

RICHARD R. WEINER

Rhode Island College

IVÁN LÓPEZ

Universidad de Zaragoza

THE NEW RESILIENCE OF PACTED TRANSITION IN SPAIN



most-overused buzzword of the new century is resilience. Understood as our bouncing back from turbulence, vulnerability, disaster. Somehow, the concept of solidarity has been eclipsed. At best, solidarity has become defined minimally as a synonym for the downward flowing protection of the State. Social solidarity can be better understood as a resilience bubbling up from below in a new form of social pact-ing of *homo reciprocans* rather than *homo oeconomicus*.

With regard to present-day Spain, emerging is a new form of social pacting that is neither opaque nor exclusive. This is a form that is not imbricated within a cartelized or corporatist membrane reminiscent of Franco's Vertical Syndicate, and not sustained in some Post-Franco minimalist Transition toward democratization – a minimalist Transition obsessed with consensus and forgetting the trauma of the Civil War (17 July 1936 – 1 April 1939). That minimalist Post-Franco Transition has been only a surface dismantling of the Vertical Syndicate, making use of direct grants to coopt the trade union movement.

Tides of social insertion

We can discern a new emergent form of bonding connection, and with it a New Transition. It is a form that recalls Spanish traditions of municipal mutual aid initiatives (1840s–1936) within a confluence strategy of municipalist, interurban, and inter-regional pacts among Popular Unity platforms and Tides (*mareas*). These connected with the evolving 15 M (15 May 2011) *Indignados* movement and together they became aligned with an anti-eviction movement (*PAH: Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca*), and a movement of over fifty percent youth unemployment (the *Precariat*).

As such, *Los Indignados* (Stéphan Hessel's Outraged Lost Generation) is not some prefigurative moment or early stage of a new political party called Podemos (Yes We Can!). The Outraged represent alternative experienced forms of life within what Gilles Deleuze refers to as horizontal and rhizomatic networks. They recall André Gorz's meditation on 1968: *Farewell to the Working Class*. They are the actualization of Gorz's prescient sensing of a coming precarious non-class of the temporary and non-unionized in a farewell to the middle class/ *embourgeoisement* social welfare policies antedating the neoliberal epoch.

The Indignados Movement articulates legitimization claims as a response to declining expectations in employment and life chances. Labor and social policy reforms of austerity imposed by the Spanish Government with the impetus of the European Union signify an end to the goals of *embourgeoisement*, associated with the 1959–1975 economic boom and the establishment of a Spanish welfare state with some “patchy nets.”

The 2008 globalized crisis was a crisis in the financialization of everyday life where capacity had been mortgaged, where consumers had been manipulated to become addicted to credit. Spain became confronted with multiple legitimization crises:

- the crisis of the Keynesian welfare state which is eclipsed with the financial Keynesianism of the neoliberal epoch;
- a late developing paternalistic Franco welfare state with promises of *embourgeoisement* is put into crisis, sadly such a welfare state is rooted in concerns of risk rather than those of solidarity;
- the inability to sustain social welfare benefits;
- stagnant wages and growing social inequality;
- the decline of the trade unions and their confederations; and
- the failure of the education system to new technology and market need.

While bringing on a universalizing public health care system and extending the public education system, social democratic Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez (1982–1996) became linked to banking elites like Miguel Boyer and Carlos Solchega who constrain Gonzalez to focus more on inflation than on unemployment. In the agreement to enter the European Union, Gonzalez accepted the condition to flex up labor law reforms. He went on to lead the deregulating of the labor market, as well as dismantling the country's industrial infrastructure – thus eroding its working class organization. This results in a rise of temporary contract work and a decline in the influence of labor unions. At the same time, housing rentals were deregulated.

The 2008 Crisis saw the collapse of the savings and loan credit unions (*cajas caixas*) linked with real estate bubbles and renewable energy bubbles. This ultimately led to a European Union 100 billion Euro bail out and European Central Bank monitored rescue plan. The *caijas* started in the 19th century as pawn shops, not for generating income for shareholders like commercial banks. Of 45 that existed at the start of 2007, only 2 remain. The rest have either been taken over by the government or forced into bank mergers that resulted in wiping out the equity holders. Meanwhile, those at the command posts of both the political-administrative and economic systems concoct schemes to “extract resources” from taxpayers for their own benefit while colonizing the *caijas* to provide easy credit to prop up consumer demand.

The Spain of 2008 and today is a State – a Regime – more than a nation. Afflicted with multiple legitimization crises, de-stabilizing impasses and trauma, a sense of trust in the Regime is vitiated. Consequently, there is a loosening and weakening of the Regime's integrative capacity and resonant capacity of inter-connection. Mistrust of the Regime gives justification for breaking off or changing familiar paths and shaping new ones. A circle of repetition is broken, setting off novel institutional imagined forms and practices.

In the wake of the economic crisis of 2008, Spain has witnessed what Henri Lefebvre would call an “eruption” of liminal spaces of possibility: new spaces of self-spreading flows of new elective affinities; new spaces of becomingness; and critically new spaces of social insertion. Social insertion is understood as a new form and as a new space:

– It is understood as *an embodied form of knowledge, and as new mediated form of politics*: an ensemble of new interpretive frames embedded and lodged

both alongside and within the new Post-Franco Transition State. The Indignados movement is constituted by its own asserted and inserted social frameworks of knowledge and their signifying meaning.

– It is also understood as *a new social space of possibility*: a space of flows, a new moral economy, a new political ecology of social praxis. This is an imaginatively created symbolic space for posing and trying alternative forms of life, new participation codes, and most importantly, new trust networks. Such trust-producing resources provide the “glue” holding together the Indignados as a movement for social insertion: resources that are regenerated as bonds, as shared values and norms, and as realized new capabilities.

Cristina Flesher-Fominaya¹ details the tides of social insertion in Madrid, Barcelona, Galicia, Valencia and Aragón – making possible new types of credit pools and *mutualité*/cooperative enterprises. *Digital interface* between laptops, smartphones and their programs became a new point of conjuncture, and an expansion of spatial capability and autonomy in the development and dispersion of prefigurative movement conceptions, designs, rallies and occupations. This amounts to spatial reorganization – in varieties of “parallel spaces”: the development of new alternatives in infrastructures of political communication, and the production of social learning. Network nodes here are not centrally coordinated; indeed they were becoming increasingly decentered/decentralized.

The concept of social insertion characterizes the movement for an increasingly shared or solidarity-based economy. The intention is to rebuild new social relationships around some radical revision of the market and practices of an excessively commodified environment. Critical movement space constituted in the new social pact-ing can *scale up* the sharing of local initiatives based on what Nobel economic laureate Elinor Ostrom² labels as “reciprocators” (*reciproqueurs*) rather than as individuated entrepreneurs.

¹ C. Flesher Fominaya: “Debunking Spontaneity: Spain’s 15 M Indignados as Autonomous Movement,” *Social Movement Studies* 14/2 (2015), 142–163; and “Redefining the Crisis Redefining Democracy: Mobilizing for the Right to Housing in Spain’s PAH Movement,” *South European Politics and Society* 12/4 (2015), 465–485. Cf. I. Martín, “Podemos y otros modelos de partido-movimientos,” *Revista española de Sociología* 24 (2015), 107–114.

² E. Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions of Collective Action*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

A confluence of tides

The Indignados sees itself as

- organized spontaneously as a parallel universe outside and separate from the power structures of a globalized market; as well as
- a movement of “autonomism: emphasizing horizontality in diffuse and *multi-scalar reconfigurings of spaces with transversal negotiations and projections*.”

What is revealed in the Indignados is a movement strategy of *Confluence of disaffection*, legitimation claims, and collective identity. This Confluence of Tides involves a feeling of righteous breaking off and provocative counterpoint to the referents, rhythms, and resonance of the Post-Franco Transition State. Street demonstrations and occupation of the public squares triggered by the Indignados Movement assemblies overlap, overlay, metamorphosize, and crystallize into all sorts of hybridized and transversal forms. The Movement opens up to a new social ecology of critical spaces with an emphasis on micropolitics wherein there emerge new understandings of citizens’ shared responsibility in managing risks in an age of increased vulnerability.

What is constituted discursively is what Charles Tilly³ called a *trust regime* or a *trust network* wherein there is an imaginary framework with which to reconfigure institutional practices. Trust networking increasingly called paranodality involves more than a single dominating code. As local and horizontal collaborative embodied engagements for solidarity-based exchange and consumption, these Indignados social pacts intend a radical revision of the market by disrupting assimilated neoliberal understandings of how we consume goods and services. In a sense, it is the *double movement* described in 1944 by Karl Polanyi,⁴ by which society knows how to defend and protect itself and its basic needs with their own re-appropriating alternatives in an excessively commodified environment fueled often by debt bondage. Buffeted by more than monopolistic competition forces of globalization, they challenge the illusions of “expansionary growth” which dismantles the protections and benefits of what remains of the social democratic welfare state.

³ Ch. Tilly, *Contentious Performances*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

⁴ K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political Origins of Our Times*, Boston: Beacon, 1944. Cf. J. Beckert, “The Great Transformation of Embeddedness: Karl Polanyi and the New Economic Sociology,” MPIfG Discussion Paper 07/1 Max Planck Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung, Cologne, 1971.

Newly created mediations emerged in the Indignados Movement to defend The Social:

- *marea blanca* (white tide) in defense of public health care;
- *marea verde* (green tide) in defense of public education;
- *marea roja* (red tide) focusing on the unemployed;
- *marea violeta* (violet tide) against sexist violence and family abuse; and
- *marea azul* (blue tide) against the privatization of water and social services.

There is a confluence into an anti-austerity coalition of *Marea Ciudadana* (citizens' tides) comprised of hundreds of thousands from 350 organizations from health groups to trade unions to youth groups to shared economy cooperatives.

These are fugitive flashes – fugitive emergent moments – bearers of mutually recognizable signifiers and commitments transversing the force field of finance capital and entrenched elites. J. M. Bernstein⁵ refers to these as flashes of “fugitive ethical moments” that haunt the present as they rupture it out of a time with strong durational intensity.

These fugitive flashes in the wake of the 15 M Indignados Movement include such socially pacted initiatives as:

- solidarity-based barter networks and local community currencies;
- districts of solidaristic economy;
- solidarity purchasing groups/procurement groups;
- time banks where time and skill can be swapped instead of money to enable a community to meet unmet needs where money is not the unit of account;
- microfinancing and social enterprises;
- ethical banks;
- new forms of consumer/producer cooperatives;
- community renewable energy initiatives;
- self-organized eco-housing initiatives;
- insulation-pooling initiatives;
- local organic food schemes; and
- community gardens/sustained agriculture.

There is in the Confluence of Tides the making use of new disposition to blog contentiously: asserting legitimization claims; redrawing space; and renegotiating relations with the State. Blogging diarists become activists persuading co-producing reciprocators of the social re-assertion/insertion in a mutually referent network. The Confluence of Tides is grounded in digitally empowered pub-

⁵ J. M. Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

lic space where sustainable community-based organizations are devised and put into effect with a more socialist than capitalist sense of a shared economy – a sensibility grounded in solidarity-based exchanges and networks.

As a movement for a socially pacted democracy in Spain, the 15 M Indignados is a broad signifier foreshadowing a more confederal frame of thinking which can imaginatively anticipate and project a more flexible institutional architecture for a poly-centric, and possibly a pluri-national Spain. They harken a socially pacted New Transition.

Such social pact-ing emerges beyond the older mutual aid of *municipalismo*. These are bootstrapping initiatives involving what Ostrom refers to as pooling of common resources and information. They involve social learning by mutual learning, and the making of multi-stakeholder pacts, i.e. codes of mutual reference.⁶

The Confluence of Tides argues for and establishes a solidarity-based economy from the bottom-up, in a way not set down by State institutions. The new social pact-ing in Spain recursively re-embeds and re-inserts the social in the sense of developing roles for sharing responsibility in adapting to managing risk in an epoch of increasing vulnerability. Rather than state-initiated concertation, the new social pact-ing from below is purely civil society initiated within their own general assemblies, the social pacts involves pooling common efforts and information (*en Común*) for bootstrapping across multiple scales, mutually setting standards and triggering sanctions. This amounts to a form of heterarchical and horizontal cooperative risk co-regulation.

Politically, as a left populism, the Indignados movement weaves new forms of local and horizontal collaborative initiatives. A Confluence of new Popular Unity Platform Parties and grass roots initiatives secured control of the main Spanish cities in the May 2015 municipal elections. And with the National Election of December 2015 in view, Confluence sentiment is articulated by autumn in a new national party platform Ahora en Común (AeC). However, the new party Podemos (Yes We Can!) pulls a brake on this momentum.

Constituted and constrained by internal party assemblies (*circulos*). Podemos' meteoric rise led the May 2015 electoral victories. But Podemos resists Izquierda Unida attempts to grab control of AeC. Breaking the knottedness is newly installed Mayor Ada Colau of Barcelona who founded the PAH anti-evictions

⁶ K. Bäckstrand, "Multistakeholder Partnerships for Sustainable Development: Rethinking Legitimacy, Accountability and Effectiveness," *European Environment* 16 (2006), 290–306.

movement. She takes her own Barcelona en Comün party into alliance with Podemos as *En Comün Podem* (In Common We Can. Together with Izquierda Unida, the political party alliance Confluence scores 20 per cent of parliamentary seats (80 out of 350) in the National Elections of December 2015 and June 2016.

Ada Colau⁷ declares that it is time for moving from "occupy to planning democracy." Democracy is understood not just as workplace industrial democracy, but in terms of a transformation in the social relations sustaining the capitalist mode of production. The Indignados will have to move from unmediated politics of rage and affinity groups networking to institutionalizing the new politics of Confluence. This would mean renewing the politics of the Post-Franco Transition State from a perspective of more radical democracy and more solidarity economy projects constituted from the bottom-up and framed in a synergistic network of plural visions of society.

The emergent Sustainable Community Movement Organizations (SCMOs)

The Confluence of Tides reveal a new imaginary – a genealogy of moral re-valuation in the reciprocal solidarity of more socialist-tending shared economy. Social economics, following Francesco Forno and Giacomo D'Alisa, has come to brand this new form as Sustainable Community Movement Organizations, SCMOs.⁸ Such a phenomenon is anticipated in the writings of the young Lewis Mumford: *Sticks and Stones* (1924) and *The Golden Day* (1926). These SCMOs stimulate new awareness, as well as new paradigms of choice and responsibility.

Sustainability – according to the 1987 Bruntland United Commissions Report on Environment and Development – denotes "development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Sustainable community movement connotes

⁷ A. Colau and A. Alemany, *Vidas Hipotecadas: De la Burja Inmobiliaria al Derecho a la Vivienda*, Barcelona: Angle, 2012. Cf. X. Fina, *Els Cent Primer Dies d'Ada Colau*, Barcelona: Portic, 2012.

⁸ F. Forno and P. Graziano, "Sustainable Community Movement Organizations," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 14/2 (2014), 139–157; and G. D'Alisa, F. Forno and S. Maurano, "Grassroots (Economic) Activism in Times of Crisis: Mapping the Redundancy of Collective Action," *PACO: Partecipazione e Conflitto* 5/2 (2015), 328–342.

- emphasizing not only price and product quality but what can be called “political consumer behavior”; specifically, how we understand the act of consuming a fundamental part of the production process;
- beyond political consumerist awareness, experimenting in alternative modes of sustainable living;
- constituting eco-systems evolving toward sustainability as an open participatory process of empowered voluntary stakeholders;
- cultivating a moral economy wherein durable social bonds of reciprocity and cooperation can be built in terms of “shared stewardship,” re-embedding economics activities in social relations and unveiling a sense of connection;
- “commoning” to foster a collective/cooperative process of social learning and participative decision-making; and
- appropriately gauging contextual scale – “moving to scale” – in best managing production and consumption: not necessarily anti-consumerist but (i) focused on alternative forms of consumption, and (ii) multi-scalar oriented, neither shunning global context nor just focusing on local scale.⁹

Under Mayor Ada Colau’s Barcelona en Comú municipal government has crystallized as a meshwork of new *commoning* SCMO projects that bridge social capital and solidary economy. Ten percent of the city’s economy is based on cooperatives in 1300 specific SCMO ventures. For example, networks like Gulf.net and SemiEnergiaCoop are coordinated by Decim Barcelona (Decide Barcelona) and BarCola, web platforms for public deliberation and decision-making.

In Zaragoza, la Magdalena is a solidarity economy district that brings together some 688 active cooperatives and SCMOs in the province of Aragón. By the end of 2014, those 688 represented a doubling in size in one year. The Luis Bunuel Community Center serves as an important hub, and there is strong assistance from the Zaragoza City Council and the SUSY (Social and Solidarity Economy) Project, a platform of the European Commission of the EU that links 23 national SCMO efforts from Portugal to Estonia.

Like elsewhere in Spain, this meshwork crystallizing and coming together is rooted in traditions of historical *municipalismo*, associationalism and

⁹ G. Alperovitz and R. Hanna, “Mondragón and the System Problem,” *Truthout*, editorial, 1 November 2013. Alperovitz and Hanna discuss the bankruptcy of Fagor Electrode, part of the large Basque cooperative Mondragón as a result of competing in the global market with Chinese companies. They stress “moving to scale”: what we discuss as gauging what level in multi-scalarity of markets and political arenas a cooperative should play.

syndicalism. We can study the durability of presence of this new resilient social pact-ing in the social re-insertion of these SCMO ensembles:

- How they engender webs of mutual recognition among “islands of alternatives in a capitalist sea.”

- How they comprise some sort of networked moral economy.

- How they are connected with each other. Specifically, how they are linked in inter-urban, inter-regional and trans-border networks as chains – chains of solidarity production, procurement, exchange, consumption, and financing in new forms of cooperatives/mutual aid societies.

- How they infuse a regenerated democratic spirit and agenda of the Post-Franco Transition.

The new resilient social pact-ing in Spain is an intersubjective developing of resilience through “communing,” that is through pooling goods and services, and through pooling resources and social learning. Commoning involves founding and enforcing institutions for governing knowledge and resources over time through actions, producing and reproducing connective structures and social bonds over time through actions.

Concretely, the new resilient social pact-ing is grounded in the *decentered mutual stakeholder pact* – known as *the frame agreement*.¹⁰ This is a protocolism of standard-setting and task reciprocity based on continued negotiated rule-making and rule-enforcing. The underlying concept here comes from video compression technology wherein an image is established as a base, and subsequent images are stored only as changes from the base.

¹⁰ K. Bäckstrand, *op. cit.*