

PROJECT: THE RIGHT TO THE CITY AND THE AMBIVALENCE OF TOURISM: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO MEDIA DISCOURSES AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS' DISSENT IN VENICE, AMSTERDAM AND BARCELONA

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TRANSLATION: DR ALEXANDER ARAYA LÓPEZ

SELF-REPORTED GENDER OF THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT [SUBJECT A]: MALE

AGE OF THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT [SUBJECT A]: 50-59 YEARS OLD

SELF-REPORTED GENDER OF THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT [SUBJECT B]: MALE

AGE OF THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT [SUBJECT B]: 40-49 YEARS OLD

COLLECTIVE: BARRIS PER VIURE (COLLBLANC / LA TORRASA – L'HOSPITALET)

INTERVIEWER: DR ALEXANDER ARAYA LÓPEZ

DISCIPLINE: SOCIOLOGY

PAGES: 19

THIS INTERVIEW FOLLOWED THE ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCHERS AND A WRITTEN CONSENT FORM WAS SIGNED BY THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT, AFTER DISCUSSING THE OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND POTENTIAL RISKS AND HARMS ASSOCIATED TO THE INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY. THE ETHICS COMMITTEE AT CA' FOSCARI, UNIVERSITY OF VENICE APPROVED THE ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR THE «RIGHTS UP» PROJECT ON JULY 2ND, 2018.

HOW TO USE THIS TRANSCRIPT? THE FOLLOWING TRANSCRIPT IS A NON-LITERAL TRANSLATION FROM SPANISH TO ENGLISH. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION, WHEN DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE RESEARCHER, HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN SQUARED BRACKETS. SOME DATA HAS BEEN REMOVED DUE TO POTENTIAL HARM TO THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT OR DUE TO PRIVACY CONCERNS. ACCESS TO THE ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT IN SPANISH COULD BE OBTAINED ON A CASE BY CASES BASIS. THE ORIGINAL AUDIO FILE WILL NOT BE SHARED. THE NAMES OF PUBLIC SPACES, BUSINESSES, POLITICIANS OR INSTITUTIONS MENTIONED BY THE INTERVIEWEE(S) HAVE BEEN INCLUDED, WHEN THIS INFORMATION IS CONSIDERED “SAFE” ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLE OF “NO HARM” APROPOS THE HUMAN PARTICIPANT.

Interviewer: Ok, generally, I start the conversation by asking people about how long have they lived in Barcelona, but we are not in Barcelona, so, how long have you lived in this neighborhood? And if you have seen any difference between “before” mass tourism and “after” mass tourism?

Subject A - BAR04: Yes. I'll answer the same... I was born here, and I have lived here for 58 years, here and in Barcelona, because the frontier is not... There is not a physical frontier, really... All the public transport connects you faster to Barcelona, than towards the outlying

districts... And the relation has always been with Barcelona... And of course, there are differences, evidently...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes, me too. I'm from Barcelona, native from Barcelona and I came to live here in 2004. It's been 15 years. And what you are saying, yes, the difference is huge... And for me, that I arrived here relatively recently... Fifteen years... Tourism, here in the neighborhood and... Maybe, it's been the last four years... That's the "boom"... [ORIGINAL WORD IN ENGLISH] And now we are in full power... [IN SPANISH: "EN PLENA JALADA"] The worst is yet to come... I believe the worst is yet to come...

Subject A - BAR04: Yes, yes! The worst is yet to come! It's clear...

Subject B - BAR04: Here, in this area... Because of its proximity and... The people that come here for tourism, they come to Barcelona... Above all... I mean, this is a city that is close to Barcelona, but it's not that... It's that it's attached... Barcelona is two blocks away... And when they advertise the tourist rentals from here, they are tourist rentals in Barcelona... There is Camp Nou... "Oh. It's Barcelona..." Nobody thinks they are coming to L'Hospitalet... well, the ones that educate themselves, yes... But for tourism here, Barcelona, the ads for tourist rentals in Airbnb and other companies, they advertise Barcelona, they don't advertise L'Hospitalet de Llobregat.

Interviewer: Ok. If we have to identify the three problems that are affecting the community the most, here in L'Hospitalet, which are these three problems linked to tourism, today?

Subject A - BAR04: Man... In the area that is closer, that is where it has begun... where there is a nucleus of touristification... Because there is the Camp Nou of Barcelona, where we have the metro line that was inaugurated about four years ago, that takes you straight to the airport, and to the center of Barcelona... Because you have various metro lines that takes you in 20 minutes to the center of Barcelona... Well, that happens in all the neighborhood, indeed... But in that area, you start seeing that the stores are not stores for the people in the neighborhood, they are stores exclusively for tourists... Souvenirs, for example... Here, there was not a single one souvenir shop before... Maybe there was some shop inside the stadium of Barcelona, for example... But now you have souvenir shops around all that area... The next effect that is really important around here is the rise in prices... Tourism is a business for rents and housing... The prices have skyrocketed, but... The last data that was released stated that, in the last three or four years, it has increased about 40%. The apartments. But the more important factors, I believe are those... And the worst of all is that when we talk about gentrification, there is always the talk that the quality of life in the neighborhood increases... but that's not true, in this case... The quality of life in the neighborhood increases, people complain more, and the public administration, theoretically, fixes the neighborhood... Or improves it... This is not happening here. The public administration is saying: "There is no issue. Nothing is happening". And nothing is improving... And we have the added issue of the lack of investment in these neighborhoods by the public administration ... taking into account that... and you have probably read about it, considering that you are doing this... We are the densest area in all of Europe... We are in the densest area in all of Europe... And we have already reached over 60.000 inhabitants per square kilometer. They used to say that it was fifty something, some 3 or 4 years ago... But we are now around 60.000 inhabitants per square kilometer, in this area here...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes. Besides the housing prices, that is evident... And besides the souvenirs and all that, I would add the disturbance of the neighbors. Because there is a huge number, very important, of tourist rentals that are illegal... And they share the building with neighbors that wake up at seven, six or five in the morning... and the disturbance for the neighbors... There are complains... And for the tourists, well it is normal, they come and stay up late drinking something, they make more noise, and the public administration does not do anything... Well, they said that... we have asked the administration, and they say: "There is no issue"... And here, where we are, in Collblanc, right in this neighborhood, and they say that there is not a problem with tourism here...

Interviewer: Well, my next question was precisely about the actions of the local administration. You seem to be a bit critical. Do you know if there is a collaboration between the local government in Barcelona and the local government in Llobregat? Do they try to understand this problem in a joint manner or...? What is your opinion about what they are doing?

Subject B - BAR04: Look, precisely that... With the arrival of Barcelona in Common [BARCELONA EN COMÚ] to the local government in Barcelona, and the attempt, more or less appropriate, of regulating the issue of tourism... What this local government [LLOBREGAT] did was to take everything that Barcelona did not want... That's what they did. I mean, they said... "Barcelona is putting some obstacles, we are going to take advantage of this moment to take all this touristic investment and bring it to the neighborhood". That is what they are doing. They are setting in place all kind of advantages... [SHORT PAUSE DUE TO TECHNICAL ISSUES]. They are giving advantages, it's the other way around... The local government sees this as an opportunity, eh... They are facilitating the creation of hotels, of tourist rentals, of student accommodation for foreign students in elite Universities, all these are facilities... And everything that Barcelona does not want, it's coming here... It's exactly an effect, if people in Barcelona are going to invest, and they want to put a hotel, and in Barcelona there is a suspension of licenses, and in L'Hospitalet they are eager for them to arrive... Well... They have to come here to knock the door... and our local government... Very generous in that respect... They give them a welcome and set in place all kind of advantages...

Interviewer: How is your group created? Because it is a relatively recent group, but it seems that the problematic has been going on for years... How is the group created?

Subject A - BAR04: The truth is... The need for activist groups, I believe, is a subject that was lost for a while, it was missing in these neighborhoods... In these neighborhoods, but little by little, we are organizing... We are creating groups in some way, because we are in more than one group too, and... [CAMPAIGNING] for that, what give us more sensitivity... This group was created thanks to conversations with members from other groups, for other issues... For example, I'm part of the group defending the Bellví Castle [CASTELL DE BELLVÍS] ... You talk to people from other groups, and you say: "Oh, well, look, we could do this..." You start to build... Put the issues on the table... You see that the administration is not doing anything... And then you decide to start a group, choose a name and... To use the social networks, evidently, to attract more people... And to define the problem... To study the issue... Indeed, we have something pending... because the public administration does not make any communication easier... To present a manifesto, that... in one of the activities that we organized, we reached a consensus with some social entities in the neighborhood... But we ended there... So, this was created because of a conversation... [NOISE FROM A ROLLING SUITCASE APPROACHING] Look how they pass, the noise... Now imagine this in the

morning... One suitcase this way, one suitcase that way... And we are in winter, that is the lowest period... but there still are some... But this, in the month of June, even May... You start listening suitcases that come up and...

Subject B - BAR04: And also, people leave really soon...

Subject A - BAR04: Sure.

Subject B - BAR04: And about the group origins, yes, it was created, besides of what he just said... He was in the Bellví Castle [COLLECTIVE], I was in the social struggle for defending public education... And in my daughter's high school, many neighbors have had to leave... We have lost students because at the time they had to renew their rent contract, they could not afford it... There are people that moved to Sitges, that is historically a city for people with some status, and it was cheaper to buy an apartment in Sitges and move to Sitges, than to stay in the neighborhood... There are others that have gone to Molins de Rei... And, since this conversation, we said... Fuck, in this area of the neighborhood, to get to know people from other movements... We created a movement, of people who already belonged to other movements, to focus on the issue of tourism and its consequences...

Interviewer: Ok. About the solutions in other cities, including Venice and Amsterdam, and Barcelona... They have proposed several solutions. There are solutions like putting a ticket, that is practically what they did in Park Güell, to try to control tourism flows. Or to invest in luxury tourism, because it is other market, that supposedly creates less noise... And one of the solutions is to devise new areas of attraction, to disperse and reduce pressure from the center of Barcelona... Do you think these solutions have been positive for Llobregat, or to the contrary, it is what is creating the problems here in Llobregat?

Subject B - BAR04: Man, one of the first solutions in Barcelona was to limit the licenses, and to stop them, and that harmed us... Sure, we as citizens of this area, we said: "Man, what a good decision by the town hall in Barcelona!", but it immediately started to affect us here... Because the ones [HOTELS AND TOURIST RENTALS] that were not able to go there, they came here... The other things, I don't know, whether they are diversifying the offer... I don't think so. We, in our city... Maybe it is not a tourism that offers... as he said... "Come and see the Bellví Castle" that is a castle that has been here for... No! What they offer is the bed, really. Here is a bit: "Come here to sleep, to rest, to arrive at night". But the tourism, really, the people that come here and sleep here, they go to Barcelona every morning... Or they go wherever they go... But here, we don't have a touristic offer... one of quality... No?

Subject A - BAR04: No. No. It does not exist. It does not exist. They sell it as Barcelona... But with the metro you are in center of Barcelona in 20 minutes, in the airport in 20 minutes... Five minutes walking, you have the... point of attraction... the most visited museum in the area, that is the Museum of the Barça... [FÚTBOL CLUB BARCELONA]. So, for the neighborhood, this is not contributing with anything... to the neighborhood...

Subject B - BAR04: This is a tourism that... It's like when one goes to Paris, and you have the outer rings, and those who end up in the more distant rings are those who have less resources... and not for that, one should allow... We defend that tourism is fine, and people have to travel, and they have to come... But here, it's not under control... The people that come here, are the people that could not afford to stay in Barcelona... In the end they come, to see, just like [SUBJECT A] said... "We have Barcelona in the center and, we have L'Hospitalet

that is right next to it, that has the line 9 that takes you to the airport, that takes you here in 20 minutes, that has the Camp Nou, that walking you get to Plaça d'Espanya in a quarter of hour..." I mean, yes, it's cheaper... Well, let's go then... They come basically to sleep... L'Hospitalet does not have... You can check... It does not have... It does not have tourism; it doesn't even have the need for tourism... It has no place here... We only accommodate... And we open accommodation so that they come here to sleep and, the more we open, the more shared wealth it seems, and... It's false, because the people that sleep here, they don't consume here, they don't spend money here... The people that come here to Collblanc, they don't go to buy in Collblanc, they don't buy clothes in our shops, they shop in the stores in Barcelona, in Passeig de Gràcia... Really, what they contribute here is very little... They help the investor, the small owner, in this case... That they are using his accommodation, and that is rising the prices... Because, in the end, this...

Subject A - BAR04: And to put tickets, makes no sense... And the luxury tourism also makes no sense, because of what we told you... Here there is no investment from the public administration, to improve the neighborhood... The only solution that we propose is for the local government to have a tourism plan... a real plan... How many tourist rentals could the neighborhood host, without creating a negative effect on the neighbors, on the neighborhood itself? This is the project that we are demanding the town hall to plan, and to study... Evidently, they keep saying: "There is no issue, there is no issue". And they have just... a month ago... They authorized 110 places for a hotel, in the corner, next to the Barça field... And "there is no issue, there is no issue". But each time the volume keeps growing...and it's not lineal growth, it's exponential... Tourism brings tourism... All the construction works in the neighborhood now, all of them, without any exceptions, are for tourist accommodation... Some with license, because yes... This was something that we achieved a couple of years ago, or last year... That you don't give a license unless it's for the whole building... That's the only thing that the local government has done... But what did they get? Well, ground floors that were there, you demolish that, and build a building of about three floors, because you are not allowed to do more [FLOORS], and fifteen rooms, tourist rentals... And some of them are good, it's what [SUBJECT B] just commented... Tourism is good, evidently, in itself... but mass tourism is not good. And this is what we are seeing that is becoming a problem... and it's going to end up being a huge problem...

Interviewer: Should Llobregat be publicized, or do they should do any marketing, that I am not a fan of that word, about Llobregat as separated from Barcelona, emphasizing what the neighborhood has, or...?

Subject A - BAR04: That has been a discussion for a lifetime... L'Hospitalet as part of Barcelona, or not, or as independent population? Sants was an independent population, it's been years since it annexed to Barcelona... Gràcia was another neighborhood... Barcelona is composed of sixteen populations, just like it happens in Madrid... Madrid, indeed, annexed all its surroundings, and there are people who speak of the Metropolitan zone, as a unity... And indeed, it's like that... In [TERMS OF] transport, in many subjects... The unity is not the city, but the Metropolitan area... But in terms of tourism, I don't think this is important... Because the label is Barcelona, evidently... If you say that you are in L'Hospitalet, people will look how far from Barcelona it is...

Subject B - BAR04: The local government has made no efforts so that L'Hospitalet could offer anything, never...

Subject A - BAR04: Nothing. Sure.

Subject B - BAR04: If you call the town hall and ask: “What could I visit? I’m here for tourism. What could I visit in L’Hospitalet?” And the people that answer the phone would say: “Fuck, why don’t you better go to La Familia [LA SAGRADA FAMILIA, A BASILICA BY ANTONI GAUDÍ]! “No, no, here in L’Hospitalet”. They have made no efforts to separate themselves from Barcelona and to create their own city, because it has been good for them... to drag... and follow Barcelona... And now that Barcelona put some restrictions in place, all comes here... It could well be, but they don’t have any interest... And for that idleness, they have nothing to offer... We have nothing to offer, because we never took care of anything we have...

Subject A - BAR04: But this discussion Barcelona or L’Hospitalet is a discussion that, I believe... since I was born, I have been listening to this discussion... We could be a neighborhood of Barcelona; indeed, we are already, what changes is the [PUBLIC] administration... And maybe, in some respects, it would be much better to be a neighborhood of Barcelona, evidently, but in others not... In this one, I don’t think it would be important, because the label is Barcelona, as a separate label it does not make any sense...

Subject B - BAR04: No. No. We have never generated any value, to sell ourselves. And they are not interested. Because there is no need for that, maybe.

Subject A - BAR04: Sure, because we go around picking up... There are hotels, well, now we could have jobs in the hotel... There is a restaurant... There are beds for sleeping... “No problem...” We have coffee shops, for example... Here, they have been growing... We have seven or eight in the neighborhood... While some of them are for domestic consumers, many of them are for tourism... Because, even if they don’t respect the legislation, because you have to become a member and all that... People come to smoke inside anyway... You have one or two, some streets away, that are called “Camp Nou”, that is the name of the Barça stadium... It’s evident that this is made for tourism... Areas for gambling, also... In Barcelona, they are being banned... They are coming here...

Subject B - BAR04: We have such a scent in the neighborhood... [LAUGHS]

Subject A - BAR04: Sure. The scent, when you walk around these places, you notice it... And gambling houses, I’m telling you, they are two or three down there... because that is the hot spot [IN SPANISH: “ZONA DEL MOMENTO”], that is more attached to the Barça area because it is for tourists... There is a bingo, a cinema... That has been there for years, but it has been totally restored... And this is the kind of business that tourism attracts, that kind of business... There is also the brothel part, the darkest part... Amsterdam, if you have done any research about Amsterdam, you know that Amsterdam was the place to go smoking... to go and buy different kinds of drugs... They limited it, and they have to go back... But there are now zones, two or three cities in the Netherlands, where the consumption is allowed, the rest of them have prohibited it... Because it was the label... “Let’s go there to smoke”... And now it’s Barcelona the one that has that label... And for that, they come here... [SHORT PAUSE] It’s a business... It moves a lot of money... It moves millions of euro, that business... And while it remains banned or limited, it would move, it would keep moving... and a lot of mafia behind it, evidently...

Interviewer: In terms of the activism that you are doing, do you feel that there is interest in the media to report about the situation in Llobregat in particular? Or do you think there is a good coverage of the problems of the neighborhood?

Subject B - BAR04: Well, some media have been interested... But it's always the same media...

Subject A - BAR04: The local media...

Subject B - BAR04: Local media... Or some publication like La Directa, or according to the type of journalism that searches for precisely that... That yes, they have created some resonance [IN SPANISH: "HACER ECO"]... And in the mainstream media, well... Sometimes... When the data comes out, and it comes out that rents have gone up 40%, evidently..., and it's the city where it is increasing the most in all of Spain, then, yes, they create resonance [IN SPANISH: "HACER ECO"]... But that's it... They don't come here to ask you... They throw some data...

Subject A - BAR04: I think that the negative part is what is always in the media... Regarding L'Hospitalet, the positive part does not normally appear...in some way. "The rents are rising" Where are they rising the most? "In L'Hospitalet!" "Where, this? Ah, Barcelona..." But it's always the negative... I think the media, the mainstream media... Not the local media, evidently not... But they have the tendency to show the negative part of L'Hospitalet as the periphery... in some way...

Subject B - BAR04: L'Hospitalet, it has a bad reputation, it has always had a bad reputation...

Subject A - BAR04: Always. And it maintains it [THE BAD REPUTATION]...

Subject B - BAR04: I come from the other part of Barcelona, and L'Hospitalet...

Subject A - BAR04: It has always had a bad reputation...

Subject B - BAR04: It was like that... Anyone could tell...

Subject A - BAR04: It was the West [IN THE SENSE OF "THE WILD WEST"] Practically... But I have never had that sensation... Well, once I did... But I never had the feeling of being too different from Barcelona.

Subject B - BAR04: It's not. It's not.

Subject A - BAR04: If we are more people, there is obviously more conflict... It is pure mathematics. If you put 100 [PEOPLE] in one square meter, they are going to fight, for sure...

Subject B - BAR04: We have some spaces here... Well, I'm changing the subject... We have some spaces, for example, next to the market, an area, no...? Big... That one could... In a city, a neighborhood like this... Which such an exaggerated density, and they put a residency for students for a school...

Subject A - BAR04: Private.

Subject B - BAR04: A private University of the Opus Dei... With 250 places, in the middle of the area... It's incongruent, all of it... It is to add, and add, and add...

Subject A - BAR04: And also, the local government fighting to secure that business... Because La Generalitat [GENERALITAT DE CATALUNYA] put some obstacles for the business, and the local government put its lawyers to secure that that University could build that residency there... I mean, the vision of the local government, and they have been the same over the last 40 years... the same political group... It's the same... It's always: "Let's find the business, let's find the business"... And not the benefit for the people...

Subject B - BAR04: And about this, they [MEDIA] do not create resonance [IN SPANISH: "HACER ECO"]... The press... If this were done by [MAYOR] Colau, they would have reported it, surely...

Subject A - BAR04: Surely... It would come out...

Subject B - BAR04: A residency for a University and they declare this like "Improvement for the neighborhood [IN SPANISH: "EQUIPAMIENTO DE BARRIO"]". Just as saying... This neighborhood needs a high school, an educational space... And we put a private University for foreign students... for people that come from abroad... Just like it was... Sure... And La Generalitat said: "Where are you going? This is not it... You don't even have a library... It is only beds". So, the local government [LLOBREGAT] fought back with its lawyers, did a modification so there was a small library, and now, because there is a space where one can study, then yes... They got it [THE PERMIT]... It could go forward...

Subject A - BAR04: It's a hotel.... How could I say this? Concealed, in some way...

Interviewer: Sure...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes, it's a hotel that starting from June hosts the tourists, then it hosts the students...

Subject A - BAR04: June, July and August... and then September, and it's a business that works for the whole year...

Subject B - BAR04: And the press does not report this... They create resonance of the [RENT] increases, of the criminality index...

Subject A - BAR04: Yes. That surely comes out...

Interviewer: Regarding your presence in social media, I've seen you have an account in Twitter, Instagram. Does this work as a way to engage in protest? Have you managed to connect with the neighbors?

Subject A - BAR04: I think so... Yes...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes.

Subject A - BAR04: The first demonstration that we did, it originated more or less in social networks... We were only a few, but we got here, I don't know, between 50 and 100 people...

And we didn't expect that... It was like: "How could it be so many people?" And it was the word of mouth and social networks...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes. Yes. I think Twitter works... For the more social topics, it works well... And besides, because we have other many connections to other movements that support us, then... If you check L'Hospitalet, you will see a lot of them... This about [TOURISM] massification in our neighborhood, here, ours... There are a lot of issues that are common struggles, or similar... That we support each other and... Twitter, really, I think yes...

Subject A - BAR04: I believe it is. It creates a network. The web, the internet, it was thought as a network, really, and... It's a system like Twitter, fast messages and it keeps growing... And suddenly 50 people retweet you... And in a neighborhood like this, considering that the average age is high, that they don't use this system... It means that these are young people and things are moving... In some way... And also, word of mouth... For older people, it's word of mouth, evidently, because they don't have emails... It's word of mouth...

Interviewer: I have a question regarding the emotive dimension. When you engage in these activities fighting the negative impacts of tourism, do you feel an impotence because you are fighting against powerful political and economic interests, or to the contrary, do you feel empowered because you are doing something for the community?

Subject A - BAR04: I think both things...

Subject B - BAR04: [LAUGHS] Yes.

Subject A - BAR04: We feel that we have a very importance force against us, but we believe that it's important for the community, what we are doing... How far will we go? There are factors that we could not control... But for me, from my personal point of view...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes. I agree.

Subject A - BAR04: We have something very big, that is treading on us, but we feel an obligation to do so... For me, it's an obligation, at the moment... An obligation, because I have some more [FREE] time, so because I have more time, I dedicate this time to what is indispensable, and if it were not us... Someone else would be doing it, I believe... And the idea is, precisely, to get the most people involved... That's what is difficult...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes. The type of the neighborhood... It's not a neighborhood for activist people... And with a lot of...

Subject A - BAR04: And it used to be...

Subject B - BAR04: People live, and people survive... And fuck, it could be that people see other more serious issues, surely... And it's difficult... It's difficult... This is not Sants, it's not Gràcia, it's not Sant Andreu... It's the type of neighborhood... Well, I think, little by little, we are making some noise... Another thing, later, is to have the hands... It's another thing to have people coming... But making some noise and getting to know each other, and that people say: "Oh, well, they are right..." Because in the end, you explain things and... Because in the beginning... In my high school, in my case... "Fuck, but building hotels is not that bad! And the price of my apartment is going to increase..." and "What is it worth to you? If you want to

go away, then yes. But what is it worth to you? If you want to say here. If it is your property. And if you are renting, you are going to bleed...” And little by little, people start to understand it... And after many explanations, and of witnessing that what we used to say two years ago, that we were right... That two years later, it’s even worse... Well, I think, yes... It’s a double sentiment... Because it seems to be complicated, that we could eventually fix the issue... But I believe that our struggle is going to change things... or minimize the impacts, for sure... Because the town hall knows that we are right. Even if they try to ignore it and to look elsewhere, they know we are right... The local media give us a space to say what we think, and... It’s very logical... The message is being heard...

Subject A - BAR04: And think that, right now, precisely, it’s a period in which social movements are growing in L’Hospitalet... There is a sort of platform that is binding various social movements in L’Hospitalet... That it is called “Another L’Hospitalet Is Possible” [UN ALTRE L’HOSPITALET ÉS POSSIBLE!]. I don’t know if you already found it, but you will find it... And this is what we are doing... To unite us, so that we could have more strength against this big monster that we have against us... Because we, individually, in a neighborhood, it could be that we have three or four sections... But if you unite all L’Hospitalet... that is more than a quarter of a million people... even is the percentage is low... It starts to add up, in some way... And we are on that, on achieving little changes in the town hall... So, that when the elections come... The problem is that we don’t see this change... That’s the problem...

Interviewer: Besides this collaboration with other groups in Llobregat, do you collaborate with groups in Barcelona? Or at the national or international level apropos tourism?

Subject A - BAR04: At the moment...

Subject B - BAR04: No.

Subject A - BAR04: No...

Interviewer: No. Ok.

Subject A - BAR04: We have a group that... it’s very involved with the issue of tourism, that is the Tenants’ Union [SINDICAT DE LLOGATERS]... That they... About some two months ago, they presented themselves in L’Hospitalet...

Subject B - BAR04: It has its headquarters and origins in Barcelona... The Tenants’ Union, for the people that are in rented houses... And about two months ago, they started the section in L’Hospitalet... And in this sense, yes... And it’s very potent... The union, it’s very potent...

Subject A - BAR04: Yes. Because people become members, it has quotes, it has lawyers... It has experience in Barcelona... And when they saw that the problem is also here, they sent some people and... We were in contact with them, but for the moment we have not agreed to any activity in common... But as you said in your email... During wintertime, the activities in the streets are drastically reduced... And I think that each spring is when we start waking up again...

Subject B - BAR04: Then, in relation to Barcelona, and regarding contact via Twitter, then yes... Each neighborhood of Barcelona has a group like ours... Each one with its own name... In Sants, in Poble-sec, in Paral·lel, in every neighborhood there are... Online, there is

[COLLABORATION]... But real contact and engaging in actions together, well, no... And I think it could be a good idea... Certainly...

Subject A - BAR04: My next question is, considering the current situation, what is the future of Llobregat?

Subject A - BAR04: [SOFTLY] Fuck... That's a ball... A ball...

Subject B - BAR04: The future of L'Hospitalet?

Interviewer: Yes.

Subject B - BAR04: Uh. I believe... It would not be very different from what we have now... There is not a project for the future... for L'Hospitalet...

Subject A - BAR04: Our local government does not have one...

Subject B - BAR04: It does not have a plan for the future.

Subject A - BAR04: We have that clear. Or at least, it does not have it for the people... For the infrastructure [IN SPANISH: "EDIFICACIONES"], it might have one... But for the people, no... It doesn't have a project for the people...

Subject B - BAR04: The future of this neighborhood, in specific, it would be a neighborhood... well, massified... in an exaggerated way... Because in a manner of two years, is what [SUBJECT A] said, you walk and... And there are construction works, in each building... Because what is good about the law, it's that it doesn't allow for a tourist rental inside a building with neighbors... But it also has an effect, that is, evidently, that those who own a whole building for rents, they increase the prices to kick everyone out, and convert it [INTO TOURIST RENTALS]... So, they say, let's go, if you are paying 700 [EURO], now pay 1.300 [EURO]... You go away, and once you have the whole building empty... then you ask for the permits... That is the effect. Our local government is not looking at this, but yes... The future of this neighborhood is exactly that... To be a neighborhood like El Born... Where the people... Basically, [COME] for tourism... And where only four [PEOPLE] stay... That in their day... Because of my parents and my upbringing, I bought instead of renting... Because in my house: "You buy, because renting is throwing the money away..." My mother would say that... So, I bought, instead of throwing the money away... And well, for me, there are no increases... I pay very little in relation to my mortgage... [REDACTED DUE TO PRIVACY CONCERNS]... For an 80 square meters apartment. And right now, my apartment could be worth about 1.200 [EURO], if I were renting...

Subject A - BAR04: Accurately.

Subject B - BAR04: I'm living... Well... And the issue is that all the people that are renting, and that they belong to my level... People from the neighborhood... These people will have to leave... [SHORT PAUSE] No, I'm telling you lies. Indeed... They are leaving every day... Each year, in my high school, a lot of parents leave... Other come, because they come to apartments for the recently arrived, and they share them with other people, but when they get their own apartment, what happens is that they have to go away again... And for that reason, the enrollment [IN SPANISH, "MATRICULA VIVA"], the enrollment is super important...

Each year we have 1.500 children in L'Hospitalet that are getting an education later than they should, because they just arrived, or because they come and go... And this is not helping... It does not help people to put down roots...

Subject A - BAR04: It's an important characteristic, for this neighborhood specifically, and for L'Hospitalet in general... But surely for these neighborhoods... It's that they have always been host neighborhoods [IN SPANISH: "BARRIOS DE ACOGIDA"]. Since the twenties, last century, to the fifties... There was a lot of migration, and now it's happening again... Before, this migration was national, from the Peninsula, but now they come from everywhere...

Subject B - BAR04: My father came from [REDACTED DUE TO PRIVACY CONCERN] to this neighborhood.

Subject A - BAR04: My parents were [REDACTED DUE TO PRIVACY CONCERNS]. And in this same square kilometer, there were 120 nationalities... 120. Of 160, or 170 that there are in the world, there were 120 in one square kilometer... The diversity is incredible. We have a 40% of people that come from abroad... with very limited resources... The majority of them... It happens what [SUBJECT B] said: "They come, they stay, and they flee..." [IN SPANISH: "SALEN CORRIENDO"]. This is not neighborly, no.

Subject B - BAR04: This is not neighborly, no.

Subject A - BAR04: The same local government is not allowing us to keep our heritage, that is what makes history and makes a neighborhood... The castle, we have been trying that it doesn't fall down, because... The reference for our neighborhood, it should not be that we have so much criminality, but that we have a medieval castle... That does not exist in the surroundings, for example... And it's a story that keeps repeating itself... Because in the thirties, before the coup that caused the [SPANISH] Civil War, this was the nest for anarchism... The worker's association... Because it was a worker's area too, no...? And the story is going to repeat itself again... People come from abroad, and when these people that come from abroad truly integrate themselves to the neighborhood... If you reference it as it is, it would be easier... To incorporate them to the social tissue of the neighborhood, but for the moment, it's really difficult, to incorporate them into the movement...

Subject B - BAR04: This is what I was saying... This is not improving the life of the neighborhood, nor the level of life, nor the quality of life... for the people... Because, precisely, to the contrary, people come and go in a manner that... Because it's impossible to stay in a neighborhood in which they [LOCAL GOVERNMENTS] don't take the citizen into account... And the future of L'Hospitalet, that is indeed the question, the future of this neighborhood is... a neighborhood that is going increasingly towards tourism... and less towards the neighbor... And it is going to turn into that... into a neighborhood that even if we get along, the four of us that manage to stay... with a lot of tourists... And people could be happy or not... Some of us will leave, because... in the end, if they don't kick you out because you are not able to pay... They kick you out, because it's impossible to live.... And to live, I mean, to get along...

Interviewer: Yes. Quality of life.

Subject B - BAR04: Sure.

Interviewer: Ok. Generally, the interview ends here, but I have some additional questions specifically about L'Hospitalet. The first one is... I have done some media analysis and I have tracked the protests in Barcelona, and when there are protests against the hotel sector, there is an idea, in some mass media, that one is attacking economic interests that are essential for...

Subject B - BAR04: Tourismphobia.

Interviewer: Exactly. Tourismphobia, etcetera. How do you engage in protests against the hotel sector? Have you been stigmatized, at some level, for this kind of protest?

Subject A - BAR04: [SUBJECT B] already said that. There are neighbors that think that the hotels are good...

Subject B - BAR04: Sure. There are neighbors that think that "when you talk about it, you are attacking our interests..." As if the building were theirs... [LAUGHS] I don't know... Sometimes... Since the beginning, we have explained that... It's true that, when you get the messages... Another thing is how you get the message, how it is deployed... How does it [THE MESSAGE] come from Barcelona? I think, people are not really against... In some cases, they are... Against tourism or massification... It's not tourismphobia... We have repeated that in each meeting, with all the entities... And I think it is, in the end, when people come and say... "Yes, it's true"... Because we have had meetings with neighbors, that the first thing that people say, older people or... "Well, this is not bad, because tourists come and spend..." And when you take a moment and explain them, that we want them to come, that is not a matter of being against tourism, that we are tourists too... We also go to other cities... That the issue is against the massification, about the benefits that it brings... In the end, people understand that... And I don't think we are labeled, in any media or in the town hall, as tourismphobia... I don't think so... We keep it in focus... Since the beginning, we have never said that "there should be no one here..." The tourism that comes here is a tourism of normal people, like us, that is in search for cheap accommodation so they can know the city, and that is super fine... The issue is that the local government needs to control it...

Subject A - BAR04: Look, the concept of the local government, in the topic of the Bellví Castle, we are talking about the uses of the castle, and we said that it is for the historical memory of the neighborhood... and if it is possible also for the historical memory of the community, then fine... And they say: "We are going to fix it, so we can attract tourism..." No, we don't want a castle for tourism, we want a castle for the neighborhood... and if tourists want to come, perfect... But not that the objective of this space is for tourism... I mean, it has to be for us... If what we do is interesting, then there is no issue, everyone can come... If they want... But you have to make it interesting... Not the other way around... "We are going to do this, so that tourists come"... No, no, no. They are mistaken. I believe they are mistaken. This is not what we want...

Subject B - BAR04: You can sell small bulls . [LAUGHS]

Subject A - BAR04: You can sell small bulls, yes. We don't want that. We want to make interesting things... And that people come, evidently, from all places, if it's necessary... Just like when we go... When I'm a tourist, I go to see concrete stuff, because they seem interesting... But if you put me the same stuff, that is what is happening in these cities that you mentioned, the stores are the same everywhere... When you cross one of these commercial streets, that are central streets but are commercial now, you see the same stuff in Barcelona, in

Amsterdam... in Venice, it's been some years since I've visited... I don't know Venice, but I think it's the same... Rome... Any of these important cities that gets tourism, they are all the same...

Subject B - BAR04: And in our case, also, because the press that covers us is local media, and cooperative newspapers... That component that El Mundo and La Razón [SPANISH MAINSTREAM MEDIA] have, that of defending capital, we don't have it... We are not accused of... The news from outside, El Mundo or La Razón, obviously they would say that we are anti-system, terrorists... That we are against progress and for poverty... and Venezuela... The media that cover us, they are not media that are at the service of the capital, directly... Or of the banks and the investors... I think this happens more in the [MAINSTREAM] media, in potent private TV stations... and in the potent media that have to give that image that this struggle is not dignified... and has no sense because it goes against poverty...

Subject A - BAR04: And we, as he says, regarding the neighbors... We provide them the discourse, constantly... and we give them arguments to explain them the process... And I think the majority, not all of them, they end up understanding it...

Subject B - BAR04: The tourists that comes here, they are not going to shop here... These stores that we have here... Well, maybe with the exception of the bars, in some cases... The commerce, in general, it would not see a benefit... They are being damaged... And you have here, 60.000 neighbors and 10.000 tourists... You will have much more consumption in the general commerce, than if you have 40.000 neighbors and 40.000 tourists... Because the tourists do not spend here... They don't buy buttons, they don't buy t-shirts, I don't know... If they shop, they shop in Barcelona...

Subject A - BAR04: And then, the ones of us that stay, we have to go find the buttons in...

Subject B - BAR04: Sure! People always think that tourists will come, and they will spend, shopping... and doing this... and shopping footwear... and no. The shops, they are not going to benefit from tourism... The bars, yes... And the bars have that clear, the bars in the market, they have that clear... And the prices in the bars around the market, they are increasing because... Of course, in the end, you had a menu for 9 euro and now it is a menu for 12 [EURO]... Fuck! It's crowded anyway... And this is also a damaging issue, the prices... in the bars... and the shops in the market... You go to buy to the local market, and the local market is going down if they lose the neighbors, even if they win the tourists... They are going down... And if they don't see it, they will notice it later... when it's too late...

Interviewer: We have mentioned twice in this conversation the issue of the exodus, that the neighbors are leaving... There was a first phase of this exodus, of people who used to live near La Rambla, and the Gothic neighborhood... and they went to Poblenou, or maybe they came here...

Subject A - BAR04: Here. Yes.

Interviewer: When people leave this area, where do they go? You mentioned Sitges...

Subject B - BAR04: No, no. Sitges is a concrete case. Right now, normally, the closest to me, for the cases I have in my high school, most of them go to La Florida, that is a neighborhood

from here, but that is farther away from Barcelona... that is not suffering the same, the touristic massification... and that it is cheaper... They go there... And from there, Molins de Rei, but out of here... But the first step... from the high school... Most people go to La Florida... that is a neighborhood just like this one, but because it is farther away from Barcelona, then the prices are more stable... That is the main one... After that, there are...

Subject A - BAR04: They go to Sant Boi, for example...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes, Sant Boi.

Subject A - BAR04: There are a lot of new constructions, in entire areas... The problem with these towns is that they have less... a worse connection [IN SPANISH: "COMUNICACIÓN"], worse than what you have here... And if they depend on an external job... They have to take the bus, that goes down to the center... to take the train... That takes you to... It's very complicated... And the connections that we have in this neighborhood... It's incredible... I don't know how you came here... But we have metro line 1, the metro line 5, the line of the trambaix... and a lot of buses... That take you everywhere in... in a matter of nothing... I would say... I have not done any estimation, but I would say that this one is the best-connected zone outside of center of Barcelona...

Subject B - BAR04: We have here the same connections that Sants has, adding...

Subject A - BAR04: The 9 and 10, they don't have that...

Subject B - BAR04: The trambaix, the trambaix that does not pass through Sants... It goes up...

Subject A - BAR04: And the 9, and the 10...

Subject B - BAR04: And the 9 and the 10, that Sants does not have... We are better connected than Sants...

Subject A - BAR04: They have the train that takes you to the airport and we have the metro that takes you to the airport... And this creates such a movement...

Subject B - BAR04: But as an exodus, I believe... in my point of view... In my high school, La Florida... The first [STEP] is to go to other neighborhoods in the same L'Hospitalet, that are more affordable... And between those, there is La Florida... Pubilla, that is farther... The area most separated from Barcelona... And then... Sant Boi... And towards there...

Subject A - BAR04: But what is curious is that... regarding the changes in prices in the market... We had here a shop that was for secondhand books, and they were in Calle Progreso, because it was, theoretically, the cheapest part in all L'Hospitalet... Now, they left, because they increased them the rent... So, they have relocated to a part that is... or was... the most expensive in L'Hospitalet, that is the center... The part of the jet set of L'Hospitalet... And they left from here, to the center... paying less rent there than what they were asking them here... The same business, same objective... A smaller shop... But it's the same...

Subject B - BAR04: It was a business that dedicates itself to buy secondhand books, and to sell them... It was a super attractive business for the neighborhood...

Subject A - BAR04: We lost that.

Subject B - BAR04: A place that one could enter to read... to listen stories... and we lost it... And they left... and sure, they went to a better zone, in quotation marks [IN SPANISH: "ENTRE COMILLAS"] better zone, and they might even have better results...

Subject A - BAR04: They are super happy.

Subject B - BAR04: Sure. Sure. And for less money.

Subject A - BAR04: They are super happy. Because they say: "There, I could not afford it, it costs me more... But I have more clients, in the end".

Subject B - BAR04: But they have more clients... Because here, the tourists do not enter to a library to buy a secondhand book... Sure, and the people that go there, they are people from the neighborhood... That consume in the neighborhood, that live in the neighborhood... And that interact with the neighborhood... Here, it is not.

Subject A - BAR04: And it is where you could have more touristic attractions, because there is the Town Hall... We have the History Museum... We have a street that is... Xipreret... That is from the 14th century, 15th...

Subject B - BAR04: The first street in L'Hospitalet... and it remains...

Subject A - BAR04: There is very little tourism there... The tourism goes to Barcelona... What I was telling before, they go to Barcelona... The attraction is Barcelona... It does not mean that you could not find one [TOURIST] there... But that you go around Las Ramblas, and you don't hear any Spanish or Catalan anywhere... The last times I have gone around Las Ramblas, or the center of Barcelona, the two languages that I use the most, Spanish and Catalan, you don't hear that... You hear Italian, English, German...

Subject B - BAR04: And this does not happen in La Rambla in L'Hospitalet... There is not a single tourist there... Not a single one.

Subject A - BAR04: Not a single one.

Subject B - BAR04: The tourists of L'Hospitalet are here... You go to La Rambla in L'Hospitalet... and it's a street for the town, with people from the town... Oh well, for the city... people from the city... And without tourists... The tourists are here... And here, it is because it meets all the conditions... It meets them, and that is why we live here... And why I have been here all my life... Because it is a well-connected neighborhood, close to Barcelona... Sants, I could not afford it... So, we came here... Because I could not be from Sants...

Subject A - BAR04: Sants has been improving lately... It's incredible...

Subject B - BAR04: Sure.

Subject A - BAR04: This revival could be gentrification or not, but all the streets are practically walking streets, and then the shops start to change... And then you start having shops... They seem like shops for the neighborhood to me, at least...

Subject B - BAR04: Sure!

Subject A - BAR04: These are shops for the neighborhood, what it's appearing there... I don't know if this is because of gentrification... Or whether it is because the government that they have in Barcelona, that it is really favoring this kind of change in the neighborhoods... Neighborhoods for the people...

Subject B - BAR04: It has nothing to do... Independently of the political affiliations of each one, it has nothing to do... The performance... with more or less success... Even for them is complicated, imagine it for us... But it has nothing to do the performance that they have, with the issue that we have here... That is what I said... To open the arms... To open the arms to everything that comes... And indeed, everything... If they put an ice rink in the center of Barcelona, and [MAYOR] Colau said: "No, but you have to pay, and I don't want anything for which you have to pay, because people could not access that... Out of here! We put something for free..." And the Mayor [FROM L'HOSPITALET] raised her hand and said: "Hey, come here!" And they put it here. All that Barcelona does not want... and people celebrate this... "Fuck, we took this from Barcelona". We took nothing from Barcelona, Barcelona kicked it out, and we picked it up... And with tourism, it's the same...

Subject A - BAR04: It's like going out and picking up... Someone throws a shit away, and you pick it up and "look what I got!". This is what our local government is doing... It's like that... "I got us shit..." Well, yes! Because they don't want it, and they don't want it for a reason ... Life is not only business, evidently... Life is, well, you have it around you right now.... And for me, since I'm engaging more with the neighborhood, I'm happier... I go out to the streets and I greet people.

Subject B - BAR04: Sure...

Subject A - BAR04: It's true. The life of the neighborhood...

Subject B - BAR04: It's wonderful.

Subject A - BAR04: I believe, an important part... That we lose, due to working, you go out to work and you come back, and it's difficult... But when you engage with the neighborhood, it's wonderful... To go out and talk to people, with anyone about any subject, and to find out what is happening around you... And this is what we don't want... This is what was almost being lost...

Subject B - BAR04: That's the headline, eh? That's the headline [LAUGHS]

Subject A - BAR04: Yes. We are almost losing it, because of the people that come from abroad... But this is exactly what a neighborhood like this... and we commented it before... We have always had people from abroad, it is a host neighborhood [IN SPANISH: "BARRIO DE ACOGIDA"]... And indeed, the key word in this neighborhood is "host" [IN SPANISH: "ACOGIDA"]. We have always been a host neighborhood. Our generation, the generation before us... It has always been... Precisely because it's an effect of the city of Barcelona...

People didn't manage... People do not arrive directly to Barcelona... They have always stayed in the outskirts. And now, not even these people could remain here... The apartments are really... We have a serious problem with the buildings, because the apartments are very old and small... And they have not encouraged the renovation... And of course, that is why a lot of people from abroad come to live here, because it used to be affordable... But now it's not affordable... Or it's starting to be unaffordable... So, what do you have? You have apartments in this area, and you have ten people living there... This is what is happening now...

Subject B - BAR04: Sure... Several families...

Subject A - BAR04: We are talking about 60.000 people registered... But we need to count how many we are, with those not registered... Because they don't allow you to register if you are not legal, because if they allowed that... We don't have an idea... They don't allow it...

Subject B - BAR04: When a family comes here, the first point of arrival, to an apartment with three more families... and when they have the capacity to go on their own... They could not afford it here... And that is the typology, the types of kids that come to my high school, they stay for a year... And the next year, the parents say: "Listen, now we could afford it, but not here". And of course, we have a flow of people that come and go... In my daughter's classroom, every year there are four of 22 students, there are four that come and four that go away... Four, four, four, four... I remember, when I studied, I entered to first grade with the same ones... Maybe one that was wandering arrived...

Subject A - BAR04: This makes it difficult, when you are from the neighborhood... It makes it really difficult... That's why we tell you... Because it endangers... No, it does not endanger, we are losing that sense of neighborhood... And to attract these people, with their different cultures and from different parts of the world, it's not easy... When it is homogenous, more or less, it's easier to associate with one another... But when each one has its own customs, its own manners to relate to other people... It requires time... And this has not happened for the first generation that arrived... So, there will probably be a change when this first generation, which was born here, has more things in common and when they could associate, strongly... Well, I think that...

Subject B - BAR04: Yes, yes, yes. To put down roots. And here is very difficult. And it will be even more difficult... That's why I said, in Barcelona, here, we'll stay, us, the tourists, and...

Subject A - BAR04: And one of the things that makes me put down roots here is that, in this neighborhood, my neighborhood, because I consider it mine... It's that my parents also live here... and my sisters are here... All my family is here... For me, it's still a town, in some ways... In quotation marks [IN SPANISH: "ENTRE COMILLAS"] the town, the neighborhood... Blurred, disfigured, but still the neighborhood...

Subject B - BAR04: But it's a strange case... That one...

Subject A - BAR04: Yes, my case... It's not common... I know three or four others just like me, but for the majority it is not like that... People have been forced to leave... Or they have left... According to the town hall, due to lack of space... Because that is another thing... The town hall is selling us the idea [IN SPANISH: "VENDER LA MOTO"], that they want to build more apartments, so that the people from here doesn't have to go away... But what are you saying? We are already sixty thousand. How many do you want to have? This is the project

that they have for us... We are criticizing that they are building 1.000 and something houses, right next to here, next to the railroads... We criticized it and said: "This is completely irresponsible!" What we need are public squares, green areas, centers for the people to interact...

Interviewer: And are those for social housing or...?

Subject A - BAR04: A part of it. A little part of it. Because the cheapest apartment starts from 300.000 euro. Now, find me someone among all these people, people that have a salary of 1.000 and something euro, how do they buy a 300.000 euro apartment?

Subject B - BAR04: And all that, with the same high school, and the same health services, just like here... You go to the CAP [CENTRES D'ATENCIÓ PRIMÀRIA] to ask for an appointment, and you have a line of one hour and a half...

Interviewer: I have a question, specifically for you [SUBJECT B]... In several areas in Venice, there is evidence of this connection that is not frequently reported in the media, between education and tourism, for example... Some have said there in Venice, that the situation is a little bit critical, considering the exodus of inhabitants, that the numbers of children have gone down and they are facing challenges, in the schools and other centers for small children, to fill the available quota... Because they don't have enough children... Is this happening here?

Subject B - BAR04: No. Here, it is not. This, at the moment, it's not happening. Here what is happening is that we have too much population... I would not say that it won't happen in the next years, but right now... We have too much population, that it covers it... Here, the schools and high school, both offer and demand, they are covered... But my criticism is, and that is my own opinion, that public education does not have enough space for those that are demanding it... But between the public and the subsidized ones, it is fine.

Interviewer: Ok. Thank you.

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