REPORT 6

CASE STUDIES IN SPAIN

Childcare Commons and the Micropolitics of Municipalismo

In this introductory chapter, I present the research endeavor of this project and some of its methodological premises. Why and how research childcare commons and the micropolitics of municipalism in the current conjuncture, and why present them as inextricably linked? Following two brief sections of introduction and methodology, this chapter features two longer sections that explore some of the key underlying currents of my two interconnected case studies, in their specific relation to the commons. Thus, we will first trace a brief genealogy of social-movement based commons debates in Spain, in order to better understand the social and historical foundations of the new commons-based municipalism. Then we will trace a genealogy of childcare and commoning in Spain and most specifically in Barcelona and Poble Sec, to investigate the importance of the neighborhood as a dimension of politics and care, as well as of feminist debates and collaborations across Spanish cities and across to Latin America.

Introduction

This report spans four years of embedded research in Barcelona and beyond, looking at the micropolitics of municipalism and at the politics of neighborhood childcare commoning. Though they might seem unrelated, these two matters are very much connected in the political and social landscape of Barcelona between 2016-20. We are looking at a time of strong dynamics of change in institutions, policies as well as neighborhood fabrics and politics, all of which share a new sensitivity to the politics of care. This politics bears the signature and fruits of Spain's 'new feminisms' (Gil 2012, Perez Orozco 2012), of Southern European struggles for welfare and Latin American struggles for commons (Perez & Salvini Ramas 2019, Gutiérrez Aguilar 2017a; 2017b), and of the global movements around care (Barbagallo & Federici 2010, Bärtsch et al. 2017, Luxemburg 2018) - and articulates them with new struggles and strategies at the neighborhood and municipal level. The subjects of this new politics are manifold: generally, it is women, migrants and informal workers who are at its center in the urban context. More specifically, in our case, it is also local mothers, children and parents as well as councilors, mayors as in the case of Ada Colau in Barcleona, and municipalist platforms, parties and networks.

My research into this politics has neither been disengaged nor disinterested, but rather immersive and militant, in the sense of partaking in the lived territories, realities and desires that drive it. As a mother I have been living and caring in the neighborhood of Poble Sec, whose networks and groups of childcare are the subject of the first study in

this report. As an activist and writer, I have been engaged with Barcelona en Comú since its emergence, working first with the migrations, then the international and Poble Sec working groups. My interests and desires certainly express themselves in my observations and analyses, and they have strongly influenced the kind of conversations I could have in interviews and group settings. Rather than offer a supposedly impartial study of the political climate of Barcelona between 2016-20, what I can offer here is an engaged and situated account that is shaped by many ongoing relations of collaboration, trust and discussion. As Donna Haraway puts it, 'It matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other stories with; it matters what knots knot knots, what thoughts think thoughts, what descriptions describe descriptions, what ties tie ties' (Haraway 2016: 12). Talk of care might sound like mystification to the positivist ear, yet the difference it points to is substantial: it matters how we relate, from what place, position and ground we make connections, be they between beings or concepts.

There are many ways of drawing connections between childcare and municipalism, beyond the anecdotal. The politics of care is one such general common denominator, as are the concrete relations of (inter-)dependence within and across neighborhoods, social movements, parties and institutions. Bodies that need attention and specific configurations of politics, from children to pregnant ones, from ill to frail to disabled bodies, as well as othered ones. They all play a role in configuring this new politics of care. Urban space and the relation between the private and the public are put in question by practices and policies of childcare commoning, inaugurating the 'playable city' (Tonucci & Institut de la Infancia 2016) as well as feminist mutual support and new modes of caring masculinity. Childcare and play spaces render care and reproduction both visible and social in political organizing and organizations, such as in Barcelona en Comú's 'Canalla en Comú,' which posits children as a matter of the common. Breastfeeding councilors and baby blocs at demonstrations, the thriving feminist strike on each 8th of March and the debate around public support for self-organized childcare groups -all these are part of the same movement and effort. An effort to democratize care and radicalize democracy, redefine the political subject and reconfigure urban space and relationality so that it can allow for commoning across all kinds of levels of reproduction and production.

It would make no sense to narrate childcare and municipalism as strictly separate matters, particularly not in the context at hand. Because the new municipalism that arose in Barcelona would have been impossible without the feminist groundwork. Not just because it strongly hinges on Ada Colau as a leading figure and on a range of radical women councilors that have done incessant educational and consciousness-raising work amongst their male colleagues as well as the general population, but also because the very concept of the commons that the municipalist movements started from had already been strongly influenced by feminist movements and struggles around social reproduction, in Spain and beyond. The post-15M social movements would never have endorsed a municipalism that were not at the level of its claims for

another modality of social care, one that matched the modes of listening, caring and commoning of the squares and neighborhoods.

Inversely, childcare commoning would likely not have thrived and matured without the ongoing dialogue and encouragement of municipal councilors and Barcelona en Comú. Without the more favourable institutional context that was inaugurated by Barcelona en Comú, childcare commoning would have remained in the niches of self-care and self-defense, as an activist and experimental practice and strategy whose great worth likely did not reach into broader debates. Without devaluing or underestimating the power of experimental and counter-politics -as the reader will see, this is hardly my general gist- it is important to note the new levels and modalities of debate and articulation self-organized initiatives such as childcare groups have reached in the context of institutional municipalism. This learning and growing has been exponential in the period of my research, and it has been mutual, as a movement held in common by activists and institutional actors. It has implied a truly transversal moment and transformation, through a very broad social movement, that has brought together traditionally very disparate actors and domains. Therein lies the value of transversality and of micropolitics, in my understanding, as enabling profound transformations in relationality and subjectivity. The latter are the most solid basis for engaging lasting and sustainable social and systemic change, as I will be arguing across these pages, and they also constitute thus the most relevant base for thinking about the potential of commons and commoning.

As a research endeavor that draws on situated anthropology and explores the micropolitics of relations and organization, the genealogies I present in this chapter inevitably focus on the sociopolitical emergence of practices and concepts. Politics, even where it seems restricted to the agora or institutions, is made and sustained by everyday relations, conversations, debates and experiments. Hence, I take care to draw attention to the collective initiatives and networks that brought forth the lively politics of the commons that underpins municipalism. This history of movement around the commons also influences and conditions the childcare politics in question, as we shall see in tracing a genealogy of childcare and commoning in Spain and, most specifically, in Barcelona and Poble Sec. In this second section on the foundations of childcare commoning, we will see the importance of the neighborhood as a dimension of politics and care, but also of feminist debates and collaborations.

While this introductory chapter traces past synergies between commons, municipalism and (child)care movements in Barcelona and Spain, the following case study chapters look at the present (2016-2020) of these entanglements. The dynamics of municipalist movements, politics and policies are omnipresent at this time in Barcelona, and have much to do with the way self-organized childcare projects constitute networks, position themselves between public and private, and make claims. Many activists of the municipalist platform Barcelona en Comú have their children in local childcare projects, local mothers who are also urban planners are involved in debates on public policy surrounding childcare spaces. The debates on

commons and on care –and indeed on commons of care– that have marked Spanish social movements from 2008 onwards, have been a strong influence on municipalist candidacies and policies. Many dynamics and stories intersect, and thus the main questions and genealogies relevant to both case studies also do.

I have tried to interweave conceptual debates, local stories, analyses and inspirations, histories and genealogies, and methodological considerations in such a way that they allow the reader to dive in and out of different layers of thinking and reality here. The parts on childcare and on municipalism can possibly also be read across, as they relate and refer to one another across a myriad points. I hope my readers can appreciate this entanglement.

Methodological considerations: Situatedness, transversality, research militancy and resurgence

In this section I introduce some of the principles and methodologies that underlie my research in more depth, starting from an overview of the notions of situatedness, transversality and research militancy. I present a brief genealogy of militant research that dwells on its interconnection with movements around the commons that emerged from the Spanish mayday and precarity struggles in the 2000s, to new waves of feminism and the 15M movement after 2010, and the municipalist present of this report. I look at the latter in more detail, exploring the way militant research sits between social movements and academia as well as between institutional critique and feminist epistemologies. We thus trace not just the genealogical importance of militant research for commons-based politics in Spain, but also its aptness for researching commons, care and prefigurative institutional practices. Finally, I briefly dwell on the question of resurgence in this section, asking with Stengers and Gutwirth what it might mean to research for resurgent commons, and what methodological approaches this might imply.

Situated, transversal and militant research

Two key principles have underpinned my research practice both in 'fieldwork' (everyday observation and participation, interviews, workshops) and writing: situatedness and transversality. I shall be referring to those continually across the coming pages and chapters, in different contexts and perspectives, therefore I will only introduce them briefly here. I am inspired by the feminist situated research paradigm first named as such by Donna Haraway, who in 1988 argued that 'Feminist Objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. It allows us to become answerable for what we learn and how to see' (Haraway 1988: 583). This notion of situated knowledge is directly relevant to the research on commons as instances of collective organization and reproduction that are singular in space and time and lie beyond the universalizing and generalizing logics of the state. It also builds an ethical basis upon which we become immediately responsible or answerable for *how* we research, figure and represent.

Transversality is a concept that stems from the militant, micropolitical and schizoanalytic work of Félix Guattari, who also coined the term 'micropolitics' in the aftermath of the 1960s and the early neoliberal 1970s-90s, in France and Italy. To take a transversal approach (Guattari 2003, Raunig 2002) means to look at the lines of coincidence, intersection, crisscrossing, influence, attraction, affinity and tension between different phenomena, to take seriously the interdependence between real processes in a shared space, as in this case in the city. Transversality in dictionary definitions means 'traversing one or more lines' as well as 'crossways, diagonal, oblique, crosswise' (Collins 2020). With Guattari, it means the capacity to crisscross subjectivities and worlds (Kanngieser 2013), to make connections beyond different spheres of meaning and signification as well as life and politics. This is pertinent to my work as it relates to different affective and subjective moments, to different spheres of experience and inhabitation, which constitute the basis of 'another' kind of politics. As such they require not just transdisciplinary and intersectional but also transversal sensitivities and approaches.

The third key pillar of my approach here is militant research. This again is a practice or approach that emerged from the Latin and Mediterranean context, with initial roots in 1970s Italian operaismo (Marxist workers' inquiries and co-research, see Viewpoint Magazine 2013) and a second wave of development in the context of precarity movements in Italy, Spain, Portugal and France particularly (Euromayday), as well as in feminist and autonomist contexts in Spain and Argentina (Precarias a la Deriva in Madrid, Colectivo Situaciones in Buenos Aires), in the 2000s (see also Zechner 2012a; 2012 b). In this history, the meaning of 'militant' shifts from the original figure of the male factory worker (1970s) to the precarious, flexibilized worker (Euromayday and related Precarity movements) on to the feminized, sexualized and care worker (new feminist practices such as those of Pracarias a la Deriva collective, Territorio Doméstico and Todas a Zien collective, all of which are linked to the Eskalera Karakola social center in Madrid; Zechner 2012a) as well as to dissident subjects of crisis (Colectivo Situaciones). This set of conceptualizations and practices was soon imported into English speaking movements and academic circuits since the mid-2000s.[1]

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[1] In their book on *Constituent Imagination: Militant Investigations and Collective Theorization* (Shukaitis, Graeber & Biddle 2007), Stevphen Shukaitis, David Graeber and Erica Biddle set out to gather a series of key texts on Militant research. Another collection of texts on what we may call engaged social movement research – though it does not inscribe itself directly into the tradition of militant research – is *The Radical Imagination. Social movement research in the age of austerity* (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014). This 2014 book speaks to the context of economic crisis notably.

The EIPCP, an Austrian-based editorial collective with a strong ethos of translation and networking across and beyond Europe, is a significant actor in the transportation and framing of militant research. Its Transversal Webjournal featured an issue on militant research in 2006, with texts by many Spanish language authors (some of them to be republished in *Constituent Imagination*) and continued to contribute substantial texts to the debate in subsequent issues. They are all available at http://eipcp.net/transversal/, accessed 20/7/2020.

I am myself invested in these genealogies both as a researcher and activist, and I have reflected on the contexts and experiences in question in various texts (Zechner 2012a; 2012b; 2013). In this project, as an active mother in Poble Sec and activist of Barcelona en Comú during its first years, I have tried to produce knowledge not primarily *of* but also *for* and *with* the sociopolitical contexts in question. What has come to increasingly matter to me is the question of how we pass on knowledge across social movements of different types, in situated and transversal ways. Militant research, in my case here, does not mean so much a collective, politically driven process of knowledge production towards a concrete end (though there are collective moments and aims in my research), but, in a more modest way, a commitment to mutual exchange and the mutual provision of access (to knowledge, resources, materials, spaces, etc.) across activist and university contexts. The neoliberal university operates via small contractual packages, segmented deliverables, a bureaucratic arsenal of ethics and health and safety, and rating and ranking systems that interpellate the researcher as individual and legally responsible subject. In this academic context, militant research in the proper collective and targeted way becomes increasingly complicated, yet its legacy continues to inspire new modes of sharing and hijacking resources and access, in the modality of the undercommons (Harney & Moten 2013). However precarious and compromised, this mode of trying to 'common' research is invested in producing knowledge for ongoing struggles and their resurgence.

What follows is a brief genealogy of militant research that dwells on its interconnection with movements around the commons that emerged from the Spanish mayday and precarity struggles in the 2000s, to new waves of feminism and the 15M movement after 2010, and the municipalist present of this report. This will then take us to some considerations around researching for resurgence, with which we shall conclude this section on methodology.

The emergence and methods of Militant Research

Militant research was not developed by researchers entering into social movements in order to study them, but by researchers (university educated or not) within movements. As such, militant research is an expression of the post-Fordist conditions of knowledge labor, in which precarization, proletarianization of intellectual labor and mass education created a layer of activist-researchers that engage in knowledge production around their social movements and contexts. We might say that Militant Research is for post-Fordist Southern Europe what Participatory Action Research was to engaged research in dictatorship and post-dictatorship Latin America in this sense. Militant Research problematizes, yet does not reject social science methods, and dwells on what it means to produce knowledge for singular movements, rather than for a supposedly 'universal' institution like the university. Though its starting point is the self-understanding of students and academics as (precarious) workers, it differs from earlier operaist workers' co-research in that it seeks the transversality rather than, primarily, the utility of knowledge. In a context of neoliberalism, militant

research seeks to re-establish social bonds, particularly those heterodox and subversive to the capitalist, patriarchal and racial-colonial order of knowledge.

Militant research was formulated out of a need to invent other ways of conceptualizing and practicing co-research in the field of social struggles – co-research no longer based in the factory nor contained within the walls of the universities, which were becoming increasingly neoliberalized and cut off from the streets. The post-structuralist knowledge turn had left many intellectuals caught in the production of discourse removed from struggles, and the emergence of post-Fordism had meant that the notion of work and workplace needed reconsidering. Both developments raised the need not just for a critique but, more fundamentally, for another way of doing things, for other ways of thinking about research and inhabiting the spaces between the streets and institutions, the homes and workplaces.

In the case of Precarias a la Deriva, this happens by taking both militancy and research out of a predominantly male frame of wage labor and academia, and placing it 'in the circuits of precarity' and, specifically, of female precarity. The inquiries of Precarias a la Deriva engaged, thus, the domestic, the everyday life of care and social reproduction in the city and their links to newer forms of precarity brought about by neoliberal politics. The collective's main tool to conduct its research have been 'drifts' –first elaborated by the Situationist International as forms of wandering the city without a fixed aim, letting oneself be impressed by what one comes across and learn from them. For Precarias, being 'adrift through the circuit of feminized precarity' means going into homes, as workplaces both of domestic workers and of precarious workers without an office (so-called freelancers, as well as university workers, cultural workers, etc.). It is broader changes in the world that render new radical approaches to research necessary. Ours is a time, writes Marta Malo of Precarias in 2004, that is marked by

> … the end of the world defined by Yalta, the disappearance of the subject 'worker's movement,' the end of the industrial paradigm, informatic and technological innovation, automation, the deterritorialization and reorganization of production, the financialization and globalization of the economy, the affirmation of a state-form based on war as a vector of normative production, and when the only thing that remains constant is change itself – dizzying change – … (Malo 2004).

In this situation of disorientation, what is necessary is 'building operative maps, cartographies in process, emerging from dynamics of self-organization, in order to be able to intervene in the real, and maybe to transform it' (Malo 2004). To call this *militant* research may in some sense be a misnomer, or at least require an understanding of 'the militant' beyond the traditional workplace or party. It is however a name that has stuck, generating its own genealogy, as elaborated in dialogue across a series of collectives and authors.

Colectivo Situaciones, in their second text on research militancy which they wrote in response to a prompt by Precarias a la Deriva in 2004, speak of the importance of an anti-utilitarian aspect of militant research methods, in particular as concerns the format of the workshop, which needs to produce 'an "uncoupling" (in each encounter, again and again) from everyday spatiality and velocity. The disposition to think emerges from allowing thought itself to spatialize and temporalize according to its own requirements' (Situaciones 2004: 85). In this sense the workshop –rather than a focus group with preformulated questions and an attempt at mapping out participants' responses from the vantage point of researchers who are external to the process they investigate– is a format that proposes, that posits, that experiments and overthrows. In the translation of these Spanish-language works into English there is always the challenge of pointing to the complicity of 'experience' and 'experiment,' on the coincidence of which Situaciones insist. If we look at the etymology of 'experience,' we find that its Latin root comes from 'experiri' as in 'to try.' The discrepancy between Germanic and Latin languages is considerable in many such terms. In the term experiri, we also find the etymology of 'expertise,' suggestive of how this term can be detached from its current reduction to institutionalized and technical knowledge, and it can be reconnected with practical reason and experience.

As such, Militant Research is a method specialized in knowledge production within social movements and sites of commoning, as well as within prefigurative practices that relate to institutions. In Spain and Italy, social centers as 'monster institutions' or 'institutions of the common' (EIPCP 2008, Universidád Nómada 2008) formulated prefigurative practices in the context of struggles around precarity, in which a politics of knowledge commons was forged and militant research was a key practice.[2] These social centers were prototypes of later spaces and networks based around the commons -such as the Fundación de los Comunes in Spain, the Teatro Valle in Rome, l'Asilo in Naples -and allowed for a shift from knowledge commons to a broader paradigm of commoning, wherein the proto-institutional aspect was increasingly emphasized. This played no minor role in prefiguring the municipalist turn. Here the emphasis no longer lay in building autonomous institutions, but in going one step further and taking over public institutions.

Militant research is thus not just a methodology for knowledge production, nor is it simply a paradigm of knowledge production and struggle that has relevance for my research endeavor. It is a key dynamic in the very genealogies of commoning that are at stake here. It takes its starting point in the questions faced by the very fabrics and intelligences of practices, engaging rigorous self-reflection and feeding immediately back into practice. The blatant embeddedness and partisanship of Militant Research –

[2] The social center La Casa Invisible in Málaga instituted this early on with its Universidad Libre y Experimental/ULEX, as did La Eskalera Karakola, El Laboratorio with the Universidád Nómada and Precarias a la Deriva groups in Madrid, and the Ateneu Candela in Terrassa for instance (in tandem with Italian social centers like ESC or Cinema Palazzo in Rome or SALE Docs in Venice, to mention just a few). Within and across these places, all of which were sites of precarity struggle during the Mayday years, Militant Research, self-education and the provision of autonomously organized courses play(ed) a key role.

even expressed in its name– means that it avoids the fallacies of disavowing its own necessary situatedness in relation to questions of normativity and antagonism. These are demands that must be made of all studies into prefigurative practices and institutions.

Militant research between institutional critique and feminist epistemologies

In a 2017 text revisiting militant research, entitled 'Intellectuals, experiences and militant investigation' (Gago 2017), Veronica Gago –member of the former Colectivo Situaciones– explores three moments-debates to address the relationship between concepts and experiences differently. Speaking of the Argentine context and its developments in politics and militancy, she traces a development from 2001 to 2017. First, in 2001, there was a destituent moment and a break with neoliberal consensus in the Argentine crisis, and with it the production of new subjectivities and resistances. This is the moment out of which the formulation of militant research as practice and method springs, we may add. Then, Gago argues, came a moment of political and populist capture and interpretation of movements in electoral terms. This implied the neutralizing rendition of all struggle as social movement –'the sociological classification of the multitudinous under the all-encompassing category of "social movements" ' (Gago 2017)- and the reaffirmation of the party-style intellectual as reading the world. Finally, in more recent developments pointing to 2017 and beyond, a context where progressive governments falter and neoliberalism returns with full force, new social unrest and community weavings emerge, such as *Ni una Menos* in Argentina. These correspond to new interwoven knowledge productions around women's movements against violence, says Gago:

> One current form of militant investigation is connected to mapping the composition of laboring, subaltern, popular classes (all variations which are worth taking into account). But it is necessary to add a third component that is fundamental in our conjuncture: the issue of violence against women, which requires that the question of gender takes on, as Rita Segato says, 'a real theoretical and epistemic status' (Gago 2017; my translation from Spanish).

And yet the point is moving those conflicts out of the ghetto of gender issues. This leaves open the question of the instituting capacity and everyday force that determines the radicality of a 'politics in feminine' as Gutiérrez Aguilar names it (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2017a) in the streets and homes. This takes us beyond commons municipalism to the radical feminist politics of care and commons. Beyond seeing the closure of a cycle of progressive governments in Latin America, we must thus also value the opening of a cycle of transversal struggles pushed by the women's movement (where the word 'woman' itself is no longer bounded or predetermined but refers to an intersectionality of experiences). In these struggles, there is a new need to put practices and concepts into tension, nourished by feminist epistemologies and experimentations.

The radical feminist experimentations in Latin America and Spain perhaps prefigure the post-institutional-turn landscapes, or at least posit and point to a most radical and promising direction for the development of progressive governments and commons politics. At stake is a radical rethinking of the political subject and logic, as a revolutionary rather than reformist moment in thinking community, commons and, also, the polis. Rethinking the political subject does not just imply going beyond subject/object divisions, as Militant Research also posits:

> In the blurring of the boundaries between the object of research and the subject of research, the practices of militant research can be explored both to inform and change the practices of academic research and reflect upon the role of knowledge in the political organization of social movements (Salvini 2013).

Rethinking the political subject also means to specifically undo the masculinist, individualist and sovereign notions of subjecthood. We must go from the Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* – 'I think, therefore I am' – to *Alguien me parió luego existo* – 'someone gave birth to me, thus I exist' (Gutiérrez Aguilar & Gil 2017). We must embrace a new relational, materialist and feminist politics, wherein commons too can be resignified. The politics of care here points first and foremost to indigenous and ecological perspectives. Learning from indigenous epistemologies, Gutiérrez Aguilar points to the 'four flowers of the common' in the indigenous sense:

> We learned a lot from the American indigenous tradition…, they speak like that in a properly poetic way, I really like how they put it. They speak of the four flowers of the common, they say: land/ground/soil [tierra], work/chores [trabajo-faena], assembly and celebration [fiesta]. These are the four things that make up the possibility… there have to be these four things in order for there to be a common (Gutiérrez Aguilar 2017c; my translation from Spanish).

Commoning is about relating as much as it is about material resources –the assembly and the fiesta are key platforms for the circulation of affects and development of relations and organizational strength. In this sense, commons are about 'putting life at the center' of our activities (a key phrase of the Spanish-speaking feminist movements), which hinges on radical collective care and the capacity for doing situated politics. Its materiality and relationality are specific to time and place, and as such any theory or politics of the commons must work through situated methodologies. It must be able to read the importance of practices, of rituals, of relations, rhythms and forms of collective practice, the 'communitarian weaving' as Gutiérrez Aguilar, Gago, Gil and many other theorists call it. Furthermore, in this view, commons are not just resources, but they are matters of relation, work and organization in a necessary sense: no commons without relations, processes of (re-)production and organization of commoning, or in the words of feminist Maria Mies, 'no commons without a community' (Mies 2014). The question of work –visible or invisible, reproductive or productive, communal or individual, paid or unpaid, etc. – in this sense is key to thinking commons, to avoid mystifying them.

In the pages that follow, I have tried to give an account of these dimensions in relation to childcare and municipalist commoning. Their material conditions and bases, and the resilience of relational, micropolitical and communitarian fabrics and weavings, is what conditions the resurgence of commons, their capacity to revive.

Researching for resurgence: passing on common(ing) memory and culture

As Stengers and Gutwirth (2016) point out, self-organizational human commons (as opposed to natural commons such as land, water, forests, etc.) are by nature resurgent. They emerge, transform, collapse, reemerge and reconfigure themselves over time and across generations. Whilst natural commons (which some refer to as 'resources,' an anthropocentric and utilitarian term I try to avoid) also go through cycles, seasons and processes of living self-organization, they do not hinge on human activity per se. Human self-organizational commons or social commons, however, require our constant labors and attention in order to sustain themselves. To resist enclosure is certainly a key challenge for them, as it is for material and natural commons, but they face an additional task: in order to survive, they need to construct social memory, resilience and continuity. As self-organizational commons, instances like childcare cooperatives or municipalist platforms are intrinsically collective in nature, and hence the question of micropolitics in them is not secondary but rather pivotal. Their possibilities of existence and sustainability rest on the capacity of a group of people to set their own rules and to adapt to changing internal and external challenges, to produce and sustain living knowledges. To ask about the sustainability of resurgent commons inevitably means to ask about the transfer or knowledges, experiences, memory, about 'common cultures' (Stengers & Gutwirth 2016: 27) or 'écoliteratie' (Capra & Mattei 2015).

We have seen that producing and sustaining living knowledges is the concern of Militant Research, which makes it very apt for researching commons. We look at commons both as social movements and social nonmovements (Bayat 2010), in the sense that they are the subject and often also the product of intense moments of social organization (what we call social movements, like the 15M, the anti-austerity movements, the new wave of feminisms, etc.), as well as being inextricably linked to and dependent on everyday practices of resistance and resilience. We may think of the latter as social nonmovements (Bayat), reproductive commons (Federici), radical practices of care (Puig della Bellacasa) or indeed ways of staying with the trouble (Haraway) -what is clear is that commons always include these everyday practices as a key moment not just of sustainability but also of subversion. Women play a key role in the subversion of community (Dalla Costa & James 1972). In the commons, too. The practices of gossip and storytelling, the informal circulation of knowledge in spaces of reproduction and everyday life, are key elements to producing resilient commons. Militant research tries to engage such informal modalities of knowing and telling by incorporating different formats and temporalities of listening, telling, knowing and remembering, particularly when it involves bodies as sites of knowing and learning, as we have seen above in the work of Precarias a la Deriva and others.

This embodied, situated and transversal engagement with knowledge allows commons to build living cultures and traditions. Commons build up an immense wealth of knowledge for those involved in them, yet their ceasing can often mean this knowledge is lost (whether they dissolve due to impasse, or they cease simply due to people moving on to prioritize commoning in other areas). This does not mean that all commons must last, but that knowledges of histories, processes and failures need to find a way to live on in communities and infrastructures. To pretend self-organizational commons must be eternal would be to misunderstand their basic premise: to meet needs that are often urgent and sometimes temporary. One important affirmation of Félix Guattari was that *groups need to know how to die* (Guattari 2003). A related affirmation of a more contemporary thinker and practitioner of micropolitics, David Vercauteren (Vercauteren, Müller & Crabbé 2007), is that social movements need a 'culture of precedents' to build memory and traditions that can allow their practices, however situated, to be remembered and learned from for future commoning. Failure and death are a key to liveliness and resurgence, and it matters what stories we tell about those, and with what perspectives, means and modes we tell those stories.

When we think about resurgence, we touch upon what Pascal Michon calls 'the rhythms of the political' (Michon 2007), as in the different cyclical ways in which mobilization and demobilization happen in societies, and how this intersects with bodies, families, groups, institutions and so forth. We need to understand how commoning partakes of rhythms at the macro -as well as micropolitical levels, as well as at the embodied, natural and generational levels. I try to take the importance of different vital moments and generational dynamics into account in my account of the way parents and children move through modalities of commoning care, and the ways in which people shift from social movements into municipal politics (and back again), as it seems to me that this matters a great deal for our understanding of commons.

This is a crucial concern in these studies of childcare commons and municipalist organization: how to give account of, give concepts to, remember and transmit the experiences and knowledges emerging from concrete processes of (self-organizational) commoning, so that they can benefit future generations, nourish a sense of history, tradition and belonging. We need to recuperate the sense that commoning has a history, a wide spread, it is part of a common culture we share across places and areas of activity. This is what gives commons, as social movements and nonmovements alike, their political power, their capacity to affirm a 'we' and a practice that has its long standing and must be defended.

While there are a myriad articles and studies analyzing municipalism and its politics, there are few that take the care and time to develop an embodied and relational stance, to situate their analysis in lived experiences and relations, and give an account that is self-reflexive rather than trying to be objective. Raquel Gutiérrez (2008; 2017a; 2017c) is a scholar-activist who practices situated and partisan production of knowledge, speaking to the (non)movements rather than an academic audience,

whereby any reader can be part of the (non)movements by identification, if they so wish to see themselves as part of a 'we' of struggle. This mode of interpellation, positing a 'we' of thinking rather than an individual reader subject, also matters a great deal to militant research. Its function is not to avoid criticality or to produce blind identification, but to engage the production of collective subjectivity and be clear about its partisan nature, circumventing the notion of disembodied, neutral or objective knowledge. This mode of speaking and writing builds a culture of precedents and understands itself to be part of a common body of living knowledge. Gutiérrez takes great care not just to analyze but also to *narrate* the histories and struggles she is close to. The critical practice that this mode of knowledge production enables is one where questions are raised not on behalf of a non-situated, supposedly disinterested individual -the academic is the prime figure of this- but on behalf of a grounded, entangled subject that knows it cannot think without a 'we,' that knows its interdependencies and inhabits them with care.

Let's take another example of why collective memory and subjectivity matters. The fact that there are thousands of articles online about childrearing but little collective culture of dealing with the challenges of being a parent, consolidating life and work in early years, of thinking politically about raising children in a local context, and so forth, attests to the problem of memory in childcare commoning, for instance. Childcare projects emerge and die, much knowledge and resources are lost; the PEPI network seeks to respond to this, as we shall see in chapter 2. This question of memory and resilience is not least what differentiates commons from neoliberal projects, start-ups and enterprises. Commons are part of a common culture and history, a situated 'we' that remembers and cares, where telling stories matters. Neoliberal quasi-social dispositifs come and go without much trace or memory, except for success or failure in numbers and monetary terms. This is one of the key aspects of what differentiates the social and solidarity economy, in which commons partake, from the neoliberal economy. And this is why memory and care matter a great deal for how we research and tell stories of commons.