are not sufficient" (2000: 222) to produce social protest, we need to identify "a complex set of factors" (ibid) if we are to understand why and when such conditions lead to social mobilisation. The research examines the particularities of the political and institutional aspects of the local contexts in Barcelona and Turin (20121-2015) in order to identify some relationships that may explain the dynamics of urban protest in those and similar cases.

The existing urban studies literature on mobilisation at the local level does not address causal questions in a systematic way. It does, however, yield a rich analysis of individual cases that – albeit in a piecemeal way – identify relationships that may help to give purchase on the general puzzle of what explains variation in urban protest. Research conducted by scholars of social movement studies – and specifically the concept of *political opportunity structure* – provides useful analytical resources to analyse mobilisation at a national level that might be applied to the local context. On the basis of these two bodies of work, my expectation is that highly decentralised and open local institutional political systems will favour a fragmented and parochial type of urban protest. By contrast, a local administration that provides only limited

accountability instruments and engages in exclusionary decision-making channels will favour more broadly articulated and connected expressions of urban protest. Moreover, urban projects and plans – the larger the better – are expected to work as *objects* of contention that connect infrastructures of everyday life with political action.

This chapter is structured in six sections. In the first section I discuss the method I use to analyse urban protest, defining the unit of analysis used and outlining the criteria for inclusion in my data that I employed. I also present the categories, both quantitative and qualitative in nature, which I used to analyse each protest event collected. In the second section I build on Chapter 1 and present my analytical approach to addressing the relationships between urban protest and 'local context'. I use the concept of 'political opportunity structure' as a theoretical means through which to connect urban protest events with the local political and institutional context. In the third section I address the factors that constitute the understanding of 'local context' in this thesis. In the fourth section I discuss the small-N comparative design of the research, which is based on the 'most similar' approach to case selection. Finally, in the fifth and sixth sections I discuss in further detail the methods I used in order to collect data, consist of protest event analysis complemented by interviews and the analysis of secondary sources.

2.1. Urban protest events as a unit of analysis

The method employed in this thesis to examine social protest in Turin and Barcelona is protest event analysis; my unit of analysis is discrete instances of urban protest that occurred in those two cities between 2011 and 2015. I draw on a systematic collection of relevant protest events in order to analyse the relationship between protest events and to examine them in relationship to the local political and administrative context.

I follow previous studies employing protest analysis in conducting a quantitative analysis of protest events collected from newspaper sources (Kriesi et al. 1995; McAdam 1983; McCarthy et al. 1996; Rucht and Ohlemacher 1992; Tarrow 1989; Tilly 1978). The gathering of data is a crucial component of this method, and the consistent application of criteria to determine what constitutes an instance of urban protest is fundamental to avoid arbitrariness.

For an event to be included in my data, it had to meet several criteria. First, a *collective claim* must be made, or a grievance expressed, on behalf of a social movement group or social category. Gatherings that did not explicitly articulate a claim (such as annual parades, outdoor concerts, or evictions not accompanied by a claim) were not included. The research has also been limited only to events where claims were made by non-governmental actors and were carried out directly by those concerned with the issue.

A second criterion for inclusion was that the protest event was required to be consistent with the understanding of urban protest detailed in Chapter 1; only protest events emerging from specific grievances produced by the process of urbanisation were included. I have defined such protest events as collective acts that, within a specific space and time frame, address localised 'collective consumption' goods and services. Protest events can address such goods and services with respect to their provision, opportunities for access, management and meanings.

Furthermore, as a third criterion, this research has only included universalist claims in relationship to localised collective goods and services. Protest events that only pertain to a specific group within society were not included. For example, student protests that addressed the needs and interests specifically of students were not included. Nor were protests by workers of a sector making a claim regarding the labour conditions in their specific sector; for example, the protest campaigns of taxi drivers in Turin and Barcelona against the Uber ride-hailing service conducted between 2011 and 2015 were not included in my data. A further notable delimitation of the data gathered has been that, in order to make the research feasible, I have restricted my data gathering to protest events located inside the administrative area of the cities of Barcelona and Turin, excluding their metropolitan territories and beyond.

Some of the events collected were clearly contentious in nature. In others, claims were delivered in less-obviously contentious forms, such as ceremonies, speeches, displays, press conferences or public hearings. Because my analysis focuses on the claims made, rather than the form of protest, my data capture a diverse group of events that includes protest both inside and outside of the local institutional system of collective claim-making and conflict resolution. I also recorded events regardless of ideology or political tendency.

Once the data were collected, I analysed each protest event in terms of a number of categories of information, both quantitative and qualitative in nature.[26] Quantitative categories included both *level of mobilisation* – assessed according to the number and timing of protest events – and the *number of participants*. In addition, 12 qualitative dimensions of the protest events are incorporated in the analysis; *date of the event, title of the event, city, scale of the conflict, location, issue of protest, claim, target, repertoire of action, type of actors participating, number of organisations reported,* and *allies reported*.

With respect to the spatial dimension of the protest events, the analysis addresses the *scale of reference* of the event, which includes both the spatial level at which the movement's demands were directed and the location of the conflict. Scale of reference was divided into three different values: the local scale, the neighbourhood scale and the metropolitan scale. If multiple scales were addressed, the event was coded as the largest of them. The *location of the conflict* refers to the geographic area of the city out of which the conflict emerged. In those cases where the conflict was related to or emerged from a specific urban area, I have coded the neighbourhood(s) and district(s) related to the claims being made. Cases in which the conflict was at the city level were coded 0.

Recording the number of protesters participating in any event is a highly sensitive issue; numbers reported can be dramatically inconsistent between different sources, and information is often scant and partial (Portos 2016a). Taking into account this issue, when non-precise data on participants was provided (estimations such as 'a few tens', 'some hundreds', etc.), I transformed estimations into a continuous variable ('few' recorded as between 0-10 participants, 'dozens' interpreted as 50 participants, 'hundreds' as 500 and so on).[27] Whenever possible, information was gathered from multiple sources (such as newspapers and information released by the organisers). If more than one estimate was given in a single report, I recorded the highest estimate (most often that of the organisers). In those cases in which information on the size of the protest was entirely missing, I used a proxy to provide an estimate; In place of the missing data, I recorded participation information from the event that was 1) closest in

[26] See Appendix A and B – Codebook for the Protest Event Analysis (PEA)
[27] See Appendix A – Codebook for the Protest Event Analysis (PEA)

time, 2) organised by the same group, and 3) pertained to the same demands (see Beissinger 2002: 468).

With respect to the *claim-makers* reported for an event, I identified the type of actor promoting the event.[28] Where possible I also identified whether the political subjects engaged in the mobilisation were pre-existing or were created through the conflict/campaign. No information was recorded when there was no reference made to an organisation by name.

I have also identified a number of issue-areas related to urban policy and urban conflict in order to categorise the principal *issue addressed* at each protest event.[29] Accordingly, I have assigned particular categories to protest events on the basis of a range of sources of evidence: speeches made at an event, public lists of demands, issues referred to in banners or leaflets. In some cases, the issue-area was implicit in the nature of the event and/or the identity of the actors. In the cases where multiple issue-areas could be inferred from the protest event, I used those sources to judge which issue was the most prominent.

Regarding the *type of claim* being made, I differentiate events along two dimensions, one drawing on the work of Sidney Tarrow on social mobilisations and a second taken from the literature on urban mobilisation specifically. In *Democracy and Disorder*, Tarrow (1989) introduces a typology which distinguishes between two macro-categories applicable to all social mobilisations: substantive claims and expressive claims. Substantive claims refer to 'getting more', 'getting heard', 'getting rights' or 'stopping action'. Expressive claims involve 'acquiring identity' (demanding the recognition of a specific group or territory), 'showing sympathy and solidarity', 'getting even' (in relationship to another group or territory) and 'getting out' (Tarrow 1989: 123-128). For my analysis, however, I have not included the 'getting out' claim as a category because urban-type protest necessarily involves a demand made to authorities for change in the functioning of the local political system, not its abandonment.[30]

I have applied Tarrow's substantive claims to the urban context using the following criteria. First, in this study I interpret 'getting more' as demands for 'more housing',

[28] See Appendix A and B – Codebook for the Protest Event Analysis (PEA).
[29] Basic public services, socio-cultural issues, mobility, public space and security, economic activity, housing, natural resources and governance (see Appendix A and B).
[30] This is the case even with respect to radical practices self-organisation practices and autonomy.

'more public space', 'more social facilities' or 'more public services'. It may also mean asking for the refurbishment of public housing, a public building, a public space or the reactivation of a particular project that had been paused. In general, therefore, 'getting more' is a demand for more public investment in a specific part of the city or a particular public service. Second, I understand 'getting heard' as a warning, notice, or report regarding a specific problem or issue in relationship to housing, public spaces, infrastructures or processes of urban transformation. Third, 'getting rights' is a demand to participate in decision-making processes related to urban planning and for the right to be more actively involved in the processes of urban transformation more generally. Finally, 'stopping action' is a demand to stop an urban transformation plan, an urban policy or a particular urban intervention. This claim can reflect a 'NIMBY' attitude to a greater or lesser degree.

The second dimension I employed to differentiate between types of claims pertains to specifically *urban* types of protest and draws from the general literature on urban movements. Here I distinguish between claims relating to the 1) provision of, 2) access to, 3) management of, and 4) the meaning of collective goods and services. These categories enable me to identify the principal discourse constructed by the urban protestors in each of the events collected.

With respect to the *target of protest*, I identified the administrative level being addressed; district, municipality, region, national, other intermediate levels, and European Union. In addition, I recorded a range of other kinds of targets; international organisations, political parties, media, organisations and social groups, corporate and private actors, professional bodies and a category for a diffuse target (public opinion).[31]

I drew on Catani et al. (2012), Kriesi et al. (1995) and Tarrow (1989) to build a typology that distinguishes between repertoires of action on the basis of increasing "disruptiveness" (Tarrow 1989: 68): conventional actions, direct-democratic actions, demonstrative actions, confrontational actions and violent actions. I have also recorded the type of institutional interaction, noting whether the protest was made outside or inside institutional channels; in urban-type mobilisations, whether protest actions are more oriented toward protest and dissidence, or whether they focus on the creation of counter-cultural activities, services or infrastructures, is an important distinction.

[31] See Appendix A and B – Codebook for the Protest Event Analysis (PEA)

Finally, protest events can be composed of a number of distinct actions. Reports of events often describe various actions that follow-on from one another in a chain of events; for example, an action can start with a demonstration and turn into a public assembly. Following Kriesi et al. (1995: 166), in such cases I have coded the most radical of the actions carried out during the event. Cases where reporting noted a series of actions that were separated in time (different days or clearly separated periods of one day) and/or space (clearly separate parts of the city) were coded as separate events. Cases where two actions revealed important differences with regard to either the goals of the protest or the claim-makers involved were also coded as separate events.

2.2. Analytical model: social movement theory and urban protest

A central approach in the body of social movement research has been the study of the relationship between protest and institutional politics (Tilly 1978; McAdam 1982). Social movement studies have been attentive to the configuration of the political context as a key explanatory factor with respect to the dynamics of social movements. In social movements literature, *resource mobilisation theory* (see McCarthy and Zald 1977; Gamson 1989), together with *political process perspective* (see Tilly 1978; McAdam et al. 1996; Tarrow 1998), have been the dominant approaches since the 1970s – a period when the study of social movements developed into a major area of research (della Porta and Diani 2006). These approaches were developed, in part, in response to earlier collective behaviourist views of protesters "as irrational individuals propelled into protest by crowd contagion or system strain" (Polleta and Jasper 2001: 283).

In social movement studies, explanations for protest "emphasize the significance of political and structural factors external to a movement – either permanent or temporary – that provide opportunities for protest by affecting people's perceptions of their capacity to mobilise and the likelihood of success of failure" (Taylor 2000: 221). The political process perspective,[32] first introduced by Charles Tilly (1978), and later developed by other authors in the field[33] has the concept of 'political opportunity structure' (POS) as a key conceptual pillar. POS is a theoretical means through which

[32] See McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1989, 1991, 1993, 2011; Kriesi et al 1995; Koopmans 2004.
[33] See Tarrow 1989, 2011; Kriesi et al. 1995; della Porta and Diani 2006.

social mobilisation is connected with changes in the political and social environment, through the prism of opportunities and constraints (see Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 1989, 1998; della Porta and Rucht 2002; Rucht et al. 1995; McAdam 1982).

This research draws on the literature from both social movements and urban studies and develops an analytical framework that focuses on certain dimensions of the local political and institutional system and understands them as opportunity structures that may explain cross-city variation in urban protest. Specifically, I have identified five dimensions of the local political and institutional context as potential factors impacting urban protest. I argue that these five dimensions,[34] drawn from existing empirical research on urban mobilisation, shape the varied contours of urban protest. They will be presented in detail and in relationship to the cases of Barcelona and Turin in Chapters 3 and 4.

To analyse the relationship between urban protest and contextual conditions, I have characterised the ways in which protest is expressed through the following analytical axes: the *repertoires of actions* (and tactical interaction) used in urban protest; the *framing strategies* (the symbolic construction of the issue) developed in urban protest events; and the *organisational forms* (the activation of specific resources and the structure of cooperation and conflict between the actors) behind urban protest events. Repertoires of action, framing strategies and organisational forms are at the analytical centre of much social movement research and there is a high level of consensus among scholars regarding their importance (McAdam et al. 1996: 2).

2.3. 'Local context' as a system of political opportunity structures

Grassroots organisational structures and the existence of cultural, social and economic resources available to urban protestors in a specific context make collective action possible, as they facilitate, shape and sustain the interaction between sympathisers, allies and authorities. However, urban protest is not only the product of the existence of extra-institutional resources and organisational structures at the local level (which both Turin and Barcelona largely share): different local expressions of protest exist despite similarities in the macro-problems effecting residents' life and despite the

[34] See the following section.

existence of a similar structure of grassroots organisations. Urban protest also builds upon the existing conditions of the local context (mainly coming from the local institutional structure and the configuration of power within such system), as an established system of opportunities and constraints that affect people's expectations when it comes to organise forms of protest and the capacity for urban grassroots to mobilise.

Accordingly, I draw on existing literature to identify contextual factors that there is reason to believe may account for the variation we see in urban protest in similar macro[35] and micro[36] contexts. I use them to lay-out a framework of five elements of local political and institutional context that I employ to systematically analyse the relationships between urban protest and the 'local context' in the cases of Barcelona and Turin. These five dimensions of local political and institutional context are: 1) the degree of local political and administrative decentralisation; 2) the political responsiveness of the local state; 3) the nature and goals of the urban policies and urban plans developed; 4) the local power configuration;[37] and 5) the levels of openness of the city to international spheres and relationship with general cycles of protest.

First, political and administrative decentralisation of the local state "have become commonly advocated as a means by which to help foster the idea (and ideas) of local democracy (Paddison 1999: 107). It can be applied at different levels and at different scales and addresses a wide variety of aspects and practices of urban governance. Accordingly, it is very complex to define and compare how decentralised are two different local governance systems as there is a high variety of mechanisms that play a role. To narrow down the concept, I have focused on one specific aspect of political and administrative decentralisation, which is how close the local administration is to the citizens. In relation to it, Turin's political and administrative system is more decentralised than Barcelona's.

Turin's institutional decentralisation is expressed through its eight 'circoscrizioni',[38] the political and territorial units that constitute the first level of decision-making in the

[35] General problems affecting residents' life.
[36] The existence of extra-institutional cultural, social, organisational, and economic resources at the local level.
[37] Type of local government, levels of stability of the political-institutional elite, and the structure of local alliances.
[38] See Appendix D – District Units in Turin and Barcelona.

political-administrative competences of the city. The principal role of the *circoscrizione* is to act as bodies of citizen participation and consultation and for the management of basic services. In Turin, these districts, unlike Barcelona, have directly elected councillors ('consigli di quartiere elettivi'), so the citizens can elect their district representative directly.

In Barcelona, by contrast, decentralisation is only administrative, rather than political. The district councils, ten in total,[39] are not elected bodies and only indirectly represent their respective districts; the political parties constituting Barcelona's municipal Council designate their representatives on the district councils. The main role of the districts is to provide for popular participation. However, they do not have their own competences, but rather they have delegated competences based on the principal of subsidiarity and the proximity of public services to the citizens. This is a different situation with the districts in Turin, which have competences only in some fields of basic services.[40]

Second, the political responsiveness of the local state is understood in relationship to the type of integrative strategies the local state has to introduce the citizen's will in the practice of local government. Integrative strategies can take various forms, such as the establishment of institutional participatory spaces and direct channels to decision making for social movements, the subsidisation of movement organisations by the state or by other members of the political system, or possibilities for juridical appeal and direct support for movement campaigns by established actors. I will focus on the establishment of institutional participatory spaces.

Both cities have institutional participatory spaces set up which provide oportunities for citizens to actively participate in official processes of local governance. Barcelona and Turin have open organs of territorial participation, such as district councils, neighbourhood councils, thematic councils or public hearings. However, in Italian cities, differing from Spain, there is a well-established system of citizen participation that is focused on the collection of signatures. With a petition with minimum 300 signatures you can propose measures to the *Consiglio Communale* to address specific

[39] See Appendix D – District Units in Turin and Barcelona.
[40] See "Il decentramento politico-amministrativo tre esperienze a confronto: Torino, Roma, Barcellona". Città di Torino, 9 September 2008.
http://www.comune.torino.it/consiglio/servizi/pdf/ricerca_decentramento.pdf

issues of local competence; with 1.500 signatures you can propose a topic to be deliberated in the *Consiglio Communcale*, which has the obligation to be discussed; and with 2.000 signatures citizens can propose the organisation of a referendum on a specific issue. In Barcelona this system of local participation did not exist during the period analysed (a similar system was established in 2017 under Ada Colau's government with the approval of new tools for citizen participation).[41]

Third, in relationship to the nature and goals of the urban policies and urban plans developed, Barcelona and Turin have different urban planning traditions. Turin has grown without any encompassing urban plan and it was not until 1995 when the city approved its first urban masterplan, setting a regulatory and zoning framework for land use in the city. Barcelona, by constrast, has always been a city with an important tradition in urban planning. Moreover, Turin has tended to develop its urban regeneration process based on a 'project-by-project' approach and with the application of innovative urban policies that rather than physically and rapidly transform parts of the city, they smoothly regenerate some aspects of it while slowly transforming it with the participation of the main social and economic actors of the territory. Barcelona, on the other hand, has tended to transform the city through large urban operations, implying expropriations, demolitions and the displacement of local residents and activities.

Fourth, in relationship to cycles of protest and the levels of openness of the city, Barcelona and Turin are two cities with different levels of openness to international spheres and, consequently, the cities' local contexts are differently impacted by global phenomena. Since the beginning of the 2000s, Barcelona has been greatly impacted by mass tourism and international property speculation; dynamics which have contributed to rapidly increasing housing prices and significant displacement of local residents away from the city centre. Barcelona has also experienced international investment and the transformation of the urban commercial landscape with the arrival of new international chains. Turin, by contrast, has not successfully positioned itself as a global

[41] The new approved regulations give a new framework of local participation that define and clarify the political participatory channels, the resources needed, and a guarantee system that has to guard for the good use and efficiency of the channels. The main novelty is the introduction of a system of collection of signatures that can promoted bottom-up a participatory process, a citizens' consultation, approve and modify a municipal measure, the creation of new participatory organs, the availability to call for a neighbourhood council and to include issues in the city's or district's plenary. See https://barcelonaencomu.cat/ca/post/noves-eines-de-participacio-ciutadana-barcelona

city in the same manner as Barcelona and continues to attempt to attract tourism, international investment and foster a positive cultural and social reputation internationally – all in a much challenging global economic environment. A good indicator of the contrasting global position of the two cities is the rankings of global cities published annually by different international bodies; Barcelona tends to appear in the lists while Turin is rarely ranked.

Finally, in relation to the configuration of the local power, Barcelona and Turin, over 2011 and 2015, present relevant differences in relationship to the configuration of the local power, the type of local government, the levels of political stability and the local alliance structure. Whereas in Barcelona the 2011 municipal elections represented a significant political turning point, in Turin they ensured continuity with the past. For the first time since the restoration of democracy in Spain, in 2011 Barcelona ceased to be governed by the socialist party and the centre-right *Convergència i Unió* (CiU) party gained power with little more than 28% of the votes (14 councillors out of a total of 41). Between 2011 and 2015, CiU governed alone in Barcelona, and faced major difficulties as a result of its minority of councillors. In Turin, by contrast, in 2011 *Partido Democratico* (PD) candidate Piero Fassino won the municipal elections with over half the votes,[42] translating into a comfortable absolute majority in the municipal council. In fact, in Turin the 2011 elections extended the predominant position the PD had enjoyed in Turin since 1997.

The five elements identified above are understood as contextual dimensions accounting for varied forms of urban protest events. Some of the dimensions, such as the levels of urban exposure to global dynamics, the power configuration of the local government or the levels of urban decentralisation, are more stable differences between the two cities than others. The urban plans and urban policies applied, on the other hand, have been collected as empirical data and understood as variable in relationship to the evolution of urban protest. Accordingly, each protest event has been contextualised with respect to the existence or non-existence of a related urban plan or urban policy.

[42] 56% including the support for smaller aligned political groups.

2.4. Comparative research design

Urban studies have largely been dominated by single-case studies and it is noticeable that "urbanists have been surprisingly slow in using comparison as a research strategy" (Pierre 2005: 446). The comparative approach offers real advantages for studying the relationship between dynamics of social protest and the political and institutional context in which it develops (see Kitchelt 1986; della Porta 1995; and Kriesi et al. 1995).

When embarking on a comparative research agenda, however, it is important to take into account the need for parsimony as a step in preparing empirical observations. Comparison requires "a robust analytical framework defining the variables to be compared, leaving out as much contextual 'noise' as possible" (Pierre 2005: 458). Cities, however, are complex and multi-faceted, with innumerable relationships, dimensions of change, and perspectives from which it is possible to observe them. As Pierre (2005) notes, the complex and seemingly *sui generis* nature of cities can lead to the conclusion that cities "do not lend themselves to any meaningful comparison with other cities" (2005: 446). According to this view, the comparison of different urban contexts is understood as a pointless exercise.

This thesis, by contrast, constitutes an argument that comparison in urban studies is not only possible but also necessary. Although acknowledging the particularity of each city in terms of political, social and cultural history, the comparison of different urban contexts can nonetheless be meaningful because of the shared quality of interaction between dominant models and counter-hegemonic practices. Studying exclusively single cases neuters one's ability to address the important questions that social movement scholars frequently wrestle with: under what conditions is mobilisation likely to emerge? how and why do the characteristics of protest vary between places? what effect does political and social context have on mobilisation?

This research is a small-N comparative design with two cases that are independent of each other but comparable because of some important shared characteristics. Indeed, this research takes a 'most similar' approach to case selection and research design, which aims to hold constant as many potential explanatory variables as possible between the two cases.

Barcelona and Turin are both non-capital cities with a significant industrial past. Turin has been known worldwide as Italy's car manufacturing capital, indissolubly connected with FIAT. Barcelona too has been an important industrial site, also connected with the car industry (SEAT). In the general context of deindustrialization, both cities have faced acute changes and been required to implement urban policies, plans and programs in order to promote the rising sectors of the contemporary global economy (such as new technologies, communications and cultural services). In that regard, Barcelona and Turin are both part of a class of cities that would include places such as Milan, Lyon, Frankfurt and Manchester.

My findings are temporally and spatially contingent but, nonetheless, this research will resonate with a broader population of noncapital cities in western capitalist democracies with a notable industrial past, a strong presence of urban grassroots and an actively developed 'urban growth' model as an instrument to reinvent the socio-economic system of the city.

An assumption made in this research is that, within the two cases, the majority of institutional, social, political and cultural features do not fundamentally change and can, therefore, be left outside of explanations for variation in protest across the two cities. Turin and Barcelona share a South-European context, which translates into similarities with respect to social capital, historical tradition, and welfare-state model. Importantly, Turin and Barcelona also share – to a greater extent than do other South-European cities – a long tradition of civic participation, voluntary associations and high levels of political protest.

The cases have been also selected because of similarities in the structures of their urban problems. Both cities share a context of austerity urbanism as a consequence of having been impacted by the eruption of the international financial crisis. In both Italy and Spain, the crisis and its institutional responses provoked a cycle of anti-austerity protest that lasted between 2008 and 2013 (in Italy) and 2011 and 2014 (in Spain).

The fact that both cities have promoted a transformation of their economic models (from an industrial base to a cultural and knowledge-based economic activity) using similar strategies and implementing similar urban models and governance tools has also been an important factor in the selection of cases. Both cities have organized mega-events (short-term, high profile events) to promote urban transformation and attract

investment capital in a context of global urban competition: Barcelona hosted the 1992 Olympic Games and Turin the 2006 Winter Olympic Games. The organization of the Olympics was presented, in both cases, as a catalyst for the process of urban transformation and a unique opportunity to promote a renewed international image.

Both cities have also promoted governance structures that have favoured public-private partnerships. Barcelona, first, and then Turin (consciously following the model of Barcelona) have developed Strategic Plans. Since 1990, Barcelona has approved six strategic plans and Turin three. Both cities' strategic plans have had as main goals to bring together actors and institutions from different levels and spheres, and to communicate the respective city's transformation locally and internationally (Brosio et al. 2016).

Where we do see important differences between Barcelona and Turin is in the intensity and character of their urban protest dynamics. Barcelona appears to be characterised by higher levels of urban mobilisation than Turin and a more coordinated urban grassroots sector. One expression of this differentiated local forms of protest is that whereas in 2011 Barcelona saw the emergence of the highly significant 15M/Indignados movement, in Turin various attempts at mobilisation failed. The 15M/Indignados was a movement with a national and international dimension – Barcelona was connected with a similar protest taking place in Madrid, for example – but it was also very much rooted in protest at the local level, emerging from local movements and with urban movements playing a highly important role. Accordingly, the emergence of 15M/Indignados in Barcelona is suggestive of the existence of urban mobilisation dynamics that are absent in Turin.

Social movement theory suggests that this variation can be explained through an examination of the two cities' respective institutional and political contexts. The comparative approach taken in this thesis facilitates a fuller understanding of the dynamics of urban protest and their links with the local context as a result of the cities' similarities and differences. As I have presented in the last section, Turin and Barcelona are characterised by different levels of urban exposure to global dynamics, different types of local political powers, different degrees of administrative decentralisation, and a different nature of urban plans and policies applied.

A final aspect of the comparative research design to note is the period of comparison. At the theoretical level, the reason for choosing 2011 and 2015 – a period in which Barcelona and Turin were immersed in an economic crisis and where an anti-austerity cycle of protest was developing in Southern Europe – is because of the expectation that, in these conditions, urban protest should be more intense than in other periods of time. Given my conceptualisation of urban protest (as a type of struggle that emerges around collective goods and services at the local level), the conditions in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015 were especially ripe for urban conflict, as under dynamics of 'austerity urbanism' collective goods and services are under great strain. Moreover, the political opportunity perspective in social movements suggests that social mobilisation tends to flourish in cycles of protest – moments when the established political order can seem more receptive or vulnerable to challenge.

There are also three empirical reasons for choosing 2011-2015 as a period of comparison. First, 2011 has been presented in the literature and in the international press as the year of social protest (locally, nationally and internationally) and marks the beginning of the anti-austerity cycle of mobilisation in Spain. Second, 2011 was also a year of municipal elections in both cities; in Barcelona, the elections represented a break in the historical norm with respect to the governing party, while in Turin people voted for continuity. Similarly, 2015 was chosen as the end-point for empirical research because local government elections in May of that year resulted in further political change in Barcelona while Turin was also coming to the end of its electoral cycle.[43] Crucially, in 2015 the early stages of economic recovery within the European Union were beginning to alter the macro-economic context in which the two cities were embedded, a context that had remained relatively constant during the preceding four years.

2.5. Data collection

Protest event analysis (PEA hereafter) can be a useful method to study the relationships between the political context and social mobilisation because it makes possible both the tracking of variation in the intensity of particular types of occurrences over time (Beissinger 2002:460; Hutter 2014: 338) and the measurement of "the effects of

[43] Local elections in Turin were held in 2016.

political opportunities in [a] comparative design" (Klandermans and Staggenborg 2002). In social movement studies it has long been recognised that focusing only on organisations misses important non-organisational (or hidden organisational) sources of collective action (Oliver et al. 2003).

The data gathered for this research is information about contentious gatherings reported in two different press sources: 'La Stampa' in the case of Turin and 'El Periodico' in the case of Barcelona. Protest events have been included as data when they have been reported in the newspaper being analysed, occurred within the administrative limits of Barcelona and Turin respectively, began on any date between 1st of January 2011 through to 31st of December 2015, involved two or more people from outside the local government making a visible claim, and were categorised as presenting an urban-type protest claim.Following these criteria, in total I collected 852 urban protest events, 605 (71% of total events) for the case of Barcelona and 247 (29%) for the case of Turin.

The data has been collected following a 'minimalist' strategy using a single quality newspaper for each case (Hutter 2014: 339). This strategy has been adopted because of the need to make the data collection feasible over the considerable time span of the study. There are clear limitations to restricting data sources to a single newspaper per case; as Rucht and Neidhardt (1995) argued, such an approach "only works under the debatable assumption that each paper has roughly the same level of attention for the same kind of domestic protests" (1995:74). As Hutter (2014) has shown, however, the potential for biased coverage of events can be minimised by selecting newspapers that are as comparable as possible (2014: 341).

Accordingly, this thesis has used data collected from online archives of two newspapers that have been selected on the basis of five criteria: 1) both have been publishing continuously throughout the research period, with old content available in comprehensive online archives; 2) both are similar in their status as quality newspapers; 3) both cover local events; 4) both are comparable with regard to political orientation, with neither highly conservative or extremely left-wing; and 5) both show similar selectivity when reporting on protest events (both give particular attention to local issues).

There is significant evidence to suggest that local newspapers are less likely than national newspapers to be selective, and that right-wing newspapers will be more

selective than those on the left of the political spectrum (e.g. Hocke 1998; Koopmans and Rucht 1995; Oliver and Myers, 1999; Swank 2000). The physical proximity of an event to a news source has also been shown to positively affect reporting (McCarthy et al. 1996), with events that take place close to concentrations of reporters are more likely to be reported (McCarthy et al. 1996; Myers and Schaefer 2004; Walker et al. 2008:47).

Reporting on protest events have been retrieved using a keyword search in the Factiva electronic media-archive.[44] Using keywords, the system automatically returns only those articles matching the input for the selected time span.[45] Electronic keyword searches have the advantage of reducing the number of irrelevant stories that coders are required to read. Such as strategy, however, requires appropriate search terms in order to include all relevant stories while excluding many of the irrelevant stories (Maney and Oliver 2001:137). The challenge for the researcher is to minimise irrelevant results without risking the exclusion of relevant items.

As the basis of my searches I have used 'generic event descriptors' (Maney and Oliver 2001:137-138); this involved entering key terms that describe the general type of event included for analysis, such as picket, strike, demonstration and demonstrate. To enter the key terms in the electronic searching, I have used the 'free text search' interface and used OR (instead of AND) as it maximizes validity rather than efficiency. Similarly, I have used the symbol (*) for the stem term that has been retrieved.[46] This strategy offers the advantage of identifying a broad range of events of interest without prior knowledge of their existence. It has also been shown to be particularly adept at covering

[44] Factiva is an information source of the world's media outlets, which contains content from 200 countries in 26 languages. In relationship to 'La Stampa', the first available edition available in Factiva is from 5 September 1996. It is a newspaper with daily frequency. Factiva has full coverage of the source and full-text article coverage. In relationship to 'El Periodico, Catalunya', the first edition in Factiva dates from 6 July 2001. It is also a newspaper with daily frequency. Factiva has full coverage of the source and full-text article coverage.

[45] The searches in Factiva have been done month-by-month, over the 5-years period of time analysed, for the two cases Barcelona and Turin.

[46] The generic event descriptors used for the case of Turin has been the following: "conflitt* or mobilizzazion* or azion* or campagn* or revolt* or ribellon* or protest* or blitz or lotta or occupa* or sfratt* or sgomber* or dimostrazion* or manifesta* or corte* or reclam* or lament* or contest* or rivendic* or partecip* or assemble* or dibattit* or blocc* or moviment* or citaddin* or organizzazion* or associazion* or collettiv* or comitat* or attivist* or vicin* or resident* or grupp* or quartier* or terzo settore or centr* social*".

For the case of Barcelona, the generic event descriptors have been the following: "conflict* or mobilitza* or acció or campany* or revolta or rebel·lió or protesta* or atac or lluita* or ocupa* or okupa or desnona* or manifesta* or reclama* or reivindica* or participa* or assemblea* or debat* or bloque* or moviment* or ciutadan* or organitza* or associa* or col·lecti* or activis* or veïn* or resident* or grup* or barri* or tercer sector or centre* social* or acampa*".

small events, indoor events, and institutional events (Maney and Oliver 2001:166). This technique does assume, however, that each story on a protest event will describe its specific form at least once with commonly used terms. Generic event descriptors will fail to return any coverage that does not employ conventional terminology. Given that the research is based on a cross-national comparison involving two languages, I have developed concepts and categories that enable a coherent comparison between the two cases.

Apart from potential savings in reading time, electronic searches also have several additional advantages over reading through newspapers and scripts. First, multiple sources can be searched simultaneously. Second, while printed newspapers differ greatly in their formats in ways that affect readability, returned search items appear in a uniform style on the computer monitor. Third, and perhaps most importantly, electronic searches eliminate distortions associated with the human practice of "scanning" texts (Maney and Oliver 2001:137).

To be successful, this method of search must be very specific and ought to be validated against other search strategies (Maney and Oliver 2001). For this research, I have performed an initial pilot coding of the first one hundred files, which has allowed for the adjustment of data categories. I have also tested for possible biases in coverage by comparing the results of one month with a second newspaper.[47] The search syntax was also pre-tested by comparing its yield with randomly selected days to ensure that relevant stories were not missed. The order of the list of terms in the search did not affect the subset of the population.

All the articles that reported a protest event were selected or discarded manually according to the criteria identified above, and redundant articles were removed. Editorial and commentary sections have been omitted – for example, in 'La Stampa' I have not analysed opinion sections such as *Cara Torino* or letters of the readers. Once collected, protest events can be aggregated into campaigns or conflicts. All protest events collected have been coded in relationship to a number of categories of information, both quantitative and qualitative in nature; I have also analysed the principal campaigns in relationship to related documents, urban plans, participatory memories and semi-structured interviews.

[47] No substantial differences regarding event coverage were found.

Using newspaper reports as a source of event data follows a long tradition in the social movement literature (Eisinger 1973, Jenkins and Perrow 1977, Kriesi et al. 1995; McAdam 1982; McAdam et al. 1996; Olzak 1989, 1992; Soule et al. 1999; Tarrow 1989). While PEA is a useful technique to analyse trends of protest, the data it yields presents several challenges,[48] the principal problem being selectivity in media coverage. This inherent selectivity is manifest in two forms of bias: selection bias and description bias. With respect to selection bias, it is important to take into account that reported events will be neither a representative nor a random sample (della Porta 2014b; Wang and Soule 2012). The principal factors that are predictive of whether or not news media will cover an event have been empirically assessed. The coverage of (low intensity) conventional events, for example, seems to be very sensitive to a newspaper's sympathy for the movements, making it less useful data for international comparison (Kriesi et al. 1995: 264). Small events organised by 'outsiders' (who lack routine access to reporters), less intense events and more institutionalised events are also less likely to be covered by newspapers. Events including a formalised social movement organisation, on the other hand, are more likely to gain coverage (Oliver and Maney 2000) than those that involve elites or other actors of political or cultural significance (Ortiz et al. 2005: 399).

Some studies have also found that the probability that a protest is reported is associated with political and electoral cycles; protests tied to institutional politics are much more likely to be covered than other protests, but institutional politics also compete with protest for space in the news agenda. As a result, both types of protest are significantly less likely to be covered when the legislature is in session (Oliver et al. 2003). Oliver and Myers (1999) have also shown that protest events related to policy making are more likely to be covered than those that are not.

While acknowledging that bias is an issue with respect to data gathered from newspapers, some authors have also argued that the effects are not as deleterious as is often assumed (see Hutter 2014; Earl et al 2004). To view trends, variation and make meaningful comparison, unbiased data is an unnecessarily high standard; what is important is that bias is systematic and consistent (Kriesi et al. 1995: 155; Koopmans

[48] For reviews, see Koopmans and Rucht 2002; Hutter 2014.

and Rucht 1995: 271; Reising 1999: 328), and research has shown that even across different countries, selection bias is reasonably consistent (Hutter 2014).

The second kind of potential bias in news coverage of protest events – description bias – refers to "how well the newspaper reporter described what actually happened at a given event" (Wang and Soule 2011: 14). The danger that even a reported event may not be accurately or fully reported is inevitably present; information may be omitted or incorrect due to the use of unreliable sources, editorial bias or simply because newspaper reporters and editors do not have the same ends and interests as academics researching mobilisation. Nonetheless, newspapers are an important, if imperfect, source of data on protest events. As Kreisi et al. (1995) have argued, although newspapers can be "disparate" with respect to the amount of information they provide, they are nonetheless "relatively reliable when it comes to reporting the 'hard', factual aspects of protest events, such as their timing and locality, the number of participants, the action form, the stated goal of the protesters, and the number of arrests that were made" (1995: 254).

Despite its imperfect nature – a characteristic shared by all research methods and data sources – the application of PEA to the study of urban mobilisation provides a solid empirical basis on which to analyse protest and feed theory development. It can also support a systematic evaluation of relations and dynamics already identified in the literature. It is especially useful for assessing longitudinal trends in protest and for focusing on a more generalised social phenomenon rather than on single movement organisations, campaigns or issues (Oliver et al. 2003).

I acknowledge, however, the need to treat data from newspaper coverage with appropriate caution because, depending on the repertoires of action being used and the frequency and size of organised events, some campaigns have been reported on to a greater degree than others. The anti-eviction campaigns that took place in Barcelona and Turin, for example, will be underrepresented (in terms of the number of protest events) by newspaper coverage. From 2011 to 2015, protest events defending the right of housing and resisting evictions happened on such a frequent basis (almost daily in the case of Barcelona) that it is entirely unrealistic to expect all or even the majority of events to be covered in mainstream media. Similarly, when organisations and platforms that manage urban facilities (either squatted or in an agreement with local government)

organise protest events that take place over the course of weeks, or even months, that is not reported by newspapers.

The fact that urban-based protest is related to collective problem solving of quotidian issues means that many protest events are not only small and unspectacular but are also hidden in everyday life practices and activities. While this presents a challenge for analysing urban mobilisation through protest event analysis it does not mean that newspapers are not a useful source of data. It does, however, mean that a thorough investigation should be complemented by alternative sources of information.

2.6. Complementing PEA

As detailed above, the principal component of the empirical research in this thesis is the content analysis of data gathered from the two newspaper sources. Those data have, however, been complemented with research into digital media, other secondary sources (such as websites and blogs, and documents published by the movements themselves) semi-structured interviews with observers and participants,[49] and statistical records. The use of complementary sources has enabled me to triangulate the data I gathered from newspapers. In some cases, I have also added information in order to either complete missing data – regarding, for example, dates, actions or stakes – or to nuance the conflict description given by the newspapers.[50]

Semi-structure interviews consist of a type of conversation "structured and guided by the researcher with a view to stimulating the provision of certain information" (della Porta 2014b: 228). The data collected through interviews has enabled me to contrast the information already collected through PEA and complement it with subjective information related to beliefs, identities, attitudes and emotions of the actors involved. As Blee and Verta have argued, semi-structured interviews are a particularly useful method when the aims of the research are "exploration, discovery, and interpretation of complex social events and processes" (Blee and Verta 2002: 93) – as is the case in this investigation into the relationship between local context and urban protest.

I conducted a total of 20 semi-structured interviews, with 11 key informants from Barcelona and nine from Turin. I interviewed urban movement activists, university

[49] See Appendix C – Semi-structured interviews with key informants.
[50] On the use of complementary sources, see Romero and Valera (2015)

researchers, professors, public administration technicians, and local politicians.[51] The interviewees have been incorporated into the analysis either as actors involved in some of the urban protest campaigns considered and/or as experts on the type of social mobilisations addressed in this research. The open-ended nature of the interviews made it possible for responses to challenge my pre-existing assumptions and understandings based on the literature, PEA and other secondary sources.

The interviews were all conducted face-to-face and, although I used the same questionnaire as a guide in all 20, the development of the conversation was flexible. I mixed questions related to basic information – "particularly important elements for situating the interviewee in the wider context in order to better understand their responses" (della Porta 2014b: 235) – and substantive questions. The substantive questions covered the relationship between urban movements and local institutions, including, among other issues, the interviewee's perception of the institutionalised participatory channels available to the urban grassroots, how specific campaigns emerged and the evolution of campaigns with respect to framing strategies and organisational dynamics. I asked similar questions to all interviewees.

With respect to secondary sources and documentary evidence, in both cases, I examined the prominent documents, websites and blogs produced by urban grassroots actors. In particular, I analysed the websites created for the principal urban campaigns developed between 2011 and 2015. Such websites were curated by the movement with the aim of communicating their discourses and presenting the actors participating in it. I also analysed the principal online publications produced by the cities' social movements. In the case of Turin, for example, I examined the website of the city's antagonistic sector, 'Infoaut', and the online alternative information site "Il Corsaro", which regularly publishes information regarding Turin. For the case of Barcelona, I have principally used the monthly publication "Carrer", which is published by the neighbourhood movement of the city and which details urban conflicts taking place across the city. I examined social media channels used by local organisations, grassroots groups and urban campaigns to communicate their activities and points of view.

Finally, in relationship to the official documents published by the local administration, I examined the main urban plans and urban policies published by the administrations

[51] See Appendix C – Semi-structured interviews with key informants.

of Barcelona and Turin during the period of study. Both municipalities readily communicate their work and it was straightforward to access significant institutional documents pertaining to the large urban plans and policies produced during the period of study. I also examined the strategic documents published online related to the Strategic Plans promoted by the administrations of the two cities.[52]

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the framework of analysis and methods used in this research. In the thesis, I examine urban protest in Turin and Barcelona through a quantitative analysis of protest events collected form newspaper sources. As a unit of analysis, I use discrete instances of urban protest that occurred in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015. For an event to be included in the data, it had to meet several criteria and, once the data was collected, I analysed each protest event with respect to a number of categories of information, both quantitative and qualitative in nature.

Protest event analysis is a useful method for studying the relationship between political context and social mobilisation as it makes possible both the tracking of variation in the intensity of particular types of occurrences over time and the analysis of the effects of political opportunities in a comparative design. PEA is a familiar method in the social movement literature but has been very little used for the study of specifically urban protest. For this research, the quantitative information provided from newspaper sources has been complemented by alternative sources of information, principally semi-structured interviews with key observers and participants.

Urban studies have been dominated by single-case studies, but I argue that comparison in urban studies is not only possible but also necessary. The research follows a small-N comparative design based on a 'most similar' approach to case selection, which holds constant as many potential explanatory variables as possible but nonetheless gives variation with respect to the phenomenon under investigation – in this case, urban protest.

In the Barcelona and Turin, the period 2011-2015 is characterised by very different local expressions of protest. This is despite similarities in the macro-problems effecting

[52] *Torino Strategica* in the case of Turin and the *Pla Estratègic Metropolità de Barcelona*, for the city of Barcelona.

residents' lives and despite the existence of a similar structure of grassroots organisations. Social movement studies have been attentive to the configuration of political context as a key explanatory factor with respect to the dynamics of social movements. Following this logic, I use the concept of 'political opportunity structure' as a theoretical lens through which to analyse the relationship between urban protest and local context. Accordingly, I have presented an analytical framework that focuses on five dimensions of local political and institutional systems – derived from existing research – considering them as opportunity structures that may explain cross-city variation in urban protest.

Although the empirical analysis conducted in this thesis does not enable me to answer with confidence the question of *why* Barcelona and Turin experienced different intensities of urban protest in a between 2011-2015, it does take several important steps toward gaining analytic purchase on such explanatory issues. First, the methods employed here allow me to bring together, in a systematic way, insights from individual cases. Outlining, for the first time, a framework of political opportunity structures at the local level provides an analytical resource for future research; a tool through which empirical insights that draw on single cases, campaigns or instances of protest can be considered against a more general set of factors, either adding evidential weight of their causal importance or prompting refinements of the framework.

The framework of political opportunity structures at the local level also enables me to systematically compare the cases of Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015, providing solid evidence that macro-context alone cannot explain urban protest and that local context is, therefore, important. The PEA conducted on the basis of my framework of political opportunity structures also yields evidence of a wealth of correlations between particular local contexts – that is to say, particular configurations of political opportunity structures at the local level – and particular dynamics of urban protest. Such correlations are a valuable source of potential hypotheses regarding the relationship between local context and urban protest and open up paths for future research.

In Chapters 5-7 I analyse in detail the results of my empirical research in relation to levels of protest in my two cases as well as three dimensions of the mobilisations recorded: the repertoires of action employed, the framing strategies and collective identities articulated, and the characteristics of the participating actors. Prior to that, in Chapters 3-4 I provide a more general analysis of Barcelona and Turin with respect to

the five dimensions of local context outlined above. These chapters provide the necessary historical and contextual information for the interpretation of the PEA that follows.

CHAPTER THREE

Local Context in Barcelona

Having presented the theoretical research framework and laid out the research design and methodologic perspective of the thesis, in this Chapter and the next I focus on the local political, institutional and social context of the two cases under analysis. In Chapter 2 I have presented the main analytical dimensions structuring the 'local context' (the degree of political and administrative decentralisation, the political responsiveness of the local state, the nature and goals of the urban policies and the urban plans developed, the power configuration of the local political context and the existence of general cycles of protest and levels of openness of the city to international spheres). This Chapter (and the next one) have the purpose to sketch out these dimensions in relationship to the cases of Barcelona and Turin.

In the Chapter, I address the interaction between, on the one hand, the top-down implementation of an urban model and, on the other, the bottom-up dynamics of contestation. Accordingly, I examine the relationship from five different angles, which structure the chapter: (1) the process of urban transformation, (2) the configuration of the local political power, (3) the urban plans and policies implemented, (4) the type of urban grassroots existing in the city and the roles they play, (5) and the impact of the recent economic and financial crisis and the related wave of anti-austerity protest. The idea is to present the cases while defining the dimensions that will be used to contextualise the empirical findings.

3.1. The process of urban transformation: from industrial city to global metropolis

Barcelona is a city with 1.6 million inhabitants (in 2015) and 100 km^2.[53] It is the second largest city in Spain, after Madrid, and the main city of the region of Catalonia. Catalonia is one of the richest regions in Spain, with the fourth highest GDP per capita and accounting for 19.3% of national. The city has historically been the most important industrial centre in Spain. Over the 18th and the 19th centuries, the development of Barcelona and the surrounding region contrasted heavily with the broader Spanish

[53] Information taken from the statistic department of the city of Barcelona. Retrieved from https://www.bcn.cat/estadistica/castella/index.htm (2017. June 29).

economic context, which was still a largely agrarian society (Ferrer and Nel·lo 1990). The industrial sector in Barcelona evolved from its 19th century characteristics – primarily made up of small textile factories, usually interspersed with residential-use buildings – to, in the 20th century, large production centres separated from the urban tissue in concentrated industrial areas.

In 1930, Barcelona had slightly over a million inhabitants and was the country's largest supplier of textile and chemical products (Ferrer and Nel·lo 1990). The city's rise to industrial prominence was the outcome of a long historical process – which began in the 18th century – in which the geography and the cultural and social structure of Barcelona led to its development as an important industrial centre. Industrial development in Barcelona were enabled by its geographic location and, crucially, the presence of its port (Tatjer 2006). It was also facilitated by the presence of universities, scientific development and the existence of a diversity of skills: technical and urban artisans invested the city with the capacity to innovate and shape new industrial projects.

By the beginning of the 20th century, factories that were separated from residential areas had grown up, with the creation of large production centres that included the fabrication of railway material (Macosa), automobiles (SEAT) and typewriter machines (Hispano Olivetti), among others. The industrial activity attracted an impressive inflow of rural immigrants from all over Spain (de Balanzó and Rodríguez-Planas 2018: 2). This sharp increase of population resulted in the housing stock rising from 282.952 units in 1950 to 1.028.634 units in 1975 (Ferrer and Nel·lo 1990).

As with the rest of Spain, the political context of Barcelona in the 20th century was profoundly shaped by the dictatorship of General Franco. In general terms, one can differentiate between two phases of Francoism; the early years represented a period of autarky and isolation, during which the city neither grew nor changed greatly. The second period, which started in 1959 with the 'Plan de Estabilización',[54] represented the years of liberalisation and openness of the Spanish economy, and a period of rapid growth and industrialisation. Over those years, the industrial sector in Barcelona

[54] The 'Plan Nacional de Estabilización Económica' (1959) or the so-called 'Plan de Estabilización' was a group of economic measures approved by the Spanish government aiming to stabilise and liberalise the Spanish economy. It meant a rupture with the autarky period of the first Francoist years and the beginning of a new period of economic growth during the 1960s and 1970s.

intensified its activity and small and medium sized industrial businesses grew up rapidly. In 1960, Barcelona was the main industrial centre of the country, accounting for 21 per cent of Spanish GDP (Tatjer 2006). The urban and economic growth of Barcelona went together with a progressive increase of social segregation and levels of urban conflict.

Since the restoration of democracy (1977), acceding to the European Union in 1985 and, in 1986, being awarded the hosting of the 1992 Olympic Games were important turning points for the city. The left-wing coalition that controlled the Barcelona city council at the time saw that moment as a unique opportunity to attract resources and address the significant urban challenges that forty years of dictatorship had left behind. In the 1980s, in a general context of de-industrialisation in Europe, Barcelona had a good outlook in terms of economic growth and prosperity, despite the fact that the city was in the middle of its own painful industrial reconversion, with accompanying high levels of unemployment and inflation.

Like many cities with an industrial past, Barcelona has, since the 1980s, been searching for opportunities to redefine its economic base and to ensure local economic growth while connecting itself to global dynamics. The Universal Exhibitions (of 1888 and 1929), the Olympic Games (1992) and the (less internationally known) 'Universal Forum of Cultures' (2004) have all been events used by the local municipality to implement important urban transformations and channel power and resources from the central government and Spanish economic elites to the city. As a non-capital city, the organisation of mega-events in Barcelona has been used as a tool to attract investment and promote cooperation between different administrative levels, focusing on urban development in the city that otherwise would have been difficult to achieve. In fact, these temporally limited events have all yielded lasting changes in the urban design of the city and brought international attention to Barcelona.

The Barcelona '92 Olympic project was the catalyst for a much larger-scale project of urban transformation. The local administration wanted to take advantage of the wide program developed for the Olympics to bring Barcelona up-to-date and foster a global metropolis following the long period of dictatorship. Specifically, the project focused on infrastructural changes – such as train connections, the development of the seafront, the construction of a ring road and the renewal of peripheral areas – and also the implementation of some important cultural institutions. The preparation of the Games,

which took place between 1987 and 1992 and demanded a fast rhythm of change of the city, led to the emergence of new priorities in urban planning and policy and implicated Barcelona to a much greater degree in the broader global agenda and the international trend toward neoliberalism.

The general atmosphere during the Olympic Games and in the years that immediately followed them was optimistic; there was consensus that the city needed to implement changes and trust in its newly appointed leaders. Only a limited portion of the squat movement and a small part of the alternative movement organised the 'Desenmascaremos el 92'[55] protest against the Barcelona Olympic Games and the urban speculation and social control involved in international mega-events more generally (Martínez 2007). The neighbourhood movement of the city also raised some concerns regarding the lack of openness and citizen participation in the organisation of the Games, but its protest was relatively muted and low-profile (Andreu 2014).

The local administration was keenly aware that the Olympic Games were a unique opportunity to attract power and resources to Barcelona from the Spanish central government and economic elites. Accordingly, along with designing the urban transformation, the local administration also promoted the Strategic Metropolitan Plan of Barcelona, a non-profit entity bringing together actors and institutions from different levels and spheres. It included the 36 municipalities of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona and the most important economic and social bodies of the city. Since 1990, Barcelona has approved six strategic plans, all of which have had as a main aim to maximise the value of public investment in the city and to organise urban interventions in a coherent way, communicating the city's transformation locally and internationally.

Immediately following the Olympics Games, Barcelona entered a new phase in its history. The Games, and the way Barcelona had been transformed, had a significant impact internationally and, since then, its process has been presented (and received) globally as a successful model of urban transformation through the organisation of large events.[56] Barcelona has also attracted praise for being a city that has managed to transform itself while following a democratic, redistributive and fair urban model. In

[55] 'Let's unmask 1992'.

[56] For example, the city was awarded the Royal Gold Medal for architecture in 1999 for its urban strategy and transformation model. The Royal Gold Medal is awarded annually by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) on behalf of the British monarch, in recognition of an individual or group's substantial contribution to international architecture.

the 2000s, many of the urban planners, academics, architects, and geographers that worked with the public administration throughout those years travelled around the world diffusing and promoting the 'Barcelona model' of urban transformation.

The success attracted investment and capital, and Barcelona emerged as a competitive global city ripe to become an arena for economic growth (Romero and Valera 2016: 7). In that sense, internationalisation has been a key aspect of the 'Barcelona model'. As a result of the Olympics, Barcelona also generated a significant municipal public debt, prompting the administration to openly promote international investment. The internationally successful Games coupled with the need to recoup the attendant public investment led the city to embrace a new identity as a place of international consumption and to promote urban-entrepreneurialism. The city's processes of management and urban transformation subsequent to the Games thus began to depend upon private capital and private investment.

In 2004, following the success of the Olympic Games, the local administration attempted to promote another large event – the 'Universal Forum of Cultures' – with the aim of further rebuilding the city's waterfront along the east part of the city. This time, however, the administration was unsuccessful in creating public excitement around the event and it was widely seen as an excuse to mask its true purpose: to continue transforming the city through private financing and without citizen participation. The event represented, therefore, a visible collapse of the urban consensus that had been built around the understanding of Barcelona as a democratic and inclusive city with a progressive and participatory model of local transformation. This conflict crystallised around the anti-Forum protest campaign, which, in 2006, led to the Socialist Mayor Joan Clos resigning two years before the end of his mandate.

The Olympic Games (1992) and the Universal Forum of Cultures (2004) are often presented as opposites, representing success and failure respectively (Andreu 2014). Although the Barcelona Olympic Games was an international event, its organisation yielded positive effects for the city and managed to succeed as a locally rooted initiative. It was also a transformational moment in which Barcelona opened itself up to the world following the end of dictatorship. The Universal Forum of Cultures, by contrast, took place in a very different Barcelona, much changed socially, politically and economically in the intervening decade. The event was organised in a context of increasing social conflict (reinvigorated by a new generation of activists), diminishing

consensus, and a weaker public leadership that lacked the capacity to manage the situation when confronted by powerful private and international interests. This combination of factors prompted a strong reaction against the event, marking the end of the local consensus regarding the embrace of the neoliberal global agenda and the organisation of large events as a means to transform the city.

Over recent years, following the impact of the economic crisis, Barcelona has been trying to build a new social consensus around a new version of urban model. Barcelona's society, however, is today more complex than forty years ago and the prospects for prosperity and general improvement of the quality of life of its residents that characterised the 1980s no longer hold. As Eizaguirre et al. (2017) state, Barcelona is today "a contemporary example of a city obliged to deal with the consequences of national top-down imposition of new modes of regulation affecting life chances (employment) and life conditions (housing and services)" (2017: 427).

Barcelona has also been transformed from a "rather shabby industrial port city" into a "major international tourist destination" (Hughes 2018: 2). The impacts of this fairly radical shift have been notably uneven, with some social groups benefiting to much greater degrees than others. The outcome is a more unequal city, more difficult to manage and with higher levels of conflict. In 2011, the 15M/Indigandos movement – which I address in further detail below – was a prominent reaction to some of the new challenges facing contemporary Barcelona: increased unemployment, significant housing evictions, climate crisis, the imposition of budget cuts by supranational institutions, and corruption among economic and political elites, among others. The administration of Mayor Ada Colau (in power in Barcelona since 2015) has also been an institutional outlet to address some of these issues and has attempted to consolidate a renewed urban agenda for the coming years.

3.2. The configuration of local political power: from government to governance

In the period of Francoist dictatorship (1936-1975), local authorities in Barcelona were not democratically elected and there was a general lack of both resources and interest in local politics. Consequently, it was a period characterised by pervasive corruption and financial irregularities in the management of the city.

Since the restoration of democracy, local politics in Barcelona has been characterised by the dominance of left-wing political parties, and principally the '*Partit Socialista de Catalunya'* (PSC). Mayor Pasqual Maragall governed the city for fifteen years, between 1982 and 1997, resulting in a strong configuration of local political power and the stable construction of a new urban model. Although the Socialist Party was the leading party in the local government until 2011, it often governed in coalition or with the support of other left-wing parties; at first the *Partit Socialista Unificat de Catalunya* (PSUC), later *Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds* (ICV) and then *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (ERC).

At the national level, the rise of the *Partido Socialista Obrero Español* (PSOE) to government in 1982 consolidated democracy in Spain and ushered in the application of a social-democratic political project. This period saw the state initiate a process of decentralisation, with the transfer of some competences and public resources to the autonomous communities that were created at the beginning of the 1980's. In Catalonia, an important achievement in that period was the approval, in 1982, of the Catalan Statute of Autonomy, which devolved an important set of competences for public policy (such as health and education) into the hands of the Catalan government. Although Spain's constitution defines the municipalities of the country as basic organisational and participatory institutions, the mode of political decentralisation in Spain has nonetheless not been a municipalist one, as it has not involved the transferring of significant power and resources to the municipalities (Martínez, 2002: 42).

In Spain, citizen participation in urban planning and urban management has its origins in the early 1970s with the neighbourhood movement (Bonet 2014: 16). The ways in which contemporary urban grassroots institutionally participate in Barcelona has much to do with the spaces and mechanisms opened by the neighbourhood movement at the end of the 1970s. Over those years, the neighbourhood associations' intense mobilisation, local support and alliances with professional collectives[57] led to Francoist local authorities to treat them as representative institutions of the territories out of which they grew (Bonet 2014: 17). As a consequence, neighbourhood associations were incorporated into processes of institutional planning and urban management.

[57] Such as, architects, urban planners, lawyers and geographers

However, during the early years of post-Franco democracy, the political parties in the local government showed some hostility towards the existence of autonomous local movements, which they saw as a counter-weight to their actions; in a period when democracy was being re-established, political parties were preoccupied with reinforcing the legitimacy of the new democratic institutions as the true representative actors of the entire society. In the organisation of the Olympic Games, for example, citizens were not brought into the decision-making process that shaped the urban transformation project. Rather, the local government's chosen way to incorporate residents into the games was as volunteers; helping to execute the event but not participating in the transformation of the city. The local administration was successful in fostering feelings of pride in the residents and in creating what was described as the 'Olympic spirit', connecting the event with a specific local identity and urban patriotism (Andreu 2014).[58]

Over the 1980s and the 1990s, the first democratic left-wing local coalition government especially focused on building (from scratch) a relationship with the local economic elites, as there was "a mutual lack of knowledge or ignorance in addition to a certain distrust" (Santacana 2000; Marshall 1996). Creating a good relationship between public and private actors and developing a platform to facilitate engagement among political and economic elites were, therefore, important aims of the politicians of the first democratic mandates (Marshall 1996).

This desire to satisfy elites was expressed in the fact that the local government of the new Barcelona was highly restrictive in the meaningful power it ceded to the urban grassroots; this was despite creating administrative districts throughout the city[59] and setting up a local participatory model of urban planning, which gave the appearance of participation.[60]. The new division of powers granted more competences to the districts,

[58] The slogan 'Barcelona posa't guapa' ('Make yourself beautiful, Barcelona') from the early 1980s was also effective in visibly building confidence and demonstrating a changing city.

[59] Currently, the city of Barcelona is divided into ten administrative areas, named '*districtes'*, which encompass the 73 neighbourhoods of the city ('barris'). The 'districtes' in Barcelona are administrated by a councillor designated by the main city council. They are created to decentralise the management of the local administration (by the direct delegation of competences to the municipality) and promote citizen participation. See Appendix D for further information regarding the physical organisation of Barcelona into 'districtes' and 'barris'.

[60] The approval of the 'Reglamento de Participación Ciudadana' (Ley 7/1985) represented Barcelona's first participatory norm and was responsible for regulating the informational and participatory spaces and procedures in the relationship between local citizens and the municipality. The regulation had the effect of bureaucratising many participatory councils, which stymied citizen participation and deliberation (Bonet 2012).

which became the most immediate level administration. However, the project of decentralisation ignored the long-standing demand of the neighbourhood movement to have district councillors directly elected by the citizens of the district (Bonet 2012). As a consequence, the local participatory model implemented failed to deliver the demand for grassroots democracy rooted in the city's neighbourhoods. The optimism and expectations of many neighbourhood associations were frustrated as democracy developed.

The re-activation of urban movements between the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s evolved in relationship to a growing political disaffection and apathy towards government institutions. Although internationally Barcelona had built a reputation for being strongly committed to citizen participation, local feelings were at odds with that image (Casellas 2006). Between 1990 and 2010, "urban plans were prepared essentially by the Socialist leaders and implemented by a small technical/political team" (Marshall 1996: 151). The Catalan elections in 2006-2007, for example, saw unusually low levels of participation.[61] In that period, as conventional forms of democratic political participation waned, novel forms of participation emerged (Bonet 2010: 72).

At the local level, from the mid-2000s the leadership capacity of the local government in Barcelona diminished and the consensus among residents that Barcelona was transforming itself openly, inclusively and democratically broke down. The local government lost its capacity to politically direct and channel the private investments being made in the city and, by that time, the list of projects developing out of the clear failures of Francoism had been exhausted. This provoked marked political disaffection and crumbling legitimacy for the ongoing process of urban transformation.[62] Even people that participated in the creation and promotion of the 'Barcelona Model' began to acknowledge that Barcelona had become a space subject to private interests (see Bohigas 2004; Borja and Muxí 2004).

[61] The elections in 2006 had 56,77% participation (almost 6 points lower than in the 2003 regional elections). All the political parties highlighted this point as a negative outcome from the elections and interpreted as a punishment from the Catalan citizens

[62] One notable example of this is the Diagonal Mar project. The Diagonal Mar project is a combination of the construction of hotels, retail, housing and offices into a new community covering 15 city blocks. Diagonal Mar is located where the Avinguda Diagonal meets the sea. The project has been strongly criticised as being speculative, elitist and characterised by inappropriate planning densities. The transformation of Diagonal Mar, together with the holding of the Universal Forum of Cultures, represented the last of the grand urban projects developed in Barcelona.

The 2000s also saw significant changes with respect to institutional politics at various levels of government. After eight years of conservative central government in Spain, in 2004, the PSOE regained power in the country. In 2003, a left-wing coalition had also gained control in the Catalan autonomous government for the first time since the Civil War. At the municipal level, the municipal group that had governed Barcelona in coalition without interruption since the first democratic elections (PSC) managed to hold on to power in 2003 and in 2007, despite losing a significant number of seats and elements of political and social support.[63]

In that context, in the 2000s the local administration made an attempt to rethink how to relate to civil society organisations. The participatory model in Barcelona had been implemented in the 1980s based on the spaces and mechanisms opened-up by the neighbourhood movement the previous decade. After twenty years, the local government showed a renewed interest in participatory methodologies, especially in communitarian participation. Accordingly, it developed '*Plans Comunitaris'*;[64] urban regeneration projects focused on areas of the city in crisis. They were presented as an attempt to improve the relationship between citizens and local authorities, although they were also seen as means of instrumentalising the urban grassroots.

The methodology of the 'communitarian plans' is based on approaching a specific area of the city in a 'complex and integrated' way, often bringing about the emergence of new subjects (reinforcing social networks) and operative tools (combining policy approaches to address a complex social problem) (see Blanco 2009). Moreover, an environmental dimension was also incorporated into urban participation with the promotion of what was called the 'Agendas 21' (Bonet 2014). The 'Agendas 21' were tools for participatory planning that aimed to achieve sustainable development at the municipal level. Barcelona promoted its 'Agenda 21' between 1998 and 2002 (Bonet 2014).

Along this line, 2010 saw the only example of a large-scale consultation on city planning in Barcelona; a consultation on proposed reforms of one of the main arteries crossing Barcelona, the Avinguda Diagonal. The consultation was a failure, narrowly

[63] Whereas in 1999 the Socialist Party returned 20 councillors (out of a total of 41) and 45,19% of the votes in Barcelona, in 2003 those proportions went down to 15 councillors and 33,60% of the votes.
[64] The first 'Community Plans' in Barcelona were in 1997: the 'Pla Integral del Casc Antic' and the 'Pla Comunitari de Trinitat Nova'.

restricting its scope. However, during the debate prompted by the consultation, various groups and organisations participated jointly under the platform "*Diagonal per a Tothom*" (Diagonal for all) and made proposals for the prioritising of public transport, the promotion of walking and the reduction of motorised transport. This group opened up the narrow scope of the issues addressed by the consultation but, in the end, was unable to mobilize a large enough proportion of Barcelona residents to have an impact on the planning process (Khattabi 2017; Regué and Bristow 2013).

In 2011, the 15M mobilisations evidenced diminishing public support for the left-wing parties that had governed the city since the restoration of democracy. That year's local elections also brought a change in the local government, with the conservative Catalan nationalists *Convergència i Unió* governing in minority and "bringing to an end 31 years of socialist governments in the city" (Eizaguirre et al. 2017: 431). Together with a shift at the local political level, at the national elections of November 2011, the conservative Popular Party won with an absolute majority.

During the period between 2011 and 2015, however, while Barcelona was governed by *Convergencia i Unió,* with Xavier Trias Mayor, a new left-wing political platform emerged in Barcelona. '*Barcelona en Comú*' was, as was the case with similar movements in other Spanish cities such as Madrid and Cádiz, firmly rooted in the urban movements of the city. Barcelona en Comú emerged out of the 15M movement, vitalised by a group of activists prominent in the anti-eviction movement between 2009 and 2013, and led by the activist Ada Colau. The platform won the local elections in May 2015, with 25.2 per cent of the votes, and has been in government since. In the current context, "many of the highest political offices of the government and local administration have also been occupied by social and political activists who have played a prominent role in the recent struggles against austerity, displacing or sharing responsibilities with officials appointed by previous governments" (Blanco et al. 2020: 18).

An important element of the political context in Barcelona (along with many other Spanish cities) is that, until recently,[65] there has been an absence of alternative left-wing political parties able to bridge the gap between the more radical, antagonistic

[65] With the emergence at the municipal level of the Candidatura d'Unitat Popular (CUP) in 2003 and the Barcelona en Comú platform in 2011.

elements in the city and the local administration (Martínez 2002). The so-called 'Barcelona Model' was an approach to local government that combined "aims of economic growth and social cohesion, using the instruments of strategic planning", with "a strong leadership of the public sector in a consensus building environment" (Eizaguirre et al. 2017: 430). Accordingly, although in Barcelona the local government successfully incorporated some degree of citizen participation, prior to 2015 it was unable to bring the increasing conflicts with the city's more alternative sectors into processes of urban and social planning.

The lack of alternative left-wing political parties from the beginning of the 1980s until the emergence of the *Candidatura d'Unitat Popular* (CUP) in 2003 translated into a weak political connection between institutional politics and the alternative urban movements. This has shaped a relationship between the two spheres of politics based on ignorance and avoidance, along with significant levels of repression and confrontation. As we will see, throughout the 1980s and the 1990s, the squatting movement in Barcelona grew without much visibility and in a legal vacuum (as non-violent housing occupations were not a crime in Spain) (Zulueta 1997). It was not until the end of the 1990s that the repression of the movement began, as it radically confronted both the urban model being implemented and the local public administration's limited competences with respect to housing.[66]

3.3. The urban planning tradition in Barcelona

Barcelona has long been seen as a city with an important tradition in urban planning (Martorell et al. 1970; Terán 1982). Since the mid-19th century, the city has attempted to approve urban plans of an encompassing nature; legally regulating and controlling the urban development and growth of Barcelona by establishing intensities, densities and land-use regulations. The *Pla Cerdà*, of 1856, was the first large-scale urban plan for Barcelona – which had grown increasingly dense through the industrial revolution – based on extending the city with a grid-like structure of streets uniting the old city

[66] In Barcelona, local institutions have competences related to land-use regulation, the promotion and management of social housing, and the rehabilitation and conservation of housing buildings. However, the responsible to guarantee the right to housing are the national and regional institutions. It is the Spanish state that is responsible for contributing the economic resources needed to develop housing policies. In the promotion of affordable housing, it is essential the coordination between municipalities.

with the several peripheral villages. The Pla Cerdà laid out the plans for the new development of an entire area of the city, which would come to be known as *Eixample*.

In 1953, the *Pla Comarcal de Barcelona* (the Barcelona Regional Plan),[67] was approved by the local municipality. Its purpose was to regulate the rapid urban growth of the city at the time. The plan failed to anticipate, however, the accelerated population growth that the city would experience during the 1960s. The need to quickly provide housing and facilities for newcomers led to city managers either ignoring or infringing regulations on land-use and planned densities (Ferrer and Nel·lo 1990). The laissez-faire and speculative attitude of the dictatorship resulted in important urban deficits in many neighbourhoods, which became over-saturated and with sub-standard housing.

During that time, significant blocks of housing were built surrounding factories on the outskirts to accommodate the working classes. The social and welfare conditions of these housing superblocks were notably poor, as they were "isolated, poorly built, and in deficiently developed areas in the periphery of the city" (de Balanzó and Rodríguez-Planas 2018: 2). These new urban territories were characterised by a limited supply of public spaces and public facilities, which, coupled with a high population density, led to the emergence of significant urban conflicts.

The most notable of the neighbourhood movement's urban struggles in the in the pre-democratic context were responses to large urban operations in Barcelona; specifically, the *Pla de la Ribera* (1965)[68] and the 1976 *Pla General Metropolità* (PGM)[69] (Bonet 2014: 16; Borja 1976). Both represented important opportunities for the neighbourhood movement to organise and coordinate itself against a common target and, through protest, improve their local areas and public spaces.

[67] Urban plan approved by the municipality in Barcelona in 1953. The omission in its formulations of a legal structure in charge of the plan and the related financial plan were the main causes of its inoperability and the protest organised against it at the end of the 1960s.

[68] The Pla de la Ribera (1965) was promoted by the industrial and financial bourgeoisie of Barcelona that had factories and owned land on the coastal edge of the city. The aim of the plan was to requalify the coastline public space into residential and commercial uses, creating a high population density (this was done with the complicity of the Mayor Porcioles, who initially approved the plan in 1971).

[69] The PGM was approved in 1976, and was the revision of the Pla Comarcal of 1953. It represented a new urban plan for the metropolitan area of Barcelona based on a double objective: 1) organising the urban growth of the city and reducing by half the permitted densities and 2) reclaiming land for public uses, such as schools and other public facilities and green areas ((Calavita and Ferrer 2000 in de Balanzó and Rodríguez-Planas 2018: 3).

In relationship to the 'Pla de la Ribera', the urban movement – together with professionals, academics and journalists – organised a large and intense campaign in opposition, which succeeded in halting the Plan in 1971. With regard to the PGM, although the plan was successfully approved in 1976, it provoked the opposition of a broad swathe of society and served to weaken the regime's political power. The neighbourhood movement made legal challenges and organised an alternative participatory competition with ten alternative projects, drawing on the technical capacities and resources of the anti-Francoist professional sector, which was highly active in Barcelona during those years. The neighbourhood associations criticised the plan for its insufficiency of public-use land and the construction of a ring-road that divided neighbourhoods and affected thousands of homes. They also saw it as a technocratic imposition with important democratic deficits (Andreu 2014).

Throughout the first local government democratic mandate (1979-1983) and during part of the second (1983-1987), the local public administration was notably influenced by the demands of the neighbourhood associations. In 1977, the *Federació d'Associacions de Veïnes i Veïns de Barcelona* (FAVB)[70] published the manifesto 'For a Transitional Local Government toward Democracy',[71] in which the associations articulated a list of urban demands that shaped the urban agenda during the early years of democracy. Most of the movements' proposals crystallized in the first 'Planes Especiales de Reforma Urbana'[72] (PERI) (Andreu 2014), which provided for an emergency urbanism that aimed to address important urban deficits inherited from the dictatorship – principally public squares and neighbourhood facilities.

During the first democratic years, the municipality implemented what has been called micro-urbanism, based on the recovery of public spaces for the neighbourhoods and addressing the structural deficits of the city.[73] The new coalition of left-wing political parties in power took advantage of the reallocation of industrial activity to redevelop old factories and build much needed public facilities; parks, schools, civic centres, and social housing. The first urban project developed in Barcelona, therefore, had a

[70] The Barcelona Federation of Neighbourhood Associations.
[71] "Per un Ajuntament de transició cap a la democracia".
[72] An urban planning tool used to transform the city and change the configuration of areas by replacing and rehabilitating constructions and existing installations.
[73] Principally public facilities of various types – for example, educational, cultural and those pertaining to public health.

community scale and aimed at addressing longstanding claims put forward by the neighbourhood associations during the years of dictatorship.

In that sense, over the first half of the 1980s, the emphasis of the local administration was on extending social justice and developing the democratic project, repairing the weaknesses and shortcomings inherited from Francoism. Pasqual Maragall was Barcelona's mayor for 15 years – from 1982 to 1997 – and, as Marshall (1996) notes, he and the architect Oriol Bohigas accelerated many urban improvement projects, with over 100 public space projects already overseen by 1987.

The preparation of the Games, however, which took place between 1987 and 1992, demanded an accelerated rhythm of change of the city, which prompted a shift of scale from the neighbourhood level up to the level of the city in its entirety, and led to the emergence of new priorities in urban planning and policy (largely, infrastructure rather than social and cultural facilities).

The awarding of the Olympic Games in 1986 also posed a challenge for the neighbourhood movement, as it prompted a significant change of direction in policy-making on urban issues, with the council shifting towards the promotion of Barcelona as a whole city, rather than at the district level. The 1980s were a decade of crisis for the neighbourhood movement, as it struggled to re-define itself in the new political context. In the new democratic Barcelona, the movement's disruptive character had to be redefined if it did not want to turn into an instrument of support and legitimacy for the new representative democracy.

One of the most ambitious urban transformations carried out in Barcelona for the Olympic Games was the regeneration of its seafront, which produced more than three kilometres of new beachfront and public spaces that very well connected with the city centre. The aim of Barcelona's Olympic transformation was, nonetheless, to distribute regeneration around the city, with Olympic facilities and projects located in various locations around the outskirts in order to act as catalysts of neighbourhood regeneration. Specifically, the areas of the city transformed during the Olympics included: the area of Poblenou (gradually transformed from an industrial space into a hub of modern technology, Montjuïc (the home of the Olympic Stadium and swimming pools), as well as other major construction projects in Vall d'Hebron, Diagonal and Plaça de les Glòries.

With the Olympics, and in relationship to city planning, Barcelona shifted from a traditionally formalised, bureaucratised and top-down oriented system, to a neoliberal urban development model (Rullan and Artigues 2007). Since the 2000s, the city has continued to transform itself, however, along a different path and embracing a different perspective; over the past two decades, Barcelona's politicians have been required to manage a situation of significant public debt and to attract external investment, meaning the involvement of an enlarged sphere of actors.

One of the main urban plans developed since then have been the *22@Barcelona project*, a "strategy adopted by the Barcelona City Council approving a new urban planning ordinance aimed at transforming the old industrial area of Poblenou into a magnet for new activities" (Dot 2015). Through the modification of the General Metropolitan Plan in 2000, the municipality provided for the establishment of new activities in the area and its capacity to attract activities related to emerging sectors in creative industries such as multimedia, telecommunications, research and education. The development of the area has been combined with new residential uses and new cultural and social facilities.

3.4. Barcelona's Social base

3.4.1. Neighbourhood associations

Barcelona has a long tradition of neighbourhood associations, a very important actor in the network of urban grassroots politically and socially involved in the construction of Barcelona. During the dictatorship, in conditions of completely closed political opportunities for mobilisation, political conflict and the expression of discontent in Barcelona were channelled through the urban conflict and centred on living conditions.

Neighbourhood associations began to emerge around the late 1940s and had an important period of growth between the 1950s and the 1960s. They grew out of social and family networks, around local churches and progressive Catholic communities, out of youth collectives, and from worker activists organised through the CCOO,[74] and through clandestine political party members. The approval of the 1964 Association Law

[74] 'Comisiones Obreras' is a Spanish trade union confederation, organised by activists from communist and other political sectors (although independent from political parties) over the Francoist period. It is the largest trade union in contemporary Spain.

by the Franco regime facilitated the explosion of the neighbourhood movement,[75] even in the context of the restrictions imposed by the regime. Neighbourhood associations – supposedly non-political – started to emerge around the city under cautious police surveillance.[76]

Some associations emerged from conservative political sectors (mainly Christian-democrats), sometimes even created top-down by the Francoist local government. Others – especially in the working-class neighbourhoods – were clearly anti-Francoist (Andreu 2014: 68-69).[77] The former were colloquially called *bombillaires* – a name derived from their responsibility for illuminating the streets during local celebrations, such as Christmas or New Year – and tended to represent commercial businesses and middle-class and higher-middle class interests. Their aim was to make the street look beautiful, attracting customers and economic activity. The "bombillaires" typically had good relationships with the regime and the Mayor, and received some public funding for their organisation. The anti-Francoist associations, on the other hand, were bottom-up and working class, mainly coming from the progressive catholic grassroots and holding communist political ideologies (Bordetas 2012).

Despite the initially clear schism between the two kinds of organisation, in the 1970s the neighbourhood movement became increasingly coordinated. Between 1972 and 1974, the creation of the *Coordinadora de Sant Antoni*[78] and later the FAVB,[79] provided the organisational structure the neighbourhood movement needed to come closer together. The FAVB included both types of associations – both those against Francoism and those sympathetic to the regime – and, despite initially being created to

[75] The Association Law in 1964 enabled associations favourable to the regime to be formed. The associations had to be in accordance to the fundamental principles of the Francoist movement and were called 'Associaciones Generales de Cabezas de Familia'. However, the law was taken as an advantaged by left-wing activists that could not openly participate in any other collective platform and meant the emergence of neighbourhood associations.

[76] For example, 72 hours of advance notification were required for any meeting taking place, and police officials attended all the social events organised by the associations.

[77] Principally communist.

[78] A platform that brought together neighbourhood associations in a semi-clandestine fashion. The platform facilitated coordination among the associations, helped other associations to emerge and achieve legal status, and to coordinate city-wide actions.

[79] The Federació d'Associacions de Veïns i Veïnes de Barcelona, an umbrella organisation for the neighbourhood movement, was an entity related to the regime from its inception, created to control and neutralise the combative neighbourhood movement. However, that FAVB only added more infrastructure to the increasingly strong anti-Francoist movement and ended up encompassing all the urban struggles, bringing together neighbourhood associations of all types.

control the movement, its existence eventually led to the neighbourhood associations becoming increasingly strong and increasingly anti-Francoist.

In Barcelona, there was a close relationship between the politically progressive neighbourhood associations and the two illegal communist political parties, PSUC and Bandera Roja (Andreu 2014: 94). The underground political parties understood action at the neighbourhood level as an important site of political struggle, using as a reference the Italian 'comitati di quartiere' which were dominated by the PCI. However, although party members actively participated in the neighbourhood associations, the progressive neighbourhood movement was articulated around discourses of political autonomy (Castells 2008) and did not exclusively operate as a channel for political interests.

The relationship between left-wing political parties and neighbourhood associations became tense as the country moved toward democracy in the 1980s. However, during the dictatorship the collaboration worked smoothly. Under the Franco regime, neighbourhood associations represented a unified citizen's movement, which was in contrast to the divisive partisan dynamics of the left (Martínez, 2002: 37). During this period the associations played an instrumental role: in conditions of completely closed political opportunities for mobilisation (as a result of the prohibition of political pluralism and the organisation of political parties), the neighbourhood associations became the tool for grassroots political action.

Despite the lack of social and political freedom, during the 1960s and the 1970s, the progressive neighbourhood associations worked as an inter-class movement, representing a broad platform of people of very different ideological tendencies. Although there were some common elements (such as the defence of democracy and being explicitly anti-Francoist), the movement was very plural, inclusive and solidarist. It was organised in assembly forms, and developed through horizontal and participatory practices that combined both protest and proposals.

The movement addressed day to day problems (for example, traffic lights or road repairs) and very basic needs (schools or health centres), conducting important urban protests – usually in coordination with members of illegal political parties, university students and some types of professionals (such as urbanists and local journalists). The movement did not restrict itself to neighbourhood issues, however; it also confronted local political power and made a claim for local democracy (Molinero and Ysàs 2010:

275). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, neighbourhood associations were crucial to a growing, city-level protest movement against the political regime (de Balanzó and Rodríguez-Planas 2018: 2).

From the mid-1960s to the end of the 1970s, Barcelona was characterised by constant struggle between residents and the urban authorities, precipitated by the inability of local governments to respond to increasing demands for urban services, the growing of urban population and the diversity of its needs (Gail 1979: 169). The context of the dictatorship – a highly restricted political context, lacking democratic rights and controlled by brutal police repression – together with intense and uncontrolled urban transformation made the conditions ripe for political conflict and the expression of discontent to be channelled through urban conflict and centred on living conditions. As Gail noted, everyday struggles related to basic needs were the only thing that pushed people to overcome their fear and collectively stand up to the dictatorship (Gail, 1979: 172).

Other important struggles that the movement spurred were protests over the lack of public facilities, such as hospitals, schools and leisure facilities. The movement's significant local victories included, for example, the dismantling of an asphalt plant in Trinitat Vella in order to transform it into a large cultural facility for the neighbourhood. The movement organised struggles against the lack of public transport in some marginal neighbourhoods[80] and, ultimately, against the increasing cost of everyday life. The neighbourhood movement also mobilised against the important urban deficiencies that areas on the outskirts of the city inherited from the speculative Francoist period.[81] Other struggles addressed the degradation of the historical centre and protested against road infrastructures (Bonet 2014: 16; Borja 1976).[82]

The repertoire of action of the neighbourhood associations was diverse. A key moment for the movement was the massive tram strike and tram boycott in 1951, an important urban revolt against the rise of public transport prices that promoted an alliance between

[80] The residents of the neighbourhood Roquetes, for example, located in the steep-hilled outskirts of the city, hijacked a public bus, obliging the driver to drive up to the neighbourhood. In doing so they demonstrated that it was indeed possible for buses to travel up Roquetes' steep slopes, despite the claims of the authorities to the contrary (Otazu 2017).
[81] For example, infra-housing, the demands for a sewer system, the shantytowns of Torre Baró, a rent strike to make a claim for dignified housing, and neighbourhood reactions against gas explosions in 1972.
[82] For example, the protest against the destruction of the Lesseps square to make way for the construction of the city's first ring-road.

Catholics, communists, workers, students, residents and anarchists. It was the first broad urban protest in the city (Balfour 1994). The event was massively repressed over three days and nights but would become a symbol of urban struggle in the city as the protest ultimately ended with the triumph of the movement. Other similar actions performed by the neighbourhood movement included: a market boycott against the increase of the price of basic products at the beginning of the 1970s; rent strikes in the 1970s to demand improved housing conditions; and the occupation of Barcelona's city hall in 1973 (Andreu 2014).

There was also a sincere attempt from the leaders of the movement to turn contestation into effective technical proposals. Together with architects, sociologists, and journalists, the neighbourhood movements developed the so-called *Planes Populares* (Community Plans) with the objective of aggregating their multiple objections to the 1974 PGM (Ferrer and Nel·lo 1990). Various neighbourhood associations followed the same process. First, they produced a diagnosis for their neighbourhood, identifying what was lacking through a participative survey. Then they created an activist platform through which they organised public protest events and communicated their claims. They also pressured the local administration, collecting signatures in order to advance their goals. The 'community plans' were then delivered to the local administration and actually shaped the political agenda in the transition period, influencing the programs and plans of the first democratic urban administration.

1975 to 1977 saw a peak in urban mobilisation both in Barcelona and in Spain in general. According to some authors the neighbourhood associations were the strongest urban actors at that time (Martínez, 2007: 379; Martínez, 2002: 38; Andreu, 2014). Following Franco's death in 1975, the first Spanish General Elections were held in 1977. In the proceeding years, the Spanish Constitution was approved and, in 1979, the first municipal elections were organised – after the post-Francoist authorities had postponed them for as long as they could – creating a clear opportunity for the neighbourhood movement and other social movements to mobilise locally.

That period saw the confluence of various conflictive elements. In those years, there was a strong student movement, born out of the permanent conflict in the universities of Barcelona from the mid-1970s onwards (Molinero and Ysàs 2010: 276). In Catalonia – similar to in the Basque Country – there was also a nationalist dimension to the social conflict. In Barcelona, the nationalist mobilisation included almost all the anti-Franco

organisations and nationalism became a framework that united the movements under the so-called *Assamblea de Catalunya*.[83] The neighbourhood associations actively participated in almost all of the struggles that took place in that period of notable mobilisation, playing an important role in the various political confrontations and political platforms of the time. The associations, with the FAVB as a coordinator, also played an important role in the organisation of the mass protest demanding the amnesty of political prisoners.

As Balfour and Martín have argued, the neighbourhood movement in Spain has been, since the 1970s, decisive in the activation of profound changes in Barcelona as a result of its combination of protest and proposal (through citizen participation) (Andreu, 2014). The years of political transition from dictatorship to democracy were a period characterised by important victories for the neighbourhood movement over the dominant classes and bourgeoisie. In that context, the organised urban struggle driven by peripheral neighbourhoods (and with the support of academics, professionals and political leaders) successfully created a kind of urban political and cultural hegemony rooted in Barcelona's neighbourhoods (Alabart, 1982).

The 1980s also saw a significant reduction in the number of people actively engage in the movement, with many of its community leaders and supportive experts swiftly appointed or elected into official positions within the administration (Marshall 1996). Other people simply abandoned the movement following the radical change of political context. Despite the fact that the recently elected local government did not particularly encourage its existence, the neighbourhood movement managed to survive and maintain a minimum number of committed people. It even managed to promote some notable protests, such as the campaign about the spread of aluminosis in a number of working-class neighbourhoods on the outskirts of the city (see Recio and Naya 2004; Martinez Alier 1991).

After some years, the movement has managed to successfully re-orient itself and has become a point of encounter within an increasingly varied urban social movements sector. It has also often acted as an intermediary between the municipality on the one hand and, on the other, people in the neighbourhoods affected by specific urban plans

[83] The 'Catalan Assembly' was composed of various associations and political organisations. It managed to have an inter-class dimension and a strong mobilisation capacity (Molinero and Ysàs 2010: 276).

or projects. Its organisational experience, its presence in many grassroots spaces throughout the city, its heterogeneity and its capacity to communicate and generate critical discourse have all contributed to the movement sustaining its relevance. Moreover, in 1991, the neighbourhood movement started a monthly publication named 'La Veu del Carrer',[84] which has both contributed greatly to urban debate and reflection and been politically influential at the local level. It has driven the critical discourse surrounding the urban model of the city and become an authoritative source of the social and political agenda of the city, serving as a referent for the urban social movements of Barcelona.

3.4.2. Squatting and alternative movement

In the 1980s and the 1990s, the city was already well organised in terms of urban grassroots. The arrival of democracy brought with it the emergence of multiple and diverse forms of associations, collectives and groups that were organised around specific issues, such as urban life, culture, consumption, leisure, sports or education. This multitude of organisations has, since then, been an expression of the plurality of neighbourhoods in the city, the broad range of issues relevant to them and their varying levels of institutionalisation and bureaucratisation.

During the same period, an alternative, more antagonistic, sector also emerged in parallel with the multiplication of non-profit and voluntary associations, collective and organised groups. The alternative sector represented the parts of the grassroots that were uncomfortable with institutional politics and instead operated outside of official public channels. This nascent alternative political scene and counter-cultural practice in Barcelona followed a broadly neo-anarchist ideology. However, this sector was more committed to developing specific and alternative practices than spreading their political ideas to the rest of the society.

At the beginning of the 1990s, this alternative urban sector was still small. However, immediately after the first squat buildings started to emerge, the practice of occupation spread "with the characteristic features of an urban movement" (Martínez 2007). In the

[84] The Voice of the Streets.

late 1990s and early 2000s this nascent movement grew, bringing forth a new cycle of protest that culminated in the alter-globalisation movement (Martínez 2007: 392).

Inityially, the squats in Barcelona were largely residential but very quickly became what are known as *Centros Sociales Okupados Autogestionados* (CSOAs).[85] Since the end of the 1980s, the squatter movement in Barcelona has been closely related to other social movements that emerged at the same time, such as the anti-militarist movement (Pelaez 2000), the feminist movement (Cervera et al. 1992) and the counter-information movement (including the alternative press and pirate radio stations) (see García-Gil 2018). Later, the squatter movement also formed links with the environmentalist, the anti-fascist and anti-globalisation movements, and the movement for solidarity with political prisoners (Martínez 2007).

The main target of the movement has always been the local government, even if the majority of squatted buildings in Barcelona were owned by other state bodies. As it was increasingly repressed, the movement gained greater political visibility and spread (Martínez 2002). However, unlike in other European cities, even in the moments when the squat movement in Barcelona was strong, there have never been significant negotiations – generalised, continued, open and varied – with the authorities, or partial legalisation of the squat movement (Martínez 2002). One positive effect of this for the movement has been that collaboration with the local government has not been a cause of internal division as it has in other cities.

Parallel to growing momentum of the squat movement, the countercultural and alternative movement in Barcelona also began to grow and emerge from its previous position as a fringe phenomenon with little visibility. In mid-1990s there was an explosion of the practice of squatting in Barcelona. Changes to the legal framework, with the introduction of the Penal Code in 1995, strongly penalised the activities of social movements and facilitated a more severe response to squatting, which began to face strong judicial and political repression. Nonetheless, in the years immediately following 1995 the number of occupations increased, and the movement diversified and multiplied even as it suffered unprecedented criminalisation and stigmatisation (Martínez 2007: 383).

[85] Self-managed Occupied Social Centres.

The so-called 'Battle of the Cinema Princesa'[86] (1995) was an important turning point for Barcelona's squatting movement. In the wake of the eviction of the squat – and the attendant local resistance, along with solidarity at the national level – the movement became increasingly visible as it drew the attention of the mass media, authorities and academics (López 2018). The press tended to present the movement as criminal, although the majority of neighbours defended the squatters. The event prompted a remarkable leap in the movement and, as Martínez states, "the cycle of squats, evictions and new squats did not cease with stronger repression" (Martínez 2007: 383).

In the 1990s, a new international order was emerging, globalisation was rapidly increasing and the World Wide Web was born. In this context, a new generation of social conflicts and social movements started to grow which were organised and coordinated around anti-globalisation claims. Between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s there was an intense cycle of mobilisation that, in Barcelona, peaked around 2004 and lasted until 2006 (Juris 2010; Feixa et al. 2009). In Barcelona, the anti-globalisation mobilisations coincided with the anti-Iraq war movement, which was very prominent in the city. By this time, the alternative local social movement community in Barcelona was also large, strong, visible and highly organised (Martínez 2002).

It was not until the end of the 1990s and the 2000s that there was a real re-emergence of urban movements in Barcelona,[87] "reinvigorated by a new generation of activists" (Jiménez 2006 in Jiménez 2007: 401). As the level of protest and occupations increased, so did the levels of criminalisation and repression from various state levels, which involved detentions, aggressive police responses and arrests.[88] However, even as the press continued to present the social movements as marginal and violent, in the broader context of increasing social conflict and diminishing consensus they nonetheless had an increasing social impact (Martínez, 2002: 11).

In Barcelona, social mobilisation developed at different scales. Struggles related to international dynamics included: the 2000 protest demanding the clearance of Spanish International debt; the 2001 campaign against the Barcelona's meeting of the World Bank; the European counter-summit in 2002; and the massive anti-Iraq war campaign

[86] A seven-month occupation of a closed-down cinema in the heart of the city centre.
[87] Although the neighbourhood movement and the beginnings of the squat movement meant that Barcelona in the 1980s and early 1990s was not completely devoid of movements.
[88] The squat movement, for example, suffered more evictions than ever, often accompanied by strong police repression.

in 2003. The anti-war protests in Spain were an important mobilisation and, as Jiménez (2007) notes, prompted huge demonstrations despite the Spanish peace movement possessing neither "a strong organisational infrastructure of its own nor a large membership" (2007: 399).

At the national level, an important turning point was in November 2002, when an environmentally disastrous oil slick, caused by the sinking of the *Prestige* off the coast of Galicia, precipitated the emergence of the social movement Nunca Máis,[89] a very significant social mobilisation. In 2004, a notable citizen protest took place outside the Barcelona headquarters of the Partido Popular following the terrorist attacks in Madrid. That protest event is well-known for being "triggered by text messages", hinting at the important role mobile technologies would play in subsequent protest events (Prieto del Campo 2005 in Karamichas 2007: 273).

At the local level, in 2002, the police attempted to evict squatters from Can Masdeu[90] but failed, as the squatter movement gathered around the house to protect it and successfully attracted a broad solidarity movement. The attempt to evict Can Masdeu was an important victory for the movement as it was the first time that an eviction was successfully repelled, which was achieved with notable support from neighbours. The Can Masdeu building was public and the plan was to sell it to a private entity in order to create a private health facility. After three days of attempts to evict the squatters, a judge ordered the provisional cancellation of the eviction.

3.5. Crisis and Cycle of Mobilisation

As Romero and Valera (2016) note, "[t]he first decade of the 21st century was a period of economic and demographic expansion and impressive urban development in Spain's big cities, including Barcelona" (2016: 1). Between 1997 and 2003 Spanish real estate prices increased by 75 per cent, while mortgage interest rates simultaneously fell (Fernández-Kranz and Hon 2006: 449). In the years of expansion, a financial bubble developed as capital moved from countries like Germany into areas of the European periphery, such as Spain and Italy (della Porta et al. 2007: 6). However, with the explosion of the financial crisis in 2007-2008, the country suffered a near-total collapse

[89] 'Never again'.
[90] Can Masdeu is a house that was occupied in 2001.

of its real estate market (Garcia 2010). In Spain, the main problem at the beginning of the crisis was household debt; in particular mortgage debt, which accounted for almost 70 per cent of private debt in the country.

Figure 1. GDP Annual Growth Rate in Spain, 1995-2015

Y axis=percentage points. X axis= years, 1995-2015 (termly data, 4 observations per year).
Source: INE (retrieved from www.tradingeconomics.com, 15 January 2017).

In south-European countries like Spain, the international financial crisis grew into a social and political crisis that gave way to a cycle of protests (Romero and Valera 2015: 8). Along with the economic recession, increasing disaffection with political elites was a central feature of the Spanish political context. In recent years, Spanish political parties and political elites have been identified by citizens as the country's third most important problem – behind unemployment and the economic crisis – with "[c]orruption scandals and the perception of political leaders as incapable of responding to the economic difficulties [have been] the background to a general questioning of the system" (Anduiza 2014: 6).

In Spain, and especially in Madrid and Barcelona, this political crisis crystallised with the 15M/Indignados movement, a movement that brought to the streets thousands of citizens and symbolized the connection of various processes that had been evolving simultaneously since mid-2000s: a housing movement, a new generation of self-managed and open social centres, the environmental movement (in relationship to mobility, water, and energy issues), the student movement, and a free culture and digital commons movement (Portos 2016b). The economic and financial crisis, an increasing disaffection for political elites, labour-market changes, corruption scandals and the perception of political leaders as incapable of responding to the economic difficulties,

together with technological changes, shaped the conditions for a new movement to emerge. As Lois-González and Piñeira-Mantiñan (2015) have argued, to the surprise of almost everybody "the *Indignados* movement emerged in imitation of events a little earlier in Tunisia and Egypt […], bearing an even greater resemblance to similar protests in Greece and the 'geraçao á rascal' movement in Portugal" (2015: 131).

The Indignados mobilisation marked an important shift nationally following a period of low levels of mobilisation. It also had a particularly significant impact on the political context of the cities in which it took place. The event, which lasted several months, successfully channelled collective outrage through many small organisations with little in the way of resources or experience of large-scale protests (Anduiza 2014: 2). In fact, the movement has been presented as a case of collective action, with qualitatively different mobilisation patterns from other recent protest events in Spain and southern-European countries in general (Bennet and Segerberg 2002; Anduiza 2014: 3). The movement included collective events without the presence of traditional organisations and was characterised by the intensive use of digital media and the mobilisation of non-traditional protesters (Anduiza 2014: 3).

According to European Social Survey (ESS) data, between 2008 and 2012 the number of people in Spain who reported participation in at least one demonstration went from 15.9 per cent to 25.9 per cent – the largest increase in Europe. These figures support the argument that "mobilisations against austerity in recent years have led to the emergence of new political subjects" (Accornero and Ramos Pinto 2014:1). In Barcelona, as in Madrid, there was also a close connection between the 15M movement and urban movements – such as the housing movement – which later developed into new municipalist candidacies (Monterde 2015).

The emergence of the 15M/Indignados movement has had institutional consequences in Spain. At the national level, a new political party, 'Podemos', emerged four months before the European elections in 2014. Its positive and unexpected results in the European elections (earning more than a million votes, 8% of the total in Spain, and gaining five MEPs out of a total of 54) changed the political landscape of the country, bringing confrontational dynamics into the electoral and institutional arena. At the municipal level, Spain saw, in 2015, the emergence of citizen platforms such as

'Barcelona en Comú[91]' in Barcelona and 'Ahora Madrid[92]' in Madrid, which were closely connected to the 15M and formed out of local grassroots and various leftist collectives and parties that put forward candidates. Following the 2015 municipal elections, such platforms had control of the local administrations in both Barcelona and Madrid.

3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the ways in which the period under analysis is the outcome of a long trajectory of urban mobilisation in Barcelona. The Francoist period shaped a highly constrained local context in terms of freedom of expression and citizen participation. In the context of a high level of repression, Christian grassroots groups, the Catalan bourgeoisie, the worker movement and others connected through the city's neighbourhood associations – the only collective gatherings allowed under Francoism – and discussed the quality of urban life and the future of the city.

The beginning of democracy opened a window of opportunity to apply the ideas and projects that developed clandestinely during the dictatorship. In the 1980s, a process of urban transformation began that took advantage of the hosting of the Olympic Games as a platform to frame and communicate the changes and, crucially, to attract much needed investment. The political dominance at the municipal level of the Socialist Party, in stable alliance with the minority neo-communist party – almost uninterrupted for more than twenty years – generated a highly stable power configuration characterised by solid cooperation with the economic, professional, and social sectors from the 1980s until 2011.

The Socialist Party lost municipal power in 2011, but the financial crisis had begun around 2004. With the organisation of the Forum of Cultures in 2004, the local

[91] 'Barcelona en Comú', initially named 'Guanyem Barcelona' is a citizen platform, currently governing Barcelona that emerged in 2014 (it includes the political parties of ICV-EUiA, Procés Constituent and Equo). The platform won the municipal elections in Barcelona in May 2015 with Ada Colau as its mayoral candidate. The current mayor of Barcelona was previously an activist and the spokesperson of the 'Plataforma d'Afectats per la Hipoteca' (PAH). In its founding manifesto, 'Barcelona en Comú' declared as its main goal to take back political institutions and put them to the service of the people and the common well-being.

[92] 'Ahora Madrid' is a citizen platform, inspired by 'Barcelona en Comú', formed by individual citizens as well as members of the political parties Equo, 'Por un Mundo Más Justo' and 'Izquierda Unida'. With Manuela Carmena in the leadership, it won the municipal elections in Madrid in May 2015. Manuela Carmena was mayor of Madrid between 2015 and 2018.

government, with the Socialist Party running it, began to show an inability to renew the local agenda, putting the city at the service of international actors. As a consequence, the general atmosphere of trust and collaboration between the local government and a large part of the urban grassroots broke down. In this context, the Forum was used as a platform against which the urban grassroots articulated its opposition. Following years of fragmentation and polarisation, the grassroots renewed its activity, operating both through institutional channels and a strong squatting movement that was increasingly strong and connected to broader alter-globalisation movements.

During the 2000s, the local administration effective control over the city was loosened and Barcelona was increasingly vulnerable to the effects of global processes and dynamics. The city increasingly became an expression of global interests (which shaped Barcelona through economic interests and investment funds) and less a local project with regulations, policies and urban planning connected to the citizens and their needs. The change of local government in 2011, shifting from the Socialist Party to the Catalan centre-right, was more the expression of a legitimacy crisis of the old model of Barcelona than it was the emergence of a new one. The rupture in left-wing local power and the eruption of the 15M/Indignados movement were not connected but, nonetheless, both articulated a general demand for change.

Between 2011 and 2015 there was a re-activation of the urban movements in the neighbourhoods. In this context, the significant continuity of the neighbourhood movement that emerged in the dictatorship is notable. It was a little renewed movement, with little connection to new generations, but able to create alliances and maintain solid bases in working-class neighbourhoods and with the capacity to project its demands and proposals at the city level, coordinated by the platform FAVB. Over the past decade, the neighbourhood movement has enjoyed much less legitimacy (especially when compared with the 1970s, when it was the only grassroots actor with connections with the public administration) but has nonetheless continued to be recognised as an unavoidable interlocutor with respect to urban issues.

Between 2011 and 2015, Barcelona saw the emergence and consolidation of a new urban movement that followed the general organisational dynamics of the alter-globalisation movement and the squatting tradition, but which also displayed new characteristics that were linked to the emergence of new technologies and social media. Over the same period, new movements and organisations also emerged. On the one

hand, there were new grassroots groups focusing on issues on energy, water, and sustainable transport. On the other hand, there was the emergence of the 'PAH' ('Platform of People Affected by Mortgages') that succeeded in bringing together highly diverse sectors in a single movement of political renewal in the city.

Between 2011 and 2015 the urban grassroots in Barcelona successfully maintained their active presence in the neighbourhoods, participating and promoting urban conflicts. They were also able to re-scale their demands and proposals, configuring new platforms, a cycle of protest with demonstrative actions in the street, and articulating discourses that renewed the local urban agenda and connected with broader movements internationally. In the following chapter I turn my attention to Turin, examining the historical antecedents that shaped its local political context between 2011 and 2015.

CHAPTER FOUR
Local Context in Turin

Having presented the local political and social context of Barcelona, in this Chapter I will introduce the case of Turin, laying out the political, institutional and social dimensions of the city that are relevant for my research. The aim, as in the last chapter, is to address the local context of the city and outline the main elements that shape the local political system of opportunities. In accordance with the theoretical framework of the research, these dimensions are expected to account for a specific type of processes of urban protest.

This chapter is structured in five sections. The first section addresses the industrial background of the city, the construction of the 'città-fabbrica', and the process of urban regeneration that Turin experienced through both its organisation of the 2006 Winter Olympic Games and the promotion of a strategic plan. In the second section I address the configuration of political power in Turin and the relative stability of those configurations in various periods of time. The third section examines the urban types of plans and policies implemented in the city over recent years. The fourth section considers the social and political actors relevant to the construction of urban conflict in Turin. Finally, I address the economic crisis and the anti-austerity cycle of protest.

4.1. From the Fordist city to the European metropolis

Turin, capital of the Piedmont region, is a city of 902.137 inhabitants, an area of 130 km^2 and a density of 6.938,92 inhabitants/km^2.[93] Together with Milan, Turin is one of two cities – both situatied in the North West region of Italy – that have the highest GDP and consumption per capita rate in the country (Istat 2017). However, it is the region of Lombardy (home to Milan), rather than Piedmont, that represents the richest region in the North West, accounting for 20% of Italian GDP (ibid).

In general terms, as has been the case for Barcelona, the development of Turin over the last century has been connected to industrialisation and immigration (Vandolo 2015).

[93] Data refer to 2015 and are taken from the *Rapporto Urbes* 2015 (2017, June 29). "Il benessere equo e sostenibile nelle città", Istat. Retrieved from http://www.istat.it/urbes2015.

The city has traditionally been presented as a prototypical Fordist city; rigidly organised according to a hierarchical mentality and politically structured around the industrial conflict, spawning a class-based mass politics (Agnew 1996: 36). Known as a 'one-town company', or the 'città-fabbrica', the city has been dominated by FIAT since the turn of the 20th century. Accordingly, FIAT – together with other companies from the automobile industry – have traditionally informed the economic, social and spatial dimensions of the urban space in Turin, which has made the city dependent on a small handful of corporations (Montanari 2016: 359).

The construction of the 'città-fabbrica' was a top-down, planned process that started in 1899 when (some years after the city lost its status of capital to Florence) a group of aristocrats and businessmen decided to invest in the engineering know-how in the city and founded the *Fabbrica Italiana Automobili Torino* [94] (Cotella 2011: 100). Manufacturing quickly came to dominate the city's economic and employment activity, with the automotive industry – and FIAT particularly – especially prominent.

By 1914, half of the cars in Italy were made by FIAT, as were many components for trains, ships and aeroplanes (Cotella 2011: 100). After Mussolini rose to power, the company continued to thrive,[95] and in the late 1950s and early 1960s, both FIAT and the Italian economy were booming. By that time, "industrial expansion was generating tens of thousands of new jobs per year" (Cotella 2011: 100), with Turin constituting the heart of FIAT's production and the company, in turn, constituting 80% of the city's industrial activity (ibid).

The late 1950s and early 1960s was a period of rapid economic growth in Italy. Between 1954 and 1964, Turin experienced the most dramatic population growth of any major Italian city in the post-war era, with an average of 56,000 economic migrants streaming into the city from Southern and Eastern Italy each year (Cotella 2011: 102). The city's population peaked at just over 1.2 million in 1975 (ibid), and as Turin's population continued to rise, large blocks of housing were built to accommodate the growing working-class.

[94] The Italian Automobile Manufacturer of Turin.
[95] FIAT and the fascist government had a shared interest in avoiding unrest among Turin's large working-class population, so the fascists, in exchange of political support, allowed FIAT to have significant independence in its affairs (Cotella 2011: 100).

In the 1950s, Turin was highly polarised; a city divided and segmented along class lines, with clear differences between the working-class population, intellectuals and the bourgeoisie. Middle-class areas of the city included *Crocetta*, the "collina" and "pre-collina" (Turin's 'hillside'), along with various lower middle-class enclaves on the west side of the city, which were inaccessible to the growing working-class population. The industrial and intellectual urban bourgeoisie also had their spaces in which to meet: the university, the publishing house Einaudi, the 'Circulo della Resistenza, the 'centro Gobetti' and the 'Istituto Storico della Resistenza. By contrast, the working-class areas of Turin have tended to be located on the outskirts of the city (such as, Borgo San Paolo, Borgo Dora and Barriera di Milano), near the factories, and were often a product of unregulated private constructions.

During the 1970s, however, as a consequence of the gradual crisis of Fordism, Turin began to be affected by the industrial re-localisation of plants. As Prat and Mangili have argued, relocation "left significant voids in the city's physical fabric"; rather than being relocated to suburban areas close to the city, Turin's large plants were being closed "as a result of shifting national and international manufacturing geographies", leading to massive loss of jobs (Prat and Mangili 2016:214). These transformations impacted heavily on the urban dynamics of the city; the growth of population stopped and employment in the service sector started to rise relative to manufacturing (Vanolo 2015: 3). In 1982, FIAT stopped production at its Lingotto factory – "perhaps the most recognisable symbol of Turin's industrial history" (Prat and Mangili 2016:214) amnd during the 1990s the company's financial situation became critical: "in 2002 FIAT announced the closure of 18 production plants all over the world" (Vanolo 2015: 3). In fact, in the 1990s, although FIAT was saved by a massive injection of state aid (which allowed it to continue to dominate its largely protected domestic market), the company continued to move production away from Turin as the Single European Act of 1992 removed trade protections and "flooded the Italian market with competition from foreign imports" (Cotella 2011: 102).

In the 2000s, Turin's residents started to show their resignation and acceptance of the disappearance of the FIAT company, the Fordist working class and, with it, the labour protests that use to characterise the city. In 2009, FIAT established a partnership with Chrysler and, in 2014, the two companies merged. This new development "involved moving the headquarters of FIAT away from Turin", neutering the connection between

the company and the city, and making the 'Italian Automobile Manufacturer of Turin' a multinational headquartered in London and Amsterdam (Vanolo 2015: 6).

Confronted with these developments, in the 1990s Turin – like Barcelona – started to implement in urban interventions designed to regenerate and redefine the city's economic base, transforming it into a more attractive place given the contemporary economic context. At the end of the 1980s, the urban visions presented by the local municipality included actions such as the promotion of economic and social synergies between *Torino* and *Milano* (*Mito*) or the promotion of *Torino Technocity* (Turin as an ICT industrial site), which made visible Turin's will to diversify its manufacturing base. However, at the end of the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s, as the industrial crisis became even more acute, the transformative aspiration of the city started to emphasise the non-manufacturing dimensions of Turin, particularly promoting cultural events and the tourism industry.

This shift was represented by the publication of the first strategic plan of the city: "Inspired by the effectiveness of the strategic planning of other European cities (Barcelona in particular), Valentino Castellani launched the city's own effort in 1998, making Turin the first Italian city to debate a plan of this kind" (Cotella 2011: 105). The decision to start the strategic plan was taken in 1998, following the re-election of Castellani as mayor.[96] The plan was articulated around the 'Forum per lo Sviluppo': "a group chaired by the local Chamber of Commerce and made up of the most active economic and social actors" of the city (Sartorio 2005: 32). From 1998, the plan was elaborated and promoted by 'Torino Internazionale'[97] and, since 2012, through the project 'Torino Strategica', which has recently launched the third Strategic Plan "Torino Metropoli 2025".

As in Barcelona, the main goal of the strategic plan has been to map out a route towards the internationalisation of the city – through enhancing its own resources, developing its organisational capacity and by collectively building a shared vision of its future (Pinson 2002: 482). In the first plan, published in 2000, Turin was presented as a city

[96] Valentino Castellani was an independent Mayor of Turin from 24 June 1993 to 1 June 2001. Before becoming the Mayor, he was a university professor in the Polytecnic University of Turin. After 2001 he became the President of the Turin Organising Committee for the 2006 Winter Olympics.
[97] "Torino Internazionale", today 'Torino Strategica", is the body managing the urban transformation of the city. It is formed of five actors: Comune di Torino, Camera di Commercio Torino, Compagnia di San Paolo, Politecnico di Torino and Università degli Studi di Torino.

with a significant technical-industrial heritage and high level of entrepreneurial initiative; a solid competitive advantage for the city to be developed in new directions. Turin's second plan (2006) clearly defined the promotion of a 'knowledge-based economy' as the main aim of the city, moving the urban discourse further away from the industrial heritage of the city. Finally, the third plan, presented in 2015, focused on the construction of Turin as a metropolitan city and aimed at promoting research, culture and a renewal of public administration. In general, the three strategic plans have promoted two types of public investments: on the one hand, investments in education, research, and communication, and, on the other, investments in the urban space of Turin and its architectural quality.

The first Strategic Plan had the hosting of the 2006 Winter Olympics, which was presented as a pivbotal event and a powerful engine for the promotion and transformation of the city. When the Games were awarded to Turin in 2001 – a decision that would have been inconceivable some years before (Dente et al. 2005: 47) – "Turin policymakers launched an intensive branding campaign in order to show to the world that the city was no longer a dark industrial city, but rather a 'new' vibrant, cosmopolitan and cultural city" (Vanolo 2015: 4). The event was also presented as a unique opportunity to strengthen pre-existing strategies to redevelop Turin and accelerate the strategic lines of action set up in the plan: (1) integrate the metropolitan area of Turin into the international system, (2) constitute the metropolitan government, (3) develop university education and research as a strategic resource, (4) promote entrepreneurship and occupation, (5) promote Turin as a cultural and tourist city, and (6) improve the quality of life of the city.

Simultaneous to the organisation of the Games and the development of the strategic plan, Turin has developed marketing strategies. Over recent years, the city has created slogans such as 'Always on the move', 'Passion lives here', and 'Turin ever more beautiful', which have been widely promoted through various kinds of media as well as on posters and flags located throughout the city (Pinson 2002: 482). As Dente et al. argue, the city has made "a great effort to overturn its traditional image as an industrial, grey, foggy city where there is nothing to see, to propose a new one based on terms such as: alps, rivers, baroque, Savoy residences, wine and slow food" (Dente et al. 2005: 48).

In relationship to the Olympic Games, although local actors agreed that they were a critical event for the recovery of the city in several ways – to promote Turin's 'post-industrial' image internationally and locally, to bring residents together and give them a new pride in the city, and to attract funding to complete the physical renewal projects already planned – the organisation of the Games nonetheless necessitated that the local administration put aside other local initiatives that were begun in the 1990s, such as the renewal of some of its most central neighbourhoods.

Similar to what happened in Barcelona, the Olympic Games in Turin took an enormous organisational effort and financial expenditure on the part of the local administration. Some studies have reported, nonetheless, that the population in Turin strongly supported hosting the Games (Crivello 2006; Guala 2009) and in surveys conducted before 2006, 79% of the people agreed with the project while negative answers only represented the 2% of the sample. In general, although it has been criticised as elitist and technocratically implemented, the local citizen perception about the transformation of Turin has been positive – an acceptance that can, at least in part, be explained by the fact that "the need for a major change in Turin was so apparent" (Dente et al. 2005: 52).

Just after the celebration of the Games, however, the economic and financial crisis hit Turin, creating a significant obstacle for the development of many of the city's plans for urban transformation. This global economic shock compromised the expected external and internal investments in the physical and economic fabric of Turin; as Biancalana argues, "[w]hile de-industrialization has changed the social and political identity of the city", Turin's "transition to [a] new model of development" has only been partially realised (Biancalana 2019: 64). In fact, "the hyper-celebration of culture, tourism and creativity, and the representation of Turin as a vibrant city of amenities" has been in stark contrast to the "the social and economic crisis experienced daily by its inhabitants" since the onset of the financial crisis in 2008 (Vanolo 2015: 6). One illustration of Turin's imperfect transition from industrial to cultural hub is its absence from the rankings of global cities that are regularly published by various international bodies. Such reports rank cities in relationship to their performance in various categories (such as, business activity, information exchange, cultural interaction, liveability, environment and accessibility) which indicate how attractive a city is to business and tourism.

4.2. The configuration political power in Turin

In traditional dynamic of political power in Turin has been one of cooperation between industrial and political leaders, resulting in the local administration focusing on keeping Turin's working class in order, often through the promotion of social policies on housing, services and facilities for the workers and their families. Up until 1980, the car industry was still by far the biggest driver of Turin's social and economic structure. As such the prosperity of the urban commercial middle-classes and the revenue of the municipal government has, in general, been linked to the spending power of the industrial working-classes and the tax revenue generated by car manufacturers. A large number of small and medium size companies also depended, for many years, almost exclusively on the car manufacturing industry in Turin, supplying it with goods and services.

Traditionally, the needs of the automobile industry have, unsurprisingly, been the priority of Turin's local administration (Castagnoli, 1995). In fact, in order to have any chance of electoral success, the political parties running for local elections were effectively required to position their programmes either in support of or in opposition to FIAT. For many years, this precluded the possibility of coming together in a truly local political space to construct a common urban project for Turin (Pinson 2002: 483). Despite this close relationship between politics and industry, Turin's local municipality has historically been limited in its effectiveness to deal with the impacts of the car industry, "partly because it [has] intervened little in the regulation of industrial conflicts and partly because it [has] had little influence over FIAT's decision-making" (Pinson 2002: 483).

In 1943, after the fall of Mussolini, Italy recovered democratic control. After the constitution of the Republic in 1947, the *Partito Comunista Italiano* (PCI) emerged as the most prominent left-wing party at the national level, while the Christian Democrats (DC) took the centre ground (Agnew 1996: 135). Between 1946 and 1994, the DC was Italy's largest political party – governing in successive coalitions – while the PCI was its main opposition. In 1963, the PCI began what has been described as "its 'long march' towards the centre" (ibid) and, in 1970s, the two main parties (DC and PCI) came together in an implicit alliance, a shift which has been known as the 'historic compromise'. The Communists did not join a coalition government with the DC but they nonetheless supported governments led by the Christian Democrats from 1976 to

1979 by abstaining from voting against it. After 1979, the Communists returned to their position of opposition.

At the local level, Turin had communist mayors between 1945-1951[98] and then a coalition between the DC and the Italian Liberal Party (PLI) was in power between 1951 and 1975.[99] Between 1951 and 1975, however, the city had eight different mayors,[100] changing approximately every two years from 1964 to 1975. The local political focus of this period was to push through the development of Turin and the Piedmont region with the construction of a new road infrastructure system that could help to better connect the area with the rest of Italy and Europe. This policy focus was supported by centre and conservative political parties, while the PCI was more interested in improving the social conditions of the thousands of workers arriving from *Mezzogiorno* to work in industries like FIAT and Olivetti (Castagnoli 1995).

In 1975, Diego Novelli was elected mayor of Turin, supported by a Communist-Socialist coalition (see Novelli 1989), and remained in power until 1985. Novelli's election represented the return of left-wing parties to power in Turin – following 25 years of conservative coalition between the DC and PLI – and the beginning of a ten-year period of fairly stable government for the city. This left-wing council – the so-called 'giunte rosse' – was an opportunity for the recently created 'comitati di quartiere' to establish a relationship with the local administration and to be recognised as legitimate representatives of the local territories in which they were embedded.

In 1985, however, Turin's communist council lost control of the local government and a five-party coalition of Christian democrats, socialists and other minor parties took power, governing the city until 1993. Following the relatively stable ten-year period of 'giunte rosse' in Turin (characterised by some important reforms implemented at the local administrative level), 1985 marked the beginning of a more turbulant period, during which successive rather unstable coalitions governed the city.

[98] The communist mayors were Celeste Negarville and Domenico Coggiola. In 1951, Amedeo Peyron (DC) won the elections, ending the communist period until 1985.
[99] Between 1970 and 1973, the coalition between DC and PLI governed with the 'Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano' (PSDI) and the 'Partito Repubblicano Italiano' (PRI). Also, between 1973 and 1975 DC and PLI governed in coalition with PSI.
[100] Between 1951 and 1962 the "sindaci" of Turin were Amedeo Peyron (DC), Giovanni Carlo Anselmetti (Democristiano). Between 1962 and 1964 the mayor was Luciano Jona (PLI), between 1964 and 1965, Giuseppe Grosso (DC), between 1965 and 1968, Andrea Guglielminetti (DC), between 1968 and 1973, Giovanni Procellana (DC), between 1970 and 1974 Guido Secreto (Social Democrat) and Giovanni Picco (DC).

The 1980s were a decade of "withdrawal" from politics in Italy in general, when compared with the 1960s and the 1970s. In those increasingly apathetic years, Italian parties and unions lost members and election turnouts fell. Throughout the 1980s, Italy had central governments made up of four- or five-party coalitions, all of which were led by either the Christian Democrats or Socialists. At the beginning of the 1990s, however, the political elite that had dominated Italian politics since 1945 – the Christian Democrats – collapsed in the context of extensive corruption scandals and the near-bankruptcy of the state. With this shift, "it fell an electoral system that was seen to have guaranteed the irremovable character of this elite" (Gundle and Parker 1996: 1). At the same time as Barcelona was in the process of renewing itself in an atmosphere of optimism and transformation, in Turin (and Italy more generally) the impetus for change came from this much darker source: "the *tangentpoli* corruption scandals triggered the collapse of both national and local governments in 1992 and paved the way for key political reforms" (Cotella 2011: 103). *Tangentopoli* represented a crisis of Italian political parties at the local and national level; it triggered the disintegration of the party system that "had dominated post-war Italy" (Agnew 1996: 137) and opened up space for the emergence of new political actors.

At the national level, one consequence of the collapse of the Italian party system was the emergence of Silvio Berlusconi and his new *Forza Italia* party in the 1994 elections. The 1994 victory of Berlusconi – a successful businessman, very well known through his connections to TV media and football – was a clear demonstration of the degree of crisis of the Italian political system. As Gundle and Parker note, the collapse of the traditional parties was not the result of an upswell of social mobilisation, rather Berlusconi attracted voters both because he was untouched by the *tangentopoli* scandal and "because he was reassuring and populist" (Gundle and Parker 1996: 10). Berlusconi was in power between 1994 and 1995 (in coalition with the National Alliance and the Northern League), and then lost the 1996 elections to the left-wing Romano Prodi. In 2001, however, he was back in power as the leader of the same coalition as in 1994.

In 1994, each party "was proposing some sort of 'clean start' for Italy after the corruption scandals of the recent past. Each claimed to represent a break with *partitocrazia*, the political economy of parties, government jobs and business payoffs" (Agnew 1996: 141). At the local level, with the 1993 municipal elections approaching, civil society stepped into the political vacuum that the collapse of the traditional parties

had left. In Turin, in 1993 the council was dissolved and a governmental commissioner replaced the mayor until the elections were called. The 1993 elections were the first local elections where citizens in Italy could directly elect their mayors (Dente et al. 2005: 46). The longstanding communist mayor of Turin, Diego Novelli, was beaten in the municipal elections by the university professor Valentino Castellani – a candidate from outside the political establishment that was put forward by "a movement created around the Chamber of Commerce, the University and the Catholic voluntary sector" (Pinson 2002: 483).

Valentino Castellani attempted to make a clear break from the tarnished perception of Turin's politics, filling his cabinet with academics and businesspeople, with no previous connection to the traditional political elite, able to bring their own networks to the service of the public interest (Dente et al. 2005: 46-51). Castellani's election was a strong signal from the residents of Turin that they had lost faith in the traditional political parties that had represented them for decades.

Between 1993 and 2016, the city of Turin was ruled by a centre-left elite that represented 23 years of a continuous administration of the city (a state of affairs pejoratively referred to in public discourse as the 'Sistema Torino').[101] Although it has been considered a ruling coalition of a relatively insular group of people coming from the municipality and the financial and institutional powers of the city (Derossi. 2016: 152) – Turin's local government over those years have also been considered very active in trying to implement innovative urban policies and include forms of coorperation with Turin's citizens. In fact, over recent years, Turin has been presented as one of the most active cities in Italy with respect to applying institutional decentralisation and participatory processes (Gentili 2017). Between 2011 and 2015, the local municipality has implemented the "Comissioni di Quartiere",[102] the Co-City project[103] in

[101] First it was the mayor Valentino Casetallani (1993-2001), then Sergio Chiamparino (2001-2011) and then Piero Fassino (2011-2015), all related to the Partito Democratico (PD) in Turin.
[102] The new 'Regolamento del Decentramento della Città di Torino' (2015) created the institution of "Comissioni di Quartiere", which presents them (in the article 29) as a main tool through which to include citizens in the local decision-making process. These commissions are constituted through the Consiglio Circoscrizionale and are made up of the Consiglieri Circoscrizionali and citizens of the neighbourhood that ask to be part of them.
[103] 'Co-City' it is a project from the municipality of Turin, winner of the European project 'Urban Innovative Actions' through which the municipality aims to promote new administrative forms to manage the city in a manner more closely shared with the citizens (in accordance with the "Regolamento sulla collaborazione tra cittadini e amministrazione per la cura, la gestione condivisa e la rigenerazione dei beni comuni urbani").

relationship to the promotion of the urban commons, and the 'Bilancio Partecipativo Comunale'.[104]

At the national level, in 2011, in the middle of the period of austerity and "under pressure from both the European Union and then the President of the Republic, Giorgio Napolitano, Berlusconi resigned, and a new caretaker government under the leadership of the economist Mario Monti was formed" (Andretta 2018: 102). In the 2013 Italian national elections, a centre-left coalition, formed by the *Partito Democratico* (the Democratic Party, or PD) and *Sinistra, Ecologia e Libertà* (Left, Ecology, and Liberty, or SEL), won a majority of seats in the Senate but not in the House of Representatives. One of the reasons that prevented the centre-left coalition from winning a safe majority in Parliament was the spectacular electoral performance of the *Movimento Cinque Stelle* (Five Star Movement, or M5S), which has been interpreted as a voter reaction to the austerity measures carried out by mainstream political parties on both the left and the right. The electoral outcome was a large coalition government that had Enrico Letta (PD) as the prime minister. In February 2014, Letta was replaced by the PD's new leader, Matteo Renzi, who governed with the same parliamentary majority (Andretta 2018: 103)[105].

In Turin, in the municipal elections in June 2016, Chiara Appendino (M5S) beat incumbent mayor Piero Fassino (PD) by 9 percentage points (54,6% vs. 45,4%). As Biancalana argues, the Turin election result is notable both because it marked the end of the centre-left's long pre-eminence in Turin's local politics, and also because an 'outsider' candidate won despite Turin being "considered an example of good administration" where citizen satisfaction had been high (Biancalana 2019: 68):

> "The two main election contenders, Fassino and Appendino, perfectly symbolised continuity and change, respectively. While Fassino relied on his experience as a public administrator and politician, Appendino pledged radical discontinuity with respect to the previous administration and more generally with respect to the Sistema Torino, understood to constitute a consolidated network of power and interests" (ibid: 69).

[104] The municipality of Turin, in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Politics and Society of the University of Turin in 2014 launched a pilot project, "Bilancio Deliberativo", in one of the districts of the city (circoscrizione 7). The idea is to extend it to other districts with expanded budgets.
[105] In 2016 Mateo Renzi resigned after a referendum rejected his constitutional reform and a new government was formed with the support of the same coalition, this time with Paolo Gentiloni (PD) as Prime Minister.

Appendino has focused on highlighting the differences between 'two Torinos': on the one hand the city's centre, with its transformational cultural events, and, on the other, "the disadvantaged suburbs, characterised by poverty and negligence" (ibid).

In contrast to Barcelona, left-wing parties in Turin have not enjoyed sustained dominance in the local government. Consequently, the city's broader left-wing social forces have not had a high degree of influence over the development of urban, social and cultural interventions led by local government. However, the left's intermittent moments of municipal control have been moments of openness of the system of political opportunities for the *comitati di cittadini* and other local left-wing forces. During such periods, and in a move similar to Barcelona, the local administration in Turin has implemented some notable reforms to promote new forms of governance and a more decentralised and participatory local political context (Trigilia 2002: 599 in Allasino et al. 2003).

In Turin, it has been important to move beyond hierarchical relations between urban actors, definied by the class conflict. Accordingly, since the 1990s the local administration has made a significant effort to create a horizontal and deliberative way of sharing an alternative vision of Turin. The changes in the decision-making processes in Turin have been an effort to transcend the dynamic of confrontation and "bring urban actors out of a somewhat secretive, conflict-ridden culture" (Pinson 2002: 483). The creation of more spaces open to social and entrepreneurial interests has facilitated the transition from government to *governance*-based decision-making processes (Kickert 2007).

Along this line, in 1976, the communist local government implemented the division of the local administration into 23 neighbourhoods, which were later re-organised into the city's current 'circoscrizioni' (Allasino et al. 2003: 71).[106] The 'circoscrizioni' in Turin, unlike in Barcelona, have councillors ('consigli di quartiere elettivi') that are directly elected by the residents of the territories. Although this is designed to nurture grassroots

[106] Currently, the city of Turin is divided into eight administrative areas, named '*circoscrizioni di decentramento comunale*', which encompass the 94 statistical areas, articulated in their respective 'quartiere' (the city's 'neighbourhoods', which are also often referred to as borghi, borgate, rioni o zone). The 'circoscrizione' are participatory and consultative organisms that manage basic services (demographic, social, educational, cultural, sportive and leisure services) and tend to have competences over urban maintenance and public heritage of the specific area of the territory in which they have authority. For the physical organisation of Turin into 'circoscrizioni' and 'quartiere' see Appendix D.

democracy and levels of political responsiveness, as Valentino Castellani (1996) argues, it also promotes the domination by political parties of these decentralised spaces of power. Moreover, in Turin (as is the case in Barcelona) 'circoscrizioni' tend to have few powers (in terms of competences) and high levels of bureaucratic rigidity, making it difficult for them to become spaces of genuine citizen's participation and grassroots engagement.

Another piece of legislation implemented in Turin (as in all Italian cities) that changed the relationship between local actors provides for the direct election of city mayors by their citizens, rather than their election through the City Council (Sartorio 2005: 26). In accordance with State Law No. 81, since 1993 candidate mayors from different coalitions have been able to present themselves and their programmes ('*Programma del Sindaco'*) directly to the people. The aim of the reform was to give more visibility to the 'sindaco' in a context of a general crisis of legitimacy throughout the traditional political system in the wake of *Tangentopoli*. The change has afforded local politics greater power and significance, lessening the importance of party structures at the local level. Moreover, the '*Programma del Sindaco'* has become an important tool for local politics and urban planning, outlining of a list of actions to be implemented within four years, and forming the basis on which to draw up annual budgets (Sartorio 2005: 31).

In Turin, however, alongside the political will within the administration to introduce innovative practices, cuts in public spending have been implemented, local politicians have been delegitimised, and electoral participation has decreased (della Porta and Mosca 2015). Ultimately, the literature seems to suggest that cuts in public spending and the reforms that have led to a greater prominence of the mayoralty have reduced the power of local councils (*circoscrizioni*) and local counsellors, which is argued to have led to the emergence of greater protest channelled directly to the Mayor and the City Council (Castellani 1996: 82).

At the district level, the literature suggests that, with the introduction of directly elected district councillors, there has been a greater chanelling of urban conflict and the everyday issues of urban life in Turin through established political parties. There are thus contrasting dynamics of conflict at the district and city levels in Turin; while political parties are able to dominate and challenge the local conflict at the district level, at the city level, protest reaches the mayoralty directly, through channels that bypass the main political parties.

4.3. Urban planning and urban policies in Turin: interventions and agents

Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, Turin grew without the guidance of any urban plan or regulation process. In those years, overcrowded working-class neighbourhoods emerged, characterised by uneven standards of municipal services, degraded urban spaces, and conflicts in relationship to the scarcity of housing (Daolio, 1974; Castagnoli 1995). Blocks of housing were built in the outskirts of the city –the areas surrounding the factories – often as the product of unregulated private constructions.

Initially, the new population settled in dilapidated parts of the city centre (often areas destined for demolition) where absentee landlords subdivided buildings into rental units with a high turnover of tenants. Later, the newcomers began populating the traditional working-class neighbourhoods of the city – those with a distinctive urban working-class culture, such as Borgo San Paolo, Borgo Dora and Barriera di Milano. By the late 1950s, some workers also began to settle in Mirafiori Sud, the area surrounding the largest FIAT plant in town (Pizzolato, 2013).

It was common for these new urban spaces to lack basic services, such as schools and health services, public transport and public spaces. Nonetheless, close relationships developed among the workers in these highly dense neighbourhoods, which became the breeding ground for the development of the labour movement in the city. However, for Turin's working class, the factory represented the principal space for socialisation, while unions[107] (alongsidethe PCI and its policy of leadership training) were the main vehicle for political organisation.

Between 1975 and 1985, the so-called 'giunte rosse' – the local government – was able to implement a degree of decentralisation and participatory policies (to the benefit of grassroots movements) but was unable to implement a new urban regulatory plan for the city. This was despite the fact that services were overburdened, housing was overcrowded and unaffordable, and the social and cultural tensions between domestic migrants and locals were simmering (Cotella 2011: 102). Further, by the end of the

[107] The main unions in Turin are FIOM-CGIL (*Federazione Impiegati Operai Metallurgici*, part of the *Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro*), FIM-CISL (*Federazione Italiana Metalmeccanici*, part of the *Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori*), and UILM (*Unione Italiana Lavoratori Metalmeccanici*).

1970s, FIAT had plunged into crisis; the global energy crisis was extremely damaging to the car industry, while the economic recession shook the whole city.

In 1985, when Christian democrats, socialists and other minor parties took power, a more difficult period began, with successive, unstable coalitions governing the city. Over those years, the municipality continued its piecemeal course, addressing urban change without any semblance of an encompassing urban plan. Instead, urban intervention was based on a 'project-by-project' approach, mainly carried out by the private sector and principally guided by a 'real estate' logic.

This lack of "an overall territorial vision" (Pinson 2002: 483) affected the way the city dealt with the significant changes in the industrial sector and the global production of automobiles. The way in which FIAT managed the conversion of its historic Lingotto factory, for example – which was done entirely at its own discretion – provides an illustration of how the local administration was managing urban transformation at the time (Bobbio 1990 in Pinson 2002: 484); the traditional industrial heart of the city was transformed into a centre for leisure, shopping and innovative business.

It was not until 1993, when Professor Valentino Castellani became the mayor of the city, that Turin managed to break from some of the dynamics from the past. In 1995, the city presented its first urban masterplan– the *Piano Regolatore Generale* (PRG hereafter) – which set a regulatory and zoning framework for land use in the city. This was an important milestone as it represented the first urban project based on an integrated vision of Turin. The masterplan was needed in order to physically regenerate the city and, in turn, encourage private developers to revitalise the old industrial areas (Cotella 2011: 103).

The PRG in Turin includes a big 'real estate' offer (Saccomani 2001) and focuses on three main ideas: to accelerate a transition to the tertiary economic sector, to help update and increase the 'real estate' valorisation of strategic areas in agreement with land owners,[108] and to promote and design a new urban layout for a new period (ibid.). The 2006 Winter Olympic Games were presented as a way to attract funding to complete the physical renewal projects laid out in the PRG.

[108] Which were the major industrial companies in Turin – Fiat, Michelin, Savigliano and Teksid – and and the state rail company, Ferrovie dello Stato.

The main urban transformation project related to the PRG, and the largest in Turin since the Second World War, has been the *Progetto speciale Spina Centrale* (Central Backbone) project, principally funded by the State-owned railway company. The project is based on moving the main railway line (and principal urban frontier) that carves through the city from North to South underground, creating a new boulevard (of 12 km in length) and requalifying four major brownfield sites surrounding the new boulevard in order to create new mixed-use neighbourhoods (the so-called Spine 1, 2, 3 and 4). The vision of the project has been to transform an old urban frontier into a central place for the city. Although it was planned to be implemented in ten years (between 2000 and 2010), it remains under development.

The development of Spina 1 took place between 1995 and 2005 and encompasses an area located in the south of the city, traditionally hosting industrial uses. After a period of abandonment, the area has been transformed into a new boulevard and an urban park. Spina 2, meanwhile, has been based on the creation of a new boulevard and a new station – Torino Porta Susa – surrounded by a university campus, a library, a theatre and the new court of law. Spina 3, the part of the city where the railway goes under the Dora River, represents the largest piece of land under development (around a million square metres) and it is one of the most ambitious interventions linked to the PRG. Many of the developments in this area (new residential areas, urban parks and public spaces) have already been completed, although some transformations remain pending. Finally, the development of Spina 4 has been based on the creation of a new access to the city from the north and encompasses residential developments and the construction of the new 'Rebaudengo' train station, which opened in 2009.

Another large intervention undertaken in Turin over recent years has been the construction of the metro line, which opened for the 2006 Winter Games and connects the western outskirts of the city with the centre and southern suburbs (Prats and Mangili 2016: 219). The metro brings the deprived ex-industrial areas in the North and South of Turin into the city's main transport network. Other investments in the transport system have been the construction of a tram line and the development of some underground parking areas. The city's Porta Susa train station – historically of minor significance – has been transformed into an international rail hub that connects Turin to Milan, Venice and, ultimately, other European cities (Prats and Mangili 2016: 219).

Turin has also invested in the creation of new pedestrian areas, commercial and residential areas, and new cultural initiatives (including new exhibition spaces, the Museum of Cinema), new university campuses, sporting venues and fairs (including a book fair and a 'taste fair'). Moreover, "many historic and former industrial buildings, including the symbol of the city, the Mole Antonelliana, have been converted to contemporary cultural uses and landmarks have been restored" (Prats and Mangili 2016: 220).

Beyond developing purely urbanistic and infrastructural projects, the municipality of Turin has also, over recent years, addressed specific urban problems, such as security issues, cultural interaction with new migrants, inadequate public services, worsening environmental conditions, traffic and congestion and water delivery. It has been developing innovative urban projects that include both physical transformation (including the redevelopment of public spaces, the construction of neighbourhood markets, community centres, social and leisure facilities and housing maintenance) and the creation of new governance tools and decision-making spaces (Dente et al. 2005: 47).

Around the turn of the 21st century, the neighbourhoods of San Salvario and Porta Palazzo were undergoing processes of dramatic urban transformation, prompting fear among residents regarding quality of life and local identity. Taking advantage of European Commission funding for urban renewal, in response to these local conflicts "the Castellani administration launched a complex and inclusive neighbourhood revitalisation initiative under the banner "Periphery Project"[109] (Prat and Mangili 2016: 220). Porta Palazzo was the pilot project and developed a 'complex and integrated'

[109] The Periphery Project, or the '*Progetto Speciale Periferia*' started in 1996 to address the inequalities between the central and peripheral neighbourhoods of the city and, in different forms, has continued until today. In 1996 the Torino City Council presented the project "The Gate [Porta] – Living not leaving" to the European Union for the area of Porta Palazzo. The Torino City Council received funding of 5 billion lire within the European Regional Development Fund. The "Porta Palazzo Project Committee" was created in 1998 as a non-profit organization made up of public institutions and private organisations to implement and manage the project. "Urban 2" has since been another project promoted following the same idea and with participation of EU funding for the area of Mirafiori Nord. Simultanrously, Turin has also developed actions of participatory local development – "Le Azione di Sviluppo Locale Participato" – in the neighbourhoods of San Donato, San Paolo-Cenisia, Barriera di Milano, Falchera, Le Vallette, San Salvario and Lucento. Moreover, between 2011 and 2015 Turin promoted the project "Urban" in Barriera di Milano, as a local development program with funding provided from the EU, and the regional and local administrations in Turin. Recently, Turin has approved the project "AxTo – Azioni per le periferie torinesi", presented in August 2019 by the municipal government, in order to access €18 milion of funding and continue to address (with a total budget of €41 milion) the transformation of parts of the outskirts of the city, with 44 projects planned.

urban policy approach that successfully transformed "a once run-down automobile-dominated and unsafe area with few accessible public spaces" into "an attractive, safe, and vibrant cultural hub" (Prat and Mangili 2016: 220).

Throught the development of these processes of urban regeneration, the residents of the neighbourhoods in question have become highly active in terms of their social networks, actively participating in the urban transformation of their territories. The experience overall has been very positive, and it has been replicated in other areas of the city. Although the projects have faced some charges that they are a means to instrumentalise urban grassroots, they have significantly transformed the relationship between citizens and institutionalised decision-making bodies (Allasino et al. 2003) and have brought about the emergence of new social and political actors and operative tools.

One of the main aims of these policies, promoted by the City Council, has been to generate groups of residents in the neighbourhoods and provide them with resources to facilitate their autonomy and responsibility for the decisions affecting their territory. The '*Progetto Speciale Periferia'* has worked with social services, educational services, the third sector and local associations (Bihgi. 2016: 123 in Balestra et al.) to create strategic points and spaces for the coming together of local actors: the municipality, the district level officials, and both public and private actors (Balestra et al. 2000). These participatory spaces have addressed urban recovery and local regeneration, incorporating and encouraging active citizen participation in the form of '*Piani di accompagnamento sociale*', inviting the existing '*comitati'* and, in some cases, promoting the constitution of new '*comitati'* (Dente et al. 2005: 47) in the process of transformation.

One of the main outcomes of the promotion of these innovative policies has been the creation of the *Casa di Quartiere*, a place of social encounter between local actors and citizens, and promotion of social and cultural activities that has emerged in neighbourhoods such as San Salvario or Barriera di Milano. These neighbourhood spaces are the product of collaboration between public institutions, private companies, local non-profit associations and citizens. The *Casa del Quartiere di San Salvario*, for example, is a space managed by the '*Agenzia per lo Sviluppo Locale di San Salvario'* (with a concession of 30 years), which is a partnership between the local administration, the Compagnia di San Paolo, the Circoscrizione 8 and a large number of non-profit associations rooted in the neighbourhood.

In fact, through the promotion by the municipality of Turin of participatory and innovative forms of urban regeneration over the last thirty years, the everyday issues of the urban life in Turin today tend to be addressed by grassroots associations working in partnership with the local administration and private companies. For example, one highly active initiative is the "*Rete delle Case del Quartiere*", which is a collaborative network of eight different regenerated public facilities that offer local services and organisational capacity at the local level (often supporting processes of social mobilisation at the neighbourhood level), in collaboration with the municipality and the Compagnia di San Paolo.

4.4. The building blocks of urban protest in Turin

Turin has a long tradition of voluntary and third sector organisations (both religious and secular) that have had a strong presence and active participation in the urban life of the city. Those organisations are specialised in social and cultural issues and tend to work in close contact with the local administration. Turin is also a city with a strong working-class identity and, as such, has a long tradition of unions and left-wing political organisations. Although the local left-wing political forces in Turin have traditionally concentrated their activity on working conditions rather than addressing urban social dynamics, they have shown an enduring capacity to spur significant mobilisations.

4.4.1. Left-libertarian movements and the 'autonomia' sector in Turin

Between the 1960s and the 1970s, Turin played a significant role in the construction of the new Italian Left. The working class began to fragment, and social, cultural and political differences become apparent. The arrival of unskilled workers from the south of Italy clashed with the old Turin working class. The 'old left' (members of the PCI and the unions CGIL and FIOM) failed to understand the changing nature of the new working classes and were not able to recognise their political potential. Instead, it was radical groups of the new Italian Left (*operaismo*) or the 'extra-parliamentary' Left, which took the fragmentation of the working class as an opportunity (Pizzolato 2013) and successfully organised itself in the new working-class context.

In 1969, Italy experienced its '*autunno caldo*' ('hot autumn'), a peak in protest that had Turin's FIAT factories as the mobilisation centre. Students from all over the country

travelled to Turin to support the movement. Turin also saw the occupation of the headquarters of the university and a major strike of the labour movement that paralysed the local production system. This wave of mobilisation – which has long been recognised as the greatest mobilisation of workers in Italian history (Cacciari 1973; Pizzolato 2017) – paved the way for structural reforms of society. It combined working-class activism with growing student protest and marked the birth of a number of social movements in Italy: *Avanguardia Operaia* (1968), *Il Manifesto* (1969), *Potere Operaio* (1969) and *Lotta Continua* (1969).

Lotta Continua was an organisation constituted by the combination of various groups – *Potere Operaio* in Tuscany, *Potere Operaio* in Pavia, and students from the universities of Turin, Trento and Milan (Della Porta, 1995) – that became the most significant radical group in Turin. It denounced the unions – even the CCGIL – "as ineffective in furthering working class demands and called for an 'autonomous' organisation of the working class" (Pizzolato 2013: 10). It presented new political demands for a modernising country and employed new repertoires of action such as the occupation of housing, facilities, factories, schools, and universities (Pizzolato 2013; Lumley, 1990).

This wave of mobilisation witnessed the eruption of new organisational dynamics (in the form of a less tightly structured organisation of protest), a new political agenda (students and the young working class found a common ground in their anti-authoritarianism against their respective institutions; the university and the factory), new repertoires of protest (rent strikes and the organisation of campaigns in the neighbourhoods) and a greater degree of fragmentation of the working class (Pizzolato 2013). The PCI in Italy – a highly centralised party – was highly adept at quashing internal opposition and, although it had an interest in stimulating protest, did not accept the presence of autonomous forces, especially those to the left of its own party (della Porta 1995: 41).

In the 1970s – at the same time that Spain was starting its transition to democracy and experiencing protest for the amnesty of political prisoners (1973) – Italy was entering its so-called '*anni di piombo'* ('years of lead'), which represented a radicalisation of the political conflict and the rise of armed struggle and political violence. The evolution of the conflicts of the Italian left-libertarian movement (against both the state and neo-fascist groups) radicalised the movement and led to the acceptance of the use of

'defensive' violence (della Porta 1995: 48). The '*Brigate Rosse'* were a clear consequence of the radicalisation of autonomous left-wing groups and some intellectuals (Catanzaro 1991). Between 1975 and 1980, they claimed responsibility for violent actions that even injured workers from FIAT.

Those years have heavily influenced a sector of the left-libertarian movement in Italy (with a significant presence in Turin), linking the movement to certain levels of political radicalisation and violence. Today, it is easy to find in the Italian media high levels of stigmatisation of this social movement sector, often attributing to it a criminal character. the 'anni di piombo' retain a vivid presence in the collective imaginary of Italian society (in particular in Turin), and each time there is a degree of confrontation between the police and some element of the left-libertarian movement in Turin, the descriptions of it in the media refer to the 1970s context.

Following the end of the "*anni di piombo*", and in the wake of a number of years of very low levels of political participation and organisational dynamism, over the 1980s and the 1990s the left-libertarian movement in Turin and the *autonomia* sector of the city developed a significant squatting movement. The first occupations in Turin took place in 1984-85, carried out by the collective 'Avaria', which created the self-managed space; 'El Paso'.[110] In 1989, following some temporary occupations by the collective 'Spazi Metropolitani', the movement obtained – in agreement with the local administration – spaces in the Murazzi Po, out of which the CSA Murazzi[111] was created (Berzano et al. 2000). At the outset, the aim was to re-appropriate spaces that had fallen into disrepair. As time has gone on, however, a new political dimension has developed within the movement, with the aim of creating an alternative political and cultural network in the city. Between 1988 and 1991, the Turin squat movement experienced its most significant period of growth (Martínez 2002) and in contemporary Turin there is an active network of around ten squats ("palazzine") managed by the left-libertarian movement and the autonomia sector in Turin. Examples include the historic social centres of "Gabrio" and "Askatasuna", the house of the "autonomia torinese",

[110] The "Paso Occupato" is punk inspired and libertarian-anarchic oriented. Since its beginnings it has played an important role in the development of the hardcore punk scene in Turin. However, over the years, the squat has lost its centrality. The name comes from the street in which it is located "via Passo Buole" in Lingotto, in the south of the city.

[111] The "CSA Murazzi" is a "Centro Sociale Autogestito" in the Murazzi in Turin. Its activity stopped in 2000 because of alleged irregularities in the whole area of the "Murazzi" and the need to regenerate the space. Recently, however, it has again been squatted and returned to activity.

and almost 200 appartments occupied by families in need of housing that have been helped by the movement.

To schematise what is of course a complex web of social and group dynamics, the squatting movement in Turin can be divided into two broad sectors: the libertarian-anarchic sector and the neo-communist and autonomia sector (Berzano and Gallini 2000: 53).[112] All of the occupied centres, however, identify themselves as part of the occupation movement; defending occupied spaces and ensuring that the practices of self-management and squatting endure. The main differences between the two sectors are in how they define themselves and their relationship with the local administration and the surrounding territory (ibid). In Turin, there is a network of CSOAs sharing a reality that includes active members, supporters, and occasional visitors (Berzano and Gallini 2000: 50; Pecorelli 2015).

The squatting movement in Italy has largely been populated by young people. The central themes of the movement have concerned the experimentation with forms of "liberated sociability" and the self-financing of social and cultural activities. The movement is also often part of the organisation of collective protest actions on issues such as the treatment of immigrants, the environment, the freedom of political prisoners, and claims for self-determination. The forms and practices of “liberated sociability” and channels for “self-financing” have been principally been the promotion of parties, concerts, debates and film screenings, along with online communication. The movement has a presence in large cities around the country, housed in abandoned buildings such as factories, or areas affected by urban restructuring plans. The movement’s presence tends to challenge authority and forms of institutional power at the local level.

In Italy, as in many European countries, the media has tended to stigmatise the squatting movement, attributing to it a marginal character, sometimes even criminal due to its conflicts with the police. The continuity and survival of the movement has been due, to an extent, to the social network that supports it – a network that goes beyond the traditional left. The expansion of the squatting movement during the 1990s, in Italy as in Spain, was connected to the expansion of new technologies and the Internet, with the

[112] This echoes the movements of the 1970s: the autonomia operaia, the Marxist-leninist, ‘guevaristi’ and the neo-communists.

creation of technological initiatives such as self-managed, free radios stations and Internet servers.

The squat buildings in Turin are in general ‘palazzine’; abandoned institutional buildings – such as ex-nursing homes or schools – usually located at the centre of working-class neighbourhoods or near parks or public gardens. The majority of the squats combine residency with the organisation of activities. They all share new media tools and virtual spaces such as ‘Web Zone Torinesi’, ‘Zero comunication’ and ‘La Nautilus di Torino’ (Berzano and Gallini 2000: 69). They also have promoted online radio stations and information websites, from which they have established relationships with various Italian and international counter-cultural organisations. ‘Radio Black Out’, for example, has been a very important resource for the movement in Turin. Completely self-managed and self-financed since 1992, it is a space to communicate, diffuse ideas and stimulate debate about antagonistic culture.

In the 1990s, various local administrations and left-wing institutional forces – such as the Rifondazione and Verdi – proposed to legalise social centres in a number of cities in Italy, including those in Turin. In response to the proposal, the squatting movement organised a number of demonstrations against its legalisation and, in 1993, a large assembly was held in ‘El Paso’. Alternative political groups from various Italian cities attended the assembly and read a manifesto against the proposal for legalisation. In Turin, the supporters of the manifesto were ‘El Paso occupato’, the ‘Barocchio occupato’, ‘Prinz Eugen occupato’ and ‘Delta House occupato’ (Berzano and Gallini 2000: 54).

The legalisation process was seen by one part of the squatting movement as a way to suffocate the movement and make self-organisation and protest impossible. For the local state and the local public administration, the proposal was understood as a way to take control of the centres, while for the left-wing political forces that made the proposal it was an attempt to create a left-wing alliance (Berzano and Gallini 2000). Within the movement, there had historically been two broad positions in relationship to the local administration. The first, typical of the libertarian sector, has been a position of complete refusal to cooperate with institutions and against any move toward legalisation. A second position, associated with the neo-communist and autonomia inclined elements of the movement, has accepted some level of relationship with the administration, although that relationship has been at times conflictive.

Social centres in Turin have not only addressed conflict at the local level, they have intervened in broader social mobilisation processes. In the 2000s, Turin's social centres were very active in the 'anti-globalisation' movement.[113] In 2001, the same year Turin successfully bid to host the 2006 Winter Olympic Games, the large protest in Genoa against the G8 meeting took place, infamously met by the Italian state with severe repression. According to Pierpaolo Mudu (2004):

> "the importance of Social Centres within the movement opposing neoliberalist globalisation processes lies in their ability to mobilise thousands of people in a snap. People take to the streets in their thousands even for local demonstrations, earnestly and constantly committed to gaining fresh understanding and experimenting with what they have learnt in an effort to make available fresh social spaces and press for global political space" (Mudu 2004: 933).

The Social Centres of Turin, as I will outline in the following section, have also been highly active in other significant Italian social mobilisations of recent years, such as the opposition to the high-speed train link ('*treno ad alta velocità'*, or TAV) between Turin and Lyon and the movement for a water referendum.

4.4.2. The No-TAV movement and the Water referendum movement

In 1991, the strongly disputed TAV project was launched based on the plan for a new high speed and high capacity railway in an alpine valley of Piedmont, with the aim of connecting Turin and Lyon. Despite the movement of opposition, until very recently every Italian national government – from across the political spectrum – had "supported this work by defining it as a strategic priority for Piedmont and for the whole nation" (Maggiolini 2013: 15). However, the vast majority of the work along the 270 kilometres of train line planned to run through France and Italy are still far from even commencing. With the arrival of the Five Start Movement (M5S) to the national government in 2018 (in coalition with the support of *Lega*, formerly the Northern League), the issue has, for the first time, divided the government; while M5S opposes the construction of the infrastructure, Lega is in favour. For the first time since the project launch in 1991,

[113] Together with the "tutte bianche" ('white overalls'), the 'disobedient', Italian laic and religious associations, and some Italian left-wing political parties (for example, Verdi and Rifondazione Comunisti).

people have demonstrated in favour of the construction of the TAV, with almost 30,000 people mobilising in November 2019.

Ever since the project was presented, most of the population in the areas implicated in the proposals have strongly opposed the TAV. Accoridng to Giani Piazza, "the No Tav is the longest and best-known territorial movement in Italy, with the highest level of mass participation ever achieved in the country" (Piazza, 2016: 5). The movement has developed in Turin and Piedmont (especially in Val di Susa) and brings together the Susa Valley Mountain community (which encompasses many citizens of the valley and several local administrations), Turin's autonomia sector, the city's principal social centres (especially Askatasuna), academics, environmental associations and left-wing parties. The project is criticised on a number of grounds: environmental devastation, financial, public health (in light of the harmful materials contained within the rocks to be drilled), and as an opportunity for the mafia (Maggiolini 2013).

Beyond the Italian national government, in recent years the French government, the European Union, the Piedmont Region, the Province and City of Turin, the Italian Railways and the Italian-French railway company (LFT) have formed a coalition to support the new infrastructure. For those in favour of the project, the TAV "represents a fundamental logistic platform for attracting global trade flows, an element of modernization, a development factor, a means for economic revitalisation, and an important opportunity for employment" (Maggiolini 2013). For years, the Italian system has provided no space for discussing the project with local communities, which has been circumvented on two accounts: the agreement with France and the 'Legge Obiettivo', which mean that the project can bypass environmental evaluation on the grounds of being 'strategic' in nature.

The campaign against the TAV has been ongoing for over 20 years, peaking between 2011 and 2013 with the attempt by the movement to stop the construction work for the tunnel in Chiomonte. In terms of the movement's strategies, its preference has been for "direct non-violent actions and picketing, along with strikes and widely attended demonstrations" (Mosca 2013: 274). The institutional reactions to protest have involved significant clashes with the police, often with the mayors in the front line, "an increasing militarization of the valley, alternated with attempts at selective co-optation" (ibid) and, from 2012 onward, "complaints, arrests and convictions for the No Tav activists, above all the Social Centres militants and anarchists" (Piazza 2013: 5).

The *autonomia* sector in Turin and its activists from social centres have brought political-organisational resources to the movement, although on occasion this has created a division between the more radical anarchist groups adding their support from outside the Susa Valley and the more moderate valley community. Institutional actors within the valley – such as the mayors of its towns – have often provided the movement with an important degree of political legitimacy (Gianni 2016). CSOAs in various Italian territories – especially in the country's north – found a common focus in their opposition to the TAV, which became emblematic as a bottom-up struggle for the defense of the commons and the defense of the territory.

The project has provoked a highly complex territorial conflict – even if it has often been flattened to 'Yes-TAV versus 'No-TAV' in public debate – that continues to attract protest. Opposing the work has been an important point within a wider political proposal for an alternative development model, based on environmental protection, socio-economic sustainability and bottom-up participation.

Beyond the No-TAV movement, a further important movement in Italy with a notable presence in Turin has been the mobilisation against the privatisation of the public water system. On June 2011, 27 million Italians voted in a national abrogative referendum, in which two questions addressed the issue of the privatisation of water. The referendum was citizen-induced, with the collection of 1.4 million signatures gathered to provoke it interpreted as an "incredible sign of vitality of the commons movement, which mobilised tens of thousands of volunteers, collecting nationwide signatures in the most remote corners of the country" (della Porta et al. 2017: 129). The campaign lasted 18 months and was framed according to a linkage of the process of privatisation of the country's public services with a general context of austerity and neoliberalism, argued to be an economic model that demands constant expansion and commodification.

In Turin, in 2002, thousands of signatures were collected by the Turin Water Movement "in support of a petition asking local and provincial councils to assert in their statutes the principle that water is not a commodity but a common good that should be considered public property and be publicly managed" (Rosolen 2018: 55). The local campaign in Turin was successful and managed to force the modification of the municipal statutes. The national campaign, on the other hand, although generating impressive support for the water movement (with 95.4% of people voting against privatisation) was ignored by the Italian Parliament.

4.4.3. Comitati di cittadini in Turin

As in the case of Barcelona, Turin is home to '*comitati di cittadini*', which also emerged in the 1960s and the 1970s. Although at that time the social conflict was still structured around industrial dynamics and the political space of the factory, and although the workers' demands were primarily economic,[114] the rapid and unregulated process of urbanisation created important deficiencies in living conditions within the city, especially in the neighbourhoods and housing projects inhabited by economic migrants. The lack of adequate housing and social services led to the emergence of a type of urban mobilisation that developed into what were called the '*lotte per la città'* (Allasino et al. 2003: 5). It produced some joint protest with the worker's movements, with organised demostrations from factory to factory (from Mirafiori to Vallette, for example), going through the city and addressing inadequate living conditions and public services for workers (Ginsborg 2003:10; Cotella 2011).

This resentment, beyond causing regular production stoppages in the factories, prompted the emergence of '*comitati spontanei di cittadini'* in the neighbourhoods of Turin's outskirts, that were highly active in making claims for a better provision of urban services and infrastructures and in promoting greater grassroots participation. In Turin, the '*comitati spontanei di cittadini'* were coordinated – in a way similar to the neighbourhood movement in Barcelona – under the body 'Domenico Sereno Regis',[115] a coordination body that has been recognised and financed by the local government (Allasino et al. 2003). Domenico Sereno Regis has been used to share interests, ideas and aims, and organise the broader urban struggle at the city level. As is the case with the neighbourhood associations of Barcelona, the '*comitati di cittadini*' claim to be non-partisan, with their political tradition rooted in the progressive catholic movement and left-wing political movements.

The fact that the '*comitati di cittadini'* in Turin, and in Italy in general, emerged in a context of democracy, while in Barcelona the neighbourhood associations developed in a context of dictatorship, have caused important differences in the role the *comitati* and the neighbourhood associations respectively play in the two cities today. In Turin,

[114] Protest activity focused on direct action aimed at slowing down production processes and made claims for reduced working hours and better working conditions.
[115] Named after one of the prominent active members of the grassroots movement.

these organisations developed in a context of political freedom, active political parties and unions and a principally class-oriented social conflict. The *comitati* represented, therefore, one of multiple ways to organise social mobilisation and participate in the local political scene of the city. In Barcelona, on the other hand, the neighbourhood organisations emerged in a context with completely closed political opportunities for mobilisation and where the urban conflict was used as a way to channel general political discontent. Neighbourhood asscociations became the only way to legally participate in the local political life and were the place of encounter between the various political actors existing at the time (such as, local activists, members of clandestine political parties, left-wing academics, politically involved professionals, etc.).

Even through the years of social convulsion in the factories and the fragmentation of the working class, the factory and the communist movement continued to channel social protest in Turin. In the 1960s, the emerging student movement – in Turin and Italy more generally – maintained the categories and symbols of the old left. According to della Porta (1995: 49), one of the most notable characteristics of the Italian student movement (which was highly prominent in the city) was its capacity to attract a significant part of the old labour movement.

Over the 1980s, the '*comitati di cittadini*' went through a period of very low visibility, with some falling almost entirely inactive. The majority did not, however, disappear completely; although they were not responsible for any significant campaigns of urban mobilisation, they nonetheless maintained their structure throughout the decade, facilitating the participation of citizens in local politics by informing residents and offering support when needed (della Porta 2004). Their evolution represented an example of a shift in the geography of mobilization in Turin; whereas in the 1970s the *comitati* were located mainly in the outskirts of the city, in the 1990s new *comitati* began to appear in more central neighbourhoods.

The new generation of *comitati di quartiere* that emerged in the 1990s (which were characterised by a more conservative discourse than the *comitati* of the 1970s) were successful in pressuring the local government to implement innovative policies related to urban security and citizen participation (Allasino et al. 2000). After years of political passivity, the emergence of new *comitati* – most notably in the neighbourhoods of San

Salvario and Porta Palazzo[116] – was seen as an expression of the need for direct citizen participation. The crisis of the party system, the reforms that created a new institutional context at the local level and a reasonably stable political context were all factors that opened up space for new actors, making possible the emergence of new instances of contestation and conflicts promoted by the identity-based *comitati*.

The protests were framed as protests against insecurity and urban degradation – issues that reflected a feeling of diffuse discomfort. They represented a shift away from the complaints about the efficacy of public administration – regarding neglected public parks and other public spaces – which were characteristic of previous years, and towards a more assertive and active citizenship with significant decision-making power and a desire for improved quality of life. In fact, their emergence expanded the plurality of opinions and values prominent in Turin (Allasino et al. 2003: 68; Dente et al. 2005: 47), and their protests were highly visible as they were not channelled through party-political dynamics.

These new types of mobilisations were not exclusive to Turin. Other Italian cities experienced similar developments around the same time (Allasino et al. 2003: 11), but to a lesser extent than Turin. The relatively strong mobilisation in the city is explained by the local structure of political opportunities. In Turin, the mobilised citizens (from both centre-right and centre-left ideologies) felt a greater need to pressure the left-wing local government[117] on issues such as security and quality of life than citizens from other municipalities with right-wing parties in government. In cities such as Milan – governed at that time by the Lega – governments were more ideologically disposed to readily respond to concerns about order and against immigration.

The urban mobilisations and urban campaigns developed by these *comitati* managed to mobilise consensus and insert themselves into broader socio-political dynamics and pressure the local administration into implementing policies in response to their claims regarding security and public order, urban requalification and participatory promotion (Allasino et al. 2003: 5). In contrast to the past, however, the 'new *comitati*' remained somewhat distanced from political parties in government. In fact, the emergence of the new *comitati* created two almost opposite organisations of '*comitatismo spontaneo'*

[116] Known as the 'quartiere in crisi'.
[117] Between 1993 and 2016 Turin was governed by left-wing coalitions between the PD and FdV, AD, PPI, DS, DL, PdCI, PRC, MOD, RnP, IdV, and SEL.

that differed in relationship to their approach, socio-political orientation and forms of protest. Today, the CCST (Coordinamento Comitato Spontanei Torinesi), on the one hand, and, on the other, the Coordinamento Sereno Regis, represent two umbrella organisations that embrace different ways to understand the relationship between *comitati*, politics and institutions. The CCST represents the *comitati* that emerged in the 1990s, which communicate their actions in the media and whose leaders have become well-known locally. The Coordinamento Sereno Regis, by contrast, represents the 'old' *comitati* dating back to the 1970s, which act less in the public eye and more face-to-face with local powers (Allasino et al. 2003: 19).

Because the old *comitati* were recognised by the local administration as legitimate representative of their local territories, and because they did not participate in the 1990s conflicts, they were accused by the 'new' comitati of being controlled by the left-wing public administration and no longer able to represent the demands of the citizens. Although the 'new' comitati present themselves as unpartisan, they have generally had links with centre-right political parties. This was evident when, in 2001, some of them ran in the local elections in alliance with local right-wing parties as part of the list 'Comitati spontanei torinesi per la rinascita di Torino'.[118] Before that, in 1997, the Comitato sponataneo di San Salvario ran for the 'circoscrizione' elections and performed moderately, but did not gain elected representation.

In the 2000s, Turin was a city with 'comitati' present throughout its territory. There was at least one *comitati* in all the *circoscrizioni* of the city. Some *comitati* are single-issue (for example, against the installation of a telephone antenna or against a piece of road infrastructure) and tend to dissolve when the specific campaign they promote ends. In general, however, although the 'comitati' in Turin tend to emerge in relationship to a single-issue, over the campaign they tend to broader their scope of action and interests and create a permanent structure. In general, they remain rooted in the same territory from where they first emerge.

[118] Turinese Committees for Turin's renewal. The list failed to have any councillors elected.

4.5. Economic crisis and the end of 'Sistema Torino'

It has been argued that Turin was the northern Italian city hit hardest by the last economic crisis of the 2000s (Vanolo 2015). Some of the reasons for this identified in the literature are the small number of companies based in the region, a low-quality service economy characterised by a lack of innovation, and an aged population (Banca d'Italia document 2017). The economic crash exploded just following the euphoria of 2006 Turin's Olympic Games and it was largely unexpected, coming in the context of positive economic indicators (Vanolo 2015: 5). The Stability and Growth Pact of the EU – reformed in 2011 to address the sovereign debt crisis that had hit the Eurozone – handcuffed the local and regional governments, imposing severe restrictions (Vanolo 2015: 5).

In Italy, the financial crisis did not have the same effects on the real estate market and the banking system as it did in other peripheral European countries (Andretta 2017: 20). The principal problem for Italy was its sovereign debt, which grew from 113 per cent of GDP in 2008 to 157 per cent in 2015 (OECD Data). Prior to the emergence of the crisis, the low economic competitiveness of the country had been the result of a low level of investment in technologies, a high use of the labour force and a specialisation in labour intensive sectors (Andretta 2017: 204). From 2010 onward, the austerity measures applied to Italy worsened the situation, resulting in the implementation of labour market reforms and cuts to the education sector and the healthcare system.

However, "in Italy, neoliberal urban austerity policies have been widely applied" (Bragaglia and Krähmer 2018: 107). The outcomes have been "a considerable mismatch between housing supply and demand, leading to a 'housing emergency' strongly felt in the cities of Turin" (Caruso 2016). Various economic figures demonstrate the economic difficulties experienced in Turin over the past decade and a half. In Piedmont, between 2000 and 2007 GDP had grown 7.9 per cent but between 2007 and 2014 it decreased 13.2 per cent (Istat). In 2012, the average disposable income of Piedmont families was 20,237 euros – a value about 11.5 per cent higher than the national average but 3.1 per cent lower than the Nord West average (Eu-SILC). Between 2008 and 2015, the city of Turin had gone from 6.3 per cent unemployment (29.5 per cent for the young) to 12.3 per cent (27.8 per cent for the young). Following the peak of unemployment in 2013 (13.7 per cent and 30.5 per cent for the young), in 2015 the level started decreasing (Istat).

Piedmont is one of the Italian regions that has been most impacted by the process of deindustrialisation that has transformed Europe over recent decades, and nowadays it is well behind Lombardy in terms of GDP – a gap that has widened in the wake of the economic crisis.

In Turin, it has been necessary to undertake the process of urban transformation simultaneous to the social and urban crisis affecting the centre and the outskirts of the city, with new and old urban fragilities meeting. Porta Palazzo, San Salvario and Barriera di Milano have emerged as the neighbourhoods where old and new urban conflicts meet. They have been places where disputes around the security of the residents have consolidated and conflicts with new, extra-European immigrants have arisen (Allasino et al 2000). Moreover, Turin has been deeply affected by the housing crisis, with consistently high eviction numbers over recent years. In 2016, 3,500 evictions were registered in the city,[119] overtaking Rome and making Turin the eviction capital of Italy (Lorenzetti 2017).

Over recent years, Turin has managed to transform around 6 million square meters of industrial area, but a further 4 million remain pending. The economic crisis has affected the new housing development in the *Spina Centrale*, generating economic and financial uncertainty for the developers (Derossi. 2016: 145). A significant part of the cultural uses planned for in the PRG have had problems with respect to their implementation as a result of a lack of funding; consequently, a number of them have been replaced by more economically profitable uses such as commercial centres and residential areas. This was the case for the ex-Officine Nebiolo and Westinghouse, for example, where a new central civic library was supposed to be housed but the project was eventually cancelled (Caruso et al 2016: 205).

Ahead of the municipal elections in June 2016, the M5S in Turin committed to ending land speculation in the city – particularly highlighting the planned construction of a new shopping centre – and to bring about a radical change with respect to the 'Sistema Torino'. The M5S promised to break 25 years of continuity in the local administration and to cut the costs of the council administration, improve transparency and encourage citizen participation. The significant debt the city has with banks have, however, constrained the ambition of the new local government (Biancalana 2019: 70).

[119] 90 per cent of which were the result of the indebtedness of the tenants.

In relationship to the most recent wave of protest, in Italy the anti-austerity protest started earlier than in Spain. In fact, according to Zamponi (2012), "Italy was the birthplace of the first mobilisation targeting the crisis-related austerity measures" (2012: 416). In 2008, the '*Onda Anomala*' ('Anomalous Wave')[120] began to frame the student protest using an anti-austerity discourse. Soon after, however, "Italy appeared unable to play a significant role in European anti-austerity mobilisation" (Zamponi 2012: 416). Attempts to develop mobilisations in the style of the Occupy movement failed, and none of the Italian movements were successful in reaching "the level of mass participation, symbolic strength and transversal recognition necessary to develop a general anti-austerity movement" (Zamponi 2012: 418), as had been the case in Spain with the 15M/Indignados movement.

Although, the anti-austerity protest mobilisation that has taken place in Italy has been weaker and more fragmented than in other South-European countries (such as Greece or Spain), between 2009 and the end of 2014, it nonetheless involved several types of organisations and social movement sectors, and exhibited a variety of repertoires of action (Andretta 2018). In Italy, trade unions have been the overlooked heroes of the anti-austerity protest (Peterson et al 2013), and in 2011 Italy saw "a number of relatively large protests by […] radical unions aimed at austerity measures by the government" (ibid 2013: 3). Protest events were significantly higher between 2009 and 2011, declined during 2012 and 2013 and rose again in 2014 (Andretta 2018).

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, as I have done previously with the Chapter 3 about Barcelona, I have presented some of the most relevant aspects of the local political, institutional and social context of Turin. The aim has been to give a general overview on the local context of Turin and the most relevant aspects affecting the nature and intensity of the urban protest developed in the city. I have divided the chapter in five sections, each of one addressing one of the perspectives taken into account when comparing urban protest in

[120] The expression of 'Onda' or 'Onda Anomala' has been used to identify the Italian student movement that developed over the autumn in 2008 in response to cuts in public funding for education under the Berlusconi government.

Barcelona and Turin. The fact that Chapter 3 and 4 follow a similar structure is to identify how similar dimensions of the local context are presented differently in the two cases.

The economic and financial crisis that erupted in 2008 has deeply affected the process of urban transformation in Turin (which started at the end of the 1990s-beginning of the 2000s) and, consequently, the current situation of the city when analysing its global position as a touristic destination and cultural point of attraction. The fact that the economic and financial crisis hit Turin just after the celebration of the Games represented a significant obstacle for the development of the urban regeneration project and the transformation of the economic base of the city. Consequently, and in the current context, the representation of Turin as a "new", vibrant and international city has clashed with a city deeply impacted by the social and economic crisis, with important housing problems, inequality and high levels of unemployment.

Although traditionally Turin's left-wing parties did not enjoyed a continuous dominance in the local government, between the 1990s and 2015 Turin managed to have a stable ruling coalition, pejoratively referred to in public discourse as the 'Sistema Torino', but having the strengths to develop the regeneration plan for the city. First the mayor Valentino Castellani (1993-2001), then Sergio Chiamparino (2001-2011) and finally Piero Fassino (2011-2015) managed to frist approved, in 1995, the first urban masterplan of the city – the *Piano Regolatore Generale* – which represented the first urban project based on an integrated vision of Turin. It was a much needed plan that culminated and accepted the disappearance of FIAT, assuming the need for a new project for Turin. Then, this government promoted the Strategic Plan of the city with what represented a victory at the time, the winning the bit to host the 2006 Winter Olympics. This local government has also managed to promot the implementation of innovative urban policies, such as the *Progetto Periferie*, partly funded by the EU.

The delayed, in comparison to Barcelona, meant that the economic crisis impacted Turin in a most sensitive stage of urban transformation, just when the city started to develop its transformation. However, and probably because of having to be innovate in terms of funding and applying resources as Turin has had to rethink itself in a austerity context, the city has been applying a lot of innovative policies and the local government has been very active in developing institutional mechanisms to incorporate the civil society in the regeneration process. This has produced a more responsive local

government and more open to incorporate external actors than what has traditionally been the local government in Barcelona.

The period between 2011 and 2016 represented the culmination of 25 years of continuity of the local administration. In 2016 there was the entrance of the M5S in the local government, which was supposed to bring a radical change and so far has showed more continuities than discontinuities.

Finally, in relationship to the social base of Turin and the grassroot sector we have seen that, probably, because of the particular history of the city, the propensity of the local state to impose repression is affected by the relationships established with the different sectors of the society. While the autonomia sector is related to some levels of violence and confrontation with the police, the third sector is very involved in the dynamics of the city. The city of Turin has a strong squatting tradition that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s and it is linked to the social centres.

In Turin, therefore, between 2011 and 2015 we see a simultanrous and selective process of institutionalisation and repression of grassroots urban mobilisation. On the one hand, there is a sector that is constantly stigmatised and, on the other, a sector that is reliable as a partner and constantly included in the urban regeneration model. These practices tend to be translated into a polarised situation between groups that are co-opted and subsumed within the third sector groups and radical and autonomous groups that try to remain separate from the local state, we will see in the next chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE
The Urban Conflict

In this chapter I analyse how urban contention unfolded in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015. I start from the assumption that urban mobilisation does not arise spontaneously in response to changes in the macro-structure (which Turin and Barcelona share), but from a system of local political opportunity structures that I have presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Accordingly, I analyse the main differences and similarities found in the urban type of protest developed in the cities between 2011 and 2015, and connect them with the local political and institutional context.

The main argument in the chapter is that the urban conflict in Turin and Barcelona has developed in a similar fashion, reflecting a similar impact of the economic and financial crisis and the austerity measures applied in response. Between 2011 and 2015, Turin and Barcelona's urban protests address a similar structure of urban issues. However, the mediation of the local context appears to have played a significant role in determining the ways in which urban protest does or does not develop in turn. Mediating between sources of dissatisfaction and urban protest there is a layer of local context – existence of institutional channels for citizens' participation and complaint, urban projects and plans and other institutional instruments that impact the levels of disruptiveness of the forms of urban protest developed at the local level.

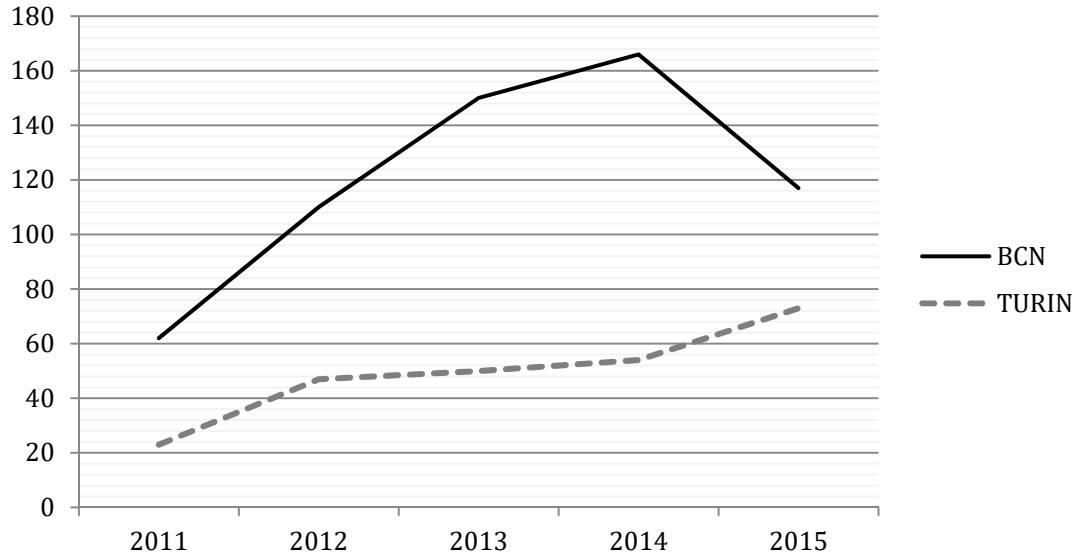
The chapter is structured in three sections. First, I describe the levels of urban protest in relationship to the general anti-austerity cycles of mobilisation developed in both contexts. Both cities present a similar structure of urban problems as urban mobilisation address similar types of issues. However, urban protest is not only more intense in Barcelona than in Turin but whereas in Barcelona it is possible to identify a cycle of urban protest similar to the dynamics of the anti-austerity cycle of mobilisation in Turin is not. Second, I present the repertoires of action used in the urban protests, corroborating that although the sources of dissatisfaction in Turin and Barcelona are similar, the expressions of protest vary. In Barcelona there is more demonstrative actions than in Turin, whereas Turin shows a more polarised system to express dissent. Third, I present the relationship between grassroots and the municipality, arriving to the conclusion that although the selection of specific urban repertoires is definitively constrained by the tradition of the movement, the particular nature of institutional

elements found in the local context seem to play a relevant role in determining the development of specific types of urban protest.

5.1. Cycle of anti-austerity mobilisations and urban protest

The total number of urban protest events collected for Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015 are N=852, 605 (71%) for the case of Barcelona and 247 (29%) for the case of Turin.[121] The number of urban protest events for Barcelona more than doubles the protest events collected for Turin, which confirms my preliminary assumption that, despite sharing a similar structure of urban problems and macro-dynamics, Turin and Barcelona present significant variation with respect to the intensity of urban-type of protest.

Figure 2. Number of urban-type protest events. Event-count data aggregated on annual basis. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

[121] It is necessary to note that in both cities there existed a much higher number of protest events than those visible in newspaper coverage, especially with respect to events related to obstruction and blockages. The housing movements in both cities ('Prendocasa Torino' and the 'Plataforma d'Afectats per la Hipoteca') blocked evictions on a daily basis (in the case of Barcelona) or on a monthly basis (in the case of Turin). However, in both cities I only collected a very small percentage of these events. Rather than publishing stories on the majority of these events, newspaper coverage was characterised by occasional summary stories that reported on what was a repeated practice. However, because I know from other sources that the gap between events and reporting is similar in both contexts, I have taken the collected data as representative of a reality that was much larger in scale.

Figure 2 shows that in Barcelona the aggregation of urban protest events on an annual basis is consistent with a cycle of protest, exhibiting an ascending phase, a climax and a demobilisation phase. In Turin, by contrast, the aggregation of urban protest events represents a continuous and moderate increase between 2011 and 2015, with more intense increments between 2011-2012 and 2014-2015.

For the case of Barcelona, the increase in the number of urban protest events between 2011 and 2013 is evidence to confirm the hypothesis that the decentralisation of the 15M/Indignados movement and its disaggregation into neighbourhood assemblies translated into an increase in the number of urban struggles. Urban protest in Barcelona peaked in 2014, from which point the mobilisation started to decrease; a decrease that coincided with the institutionalisation process of local social movements through the creation of the citizens platform 'Barcelona en Comú', with Ada Colau as its figurehead.

As it has been presented in Chapters 3 and 4, after the eruption of the economic crisis in 2008, South-European countries were pushed by the European Union to proceed with 'structural reforms' considered to be necessary measures to increase economic growth and recover national economies. Liberalisation, job flexibility, privatisation and public-sector pay cuts have been some of the measures applied in Italy and Spain since that time. The situation of economic crisis (with its attendant increasing levels of unemployment and housing evictions) together with an institutional response based on the application of austerity measures, triggered widespread protest across Europe, especially in the South.

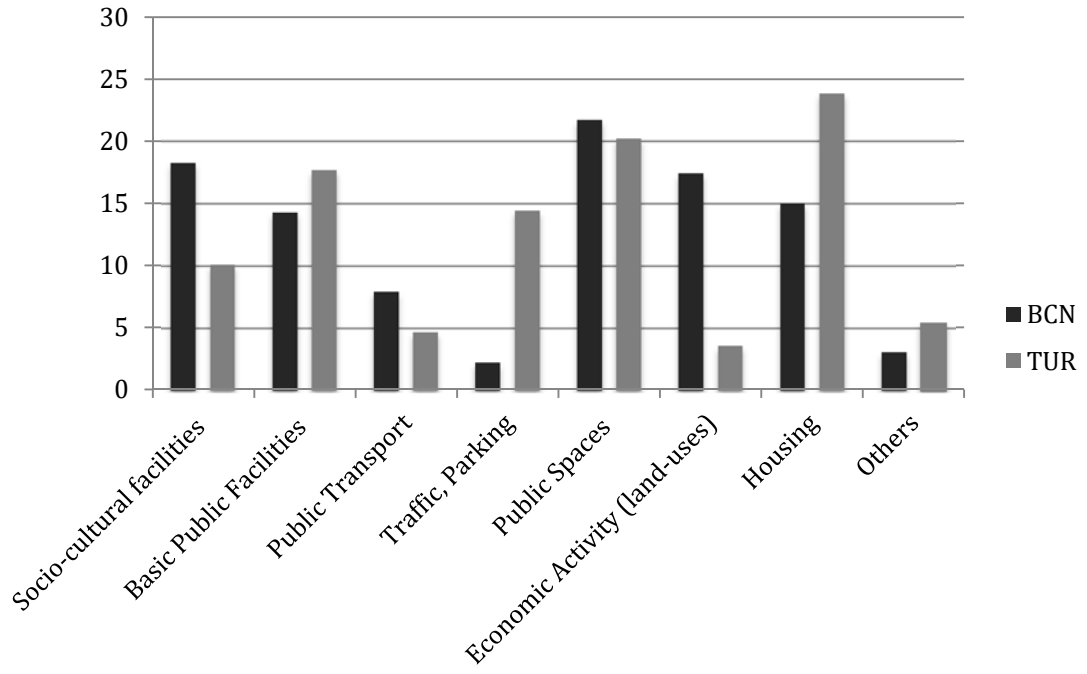
The data seem to confirm the findings of other authors[122] in relationship to the eruption of urban movements in Barcelona during the later years of economic-financial crisis. After several weeks of camp, in June and July 2011 the 15/M movement disaggregated into various neighbourhood assemblies (Antentas 2017). The decentralisation of the movement contributed to the local struggles, as it provided organisational settings, the design of strategies and support for campaigns (Portos 2016b: 194). Accordingly, the 15M, in contact with other pre-existing local actors, re-activated pre-existing local demands and brought them to prominence. After the summer of 2011, and the abandonment of the camps, the movement lost media visibility and overall participants;

[122] See Lois-González and Piñeira-Mantiñan 2015; Portos 2016; Antentas 2017.

however, the shift brought forward everyday problems and pressing citizen needs at the neighbourhood level (Flesher 2015). It was a way the movement found to go beyond the ideational and pre-figurative type of practices that had developed in the camps and face concrete needs based on the local agenda of protest.

However, the data also support the idea that the relationship between economic crisis and the rise of urban protest is not as straightforward as it is often presented in the literature. Turin and Barcelona are two cities that, between 2011 and 2015, shared a similar context of economic and social problems, and a general deterioration of the conditions of citizens' lives. If we analyse the urban protest events developed over the period under study, comparing Turin and Barcelona in relationship to the particular issue-areas being addressed by the protestors, we see a lot of similarities (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Distribution of urban-type protest events according to issue-areas of protest. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

Barcelona and Turin have been among the cities most greatly affected by the financial and economic crisis in Southern-Europe, especially in relationship to housing and the number of evictions resulting from an inability to make mortgage repayments. As we see in Figure 3, housing is a relevant problem in both cities, being especially relevant

in Turin. The effects of the crisis in Barcelona and Turin occurred simultaneously between 2011 and 2015, together with the similar application of austerity measures, cuts and the privatisation of basic services at the local level. Figure 3 shows that the urban protest events related to basic public facilities are important in both cities. Nonetheless, the levels and intensity of urban protest at the local level have varied markedly.

In the case of Turin, although a mobilisation event comparable to the 15M in Barcelona is absent, the data show an increase of urban protest between 2011 and 2012 in the city. In 2011, the arrival in power of Mario Monti marked a process of de-mobilisation at the national level. According to Andretta (2018), the general demobilisation at the Italian national level was linked to the resignation of Berlusconi in 2011 and the opening up of political opportunities. "The enemy [Berlusconi] was defeated, and new chances to influence the government opened up" (Andretta 2018). In that context, more moderate actors – such as the large, national unions like the CGIL – defected from the protest arena and more informal organisations (with fewer organisational resources and more radical repertoires) mobilised.

While on a national scale, levels of social mobilisation declined during 2012 and 2013, urban protest in Turin smoothly increased from 2011 onwards. One possible explanation is that the general shift in the type of actors present in the protest arena from large and moderate actors to informal and radical actors favour social protest at the local scale. The data also shows an increase of urban protest actions in 2014 and 2015 in Turin, which this time coincides with a general increase of social mobilisation at the national level in Italy. In fact, the demonstrations in Italy had their peak in 2014 (Andretta 2018).

In Turin, the political measures implemented by the Renzi government at the national level – such as the 'Piano casa di Renzi' and the 'Job Acts'[123] – seem to have worked as platforms from which local protest have managed to articulate itself. Between 2010 and 2012,[124] there was an emergence of a variety of local campaigns in Turin that, together with the perception of the local administration as incapable of responding to

[123] The Jobs Act is an informal way of referring to the reform of labour rights in Italy – promoted by the Renzi government through the approval of several legal procedures brought forward in 2014 and 2015 – aiming at increasing flexibility within the labour market.
[124] Such as 'Prendocasa Turin', solidarity actions with the ex-Moi buildings, anti-speculative plans in San Salvario and the occupation by the cultural sector of the Cavallerizza Reale.

the increasing economic and social difficulties, developed during 2011 and 2015, reaching higher levels of coordination – especially at the national level – and a higher intensity of mobilisation. This coordination is exemplified by the creation of general slogans such as #riprendiamocilacitta, which include very different local urban conflicts, and "dalla valle alle metropolis" (linking urban protest in Turin with the No-TAV movement, for example).

In addition, in December 2013 the 'Forconi' (the Pitchforks) mobilised under the umbrella organisation "Movimento 9 dicembre' (December 9 Committee), bringing together lorry drivers, small business owners, farmers, unemployed people and students. This group, which defines itself as non-partisan, has been "founded by a Sicilian entrepreneur on the basis of a bunch of political demands including national monetary sovereignty, and opposition to austerity and economic globalisation" (Castelli and Froio 2014: 24).

Turin hosted, at the end of 2013, one of the movement's largest protests in Italy, involving three days of blockages, stopped trains, clashes with police and the occupation of squares. The protest, which brought together very different groups, pointed to a frustration with traditional politics and a wide-ranging opposition to austerity policies, the government, the Euro, Brussels and globalisation. The movement has been often labelled as part of the extreme right (as it includes some extreme right political organisations) although it has been also presented as a non-political and transversal movement of people that feels un-represented by traditional political organisations (participants include '*grillini*' and even activists from the *autonomia* sector). They have had as their slogan "sense partiti, senza ideologie, con la sola bandiera tricolore" (La Stampa, 2014).

Finally, although their intensity rose and fell, the conflicts related to the high-speed railway (TAV) and the uncertain future of the FIAT plants in Turin (especially FIAT Mirafiori), with the metal workers asking the regional and local administrations for the implementation of social protection policies, had a constant presence in Turin between 2011 and 2015. These two conflicts pre-existed the anti-austerity cycle of mobilisation in Italy and have had an important presence in the city of Turin over recent years. Although this research does not include those movements – both because of their being located outside the administrative limits of Turin and their inconsistency with the

conceptualisation of urban protest put forward here – it is nonetheless important to note their significance in the broader context of social mobilisations in and around Turin.

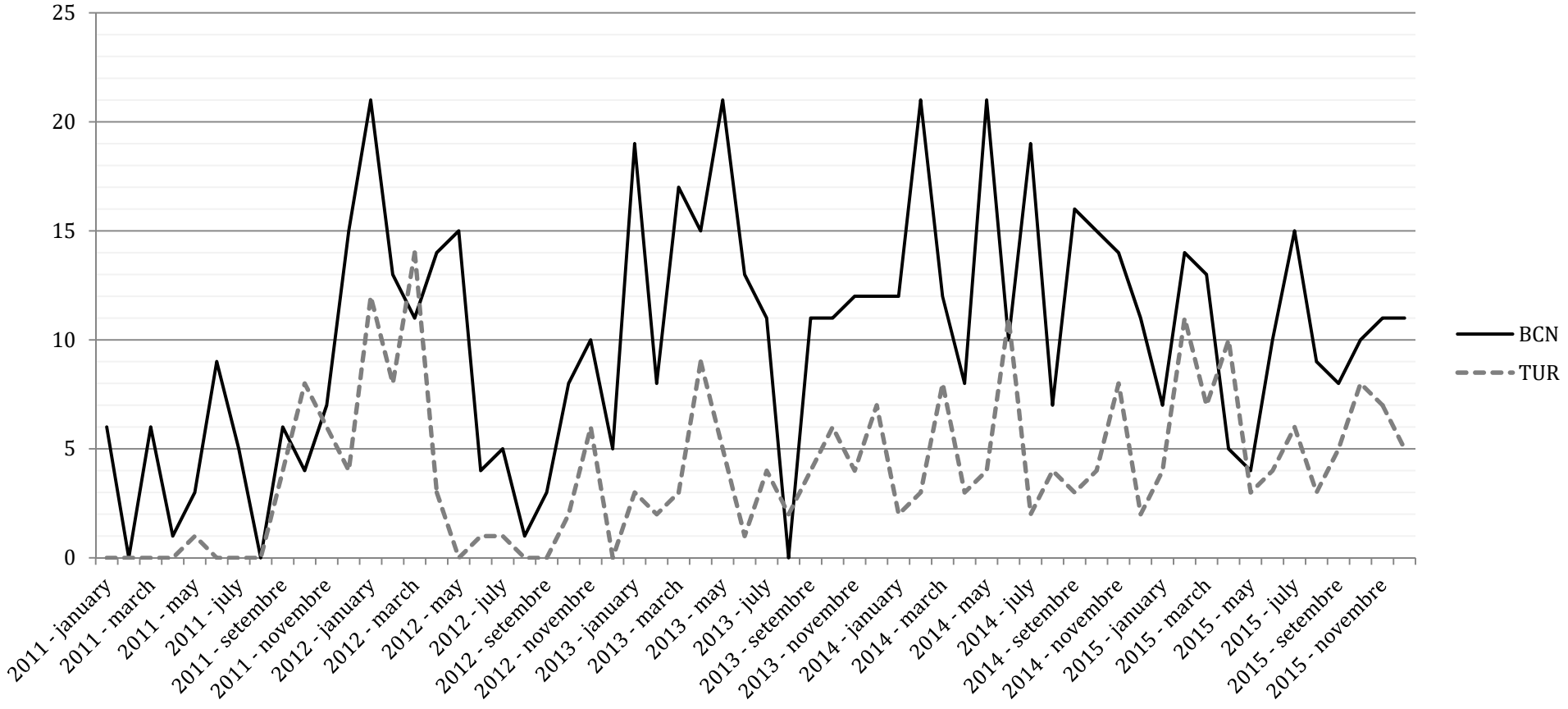
In contrast to Italy, Spain experienced a peak in protest between 2012-2013 (Portos 2016), although the main turning point was the Indignados movement, which developed in May 2011. Following the disbandment of the camps, a number of other important protest events took place in Barcelona. The first was the blockage of the Catalan Parliament (June 2011), where protesters came together under the slogan 'Let's stop the parliament' and aimed to prevent the parliament's deputies from approving cuts to the regional budget. Also notable were the so-called 'mareas' (tides) – two general strikes called in March and November 2012 – which were organised in order to fight austerity and to bring together many different organisations, assemblies and issue-specific platforms in defence of public services.

As Portos (2016a) has argued, to reduce "anti-austerity protest in Spain to the events represented by 15M would preclude us from seeing what in truth was in reality a much more complex cycle of social confrontation" (Portos 2016a: 182). After the 15M camps, the movement returned to the neighbourhoods, but the protest activity increased and persisted until the beginning of 2014, which is something that the data collected for this research corroborates. Although the movement specialised in issue-specific conflicts, the various collective mobilisations managed to coexist and interact, linking their specific demands to a more general rejection of austerity and claims for democratic renewal from below.

In Spain, following the wave of protest between 2011 and 2014, the protest actors and their repertoires of action became exhausted and institutionalisation began to be seen as a more effective and plausible way to achieve their aims (Anduiza 2014). In that context, some actors decided to go beyond protest and turn the political capital built up around the 15-M/Indignados into an institutional force. Putting candidates forward for elections was part of a broadening strategy adopted by one part of the protest movement. Their main goal was to renew the political system and 'take back' institutions, reclaiming politics in its more conventional and institutional version. The data collected for this research also corroborates how urban protest in Barcelona decreased noticeable in 2014.

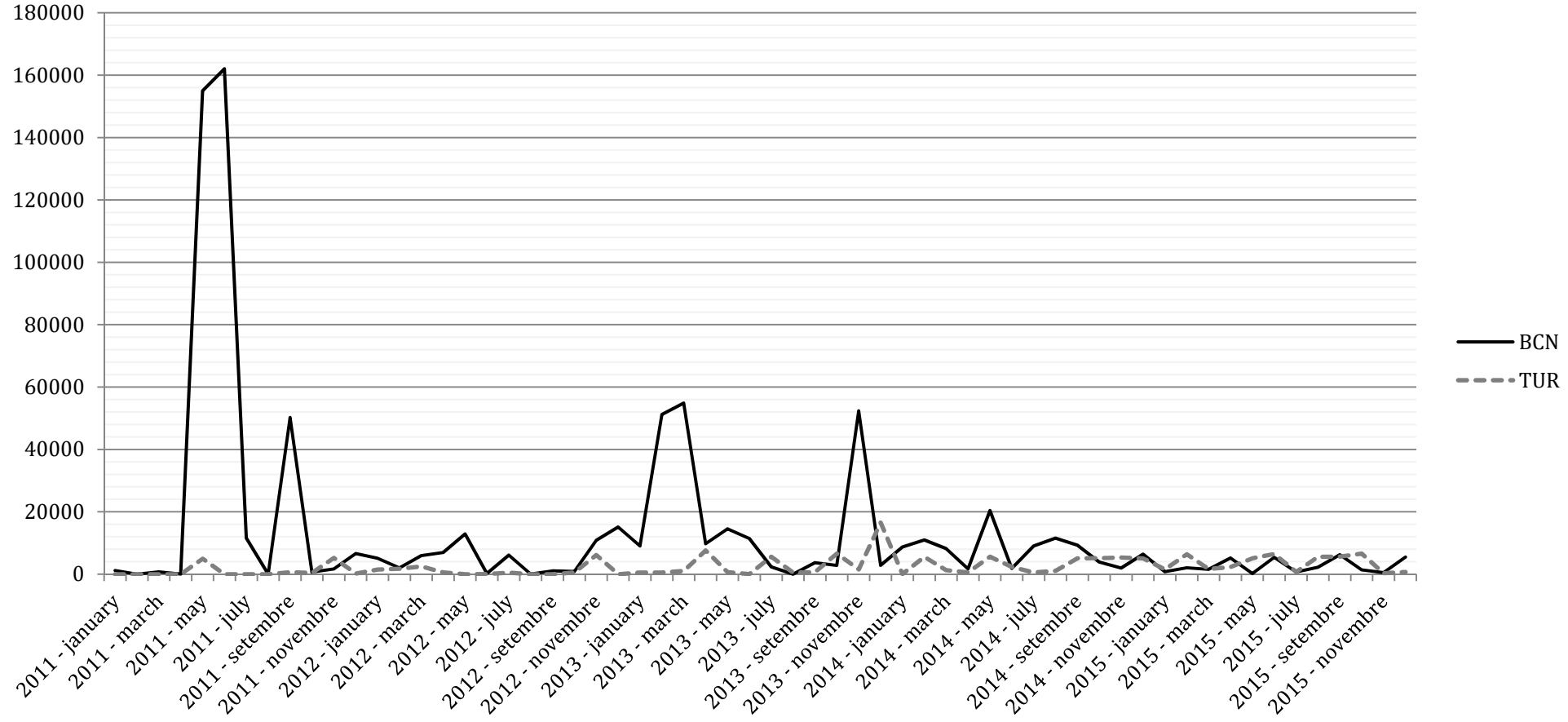
At the regional level, it is important to mention the pro-independence movement in Catalonia, which has been a highly active conflict since 2011. Although it is not considered an urban-type of protest for this research, the movement has certainly impacted some organisational and framing strategies of the urban mobilisations taking place in Barcelona. In 2010 Spain's Constitutional Court made public its verdict on the Statute of Autonomy following an appeal that had been made in 2006. The verdict "fostered contestation and the organisation of dissent" with 1.5 million protesters taking to the streets to march under the slogan 'We are a Nation, We Decide'" (della Porta et al. 2017a: 59-60). The cycle of mobilisation of Catalan independence developed between 2011 and 2015 and since 2015 the regional pro-independence coalition in Catalonia "has been rooted in its promise to organise a binding referendum on independence and its commitment to a unilateral declaration of independence if it obtained more than 50% in favour" (della Porta et al. 2017b).

Figure 4. Number of urban-type protest events. Event-count data aggregated on a monthly basis. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

Figure 5. Number of participants in urban-type protest events. Participants-count data aggregated on a monthly basis. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

When we examine the data aggregated on a monthly basis, we see greater similarity between the two cases. Figure 4 shows a complex picture characterised by important fluctuations, with sharp changes in the number of protest events. However, beyond this variability, it is also possible to recognise a trend in relationship to how urban protest spreads throughout the year. In both cities we see that urban protest tends to drop during the summer months, especially in August, and increase during winter, especially around the beginning of the year.[125]

The variability in the levels of urban protest between summer and winter could suggest that urban mobilisation develops in close relationship with the local administration. We find more mobilisations in the moments of the year where there is greater administrative and political activity – moments in which urban protestors may be thought to have more capacity to influence the local political context. In that sense, even though urban conflicts often address local expressions of global dynamics (such as inequality, migration, economic crisis, etc.) the data seems to support the idea that they are expressions of tensions in the relationship between the administration and the citizens, who protest when the goals of the two diverge (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010: 112).

On the other hand, when analysing number of participants in the urban-protest events we see much larger events in Barcelona than in Turin. The peaks we can identify in the graph are related to, in the case of Barcelona, the 15M movement (summer 2011), and two large anti-austerity mobilisations (that took place in 2013 and another in 2014) that were clearly urban in type (related to housing and other basic services). Spain as a whole experienced a protest peak in 2012 and 2013 with the emergence of the so-called 'mareas' (tides) organised against austerity in issue-specific processes of social mobilisation. Although many of the events organised by the 'mareas' are not included in the data of this study because of their falling outside of the conceptualisation of urban protest employed here,[126] those that were examples of urban-type protest have raised the recorded levels of participation.

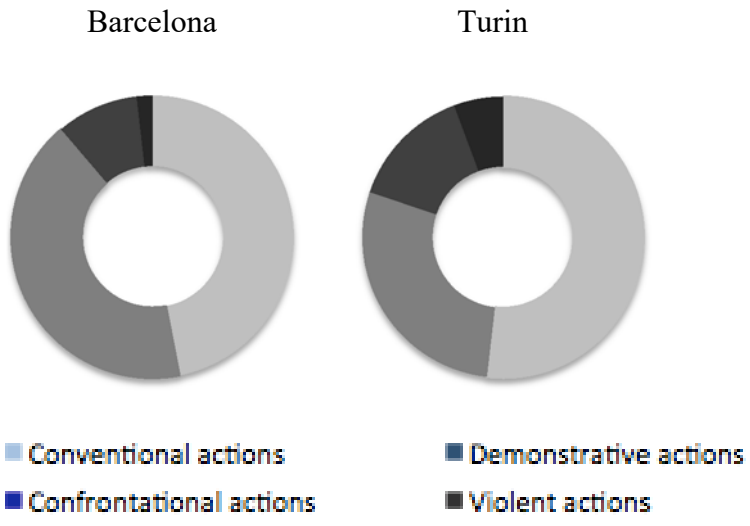
[125] In Barcelona, there is one exception to this trend, during the summer of 2014, which saw a notable urban mobilisation against tourist apartments organised by residents of the Barceloneta neighbourhood.
[126] The protest events of the mareas tended to be extensive and diffuse, not focusing on specific territories.

In the case of Turin, we do not see very large demonstrations. In Italy, the most significant demonstrations in the anti-austerity cycle of protest took place in Rome. In fact, we see a much more nationally coordinated struggle in Italy than in Spain. Even though neither Turin nor Barcelona is a capital city, we find that the intensity of mobilisation in Barcelona appears less affected by that fact than is Turin. In the case of Turin, even some protest events with a clear local dimension took place in Rome, such as in February 2012 when workers went to the capital to mobilise to defend their labour conditions and rights as part of the FIAT conflict and the problems related to the Mirafiori plant.

5.2. Urban mobilisation and forms of protest

Urban contentious claims can be delivered through more or less conventional channels and show different levels of disruption. I have drawn on Catani et al. (2012), Kriesi et al. (1995) and Tarrow (1989) to build a typology of repertoires of action that distinguishes categories on the bases of increasing levels of "disruptiveness" (Tarrow 1989: 68). Accordingly, I distinguish between the following repertoires of actions: conventional actions, demonstrative actions, confrontational actions and violent actions.

Figure 6. Distribution of repertoires of action in urban-type protest according to levels of disruptiveness, 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

Figure 6 shows the forms that urban protest takes in Barcelona and Turin in relationship to the level of disruptiveness. The darker the colour, the more disruptive is the form of protest. As we can see, both contexts show similar distribution of protest events in relationship to the levels of disruptiveness, although with some notable differences.

First, we can affirm that urban protest in Barcelona and Turin is indeed moderate in its forms and has the tendency to use conventional channels for the expression of claims. However, looking at the data in more detail (see Figure 7) we see that, even within the moderate forms to protest, there is a much bigger tendency to express dissent through institutional channels in Turin than in Barcelona. In Turin, conventional types of protest represent 51.8% of the total events whereas in Barcelona they account for a little under 47%. However, if we identify the institutional channels within the conventional forms of protest (which are petitioning and active public participation in spaces of local governance), we see than in Turin, 36.5% of the total protest events are channelled through these institutional forms of public participation whereas it is only 15.1% of the total protest events in Barcelona. The majority of the conventional forms of protest in Barcelona take the form of press releases, lobbying and diffusion (mainly banners).

In Turin, petitioning represents 29% of the total protest events, which is the form of protest with the highest percentage. This has to do with the fact that in Turin there exist a specific system of local participation established that did not exist in Barcelona during the period analysed (a similar system was established in 2017 under Ada Colau's government with the approval of new tools for citizen participation).[127] In Barcelona, on the other hand, the media is the most used channel by urban protestors to express dissent. Urban movements use it to make their actions visible and communicate their claims (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010). Movements often have direct access to journalists to inform them about their actions. At other times, individual people contact the press to make public a specific situation or local conflict, though it may not have a collective behind it. The latter case has not been collected as an urban protest event in

[127] The new approved regulations give a new framework of local participation that define and clarify the political participatory channels, the resources needed, and a guarantee system that has to guard for the good use and efficiency of the channels. The main novelty is the introduction of a system of collection of signatures that can promoted bottom-up a participatory process, a citizens' consultation, approve and modify a municipal measure, the creation of new participatory organs, the availability to call for a neighbourhood council and to include issues in the city's or district's plenary. See https://barcelonaencomu.cat/ca/post/noves-eines-de-participacio-ciutadana-barcelona

this work.[128] Barcelona's urban grassroots very often use press conferences as a way to communicate their actions and claims, representing a moderate, but not institutional, form of protest.

Our data show that institutional organs of territorial participation (district councils and neighbourhood councils, thematic councils or public hearings) are not highly used by urban grassroots to express protest. In Barcelona, only 4.9% of the protest events were channelled through these types of spaces whereas in Turin they represented the 6.9% of the events. This seems to suggest that citizens use these spaces more to inform themselves than to complain and protest.

I have seen that often, especially in conflicts related to specific urban plans or policy measures applied by the local municipality, the district council tends to be the starting point of a conflict, as it often represents the moment in which the residents become aware of the intentions of the local government. However, the system of public participation is often too fragmented and lacking coordination among the different channels to discuss the urban transformation project as a whole. Often, citizen participation in these institutional spaces is perceived as having little impact on the urban project so it tends to be seen not as a useful way to impact the public administration's activity (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010). Our data confirm the idea in Turin and in Barcelona active public participation in institutional channels does not represent a widely used way to express opposition to institutional urban projects.

Secondly, from the total number of protest events collected, 41.8% of the events in Barcelona were expressed through a demonstrative action. This type of protest includes traditional forms of action, such as demonstrations, gatherings and public assemblies, and more innovative forms of protest, such as exhibitions, performances, celebrations, protest camps and the recruitment of volunteers, money or goods. In Turin this form of protest represents a significantly lower percentage, 28.3%. In that sense, urban protest in Barcelona seems to involve more public presence, visibility and mass participation, as demonstrative actions tend to show solidarity, size, and the scope of supporters of the movement (Alimi 2015: 2). Instead, urban protest in Turin seems to be more polarised between the use of institutionalised channels (usually with small levels of

[128] I have only collected those pieces of news in which there were presented at least two different interests confronted with each other and where the challenger was a collective and non-institutional actor

participation and little visibility) and confrontational action (also with a tendency towards low participation but with a high level of visibility, especially as a result of media reporting of the event).

In the literature, the proliferation of citizen mobilisation is interpreted as a sign of a crisis of the tools for articulating and aggregating interests (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa, 2010). Specifically, diffusion of conflict is presented as a response to the deterioration of the capacity of political parties to connect civil society and public institutions, and the weakening of their social support and influence in decision-making processes (Della Porta 2004). When political parties are strong and connected to avenues for the aggregation of interests, they are able to channel territorial grievances and demands, so urban protest decreases (Bobbio 2011). Accordingly, the emergence of urban protest would be explained as a result of territorial fragmentation and a crisis of political parties at the local level.

In Barcelona citizens seemed to mobilise more frequently than in Turin, immediately directing themselves to the public sphere using demonstrative actions (although often in parallel with conventional spaces too). My interpretation of this tendency is that, apart from the fact that in Barcelona there is no tradition (as it is in the case of Turin) to channel urban protest through political parties (as we have seen in Chapter 3 and 4), in Barcelona, between 2011 and 2015, there was a higher perception than in Turin that political leaders would be unresponsive to citizens' needs. Accordingly, for the urban grassroots in Barcelona using institutional channels was neither a common, useful nor impactful way to protest. In the interviews I conducted in Barcelona, the perception was that the local government was not interested in citizen participation, did not know the mechanisms available to engage with local groups and associations, and had neither contacts nor relations established with the urban grassroots and neighbourhood associations. This feeling, in general, has the tendency to favour the emergence of forms of collective action in which citizens can directly implicate themselves and have an influence (Subirats 2006).

On the part of the local government, according to Bobbio (1999), one of the persistent characteristics of public administrations is their undermining of citizen protest and their excessive trust in the correctness of their own decisions, technical studies and the strengths of the law (1999: 202-203). Such a position increases the distance between politicians and citizens and often translates into greater mobilisation. Protest is used, in

such cases, as a way to force a reaction from the local government (Cruz and Martí 2010: 123).

Moreover, the fact that districts in Turin has a political representation system, the institutional system seem to have more tools for articulating and aggregation interests. Political parties seem to have more capacity to connect civil society and public institutions in Turin than in Barcelona, and prevent the diffusion of conflict, seen as more responsiveness and having more capacity to influence decision-making processes. They are probably strong at the district level, connected to the avanues for the aggregation of interest and able to channel territorial grievances and demands, so urban protest in a demonstrative way seems to decrease.

According to the data collected, a higher proportion of protest events involved confrontational and violent actions in Turin (19.9% of total events) than in Barcelona (11.2%). The events coded as violent are events that involved clashes with political opponents, clashes with the police and/or some sort of property damage. I did not find any event that could be considered an urban riot for the period of time analysed in the two cities. The data shows that in Turin there was a slightly higher percentage of actors that used moderate and policy-making-oriented forms of action to express dissent than in Barcelona, but at the same time there was also a higher percentage of disruptive conflicts. The data shows a larger proportion of occupation and squatting practices in Turin (6.1%) than in Barcelona (3%), and a larger proportion of events that involved clashes with the police in Turin (3.6%) than in Barcelona (0.5%).

The confrontational events in Turin were mainly related to the housing movement (under the campaign 'Prendocasa Torino') – taking the form of occupation and squatting practices – and to the demonstrations organised against anti-austerity measures, which often finished with some level of confrontation between a sector of the activists and the police. In Barcelona, the confrontational types of events were also related to the squatting movement (especially the conflict surrounding the eviction of the squat centre 'Can Vies' in 2014) and the actions developed by the 'Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca' (PAH, 'The Platform of those Affected by Mortgages').

In Spain, among the most noteworthy activities of the anti-eviction movement was the simultaneous combination of contentious and conventional forms of action (Romanos, 2014), a practice that was adopted by the Italian housing movement as well. Both

movements were blocking evictions, occupying buildings and, at the same time, performing what is known as 'escrache'; "a form of protest which consists of the public condemnation of those responsible for an injustice with the objective of exposing and upsetting them" (Romanos, 2014: 297). The PAH's protocol recommends a peaceful resistance if negotiations with the police in the moment of the eviction or occupation are unsuccessful (ibid). In Turin, the housing movement has been promoted by two of the city's long-standing social centres, Askatasuna and Gabrio. Both are part of Turin's 'autonomia' sector and have a history of repression, arrests and clashes with the police, not only in the anti-eviction campaign but also dating back to older conflicts such as the NO-TAV.

In that sense, and as it has been presented in Chapter 4, in Turin some more disruptive protest forms seem to be more "normalized" than in Barcelona. As della Porta (2001) has noted, in Italy, "the occupation of spaces in disuse to be transformed into 'temporarily autonomous zones' has brought the young people of the centres to clashes with the authorities and the police, sent to perform orders of clearance: clashes that often assumed almost ritual dynamics" (2001: 86). Although violent actions on the part of Italian social centres are no longer commonplace (della Porta 2011: 86), the protests of their members often represent a challenge to the local state on the issue on law and order. Whereas in Barcelona, and especially after 2011 with the 15M movements, urban movements have a clear non-violent position, in Turin there has not been such a turning point and the left-wing political tradition has had more contact with violent forms of protest and resistance. In that case, the relationships between the city's more antagonist sector, the local government and the police have developed, over recent years, following a confrontational attitude that drags with it a history of repression, violent encounters and stigmatisation by the mainstream press.

Moreover, the data seems to support the idea presented in Chapter 3 and 4 that the local state, through the development of a variety of institutional mechanisms, is more active in Turin than in Barcelona when it comes to limit, constrain and disempower the development of some protest actions. These practices are often translated into a polarised situation between groups that are co-opted and subsumed within the third sector groups and radical and autonomous groups that try to remain separate from the local state (Mayer 2000). In Chapter 4 I have presented a local context of Turin based on two very different urban grassroots forms, one represented by the third sector and a

long trajectory of collaboration with the local administration; and another one represented by the alternative sector, with an antagonistic position towards the local state. This picture seems to be confirmed when analysing the data collected for the case of Turin. However, the data also shows the activity of a third group of actors, the *comitati di cittadini* (which I have also presented in Chapter 4), that, although with less intensity than in Barcelona, they react and confront the municipality of Turin directing themselves to the public sphere using demonstrative actions (although often in parallel with conventional spaces too).

In Turin, however, there seems to exist more polarisation between moderates and radicals, between, on the one hand, a section of the urban grassroots with an antagonistic attitude vis-à-vis the local authorities and, on the other hand, a sector with a clear preference on conventional and institutional channels. Such division often leads "to the demobilization of popular movements" (Jung 2010: 29). The more excluded, disadvantaged, and decertified movement's organizations are, the more likely it is for them to employ more violent tactics, and vice-versa" (Alimi 2015: 2). In Italy, as in many European countries, the media tends to stigmatise the antagonist sector, attributing to it a marginal character, sometimes even criminal due to their conflicts with the police. In Barcelona, the 15M movement functioned as a way to reduce polarisation, create solidarity between different urban grassroots' sectors and to morally legitimise protest within society as a whole.

Finally, Barcelona's urban protest seems to have adopted more innovative strategies to express dissent, using symbolic occupations, performance and 'escraches' more often than in Turin. In Barcelona we find a relevant use of popular participatory processes and the organization of exhibitions, performances and open debates as a way to protest, representing 16.9% of the total protest events (versus 10.9% in Turin). In Turin there is instead a slightly larger tendency to use more traditional forms of protest such as sit-ins, public rallies, strikes, occupations and road blockades.

Figure 7. Distribution of protest events by repertoires of action. 2011-2015.

		BCN		TUR	
		Total	%	Total	%
Conventional actions		**286**	**47,3**	**129**	**52,2**
1	Lobbying	15	2,5	5	2,0
2	Petitioning	58	9,6	73	29,6
3	Active public participation	28	4,6	17	6,9
4	Press releases	164	27,1	25	10,1
5	Diffusion	14	2,3	1	0,4
6	Suing	7	1,2	8	3,2
Demonstrative actions		**251**	**41,5**	**69**	**27,9**
9	Popular Participatory Processes	12	2,0	0	0,0
10	Exhibitions, performances, celebrations	50	8,3	19	7,7
11	Public assemblies, debates	40	6,6	8	3,2
12	Sit-ins	1	0,2	5	2,0
13	Public rally, gathering	71	11,7	15	6,1
14	Demonstrations (legal and nonviolent)	70	11,6	20	8,1
15	Protest camp	5	0,8	1	0,4
16	Recruitment of volunteers, money or goods	2	0,3	1	0,4
Confrontational actions		**57**	**9,4**	**35**	**14,2**
17	Strike, Self-reduction of services	6	1,0	5	2,0
18	Interruption and disturbance of official meetings	0	0,0	3	1,2
19	Boycott	3	0,5	0	0,0
20	Occupation and Squatting	18	3,0	15	6,1
21	Obstruction and Blockades	30	5,0	10	4,0
22	Unauthorised demonstrations	0	0,0	2	0,8
Violent actions		**11**	**1,8**	**14**	**5,7**
23	Clashes with political opponents	2	0,3	2	0,8
24	Clashes with police	3	0,5	9	3,6
25	Propriety damage	6	1,0	3	1,2
26	Urban riots	0	0,0	0	0,0
27	Others	0	0,0	0	0,0
		605	**100,0**	**247**	**100,0**

Source: data collected in this research

In this section I have presented the repertoires of action used in urban protest events in relationship to their level of 'disruptiveness'. In the next section I will address the type of interaction that urban challengers establish with the local administration.

5.3. Urban protesters and the local administration

5.3.1. Target of protest

Fainstein and Fainstein (1985) stated that even though the local state is not always the target of urban movements, in advanced capitalist nations, urban mobilisations "almost always collide with the local state as it acts to service, police and redevelop urban communities" (1985: 189). What we see in the data collected, however, is that the local state is indeed the target in the majority of urban protest events (80% in Barcelona and 67.6% in the case of Turin). In Barcelona, the municipality constitutes the target of a significant majority of protest events (almost 67% of the total), whereas in Turin the target is more spread throughout the different administrative levels. The district level (28% of the total protest events) and the national level (15.4%) of the public administration are more predominant as a target in Turin than in the case of Barcelona (13% and 6.3% respectively).

This is something to consider as Turin implemented local administrative reforms in the 1990s and reduced the power of the district councils, giving greater power, significance and visibility to the 'sindaco' (mayoralty). This reform was designed to increase the protest channelled directly to the Mayor and the Turin city council. However, the data shows that the municipality of Turin has yet to reach the levels of power held by the Barcelona municipality, where it is the principal interlocutor for citizens by some margin. It may be the case that the still higher levels of decentralisation in Turin than in Barcelona – in Turin, citizens directly elect district councillors whereas in Barcelona they are political appointees – lead to the district level attracting more protest than in Barcelona.

Figure 8. Distribution of protest events by targets of action. 2011-2015.

	BCN		TUR	
	Total	%	Total	%
District	78	12,9	69	27,9
Municipality	405	66,9	98	39,7
Regional	18	3,0	6	2,4
National	38	6,3	38	15,4
Other administrative levels	29	4,8	15	6,1
Civil organisations and Social groups	1	0,2	6	2,4
Corporate and Private actors	16	2,6	4	1,6
Diffuse target (public opinion)	20	3,3	11	4,5
	605	100	247	100

Source: data collected in this research

When analysing the target in relationship to the types of issues contested, we see that there is the natural tendency to target the administrative level holding competences on the issues. At the district level, in Turin, the most contested issues were (in order) the quality and the security of the public space, followed by traffic and road infrastructure, and then basic public facilities. At the municipal level, the most addressed issues in Turin were related to housing (23%), public space (19%)[129] and economic activities (16%)[130]. In Barcelona, the issues addressed at the municipal level are similar to Turin, with the exception of housing; the data show conflicts related to public space (26%)[131], economic activities (21%)[132] and socio-cultural facilities (19%). At the regional level, in Barcelona and in Turin the most contested issues pertained to basic public services and environment. Finally, at the national level, in both cases there was a tendency to contest issues regarding basic public services, austerity measures, and housing.

Although the distribution of the targets of protest vary between Turin and Barcelona, in both cases the public administration (with its various administrative levels) constitutes the ultimate target for urban protest, accounting for 92.8% of the protest events in Barcelona and 92.4% of the protest events in Turin. In both cities corporate and private actors, other civil society organisations and social groups represent a very small minority of targets.

[129] In this case, first in relationship to security and then to its quality.
[130] The overwhelming majority of protest events falling into the category of economic activity pertained to the regulation of nightlife.
[131] Mainly regarding its quality, provision and access.
[132] The tourism sector.

5.4. Urban planning as a trigger of urban protest

Of the total number of protest events collected for the period 2011-2015, 66% of the events in Barcelona and 48% of the events in Turin were related to specific institutional urban projects or plans applied by the local administration. This demonstrates that a large part of urban protest – especially in the case of Barcelona – articulated itself and developed in relation to the actions of the local administration. This remains the case despite the fact that following the irruption of the financial crisis and the application of austerity measures, the number and scale of urban transformation projects dramatically fell in both cities.

Barcelona and, especially, Turin currently have pending projects that were stopped as a result of the economic and financial crisis. Turin has almost 10 million square metres of abandoned industrial areas that were supposed to be utilised as resources for significant processes of urban transformation. However, many of the approved requalification projects are yet to be implemented or are currently paralysed, waiting for investment. In Barcelona, following the municipal elections in 2011, the local government (CiU) communicated that the coming period would not see any large urban transformation projects as part of the city's adjustment to newly straitened circumstances.

The remaining protest events – 34% in Barcelona and 52% in Turin – were events that emerged out of a perception of inadequate regulation and control by the public administration, or out of discontent with the abandonment or halting of projects previously in the pipeline. I have classified these types of conflicts in two slightly different categories. The first encompasses proactive demands; here claim-makers were demanding of the administration relatively well-defined provision to solve a specific problem, or were practices of squatting a particular abandoned building or space. The second category relates to reactive protests, where claim-makers were asking for undefined solutions to complex issues that were transforming the local territory.[133] Whereas the first type of petition tends to be simpler and specific, the second type tends to be more closely related to macro-structural dynamics – globalisation,

[133] Such as urban degradation, the arrival of refugees or the impact of the tourist industry.

metropolisation or economic transformation – that impact upon the contemporary urban space.

The second type of conflicts, more clearly linked to overarching dynamics, has been characterised as conflicts of "places versus fluxes" (Bobbio 2011); conflicts pertaining to perceived threats of external invasion. When faced with transformative forces from 'outside', local communities can be prompted to react defensively, perceiving such changes (or fluxes) as a form of aggression. Manuel Castells (2000) characterised these conflicts as pitting places (by their nature static) against fluxes (in constant movement), a tension which is one of the dominant aspects of contemporary urban conflicts. Cities regularly compete with one another to attract global fluxes, such as investment, populations and information. However, fluxes often generate insecurity and uncertainty in local places. When confronted by fluxes beyond their control, residents look to the local municipality for mediation (through regulation, control or restriction).

One campaign that exemplifies well the conflict of "places versus fluxes" is the campaign 'Moviment Veïnal La Barceloneta Diu Prou' ('The Barceloneta Neighbourhood Movement Says Enough is Enough'), which was a highly active platform developed over the summer of 2014 in Barcelona. It was created to stop the increasing presence of tourist apartments in the seaside neighbourhood and demand greater regulation by the public administration. The neighbours protested about the effects of the tourist industry in their everyday life (bringing degradation, insecurity, gentrification and speculation) and demanded more institutional intervention to control the dynamic at the neighbourhood level.

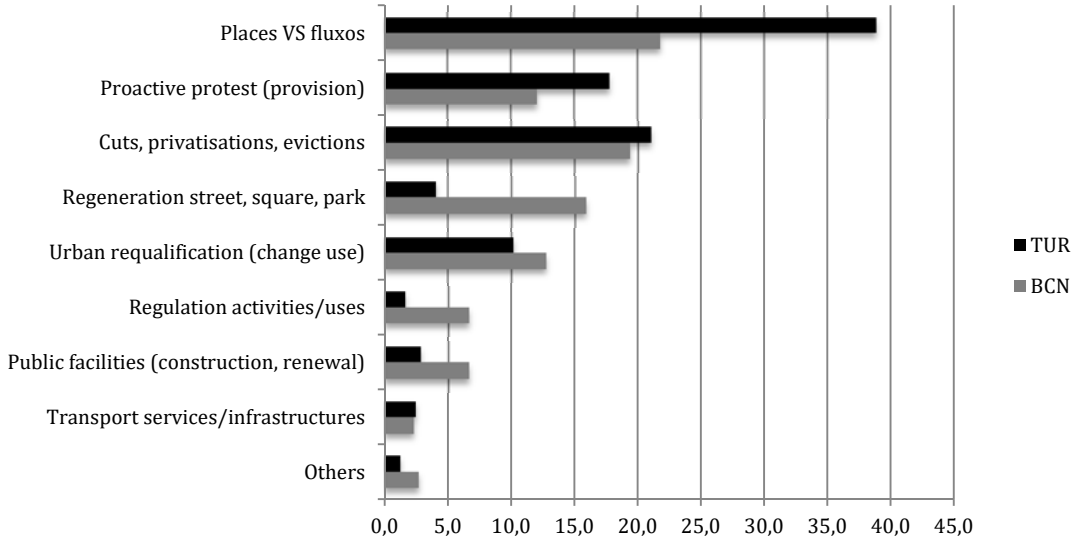
The data of Figure 9 breaks down the conflicts of both cities by type and shows that Turin is proportionally more affected than Barcelona by conflicts unrelated to specific actions developed by the municipality.[134] Barcelona, on the other hand, is characterised by almost the opposite situation; urban protest was largely reacting to specific plans and policies applied at the city level (regeneration projects, urban requalification plans, etc.)

This data, together with the fact that the 80% of the protest events in Barcelona target the local state (in comparison to the 67% in Turin), suggests that in Barcelona to a much

[134] Austerity measures are an important exception that accounts for a significant percentage of total protest in the city.

greater extent than Turin, urban protest is mediated by the local administration through the approval of plans and interventions. The urban plans and projects in Barcelona work as platforms used by urban grassroots to activate and mobilise.

Figure 9. Trigger of urban protest in Barcelona and Turin. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

As we can see in Figure 9, the conflicts related to austerity measures[135] were equally relevant in Barcelona and Turin. This is not surprising given that "mobilisation in this cycle revolved around the austerity policies implemented" by the national, regional and local governments (Debelle et al. 2018: 62). Both Turin and Barcelona have, over recent years, performed cuts in public services and privatised public resources, partly as a consequence of an increasingly limited local budget and ability to borrow.

With respect to the conflicts related to urban plans implemented, we see in Turin a higher percentage of protest in reaction to urban requalification projects versus projects to regenerate streets or other public spaces. The protest event data show that Turin and Barcelona are characterised by different sources of grievances in relationship to the type of urban planning applied, a trend that is reflective of different stages of urban transformation in the two cities (as it has been presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4). Whereas in Barcelona the local government was more focused on interventions such as the regeneration of public spaces and the regulation of activities and uses taking place

[135] Such as rising prices, service reduction and the externalisation of public services.

in the public spaces, Turin was in a period of applying large-scale urban requalification projects to completely transform some parts of the city.

In general, the municipality of Barcelona displays a greater capacity to translate changing macro-circumstances into specific plans and programs. These actions tend to channel the more amorphous currents of global change into concrete issues for the local space, providing a focus for the articulation of responses at the urban level. The articulation of specific plans and policies in response to global forces reduces the level of complexity of the urban conflict, translating the global into the everyday.

In Turin, on the other hand, rather than being funnelled through specific spatial urban plans promoted by the municipality, a greater proportion of the urban protest is the expression of broader feelings of disquiet and insecurity, directed toward non-institutional targets, such as immigrants, roma camps, or late-night activity. The municipality of Turin seems to direct their actions more in the promotion of urban policies (and the establishment of partnerships with local community groups and third sector organisation) than in applying urban plans implying a physical transformation of a part of the city. This difference can be related to the level of economic resources the two municipalities have, being physical interventions much more expensive than public policies.

A further potential explanation for the contrasting protest dynamics in Turin and Barcelona is that while in Turin the local elections in 2011 represented continuity, the municipal elections in Barcelona in May 2011 were a turning point. The high proportion of conflicts against the actions of the Barcelona local government may represent a reaction against CiU and its management of the process of urban transformation and public participation. 2011 marked the first time that CiU governed Barcelona's local council following the transition to democracy at the end of the 1970s; the party had neither the contacts nor the experience to relate with the urban grassroots of the city. The effect of this was that although participatory channels were established, they did not work as intended during the mandate 2011-2015. On the other hand, the fact that in Turin the 2011 government was a continuation of previous mandates meant that the channels of dialogue were maintained, and conflict could be channelled through non-contentious institutional spaces.

As an example, the starting of the conflict around the transformation of the 'Port Vell' (old harbour) into a luxury harbour for super-yachts in Barcelona in 2011 is a good illustration of the lack of relationship between the local government and the residents of Barcelona between 2011 and 2015. In 2011 the residents of the affected area (the neighbourhood of Barceloneta) discovered via the video-streaming website YouTube a video laying out a project to transform the harbour. The video was a presentation in which the municipality, together with the international investment group promoting the project, presented the plan to an audience with owners of the yachts and experts from the sector. The residents of Barceloneta and the citizens of the city as a whole had not been invited (Sutton 2015: 31). In reaction, a forceful opposition to the project emerged, organised by local neighbourhood platforms, citizens groups, academics and professionals, who created the platform 'Plataforma Defensem el Port Vell' ('Let's Defend the Old Port' Platform). The project was, however, approved in February 2013 following an agreement between CiU and Partido Popular.[136]

A final reason accounting for the differences in the types of protest events undertaken in the two cities is that "reasons for voicing discontent are usually added to old ones" (Walsh 1981), as grievances are "cumulative and often concatenate" (Portos 2016b: 188). Barcelona's urban transformation process was mostly implemented in a period of economic growth, through a top-down approach with little in the way of financial restrictions. In Turin, by contrast, there had been no city-level planning framework since 1995 and, once the projects started being applied, the financial crisis hit. Turin's urban transformation has, thus, been implemented slowly, creating less acute confrontation and leaving residents more time to adapt to new demands. Barcelona's transformation, on the other hand, was mainly taking place over the 2000s, a period characterised by an unprecedented economic boom in Spain and high capacity for public spending. Barcelona's municipality, therefore, was able to develop a transformation with resources, controlling the timings and without much citizen's participation, which accumulated protest and mobilisation against it. As I have presented in Chapter 3, the urban grassroots of the city of Barcelona managed to be re-articulated in the 2000s, which was the base for organising the 15M/movements where the city started.

[136] The right-wing party controlling the Spanish national government at the time.

5.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed how contention unfolded between 2011 and 2015 in Barcelona and Turin. On the one hand, the data show the coexistence of a high variety of forms of urban protest and urban activism. Urban protest events provide evidence of campaigners combining different strategies and proving highly adaptable to the institutional spaces available. As expected, urban protest is present at a greater level in Barcelona than in Turin. Aspects of the local context such as the timing within broader cycles of contention and urban transformation, the relative activity of the local administration in implementing urban plans and projects, and the effects of continuity or change in local government are suggestive of a complex layer of local context that is essential for understanding the emergence of a cycle of urban protest in Barcelona in 2011 and the failure of such a cycle to emerge in Turin.

The political opportunity perspective in social movement suggests that social mobilisation tends to flourish in cycles of protest – times when the established political order can seem more receptive or vulnerable to challenge. The decentralisation of the 15M/Indignados movement and its disaggregation into neighbourhood assemblies translated into an increase in the number of urban struggles in Barcelona. The urban grievances were able to find a voice in the political opportunities presented by the development of urban plans and projects in different parts of the city.

The grievances generated at the local level by the projects proposed, however, did not find a way to be channelled through non-contentious institutional paths. In Barcelona, a local context that combined an institutional environment felt to be unresponsive to resident claims with an intense cycle of non-urban protest yielded a higher number of demonstrative and confrontational protest events than in Turin. The local government in Turin showed a relatively high level of capacity to maintain functioning non-contentious channels of interaction with the majority of the local actors. The Barcelona local government, by contrast, was new to power and did not have relationships established with the organised grassroots groups. It seemed unable to establish practices to mediate, limit and co-opt the grassroots movement, with conflict increasing as channels for negotiation with the administration broke-down.

In Turin, as well as fewer overall protest events, a greater proportion of those recorded were either hardly disruptive or hardly disruptive; events fell into the conventional, confrontational and violent categories more than in Barcelona, which was characterised by a predominance of demonstrative actions. The fact that Turin's government was a continuation of previous mandates meant that participatory channels did not break-down, and that conflict could be channelled through conventional and institutional spaces. At the same time, while in Barcelona urban protestors have had a clear position of non-violence (especially following 15M), in Turin there has not been such a turning point, especially in the housing movement promoted by the "autonomia" sector. Finally, Barcelona's urban protest seems to have adopted more innovative strategies to express dissent, using, more often than in Turin, symbolic occupations, performance or 'escraches'.

Moreover, the data collected show that in both cities the local administration was still considered as the power holder and the main interlocutor for citizens. The municipality of Barcelona, however, seems to have had a greater capacity to respond to changing circumstances and translate them into specific plans and programs than in Turin. The development of an active planning agenda at the local level establishes the conditions from where dialogue with residents can begin, but it should not be assumed that this necessarily leads to less protest. Rather, the data analysed here suggest that concrete plans are both generative of grievances and act as lightning rods for dissatisfaction.

Broadly speaking, urban protest in Turin and Barcelona has developed in a similar fashion, reflecting the shared impact of the economic and financial crisis and the similar austerity measures applied in response. However, the mediation of the local context appears to have played a significant role in determining the ways in which urban protest does or does not develop in turn. In this chapter I have analysed data that suggests that local plans and projects, and their attendant channels for dialogue, not only shape urban protest but in an important sense generate it, both generating grievances and constituting the platforms through which demonstrative actions are made possible.

The data also suggest, however, that the political opportunity structures of the local government are not the only significant element of local context. The analysis here also suggests that how urban protest dovetails with broader cycles of mobilisation may also be important in shaping development of a mobilisation and whether or not it is successful in scaling-up to connect with other mobilisations.

In the case of Barcelona, the disruption that led to the emergence of 15M/Indignados, coupled with unprecedented discontinuity in local government, enabled the emergence of urban protest imbued with the potential to quickly escalate. While in Turin, the *'autonomia'* movement lacked connections with the social mainstream, in Barcelona urban campaigners succeeded in articulating an alternative discourse on local issues that developed into a new alternative local politics that reached the mayor's office in 2015.

CHAPTER SIX
Framing Strategies

This chapter focuses on the framing strategies of, and the collective identities articulated through, urban protest events taking place in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015. I analyse the content, messages and arguments used by the actors involved and argue that, through them, we can see a variety of collective identities to which urban protest is attached. In some protest events, urban actors attached themselves to pre-existing identities, while, in others, collective identities are constituted and transformed through the process of mobilisation itself. Urban actors use framing strategies to facilitate the scaling-up their struggle beyond the particularity of the urban issue immediately at stake, transcending the NIMBY logic of protest. In this process, urban protestors use encompassing master frames to which the specific urban issue is linked. The principal argument that I make in this chapter is that the particularities of local context appear to influence the type of framing strategies employed by urban activists. The mode of urban planning adopted in a particular city[137] creates specific political opportunities that, in turn, appear to influence and constrain the discourses available to, and types of collective action developed by, the various actors involved.

I first present a number of identities that relate to the scale of reference of urban protest (local, neighbourhood and metropolitan) and connect them to the emergence and persistence of specific forms of collective action.[138] I then identify the various mechanisms available to actors in order to generalise their demands and overcome the NIMBY label, or 'NIMBY syndrome' (Dear 1992), in relationship to framing. In the third section I address the three master frames used to scale-up the discourses in urban protest: 'quality of life', 'use value', and 'urban commons'. These master frames represent three collective processes of interpretation used by urban protesters to mediate between political opportunities and action. Finally, I point to some factors that

[137] For example, transforming the city project by project or, alternatively, through the implementation of large, encompassing urban plans.
[138] On the relationship between collective identity and the scale of reference of protest see Pickvance 2003.

seem to have shaped the construction of frames and collective identities in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015.

6.1. The scale of reference in urban protest

The scale of conflict, or scale of reference, in urban protest events is the spatial level at which urban claims are based. Accordingly, I differentiated between three scales of reference: the local scale, the neighbourhood scale and the metropolitan scale. These three categories have been assigned to individual protest events according to how the protestors present themselves in a particular event. The scale of reference of a protest event is, therefore, the area in which the claim-makers assert the validity of their claims and proposed solutions.

The local scale encompasses protest events where the protesters present themselves as related to a geographical scale smaller than a neighbourhood – for example, the residents of a street, the neighbours surrounding a square, or the residents of a specific area affected by a specific urban project.[139] The neighbourhood scale refers to events where the actors claim to represent a particular neighbourhood, which works as the area of collective reference. This happens when, for example, the management of a particular urban facility or the development of a particular urban project is understood as a problem facing the whole neighbourhood. Finally, there are some protest events where the actors connect to broader scales and present themselves as addressing the point of view of a particular city, metropolitan region or even national interest. In my empirical analysis, I group all of these broader scales of reference together as the 'metropolitan' scale.

Figure 10 below shows that whereas the most frequent scale of reference of protest events in Barcelona between 2011 and 2015 was the neighbourhood (42.8% of the total of events collected), in Turin it represented only 16.6%. In Turin, the majority of urban protests had the local as the scale of reference (60.3% of total events) followed by the metropolitan scale (23.1%). The marked difference in prominence of the neighbourhood as the community in the name of whom urban protest events are

[139] It is important to note that in relationship to collective identities I am following the literature in using the term 'local' to refer a territorial scale of only few streets. This should not be confused with the concept of 'local context' that I articulate throughout this thesis, and which can operate at a variety of levels of territorial scale.

articulated is the principal difference between the two cities with respect to scale of reference.

Figure 10. Protest events disaggregated by scale of reference, Barcelona and Turin. 2011-2015.

Scale of reference of the urban conflict	Barcelona		Turin	
	Total	%	Total	%
Local	232	38.4	149	60.3
Neighbourhood	259	42.8	41	16.6
Metropolitan	114	18.8	57	23.1
Total	605	100	247	100

Source: data collected in this research.

A possible explanation for this difference is the differing organisational resources present in the two cities – that is to say, the type of actors articulating urban protest – and the traditions established in them. Because of the existence of neighbourhood associations in Barcelona, urban conflicts have traditionally been channelled as "neighbourhood problems". Those associations have aggregated opinions, grievances and interests from the smaller, local territory and been the actors channelling them to the public administration. In Turin, by contrast, there is a propensity to create 'comitati di cittadini' – which sometimes coincide with the neighbourhood but often do not – to address urban issues (for example, Comitato Borgo Valentino, Comitato Parco Paraiso and Comitato Residenti Rione Pinchia).

For example, in Barcelona, conflicts related to social centres[140] were, in general, presented as a neighbourhood issue. They tended to be framed as "a neighbourhood need", "a longstanding neighbourhood demand" or "the defence of a neighbourhood's space". However, in Turin, similar types of conflicts tended to be presented as a city need and were represented by ad-hoc organisations or assemblies that were not related to specific territories but rather to a general collective need. Accordingly, in Turin,

[140] Squats, self-managed social centres or more institutional social facilities for the local community.

territorial identities related to neighbourhoods or districts did not seem to exist to the same extent as in Barcelona.

The re-occupation of the social centre 'CSA Murazzi' in Turin in the summer of 2013 is an example of the difference between the two cities. The re-occupation was presented as the reclaiming of a historically self-managed space for the good of the whole city, and as a new community and social space for the citizens of Turin at large. Similarly, the defence of the 'Cavallerizza Reale' (a cultural facility) against a process of privatisation was presented, by the association "Assemblea Cavallerizza 14:45", as an issue affecting all the residents of the city, and especially the cultural sector.

In Barcelona, similar conflicts were channelled through the neighbourhood. Examples include the urban protest events related to the campaign "Campanya Segle XX és pel Barri" ('Campaign 'Segle XX' is for the neighbourhood') in the Barceloneta neighbourhood and the protest events of the campaign "Recuperem la Flor de Maig" ('Let's take back the 'Flor de Maig'') in the neighbourhood of Poblenou. Both of these campaigns were based around citizens reclaiming the use of a long-abandoned building and turning it into a public facility managed by the residents of the neighbourhood. In both places, campaigners constructed their claim around the building's importance with respect to the history of the neighbourhood and its territorially particular grassroots movement.

Urban protest events articulated at a smaller scale than the neighbourhood (38.4% in Barcelona and 60.3% in Turin) tended to be related, in both cases analysed, to: 1) a facility or service that created problems for the people living in the immediate vicinity;[141] 2) conflicts promoted by residents of public housing blocks or users of specific public facilities;[142] and 3) residents affected by specific urban plans that involved the reallocation of their houses.[143] Such urban protest events tended to be promoted by the people who shared a service, activity or space, or a group of people with an 'imposed' territorial identity (such as sharing the same block of houses or being affected by the same urban plan).

In Barcelona, in the cases where there did not seem to be a pre-existing identity (and often even in the cases where there was), the conflict was channelled through the

[141] For example, an animal shelter, a telephone antenna, a parking space or an area for dogs.
[142] Parents of school children, the users of a centre for older people, etc.
[143] This was particularly the case in Barcelona; for example, the Colonia Castells.

corresponding neighbourhood association. These organisations, as we will see in Chapter 7, aim to represent the needs of the residents in the neighbourhood and present their claims and proposals as needs, interests and complaints of the neighbourhood as a whole. In a minority of cases, these types of conflicts were promoted by a group of people (such as residents or users) that organised themselves into an ad-hoc platform.[144]

In Turin, however, the localised urban protest events tended to be promoted by *comitati di cittadini*, which often did not fit the boundaries of a district or a neighbourhood, but rather notably smaller scales. Some examples are the protest events related to the following local organisations or campaigns: "Assoziacione Abitanti Piazza Vittorio e Zone Circostanti",[145] "Comitato No al parcheggio sotta la Gran Madre",[146] "Comitato Parco Paraiso",[147] or "Comitato Spontaneo Rione Pinchia".[148] As we will see in Chapter 7, these *comitati*, although emerging in response to a specific problem, often maintain their activity even when the original conflict is resolved, addressing other issues from the surrounding area. Even when grouping together multiple protest events promoted by the same 'comitati', we see that these committees continued to address the conflicts from a highly localised perspective, as affected residents rather than as representatives of a more general will or interest.

In Barcelona, by contrast, even when a conflict related to a specific, small-scale piece of territory, such as Plaça de les Glories,[149] in the related protest events the conflict tended to be framed as a problem of the neighbourhoods surrounding the square.[150] Moreover, protest events related to tourism[151] and protest events related to specific urban plans or regulatory policies[152] also tended to be presented as neighbourhood issues.

In Turin, the small percentage of protest events framed as problems of a whole neighbourhood tended to be related to insecurity, urban degradation or the so-called

[144] For example, SOS Enric Granados, a platform created by the residents of the street Enric Granados to defend their street from the spread of tables from the nearby restaurants into the public space, which they understand as privatising the space.
[145] Association of the Residents of 'Piazza Vittorio' and the Surrounding Areas'.
[146] Platform No to a car park under 'Gran Madre'.
[147] Park Paraiso Platform.
[148] Volunteer Committee for the Pinchia Area.
[149] A large square at the intersection of four different neighbourhoods.
[150] In the case of Plaça de les Glories, the four neighbourhood associations coordinated between themselves to organise the mobilisation.
[151] Specifically, in relationship to the existence of tourist apartments and the creatioin of new hotels.
[152] Which are often implemented at the neighbourhood level.

'movida' (nightlife, restaurants, bars and cafes). In those cases, as in Barcelona, the *comitati* in Turin (or the neighbourhood associations in Barcelona) assigned themselves the role of protecting the 'neighbourhood' against the perceived menace of the 'others', who were sometimes the local administration (in the context of urban plans or regeneration projects), sometimes tourists and sometimes immigrants or people coming from other parts of the city. These types of conflicts open up questions as to who qualifies as a 'local' in today's increasingly mobile and inter-connected world, and the implications that question has for notions of 'citizenship' and 'local community'. This is something that could be addressed in further research by developing the analysis of the framing strategies used by urban grassroots in the urban conflict.

Finally, the metropolitan scale protest events tended to be related to anti-austerity measures, environmental problems or the right to housing. In both cities, events at this scale tended to address issues that were easily generalisable, that did not relate to a specific location[153] and were easily transferable and comparable with other cities. The data shows that in Turin the urban grassroots are more interconnected nationally than in Barcelona with respect to these issues. Urban protest in Turin often referenced other cities and similar mobilisations from other parts of the country, framing a particular issue as a more general conflict or in solidarity with other events happening in other cities.

In Barcelona, by contrast, the data only yielded one protest event collected between 2011 and 2015 that relates to another Spanish city; a demonstration organised in 2014 in solidarity with the urban conflict in Gamonal. In the city of Burgos, Spain, Gamonal is a working-class neighbourhood where a group of citizens successfully stopped diggers from transforming one of the area's main streets into a boulevard.[154] The project was proposed by the local administration (with the party 'Partido Popular' in government) but the residents saw it as an imposition; a speculative and corrupt operation and a threat to the neighbourhood that would promote gentrification. There were blockades, demonstrations and confrontations with the police.

As this section shows, a number of different collective identities were invoked in the promotion of urban protest events in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015. On

[153] Issues related to urban transport, urban pollution, housing problems, etc.
[154] The project would have meant reducing traffic, creating a bicycle path and building an underground parking space.

the one hand, pre-exiting collective identities and points of solidarity were drawn upon which were related to particular public services or facilities – such as the parents of children of a specific school, or the users of a day-care centre). On the other hand, there were spatially-defined collective identities linked to a community (in relationship to a street, a square, a neighbourhood or a city) and often channelled through an organisation or group. These organisations operated at a variety of scales; such as neighbourhood associations, small-scale citizen committees or a particular squatted social centre. Sometimes these identities pre-existed a particular conflict and could be linked to the local grassroots group or association promoting the event. In other instances, analysing urban protest events from the same urban struggle together shows that the collective identities were developed over the course of the campaign.

In some protest events, campaigners presented an identity as specifically urban citizens who were contesting issues at a larger scale; for example, environmental problems or the global right to housing. A final type of collective identity I observed in the protest events were not themselves spatially specific but, rather, connected areas of the city or particular buildings with sets of beliefs or ideological identities.[155]

In Barcelona, with its historically important neighbourhood associations, the scale of reference in the protest events collected tended to be constrained to the neighbourhood. In Turin, by contrast there was greater flexibility in how protestors were able to articulate a community in relationship to specific urban protests. In Turin, we see a presentation of the urban conflict more closely connected to smaller scales (articulated through ad-hoc platforms) or larger scales, which connected Turin to other Italian cities or more general international dynamics and which presenting the issues at stake as relevant to all the citizens of Turin.

Although the 'local' scale of reference does not always indicate a particularistic or NIMBY attitude, when grouping together protest events that are part of the same urban campaign, we often see that the scale of reference evolves, tending to move up to broader scales, connecting with more general issues and identities. Collective identities, when analysed over time – in relationship to urban campaigns rather than particular protest events – tend to evolve and transform both as a reaction to specific events – an

[155] Some examples are groups against the privatisation of public goods, the 'antagonistic' sector, and the cultural sector.

urban intervention (or the lack of an intervention), for example – and through the use of framing strategies developed by the actors involved in the conflict. I will address this more dynamic aspect of collective identities in the next section.

6.2. Urban protest and up-scaling dynamics

In Barcelona, there were 36 urban protest events – 6% of the total collected – that were characterised as 'NIMBY'. These events were localised conflicts that opposed specific interventions[156] or the location of particular centres or activities.[157] In Turin, there were 41 urban protest events (16.6% of the total collected) that I coded as 'NIMBY'. In Turin, the phenomena provoking these types of protest events included: the construction of a mosque, an underground car park, the relocation of a market, the existence of bar terraces in a residential area and the presence of informal settlements housing refugees close to protesters' homes.

Recent research has suggested, however, that although urban campaigns typically adopt a particular and reactive character at the beginning, such an attitude is only characteristic of an initial phase of opposition, which occurs when the conflict is in its infancy (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010). Throughout the course of the campaign, the majority of urban conflicts overcome 'NIMBY syndrome', at least in terms of discourse (Bobbio 2011). As I detailed in Chapter 1, there are two types of strategies used by local groups to scale-up the interpretative frames of their protests that are identified in the literature. Della Porta (2004) distinguishes between processes of 'frame-bridging' (or 'frame extension') and processes of 'frame-transformation'. The first strategy involves connecting particular conflicts to broader dynamics and macro-structural phenomena, such as neoliberalism, democracy or austerity measures. The second strategy is defined as the articulation of 'new' issues that are considered legitimate for the potential allies of the local protestors or the community they claim to represent.

In relationship to the cases of Turin and Barcelona, it is possible to see up-scaling mechanisms in action when analysing protest events across the course of a single

[156] For example, the construction of an animal shelter, a telecommunication centre or a new car park.
[157] For example, opposition to a squat building, a homeless centre, a petrol station, a tourist apartment, or the noise of trucks at night.

campaign. When doing so, we see that some urban campaigns followed 'frame-bridging' strategies to link their particular struggles with broader issues. This was the case, for example, with the campaign *Plataforma Salvem el Port Vell*[158] that took place between 2012 and 2013 in Barcelona. Other urban campaigns followed the strategy to create a 'new' issue able to bring together various local conflicts under the same umbrella. The urban campaign *Nou Barris Cabrejada Diu Prou*,[159] in the case of Barcelona, and the campaign *Torino Sicura*,[160] in the case of Turin, are examples of scaling-up local conflicts through the creation of a 'new' identity. I also observed some urban struggles, such that of the *Cavallerizza Reale* in Turin, that were city-level conflicts from their emergence. These campaigns drew on broad discourses such as urban commons, democratic control of urban resources and the self-management of cultural facilities.

In the case of the campaign *Plataforma Salvem el Port Vell* in Barcelona, the conflict began in 2011 with the public presentation of the project to renew the old harbour – the *Marina Port Vell* – and transform it into a marina specialised in docking super-yachts. Protests began by identifying the project as a neighbourhood issue, but the conflict was then propelled to the metropolitan scale by linking it to broader tensions in the city with respect to the use and management of the seafront (Sutton 2015). The protestors were successful in framing the redevelopment of a limited, territorially unusal area of Barcelona as part of a general conflict between the use-value and the exchange-value of the city, defending the general claim of "cities for people not for profit" (Brenner et al. 2012). The actors also criticised the functioning of democracy in Barcelona, demanding more and more effective participatory mechanisms.

Through scaling-up the discourse, the movement successfully opened up the conflict to the city level, which aided in convincing the academic sector to become involved and support the campaign. Local researchers highlighted the lack of balance between the tourism sector and everyday life in the neighbourhood, advocating for the functional, economic and symbolic interest of the port for the city's coastline at the local, national and international scale (Sutton 2015: 40). The *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*, for example, published a study that warned of the port becoming a luxury space,

[158] Platform to Save the Old Harbour.
[159] Exasperated *Nou Barris* Says Enough is Enough. For more information on this campaign see Parés et al. 2017.
[160] Safe Turin.

segregated from the city and a focus of gentrification for the city centre (Magrinya et al. 2013).

The *Plataforma Salvem el Port Vell* campaign is an example of how urban grassroots tend to defend themselves of accusations of NIMBYism: through the articulation of a critique of the functioning of democracy and by linking their particular conflicts to broader processes, such as the privatisation of the urban space and democracy (Devine-Writh 2009). The cases of *Torino Sicura* and *Nou Barris Cabrejada Diu Prou* are examples of how urban grassroots can create 'new' issues, connecting particular struggles with more general claims, widely accepted as legitimate, that are embedded into the contexts from where protest emerges. In this way, campaigners make their struggle more visible and coordinated.

The urban campaign *Nou Barris Cabrejada Diu Prou* was waged in one of the districts in Barcelona most acutely affected by the financial crisis and resultant austerity measures. Rather than expanding the territorial scale of protest to the city or metropolitan level, the grassroots associations from the area created a 'new' frame, expressed in the slogan of the campaign, to bring together various local conflicts in the neighbourhood under the same umbrella. *Nou Barris Cabrejada Diu Prou* – Exasperated *Nou Barris* Says Enough is enough – links the many, particular anti-austerity practices of resistance that were taking place in the neighbourhood with a historical perception of the territory as forgotten and neglected by the local administration. The campaign managed to make more visible the multiple issues of conflict afflicting the territory – such as those relating to housing evictions, cuts in public services, and the lack of social services – and bring together previously fragmented processes of social mobilisation into the same struggle.

In Turin, the *Torino Sicura* campaign emerged following a similar strategy to that employed in Nou Barris in Barcelona. Between 2011 and 2015, various existing *comitati di quartiere* - from neighbourhoods such as Pozzo Strada, Parella and San Paolo, and from municipalities on the outskirts of Turin, such as Venaria Reale – came together under the *Torino Sicura* campaign to denounce, in a coordinated way, multiple conflicts regarding prostitution, micro-crime and drug trafficking. The platform enabled fragmented conflicts spread around the city to scale-up and cluster around the issue of security. *Torino Sicura* thus provided a meeting point for a number of local associations and organisations.

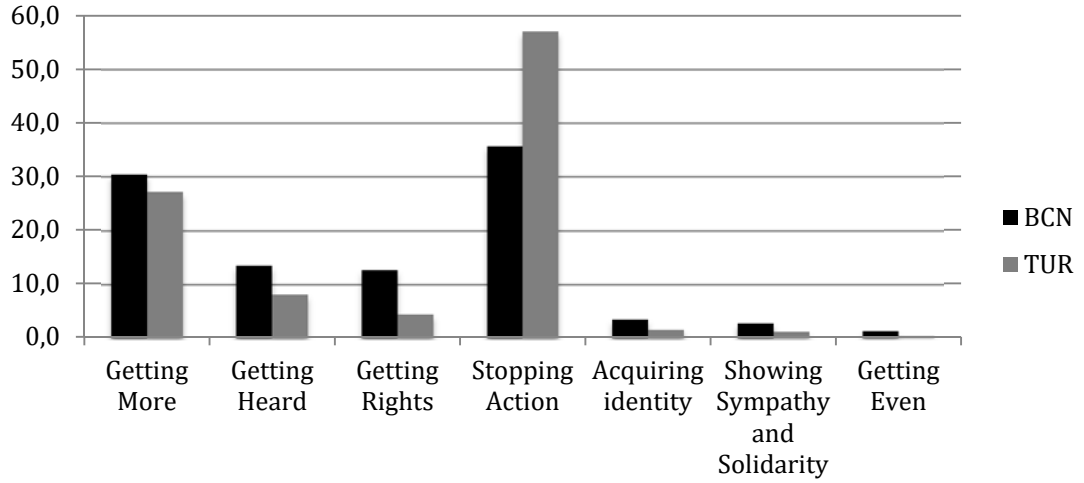
Finally, the campaign for the *Cavallerizza Reale* in Turin was a bottom-up mobilisation in which a citizen movement emerged in reaction to the plan of the public administration to sell the *Cavallerizza Reale* building to private developers.[161] The discourse of the campaigners was one of a struggle that was significant for the residents of Turin as a whole. The squatting of the *Cavallerizza* was framed, from the beginning, as a means to re-appropriate the urban space of the city, defend citizen rights and to confront the deleterious neoliberal and austerity policies of the local government. Since then, the campaign has formed links with other initiatives to reclaim the urban commons, such as the *Teatro Valle* or the *Metropoliz* in Rome, and the former *Asilo Filangeri* in Naples.

6.3. Types of claims in urban protest

As I outlined in Chapter 1, social movement research suggests that any protest event aims to achieve a particular goal. On some occasions the goal is very specific and concrete, such as the implementation of a specific urban policy or the introduction of a piece of urban regulation. In other cases, protest can have a more general and demonstrative aim, such as the symbolic recognition of a group or an expression of solidarity. For the analysis of urban claims, I used Tarrow's (1989) typology of claim types, which I discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Although Tarrow's categories originally referred to general social movements, I have adapted them to specifically urban claims.[162]

[161] The administration initially planned to transform the Cavallerizza Reale into a large museum but the plans were abandoned because of a lack of resources. For more information on this campaign, see Bragaglia and Krähmer 2018.
[162] See Chapter 2 section 2.1. for further information.

Figure 11. Urban Protest Events and Type of Claims (I). Turin and Barcelona 2011-2015



Source: data collected in this research

Figure 11 shows how great is the difference in prominence between substantive claims and expressive claims in urban protest. The graphic also illustrates the highly reactive nature of urban conflict, in particular in the case of Turin. In both cities, more than 90% of the collected events related to a substantive claim (92.5% in Barcelona and almost 97% in Turin), demonstrating the overwhelming prevalence of material and concrete objectives rather than claims with a symbolic and demonstrative goal.[163]

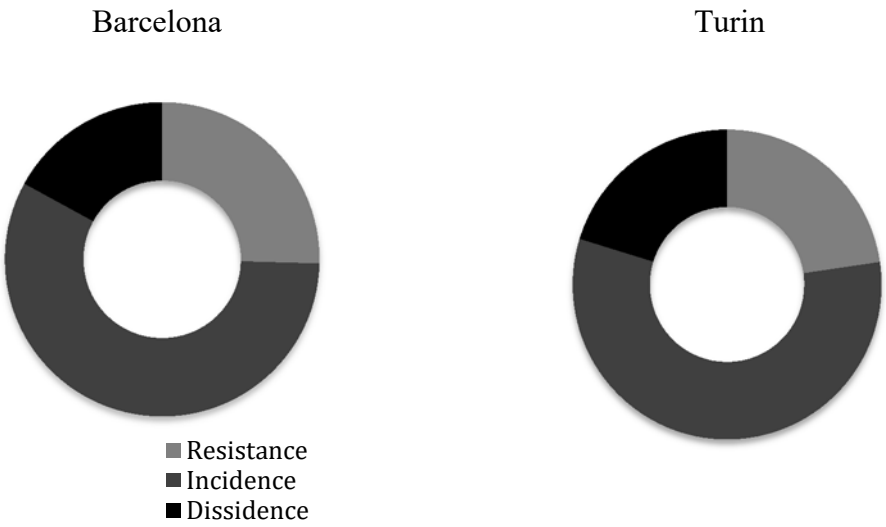
It is important to take into account, however, that urban protest can express substantive and expressive claims simultaneously, usually by expressing demands for a specific and particular urban resource, while prefiguring it at the same time. This is what Martí i Puig et al. (2018) identify as dissident practices: practices performing a political claim (usually a substantive type of claim) while simultaneously prefigurating the model proposed. This usually takes the form of providing the urban resource in a self-managed way or by community development of the specific governance practice being demanded. These are not assistencialist actions because, at the same time as providing or performing a specific service or governance model, they communicate a political claim. In this research, such cases of urban protest have been coded as events showing substantive claims, even though there is an expressive dimension to them.

[163] It is, of course, highly possible that these proportions are, in part, reflective of the fact that my data correspond to a period of economic crisis and austerity measures. Although would be interesting to compare the relative prevalence of claim types to a period of economic prosperity, such an undertaking was not possible in this study.

Beyond dissident practices, Martí i Puig et al. (2018) identify two other types of interactions that protestors can establish with the public administration: practices oriented toward resistance (denounce and protest), practices oriented toward incidence (impact and delegate) and practices oriented toward dissidence (create and prefigurate). According to Martí i Puig et al. (2018), over recent years, and especially in the context of austerity, dissident practices have increased in comparison to practices of resistance and incidence, which are normally considered the traditional types of interactions between the local administration and urban actors. The authors describe dissidence as actions based on creative and constructive practices that aim to build tangible realities with a prefigurative capacity (Martí i Puig et al. 2018).

Some examples of dissident practices collected in this research have been: the organisation by urban grassroots of participatory processes; the creation of alternative knowledge; the transformation of a place into an urban garden; and an active occupation of a public space. In Turin, in addition to occupations and practices of knowledge production, I have also collected practices of organised neighbours directly policing their neighbourhood (through organised walks), with the aim of reducing crime and prostitution, and increasing security.

Figure 12. Distribution of protest events by types of interaction with the administration. Barcelona and Turin. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research.

It is significant to see that Turin and Barcelona show almost identical distributions of urban protest events when classifying them in relationship to the type of interaction

established with the local administration. The events that have been coded as 'resisting' (25.5% in Barcelona and 22.7% in Turin) would cover more or less the same events coded as "stopping action". In general, they are types of protest that establish a protective and defensive position in relationship to the actions of the public administration. Second, the events coded as desiring of influencing and having an impact (57.5% in Barcelona and 57.1% in Turin) represent, more or less, the substantive claims discussed before. They are events that demonstrate an attitude of willingness to influence and pressure the local administration on a specific issue. Finally, the events coded as 'dissident' (17% in Barcelona and 20.2% in Turin) are protest events that are performative in their actions, usually in a symbolic way, and which create an alternative way of addressing the issue at hand, at the same time as they target the public administration for a change.

One organisation in Barcelona that has demonstrated that it is possible to simultaneously develop all three types of interaction is the anti-evictions organisation, *Plataforma de Afectats per la Hipoteca* (the PAH). On the one hand, the PAH has been fighting to make mortgage debt cancellable by bank repossession and for the cessation of all evictions; that is to say, to influence. To do so, they have developed a popular legislative initiative (ILP)[164] which, in 2014 was presented to the Spanish Parliament with almost 1.5 million signatures. Following that, the platform carried out a march to Brussels from Andalucía and offered testimony in the European Parliament. In the meantime, they have been developing nonviolent direct actions to prevent and stop evictions of families and individuals (Flesher 2015); an example of resistence. Finally, they have been advocating for the development of regimes of social rent in buildings owned by banks that were rescued with public funds, developing what they have called *Obra Social de la PAH*,[165] a dissidence-based campaign "to occupy and recover the housing rights that respond to a generalised state of housing emergency generated in a deliberate and artificial way by banks and governments" (Flesher 2015).

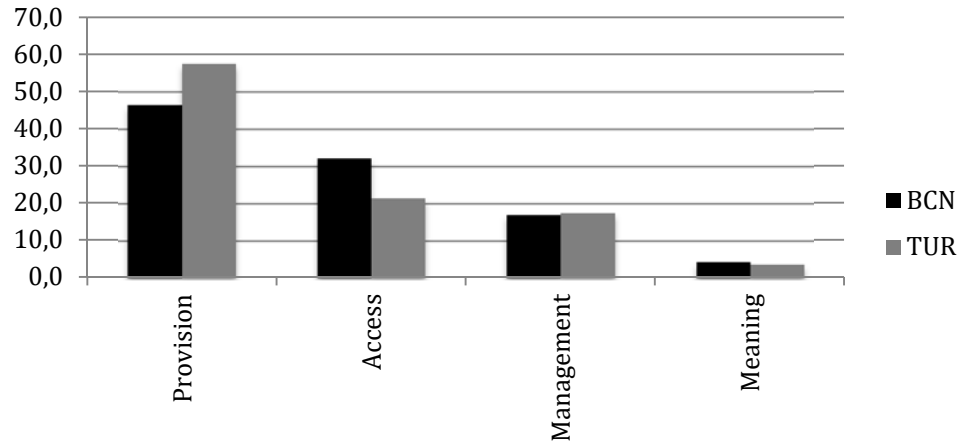
Beyond embodying different types of claim (substantive or expressive) and establishing various types of relationships with the local administration, urban protestors can articulate urban issues individually or as part of broader dynamics that transcend the

[164] The popular legislative initiative is a constitutionally defined power of citizens to propose a new law. In Spain, the Constitution adopted the most restrictive approach, and Parliament has the final decision without possibility of referendum.
[165] PAH Social Work.

conflict at stake. As I discussed in Chapter 1, the literature on urban movements identifies three interpretative master frames that urban protestors tend to use in order to connect particular struggles to more general discourses. These master frames are *economic development* versus *quality-of-life*, *use-value* versus *exchange-value* and *democratic city* versus *technocratic city*. Drawing on these master frames, I have created four categories –the provision of, access to, management of, and meaning of collective goods and services – which allow me to analyse the principal discourses constructed by the urban protestors in each of the events collected.

The categories 'provision' and 'access' encompass protest events with substantive claims that establish a type of interaction with the local administration based on 'incidence' or 'resistance'. While in the protest events coded as 'provision' the protestors mobilise around the existence of, standards of and/or location of specific urban resources and goods, in the events coded as 'access', protestors mobilise around issues related to affordability and/or rights to access specific urban resources and/or services. The category 'managing', while also based on substantive claims, implies a relationship with the local administration based on 'dissidence'. The protest events coded as 'managing' represent conflicts about the administration of public urban resources and services, and the power relations embedded in that good or service. Finally, the category 'meaning' covers the protest events related to 'expressive' claims, which were generally related to conflicts on the protection of heritage, memory and culture.

Figure 13. Urban Protest Events and Type of Claims (II). Turin and Barcelona. 2011-2015.



Source: data collected in this research

Figure 13 shows the distribution of protest events in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015 in relationship to the four categories outlined above. Both places have a similar distribution of protest events. However, the data shows that Turin experienced more of what could be described as a more traditional type of urban conflict; those focused on the provision of quality of life, such as new regulations on environmental issues, new investments to improve a service or good for collective consumption, or increased provision of social housing and public space in areas where they are lacking. Such 'traditional' conflicts also tend to involve claims for greater provision of green spaces or public services. The category of 'provision' also encompasses conflicts of resistance to facilities, projects or programs that are understood as being of detriment to the liveability of an area.

The data shows that in Barcelona there are more urban protest events related to what have been coded as conflicts over 'access'. These events are local reactions to processes of increasing privatisation and commodification (including increasing costs) of collective resources or goods, with consequences such as the displacement of population and activities, the marginalisation of some groups of citizens,[166] and gentrification. The fact that these issues are related to the broad context of neoliberalism, and the fact that Barcelona has a larger proportion of these types of events, suggest that Barcelona may be in another stage of urban development, more open to international forces and global dynamics that are related to neoliberalism. Consistent with what I laid-out in Chapters 3 and 4, this indicates a possible connection between, on the one hand Barcelona's status as a more internationally renowned city than Turin (closely implicated in global neoliberal dynamics of urban transformation) and, on the other, the type of urban protest that develops at the local level.

The low proportion of protest events coded as 'meaning' (often concerned with projects that threaten urban heritage) in both cases shows the extent to which Turin and Barcelona shared a general context of economic crisis and austerity between 2011 and 2015. In this context, and and its attendant budget restrictions, neither of the two local municipalities could develop large requalification projects, instead adapting their local action plans to the implementation of smaller-scale projects. Although in research (see Romero) that pre-dated the economic crisis the 'meaning' dimension was more

[166] Such as squatters, homeless people, prostitutes and immigrants.

prominent in urban protest (see Romero), in the context of austerity urban protestors discourses articulate different kinds of struggles.

6.4. Interpretative frames in urban protest

In this section I discuss the three master frames that, in the cases examined here, capture the ways in which urban campaigners presented the protests they developed as going beyond the particularities of the issue at stake, scaling-up their discourses and connecting with other instances of contention. I have termed the three master frames 'quality of life', 'use value', and 'urban commons'. This sections draws on the analysis presented above in relationship to the types of claims developed by urban protestors, the interactions established with the local administration, and the 'interpretative frames' presented in the literature on urban movements. The analysis here is based on my PEA and also the interviews I conducted, which I have used to corroborate my interpretation of the frames identifiable in the PEA and to provide some nuance.

These three frames that I present above are not mutually exclusive, and are often presented together. Framing strategies develop throughout the course of an urban campaign and, often, multiple frames are employed, both over time and concurrently as activists use different strategies to connect with different sectors of society. The general interpretative frames identified here – quality of life, use value, and urban commons – can be considered as escalating in complexity, with 'quality of life' being the simplest frame and 'urban commons' encompassing the other two. However, all three frames share some elements a study of individual urban campaigns would be necessary to provide a full analysis of framing strategies used by activists.

6.4.1. Quality of life

A prominent master frames employed by urban protestors as part of the protest events collected here is what I have termed the 'quality of life' frame. The construction of this frame is based on the analysis of the events coded with the category 'provision' (see the previous section). This type of protest are events where the protestors use substantive claims, establish a relationship with the local administration based on 'incidence' or 'resistance', and mobilise on issues related to the existence, standards and/or location of specific urban resources and goods. From that type of urban protest

(which accounted for 46.4% of events collected in the case of Barcelona and 57.5% of events collected in the Turin case), I have reconstructed a general discourse that is used, with varying intensity, by the activists. There were, however, a minority of events in both cases that did not exhibit the master frame presented below, with protesters discussing only the issue at stake, without engaging in any general discourse.

The 'quality of life' frame has a polysemic nature as it represents a highly subjective issue: the defence of everyday life in a specific community, which could be a building, a street, or a neighbourhood, among other collectivities. It can encompass a wide variety of issues with the potential to improve or secure residents' quality of life, and it has the capacity to link multiple political cleavages and specific contexts. The 'quality of life' frame is highly inclusive, sspecially in the diagnostic and prognostic phases of the frame construction. However, 'quality of life' presents challenges for building a motivational frame that provides for a common solution to the problem identified. As Bobbio (2011) notes, the spread of this type of discourse can favour the construction of a fragmented world, characterised with micro-conflicts and micro-powers of veto.

This master frame is often used to channel feelings of weakness and vulnerability when local communities are confronted by global dynamics. Accordingly, the frame works to legitimise a state of discomfort and insecurity in relationship to the presence of certain activities or collectives (for example, immigration, homelessness or tourism) in a specific community. This is what I identified in Chapter 5 as the tension between 'hosts' and 'guests' in the city, or between 'places' versus 'fluxes' (Bobbio 2011). The conflict between the constant movement of fluxes and the immovability of places (Castells 2000) is one of the dominant cleavages in contemporary urban conflict. In such cases, the motivations for the use of the frame are primarily conservative, with residents expressing a desire to "maintain the neighbourhood as it is" (Loopmans and Dirckx 2011: 12).

In the period of study, campaigns developed in the Barceloneta (Barcelona) and San Salvario (Turin) neighbourhoods: *'La Barceloneta diu Prou!'* and *'Rispettando San Salvario'*[167] that exemplify a certain use of the 'quality of life' master frame. In both areas, the conflict over tourism (in Barceloneta) and the '*movida'* (nightlife activity) in San Salvario, is framed as a struggle between 'host' and 'guests' and as problematic for

[167] 'Barceloneta Says Enough!' and 'Respecting San Salvario'.

the quality of life of the residents of the neighbourhood. In such conflicts, urban grassroots react against the dynamics caused by outsiders that impact their community in ways such as affecting quality of sleep, safety and comfort, and the continuity of everyday life (in terms of identity and habits).

In the case of Barceloneta, tourists are those representing 'guests', while in San Salvario they are visitors from other neighbourhoods in the city that come to the area because of its reputation as a place to go out at night. However, in both neighbourhoods the conflict is framed around the distinction between 'temporary users' and 'permanent users'. The former are the target of local authorities and private interests, especially in their role as consumers, and are presented by campaigners as those able to 'afford' and enjoy the process of neighbourhood restructuring and socio-spatial transformation. The latter are the residents; unprotected and ignored by the local state.

In the case of Barceloneta, as the mobilisation developed, the discourse also evolved, at least with respect to part of the movement. This evolution involved an extension of the frame into more complex arguments centred on the claim 'we are losing the city and we want to win it back'. This shift was a step further in the re-scaling process, not only embedding the particular conflict inside a global category of conflicts – the 'quality of life' frame that transcends particular areas and cities – but also linking Barceloneta's issues with other types of conflicts taking place in other parts of the city. The campaigners thus articulated a novel and all-encompassing motivational frame: "let's win the city back!".

In San Salvario, by contrast, the protest has been against the late-night influx of resident from other parts of the city. Prominent issues around which the neighbourhood's urban protest have grown up include the increasing opening of leisure and entertainment enterprises, traffic congestion, noise pollution and the deterioration of the public space. The residents of the neighbourhood accuse people coming from outside San Salvario of posing problems of public safety and encouraging drug dealers and prostitution, with affects on residents' everyday lives. Particularly prominent targets of their complaints were the lack of available parking spaces and the late-night public nuisance. Although the campaign has coordinated with other neighbourhoods from Turin and similar campaigns from other Italian cities, only some parts of the movement have incorporated into their discourse the issue of gentrification, in the form of displacement and replacement of former activities by bars and clubs.

At other times, the 'quality of life' frame is used to justify and structure conflicts over the provision or improvement of some common services or goods (such as urban green areas or problems of air pollution). In those cases, the diagnostic and prognostic framing strategies can be similar to the conflicts presented above, as they relate to the defence of everyday life in a specific community. However, such conflicts do contain the potential to blossom a motivational frame able to present a common exit to the problem identified. In such cases, highlight the tension between economic development (efficiency, growth and the maximisation of resources) and sustainable life. The discourse in such instances is not so much about opposing development but, rather, about considering an alternative mode of development; one that embraces economic innovation (technological sovereignty, social and solidarity economy and dynamics of ecological and circular economy). Conflicts related to air pollution that advocate for a better quality of life through the promotion of sustainable modes of transport or the incorporation of more green areas in the city are examples of this type of issue.

The principal differences between this type of 'quality of life' framing and other, more parochial iterations is whether the discourse successfully transcends nostalgic notions of 'community' and constructs the 'who' is this community in an inclusive, rather than exclusionary, way.

6.4.2. 'Use Value'

A further strategy to re-scale particular urban conflicts is to locate the specific issue at stake – the privatisation of a public facility or the abandonment of a piece of land, for example – in relationship to a broader discourse that confronts the "exchange value of the urban space" (embodied in aims to privatise public facilities or profit from the sale of public land) with the "use-value of the city". The 'use value' frame can, therefore, be understood as a reaction to the dominant urban development model, a model based on unbridled consumption and the unharnessed drive to generate economic profit (Bobbio 2011).

Conflicts between those who use a specific place principally to live and to work and those who use it as a source of profit and place of consumption is well represented in the data collected. The competition between cities to attract global flows of investment, and the general increasing commodification of the urban space in Western Europe,

establish Barcelona and Turin as places for investment and consumption (Colomb 2016; Aytar and Rath 2012; Clark, 2004; Zukin 1995). This tendency gives priority to certain segments of the urban population, such as tourists, young urban middle-classes, and temporary residents and city users, over residents (Martinotti 1993). From this perspective, residents are understood not only as ignored by the local administration but also displaced by economic interests.

This master frame was directly identified in the protest events collected in this research. The construction of the frame is based on an analysis of the events coded with the category 'access'. 'Access' protest events were those where protestors used substantive claims, established a relationship with the local administration based on 'incidence' or 'resistance', and mobilised according to issues related to affordability and/or rights to access specific urban resources/services. This type of urban protest accounted for 32.2% of the events collected for the case of Barcelona and 21.5% of the events collected for the Turin case. I used those protest events in the construction of the general description of the frame. As in the 'quality of life' master frame, 'use value' is used with greater or lesser prominence by activists depending on the event, and within the data are some events coded with the category 'access' that do not exhibit the frame it at all.

The core idea behind the 'use value' frame is to present the city as a space to use and live rather than a source of profit. As Loopmans and Dirckx (2011) have noted, "[n]eoliberal urban policies are confronted with the uneasy task to match local competitiveness with collective provision and social cohesion" (2011: 1). In the current context this tension is exaggerated with the acceleration of economic restructuring, which has "given impetus to the struggles of urban movements emphasizing the injustice, destructiveness, and unsustainability of capitalist forms of urbanisation" (Brenner et al. 2012).

The master frame emphasises the economic aspect of the urban conflict, with 'them' representing economic interests and 'we' the users of the urban space. It tends to develop with respect to specific conflicts over the use of the public space – such as outside tables in squares or streets or the presence of public benches – and it is more easily employed in response to some of the recent actions developed by the local administration in selling goods and services. In the face of these actions, urban protestors almost automatically re-scale the discourses and rather than frame the

conflict as the lack of a public good or service for the community, it is presented as an instance of the commodification and privatisation of the city.

The promoters of this frame tend to present the conflict as a confrontation between, on one side, a network of actors (both public and private, formal and informal) interested principally in economic growth and profit and, on the other side, a weakly structured coalition of groups that resist this model of development. The frame encompasses practices such as urban gardening, the defence of public spaces and the reduction of traffic, which are acts of resistance to an understanding of the city as a space of consumption. Such practices are also usually presented as promoting the lived urban space (characterised by use and activity) over empty, under-used space, valued primarily for its speculative potential, leading to abandonment and degradation.[168]

In the context of austerity, this type of conflict is likely to be more prominent. Economic crisis augments the feeling of competition between cities to attract investment. It also provides an incentive for public authorities promote investment –, through urban planning, business promotion, communication and urban policies oriented towards private investmens. In Barcelona and Turin, the crisis has also led to the re-emergence, within the urban grassroots, of discourses of solidarity. It has spurred the development of grassroots projects such as working cooperatives, time-exchanging places, urban gardes; common to all of these initiatives is the attempt to address needs in a collective way.

6.4.3 'Urban Commons'

Cities, and the production of space, have always played a key role in the capital accumulation process (Lefebvre, 1970; Harvey, 2012). Urban grassroots develop resistance against urban developers through protest actions and the occupation of vacant lots, creating new spaces. Following the discourses of the commons, in Barcelona and Turin some of the protest events collected framed the struggle not only as a way to resist speculative processes and the commodification of the urban space, but also as ways to protect and defend collective goods and services, producing

[168] A key article on this issue is Mayer 2012.

alternative ways to manage them that go beyond both public institutions and the private company.

Accordingly, the ‘urban commons’ frame adds another layer of complexity to the ‘quality of life’ and ‘use-value’ frames discussed above. the urban commons frame is derived from the analysis of the events coded with the category ‘management’; those are events where protestors use substantive claims, establish a relationship with the local administration based on ‘dissidence’, and mobilise on issues related to the administration of public urban resources and services (and the power relations embedded within). This type of urban protest composed 17% of the events collected for the case of Barcelona and 17.4% of the events for the case of Turin. Those events constitute the basis for the general description of the frame.

The ‘urban commons’ frame is not only about quality, accessibility and affordability of collective goods and service, it is also about managing them. The practices that tend to relate to this interpretative frame are instances of protest that can create opportunities for self-organisation. The frame has a high re-scaling potential as it can be linked to a broad range of issues, such as democracy, commons, capitalism, neoliberalism and crisis. Urban practices that use this frame are often presented as developing direct democracy or representing spaces of resistance against the neoliberal context. They are practices and protest events that stress the need to ‘inhabit’ the city, reclaiming the right to participate in the fabric of urban spaces.

While in Barcelona we saw a more pronounced predisposition to use the ‘use value’ frame, in Turin there was a tendency to use more pragmatic arguments, related to specific problems and expressed through the ‘quality of life’ frame. In the case of the ‘urban commons’ frame, however, we see a similar level of use it in both cases, which may be reflective of similar socio-economic and political contexts in the two cities. Although Turin did not develop a movement similar to the 15M-Indignados in Barcelona did, the data collected for this research suggests that in both cities, between 2011 and 2015, an urban discourse issues regarding direct democracy, self-management and the reclaiming of common urban services and resources were similarly prominent. This is suggestive of a comparable will in the grassroots of both cities to establish new forms of relationships with the public administration.

6.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have analysed the framing strategies and the collective identities articulated through urban protest events in Turin and Barcelona between 2011 and 2015. I identified a variety of collective identities implicated in urban protest, and I showed that in some events urban actors attached themselves to pre-existing identities (connected to particular public services of facilities, spatial communities or ideological tendencies) while, in others, collective identities seemed to be constituted and transformed through the process of mobilisation itself. The fact that this research addresses a large-N sample of singular protest events, rather than a small number of urban campaigns in their entirety, makes it difficult to trace exactly how collective identities are constituted through mobilising processes. However, the examination of multiple protest events from single campaigns in my PEA does suggest that such a process is taking place and may be a fruitful avenue for further study.

While the most frequent scale of reference of protest events in Barcelona between 2011 and 2015 was the neighbourhood, in Turin the majority of urban protests had the local as the scale of reference, followed by the metropolitan scale. The marked difference in prominence of the neighbourhood as the community in the name of whom urban protest events were articulated was the principal difference between the two cities with respect to scale of reference. In Turin, the urban grassroots seemed to be more connected nationally than in Barcelona with respect to urban issues, and urban protest often referenced other cities and similar mobilisation processes from other parts of the country.

Urban actors use framing strategies to facilitate the scaling-up their struggle beyond the particularity of the urban issue immediately at stake, transcending the NIMBY logic of protest. In this chapter I discussed a number of examples of campaigns that illuminate the distinction between frame-*bridging* strategies of re-scaling and frame-*transformation* strategies,

In the processes of scaling-up the issue at stake, urban protestors use master frames that encompass the specific urban issue in question. ‘Quality of life’, ‘use value’, and ‘urban commons’ emerged as three important collective articulations of urban issues used by protesters to mediate between political opportunities and action. Whereas in Barcelona we see a tendency among groups to invoke the ‘use value’ frame, in Turin pragmatic

arguments related to more specific problems were more common, making the 'quality of life' frame highly prominent. In the case of the 'urban commons' frame, we saw a similar level of predisposition to use it in both cases, which may be an indicator that Barcelona and Turin share a similar socio-economic and political context.

In the period under study, Turin and Barcelona had different local contexts with respect to their modes of urban planning. Barcelona was more closely implicated in the global neoliberal dynamics of urban transformation, while Turin was highly restricted in terms of its budget for large requalification projects. These different modes of planning are associated with both different configurations of political opportunities and different kinds of tensions in urban life. What I have shown in this chapter is that those varied contexts are also associated with varied discourses of urban struggle and different types of collective action on the part of the urban grassroots. In the next chapter, Chapter 7, I analyse the characteristics and roles of the various mobilising actors in urban conflict, and discuss dynamics of coordination between them.

CHAPTER SEVEN
Organisational forms in urban protest

In this chapter I analyse the characteristics of the mobilising actors in the urban conflicts and the modes of coordination they exhibit. There exist a large variety of actors participating in urban protest and "social movements are only one of numerous forms of collective action" (Diani 2010: 5). In this chapter I address the plurality of actors, organisations, interest groups, community groups, political parties, non-profit organizations and counter-cultural spaces that serve as "grassroots mobilising structures" (McAdam et al. 1996) in urban protest. I analyse their characteristics, roles and levels of coordination in relationship to the urban protest events collected in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015. In doing so, I employ the concept of 'modes of coordination' (Diani 2013) to help differentiate, in a systematic way, between different types of mobilising agents and forms of protest.

Campaigns developed at the local level generally remain at the local level. In this chapter, however, I identify a variety of levels of coordination and consider their relative potential for rescaling. Some platforms are more willing than others to scale-up and present themselves as connected to other issues. This chapter examines the conditions under which this type of platform is more likely to emerge.

The chapter is organised in five sections. The first section addresses the different forms of organisational support behind urban protest events, which I have classified as i) non-organisational-driven events, ii) events organised by pre-existing organisations, and iii) events promoted by an ad-hoc platform. In the second section I present the characteristics of the urban grassroots sectors in the two cities. I do so in relationship to four types of movement organisations identified in the literature on social movements: which are i) public interest groups, ii) voluntary association, iii) citizens committees and iv) countercultural communities. In the third section, I analyse in detail the ad-hoc platforms and coalitional modes of coordination existing in urban-type of protest. Common to all of them is their instrumental and goal-oriented nature and their capacity to overcome the increasing fragmentation of the urban grassroots sector. Finally, in the fourth section, I analyse forms of inter-organisational cooperation and the relationship between 'new' and 'old' actors.

1.1. Organisational forms in urban protest

Social mobilisation is not reducible to the organisations that mobilise; however, organisations often play a very important role within mobilisation (della Porta and Diani 2006: 137). As I have presented in Chapter 1, involved in urban protest processes there are a plurality of actors, organisations, interest groups, community groups, political parties, non-profit organizations and counter-cultural spaces that are represented as "grassroots mobilising structures" (McAdam et al. 1996) or "collective building blocks" (ibid) in urban collective action.

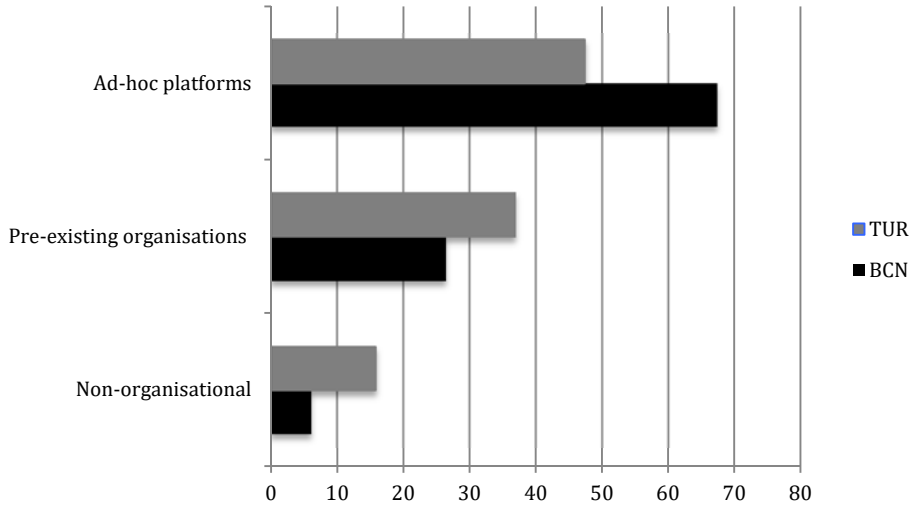
Groups and organisations in collective action represent structures to mobilise support and acquire and share resources. In fact, organisations tend to reduce the cost of action and stabilise it, allowing to maintain some level of mobilisation even in the low periods of mobilisation cycles and representing a source of continuity for the movement, in terms of identity and action. Without their existence, collective action would exhibit much higher levels of variability and a more limited capacity for action. Organisations also tend to play a representative role on behalf of a movement in front of the press and the general public.

Whereas social movement studies have extensively used resource mobilisation theory to analyse the organisational forms that social protest takes, in the literature on urban movements there has been a tendency to limit the importance of pre-existing organizations and focusing only on specific campaigns emerging in the urban milieu. According to Bobbio (1999), in urban conflicts usually the opposition is not promoted directly by pre-existing organizations (such as local associations, environmental organizations or citizens groups) but by mobilised citizens constituted in a platform. The aim of the platform is to increase the social base of the mobilisation, exercise pressure and become the interlocutors with the public administration (Bobbio 1999; Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010).

Fugure 14 distinguishes between three types of urban protest depending on who promotes the event: 1) events promoted by the "residents", which do not seem to have any organisations behind the protest, 2) events promoted by one or more pre-existing organizations (individual organisation or multiple organisations working in coordination with each other) and 3) events promoted by an ad-hoc platform created

specifically for the campaign. The latter category also includes new occupations or squatted buildings performed during the period of analysis. Older occupations are treated as already-established groups.

Figure 14. Urban Protest Events by the promoter of the event. Turin and Barcelona. 2011-2015



Source: data collected in this research

As we see in Figure 14, the data collected for this research adds further evidence of the common nature of platforms in urban mobilisation processes. Between 2011 and 2015, 67% of the protest events organized in Barcelona were promoted by an ad-hoc platform. In the case of Turin, the percentage is a considerably smaller proportion – 47% of the protest events – but was still the most common form of protest promoter. By contrast, non-organizational-driven events were in the minority in both cities (15.8% of the cases in Turin and 6.1% in Barcelona). Finally, the events organised by pre-existing organisations constituted 36.7% of the cases in Turin and 26.9% of the cases in Barcelona.

In the two cases analysed, the non-organisational-driven events are, in general, conflicts involving neighbours sharing a housing block, a street or a square, protesting against things such as: the noise of trucks at night, the presence of a social lunchroom, the noise of a nearby concert hall, the degradation of the square in front of their houses, a tourist apartment in the same building, bad conditions in their social housing flats or cuts in the utilities. Sometimes, especially in the case of Turin, the issue of protest, was also related to claims for the provision of specific resources or goods, such as more traffic

lights, changes in the names of streets, a new dog area or bigger parking areas. In Barcelona, the repertoire of action of these types of protest tended to be banners hanging from balconies, whereas in Turin petitions were frequently organised. Sometimes, in both cases, these types of events related to the residents of an urban area affected by a requalification project and develop in institutional spaces of public participation (such as a public audience or district council).

These types of non-organisational-driven events tend to relate to either very short and particular struggles, or the beginning of longer urban campaigns where the actors have not yet been constituted into a platform, association or group. In general, the aggregated data on urban campaigns shows that once a particular struggle is expanded over time, protestors tend to constitute themselves in a platform or organisation, which facilitates the communication of their claims and the organisation of resources.

The large majority of urban events (94% in the Barcelona case and 84% in the Turin case) were promoted by pre-exiting organisations or ad-hoc platforms. Protest events organised directly by organisations (individually or in coordination with each other) tend to take the form of an 'organizational mode of coordination' (Diani 2013), consisting of "models of resource allocation and boundary definition that do not involve systematic inter-organizational networking and take largely place within specific groups and organization" (Diani 2013: 11). On the other hand, protest events organised by ad-hoc platforms tend to develop a coalitional mode of coordination (Diani 2013) and can be, in some cases, interchangeable with social movements as they consist of heterogeneous and independent actors oriented towards a shared goal.

The main difference between ad-hoc platforms and social movements, according to Diani (2013), is its temporality: ad-hoc platforms tend to exhaust their functions when their goal is either achieved or it has been clearly lost; and the fact they tend to be locally circumscribed. However, throughout the course of contention, the coalition (or the ad-hoc platform) "may gradually see the emergence of broader feelings of solidarity among their proponents, and this contributes to the formation of broader social movements" (Diani 2013: 11).

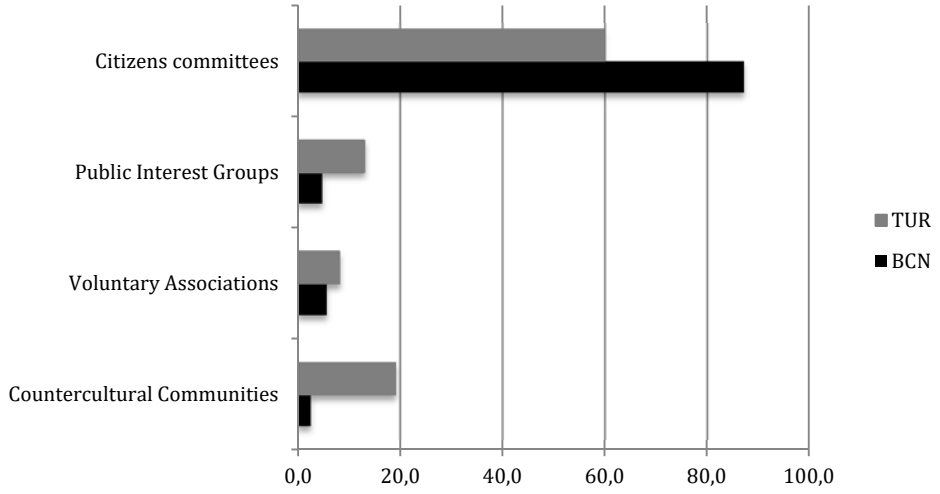
It is difficult to see how often and why the evolution of conflicts and urban campaigns go from being non-organisational or organised by pre-existing organisations to ad-hoc platforms as the promoters of the campaigns. In the data analysed, I saw a number of

cases where the initial events of a specific urban campaign were coded as non-organisational events (or events organised by pre-existing organisation), while later events of the same campaign took the form of ad-hoc platforms. However, some urban struggles in Barcelona that have lasted for many years, such as the case of the conflict on the transformation of the square *Plaça de les Glòries* have never developed a stable platform, instead continuing to be animated by pre-existing organisations (mainly neighbourhood associations) organised around the issue and mobilising either together or separately depending on the event. The analysis of this dynamic is something to be considered for further research.

1.2. Pre-existing organisations in urban protest

As I have presented in Chapter 1, the literature on social movements distinguishes between four types of movement organisations (della Porta and Diani 2006): public interest groups, voluntary associations, citizens committees and countercultural communities. The data collected in this researchunambiguously shows that the main actors participating in urban conflicts in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015 were neighbourhood associations, or *comitati di cittadini* in the case of Turin.

Figure 15. Types of organisations in urban protest events in Barcelona and Turin. 2011-2015



Source: data collected in this research

1.2.1. Neighbourhood associations and "comitati di cittadini"

'Comitati di cittadini' in Turin, and *'Associacions de Veïns*' in Barcelona (neighbourhood associations), are civil society organisations based on residency. They tend to be permanent actors embedded in the local urban milieu, with ups and downs in the activity they perform, but reliable when it comes to the necessity to articulate bottom-up mobilisation in relationship to urban conflict. Some examples of these organisations collected for the case of Turin are the 'Comitato San Donato' or the 'Comitato Nord Barriera di Milano'. For the case of Barcelona, I have found neighbourhood associations such as the 'Associació de Veïns de la Satalia" or the 'Associació de Veïns del Poblenou'.

In Turin, 93% of the events organised directly by pre-existing organisations were held by a sole organisation. Half of the time, that actor was a *comitato di cittadini*. In Barcelona the proportion of those protest events organised directly by pre-existing organisations that were promoted by a neighbourhood association is even higher than in Turin, representing 79%. As I will show in the next section, even in ad-hoc platforms these organisations represent one of the structuring blocks for urban protest. The data collected for this research shows, therefore, that neighbourhood associations and *comitati di cittadini* are still the most heavily represented actors in urban protest. Although not enjoying the same level of protagonism they enjoyed in the 1970s, these organisations remain able to represent, channel, and aggregate local demands and propose interventions.

When comparing neighbourhood associations in the two cities, we find some relevant differences and similarities in their characteristics and dynamics. In both cities, *comitati* and neighbourhood associations are formed by similar profiles of people. In general, the interviews that I conducted suggest that they are mainly composed of middle age, retired, middle class people, firmly rooted in the territory. In both places, these types of associations tend to be supported by their active members. Moreover, in many cases the local administration offers them a free space to meet, which they manage, and grant access to other, smaller associations of the neighbourhood. In some cases, they receive funding from the local administration or the local districts for the organisation of specific events or specific local programs in the form of partnerships.

In both places these types of associations exhibit similar organisational dynamics. The structures they create are, in general, not highly complex; the minimum required to maintain their activity in periods of low mobilisation when they are not promoting any protest or mobilisation campaign. As much as they can, they tend to participate in the various platforms or initiatives opened up at the local level. Some examples are the *Case di Quartiere* in Turin or the 'self-managed social centres' in Barcelona, where, most of the time, the neighbourhood associations and the *comitati di quartiere* form part of the coordinating entity.

In Turin, the emergence of *comitati di cittadini* has been relatively spread over time (with two peaks in the emergence of new comitati in the 1970s and in the 1990s). Therefore, the number of active *comitati* has tended to fluctuate over time, with some associations disappearing and others emerging depending on the local context. In Barcelona, by contrast, the number of existing neighbourhood associations is highly stable over time. Most emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, and they have maintained their activity over time. Since the 1970s, a small number of new neighbourhood associations have been created – following the emergence of new neighbourhoods or splits within the same neighbourhood association – but in general the number has remained relatively stable. This suggests that neighbourhood associations are a more firmly rooted institution in Barcelona than in Turin.

In Turin, the *comitati di citaddini* also show a more pronounced tendency to emerge as single-issue organisations related to specific campaigns than in Barcelona, where they generally exhibit a willingness to represent the local territory in all its complexity. In Turin, once a campaign is over, however, the *comitati di cittadini* tend to evolve towards other issues and more permanent structures that rooted in the local territory and that address various issues in the local area (such as security, traffic, public spaces, etc.). In some cases, they continue to focus on a single-issue even once the campaign is over, becoming an organisation more akin to an interest group than a neighbourhood association.

1.2.2. Public interest groups and voluntary organisations

The social movement literature presents public interest groups as groups with a universalist identity, with a focus on single issue and favouring strategies of

intervention based on lobbying (della Porta 2004). Voluntary organizations tend to present a universalist identity, focus on single issues, but focus their actions on service supply to members of the general public. Voluntary associations tend to have a more pragmatic than ideological approach and often derive from older cycles of mobilisation, transformed into voluntary associations providing local services.

Both types of organisationa are formal, well-structured organisations that exhibit permanent structures. The public interest groups participating in the urban conflict tend to be related to environmental issues; in the case of Turin, I found organisations such as 'Legambiente' or 'Pro Natura'. Also, there have been identified different unions, classified as interest groups, such as CGIL, CISL, UIL or COBAS. In the case of Barcelona, I found organisations such as 'Greenpeace', 'Bicicleta Club de Catalunya' and the 'PTP' ('Plataforma per el Transport Públic'/'Platform for the Public Transport').

For the case of Barcelona, more so than in Turin, in the category of voluntary organisations and interest groups, I have identified professional and advocacy organizations formed by lawyers, architects, urbanists, geographers and social scientists. Often activists spend a lot of time studying the issue to confront their struggles. However, other times they pay for professional help, especially when going down the legal route and often are actively supported by professional actors to get different opinions, acquire knowledge regardless of whether they formally collaborate with them, and help the movement to confront the professionals from the public administration. This type of support has been called 'critical expertise", and tends to be based on helping urban grassroots to legitimise their claims as independent experts (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010).

In general, public interest groups have resources and a high degree of formalisation. As for their action strategies, the data shows that they tend to be involved in moderate actions, oriented toward policy-making. Even though they are institutionalised groups, usually pre-existing from older cycles of mobilisation, they keep engaging in protest, more in the Italian case than in Barcelona. However, they do not tend to engage in disruption actions, only participating in moderate or demonstrative forms of protest.

1.2.3. Countercultural activities and social centres

In both cities there is an important presence of self-organized social centres or squats directly challenging particular issues. Some examples are 'Can Batlló' or 'Can Vies' (in the case of Barcelona) and 'Askatasuna' or 'Gabrio' (for the case of Turin). They act according to the decisions taken in their spaces of decision-making although, in general, their organizational structure "is extremely decentralized" (della Porta 2011: 86). Their main form of action is the occupation of spaces in areas to be transformed or in process of transformation. They have aspirations of radical change and for the reproduction of activism over time they use internal solidarity and identity.

In the case of Turin, the mainstream newspapers and the general public tended to present these actors as the 'antagonistic' sector of the city. In Barcelona, these spaces were presented differently depending on the case, and was no such common framework to refer to them. From the data collected, it is possible to see that in Turin there is a clear countercultural political reality, separated from other grassroots spaces and from the majority of citizen committees. In Barcelona, by contrast, in the majority of cases analysed, the squatting movement was one part of a very diverse and mixed grassroots, where it was common for actors to share spaces, projects and protest events with each other.

In both cities, it is possible to identify two models of social centres. First, those that do not want to have any relationship with the local administration. In Barcelona that was the case with respect to the squat 'Can Vies'. In Turin, the *antagonisti*, are groups against any type of relationship with the local administration, promoting sentiments such as "*non ci sono governi amici*" ('there are no friendly governments'). There were also, however, social centres that established relationships with the local administration and tended to provide spaces for different groups and organisations (with different political leanings and organisational dynamics) to gather and perform common actions, often in some sort of partnership with the local administration.In Barcelona, Can Batlló ia an example of this model of relations – one that has spread over recent years in the city. In Turin, this model was exemplified by the squatted centre *Cavalerriza Reale*, a self-organised space that, over recent years, has brought together a heterogeneous group of people, with many coming from the cultural sector.

In Turin, these centres are the ones that have promoted the housing struggle, stopping evictions and squatting empty buildings to locate evicted families (sometimes under the name of 'Prendocasa Torino' and others not). In Barcelona, on the other hand, the housing movement has been promoted by an ad-hoc platform ('Plataforma d'Afectats per la Hipoteca' (PAH) /'Platform of Affected by the Mortgages') that although coming from activists that participated in old squatted houses in the city over the 2000s, it was not connected to specific social centres. The PAH cannot be described as an advocacy organization, taking up a cause and fighting on behalf of others, instead, most members are directly and profoundly affected by the issues they are protesting about – they have been transformed by personal individual circumstances into political activists" (Flesher 2015:471).

1.3. Ad-hoc platforms and coalitional modes of coordination

Ad-hoc platforms usually encompass previously existing associations and organizations (apart from individual citizens) inside their umbrella. They tend to develop a coalitional mode of coordination (Diani 2013) that sometimes, throughout the course of contention, they can be interchangeable with social movements. In Barcelona, I identified, for the period 2011 and 2015, 43 ad-hoc platforms. In Turin, I only identified 23 ad-hoc platforms. Although all were classified as ad-hoc platforms, they are nonetheless very different, addressing a borad variety of issues, existing for shorter or longer periods of time, and incorporating more or less variety with respect to organisations and activists. Some of these platforms had associations, organisations and groups under their umbrella, while others grew up around individual citizens. What they all had in common was their instrumental, goal-oriented nature, although some had more specific and easier to achieve goals than others.

Figure 16. Urban ad-hoc platforms mobilizing in Barcelona between 2011-2015

- Assemblea de Barris per un Turisme Sostenible (ABTS) (*Assembly of Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Tourism*).
- Associació en Defensa del Patrimoni Dante-Llobregós (*Association for the Defense of "Dante-Llobregós" Heritage*).
- Assemblea Solidària contra els Desallotjaments (*Solidarity Assembly against Evictions*).
- Assemblea Veïnal per una Rambla Democràtica (*Neighbourhood Assembly for a Democratic 'Rambla'*).
- Campanya per la Dignificació del tram Vallbona-Montcada (*Campaign for the Dignification of the 'Vallbona-Montcada' section*).
- Campanya Exigim Espais (*Campaign Let's Demand Spaces*).
- Campanya Fem Plaça (*Campaign Let's Make Square*).
- Campanya Salvem el Casc Antic de Sant Andreu (*Campaign Let's Save the Old Town in Sant Andreu*).
- Campanya Salvem el Parc de l'Oreneta (*Campaign Let's Save the 'Oreneta' Park*).
- Campanya Salvem la Pedrera de Pedralbes (*Campaign Let's Save the 'Pedralbes' Quarry*).
- Campanya Salvem Sala Granados (*Campaign Let's Save 'Sala Granados'*).
- Campanya Segle XX és per el Barri (*Campaign 'Segle XX' is for the Neighbourhood*).
- Campanya Tanquem els CIEs (*Campaign Let's Close the 'CIEs'*).
- Campanya Volem Can Batlló per el Barri (*Campaign We Want 'Can Batlló' for the Neighbourhood*).
- Comissió d'Afectats per el Projecte Urbanístic del Born (*Comission of the Affected by the 'Born' Urban Project*).
- Comissió Calàbria 66 (*Comission 'Calàbria 66'*).
- Comissió Ciutadana per la Recuperació de la Memòria dels Barris de Barraques (*Citizen Comission for the Memory of the Shantytown Neighbourhoods*).
- El Banc Expropiat (*The Expropriated Bank*)
- Escoles Bressol Indignades/Plataforma en Defensa del Model d'Escola Bressol Pública (*Platform in Defense of the Public Nursery Model*)
- La Barceloneta Diu Prou (*The 'Barceloneta' Says it is Enough*).
- Nou Barris Cabrejada Diu Prou (*Exasperated 'Nou Barris' Says Enough).*
- Plataforma d'Afectats per la Hipoteca (*Platform of the Affected by the Mortgages).*
- Plataforma Ciutadana Defensem el Park Güell (*Citizen Platform Let's Defend 'Park Güell'*).
- Plataforma Defensem el Port Vell (*Platform Let's Defend the Old Harbor*).
- Plataforma Diagonal per a Tothom (*Platform "Diagonal' for Everyone*).
- Plataforma Gràcia Cap a on Vas? (*Platform 'Gràcia' where do you go?*)
- Plataforma No a l'Antena del Carmel (*Platform No to the Antenna of 'Carmel'*).
- Plataforma No al Pelotazo de la Maquinista (*Platform No to the 'Maquinista' Plot*).
- Plataforma Prostitutes Indignades (*Platform of Outraged Prostitutes*).
- Plataforma Recuperem l'Arnau/Salvem el Teatre Arnau (*Platform Let's Take back 'Arnau'/Platform Let's Save 'Arnau Teatre'*).

- Plataforma Recuperem la Flor de Maig (*Platform Let's Take Back the 'Flor de Maig'*).
- Plataforma Salvem Can 60 (*Platform Let's Save 'Can 60'*)
- Plataforma Salvem el CAP de la Guineueta (*Platform Let's Save the Guineueta 'CAP'*).
- Plataforma Salvem el Cine Niza (*Platform Let's Save 'Cine Niza'*).
- Plataforma Salvem la Repla (*Platform Let's Save the 'Repla'*).
- Plataforma Stop Pujades Transport (*Platform Stop Public Transport Rises*).
- Plataforma Transforma Porta (*Platform Let's Transform 'Porta'*).
- Plataforma Transformem (*Platform Let's Transform*).
- Plataforma Aturem el Pla Paral·lel/Plataforma Som Paral·lel (*Platform to Stop the 'Paral·lel' Plan/ Platform We are 'Paral·lel*).
- Plataforma No Hotel al Rec Comtal *('Platform No to the Hotel in 'Rec Comtal'*).
- Plataforma Salvem Botticelli (*Platform Let's Save 'Botticelli'*).
- Plataforma Salvem Torre Garcini (*Platform Let's Save 'Torre Garcini'*).
- Plataforma SOS Enric Granados (*Platform SOS Enric Granados*).

Source: data collected in this research

The 43 platforms identified in Barcelona account for 62% of the total number of protest events promoted in the city between 2011 and 2015. Within this 62%, 22% were not directly related to an urban plan, policy or intervention developed by the local state, but the corresponding 78% were instances of platforms contesting or resisting the actions of the local administration.

The majority of the platform-events were in reponse to austerity measures applied in the context of financial crisis and economic recession (for example, this is the case of 'Escoles Bressol Indignades' -*Platform in Defence of the Public Nursery Model*-, 'Nou Barris Cabrejada Diu Prou!' -*Exasperated 'Nou Barris' Says Enough*-, or 'Plataforma Salvem el CAP de la Guineueta'- *Platform Let's Save the Guineueta 'CAP'*). The second majoritarian group of platform-events collected for the period of time analysed in the case Barcelona were struggles related to regeneration plans promoted by the local administration that affected some of the main boulevards of the city (some examples are 'Plataforma Diagonal per a Tothom'- *Platform "Diagonal' for Everyone*-, 'Plataforma Aturem el Pla Paral·lel'- *Platform to Stop the 'Paral·lel' Plan/ Platform We are 'Paral·lel* -or 'Plataforma Salvem la Repla'- *Platform Let's Save the 'Repla'*) and urban requalification projects ('Campanya Salvem el Casc Antic de Sant Andreu', 'Campanya Salvem el Parc de l'Oreneta', or 'Campanya d'Afectats per el Projecte Urbanístic del Born').

The most important platform existing in the period analysed in Barcelona was the '*Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca'* (PAH),[169] which emerged in 2009 and, within a few years, managed to establish a network of 225 affiliated groups across Spain (PAH 2015). The organization has been characterised by horizontal structures and operated through frequent assemblies. Over recent years it has demonstrated a degree of longevity and stability. At least until 2015, it also contained fairly stable groups of people, engaging in regular face-to-face meetings with a high capacity for self-management and autonomy.

From the data collected in Barcelona, we can find an explanation for the high presence of ad-hoc platforms in urban-types of protest in the work of Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa (2010). According to the authors, the emergence of these organisational forms can be interpreted as a lack of trust of mobilised citizens in pre-existing organisations (such as neighbourhood associations), as a shortage of internal renewal of activists of these pre-existing organisations (and the consequent lack of renovation in interests, structures, perspectives and issues), as a moderation of the demands of the pre-existing organisations (because of the process of institutionalisation of these associations) or simply because of a context of more general fragmentation and heterogeneity of the organisations related to urban protest. Moreover, "actions promoted by broad coalitions are more likely to attract public attention, be perceived as worthy and gain political legitimacy" (Diani 2012: 7).

Indeed, these platforms make possible the articulation of different actors (new actors that emerged over the last cycle of mobilisation and old actors participating in the urban conflict since years ago) and allow overcoming the increasing fragmentation of the organisations engaging in the urban conflict in Barcelona. Since the 15M, and the emergence in Barcelona of a network of 'neighbourhood assemblies' distributed over the city, the actors 'representing' and channelling citizens demands have almost multiplied. These new assemblies follow a similar role as the traditional neighbourhood associations, although they develop different structures and organisational forms (without membership and open to everyone), and use social centres or public squares, instead of the traditional buildings (ceded by the administration). The ad-hoc platforms

[169] Platform for those Affected by Mortgages.

related to specific campaigns that I have found in Barcelona between 2011 and 2015 have been able to encompass these different actors, and make them work together.

Figure 17. Urban ad-hoc platforms mobilizing in Turin between 2011-2015.

- Assemblea Cavallerizza 14:45 (*'Cavallerizza' Assembly 14:45*).
- Associazione Rispettando San Salvario (*Association Respecting 'San Salvario'*).
- Centro Sociale l'Asilo di Via Alessandria (*The Asylum Social Centre in Via Alessandria*).
- Collettivo Prendocasa (*Collective 'Prendocasa'*).
- Comitati di cittadini Torino Nord (*Citizens' Commitee 'Torino Nord'*).
- Comitato 0.6 (*Committee 0.6*).
- Comitato di cittadini per l'ex Moi (*Citizens' Commitee for the 'Ex-MOI'*).
- Comitato ExIsvor (*ExIsvor Commitee*)
- Comitato Ex-Moi Lingotto (*'Ex-MOI Lingotto' Commitee*)
- Comitato No al Parcheggio sota la Grande Madre (*Commitee No Parking under the 'Grande Madre'*).
- Comitato No Parking (*Commitee No Parking*).
- Comitato No Tunnel della Torino-Ceres sotto Corso Grosseto (*Commitee No Tunel 'Torino-Ceres under 'Corso Grosseto'*).
- Comitato per l'acqua pubblica (*Public Water Commitee*).
- Comitato Salvare i Murazzi (*Commitee Save the 'Murazzi'*).
- Comitato Salviamo Corso Marconi (*Commitee Save 'Corso Marconi'*).
- Comitato Salviamo il Maria Adelaide (*Commitee Save 'Maria Adelaide'*).
- Comitato SniaRischiosa (*Commitee 'SniaRischiosa'*).
- Comitato Soliderietà Rifugiati e Migranti (*Committee in Solidarity with Refugee and Migrant*).
- Coordinamento Nazionale No Degrado e Malamovida (*National Coordination No Degrade and 'Malamovida'*).
- Coordinamento 'No Zoo' (*Coordination 'No Zoo'*).
- Giovani per Borgano (*Young People for Borgano*).
- Rifugiati di Corso Chieri Torino (*Refugees from 'Corso Chieri Torino'*).
- Occupazione in Via Verdi 15 (*Occupation in 'Via Verdi 15'*).

Source: data collected in this research

In Turin, 23 ad-hoc platforms were identified (almost half the number of platforms in the case of Barcelona), accounting for 46% of the total number of urban protest events promoted in Turin between 2011 and 2015 (almost 20 points less than in Barcelona). Within this 46%, almost half of them are not related directly with an urban plan, policy or intervention developed by the local state. A number that is double the percentage found for the case of Barcelona.

Some of the platforms found in Turin, like in Barcelona, respond to austerity measures applied in the context of financial crisis and economic recession *('Collettivo*

Prendocasa', 'Comitato 0.6', and *'Comitato 'Salviamo il Maria Adelaide'*). Others are platforms created to respond to urban plans or urban projects promoted by the public administration *('Comitato ExIsvor', 'Comitato No al Parcheggio sota la Grande Madre', 'Comitati No Tunnel della Torino-Ceres sotto Corso Grosseto',* or *'Comitato Salviamo Corso Marconi'*). The others respond, mostly, to defensive or proactive reactions to transformative forces coming from 'outside' (such as *'Associazione Rispettando San Salvario', 'Comitato di cittadini per l'ex Moi', 'Comitato Ex-Moi Lingotto', 'Comitato Soliderietà Rifugiati e Migranti'* and *'Coordinamento Nazionale No Degrado e Malamovida')*.

Finally, the rest of the ad-hoc platforms collected for the case of Turin are related to the squatting and self-management of urban spaces *('Assemblea Cavallerizza 14:45', 'Centro Sociale l'Asilo di Via Alessandria', 'Comitato 'Salvare i Murazzi'* and *'Occupazione in Via Verdi 15'*).

In the case of Turin, the emergence of these platforms can also be seen, in part, as finding ways to articulate and mobilise individual citizens, together with the organisations or groups promoting the campaign and the platform (Cruz-Gallach and Martí-Costa 2010: 122).. For the case of Turin, however, they do not seem to emerge because of lacking of trust of the mobilised citizens towards neighbourhood associations, nor as a moderation of their demands because of the process of institutionalisation. Moreover, in Turin, the last cycle of mobilisation did not make emerge new organisations at the local level, so their emergence does not seem to respond to a more fragmented and heterogeneous urban grassroots context but as way urban activist have to articulate their demands and coordinate themselves.

1.4. Inter-organisational cooperation dynamics and different roles

Promoting mobilisation campaigns together is the outcome of sharing a network of interaction that favours the formulation of collective demands (della Porta and Diani 2006: 27). Ad-hoc platforms represent the shift between atomized experiences (disconnected and particular urban protests) to collective subjects (with stronger or weaker feelings of solidarity among their components). The literature suggests that the more local institutional participatory spaces are created, and the greater the diversity of

urban policies applied, the less coordination there will be between urban grassroots organisations and more heterogeneous and fragmented urban movements' sector.

The data collected shows that whereas in Barcelona the synergies, complicities and interaction between different actors mainly exist at the local level,[170] in Turin, by contrast, networking organizational strategies favour the national scale and tend to work in a rather sectoral way. Urban actors are more often connected with similar urban actors from other cities in Italy than with different urban actors sharing the same local context. Instead, in Barcelona we see very little coordination at the national scale and stronger links at the local context under the creation of ad-hoc platforms.

In Barcelona we see a combination of actors forming ad-hoc platforms – a pattern that was replicated throughout the city in different campaigns and neighbourhoods. This typical combination involves the neighbourhood(s) association(s) of the affected area or the urban space from where the conflict emerges, a new neighbourhood assembly or social centre created during the previous cycle of mobilisation (in this case, the 15M movement) and a number of relevant cultural, educational or social associations that exist in the area.

The number of associations participating in the platforms varied greatly; while some platforms incorporated all of the small associations of the territory,[171] others incorporated only one or two, usually those closest to the social centre or local assembly created during the previous cycle of mobilisation. However, apart from very few exceptions, the neighbourhood associations of the area always participated in this type of platform.

From the interviews conducted with leaders of the neighbourhood movement in Barcelona, I perceive the collaboration of the neighbourhood association with different actors as a survival strategy, an opportunity for the renewal of the moveemnt and as a way to get articulated in the new urban grassroots context, which change after the 15M/Indignados events and its decentralisation movement to the neighbourhoods. From the beginning of the 2000s, and especially after the 15M movement, the creation of new neighbourhood assemblies has meant that neighbourhood associations no longer have a monopoly on channelling and aggregating interests at the local level. The

[170] And address various types of issue, engaging various types of organisations.
[171] Such as school associations, local theatre groups, cultural centres, and communitarian groups such as urban gardens or groups of collective consumption.

neighbourhood movement in Barcelona has, over recent years, had problems attracting new members in an increasingly ageing movement. With the entrance in the local government of the 'Convergencia i Unió' (CiU) party in 2011, the communication between the movement and the local government stopped being as fluid as before, and the neighbourhood associations had an opportunity to articulate new relationships with other, mostly new, urban actors in the neighbourhoods.

From the data collected in Barcelona, we can see a process of the creation of a social movement between 2011 and 2015, with sustained exchanges of resources and collaboration between different types of actors in pursuit of common goals. These goals were driven by specific urban campaigns and the creation of instrumental ad-hoc platforms. Although the individual and organised actors participating in these platforms kept their autonomy and independence, there was a constant collaboration among them, which is presented in the literature as a characteristic of a mature field of urban movement.

In Barcelona, more so than in Turin, the data show coordination between 'old' and 'new' forms of activism with different organisational dynamics. In a post-15M context, there was the existence in Barcelona of more innovative political organisations, where there is difficult to determine 'membership' with respect to a group or collective and represent open spaces often meeting in public squares. The events organised by these non-conventional organisations appear, at first sight, to be spontaneous and immediate. However, their rapid development is only made possible as a result of pre-existing webs of social networks – both physical and virtual – which facilitate the articulation of organised protest. With a feasible and attractive call to action, the nodes and links of the net can be activated in certain moments in service of a common and specific goal.

This situation contrasts with an 'old' neighbourhood movement that rely on stable structures, forms of membership and decision-making systems. However, although the existence of clear differences between 'old' and 'new' actors and the increasing presence of new forms of organisational dynamics in the urban conflict, the data collected for this research shows that the neighbourhood associations were, between 2011 and 2015, the most heavily represented actors in the urban protest and one of the main structures articulating bottom-up mobilisation processes. Through the creation of ad-hoc platforms, often around new social centres, the articulation of different actors (new actors that emerged over the pervious cycle of mobilisation and existing actors

participating in the urban conflict for many years) was possible. In Turin did was not the case at the same extent as in Barcelona as the urban grassroots sector seem to be coordinated more in a sectorial way and at the national scale.

After the last cycle of urban mobilisation in Barcelona, which this research has depicted, new institutions have emerged in the city, one of the most important ones being 'Can Batlló'. The neighbourhood movement is now part of this institution but present in a diluted way, mixed with other actors in the general assembly. Maybe the emergence of this new institutions can solve the problem of regeneration of urban grassroots structures at the neighbourhood level. We need time to see whether these new institutions show continuity over time and are able to represent, channel, and aggregate local demands and propose interventions in a sustained way. This is something to assess in further research.

1.5. Conclusion

There are a plurality of actors, involved in processes of urban protest: organisations, interest groups, community groups, political parties, non-profit organizations and counter-cultural spaces that are represented as 'grassroots mobilising structures'. Depending on the event, the organisations supporting it take forms. I organised the protest events collected for Barcelona and Turin into three categories depending on who promoted them: non-organizational-driven events, events organised by pre-existing organisations and events promoted by an ad-hoc platform. The large majority of urban events (94% in Barcelona and 84% in Turin) were promoted by pre-existing organizations or ad-hoc platforms. And in both cities, the majority of events were promoted by an ad-hoc platform.

The literature on social movements distinguishes between four types of movement organisations: public interest groups, voluntary associations, citizens committees and countercultural communities. From the data collected in this research, we can confirm that the main actors participating in the urban conflict in Barcelona and Turin between 2011 and 2015 were citizen committees, in the form of neighbourhood associations in Barcelona and *comitati di cittadini* (in Turin). These types of organisations were present in the majority of the urban events collected, representing permanent actors embedded in the local urban milieu. Although not enjoying the same level of protagonism they had in the 1970s, in the current urban context – with many more organisations and

actors participating at the urban grassroots level – they nonetheless are still able to represent, channel and aggregate local demands.

Public interest groups and voluntary organisations are organisations and groups with a universalist identity that focus on single issues and often have an approach that is more pragmatic than ideological. They exist in both cities, although they showed a slightly higher levels of involvement in urban protest in Barcelona than in Turin. On the other hand, countercultural activities and social centres are also present in both cities, and some cities have some social centres that have been active for many years ago. Whereas in Turin there is a clearer countercultural political reality – rather separated from the other urban grassroots spaces – in Barcelona such spaces are more dilute, with a mixed grassroots milieu of shared spaces, projects and protest events.

Ad-hoc platforms and coalitional modes of coordination have in common their instrumental and goal-oriented nature and their capacity to overcome the increasing fragmentation of the organisations engaging in urban conflict today. In Barcelona, I was able to identify 43 different platforms existing between 2011 and 2015, which account for 62% of the total number of protest events promoted in the city between those years. For the case of Turin, the data collected shows 23 ad-hoc platforms (almost half of the total for Barcelona) accounting for 46% of the total number of urban protest events promoted in Turin between 2011 and 2015. The majority of these platforms are directly related to an urban plan, policy or intervention developed by the local state. They contest or resist the local administration's actions, such as austerity measures applied in the context of financial crisis and economic recession, or plans for urban regeneration.

Finally, in relationship to forms of inter-organisational cooperation and the articulation of 'old' and 'new' actors that emerged over the previous cycle of mobilisation, the data show that whereas in Barcelona the synergies, complicities and interaction between different actors mainly existed at the local level (and operated through different types of issues and organisations), in Turin, networking organisational strategies favoured the national scale and tended to work in a rather sectoral way. In Barcelona, therefore, there was a higher articulation between different organisational modes and generation of activists than in Turin, which works more sectorally with respect to types of actors.

In Barcelona, since the 15M there have been the emergence of a new network of neighbourhood assemblies distributed over the city. These actors have different organisational dynamics, less formal, more open and horizontal and less permanent, that has confronted with the organisational ways of some of the traditional actors participating in the urban conflicts. The data shows spaces and forms of cooperation between these different types of actors for the case of Barcelona. Further research needs to address the role of the new institutions created and to what extent they have the capacity to replace old institutions such as the neighbourhood associations.

CONCLUSION

When reflecting on a space that appears to house both the global and the micro, the question is begged: what role for the urban? The urban is the context that mediates between, on the one hand, the structures and fluxes of a globalised world and, on the other, the day-to-day existence of individual residents. In Europe, this urban reality appears to be at the heart of the functioning – and the contradictions – of contemporary capitalism.

The urban context is also a rich site of resistance and activism; critical urban studies research has contributed greatly to the development of an understanding of urbanisation and the urban space as a social construction resulting from the exercise of power and conflict. In academic literature, however, local mobilisation processes and urban-type of conflicts have been often characterised as 'parochial' and 'particular', isolated and fragmented by their rootedness in proximal, everyday life. This has been problematic, as it suggests that urban movements are incapable of overcoming their restrictively particular local communities and opening out towards broader processes of social mobilisation. It has also contributed to a tendency to locate urban protest outside the conceptual scope of the mainstream social movement literature.

Despite the firmly particular territorial grounding of urban protest, some mobilisations are, nonetheless, successful in transcending their origins and gathering momentum to become an urban movement on a larger scale. This begs the question as to how can protest rooted in such a micro-territorial scale transcend the proximal and become a more significant social force? And why are some mobilisations more successful in this regard than others, especially given that macro-context and grievances are often shared?

Cities have also been the forum for a number of major mobilisations in recent years. In Tahir Square in Cairo, the '15M/Indignados' movement in Spain or the 'Occupy Wall Street' movement in the US, cities were the cradle of protest, and the urban space constituted a central platform for people's struggles. In response, literature from both social movement studies and urban studies have tended to interpret all social mobilisation that takes place in cities as urban-type movements. This is also problematic as it ignores the possibility that specifically *urban* protest may be

characterised by dynamics of mobilisation that are specific to contestation over *urban* issues.

This thesis is an attempt to bring together urban studies and social movement studies; an argument in favour of dialogue between two bodies of work that share much in the way of analytic interests but little in the way of cumulative scholarship or theoretical and methodological resources. Analytically, my aim has been to lift the lid on the 'black box' of local context and begin to piece together a picture of the ways in which that context is significant for what is an important, and unavoidable, element of urban life: conflict.

The existing literature on social movements suggests that social mobilisation is not a spontaneous reaction to changes in macro-structures – such as economic recession or increasing globalisation – but is rather related to the existence of organisational, cultural, social and economic resources. The concept of 'political opportunity structures' has been much used in social movement studies to bridge the gap between, on the one hand, institutional, political and social conditions and, on the other, dynamics of social mobilisation.

Urban studies researchers – largely working from a neo-Marxist approach to political economy – have, however, tended to identify macro-level sources of grievances and use them as the lens through which to analyse processes of urban contention. Despite this tendency to grant macro-structures a privileged place in descriptions of, and explanations for, urban protest, we nonetheless observe significant variation in urban protest events, even when such contexts are held constant. Barcelona and Turin are two cities that share many similarities in terms of large-scale processes and phenomena. However, they differ markedly in terms of the characteristics of the urban protest they give rise to.

In attempting to address the puzzle animating this research – why do the dynamics of urban protest vary among structurally similar cities – I developed a two-part question to guide my research – *how did urban protest vary across Turin and Barcelona in the period 2011-2015, and what role did the 'local context' play in shaping that urban protest?* In attempting to answer that question, I have employed a method that has been little used by urban studies scholars; through an extensive Protest Event Analysis, I examined urban conflict from a perspective that encompasses more than just a single

campaign or single group of campaigners. The descriptive analysis informed by the protest events is, therefore, a source of insight into the dynamics of protest at the local level that fills an important gap in the literature and opens up avenues for further research. The supplementary interviews conducted, the historical context outlined in Chapters 3 and 4 and additional desk research also provided a rich background of contextual knowledge that has facilitated the analysis of protest events that constitutes the bulk of Chapters 5-7.

The principal argument that runs throughout the thesis is that a consideration of local context is crucial for understanding the dynamics of contemporary protest. This thesis adopts from social movement studies the concept of 'political opportunity structure' to guide the creation of a framework for systematically analysing the relationships between, on the one hand, urban protest and, on the other, institutional, political and social dimensions that are particular to the local level. Accordingly, 'local context' is understood as a system of political opportunity structures located at the intersection of urban protest dynamics and the fluxes of global forces.

I identified a number of institutional and political dimensions – aspects of local context – that there is reason to believe may shape the nature of urban protest; the degree of political and administrative decentralisation at the local level, the political responsiveness of the local state, the nature and goals of the urban policies and urban plans developed, the type of local government, and the openness of a city to international spheres and general cycles of protest are all variables that, drawing on social movement theory and my knowledge of the two cases, I have identified as potentially important in the development of urban protest. We have also seen that, in the two cases studied here, different combinations of these elements were associated with different framing strategies, repertoires of action and organisational characteristics at the grassroots level. Moreover, there are theoretical reasons for thinking that the relationship between these phenomena may be causal, and that that relationship may not be limited to the cases examined here.

On the one hand, the data collected for this research confirms that there is marked variation with respect to the levels and forms of urban protest developed in the two cities during the period analysed. Through the analytical concepts of repertoires of action, framing strategies and organisational structures – which are widely used in social movement studies but not in urban studies – I have established a range of

variation to guide the empirical investigation into the relationship between urban protest and a system of political opportunity structures.

In Barcelona I observed a very strong relationship between the activity of the local administration and urban protest actions. I also saw an urban grassroots sector that was highly interconnected but largely insular with respect to actors from outside the city. A large majority of urban protest events collected in Barcelona were directly related to an urban plan, policy or intervention developed by the local state, and almost all of the events targeted the local public administration.

In Turin, by contrast, I saw a less confined local political system and a much more nationally connected urban grassroots sector. The local state was the most frequent target in the urban protest events collected; however, there were a number of urban protest events that targeted the national scale. Whereas in Barcelona the synergies, complicities and interaction between different actors mainly existed at the local level, (and operated through different types of issues and organisations), in Turin, networking organisational strategies favoured the national scale and tended to work in a rather sectoral way.

In both cities we saw that the large majority of the urban events were promoted by ad-hoc platforms – organisational platforms that tend to be flexible and have the capacity to overcome the fragmentation of the urban grassroots sector. However, the relative importance of the platforms as a mode of coordination was higher in Barcelona than in Turin. The repertoires of action performed by these platforms were different in my two cases. Although in both cases, the repertoires of action used were generally moderate, in Barcelona there was a higher tendency than in Turin to use demonstrative actions and organise visible protests (open assemblies, demonstrations or gatherings) in the street.

On the other hand, the research conducted here has added weight to the notion that urban protest is closely related to the local administration. In both cases analised, we see variability in the levels of urban protest correlating with greater or lesser administrative and political activity. Given the broad empirical range of this study, I have been able to establish with confidence that urban protest tends to be moderate in its forms, and that claims tend to be expressed through conventional channels.

The local state was the target of the vast majority of urban protest events analysed, with the majority of them relating to specific institutional urban projects or plans. Urban plans have the potential to both operate as a platform around which protest can be articulated and also as a platform to mediate between international forces and citizens. In theory, such plans should enable the public administration to mediate between residents and these external forces. However, the municipality of Barcelona displayed a greater capacity than that of Turin to translate changing macro-circumstances into specific plans and programmes. In Turin, the local authorities were highly restricted in terms of the available budget for large requalification projects.

These differing modes of planning evident in my two cases are manifested in both different configurations of political opportunities and different kinds of tensions in urban life. In Chapter 6, I also showed that those contrasting contexts in my two cases found contrasting expressions in the discourses of collective actors engaged in urban resistance. The discourses of the actors involved in the protest events collected for this research also revealed a variety of collective identities implicated in urban protest. I showed that in some protest events urban actors attached themselves to pre-existing identities. However, in others, collective identities seemed to be both constituted and transformed through the process of mobilisation itself. This finding is suggestive of an important relationship of mutual constitution between urban actors and urban protest that may be an interesting topic for further research.

Urban protest arises in response to injustice, grievances and social strains, but such facilitating conditions are not enough to produce urban protest with the capacity to scale up; a complex set of factors in a specific relationship seems necessary to produce protest that transcends the parochial. With respect to the local context, we might expect those cases with some levels of local openness and decentralisation, coupled with insufficient and inadequate accountability instruments, to favour more broadly articulated and connected expressions of urban protest, with a greater capacity to generate contention. Moreover, a local administration that is active in developing plans, projects and regulations adds density to the local context, generating new sources of grievance. By creating channels for public participation that give residents a voice, but which are insufficiently effective to satisfy protestors, the local administration can create favourable conditions for the development of an urban-type of protest with the potential to transcend the particular level.

In Barcelona, following the elections in 2011, participatory institutional channels broke down and opportunities opened up for the development of urban protest. The centre-right government in power between 2011 and 2015 was disconnected from local citizens; although it showed some levels of openness, and a willingness to implement open and participatory processes, it failed to be responsive to grassroots demands and logics. Following the eruption of the 15M/Indignados (and the emergence of new mobilising agents at the local context), this context of political opportunities within the local system appears to have facilitated the development of an intense urban mobilisation process that ultimately crystallised into the creation of the citizen platform 'Barcelona en Comú', which remains in power in Barcelona.

The promotion of urban projects and plans in Barcelona also represented opportunities for very different urban protestors to become organised and coordinated under a common framework of action. The decentralisation of the 15M/Indignados movement and its disaggregation into neighbourhood assemblies translated into an increase in the number of urban protests that were articulated, in most cases in response to a local institutional intervention.

In Turin, by contrast, the local configuration of political opportunity structures between 2011 and 2015 yielded a very different 'local context'. First, when compared with Barcelona, the local government in Turin seems to have had a greater tendency to implement integrative and responsive participatory strategies. Moreover, the local institutional system in Turin has a greater degree of proximity between the local institution and the local residents, which we would expect to produce dynamics of protest like those which I observed: more moderate forms of protest, more fragmentation of the urban grassroots, and pronounced polarisation between an institutionalised part and a radicalised sector. These dynamic may be linked to the fact that, in Turin, political parties were both stronger and closer to the citizens and, hence, better able to channel territorial grievances and demands. In the period under study, the local government in Turin was also a continuation of previous mandates, meaning that dialogue with the grassroots could be maintained and conflict could more easily be channelled through non-contentious institutional spaces.

Urban studies have largely been dominated by single-case studies. This thesis constitutes an argument that comparison in urban studies is both possible and illuminating. The small-N comparative design takes two cases that are independent of

each other but comparable because of some important shared characteristics. This design has enabled me to examine protest event in cases that exhibit variation with respect to local context and, thus, to examine a greater range of relationships between different dimensions of local context and expressions of urban protest. The findings are temporally and spatially contingent but, nonetheless, this research is expected to resonate with a broader population of noncapital cities in western capitalist democracies with a notable industrial past and a strong presence of urban grassroots.

Additional research methods – such as a systematic process tracing – would be necessary to establish with confidence that what I observed – in terms of apparent connections between the various dimensions of local context considered here and particular expressions of urban protest – were causal relationships. However, the qualitative empirical investigations that supplemented the PEA conducted in this study, coupled with theoretical expectations and empirical observations from existing literature, provides evidence of the plausibility of an important – and understudied – relationship between local context and urban mobilisation.

This thesis has been largely exploratory in aim, establishing a conceptualisation of urban protest – based around Manual Castell's idea of ´collective consumption´ goods and services – and a framework for studying which I built up on the basis of what appear to be important aspects of the local political and institutional contexts. The framework proposed provides the theoretical and methodological resources necessary to compare urban protest across cases. The aim has been to facilitate further research on urban movements which can build on existing studies, explore further some of the relationships drawn out in this thesis, make predictions about developing dynamics of urban protest and explain variation in dynamics of mobilisation across cases. This approach taken here has been an exploratory first step to examine a relationship in a field of empirical research that has been dominated by single-case studies. Those existing studies have approached the phenomenon of urban conflict in a piecemeal fashion and largely eschewed the establishment of relationships that may hold across cases.

The puzzle animating this research was that of how and why urban protest varies within similar macro-contexts. I have focused on exploring the relationship between local context and urban protest and used that investigation to lay out a framwork for future research. I have done so in the hope of making it easier for future study of urban

movements to be cumulative. This research also has relevancy for the study of social movements more generally, as it provides a framework to analyse the role of the local context and the implication of different forms of urbanisation on social protest. This is an area of study that has been largely left unexplored by the literature on social movements and the concept of political opportunity structure has had very little application at the local scale. In a moment where prominent social conflicts and processes of mobilisation are underway in cities across the world, it seems crucial, for this body of literature, to understand the implications that new forms of urbanisation – and their associated grievances – may have for dynamics of social protest.

APPENDIX A – CODEBOOK FOR THE PROTEST EVENT ANALYSIS (PEA)

Nº	NAME	DESCRIPTION	RANGE OF IDENTIFICATION
1	ID	Case Number of Observation	1…
2	DATE	Date of Article Coding	day.month.year
3	NEWSCODE	Newspaper Name	Name of the Newspaper
4	DATEREP	Date of the Report	day.month.year
5	TITLE	Article Title	The full title of the coded article
6	CITY	City Where the Event took Place	1: Barcelona 2: Turin
7	SCALE	Scale of the Conflict	1: Neighbourhood 2: Intermediate (more than one neighbourhood) 3: City 4: Region 5: State 6: International
8	DISTRICT	District Where the Conflict takes Place	See Appendix B
9	NEIGHBOURHOOD	Neighbourhood Where the Conflict takes Place	See Appendix B
10	PLACE	Place Where the Protest takes Place	1: Public Space: Streets, Bridges, Roads… 2: Public Space: Squares, Parks, … 3: Public Space: Outside Public Institutions 4: Governmental Place: Public Building, Centre, Auditorium, Court 5: Private/Semi-Public Space: Banks, Commercial Centres… 6: Private Space: Housing Buildings, Workplaces… 7: Squat Buildings, Social Centres 8: No Location Specified 9: Social Media, Online Activism

11	NUMDUM	Number of Participants Reported by the Source	0: No 1: Yes
12	REPNUM	Reported Number of Participants	1: Few (1-10) 2: Dozens (50) 3: Hundreds (500) 4: Thousands (5,000) 5: Tens of thousands (50,000) 6: Huge mass (100,000+)
13	ESTNUM	Estimated Number of Participants	1: Few (1-10) 2: Dozens (50) 3: Hundreds (500) 4: Thousands (5,000) 5: Tens of thousands (50,000) 6: Huge mass (100,000+)
14	ISSUE-1	Categorical Issue of Protest	See Appendix B
15	ISSUE-2	Categorical Issue of Protest	1: Provision 2: Access (affordability, privatisation, displacement…) 3: Quality (conditions…) 4: Management (decision-making, costs…) 5: Protection 6: Location 7: Others
16	ISSUE-3	Categorical Argument of Protest	1: Economic 2: Social (displacement, exclusion, gender…) 2: Heritage, Identity, Culture 3: Healthcare 4: Environmental

			5: Security 6: Democratic 7: Others
17	PLAN-1	Urban Planning, Design and Policies	0: No Plan Relate 1: Urban Renewal, Rehabilitation (Same Use) 2: Requalification, Reallocation, Redevelopment (Change Use) 3: Urban Project (Facility, Housing…) (Intervention) 4: Demolition, Dismantling, Eviction, Selling 5: Social and Community Promotion 6: Marketing and Branding 7: Cultural and Knowledge-based policies 8: Surveillance and Securitization policies 9: Events, Conferences and Fairs 10: Strategic Planning
18	PLAN-2	Name and Features of the Plan/Project	Name and Features of the Plan/Project
19	CLAIMS-1	General Categorical claims of protest	See Appendix B
20	CLAIMS-2	Specific issue described by the source	Name of the Campaign
21	TARPRO	Target of Protest	1: District 2: Municipality (government, agencies, departments…) 3: Regional (government, agencies, departments…) 4: National (government, agencies, departments…) 5: Other Administrative Levels 6: European Union 7: International Organizations 8: State Institutions (Judiciary powers, Police, Legislature…) 8: Political Parties 9: Media

			10: Civil Organizations and Social groups 11: Corporate and Private actors 12: Technicians and Professionals 13: Diffuse target (Public opinion)
22	ACTNUM	Number of Actions in the Event	1,2,3…
23	ACTYPE	Repertoires of Action	See Appendix B
24	TACINT-1	Tactical Interaction	1: Opposition outside institutional channels 2: Opposition inside institutional channels 3: Dissidence/Counter-Activities/Solidarity
25	TACINT-2	Name and Features of Channel/Partnership	Name and Features of Channel/Partnership
26	ACTOR	Type of Actors Reported	See Appendix B
27	ORGNUMB	Number of organizations reported	0: Not identifiable 1,2,3… 100: Many not identifiable
28	ORGNAME1	Name of the organization	Name of the primary organization calling the event
29	ORGNAME2	Name of the organization	Name of the secondary organization calling the event
30	ORGNAME2	Name of the organization	Name of the third organization calling the event
31	ALLNAME	Name of the allies	Name of the primary allied reported

APPENDIX B – CODEBOOK FOR THE PROTEST EVENT ANALYSIS (PEA)

Codes for District

0: Upper scale (for both cities)

Districts in Barcelona
1: Ciutat Vella
2: Eixample
3: Gràcia
4: Horta-Guinardó
5: Les Corts
6: Nou Barris
7: Sant Andreu
8: Sant Martí
9: Sants-Monjuïc
10: Sarrià-Sant Gervasi

Districts in Turin
1: Circoscrizioni 1
2: Circoscrizioni 2
3: Circoscrizioni 3
4: Circoscrizioni 4
5: Circoscrizioni 5
6: Circoscrizioni 6
7: Circoscrizioni 7
8: Circoscrizioni 8
9: Circoscrizioni 9
10: Circoscrizioni 10

Codes for Neighbourhood

0: Upper scale (for both cities)

Neighbourhoods in Barcelona

1: Raval
2: Gòtic
3: Barceloneta
4: Sant Pere, Santa Caterina i la Ribera
5: Fort Pienc
6:Sagrada Família

7:Dreta de l’Eixample
8: Antiga Esquerra de l’Eixample
9: Nova Esquerra de l’Eixample
10: Sant Antoni
11: Poble Sec
12: Marina del Prat Vermell
13: Marina del Port
14: Font de la Guatlla
15: Hostafrancs
16: Bordeta
17: Sants-Badal
18: Sants; PM: Parc de Monjuïc; FP: Zona Franca
19: Corts
20: Maternitat i Sant Ramon
21: Pedralbes
22: Vallvidrera, Tibidabo i les Planes
23: Sarrià
24: Tres Torres
25: Sant Gervasi-Bonanova
26: Sant Gervasi-Galvany
27: Putget i Farró
28: Vallcarca i Penitents
29: el Coll
30: Salut
31: Vila de Gràcia
32: Camp d’en Grassot i Gràcia Nova
33: Baix Guinardó
34: Can Baró
35: Guinardó
36: Font d’en Fargues
37: Carmel
38: Teixonera
39: Sant Genís dels Agudells
40: Montbau
41: Vall d’Hebron
42: Clota
43: Horta
44: Vilapiscina-Torre Llobeta
45: Porta
46: Turó de la Peira
47: Can Peguera
48: Guineueta

49: Canyelles
50: Roquetes
51: Verdum
52: Prosperitat
53: Trinitat Nova
54: Torre Baró
55: Ciutat Meridiana
56: Vallbona
57: Trinitat Vella
58: Baró de Viver
59: Bon Pastor
60: Sant Andreu
61: Sagrera
62: Congrés I els Indians
63: Navas
64: Camp de l'Arpa del Clot
65: Clot
66: Parc i la Llacuna del Poblenou
67: Villa Olimpica del PobleNou
68: El Poblenou
69: Diagonal Mar i Front Martitim del Poblenou
70: Besòs i el Maresme
71: Provençals del Poblenou
72: Sant Martí de Provençals
73: Verneda i la Pau

Neighbourhoods in Turin

1: Centro
2: Crocetta
3: Santa Rita
4: Mirafiori Nord
5: San Paolo
6: Cenisa
7: Pozzo Strada
8: Cid Turin
9: Borgata Lesna
10: San Donato
11: Campidoglio
12: Parella
13: Borgo Vittoria
14: Madonna di Campagna

15: Lucento
16: Vallette
17: Barriera di Milano
18: Regio Parco
19: Barca
20: Bertolla
21: Falchera
22: Rebaudengo
23: Villaretto
24: Aurora
25: Vanchiglia
26: Sassi
27: Madonna del Pilone
28: San Salvario
29: Cavoretto
30: Borgo Po
31: Nizza Millefonti
32: Lingotto
33: Filadelfia
34: Mirafiori Sud

Codes for Issue-1

A: Facilities and Services of Collective Consumption

1: Socio-cultural
2: Education
3: Healthcare
4: Public Services (Police, Incinerator, Prison…)
5: Other public facilities (Institutional, Recreational, Sportive…)
6: Public Transport
7: Traffic, Parking
8: Airport Infrastructure
9: Port Infrastructure
10: Railway Infrastructure
11: Road Infrastructure
12: Public Space
13: Green Space, Gardening…

B: Socio-Economic Activities

14: Commercial activity*[1]
15: Tourism Industry
16: Prostitution
17: Industrial and Logistic

18: Street Music, Street Art…

19: Nightlife, cafes, bars…

C: Housing

20: Housing

D: Resources

21: Natural resources (air, water, gas…)

22: Other resources (ICT…)

E: Empty plots

23: Empty land and buildings

Codes for Claims-1

A: Substantive Claims

1: Getting More (Proactive claim: need more, better, something specific…): Between people seeking direct substantive benefits and those who have them to give.

2: Getting Heard (Proactive claim: putting an issue on the table without asking for a specific thing…): projects on behalf of positive Policy objectives

3: Getting Rights (Participate, co-create, produce, debate…): protest to gain the right to participate in decision-making (gaining control/management…of public services and resources).

- 4: Stopping Action (Reactive claim: against some action…): protest mounded to change or stop an existing policy, or stop the adoption of a policy or project that the protesters dislike.

B: Expressive Claims

5: Acquiring Identity (Recognition): protest aimed at demonstrating solidarity with other individuals, categories, or organisations.

6: Showing Sympathy and Solidarity (Showing solidarity, Condemning the action…): protest aimed at demonstrating solidarity with other individuals, categories, or organizations.

7: Getting Even (Same rights as other collectives...e.g. gender issues): conflicts between groups in conflict in which there is no visible policy or substantive claim, but opposition to others is what they stand for.

8: Getting Out (Self-management…More/less political, more/less left-wing…): protest aimed at destruction or overthrow the system (providing alternatives, transformations…).

Codes for Repertoires of Action

A. Conventional actions

1: Lobbying: participation in official meeting…

2: Petitioning: letters to public authorities, collecting signatures…

3: Active public participation: allegations, public forums in formal participatory processes, hearings…
4: Press releases, conference, speeches…
5: Diffusion: leafleting and banners
6: Suing, trial, appeals…(judicial processes)

B. Direct-democratic actions

7: People's initiative (ILP)
8: Popular Referendum
9: Other direct actions

C. Demonstrative actions

10: Exhibitions, performances, celebrations…
11: Public assemblies, debates…
12: Sit-ins
13: Public rally, gathering
14: Demonstrations (legal and nonviolent)
15: Protest camp
16: Recruitment of volunteers, money or goods

C. Confrontational actions

17: Strike, Self-reduction of services
18: Interruption and disturbance of official meetings
19: Boycott
20: Occupation and Squatting
21: Obstruction and Blockades
22: Unauthorised demonstration

D. Violent actions

23: Clashes with political opponents
24: Clashes with police
25: Propriety damage
26: Urban riots
27: Others

Codes for Type of Actors Reported – Claim Makers

1: Community: residents' organisations and collectives, socio-cultural centres…
2: Vulnerable groups: immigrants, homeless, street workers…
3: Private Sector: Shopkeepers, tourist sector…
4: Pensioners: old people
5: Students: youth movement
6: Parents: parents associations
7: Squatting movement: counter-cultural groups, social centres…
8: Artists, cultural Sector and creative professionals
9: NGOs and international organisations

10: Religious groups
11: Worker movement and unions
12: Feminist movement
13: Environment movement
14: Professionals, technical occupations, advocacy groups and cooperatives
15: Political parties and extra-parliamentary political organization
16: Public workers
17: Local government and decentralised institutions
18: Media
19: Others

APPENDIX C – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS

BARCELONA

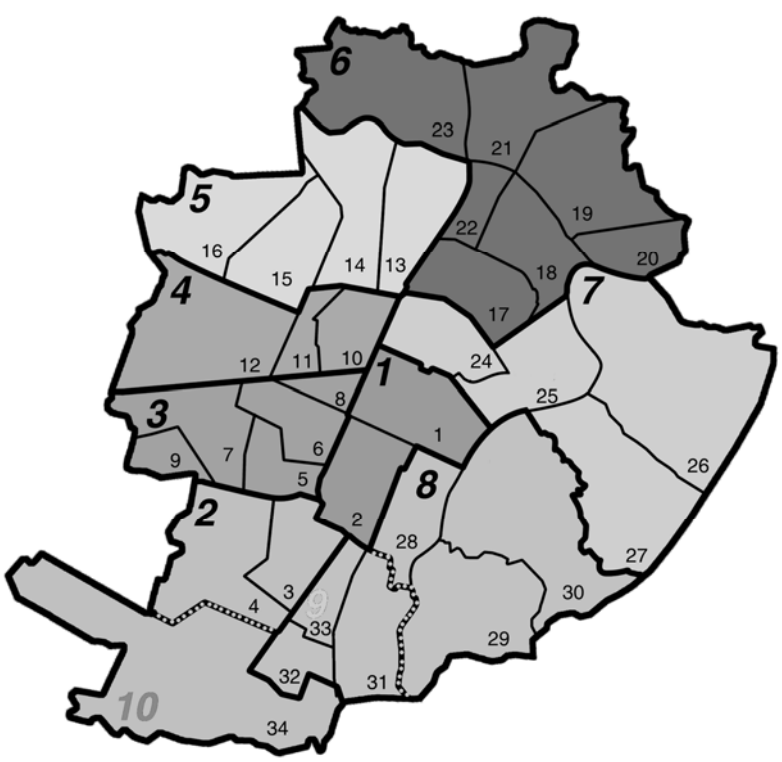
Interview B1. A Professor in Political Science from 'Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona'. May 2013
Interview B2. An activist from the neighbourhood movement in the neighbourhood Barceloneta. May 2013
Interview B3. An activist from the neighbourhood movement in the neighbourhood Barceloneta. May 2013
Interview B4. An activist from the squatter movement in the neighbourhood Sants June 2013
Interview B5. An activist from the neighbourhood movement in the neighbourhood Sants. September 2014.
Interview B6. PhD researcher in the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. September 2014
Interview B7. A municipal technician working in the district of Gràcia. April 2015
Interview B8. A mayor advisor and former activist in the neighbourhood movement. September 2015
Interview B9. A technician working in the Barcelona Strategic Plan. September 2015
Interview B10. A member of the FAVB, umbrella organisation of the neighbourhood movement. September 2015
Interview B11. A professional technician from the 'Taula del Tercer Sector' (third-sector umbrella organisation) of Barcelona. September 2015.

TURIN

Interview T1. An activist from the 'Askatasuna' social centre. February 2014
Interview T2. A political science Professor from Turin university. February 2014
Interview T3. An activist from the pro-immigrants rights movement in Turin, participating in the neighbourhood platform supporting the 'Ex-Moi' squatters. February 2014
Interview T4. A member of the 'Consiglio Direttivo dell'Agenzia per lo Sviluppo Locale di San Salvario. April 2015
Interview T5. PhD researcher in the University of Turin. April 2015
Interview T6. PhD researcher in the University of Turin. April 2015
Interview T7. An activist from a 'comitati di quartiere' from the neighbourhood Barriera di Milano. April 2015
Interview T8. An activist from a 'comitati di quiartiere' from the neighbourhood Lingotto. April 2015
Interview T9. A former "assessore della Giunta Comunale' of Turin. April 2015.

APPENDIX D – DISTRICTS UNITS

TURIN



BARCELONA

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