

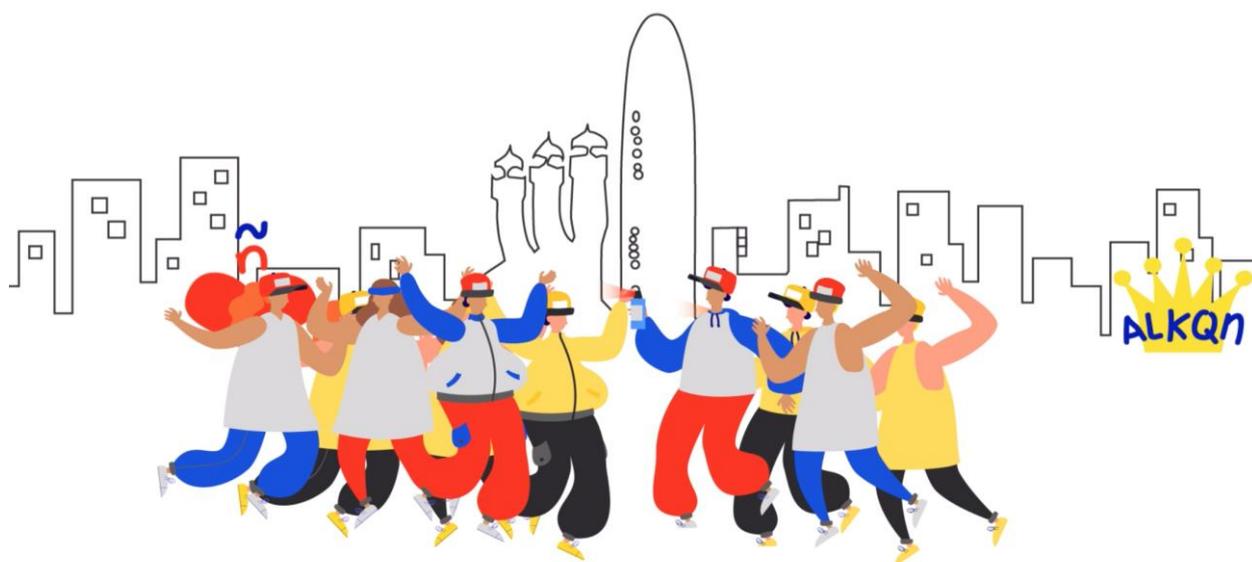
TRANSGANG Final Reports 01

Youth Street Groups and Mediation in Southern Europe: Ethnographic Findings

Ábel Bereményi (Coord.),

Eduard Ballesté, Paolo Grassi, Juan Camilo Mansilla, María Oliver,

Carles Feixa (Dir.)



Youth Street Groups and Mediation in Southern Europe: Ethnographic Findings

TRANSGANG Final Reports 01

NS: TRANSGANG_FR_1/2023

Edition: June 30, 2023

Authors

Ábel Bereményi, Eduard Ballesté, Paolo Grassi, Juan C. Mansilla, María Oliver, Carles Feixa
Work distributed under CC licence.



© TRANSGANG & UPF

Recommended format for citation

Bereményi, Á. (Coord.), Ballesté, E., Grassi, P., Mansilla, J.C., Oliver, M., & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *Youth Street Groups and Mediation in Southern Europe: Ethnographic Findings*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research. TRANSGANG Final Reports 01.
<http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr01>.

www.upf.edu/web/transgangtransgang@upf.edu

The TRANSGANG project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement n° 74270.

General Presentation

TRANSGANG is a study of transnational gangs as agents of mediation in the 21st century. It is an Advanced Grant of the European Research Council, that during the last five and a half years (2018-2023) has investigated this topic in twelve cities of three regions: Southern Europe (Barcelona, Madrid, Marseille, Milan), North Africa (Rabat-Salé, Algiers, Djendel, Tunis) and The Americas (Medellin, San Salvador, Santiago de Cuba, Chicago). The *TRANSGANG Final Reports* compile the main results of the project, grouped into three regional ethnographic reports (on Europe, Africa and the Americas) and four cross-cutting reports (on social networks, media representations, documentary films and social perceptions), in addition to the White Paper on mediation and gang policies, published in the *Communication Reports* series of UPF.

TRANSGANG Final Reports

1. Bereményi, Á. (Coord.), Ballesté, E., Grassi, P., Mansilla, J.C., Oliver, M., & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *Youth Street Groups and Mediation in Southern Europe: Ethnographic Findings*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 01. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr01>.
2. Sánchez-García, J. (Coord.), Boucherf, K., Omrane, M., Najar, S., Touhtouh, R., & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *Youth Street Groups and Mediation in Northern Africa: Ethnographic Findings*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra, European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 02. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr02>.
3. Feixa, C. (Coord.), Ross, W., Lavielle, L., Chévez, C., & Márquez, F. (2023). *Youth Street Groups and Mediation in the Americas: Ethnographic Findings*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 3. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr03>.
4. Fernández-Planells, A. (Coord.), Orduña-Malea, E., & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *Youth Street Groups and Social Media: Case Study of the Latin Kings*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 04. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr04>.
5. Masanet, M.J. (Coord.), Carnicé, M., Fedele, M., Iñigo, A., López-González, H., & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *Youth Street Groups and Media Representations: From stigma and stereotyping to reaffirmation and resistance*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 05. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr05>.
6. Mecca, M. (Coord.), & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *TRANSGANG Documentary Films*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 06. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr06>.
7. Guiteras, X., Morano, X., & Feixa, C. (Dir.) (2023). *Social Perception of Youth Street Groups: Survey Results*. Barcelona: Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council. TRANSGANG Final Reports 07. <http://doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2023.fr07>.

TRANSGANG Communication Reports

8. Feixa, C., Sánchez-García, J., Brisley, A., Hansen, N., Ballesté, E., Boucherf, K., Chévez, C., Grassi, P., Lavielle, L., Mansilla, J.C., Márquez, F., Mecca, M., Najar, S., Oliver, M., Omrane, M., Ross, W. & Touhtouh, R. (2023). TRANSGANG White Paper. Gang Policies and Mediation in the Context of Overlapping Crises. *Communication Reports* 03. <https://doi.org/10.31009/cr.2023.03>

Table of Contents

<i>General Presentation</i>	3
<i>Table of Contents</i>	4
<i>Table of Figures</i>	7
<i>Abstract</i>	9
1. Introduction. Ábel Bereményi	10
1.1. Introduction	10
1.2. Framing the ethnographical reports: Neoliberalism & gentrification	10
1.2.1. Policies with respect to gangs, and youth groups vs. inclusion policies	12
1.2.2. Diversity of youth street groups' urban location	13
1.3. Clusters: Changing shapes and relations of youth street groups	14
1.3.1. Identities	14
1.3.2. Subjectivities	17
1.3.3. Practices	19
1.3.4. Relations	20
1.4. Emerging analytical metaphors	25
1.4.1. Polis/Police/Policy	25
1.4.2. GRAFS (grand frères et soeurs)	25
1.4.3. M.D.L.R. ("mec de la rue")	26
1.4.4. REINA	26
1.5. References	27
2. Young migrants, the street and subsistence in Barcelona after the gangs. Eduard Ballesté	28
2.1. Introduction	28
2.1.1. Justification and approach	31
2.1.2. Report Structure	33
2.1.3. On peripheries, spaces and mediations: Expanding the Research Plan and the Background Paper	34
2.1.4. Updated objectives and assumptions, and overall main results	37
2.2. Ethnographing youth street groups: Contexts, techniques and approaches to the study	42
2.2.1. Barcelona and its Metropolitan Area during the 21st century: Contextual frameworks	42
2.2.2. Qualitative techniques	45
2.2.3. Entrance to the field	47
2.3. Obstacles, alterations and discontinuities of the study	51
2.3.1. Fuzzy groups	51
2.3.2. COVID-19	52
2.3.3. Institutional relations	53
2.4. On gangs, MENA's and youth from peripheral neighbourhoods: General analysis	54
2.4.1. From gangs to diffuse groups: On peripheral youth groups	54
2.4.2. The Latin Kings and Queens of Barcelona: 20 years of history	56
2.4.3. Minors (and adults) migrated alone: New and old stigmas on youth groups	62
2.4.4. Young people, peripheries and daily life: About trap, squares and associations	69
2.4.5. Brief examples of mediations	77
2.5. Analysis and detailed results by groups and clusters	79

2.5.1.	New codes and explanatory MEMO's	79
2.5.2.	Latin Kings and Queens Barcelona: Evolution of the gang	86
2.5.3.	MENA's and EXMENA's: New informal street youth groups	94
2.5.4.	Peripheral neighbourhoods: Young people, livelihoods, and mediations between L'Hospitalet de Llobregat and Barcelona	105
2.5.5.	Practices	106
2.6.	Examples of participants and their trajectories	111
2.6.1.	MEM_BCN_35, from a young ex-guardian to "leader" of the group	111
2.6.2.	EXMENA's from the perspective of MEM_BCN_09: New forms of resistance and mediation from the margins	112
2.7.	Conclusions.....	114
2.8.	References.....	116
3.	<i>The metamorphosis of gangs. Beyond the mano dura in Madrid. María Oliver</i>	118
3.1.	Introduction.....	118
3.2.	Methodology	120
3.2.1.	Multi-Sited Ethnography	120
3.2.2.	Field work	121
3.3.	Ethical issues.....	124
3.3.1.	Participants.....	124
3.3.2.	Researcher positioning.....	125
3.4.	General perspective on youth street groups: Presentation of the context and the groups investigated.....	126
3.4.1.	State of affairs	126
3.4.2.	Present	128
3.5.	Youth street groups in Madrid	133
3.5.1.	Latin Kings (and Queens).....	134
3.5.2.	DDP's and Trinitarians	141
3.6.	Stakeholders in Madrid	146
3.6.1.	Teaching and non-teaching staff of institutes.....	146
3.6.2.	Social work and street education staff.....	148
3.6.3.	RUMIÑAHUI Association	149
3.7.	Mediation experiences.....	152
3.8.	Analysis and results of encoding with NVivo.....	156
3.8.1.	New codes.....	157
3.8.2.	Analysis of results by clusters.....	157
3.9.	Portrait of a member	170
3.10.	Conclusions	172
3.11.	References.....	174
4.	<i>Gangs of Milan, Where Are You? Street Groups, Rap and Urban Territory Within and Beyond a City in Transformation. Paolo Grassi</i>	176
4.1.	Introduction.....	176
4.2.	Methodology	177
4.3.	Ethical issues.....	179
4.4.	Analysis per Clusters General perspective on youth street groups: presentation of the context and the groups researched.....	180
4.4.1.	Milan: a city in transformation	180
4.4.2.	The Latin American street groups of Milan: an "archaeological" approach.....	182
4.4.3.	The rap crew of San Siro.....	185
4.4.4.	Juvenile violence and the pandemic: the "Mega brawls"	188
4.5.	Analyses section	188
4.5.1.	Latin American street groups.....	188
4.5.2.	The rap crew of San Siro	194

4.6.	Member Portraits	199
4.6.1.	José. A Salvadoran <i>pandillero</i> in Milan	199
4.6.2.	Daniel. A (former) rapper of San Siro	201
4.7.	Conclusions	202
4.8.	References	204
5.	<i>Youth in Marseille Associative, traffic and social mediation networks. Juan Mansilla</i>	207
5.1.	Introduction	207
5.1.1.	Document structure	207
5.1.2.	Approach and objective of ethnographic analysis in Marseille	207
5.1.3.	Relevance of the Marseille case study	208
5.2.	GENERAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE STREET YOUTH GROUPS INVESTIGATED	208
5.2.1.	Construction of the case study: the relational ethnography approach	208
5.2.2.	LaFab neighbourhood: geographical anchorage of the case study	210
5.2.3.	Neighbourhood associations: Phenomenological anchoring for the case study	212
5.3.	Methodology	214
5.3.1.	Types of data collected	214
5.3.2.	Analysis of data	215
5.4.	Analysis	216
5.4.1.	Organization (cluster I. TransGang)	217
5.4.2.	Identifications (cluster II. TransGang)	221
5.4.3.	Internships (cluster III. TransGang)	240
5.4.4.	Relations (cluster IV. TransGang)	250
5.4.5.	Imaginaries (V. cluster TransGang)	264
5.4.6.	Cross-cutting issues (VI. cluster TransGang)	269
5.5.	Conclusion	282
5.6.	References	285

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Population on January 1. By nationality, sex and five-year age. Barcelona 2021.....	43
Figure 2. Population on January 1. By nationality, sex and five-year age. L’Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2021.....	43
Figure 3. Interview table of Madrid.....	123
Figure 4. The TRANSGANG Continuum	125
Figure 5. Comparison of registered foreign population and residence authorizations. January 2008- January 2021	129
Figure 6. Schooling of migrants by educational level	130
Table 1. Definition of case study	208
Figure 7. Interdependent logics in the construction of the Marseille case study.	210
Figure 8. Location of the LaFab neighbourhood, third district of Marseille.	211
Figure 9. Poster for the October 2020 program from the Maison Pour Tous (MPT-SM)	213
Figure 10. Advertising for the courses offered by the LaFab Football Club.....	214
Figure 11. Comparison of the number of references coded using NVivo, Marseille case, mode A.....	216
Figure 12. Comparison of the number of references coded using NVivo, Marseille case, mode B	216
Figure 13. Community initiative “Ma cité va briller” (My neighbourhood will shine)	224
Figure 14. Panorama of the LaFab neighbourhood	228
Figure 15. Territorial awareness art in a public space in a popular neighbourhood, Marseille	229
Figure 16. Territorial awareness art in popular neighbourhood, Marseille	230
Figure 17. Absence of young people in the LaFab urban renewal consultation tables	231
Figure 18. Mainly social housing buildings in LaFab	235
Figure 19. Audiovisual series distributed on YouTube produced by young people from the third district of Marseille	238
Figure 20. Youth and adults in public space, city centre, Marseille	239
Figure 21. Euroméditerranée urban renewal project in the centre of Marseille	240
Figure 22. YouTube advertising of cultural youth groups on the street.....	246

Figure 23. Young people recording video clips in the streets of downtown Marseille 246

Figure 24. Cultural project of initiative of an NGO in collaboration with the youth of LaFab 253

Figure 25. Clothing advertising for the 143 Street Game community association project 254

Figure 26. LaFab neighbourhood urban renewal model 258

Figure 27. Homeless immigrant man in the city centre 273

Figure 28. Young Gambian immigrant in the city centre of Marseille 275

Abstract

Abstract: This report includes the ethnographic accounts from the South European region of the TRANSGANG project. Following the initial project design, the somewhat broader core case of Barcelona has been enriched through the contrast cases of Madrid, Milan and Marseille. The project follows the distinction between “major transnationalism” (or transnationalism *from above*) and minor transnationalism (or transnationalism *from below*). Centring on youth street groups, migration practices, “gang culture transfer” and similar elaborations of resistance and resilience practices to structural and institutional violence are clear examples of those transnational connections *from below*. The international exchange of imaginaries, problem definitions or framing, policies targeting youth street groups, or the institutional answers given to the identified problems are illustrations of transnationalism *from above*. The project in Southern Europe reflects on the changing shape of the concept of gang traditionally charged with stereotypical meanings, opting for the more inclusive and less poisoned term of “youth street group”. Certainly, our comparative accounts show how changing institutional, socioeconomic and political settings have reshaped young people’s daily socialisation practices, identification norms and, as a consequence, the very ways group memberships are elaborated, borders are redefined, and inter-group and intra-group relationships are forged to create subjectivities. In the light of this complexity “youth street group” results a more inclusive concept to be used.

Keywords: Transnational Gangs, Youth Street Groups, Mediation, Southern Europe, Barcelona, Madrid, Milano, Marseille.

1. Introduction.

Ábel Bereményi

1.1. Introduction

This brief introduction aims to offer an initial view of the following ethnographic accounts from the South European region of the TransGang project. Following the initial project design, the somewhat broader core case of Barcelona has been enriched through the contrast cases of Madrid, Milan and Marseille.

Transgang project in Southern Europe focuses on the **border spaces** in a broad sense. In terms of the intense historically shaped “**transnational connections**” (Hannerz, 1997), Southern Europe is linked to both the Americas and North Africa through different levels and intensities of flows. Among these we can mention the diverse modes of mobility of persons, media, technological devices, capital, ideologies and cultures (Appadurai, 1996). Transgang project follows the distinction between “major transnationalism” (or transnationalism *from above*) and minor transnationalism (or transnationalism *from below*) (Lionnet & Shih, 2005). Centring on youth street groups, migration practices, “gang culture transfer” and similar elaborations of resistance and resilience practices to structural and institutional violence are clear examples of those transnational connections *from below*. The international exchange of imaginaries, problem definitions or framing, policies targeting youth street groups, or the institutional answers given to the identified problems are illustrations of transnationalism *from above*.

Transgang project in Southern Europe reflects on the changing shape of the concept of gang traditionally charged with stereotypical meanings, opting for the more inclusive and less poisoned **term of “youth street group”**. Certainly, our comparative accounts show how changing institutional, socioeconomic and political settings have reshaped young people’s daily socialisation practices, identification norms and, as a consequence, the very ways group memberships are elaborated, borders are redefined, and inter-group and intra-group relationships are forged to create subjectivities. In the light of this complexity “youth street group” results a more inclusive concept to be used.

First, we will frame ethnographic reports conducted in Southern Europe’s 4 sites. Secondly, we will go through the main clusters of analytical concepts: relations, identifications, subjectivities and practices. Third, we will propose four analytical metaphors for future meta-ethnographical analysis.

1.2. Framing the ethnographical reports: Neoliberalism & gentrification

A central concept to understand TransGang ethnographical reports of Southern Europe sites, on recent changes in the constellation of youth street groups is neoliberalism, and

the neoliberal governance of the city. It mainly involves the promotion of the capitalist market logic, as the only possible paradigm for economic, political, social and cultural organization of the urban life. It implies “deregulation, privatization and the abandonment by the State of many areas of social provision” (Harvey, 2005, p. 9), particularly those related to youth and children. In this context, instability, unpredictable future, fractured youth transitions, growing flexibility to respond precariousness have been installed as keywords with respect to young people. On the other hand, state responsibilities have growingly been transferred to local communities, and most of all, to individuals. Young people are expected to adapt flexibly to the challenges of these times of permanent crisis (Strecker et al., 2018). If not, they are blamed, and placed in categories of dangerous populations.

As opposed to early gang studies (Thrasher, 2013), or even to cities of the ‘80s, contemporary city in Southern Europe lacks urban voids without surveillance and regulation (Harvey, 2012). Growing city occupies and revalues earlier abandoned areas. McKenzie, Park and Burgess and (1967) in their seminal work discussed about these “transition areas” defined by continuous dynamics of invasion-succession, and they argued that these processes, characterized by deprivation and abandonment impact both collective and individual identities, disintegrating collective spaces and social relations. On the other hand, from a more positive perspective, as Bayat (2012) claims, these peripheral territories play a crucial role in elaborating youth’s awareness of their social and spatial position. Feixa and Sánchez-García (2021), based on fieldworks in Southern European cities, further detail that “neighbourhoods, public parks, commercial centres, informal markets, corners and cafes provide key locations for the formation of youth street groups as elements of identity, care and resilience” (2021, p. 259). These peripheries have become objects of development plans, mainly driven by capital gain potential, but also by the goals of satisfying the housing need of the citizens within the city borders. Gentrification is a key concept to understand how peripheries are perceived as a stigma by its inhabitants and, alternatively, understood as a potential by investors and politicians. South European TransGang case studies sensitively describe how these dual perspectives trigger intrinsic conflict among main stakeholders. Milan’s “two-speed city” metaphor resulting from its huge regeneration plan illustrates well this underlying dichotomy. Transition areas, where high level of flexibility and mobility make weak identification emerge (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000), generate cultural border spaces between the global and the local, through the adaptative processes, but also through resistance to oppression. Hybrid or border space construction in youth and street sociability is a heterogeneous process where ethnic/racial/citizenship framing gradually fades, opening way to a landscape of much more open and fluid cultural identifications and subjectivities (Feixa et al., 2019).

Research describes how changes triggered by neoliberal doctrines produced a variety of reactions ranging from uprisings to forms of resistance, whether the focus is shed on more spectacular ways or alternatively on daily ‘discrete’ actions (Gledhill, 1994; Touhtou, 2021). But it is the spaces of ‘poverty production’ as a vital form where TRANSGANG project aims to understand the role of youth street groups and the variety of agents that

comprise them presently. In this reality, violence plays a central role, and especially the way its different forms and levels interact. The project discusses three types of violence: violence from above (in the form of oppression); violence from below (in the form of resistance) and horizontal violence (in the form of stigmatisation and conflicts among and with youth groups) (Feixa et al., 2019, p. 16).

1.2.1. Policies with respect to gangs, and youth groups vs. inclusion policies

The broader context of rolling back protective welfare policies and redistributing state functions to the market, and a shift towards corrective workfare and expansive penal policy responding to social conflicts (Wacquant, 2012), often characterised as the main signs of neoliberal turn, deeply influences how Southern European states and cities cope with the phenomenon of youth street groups. TransGang ethnographies of Southern Europe make these phenomena visible at a micro- and meso-level. On the one hand, the growing relevance of NGOs (Sinha, 2005) as the main interface with wider support structures in a range of fields, such as education/training, labour market, leisure, health or housing, to mention but a few. On the other hand, expansive penal policies are accompanied by loud media representations that label groups that are supposed to threaten social order “criminals” or “delinquents”. These depictions help expand the idea of social panic and make acceptable for the citizens the public investment in incrementing security measures. Ethnographic reports do not only show different policies or models of “managing” youth street groups, but they also illustrate the micro effects of a process of policy change. While both in Spain and Italy the phenomenon of immigrant youth groups gained attention of public authorities at the beginning of the 2000s, in France it has been a decades’ long experience of marginalisation and criminalisation by the state.

Barcelona’s case, the so called “Modelo Barcelona” beginning in 2004, is particular inasmuch as it experienced a process of collaboration among the city council, the local police’s specialised youth unit, and a public research institution, with the objective of developing new strategies from a restorative, mediation perspective of conflict resolution. The aim was to pacify and integrate groups and group members and act upon the causes of violence, through preventive measures. While the process achieved its objectives, produced good practices and positive outcomes, later varying political support negatively conditioned the continuity of this process.

As a contrast, in Madrid, policies of “mano dura” and “super mano dura” have been altering in order to oppress street youth groups and dissolve them, offering less attention to the underlying socio-economic needs that brought them to existence. Despite a recent favourable period (2015-19) of a socially more sensible city council, major changes were not achieved in the repressive and punitive judicial procedures and police practices.

Milan is another case with recent gradual disinvestment in youth policies, repressive treatment of youth street groups, and in general intolerant, punitive urban policies particularly with minorities and the poor. On the other hand, conflicts with youth groups have repeatedly used for political campaigns for gaining votes.

The Marseille case study reflects on the delicate balance that ensures a relative public order within France's poorest neighbourhood. A policy of patronage of public administrations offers sufficient funding for the already existing NGOs in order for them to carry out their socio-educational, training, leisure, health-related or labour market integration programmes (among others) engaging a part of local youth. Public youth policies are channelled mainly through these organisations. They hold responsible for the local youth wellbeing, while apparently their interventions are also capable of depoliticising local youth, and preventing the organisation of politically motivated youth movements. On the other hand, adjacent police station seems to ensure that drug dealing is kept limited to the neighbourhood without conflicts, leaving a source of income for many young people, otherwise excluded from the labour market. At the same time, drug dealing is strictly persecuted in more centric districts of the city. So, Marseille case shows that broader policies targeting youth groups, can be overwritten by strategies of sustaining local balance of power in a patronising network of relations

1.2.2. Diversity of youth street groups' urban location

In the Southern European context, the urban location of the youth street groups between regulated areas and marginal zones reflects their position in the social and political spaces. The observed youth street groups appear in a variety of urban zones as well as in-between territories throughout the evolution of each of them. Furthermore, their geographical location has varying weight in their self-definition or in the group's identity-formation itself. Also, the shape of the groups, their inner structure with corresponding rituals, processes and roles, their links with stakeholders and the quality of their borders (more solid or porous, rigid or flexible, etc) highly vary among South European TransGang sites, and among particular groups of the same site, as well.

TransGang project set off drawing on earlier research experience of Latin American youth groups in European cities. Its principal reference were the strictly structured, homogeneous "gangs" engaged in regular rivalry one with the other, and in conflict with public administration. Some of them subsequently chose to transform into a formal association. Nevertheless, in South European TransGang sites, those earlier Latin American youth groups have largely retired both from the visible urban spaces, and from media focus, into more hidden public or private areas. Those earlier groups were constituted by young people most of whom migrated to Europe due to family unification projects in a burgeoning economic situation (Feixa, 2008; Feixa et al., 2006). In Madrid and Barcelona, "traditional" Latin American youth groups (mainly, Latin Kings and Ñetas of Equatorian origin) that earlier organised themselves in local "chapters" (divisions), currently became reduced in size and hence opted for broadening their "catchment area". Currently, they get together from a wider range of territories. On the contrary, fieldwork in Madrid found that the presently most active Latin youth street groups (DDPs and Trinitarios) can maintain a neighbourhood-based membership, for whom street-level local identity is central in their daily experience of self-definition as a group. In fact, ethnographic data highlights that the main drive for young people to join these groups is their power dominance in their neighbourhood of residence. Something

similar is observed in the second-generation Muslim youth community in a Marseille neighbourhood as well as in Milan. For other observed youth street groups, on the other extreme, such as the unaccompanied migrant children (MENAS, abbreviated in Spanish) urban location is an occasionally bond to the availability of social capital and resources for daily subsistence. These examples illustrate the great variability of the present scene of youth street groups in the observed territories.

1.3. Clusters: Changing shapes and relations of youth street groups

Getting beyond the physical space, it is a central interest of TransGang project to understand how “youth street group space” is developed in each context, bearing in mind the “historical-structural heterogeneity” (Quijano, 1989) of each particular setting in which agents and their social positions are located (Feixa et al., 2019, p. 60). Fieldwork in South Europe shows a great heterogeneity of youth street groups in all terms: in their forms, internal and external relationships, the elements of their identification, and their everyday or regular practices.

1.3.1. Identities

TransGang ethnographies focus on persons’ identities that emerge from social and personal narratives, as chosen, bestowed, simultaneous, and strategic and hence conscious identifications with acknowledged social categories (Feixa et al., 2019, p. 81).

Ethnographies suggest that group belonging has a range of different drives, but it is closely related to coping strategies. In this interpretation, groupness offers material and immaterial resources for subsistence and resilience, the feeling of belonging being just one important factor of them. Similarly important drive is the possibility to access and accumulate prestige, power and safety to manifest one’s anger, frustration and criticism to unjust social order through resistance and violence. As for the young people’s motivations to join the more hierarchically structured youth groups, ethnographies point to variables such as the strictly organised hierarchy, discipline, codes, rituals, and an overtly strong masculine identity. These elements are present in most street groups that have evolved without any institutional or adult support: ethnically described (though not ethnically homogeneous) groups, or those engaged in the sale of illicit products (such as drug). Rules of joining and leaving the group, although marked by rituals, in most local groups have become more flexible than described in earlier reports on Latin American gangs.

Ethnographic reports, in search of ‘street gangs’, have identified the following main identification interwoven forms through which young people visible on the street create groups: 1) Street groups defined by their ethnic/religious/geographic origin or adscription; 2) Locally self-organised groups in the search of daily subsistence and security; 3) Heterogeneous “thematic” groups of local youth initiated and promoted/supported by NGOs. Artistic self-expressions or manifestation of resistance are

all cross-cutting aspects of these groups in their struggle for meaning making and negotiation of access to resources.

Latino youth street groups' presence in public spaces has significantly decreased in Barcelona, Madrid and Milan. The "new" Latin youth groups, those of Central American and Caribbean origin (mainly of Dominican Republic) share important aspects with earlier groups in terms of stylistic-symbolic repertoire and references of both Latin American youth groups and global "gang" cultures. Broader visibility of these Latin groups in Italy, Spain and France has significantly dropped.

Similarly, a generation shift can be observed, though in other terms, among the Muslim groups of Marseille, where youth – in older generations' view – have lost traditional respect for community values and hierarchies. Muslim religious belief and related community practices turned out to be central in the group members' identification. Presently, young Muslim people rely less on earlier patterns of respect-based mediation by more matured community members (GRAFS) and they are claimed to opt for more violent conflict solution. On the other hand, new Latin American youth groups as well as other youth street groups show ethnically more inclusive identity building strategies, with a broader set of sociocultural references. Shared experience of growing up with the stigma of immigrant origin in peripheral neighbourhoods with limited resources and restricted future aspirations play a major role in keeping groups together than the parents' place of origin or the families' ethnic/religious culture. Neighbourhood/district, street corner or a square is a central element of identity for the groups both on a physical (shared space) and a symbolic (shared conditions of marginality, and shared conception of the city) level. These physical units frame and give meaning to their relations, identifications, practices and subjectivities, both as a group and as individuals.

Another example for the growingly flexible identity references can be observed in Latino DDP and Trinitarios youth groups, in Madrid. These groups, despite the symbology strongly linked to Dominican Republic (colours of the national flag, etc.), are composed of members of a variety of origins such as young people coming from Spanish, Moroccan and Eastern European immigrant families. Similarly, ethnographies in Barcelona, Milan and Marseille highlight how groups organised around artistic expressions (mainly urban music, but also graffiti, theatre, etc.) or sports are ethnically inclusive, and their main aspects of identity formation are shifted to shared experience of social exclusion and an effort of alternative meaning creation.

While border-work – i.e., the effort to define and maintain difference between 'we' and 'them' - is a crucial part of a group's identity building, TransGang ethnographies have shown that emerging youth street group forms are characterised by more 'porous borders' or 'blurred limits', related to the earlier mentioned more inclusive memberships. One reason for that is that some of these groups are tagged and defined as a group by stakeholders, rather than by the group members themselves. Street-level social participation does not necessarily imply unique identification. Unaccompanied migrant children's group (UMC) in Barcelona offers a good example for that. They constantly negotiate (hiding or overemphasizing) their condition of UMC and the corresponding

practices, adapting them to the given context, while they navigate among available economic, social and cultural resources. Also, young people engaged with an auxiliary role (as ‘charboneur’) in drug selling in Marseille express their merely instrumental involvement in the street group (organised around drug dealing) to make for a living (i.e., as a subsistence). They claim that this job and the corresponding lifestyle, ideology, symbolism, and daily activity do not contribute at a deeper level to their identity.

A further point in which ethnographic reports coincide is to show different forms of resistance in young people’s daily activities, as an integrated element of their identity formation. On the one hand resistance responds to the daily manifestations of structural violence. Reports detail experiences of vertical and horizontal violence. Vertical violence refers to structural and institutional injustice, such as spatial and social marginalisation, discrimination, cultural subordination and racism. But also, poverty and the lack of hope and future expectations also reflect vertical violence. At the same time horizontal operation of violence manifests itself in different forms of competition for scarce material and symbolic resources in the same social space: rivalry, conflicts among youth groups, or within groups, gender violence or strong hierarchy among generations. In terms of identity, it is highly relevant the way young people express, narrate, describe their experiences with respect to all forms of violence. As we can see in Marseille or Barcelona reports, local NGOs and other stakeholder in close contact with the young people, play an important role in supporting the shift from resistance to resilience strategies and hence to assist positive group identity formation, as a form of community mediation.

Finally, it is crucial to mention media representation of young street groups, and the partaking young people, which create and recreate their social identities on the margin of the mainstream society, often described in terms of criminal, illegitimate and marginalised sociocultural practices. TransGang reports offer a description of how different media sets shed the spotlight on ‘youth gangs’ or avoid doing so, according to their own agenda, rather than being driven by the principles of ethical, accountable and well-balanced informing. In this sense, media is responsible for the stigmatisation and criminalisation of certain social groups, and hence it forms part of the above-mentioned structural violence exercised, while it could as well be a means for society to a deeper understanding of the reasons of the emergence of these groups, and their activities.

After a long period of intensive presence in media, by the end of 2010s political and media attention on youth groups of Latin origin (“Latin gangs”) gradually decreased and been shifted to other youth groups, particularly those of recent immigrant background. However, any emerging event can reopen media reaction in the tune of earlier news campaigns. A good example for that is a one-off violent, mortal event among two Latin youth group members in early 2022, in Madrid, which triggered earlier ways of repressive, ‘super mano-dura’ conflict resolution by police, and criminalising discourses by the national media sets. Similarly, Milan experienced waves of ‘moral panic’ linked to specific events and groups in April 2021. In the public representations the categories of ‘youngsters’, ‘migrant’ and ‘poor’ tended to intersect and overlap. In Italy, media recycled earlier stereotypical and stigmatising portrayal of these groups, treating them as criminal gangs uniquely echoing the perspective of the repressive police while using

rap/trap lyrics to voice street groups (in which symbolic and concrete meanings and representations are intersected).

1.3.2. Subjectivities

In the dimension of subjectivities, we aim to underline the following comparative aspects of the reports: individual maturing process, underage youth and gender.

Individual maturing process

While highlighting the structural, institutional and social embeddedness of youth street groups, ethnographies also explore group members' individual experiences, beyond identity construction. An important issue to further analyse is the individual maturation process, that is, the way group members give meaning to their trajectories with respect to the street group in the light of significant life-events, such as violent conflicts, important losses, family formation, labour market inclusion or imprisonment, among others. Having looked on violent acts 'as a game' (Milan), the 'trivialization of drug-dealing and violence' (Marseille) and not having recognised their possible negative consequences on one's own future and on that of others are recurring elements in more matured group members' discourses in the ethnographic accounts. Time spent in prison (although represented as a source of pride in the lyrics of rap/trap songs, and as a piece of evidence of injustice and violence suffered) is a very rude interruption in one's life, which may lead to the reinterpretation of available opportunity structures beyond group memberships. Also, successful labour market incorporation is shown in Barcelona and Milan reports to be a life event that gradually reduces engagement with youth street groups or leads to departure. Advancement in one's life-course (often termed as youth transitions) is not a guarantee for leaving resisting or illicit activities in the frame of delinquent street groups: some may choose this future. Nevertheless, fieldwork data emphasize the great potentiality of older group members, role models, who have managed to "make it" in the sense of social recognition (through work, further studies or social participation), beyond the "street group space" or beyond one's neighbourhood of reference. These latter group members have major relevance as potential mediation agents, too.

Of course, neither the maturing process nor its effects on the community is irrespective of the institutional and social context that can make it possible for young people to transform their strategies of resistance into critical and creative construction of future aspirations. In Milan, for instance, different ex-members of Latin gangs intended to become mediators to serve for young people to help them develop their aspirations beyond local street groups, but neither public administrations, nor NGOs were receptive to their proposal. On the contrary, in Marseille and Barcelona, NGOs found it necessary and useful to contract young people from the neighbourhood of intervention to construct positive role models, and foster engagement in training and work. Possibilities of NGOs are certainly restricted by public financing and policies, rather than by their own will.

Underage street group members

A further aspect that emerges from the TransGang ethnographies is the recruitment of underage youth by the youth street groups, or the ascription of the underage to the locally available groups. For example, the most powerful Latin groups in Madrid presently attract underage which has been their main source of growth. On the contrary, the present association of Latin Kings and Queens in Madrid claims not to let underage children in, on an ethical basis. Also, LKQ informants claim that teenagers tend to get involved in more conflicts than their more matured and responsible peers. On the other hand it is true, that underage teenagers are in an important and formative age in which community experiences are crucial in one's individual growth and learning process. Youth street groups, in this sense, are an ideal form of socialisation due to its shared community values and rules, solidarity among members and a more or less strict hierarchy. Beyond bonding social capital, a group when it is rich in relationships with different community or institutional agents, it can also serve to develop one's bridging social capital.

Gender dimension

Southern European TransGang ethnographic accounts aimed to cast light on girls and young women with respect to street youth groups. Women are broadly absent from the social representations of "gangs", and other street groups, and most studies also recognise the secondary, subordinated or supportive role women can achieve. Here, site reports have also observed a male dominance, women's overall absence from public space, and an overall patriarchal culture among the male youth street group members.

In Madrid, Latin Kings and Queens association permitted female membership. Although their number has also been very low, the fieldwork offers testimonies of some female leaders from this group, and their struggle for being recognised by their male fellows. In Barcelona, women's role is underlined with respect to practices of mutual support particularly related to reproductive activities such as childcare, dwelling, food or cloths, especially during the earlier financial crisis and the recent pandemic Covid-19. In Madrid and Barcelona, their role of conflict resolution or mediation is also emphasized. Nevertheless, their visibility remains very limited to outsiders of the groups.

Milan report points to an ambiguous standpoint of young males with respect to females in Latin American youth street groups. Women, on the one hand, are perceived as sexual objects and at the same time domestic consolers, supporting males. This role is contrasted with a more active and empowered archetypical role of the caregiver and protecting "mother", particularly the breadwinner mother left-alone by their husbands. Trap/rap lyrics often rely on this hard-working and caring person as a victim of capitalism's injustice and racial subordination, but still the most important referent for their children. Milan report also highlights differentiated social representation of female members or connected outsiders. An example for that are the analysed rap-videos, in which women are represented in residual, subordinated roles, often as bio-decoration rather than individuals with their own agency.

Marseille ethnography finds some processes of participation by young Muslim women, despite the obstacles related to their religious communities and their parents' perceived

risk regarding the neighbourhood. Some women regularly participate in a local football club and boxing club, or occasionally, in school activities such as in an international students' exchange programme. Nevertheless, young females tend to move in small groups on the street, and spend overall less time in public spaces than their male peers. Female culture in Southern European TransGang sites is more related to indoor activities, than to outdoor spaces. Although Madrid report highlights that social media use has radically increased among the youth, and particularly during the lock-down, it does not discuss different uses among young men and women, as European research posited through the concept of "bedroom culture" (McRobbie, A., & Garber, J. 1976).

In this aspect, a singular case is presented in Barcelona, where the ex-Mena support group was constituted by three racialised young females, who themselves had earlier experienced the challenges of non-accompanied underage migrants in Spain. Once grown-up, they decided to act as a support network for young male and female MENAs, in the very centre of Barcelona. Although less female children decide to migrate alone, their challenges experiencing a symbolic, psychologic and physical violence and hardship differ from their male peers'. Often, they suffer abuse, exploitation or forced marriage already in their place of origin. Making invisible their multiple exposition to these risks can also be considered as a manifestation of structural and institutional violence.

1.3.3. Practices

Ethnographical reports offer an insight into group street groups' daily practices, internal dynamics, economies, rituals and cultural expressions. In the following we highlight just some of the most relevant aspects shared among the TransGang site reports.

Solidarity and mutual help are not abstract terms in the life of many of these groups, but they are operationalised every day around subsistence, safety and a feeling of belonging. Barcelona report centres on the need of (ex-) minors who migrated alone to assure a shelter and to satisfy basic needs, to defend themselves against vertical or horizontal forms of violence, and to satisfy their basic need of belonging to a group. Part of these activities of subsistence is the drug sale and drug abuse. Significantly, drug abuse or alcoholism is not linked so much to leisure as it would be the case of other groups, but to the crisis management or dealing with depression or other mental problems. Barcelona report offers a very detailed description of how police raids, runaways from police control or minor delinquent acts are part of the everyday practice of these groups. The Madrid report mentions the growing importance of social media activities such as Instagram or Facebook. Younger generations of Latin youth street groups spend more time with social media, than "on the street" and their forms of communication of violent or offensive contents may trigger subsequent physical conflicts among groups.

In a similarly detailed description Marseille report highlight conditions of unsafe 'navigation' among territories controlled by adverse groups, and the importance of having one's group around in the case of violence, on a daily basis. But solidarity acts had a crucial role during the lock down for Covid-19 pandemic, or sorority in the case of childcare and other reproductive activities as shown in the Madrid report.

A crucial element in the life of these young people is formal or non-formal education and training activities. Many underage group-members attend school until 16, or take part of second chance, or catch-up courses. The Madrid report makes visible the ethnically segregated institutional environment in which young people from the poorest neighbourhoods tend to continue studying. This is particularly true for post-compulsory studies, where these young people are discouraged to continue in academic tracks. Pervasive guidance and selection processes push young people from minority background and marginalised neighbourhoods towards vocational and technical training with less access to good jobs, than more prestigious tracks. Although these training modules do not tend to ensure a proper preparation for the access to labour market, and dropout rate here are much higher than in regular academic tracks, they sometimes are linked to scholarship or social benefits, or it may serve as a justification to reduce charges in the penal system as explained in the Madrid report. Barcelona report mentions a labour market inclusion project conducted by an NGO, which, similarly to many other good practices, unfortunately work on a merit basis, selecting the “most deserving” young people, while leaving alone the rest of them, due to budgetary reasons. Reports, however, mention the benefits of these and other courses in terms of broadening social network and incorporating future aspirations guided by professional trainers. These post-compulsory training environments play an important role of mediation, and staff often serve as the only positive reference from outside the neighbourhood, from non-precarious segments of the labour market.

Finally, various forms of leisure activities are not only important in terms of psychological and physical wellbeing of the young people, but these patterns of socialisation may mean the chief motivation to access these groups and deepen one’s belonging to society. As Marseille report claims, collective youth practices are found on a continuum between self-managed projects with varying community impact, and projects fostered or supported by local institutions and professional mediating agents. Everyday leisure activities, celebrations or gatherings are organised spontaneously in public spaces (parks, street corners) but also in discotheques or pubs. While these gatherings may create conflicts with rival groups, these occur less often than recreative activities. It is true, though, that in several contexts, these gatherings may suppose a peril to insecurity and potential violence for police and security agents. Ethnographic reports show sports, music, theatre and similar artistic expressions both in non-formal self-organised spaces, as well as in institutional environment. From a policy perspective, all these activities create crucial conditions (trusting relationships, feeling of belonging, safe and inclusive environment, etc.) for present and future mediation.

1.3.4. Relations

Within the cluster ‘Relations’ reports uncover the complex network of relationships that constitute the contexts of youth street groups. Most importantly the cluster highlight those relationships that the street groups and their members establish with the society: within the group, with other groups, local stakeholders, and institutional relationships. The reports highlight the changing shape of groups (that is their inner dynamics), and their

place in the society, both highly depending on structural factors, such as public policies (youth p., social p., educational p, or public housing to mention some), media representations and economic interests. In this sense, forms and intensity of structural violence as well as the strategies and forms of resistance by groups are key factors to understand youth street groups' relationships.

Violence

As ethnographic reports highlight – and as the lyrics of urban music sensibly represent – violence is a building block of youth street groups' life, and an element of identity construction through the connection to the transnational *gangsta* imaginary: that links local and global experiences of subordination, with their symbolic manifestations. Nevertheless, ethnographies distinguish between vertical and horizontal operation of violence. Structural violence shapes young people's everyday lives in their geographic-urban position, institutional embeddedness, and socio-economic opportunities, and eventually manifests itself in its consequences: poverty, precarity, stigmatisation but also negative social representation and punitive or paternalistic conflict-management by state powers. This **vertical violence** is experienced in their marginalised position in all walks of life, which is claimed by ethnographic reports to condition the emergence of different forms of **horizontal and interpersonal violence**: confrontations between youth street groups, strict, hierarchical and patriarchal internal organisations, hostile control of territories, among others. The violence of poverty governance and constitutes the bases of what TransGang project calls the “youth street group space”. It means that violence is the underlying experience of any relationship that is established between the youth street groups and their members, and organisations, institutions and authorities.

Youth street groups in TransGang reports host young people in vulnerable conditions, some of them with a recent experience of migration. Beyond their school trajectory, in which they tend to accumulate discouraging messages with respect to their future, often their main contact with the State, and even with mainstream society is manifested through the Police officers, while much less with the agents of “right hand of the State” (i.e. those related to the public welfare policies). Regular control, police raids, arrests and imprisonment are daily experiences of youth in the reports. We can also learn from mediation processes (see Barcelona and Milan reports) as an alternative of “mano dura” policies, with a potential reconfiguration of youth street groups social network, reinforcing bringing social capital and a broader structure of opportunities.

Resistance and resilience

TransGang ethnographies sensibly describe main mediating agents' scopes, possibilities and willingness to transform youth groups' **resistance** into creative and constructing building block of resilience, bearing in mind an ecological notion of this phenomenon (Ungar, 2012) rather than the more extended understanding of resilience as an individual asset. In Ungar's definition resilience refers to “the ecologically complex (multi-dimensional) processes that people engage in that makes positive growth possible (e.g., engaging in school, resisting prejudice, creating networks of support, attending religious institutions), all of which are dependent upon the **capacity of social and physical ecologies to provide opportunities** for positive adaptation (preferably in ways that express prosocial collective norms)” (2012, p. 19) to an uncertain future. A particularly

important aspects we observe in ethnographies is the that these young people in vulnerable socio-economic conditions are exposed to high levels of structural instabilities. Artistic self-expressions such as urban music is shown in all TransGang reports to have a strong potential for an affective, cognitive, relational and behavioural process skills to respond to situation of risk or adversity, that is to initiate processes of resilience (Feixa & Sánchez-García, 2021). However, what is most relevant here is the powerful impact of these popular art products locally and globally on young people's meaning making with respect to the city, the most affluent groups of the society and the current social order.

Relationship with local NGOs

Public institutions or organisations catering projects for young people are scarce in all the European TransGang sites. Mainly **non-governmental organisations** are the ones that reach them out. A few of them are self-organised and eventually formalised groups, such as the ex-MENAS support group in Barcelona. Others are of religious character, such as the Senegalese Muslim association in Marseille. In NGOs youth workers often with a shared social and/or ethnic-religious life experience are undoubtedly more genuine, and their participation as youth workers / mentors / mediators has a very high potential to engage youth in vulnerable conditions and guide them towards meaningful social participation through community projects, sports and arts activities, among others, and nurture future aspirations, offer alternative meanings beyond daily subsistence. A further common element mentioned in site reports is that public policies with regard to youth wellbeing, instead of supporting these potentials, make NGOs compete for scarce and mainly short-term funding. Competition - often detrimental to local cooperation among NGOs - installs market-driven project thinking, that pushes towards short term results, and discourages the engagement with longer processes with uncertain outcome. Short term focus often squeezes out the neediest, the most hard-to-reach or hard-to-engage. Nevertheless, all reports show some NGOs and NGO workers as significant mediator agents, relevant both for young people and public administration.

Within group relations

The above-mentioned configuration of policies, institutions and relevant stakeholders make it easier to see within-group dynamics of youth street groups from a more complex perspective. Probably the most important finding of TransGang reports is the gradual disappearance of hierarchically structured homogeneous youth street groups, and the shift towards more heterogeneous groups with a membership of multiple bonds and identifications. This transformation affects the structure, shared objectives and leaderships, as well as their activities and relationship with other groups. Nevertheless, reports mention both locally dominant groups that aim to extend their control over a certain territory (square, street corner, or a part of the neighbourhood, for example in Madrid), and groups whose main objective is defined by subsistence: housing, food and resistance to authorities. Shared objectives, and the motivation of creating or joining the group create very different conditions for internal bonds, dynamics and their durability. A singular grouping is observed in all the sites which is organised around an artistic activity, either stemming from members' initiative or fostered by NGOs and local stakeholders. They are singular inasmuch as they may get together from very different

backgrounds but sharing a common experience of marginalisation. They gather to create outputs and they publicly represent the voice of their generation. In this sense, through their activities they can easily broaden their social network to very wide range of stakeholders beyond their neighbourhood or city.

Gender relations

While most reports describe growingly heterogeneous character of youth street groups, gender dimension reflect a significant division. Female youngsters tend to remain invisible in most youth street groups, or play secondary and supportive roles. Their main spaces of socialisation tend to be homes, rooms, rather than open spaces. There are some exceptions, mainly those groups which are supported by NGOs or have undergone a mediation process. Latin Kings in Spain is a good example for that. Here, several female leaders could emerge even though they struggled for recognition harder than male leaders. Nevertheless, female leaders and members are active in solidarity activities which emphasize their mediating role within the groups. Young Muslim women pursuing sports traditionally considered as male-only activities (such as football and boxing), is another way that shape gender relations within that particular leisure clubs, and also in other spaces of the local communities.

Mediation: NGOisation, peer-mediation and other non-institutional forms

A central issue of relations in each ethnographic site is to explore forms, processes and main stakeholders of mediation, as well as the barriers that block these attempts. Reports offer a broad variety of inspiring experiences, or the lack thereof.

In **Madrid** data collection and mediation training seminar were blended with the help of three different organisations and experienced agents in the field of Latin American youth street groups. The aim was to train young members of different street groups to serve as formally contracted “link youth” (*jovenes de enlace*) within their own group and among groups. The project made the most of different models, such as “natural mediation”, or “peer mediation”, and it was designed to take advantage of already existing community resources, such as the positive leaders or role models. While the initial interventions turned out to be successful mediations, public administrations did not show commitment with it, and for the lack of funding the project finished.

In **Milan**, in the past between 2005 and 2008 a mediation initiative was being carried out by a Catholic NGOs, through which a formal association was set up by a group of Latin King youth. This association does not exist anymore, and no interest in youth street groups is shown by public administration. An ex-group member’s struggle is described who, after released from prison, offered his voluntary services to any NGO or public entity to sensitise young people against their involvement in delinquency. But no entity was interested in his potential. On the other hand, rap, as in other places, becomes a central mediating tool. Some members of a widely known rap crew were received by the mayor of Milan, thanks to the mediation of a priest. As a result of this mediated dialogue, a series of educational interventions were launched in that particular neighbourhood.

Marseille report defines mediation as a community action targeting the community wellbeing and individual trajectories, and it identifies institutional, informal/community and hybrid mediation practices. The report describes genuine community agents who are informally called mediators, who indeed intermediate in a horizontal fashion, in

conflictive situations, such as respected family members, or acknowledged natural leaders of a religious or ethnic community. In contrast, the officially called mediators are entitled to transmit community and citizens' concerns to the public administrations, but with very limited margin of effective power to change. The hybrid model refers to the role of some youth and recognised adults (GRAFS: grand frères et soeurs), who are genuine community members occasionally contracted by local institutions to facilitate outreach in particular actions. Nevertheless, community participation in the resolution of structural problems with public administration is not equally ensured for all segments of the local population. Particularly, local youth do not participate in these fora, where important decisions are made with respect to their lives. Poor economic resources make any official form of mediation inefficient, lacking underlying conditions (trust, respect), and they are condemned to short-term actions. An example for this latter argument is the "territorial booster", a professional mediator who besides motivating youth to engage in labour market integration programmes, it also supports young people to set up their own association and run for public funding. It may work efficiently, if bureaucracy were simpler and funding came quicker, which was not the case. The more visible ways of mediation are carried out through either non-formal or even illicit self-expression and community practices, where the intergenerational relations are reproduced which legitimate agents and community structures for conflict resolution; or through leisure activities (sports, arts) where no important decision concerning the neighbourhood are in stake. After all, a trainer or other mentor figures can only effect on individual trajectories, rather than broader structures that reproduce inequalities, and corresponding conflicts.

Barcelona report departs from the mediation process that became an overall reference, the so called "Barcelona model". Initial definition of the phenomenon and the proposal to manage it in a more collaborative and inclusive way, emerged from researchers' ethnographic participatory observation with young people from Latin American groups. Such a situated knowledge and "privileged" inside position permitted the connection of relevant stakeholders to launch a collaborative process of structural change that acts upon the causes of violence through preventive measures. A part of Latin Kings and Ñetas groups, those who were favourable of change, accompanied by an anthropologist and a lawyer founded a legally registered youth association, and they made their activities visible to the public, in order to fight their stigmatising social representation, and achieve public recognition. Beyond the official process, the report highlights more invisible internal mediation processes fostered by female members of these groups. Nevertheless, with the change of leading political party, the process ceased to enjoy city hall's financial and institutional support.

A very different model of mediation is applied to the youth street groups found in 2021 by ethnographers. These scarcely structured groups occasionally "come across" with available mediation projects launched by NGOs, neighbours' movements, or older peers who can act as tutor/mediators. Urban music and art, or sports and other leisure activities are identified, just like in Marseille and Milan, as particular modalities of mediation and resistance against the daily experience of structural violence (poverty, precarity, lack of resources). These measures prevent the transformation of structural violence into horizontal or interpersonal violence. Yet another alternative form of natural mediation

can be observed in the network of “mothers”, who on the one hand formally support “unaccompanied migrant children” (under the guidance of local government), but also informally maintain their caring attention serving for them as a safe place, a shelter, and also as role models. Similarly, ex-UMC’s association emerged from a community initiative and assisted young people mediating between their psychological and material needs and the available structural conditions.

1.4. Emerging analytical metaphors

This brief introduction had the main objective to present the **central issues** of the TransGang ethnographic reports of the four European research sites, the core case of Barcelona, and the three contrast cases of Madrid, Milan and Marseille. Beyond the above summarised aspects, each report contributes with important emerging ideas to understand the others. Below, we briefly summarise the main aspects of meta-analysis, which help in an interpretative comparison of the site reports. It will be further developed in the upcoming TransGang publication. The **key metaphors** are identified in the salient issues of each ethnographic account and contribute to a cross-site analysis (Noblit & Hare, 1999). In order to draw a feasible cross-site analysis we defined 4 key metaphors, that we describe in the following.

1.4.1. Polis/Police/Policy

This metaphor refers to different levels and forms of structural and institutional **violence**. “Polis” stands for the “neoliberal city”, or the city governed by neoliberal logics following market principles and a spatial differentiation of citizenship categories. Here, unprivileged citizens placed in particular neighbourhoods perceived as a “stigma” for their inhabitants, but seen as a potential development for policy makers, investors and even social interventionists. Both stigma and gentrifying opportunity contribute to recreate social relationships of power. “Police” stands for the daily physical experience of state control, the monopoly of legit violence, its institutional configuration and the ways young people deal with it, partly reproducing vertical violence in horizontal relationships, partly navigating among resources to avoid confrontations and their negative consequences. Finally, “policy” is a higher-level metaphor including the latter two, constituting a broader narrative about the societal model, power-relations between the main stakeholders and their special representation within the territory. In fact, these categories represent the “right hand” of the state, irrespective of the agent who mediate it to the youth. In this sense NGOs, school, church institutions, neighbourhood volunteers may represent the principles to which this metaphor refers to.

1.4.2. GRAFS (grand frères et soeurs)

The concept emerges in the Marseille site, mostly among families of immigrant origin. These “older siblings” represent a **horizontal form of mediation** that is based on respect and mutual recognition, in a broader framework of shared experiences of social position, inasmuch as these elders used to live the same daily conditions than the now younger

ones. These are not strictly kin relations, but may include neighbours and friends of the community. They are both mediating agents, and socialising role models. Their authority is delicate and not absolute, which distinguishes them from parent/child relationship. As a metaphor, GRAFS stands for **trusting and caring** relations, a high level of listening and understanding, and furthermore collaborative and community based mediation. This metaphor refers to internal resources, the groups' own capability of resilience, based on community based "folk success", and "meaning making", that is the understanding of the "system" and one's chance to succeed in it. GRAFS metaphor grabs the imaginaries with respect to family, culture, language or religious identity, which may be represented in idealised terms (for example in the lyrics of urban music).

1.4.3. M.D.L.R. ("*mec de la rue*")

MDLR is an abbreviation for "street kid", the title of a trap song (of 25 million downloads) performed by a popular Spanish trapper of Moroccan origin who himself grew up in a poor working-class neighbourhood on the margins of Barcelona metropolitan area. Its lyrics can be considered an essence of **young people's struggles** amid marginal conditions: poverty, violence, loss of aspirations, mistrust and hopelessness, but at the same time in search of dignity. In fact, it turned out to be a sort of anthem of identification and resistance among the working-class youth. MDLR as a metaphor represents the **individual trajectory** with varying capacity of navigation among the available resources, and a limited ability of negotiation of meanings and access. While GRAFS represent the collective bargaining power but also dependence on the community, MDLR stands for the individual strategies both as a strength and as a risk. Where collective navigation strategies (*folk theories* of how to make it) are unavailable or their cost is too high (in terms of time, hierarchy, risk, etc.), young people may negotiate alternative, individual life-courses accumulating capitals that are highly valued by the mainstream society, relying on emerging resources, such as studies, training and/or work. MDLR represents a highly vulnerable position in society, as their trajectories must be invented and constructed for themselves as very few genuine role models with alternative aspirations are accessible in their context, and institutional support structures are weak. In this sense, the cost of a possible failure is very high.

1.4.4. REINA

This metaphor stems from the Madrid report which offers a description of the shift of Latin Kings youth street group into an association of "Latin Kings and Queens", adapting a more gender-inclusive language and a more system-conform operation. While the "reina" (meaning "queen" in Spanish) makes the **female members and roles** visible in the "youth street group space", metaphorically it also refers to the archetypical role of "**mother**". This latter role is often associated with care, protection, support and encouragement. At the same time, it may also refer to **protective structures and agents**, as well as the safeguarding role that street youth groups play for the individual. Beyond the mother role, the "reina" metaphor may symbolise older sisters' caring **dominance**,

too. Beyond that, maternal-filial relationship is not a horizontal and mutually equal one but implies **dependence, loyalty and subordination**. In this sense, protective structures that respond to this metaphor require emotional implication. Thus, individual decisions, resistance or emancipation process may correspondingly imply high emotional cost.

1.5. References

- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Bayat, A. (2012). Politics in the city-inside-out. *City & Society*, 24(2), 110–128.
- Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond “Identity.” *Theory and Society*, 29, 1–47.
- Feixa, C. (2008). Generación uno punto cinco. *Revista de Estudios de Juventud*, 80, 115–127.
- Feixa, C., Porzio, L., & Recio, C. (Eds.). (2006). *Jóvenes ‘latinos’ en Barcelona: Espacio público y cultura urbana*. Anthropos Editorial.
- Feixa, C., Sánchez García, J., Ballesté, E., Cano, A. B., Masanet, M.-J., Mecca, M., & Oliver, M. (2019). *The (Trans) Gang: Notes and Queries on Youth Street Group Research (WP02.1/2019; TRANSGANG Working Papers)*.
- Feixa, C., & Sánchez-García, J. (2021). Introduction: Global Gangs? Beyond Marginalization and Resilience. *Youth and Globalization*, 3(2), 255–264. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25895745-bja10018>
- Gledhill, J. (1994). *Power and Its Disguises: Anthropological Perspectives on Politics* (Pluto Press, Issue 15).
- Hannerz, U. (1997). *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*. Routledge.
- Harvey, D. (2005). *NeoLiberalism: A Brief History*. Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution*. Verso books.
- Lionnet, F., & Shih, S. (Eds.). (2005). *Minor transnationalism*. Duke University Press Durham, NC.
- McKenzie, R. D., Park, R. E., & Burgess, E. W. (1967). *The city* (Vol. 239). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Noblit, G. W., & Hare, R. D. (1999). Meta-Ethnography: Synthesizing Qualitative Studies. In *Particularities: Collected Essays on Ethnography and Education* (Vol. 44, pp. 93–123). Peter Lang. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00005053-199007000-00016>
- Quijano, A. (1989). *Modernidad. Identidad y Utopía en América Latina*. Ediciones el Conejo.
- Sinha, S. (2005). Neo-liberalism and Civil Society: Project and Possibilities. In A. Saad-Filho & D. Johnston (Eds.), *Neoliberalism: A Critical Reader* (pp. 163–169). Pluto Press.
- Strecker, T., Ballesté, E., & Feixa, C. (2018). El juvenicidio moral en España: antecedentes del concepto, causas y efectos. In M. A. Cabacés (Ed.), *Jóvenes, trabajo y futuro: perspectivas sobre la garantía juvenil en España y Europa* (pp. 430–460). Tirant lo Blanch.
- Thrasher, F. M. (2013). *The gang: A study of 1313 gangs in Chicago*. University of Chicago press.
- Touhtou, R. (2021). Street Youth Groups in Sidi Moussa/Morocco: The Everyday Resistance of Precariousness. *Youth and Globalization*, 3(2), 265–285. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25895745-bja10010>
- Ungar, M. (2012). Social Ecologies and Their Contribution to Resilience. In M. Ungar (Ed.), *The Social Ecology of Resilience. A Handbook of Theory and Practice* (pp. 13–32). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-0586-3_1
- Wacquant, L. (2012). Three steps to a historical anthropology of actually existing neoliberalism. *Social Anthropology*, 20(1), 66–79. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8676.2011.00189.x>

2. Young migrants, the street and subsistence in Barcelona after the gangs.¹

Eduard Ballesté

Translation into English by Laura Styles

2.1. Introduction

In Barcelona, the start of the project's field work coincided with the last collective trial (at least, up to the date of writing) against a faction of the Latin Kings in Barcelona. After a police investigation that ended in June 2015 with raids on 13 homes and the arrest of 28 alleged members of the group, both in Barcelona city and in other cities in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, 23 of the people arrested ended up going to trial in December 2018. In between, several of the detainees had spent a few months in pretrial detention. Others, those who were directly arrested for narcotic substances, spent 3 years in prison until the trial was held. The accusations, prepared through police work in collaboration with the prosecutor's office, and endorsed by the investigating judge, ranged from belonging to and/or leading a criminal organization, obstruction of justice, threats and ill-treatment, attempted homicide and crimes against public health for possession and distribution of drugs. The charges requested ranged from 10 to 25 years in prison for the defendants, with the alleged leader of the group accumulating the highest request.

The trial, which lasted about two weeks, did not appear in any media sources with any impact and coverage, unlike the 2015 raids, which made headlines in the vast majority of state media. A year later, in December 2019, the sentence that deemed the majority of the defendants not guilty was made public and those few who had spent 3 years in prison were released, since it was considered that they had already served their sentence for possession and distribution of drugs. Nearly all the police and prosecutor accusations were based on the idea of criminal organization and coordinated and hierarchical action for the commission of local, national and international crimes and when their arguments fell apart, the rest of the charges were dropped. As in the trial, this acquittal did not have any notable impact in the media, although the defence lawyers tried to do so as part of their strategy.

Between February and March 2019 in Canet de Mar (in Maresme, about 50 kilometres northeast of Barcelona) a protest campaign took place against the presence of a centre for unaccompanied foreign minors. The centre, which opened at the end of 2018, welcomed

¹ This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 742705. IP: Dr. Carles Feixa. Website: www.upf.edu/web/transgang. Contact: transgang@upf.edu.

more than fifty unaccompanied migrant minors. Neighbourhood groups opposed to the presence of these young people in the town, along with representatives of extreme right-wing political parties, organized demonstrations and rallies to show their rejection. In response to these mobilizations, groups such as SOS Racisme or Amb Papers sought to point out the underlying racism of these campaigns and tried to open channels of dialogue between the youth of the centre and the rest of the town's citizens to attack the growing stigma. These support groups, beyond fighting against this stigma, were also earmarked as spaces to improve the situations of migrant minors and young people, help them find work, regularize their legal situation or find housing, among other issues.

Canet de Mar was not the only example of protests against and in favor of these youth groups. The public institutions, mainly autonomous ones because these are the ones in charge of the guardianship of minors, faced with the increasing arrival of unaccompanied migrant minors (mainly with origins in the Maghreb region), established the creation of various centres for minors with guardians distributed throughout the territory as a response policy. Far from being a policy for complete integration, it was more about providing a temporary fix based on getting these young people into centres, having them complete courses and non-formative activities, and then wait it out until they turned 18. Of all these young people under guardianship, a relatively small percentage continued to be linked to institutional or associative spaces for guardianship once they turned 18 years old. For those who remain outside the legal frameworks, there are situations of poverty, homelessness, house occupation, consumption and informal economies, some of which are linked to issues such as drug trafficking or small-scale robbery. Taking advantage of this situation, these young people have often become the focus of stigmatization and attacks by the extreme right, who base part of their central discourse in relation to fear towards these young people due to the danger that their “criminal” activities pose. The media have also echoed these situations, alternating between an excessive vision of the phenomenon (an oversized exposure of them) to a stigmatizing vision that strengthens these racist discourses. Somehow these young became something of a public hazard for conservative agents and media.

In 2019, El Morad, a young son of Moroccan immigrants from the Florida neighbourhood in L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, released his first single called M.D.L.R. (Mec de la Rue), and later his first album with the same title. By mid-2022, the song had racked up 16 million views on Spotify and more than 24 million on YouTube. Both the song and the album launched him into being one of the most famous artists in the state context (and, currently, with a significant international impact) of drill, trap and rap. In the song M.D.L.R., Morad describes the daily life of a young man of color in a peripheral neighbourhood dealing with topics such as family, the relationship with the police, expectations for the future, the importance of respect and, ultimately, describing what it is to be a street youth.

Beyond the lyrics, this song became almost a hymn for the youth in the margins, not only in L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, but also in Barcelona, Lleida, Canet de Mar. The influence even extended to other project cities such as Madrid and groups of young people came to call themselves MDLR's, they appeared painted with these initials and this would become

one (self)definition that had an impact on issues such as aesthetics, the attitude towards daily conflicts and the sense of brotherhood. For second generations, but also for young migrants alone, Morad and his musical style, his lyrics and other artists of the same style and context that appeared after him became individual and group references. In 2022, as one of the artists with the most songs in the charts, he continues to be largely unknown to most of the media, in which he normally only appears in the events section due to problems with police.

The aspects that these three situations share is the centrality that groups of street youth occupy in them and also the different agents that act and interact with them. The three phenomena, each with a different temporal route, are situated as central social realities as far as these groups are concerned. Moreover, in each of the cases, the social view of the phenomenon, based mainly on its appearance in the media, on the political discourses constructed around it, and on the relationship with certain social agents, is constructed from a distance and on the basis that these are conflictive groups that must be "combated", "eliminated" or, if not, socially "reintegrated". They are all groups that, far from defining themselves and having certain spaces for their understanding in media and institutional channels, are usually explained and treated as an external, abnormal issue, far removed from the "normal citizen" (Delgado, 2016). At the same time, each of them is subject to structural oppressions that at times situate them as recognised non-citizens, at others as contemptible and eliminable groups, and in all cases the hegemonic vision is as "social evils" to be combated by institutions or other agents and de facto powers. As we shall see, processes of stigmatisation, marginalisation or exclusion are produced, which have consequences both within the groups (how they organise themselves, negotiate, resist or confront daily and structural violence) and outside (who and what agents act, intervene or relate to them).

Moving away from the concept of 'gang' because of its negative and stigmatising connotations that accompany it after years of political and media 'wear and tear' (Brotherton & Barrios, 2004; Feixa et al., 2019; Kontos et al., 2003), and also because of the changes occurring in the reality of the most marginalised youth groups (Queirolo Palmas, 2014, 2017), in this research and in the TRANSGANG project in general we use the concept of 'street youth groups' (Feixa et al., 2019); a concept that aims to better reflect the reality, based on non-stigmatisation and broadening the focus of young people who can be considered part of the study: groups of young people with a certain common self-identification and for whom the street is the main space for socialisation.

This report, based on an ethnographic study carried out between 2018 and 2021, and inserted within a regional and transnational comparative study, focuses on analysing the current situation of these groups, their evolution, their reality, the relationship they maintain with institutions and other social agents, the conflicts that occur between or within groups, as well as the external and internal processes that are generated to confront or mediate them. To this end, the main methodological aspects that have guided the research in Barcelona are developed below, and the different cases are justified, as well as the different analyses and results carried out.

2.1.1. Justification and approach

In 2004, in the city of Barcelona, a collaboration process began between the Barcelona City Council, the Consorci Institut d'Infància i Món Urbà, the Sindicatura de Greuges de Barcelona and the academic world through Professor Carles Feixa. From this collaborative work the JOVLAT project would be born (Feixa & Porzio, 2004; Feixa et al., 2006; Feixa & Romaní, 2014). This project focused on studying the migratory waves from Latin America, especially young populations, upon their arrival in Catalonia, and also understand the recent appearance of "Latin gangs", their dynamics, practices and the processes of stigmatization that arose through the gaze that certain institutions, social agents and the media cast on these groups. Parallel to this process, the Mossos d'Esquadra body, specifically the Unitat de Nous Grups Organitzats Juvenils, promoted "new" ways of acting on these groups that were a far cry from the *mano dura*, putting a restorative and mediating perspective before the conflicts that they were taking place. Overall, in Barcelona and Catalonia, a period of mediation and relations with these gangs began with the aim of making them publicly known, understanding their dynamics, both positive and negative, and the group/brotherhood processes that take place within them, and thereby trying to change the dominant stigmatising view of the phenomenon and find alternative ways of integration and social recognition of these groups beyond their elimination or persecution. This whole process was called the Barcelona Model, and had its high point in the constitution of institutionally recognised youth associations of groups such as the Latin Kings (Cultural Organisation of Latin Kings and Queens of Catalonia, in 2006) and the Ñetas (Cultural, Sporting and Musical Association Ñetas, in 2007), but which was finally truncated by changes in government and political guidelines around 2011 (Queirolo Palmas, 2017).

The present investigation is based on this study, and on the process itself, to try to understand, after more than ten years, what effects it had on the present reality of youth street groups. In order to understand these effects, it is necessary to establish a diagnosis of the current situation of the groups and what evolution they have undergone over the years. If the Barcelona Model meant the opening of certain groups and the appearance of other ways of approaching the phenomenon, the TRANSGANG project maintains that spirit, focusing its gaze both on understanding these groups today, and on analyzing and studying the different mediation processes that take place within these groups (among their members), between groups (in the face of conflicts) or also with other agents external to them (institutions, police, community agents, etc.) (Feixa et al., 2019). Thus, the project in the city of Barcelona is based on that experience as a frame of reference and, therefore, one of the central points of the study is to understand the evolution experienced by the groups that were protagonists of this process (Queirolo-Palmas et al., 2021). This will allow us to understand, after more than 10 years, what impact the process had and to understand how it marked the path that these groups followed and also others that appeared later.

It is from this contextual perspective that the study in the city begins and that the research plan is drawn up (Ballesté, 2018: NP). This plan focuses primarily on understanding the reality of young people in peripheral or marginalized neighbourhoods. From this initial

'detection' work, established through informal contacts and non-participant observations, the situation of street youth was examined in 3 areas: the Ciutat Vella neighbourhood in Barcelona and the Torrassa and Florida neighbourhoods in L'Hospitalet del Llobregat. These places, described in more detail in the following sections, were chosen as starting points for the research because of their existing importance in the study carried out at the beginning of the 2000s, because they are spaces with high rates of migrant population, unemployment and accumulation of low income, and lastly because they are places where there is a greater presence of initiatives of a social nature (both from institutions and from the third sector). Already in the early stages of the appearance of the 'Latin gangs', these neighbourhoods were central places for the presence of these groups. Thus, from a geographical and contextual point of view, as they are spaces where these groups have traditionally been established, and also due to their sociodemographic characteristics, they will be the centre of research from which to determine the groups of young people studied and the current reality.

The first of the groups studied are the Latin Kings and Queens of Barcelona. Although they will be described in more depth later, it is necessary to remark that descriptions are of one of the factions of the group (the one that participated in the Barcelona Model), and that, at the time the study began, most of its members were over thirty years of age. Even so, this group was chosen for various reasons: 1) There is a large amount of existing information from previous studies and the possibility of establishing a temporally broad study; 2) It is one of the most important youth street groups and with the most "affiliated" members in the last 20 years (both in Barcelona and at the state level); 3) It was easy to access because of previous contacts; 4) Throughout the study, there was a combination of public policies of mediation together with policies of repression or iron fist.

The second group, which was already recognized in the Background Paper (Queiroló-Palmas et al., 2021), is that of unaccompanied minors and young migrants. In the last decade, the migratory phenomenon has been gaining importance, which, even though it existed previously, has been mutating and increasing recently: that of minors who migrated alone, mainly from North Africa (Comas & Quiroga, 2005; Quiroga, 2003; Quiroga et al., 2021). As Queiroló-Palmas (2017) already anticipated, these groups would come to occupy the place that the gangs had had until now as public enemies. Barcelona, along with Madrid, have been one of the main destinations for these young people.

Both hands of the State have acted around this phenomenon. On the one hand, the left hand promoted the development of a reception plan based on the insertion of young people in tutoring centres. On the other hand, the right hand acted through the repression and criminalization of those young people who did not accept this tutelage or who were left out (in the streets) for various reasons, ranging from legal, age, and economic one. In addition, these groups have been suffering structural violence based on the interrelation of the two hands of the State due to the difficulty of being recognized as citizens and, as a consequence, the condemnation that this produces to marginality (informal and subsistence economies, squatting, crimes, consumption, etc.) (Fassin, 2018). This group formally has much more diffuse borders than the previous group: young people, rather than identifying themselves as a homogeneous group, are externally labeled as such and

it is through said labeling that they negotiate, hide or exaggerate their belonging to said group and the accompanying practices. This diffuse group definition, added to the importance of the group in the current Catalan and Spanish reality (an importance many times "created" through the media and political speeches), is what gives it enough importance to be considered as core study group. In addition, different mediation projects are created around these young people at different scales, as we will see below.

Finally, the third group was later added to the initial work plan and is much more diffuse and extensive as well as heterogeneous. It is based on the groups of street youth that are currently formed in the peripheral neighbourhoods of Barcelona and L'Hospitalet del Llobregat. This group is not based on a specific "hermetic" or structured set, but is built analytically through the young people who make life, interact and build their shared identities in the streets of these neighbourhoods, intersecting with projects of social mediation (in a broad sense) that take place there both by institutions (local, regional and national) and by entities of the third sector, political collectives or neighbourhood movements. More than belonging to the group as a generator of identifications, it is the neighbourhood itself and the youthful street codes that are built there through daily life, day-to-day subsistence within processes of marginality, as well as the relationship with other present agents that constitutes that feeling of belonging and of "shared worlds". In addition, there are substantial identification processes for this group, for example, on music and aesthetics that reinforce and produce that feeling of brotherhood (Nofre, 2021; Rey-Gayoso & Diz, 2021).

The three groups, although with completely different formats and routes, were chosen because they allowed for a first-rate analysis of the current situation of street youth in the city and its metropolitan area.

2.1.2. Report Structure

The purpose of this report is to present the main results of the analysis carried out in the city of Barcelona, to develop the theoretical and methodological path that has been followed in the process, and finally to serve as a tool for subsequent reading for the benefit of a regional and transnational comparison. For this, it is structured with this first introductory section, where the selected case studies are briefly justified, where the initial theoretical framework of the Background Paper and the Research Plan is developed and expanded, and finally the main objectives and hypotheses of the study are explained.

Next, the second part of the report focuses on methodologically describing the entire fieldwork process. First, the qualitative techniques carried out are exposed and the collected material is described. In the second section, the theoretical and contextual justification for the choice of these case studies is deepened through statistical data and theoretical references. Finally, the section ends with a detailed explanation of the entry and exit of the researcher's field of study.

The third part focuses on raising and discussing the ethical issues that have arisen through the ethnographic process. Issues such as the impact of COVID-19 and the health and confinement measures applied or the relations of the project with the institutions are

presented so that they allow us to understand the limitations or complications that the entire process has had. There is also a central question raised in this section: the search for these groups, the adaptation of the TRANSGANG frameworks to the city of Barcelona and the need to reconsider the initial investigative schemes.

The analysis is in the fourth and fifth sections of the report. In the fourth, the groups are described and contextualized in depth. At this same point, the study groups, together with their socio-geographical contexts, are placed in dialogue with the theoretical tools to outline some first general analytical lines. Finally, some key examples from the study in Barcelona are also highlighted here, which signify outstanding mediation processes of different types, both between groups and with agents outside them. In the fifth, after a brief introduction to the specific analysis where the new codes and memos added to the NVIVO coding process are explained, each study group is covered through the different clusters proposed in the project itself as dimensions of analysis (Feixa et al., 2020). They are reviewed in detail through specific quotes to situate each information.

The seventh section includes the example of two main actors, MEM_BCN_35/M20 and EXMENA's (the group in general), who have played a leading role in the ethnographic process and who serve as concrete examples that illustrate a large part of the analytical conclusions drawn. It is through these two specific stories from which different processes that have been analysed throughout the fieldwork can be extrapolated and summarised.

Lastly, in the conclusions, a first approximation process of the analysed data and the first results obtained to the general theoretical frameworks established both at the level of the Barcelona case study and at the general level of the TRANSGANG project are elaborated.

2.1.3. On peripheries, spaces and mediations: Expanding the Research Plan and the Background Paper

Both the Research Plan (Ballesté, 2018, NP) and the Background Paper (Queirolo-Palmas et al., 2021) anticipated some theoretical tools that would guide the analytical frameworks for the different cases studied in Barcelona. They are then referred to and updated with new contributions linked to the entire ethnographic process.

Locating these groups in a specific social and political space (with effects on the physical space occupied) at each historical moment allows us to understand which agents interact with them and in what way. These spaces, far from being an exclusively geographical or physical matter, are the places where relations between agents take place, and with them also conflicts, violence or differentiation processes (Bourdieu, 1985; Lefebvre, 1991). Thus, the State and other social agents such as the media or the citizens themselves build up specific perspectives of certain social groups (in our case, youth street groups) that position them in more central or peripheral position in each space, which in turn, consequently generates a process of certain integration and recognition in the face of stigmatization or marginalization processes (Ballesté, 2022a; Feixa et al., 2019; Queirolo Palmas, 2017). All this also directly affects the ability of said groups to be described from their own perspectives, to 'have their own voice' and to be recognized as valid agents or, on the contrary, to be labelled and defined from the outside (Spivak, 1988; Ballesté &

Feixa, 2022). The level of public recognition, and the way in which it is produced, is closely linked to the social and political position occupied and the capacity (greater or lesser) for the groups to be recognized as valid interlocutors (Ballesté, 2022a).

The example of Barcelona in the last two decades allows us to observe the processes of fluctuation that occur between this greater or lesser recognition, and therefore a greater or lesser centrality in the social space. During the time of the Barcelona Model, some youth street groups were recognized as valid agents through different coordinated strategies: constitution of associations, use of institutional or community spaces, public exhibition projects linked to academia (cinema, exhibitions, talks, etc.), mediation policies with the police, etc. The purpose of this process, not merely for the reduction of conflicts, was the attempt to give these groups their own voice so that they could define themselves and their practices, identifications, and ways of organizing behind the scenes, in addition to channelling a "phenomenon" to bring it to normalized practices, formats and relationships to a certain extent. Faced with an overwhelming presence in the media that was usually from a stigmatizing perspective, the strategies of this process focused on trying to get them out of hiding and that they themselves when linked to other interlocutors could express their situations, experiences, and beliefs. At an institutional level, this process also implied a certain involvement of the left hand of the State in the relationship with these groups. The involvement was implementation since traditionally, both here and in other geographical contexts, the institutions in charge of relating to said groups used to be the police or the judiciary bodies (which made up the right hand) (Feixa et al., 2006; Queirolo Palmas, 2017).

This process, and the consequent assumption of responsibilities by the left hand of the State towards these groups, could be understood as a small oasis within a generalized dynamic of repression, persecution and stigmatization where the penal State is the one that focuses a large part of interventions. (Wacquant, 2011) and therefore the political path par excellence within the neoliberal government of the State would be the "criminalization of poverty" (Wacquant, 2009). In this sense, García and Dávila (2015) go a little further and expose how contemporary neoliberal forms of government are built through the commitment to an increase in the security model, which are based on an increase in "subjective" insecurity. That is, in the expansion of an idea of insecurity that penetrates the public and social imaginaries, and that is not always based on real facts of criminal or criminal increases (Ballesté & Feixa, 2022).

In order to understand the forms and characteristics of these groups in Barcelona, but even more so in order to understand the different political dynamics that are followed in relation to them, it is necessary to situate the research in larger-scale political and economic frameworks. To understand the dynamics between the group and, for example, Barcelona City Council, the Catalan government, the police, the media, judiciary bodies, but also academia, the third sector or social services that act with/against these groups, we must observe how the neoliberal model (Brenner et al., 2010) and the applied austerity policies have had political, economic and social effects as a response to the 2007 crisis (Fontana, 2011, 2013; Horvat et al., 2014). The constant increase in precariousness (in multiple dimensions, not only labour) and the growing social inequality, linked to a

certain progressive dismantling of the Welfare State through cuts and saturation, have meant an increase in poverty that has intensified in certain areas or specific neighbourhoods (García García & Ávila Cantos, 2015; Graeber, 2018; Lorey, 2014). All of this has also been accompanied by an increase in the penal State that seeks to control, demobilize, eliminate and imprison those groups that appear as non-normalized subjects or unadapted to this unequal model: whether they are social or political movements, as well as groups on the margins that they seek other forms of organization and action to survive (Goikoetxea & Noguera, 2021).

It is in these neighbourhoods where the greatest number of actions are condensed, both by the right hand with police interventions, raids and security control, and by the left hand with community initiatives, presence of social services and other types of "programs". integration or mitigation of said inequalities (García et al., 2021). Recovering the idea of "moral panic" (Cohen, 2011), we observe how in these neighbourhoods the external production of subjects such as street youth groups have the purpose of making the main social problems fall on them, which supposes an attempt to break of community ties and an expansion of violence from top to bottom and horizontally (Solís et al., 2022). In other words, the agents and groups affected by structural violence that "condemns" them to situations of exclusion and precariousness in these peripheral neighbourhoods and the creation of these "demons" or "public enemies" fulfil the function of hindering mutual recognition of a situation of shared violence received, breaking the possibilities of common organization to reverse the situation, expanding a feeling of community isolation, and the difficulty of creating common ties (ibid.). Social ills, rather than being identified as the result of the neoliberal model that condemns precariousness, exclusion and unrecognized subjects, are linked to the social groups present in these neighbourhoods and are adjudicated as creators of insecurity through different strategies (García & Avila, 2015).

It is on this general basis that all forms of intervention on groups are built, including those carried out from the left hand (Quierolo-Palmas, 2017). And it is from here that we can understand both the types of conflicts that occur linked to these groups, as well as the spaces and forms of mediation that occur over them and the limitations that they usually have.

Both the Concept Paper (Feixa, et al., 2019) and the Barcelona Background Paper (Ballesté, 2022a) pointed to the theoretical and analytical tool of the "space of street youth groups". Returning to points made at the beginning of this chapter, this tool allows us to understand which agents inside and outside the space play a main or influential role in different historical moments (Queirolo-Palmas, 2017; Ballesté, 2018; Ballesté & Feixa, 2022), and through this, understand what positions youth street groups occupy in relation to other spaces such as the social (Ballesté, 2022a; Feixa, et al., 2019). Thus, understanding spaces as places of power struggles and differentiated positions (Ballesté, 2022a; Solís & Ballesté, 2018) and therefore with positions closer to or further from the centre depending on the recognition and "voice" that is given to certain groups by the holders of power, we will be able to understand processes of greater or lesser marginality or, on the contrary, of recognition as socially valid agents. With this, we will also be able

to understand and situate the different groups studied within this relational space, analyse how other agents or institutions interact with or on them, to finally be able to establish the position occupied that will allow us to understand greater or lesser processes of marginality, repression and stigmatization of groups (Ballesté, 2018, 2022b). For example, in the case of the Latin Kings and the process of the Barcelona Model, the interaction of institutions, police agents and academia from the recognition as valid agents, allows to situate them in that historical moment as a less peripheral group of the social space. On the other hand, with the return of repression and the heavy hand on that specific group, the space of youth street groups interacts with external agents from a repressive or "elimination" vision, with this the recognition decreases (they are understood as groups to be eliminated) and, as a consequence, their position in the social space becomes extremely peripheral.

Finally, this combination of differentiated positions within the spaces, added to the general framework of intervention in the groups from a security governance perspective, allows all of this to be related to the different mediation and intervention processes that occur with or from the groups.

2.1.4. Updated objectives and assumptions, and overall main results

Since Barcelona is a Core Case of the project, and therefore is a study of three different groups, the objectives and initial hypotheses as well as some of the most outstanding results have been adapted or translated in some cases for each of the groups. As explained above, the three groups, far from being homogeneous, reflect differentiated youth grouping processes and also certain specific dynamics and formats. Although one of the purposes of the study is to shed light on what common processes all of them experience, there are also specific results for each group that need to be highlighted.

In the Research Plan (Ballesté, 2019, NP) some central hypotheses that were to accompany the ethnographic process were presented, which were adapted, redefined or expanded with new ones as the field work progressed.

The main hypothesis was that in order to understand the creation and composition of street youth groups and what practices and relationships they carry out, it is necessary to locate each group specifically in the physical, political and social space. This will allow us to understand how they are related to other central agents of these fields and, finally, we will be able to transfer these theoretical tools in the construction of the "gang space" or "space of youth street groups" (Feixa et al., 2019; Ballesté, 2022a). Understanding spaces as places where agents position themselves or are positioned more centrally or peripherally, these will help us identify the mediation processes (or not) that occur with and between them, which agents are involved and also recognize to what extent groups are able to have their own voice. This main hypothesis has served as a guide throughout the study since it allows us to understand how these groups are constituted in a relational way with other agents such as social and educational institutions and services, police forces, the media, community mediators, etc. Thus, the starting point and guide in all field

work has been the use of this tool as the best way to understand street youth groups (all those studied).

The first specific hypothesis focused on understanding the evolution of youth street groups with Latin American origins, centred on what was traditionally understood by “Latin gang”. Although they have a much smaller presence in the public space, and also in the media and in political discourse, these groups have remained present, although their formats and practices have mutated over the years, through the impact of both of the Barcelona Model as well as processes of repression and iron fist. Within this hypothesis, the idea was pointed out that said disappearance from the public scene was linked to the repressive process that began in 2012 with the end of the Barcelona Model. The way in which said accumulation of differentiated processes had impacted on them was considered, and this could be an explanation of their certain “disappearance”. In addition, it also pointed to how the emergence of new (younger) groups had been able to transfer these historical groups (mainly Latin Kings and Ñetas) to that certain disappearance.

This first hypothesis, although it remained valid, was reformulated to understand not only the repression as the explanation for their disappearance, but also the set of policies expanded towards these groups (also the Barcelona Model) as causes. In addition, the last part referring to “new groups” was modified, since the same field showed that (at least during the field work) there were no new groups with formats similar to these. On the other hand, other more dispersed and less structured groups, such as those that we include here as MENA's and EXMENA's² or the youth of peripheral neighbourhoods, have indeed occupied this place, both internally and physically in the neighbourhoods (occupying public spaces and generating processes group identification), as well as in the gaze of other external agents (labelled as “new public enemies”).

The second of the hypotheses focused exclusively on the group of the Latin Kings and sought to relate this process of mediation and constitution of associations with certain positive and also negative consequences that the group had experienced in the following years. Thus, although the process experienced was a framework for “making oneself known” and recognition of certain non-negative group practices, it also had negative consequences: confrontations within the group, processes of disintegration, a return to repression at the end of the process, etc. Thus, one of the central objectives of the work has been to understand what this process meant for this group and how its consequences are reflected today; even more so when other Spanish cities, with completely different dynamics and paths in this area, currently experience different situations from Barcelona with, for example, a greater presence of groups and conflict.

The third hypothesis pointed to the need to rethink the idea of the “street youth group”, moving away from a static gaze focused on the group as a more hermetic space in order to understand other more diffuse and sporadic current group processes. This should serve to include groups such as unaccompanied migrant minors (and older people), but also young people from peripheral neighbourhoods, and to be able to analyse their formats and the relationships that are established while maintaining the idea of “gang space”. In

² MENA's is the acronym for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors.

addition, these groups experience similar processes to the previously mentioned groups of stigmatization and marginalization through the media, political discourse, and relations with the institution. These similarities allow us to extrapolate the role of "social control" experienced by these groups through the production of public enemies and frame them more generally in government political dynamics through insecurity, the criminalization of poverty, normalization and of the production of "unwanted subjects". All this definitely allows us to understand how these subjects are produced, who defines them, who intervenes and under what political intentions. As already reflected in the Research Plan, the production of subjects on whom stigmatization processes fall also serves as a tool to 'divert' attention from the socioeconomic consequences of the neoliberal model based on austerity and cutbacks in public services, and to 'break' community ties and mutual recognition that could present responses and organized mobilizations to these structural situations.

Finally, the fourth initial hypothesis focused on understanding the presence of these groups in the physical space as a way of also measuring their position in the social and political space. That is, the geographical analysis of the presence of the groups, their practices and the urban spaces where they move, also allow us to understand what positions they occupy in other spaces such as the social or political. This last hypothesis has been reformulated to add not only an analysis of the groups' daily life from the geographical point of view, but also of all the agents that intervene with them. Thus, we can add to this analytical view the presence of social services, third sector projects or community agents as well as differentiated police actions, media discourses and relations with the community when determining the labels suffered by the groups and neighbourhoods where they live, and thus situate it all within the framework of social and political space.

Guided by these general hypotheses, the main results obtained in the project on the delimited clusters allow us to give a first general image (they will be detailed and specified for each group in later sections):

Biographies: These are constituted as one of the central axes to understand from the point of view of its members, the creation, evolution, and format that the different youth street groups take. In the case of Barcelona, a large majority of the young people who have participated in the research have experienced various migratory processes. Both their vital experiences in the country of birth, as well as the migratory process itself or the arrival at their destination are key moments that appear with some frequency in the stories. All of this helps to understand personal trajectories as elements linked to joining or entering youth street groups: either questions of entry or exit, as well as situations that they experience within the groups and that mark them in their biography (entry in the prison, mediation processes, loss of loved ones, finding work, etc.). Furthermore, this is one of the key elements for linking individual trajectories to broader processes of evolution of the groups themselves.

Organizations: This point is crucial to understand how the different groups are constituted and what formats they acquire. In the case of Barcelona, the heterogeneity of the groups

studied means that this analytical block must be rethought to include more flexible groups such as young migrants alone or young people from peripheral neighbourhoods. Although in the case of the Latin Kings the entry processes, the roles and positions, the 'difficulties' with leaving, and the entire evolution of the group are reported clearly, in the case of the other two study groups everything is becomes something more diffuse or abstract. Thus, in these groups, membership or entry into the group does not take on such important relevance, since many young people "come and go" depending on each specific or historical moment.

This allows us to observe that the groups studied have evolved to less hermetic formats, which leads us to observe how currently the groups are spaces with much less visible borders in which one enters and leaves more fluidly, which it also affects that the rules or roles are much less strict.

Identifications: Regarding this aspect, it has been possible to observe a strong link between the groups and certain specific territories, normally at the scale of squares or parks, although the neighbourhoods also have an important component when it comes to generating processes of joint identification. Historically, in the Latin Kings, the chapters (subgroups) were formed around squares, parks or subway stops, and were the group's central relational space. At present, for groups such as the MENA's and EXMENA's, or even the youth from peripheral neighbourhoods, although the referential space may be changing and normally encompasses entire neighbourhoods, the identifications between group participants are also generated in more concrete or specific places and are mainly linked to public space. For example, the Parque del Forat de la Vergonya or the Jardins de Sant Pau in Barcelona are the leading spaces in the day-to-day life of these groups of young people. In the case of L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, places like Parque de la Torrassa, the Florida football field or some squares inside the Florida blocks are central meeting places.

Beyond territorial identifications, other dimensions such as music and aesthetics are common places from which shared identification processes are generated. In all the groups, although in different ways, these aspects are protagonists (also in the case of the Latin Kings, with a historical trajectory closely linked to, for example, musical production). In addition, in groups like the MENA's or EXMENA's and the youth from peripheral neighbourhoods, through aesthetics and music the idea of groupness also expands to other young people. They are young people who, although they are not part of the same group, reproduce similar dynamics and practices in other territories. An example of the latter is, as will be seen, the impact of the M.D.L.R. (which links aesthetics and music, but also everyday 'attitude') in cities like Lleida or towns like Canet de Mar.

Practices: This section of analysis is fundamental in understanding the daily life of the youth street groups studied, as well as the forms that their different actions take. This makes it possible to understand what functions the groups fulfil in terms of spaces from which to propose different types of activities that generate common frames of reference for their members. It has been detected through field work that although the practices linked to leisure and playful encounters are important, there is a set of mutual aid

dynamics at different levels that are normally the ones that mainly support the group. These mutual aid practices can range from group help for the daily subsistence of its members (economic, labor and/or emancipatory, for example), to help in resolving different types of conflicts (between groups, but also with institutions). In general, moving away from the more common view of groups as 'spaces for fun' or 'recognition', we find that the basis of all of them is to seek vital solutions among their members through the group. Likewise, this group of analyses also includes different economic or vital practices that reflect the processes that the members of the group experience in order to survive on a daily basis (from informal economies or those linked to crime, to processes of repression that they suffer, including due to experiential situations such as not having a home and/or occupying flats). All of them are situations that cross the three groups studied.

Relationships: This cluster is essential to understand how the "gang space" or "space of youth street groups" is constituted, since it allows us to x-ray what relationships its members maintain with other agents outside the group. This is intrinsically related to the idea of understanding what positions these groups occupy at each historical moment based on what external agents they have a relationship with and also, based on that, what types of relationships are built. With this, through this classification we can obtain information on what type of agents are related to the groups (right or left hand of the state), in addition to observing in each specific case and each historical moment which agents take more prominence and also from which way they are related. At the same time, this category also allows us to understand what kind of relationships exist within the group, supporting other classifications such as the relationship between members for mutual aid. In particular, it has been possible to see how each of the groups has differentiated relationships with external agents, which also allows them to be placed in specific and differentiated places within the "gang space".

Imaginaries: The classification by imaginaries allows us to understand what images are built on the groups and who creates them. In this cluster, the dimension of media representations as constructions of common imaginaries about what these groups are, how they act and the reason for their constitutions has a very important weight in all three groups. We see that the three groups are traversed by a majority stigmatization from the media that directly affects the social imaginaries that are built around them. In the case of the Latin Kings, for example, it is remarkable how almost constant look that the media has had on them has been determined by stigmatization and criminalization. This also occurred in the years of the Barcelona Model, with this agent (the media) being the only one that for the most part did not actively participate in the process. In the other two groups the situation is similar, since most of the times that they appear in the news it is usually for issues related to crime, conflict or violence.

Transversal: Finally, the transversal dimension collects information that can go through all the clusters and that helps to clarify, understand and introduce them within the general objectives of the project. Thus, this section includes all those issues related to mediation and the different forms it takes: either internal to the groups themselves, or external to other agents. In addition, in the specific case of Barcelona, the methodological section

has been expanded to be able to analyse in greater depth the entire participatory process that was carried out for the theatre workshop and the creation of the documentary film. Finally, gender roles and relations within the groups, which sometimes also appear in other analytical categories from previous clusters, are analysed here and provide an interesting look at the reduced presence of women and the position they occupy in each group and moment. On this, it will be as interesting to observe their presence and position in the groups that appear, as the apparent invisibility and its causes in those that do not.

2.2. Ethnographing youth street groups: Contexts, techniques and approaches to the study

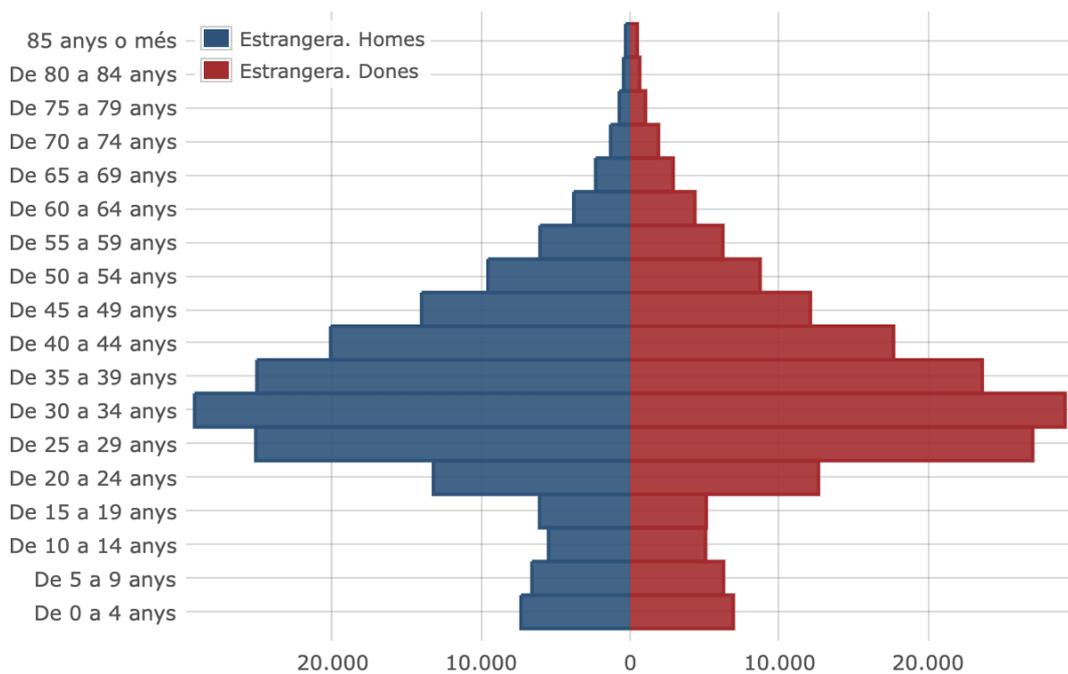
2.2.1. Barcelona and its Metropolitan Area during the 21st century: Contextual frameworks

In order to understand youth street groups both in Barcelona and in its Metropolitan Urban Area, it is first necessary to shed light on the populations that these cities have in order to understand their sociodemographic composition.

Barcelona and the Metropolitan Area are the second largest urban agglomeration in Spain, with a total population of 1,636,732 inhabitants in Barcelona and 3,291,654 inhabitants in the entire Barcelona Metropolitan Area (with L'Hospitalet de Llobregat the second largest with 264,657 inhabitants). According to the continuous census, published by the National Statistics Institute, in 2021 Barcelona had a population of 395,135 young people (between 15 and 34 years old), representing 24% of the total, while L'Hospitalet de Llobregat had 61,217, 23% respectively. With this, we can see that one in four inhabitants is a young person. If we add to these data the relationship of population with their origin, we find that in Barcelona 348,302 people have foreign nationality (21% of the total) and 58,685 in L'Hospitalet del Llobregat (22%). In both cases, the highest numbers of foreign population are found in the youth group (see Figures 1 and 2), with the countries with the largest migrated population by total number being Italy, Morocco, Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Pakistan and Chinese in Barcelona; and Morocco, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, India, Pakistan and China in L'Hospitalet del Llobregat (data obtained from the Municipal Register of Inhabitants through the Statistics Institute of Catalonia).

All this allows us to identify two primordial issues. On the one hand, the youth population holds weight in both urban centres, where, and although the population pyramid is increasingly older, the youth volume continues to have weight. On the other and related to this, how this young population has been significantly affected by the arrival of foreign population in recent years or decades. This population that, as we have been able to see, is predominantly from the Americas and North Africa. Both data are necessary to understand the form that youth street groups have in these cities, and also allow us to understand the strong link they have with migratory processes.

Població a 1 de gener. Per nacionalitat, sexe i edat quinquennal. Barcelona. 2021

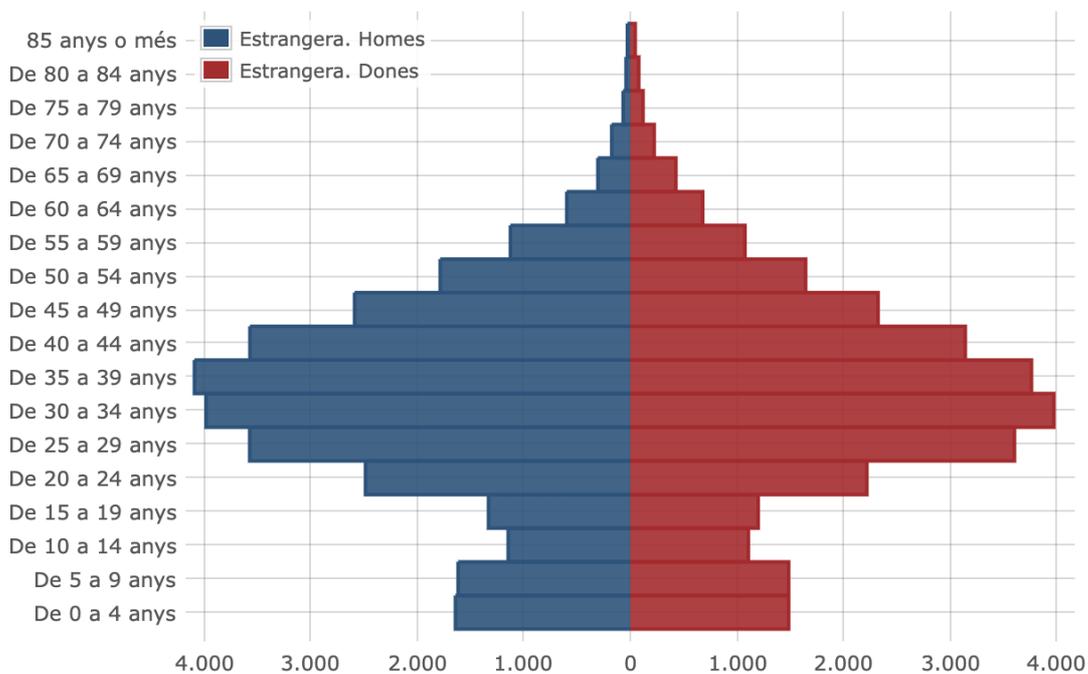


Font: Idescat, a partir del Padró continu de l'INE.

Figure 1. Population on January 1. By nationality, sex and five-year age. Barcelona 2021

Fountain: Idescat, from the continuous register of the INE.

Població a 1 de gener. Per nacionalitat, sexe i edat quinquennal. Hospitalet de Llobregat, l'. 2021



Font: Idescat, a partir del Padró continu de l'INE.

Figure 2. Population on January 1. By nationality, sex and five-year age. L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, 2021.

Source: Idescat, from the continuous register of the INE.

Although the breakdown at the city level is significant, these data are even more interesting when we lower the focus to the neighbourhood level. One of the main focuses of attention is both the population density of certain neighbourhoods studied and the percentage of foreign population. In L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, neighbourhoods such as Torrassa or Florida (the neighbourhoods where field work has been carried out) in 2020 had the largest foreign population in the city (14,223 and 14,849 respectively) and, at the same time, are the neighbourhoods with the highest population densities (63,723 and 79,605 inhabitants per square kilometre, respectively, with the average total density of the city being 21,963).

In Barcelona, in 2021, the neighbourhoods of Raval and Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and La Ribera, the focus of field work, have 53.4% of the foreign population (25,997 inhabitants) and 47.0% (10,805 inhabitants) respectively, according to data from the Municipal Register of 2021. And according to the Statistical Yearbook of the City of Barcelona 2020, the population density figures by districts shows that Ciutat Vella (the district that is made up of the Raval and Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and the Ribera) has 26,288 inhabitants per square kilometre as one of the densest districts in the entire city (with 10,000 inhabitants per square kilometre, which more than the average).

From this brief snapshot, we can conclude that the peripheral neighbourhoods studied here, and which are also historically the spaces with the greatest presence of youth street groups or gangs, share certain common characteristics in both cities: they are neighbourhoods with very high population densities and consequently they have little public space, they are usually the neighbourhoods where there is a larger foreign population and, in addition, they tend to have a higher percentage of youth. All of this has a direct impact on the format that these youth groups acquire in these neighbourhoods, and at the same time has a constant effect on the forms of intervention and mediation that different agents (institutions, third sector, associations or others) carry out. Thus, both the neighbourhoods of Torrassa and Florida in L'Hospitalet, as well as Raval and Ciutat Vella in Barcelona accumulate a large number of social interventions of different kinds. For example, according to the Barcelona City Council itself, in the Raval neighbourhood, there are 31 directories of social services, 567 associations and 51 directories linked to the public administration 'working' in the area.

If we also analyse the socioeconomic composition of these neighbourhoods and municipalities, we observe that these are places where the level of income is lower or the accumulated unemployment is one of the highest in the entire city. In Barcelona, the Available Income per Household (defined as the indicator of the volume of resources available to households to consume or save) stood at 22,229 euros in 2019. For the Raval neighbourhood, this indicator dropped to 12,142 euros, and for Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and La Ribera, to 18,075, placing them among the neighbourhoods with the lowest disposable income. In addition, in total numbers, in January 2021 the Raval ranks as the

neighbourhood with the most unemployed people (3,039, of which 1,497 are long-term unemployed)³.

All this allows us to understand the backdrop of the main neighbourhoods where field work was carried out. Even so, the neighbourhoods, as was said, were not chosen exclusively for their sociodemographic data, but rather the fact that in recent decades these have been the spaces where there has been the greatest presence of youth street groups. Already in the first studies on Latin Kings in Barcelona (Feixa, et al., 2006), both neighbourhoods such as the Raval in Ciutat Vella, or L'Hospitalet de Llobregat were areas with greater presence of chapters of the group. This allows, in addition to analysing what function youth groups have and what relationships they maintain in peripheral spaces, to be able to build a kind of historical continuum that will allow us to observe the evolution of each group, and the appearance of new ones in the same geographical space.

2.2.2. Qualitative techniques

The methodological approach is centred on an ethnographic study of 3 street youth groups in the city. The idea of the "extended case method" (Burawoy, 1998; Feixa et al., 2019, 2020) has been used to construct the different groups studied in a relational way and to try to understand both the daily dynamics, the subjectivities and the realities of young people, such as the impacts that larger-scale processes that organize their daily lives have on them. This approach has led to the field itself guiding the evolution of ethnographic work. In other words, although the Research Plan established some previous approaches, it was not until the entry into the field at the end of 2018, and during 2021 that the groups and agents with which to establish relationships have materialized. As the involvement in the field and in the aforementioned neighbourhoods became deeper, with the greater knowledge of institutions, entities and agents in the neighbourhoods, the interest of each qualitative technique used was specified. This led to many of the previous methodological prisms, both groups to be studied and ways of approaching and hypotheses, were being modified with the "ethnographic walk" itself.

During the field work in Barcelona, a total of 132 participants were coded and anonymized (85 group members and 47 stakeholders).⁴ The sex of these people is as follows: 61 male and 24 female members; 25 male and 22 female stakeholders. For ethical reasons, all those people who were considered important for the work and who appeared (either with their own voice or through the voices of third parties) had to be anonymized. With this base, the field work has consisted of the following materials exposed through the tables with the main technical data of the realization:

³ Data obtained from the report "La renda de les llars de Barcelona: distribució per districtes, barris i seccions censals 2019 (Household income in Barcelona: distribution by district, neighborhood and census sections 2019)" and the registered unemployment statistics of Barcelona City Council.

⁴ The coding has been done for individuals who had a relatively important weight during the ethnography. In other words, although some of them have not been spoken to directly, they appear in conversations, observations or other materials and, therefore, are the main subjects to be anonymized. Of course, among all these subjects there are substantial differences in terms of volume of information and presence in the field.

Semi-structured interviews:

Nº	MEM o STK	Código entrevista	Género	Ciudad	Fecha	Proyecto NVIVO	Edad
1	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_01	M	Barcelona	8/1/19	Latín Kings	41
2	STK	BCN_INT_STK_01	M	Barcelona	30/1/19	Latín Kings	35's
3	STK	BCN_INT_STK_002	M	Masnou	8/1/20	Menas/Exmenas	50's
4	STK	BCN_INT_STK_003_004	F	L'Hospitalet	17/1/20	Barrios	30 STK_03
4	STK	BCN_INT_STK_003_004	M	L'Hospitalet	17/1/20	Barrios	26 STK_04
5	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_002_003	M	Barcelona	25/1/20	Latín Kings	36 MEM_02
5	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_002_003	F	Barcelona	25/1/20	Latín Kings	32 MEM_03
6	STK	BCN_INT_STK_006	F	Barcelona	31/3/20	Barrios i Menas/Exmenas	34
7	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_004	M	Barcelona	3/4/20	Barrios	27
8	STK	BCN_INT_STK_010	M	Barcelona	6/5/20	Barrios i Menas/Exmenas	47
9	STK	BCN_INT_STK_011	F	Barcelona	11/10/18	Latín Kings	40's
10	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_010	F	València	8/4/19	Latín Kings	32
11	STK	BCN_INT_STK_005	F	Barcelona	4/6/20	Barrios i Menas/Exmenas	26
12	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_013	M	Barcelona	29/10/20	Latín Kings	31
13	MEM	BCN_INT_MEM_017	M	Barcelona	2/12/20	Menas/Exmenas	20's
14	STK	BCN_INT_STK_018	M	L'Hospitalet	16/4/21	Barrios, Latín Kings i Menas/Exmenas	43
15	MEM	2021-04-14_LS_MEM_35_1	M	Canet de Mar	14/4/21	Menas/Exmenas	20

Focus or discussion groups:

Nº	MEM o STK	Código entrevista	Género	Ciudad	Fecha	Proyecto NVIVO
1	MEM	BCN_MEM_STK_FG_01	4-F/ 4-M	L'Hospitalet	18/11/20	Barrios
2	MEM	BCN_MEM_FG_02	2-F/ 1-M	Barcelona	11/1/21	Menas/Exmenas i Barrios
3	MEM	BCN_MEM_FG_03	1-F / 6-M	Barcelona	17/2/21	Menas/Exmenas
4	MEM	BCN_MEM_FG_04	9-M	Barcelona	9/5/21	Latín Kings
5	STK	BCN_STK_FG_01	4-M	Barcelona	25/5/21	Latín Kings
6	STK/MEM	BCN_STK_FG_02	2-F / 2-M	Canet de Mar	27/5/21	Menas/Exmenas
7	STK/MEM	BCN_STK_FG_03	1-F / 3-M	Canet de Mar	4/5/21	Menas/Exmenas
8	STK	BCN_STK_FG_04	3-M	Barcelona	22/6/21	Latín Kings
9	STK/MEM	BCN_MEM_STK_FG_02	3-M	Barcelona	5/11/21	Latín Kings
10	STK/MEM	BCN_MEM_STK_FG_03	1-F / 4-M	Barcelona	17/2/22	Latín Kings

Life Stories:

ENTREVISTAS A MEM_01 PARA LS			
Recogida de datos	Género	Ciudad	Fecha
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2018-05-28	M	Barcelona	28/5/18
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2019-01-08	M	Barcelona	8/1/19
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2019-12-10	M	Barcelona	10/12/19
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2020-02-06	M	Barcelona	6/2/20
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2020-02-18	M	Barcelona	18/2/20
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2020-02-20	M	Barcelona	20/2/20
BCN_INT_MEM_01_2020-10-15	M	Barcelona	15/10/20

ENTREVISTAS A MEM_35 PARA LS			
Recogida de datos	Género	Ciudad	Fecha
BCN_INT_MEM_035_2021-04-14	M	Canet de Mar	14/4/21
BCN_FG_MEM_03_2021-02-17	M	Barcelona	27/2/21
BCN_FG_STK_02_2021-05-27	M	Canet de Mar	27/5/21
BCN_INT_MEM_035_2021-05-17	M	Canet de Mar	17/5/21

ENTREVISTAS A EXMENAS PARA LS			
Recogida de datos	Género	Ciudad	Fecha
BCN_INT_MEM_017	M	Barcelona	2/12/20

ENTREVISTAS A EXMENAS PARA LS			
Recogida de datos	Género	Ciudad	Fecha
BCN_FG_MEM_02_2021-01-11	2 -F / 1-M	Barcelona	11/1/21
BCN_INT_STK_005	F	Barcelona	4/6/20

Observations:⁵

Total horas observación apuntadas	
Año	Horas
2019	57,45
2020	116,4
2021	94,2

2.2.3. Entrance to the field

For each of the study groups, an entrance to the field and a specific approach were chosen. In addition, depending on each entry into the field and the development of the research itself, the different qualitative techniques were used to collect the best possible information.

Latin Kings and Queens Barcelona

The contact with the group was made mainly through previous contacts that already had the same IP of the project. As previously mentioned, the JOVLAT project began in 2004, which sought to study and understand the youth realities of Latin American migrant youth. As an emerging theme, one of the main branches of research was the understanding of the Latino gang phenomenon. At that time, the JOVLAT project itself came into contact with various members of the group, specifically with MEM_BCN_01/M41 who held a relevant position within the group at the Catalan and Spanish level. After a little less than 20 years, the field work with the group began with the idea of recovering these contacts (some had already been maintained over time, such as MEM_BCN_01/M41 himself, who actively participated in the research) in order to analyse how its evolution has been up to the present. Through MEM_BCN_01/M41, who acted as a guide within the group, we accessed two types of profiles of members of the Latin Kings in Barcelona. On the one hand, the *hermanitos* closest to MEM_BCN_01/M41 who, having lived through the entire process of the Barcelona Model and having been present since the group was formed in the city, continue to maintain their feeling of self-identification with the group, but from a less active position and with a certain distance from the activities

⁵ The number of hours is based on those on which a field report, an interview, a focus group or other information produced was made. The complement of hours to reach the maximum required by the project was made with other observations prior to those years and, mainly, with initial field observations and other specific activities that ultimately did not have enough ethnographic value to be transcribed.

that they had carried out in the past. These members were typically in their 30s and 40s. With them they sought to historically reconstruct the evolution of the group and understand to what extent the Barcelona Model had affected their current lives.

On the other hand, within that historical group of Latin Kings there was a small branch of younger members who were still active. One of them, who had also been present in the process of the Barcelona Model as a *Peewee* (the young sector of the group at that time), came into contact with the project itself seeking to reproduce said model again. Through the project, we witnessed the first stages of meetings and work, together with the Institut de Drets Humans de Catalunya, which allowed us to get closer to the current reality of this group. It is a group of about 15 members between the ages of 25 and 35. Their main motivation was to constitute an institutionally recognized association to be able to get away from the streets, have their own meeting spaces and thus reduce possible conflicts with other groups, such as had been done previously. This process, although it had a very limited journey, mainly due to the effects of the pandemic and the restrictions, allowed us a small glimpse of other realities within the group.

Archaeologically and historically speaking, the field work also approached other leading agents of the Barcelona Model to be able to assess the effects of the process from different dimensions and perspectives. For this reason, agents of the Mossos d'Esquadra had been the protagonists of the intervention model for mediation, protagonists of Barcelona City Council's social services, agents of third sector entities and, albeit in a more one-off, important (and historical) way, members of the Ñetas group.

In summary, this group was accessed mainly through previous contacts that the project itself, members who participated in it and the PI itself already had. This made it possible to open the circle of members and stakeholders contacted and reconstruct a kind of historical journey from the implementation of the Barcelona Model to the present.

The field work, in addition to interviews and discussion groups, focused on carrying out participant observations of different events organized by the first group. These were mainly linked to the creation of their own clothing brand and also to the development of a joint musical project and the making of the video clip. These observations were mainly made of the group's own spaces such as the music recording studio or the clothing brand's premises as well as in different public spaces. In relation to the second group, that of young people who sought to reproduce the phase of constitution of associations at present, the researchers went with this group to joint meetings with entities such as the Human Rights Institute of Catalonia, in addition to monitoring different processes such as internal group meetings and the writing of bases of the association. With this second group, the observations were made both in private spaces and those linked to the association, as well as in public spaces or in the university itself. Finally, regarding the Latin Kings, the same research group was able to count on the participation of prominent members from other Spanish cities as well as from Chicago and New York, in seminars and internal activities of the project.

MENA's and EXMENA's

The second group, as seen above, has a much more fluid and non-hermetic composition. Although they are classified as being within the same group, the forms that these groups take are plural and dispersed throughout the territory, being united by a similar personal situation of its members, and also by a common label (which most of the time comes from outside the group). This is why the entry into these groups was done in various ways and by different paths, resulting in contact with various similar groups, both in the city and outside it.

One of them was the group EXMENA's, a political and aid/solidarity group focused on the realities experienced by young migrants alone upon arrival. In this group, first, they contacted a stakeholder who help them with daily functions such as finding and joining networks or internal organizations. Through it, and also in parallel to the contact with the *Espai Jove Palau Alós* (a municipal space where the group meets and carries out activities), I came into contact with the main core of group participants, which allowed me to not only attend several of their meetings, activities and protests, but also accompany them on a day-to-day basis in actions of help and support for unaccompanied minors. It was in these actions and meetings where the participant observation was carried out, which allowed us to discover how the group works in its daily life. The main spaces where this observation was carried out were the *Espai Jove* premises where they held their meetings, and also in different places in the public space where they carried out actions or demonstrations. This first group, in turn, and usually indirectly, also opened the doors to the following groups studied.

The second group that falls within this category is that of the young migrants alone from Canet de Mar⁶. The entry into this group was made through the director of the documentary film of the project, Andrés Duque. He came into contact with various support groups in the town, such as *Amb Papers*, and from there he built a network of contacts until he reached several young people who had all been cared for as unaccompanied migrants in a centre for minors in the town. Through his contact, the Barcelona team of the project gradually began to participate in the activities related to the filming of the documentary and the theatre workshops that were carried out as a complement. Thus, the entrance to the group was because of the documentary, but this made it possible to achieve very high levels of trust with the group. In addition, throughout this process, we not only had access to the young people of said group, but, as it is a relatively small town, we were able to take a deeper look and learn about a good part of the reality that these young people live and also the different forms of relationship that take place around them with other groups, with institutional agents, with neighbours, etc. For this group, participant observation consisted of both accompanying the young people to different daily activities in their town, as well as monitoring and active participation in the different workshops and filming that were carried out within the framework of the documentary. This led the researchers linked to participate in the different sessions that took place on the television set of the Pompeu Fabra University, in

⁶ Although the group is always cited as belonging to Canet de Mar, a large part of its members lives within the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. Even so, they have the fact that they all met in the town's centre for minors in common.

public spaces in the town of Canet de Mar such as bars, squares or the beach itself, and finally in houses personalities of the protagonists.

Lastly, and in a more complementary way, young people or minors who migrated alone appeared at different moments of the field work in the investigations that were carried out in the different neighbourhoods. Mainly, these complementary appearances occurred when they came into contact with entities of the third sector that work in those neighbourhoods and also with certain institutions. Both the Casal dels Infants in the Raval, Itaca or the Nou Sidecar in the Torrassa and Florida neighbourhoods had programs and projects focused on the situation of these young people and trying to cover some of their basic needs. In short, contact with these associations also led to subsequent contacts with young people who can be classified within this group. Thus, the observation was less participatory and active than in the previous groups, but data was collected on both the daily activities that these entities in their premises, as well as other more specific activities or actions carried out in the public space of each neighbourhood.

Youth from peripheral neighbourhoods

The last group brings together youth realities from peripheral neighbourhoods that, although they do not share an identity framework as specific as, for example, the Latin Kings, allow us to observe the processes of construction of groups on the margins and the role that the group has in daily subsistence processes. This group, which was not included in the initial Research Plan, was incorporated into the study after a first approach to the field linked to observing and understanding the youth realities in those neighbourhoods where there had traditionally been "gangs". The entrance to find out what the young people of those neighbourhoods for whom the street was their main space for socializing and meeting were doing was through entities and associations that work there. Thus, it was through contact with the City Councils of Barcelona and L'Hospitalet de Llobregat (the second with a much higher degree of involvement), and contact with entities such as Itaca, Nou Sidecar, Casal dels Infants, Tot Raval or Xamfrà, among others, that it was possible to compose an image of the youth in these neighbourhoods. Thus, the gateway to all of these groups came about due to the link with these entities, with the activities they carried out and that, ultimately, was bringing the young participants closer.

Continuing with the example of the last group described in the previous section, different limitedly participatory observations were carried out in workshops, activities, training sessions or celebrations that were promoted by the same entities and that involved young people from the neighbourhood. Most of them were held on the premises or in the spaces of each entity and although this was normally to encourage involvement and presence in the neighbourhood, some of them more specific were also held in neighbourhood public spaces such as streets or squares.

2.3. Obstacles, alterations and discontinuities of the study

2.3.1. Fuzzy groups

Throughout the fieldwork, different ethical issues have appeared, but also methodological and theoretical ones, which have turned or modified some of the initially marked research premises. The first of them, much more theoretical and defining the project itself, is the format that the youth street groups had throughout the investigation and how these “new” formats affected the pre-established methodological tools.

In the case of Barcelona, starting from the much more structured idea of youth groups such as the Latin Kings or the Ñetas, in the face of the reality found during the field work and due to which these groups had lost a lot of weight, it was necessary to readapt some of the theoretical frameworks of the project to try to include other groups that are currently the most present in the neighbourhoods. Thus, some of the perspectives on the groups pre-established by the project focused on understanding them as a group that was homogeneous to a certain extent, that showed common codes and that, mainly, was governed by specific rules that delimited the interior from the exterior of each cluster. On the other hand, the first incursions into the field already began to denote the lesser presence of this type of groups and the appearance of other dynamics in the existing groups. It was no longer about such unified groups, but one of its main characteristics was the diffuse, the improvised and the sporadic elements. In other words, the internal/external barriers of the groups became much more porous and this in turn affected the internal dynamics of the group, the processes of constitution and the forms of organization.

For this reason, a large part of the analytical categories, mainly those that refer to the Organization and Practice clusters, and that also organized part of the field work schemes, had to be redefined in order to adapt to the reality found. For this, some of the issues related to the structure, the entry and exit processes, and the 'formal' activities of the groups lost a certain sense. On the other hand, rethinking them from a perspective of less hermetic groups made it possible to explore new dimensions of the categories of position, membership, and also of certain more informal activities and less linked to formative processes. On many occasions, the concept of entering the group, which is a crucial issue in the case of the Latin Kings, became diffuse and little understood by the rest, since the group was not created based on a formalized membership, but through daily accompaniment by its members. Likewise, the processes of leaving the group also lost weight, since in many of the young people studied in the groups of MENA's and EXMENA's or young people from peripheral neighbourhoods, they tend to occur on a regular basis and membership often acquires a discontinuous dimension and, therefore, was not such an important category for the group, but rather it was a sample of how these young people are linked to mobility and migration processes, which also explains the growing mobility within these groups.

Ethically, this whole process involved a deep reflection by the researcher in the field to adapt some of the main premises of the project to the reality that had been observed. This

implied an alteration of the field work and the dialogue that it produced with the project itself, more taking into account that the ultimate goal is a comparative metaethnography between different cities.

2.3.2. COVID-19

Of course, the main aspect that affected the entire ethnography (and the project in general) was the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This situation made all field work pause for a little less than a year, and its consequences continued right through to the end. Beyond the reality of confinement and suppression of face-to-face relationships that were experienced (and that directly affected all types of study), it should be noted how it affected an ethnographic process that had already been in the field for months and what that meant in terms of loss of relationships, contacts, and trust.

One of the main gateways to youth street groups was related to associations or entities that work in certain neighbourhoods and that base their action on the constitution of daily activities: youth open spaces, non-regulated training, youth centres, management of public spaces, etc. In this sense, all these activities were interrupted in March 2019 and with it a good part of the relationships that were being built in the field and also of the trust processes that were being carried out both with stakeholders of these institutions, and mainly with members of the groups. The confinement and health measures caused not only the temporary end of all these activities, but also a stoppage in the daily life of the groups studied, which, of course, modified all their expressions.

At a methodological level, to alleviate this situation in the case of Barcelona, it was decided to maintain a virtual relationship of greater intensity with those contacts. In this way, various interviews were conducted through platforms such as Skype, Meet or Jitsi, which served to deepen knowledge, mainly about the work of stakeholders. At the same time, various virtual interviews with members were also conducted. Although the pandemic clearly affected the field work directly and many contacts previously made with whom commitment or trust had not been generated were lost, this "solution" allowed us to continue moving on with the investigation and also to maintain some contacts for later, and with the gradual reduction of confinement measures, we were able to return to the field with more knowledge.

It should be noted that due to the novelty itself and because for many the virtual contact or the interviews could serve as an escape route from the routine, this process also served to deepen ties with some participants since we were able to maintain relaxed conversations and regular telematic contacts.

On the other hand, at the level of the researchers involved in the ethnographic process, this situation also meant running certain personal risks. As highlighted throughout various bimonthly ethics reports, we researchers exposed ourselves to a high risk of contagion (mainly the months after strict confinement) in activities such as theatre workshops with young protagonists of the film. This entailed certain ethical problems and decisions to be made to protect our personal lives from possible contagion.

Finally, regarding this same situation, it should be noted that, although the confinement measures and restrictions gradually disappeared, they remained in some way present until the end of the field work. Although there was no longer a strict confinement, situations such as small groups, police controls, sick leave due to COVID-19, among others, have been a constant throughout all the last months. This, like everything previously highlighted, led to alterations and obstacles to phases of field work, having to relocate interviews, postpone meetings, or also seeing how certain advances in field work were not finally completed. Many of the observations reflected these situations and also explained the ways in which researchers look for solutions to move forward.

2.3.3. Institutional relations

Among the major ethical issues that accompanied all the field work, it is also necessary to highlight the relationship that the project itself has had with local institutions, mainly with the Barcelona City Council and the different agencies that depend on it.

One of the first approaches to the field that were made at the beginning of the project was to get in touch with the social street educators who worked in the different neighbourhoods of Barcelona that we studied. From that initial contact, they quickly moved on to an institutional contact to, at the requests of the local institutional bodies, form an agreement between the project and this entity. The idea, according to them, was to protect the young participants from possible negative consequences of the research and also, although in a less direct way, to be able to 'control' how we studied the projects that the Barcelona City Council was carrying out. From the outset, we observed that the city council did not agree to participate: it delayed the meetings, it modified all the documents that we prepared, it showed a critical position in the meetings and it did not advance in the deadlines that were being established. All of this meant that we were waiting for more than 2 years for its acceptance and, with it, being able to contact the street educators and learn about the different projects that the institution was carrying out on the themes of the study.

Finally, the field work came to an end, and we did not could not have the participation of the city council due to its constant postponement and refusal. This situation clearly limited our ability to learn about the different integration and mediation strategies that the largest institution in the city was carrying out, and with this we are aware that there is a gap in all ethnographic work in relation to this.

As a way of mitigating and coping with this situation, it was decided to include the functions of the Barcelona City Council and the agencies that depend on it indirectly, and to intensify the study with other entities from the third sector that also participate on a daily basis in issues of integration, training or playful for many of the young people studied. Normally, the city council was also an involved party in these spaces, but its approval was not required to participate in them.

2.4. On gangs, MENA's and youth from peripheral neighbourhoods: General analysis

2.4.1. From gangs to diffuse groups: On peripheral youth groups

STK_BCN_06/F34: Yes, yes. I think so. And in the end this, by areas where they are... I don't know. I think there in the library that there was always a small group, especially Moroccans, but sometimes also other kids, well, smoking joints. Of course, it is his thing. And normally people don't go to that place anymore because they are there, right? And it happens to be like a dangerous place. And this makes this dynamic, well yes, they end up being a bit like "that gangs". Colleagues helping each other. When there is a brown person, they are all together. That they support each other and that... well, I think that sometimes gangs don't become so much (...), that in the end, the formation process is not unilateral. It's not that they decide to be a group, it's that society also excludes them and they end up being that group.

STK_BCN_10/M47: But hey, the truth is that we are noticing this type of situation less and less, right? I say again, the group of equals is essential when it comes to building your identity, because it is where you feel welcomed, where you feel the same concerns that you have... The same situations "Wow, this one has obtained a work permit; this one is already working; the other I don't know what...". I mean, it's important. But I would say that currently it is not linear to be part of a group of these and that the consequences are criminal activities. Absolutely.

STK_BCN_18/M43: Well, the point is that when I came back [in 2016, after not working for a few years] it's like I stopped living this gang reality. There were other things: drugs, fights, more youth dynamics (...). So, what there is now I would say that it is the whole Morad phenomenon, which is also a very neighbourhood aesthetic (...), which transmits a point of evil at the same time as a lot of reality.

These three references are from different social educators, the first two from Raval, and the last from Torrassa and Florida. All of them have a long career in their trade in these neighbourhoods in common and they coincide in emphasizing that, nowadays, compared to the beginning of the 2000's, the whole phenomenon of gangs has changed a lot and is no longer apparently present. This affirmation has been a constant throughout all the field work, since the reality of the youth groups that occupy most of the public spaces in these neighbourhoods is very different from that experienced more than a decade ago.

In Barcelona, and cities in its Metropolitan Area such as L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, traditional groups such as the Latin Kings, the Ñetas, the Trinitarios, the DDP's or other similar groups have gradually lost weight. From being the main groups of reference in these territories, and a whole social and media phenomenon at the beginning of the century, they have come to occupy a much more secondary place. This loss of weight does not mean the disappearance of these groups, but rather allows us to point out some internal changes that they have been experiencing and that has led them to lose presence in the public space and to see themselves reduced in numbers.

The hypotheses in this line are diverse and throughout the field work different ideas have appeared that could summarize them. On the one hand, many of the leading members of these groups at the beginning of the 2000's are currently over 30 years of age and, as has been verified, most of them live in vital situations of building families, with more or less permanent work, some already They are in a regular situation and with papers, etc. This does not mean that they no longer identify themselves as members of the group, but it

does mean that it clearly affects their practices and dynamics. On the other hand, as a police officer that we interviewed pointed out, some of the members of these groups, those who opted for more criminal paths, are currently dedicated to criminal issues related to robbery or drug trafficking. These people no longer maintain that involvement or visibility with the group, and they turned their participation towards more clandestine issues. The last of the hypotheses is linked to the idea of the effect that the Barcelona Model could have had on the youngest sectors of the groups that participated. As also pointed out by representatives of the police and the city council at that time, it could be that this greater integration within the institutionally recognized channels and also a greater involvement of these young people in entities of the third sector will mean a non-replication of certain dynamics and the turn of the group and its members towards other less invisible and hermetic formats. Furthermore, a generational change among its members in the perception of the gang and the group is added to this. While those young people who in the 2000's led the creation and start of these groups in Barcelona, and in Spain in general, had previous knowledge of these groups in their countries of origin, many times with previous memberships there. On the other hand, the younger ones, who later had to take over in positions of leadership or responsibility within the group, had a weaker contextual and historical link with the group, and added to the reasons mentioned above, allow us to outline a first image of that weakening and loss of strength of these groups today.

Of course, above all these hypotheses there are structural issues such as the socioeconomic and political situation of the last 20 years that also have a clear effect on the formats of these youth groups. Issues such as changes in the profile and format of migrations (a certain change in volume between young people arriving from Latin America to young people from North Africa), the different successive economic crises, and their employment and economic consequences, or the successive changes politicians on a different scale, have altered the reality of young people who are pushed to the margins, which has also directly affected their daily practices.

All of this has contributed to the fact that the youth street groups studied here have varied their forms, formats and practices, going from being much more monolithic, hermetic and to a certain point static group, to much more diffuse groups, without clear borders and where what generates the feeling of belonging is the shared identification among its members of living similar realities, in similar places, and from similar social positions. As both STK_BCN_06/F34 and STK_BCN_10/M47 explain, groups are often no longer defined from within (as if it could happen at certain times in the past), but rather from the outside, and they usually have in common the characteristic of serve as spaces of support and subsistence against the difficulties that precarious lives in the peripheries entail. The group is not only a space for mutual recognition and identification under the group, but it is also a fluid space that serves as an escape valve for various problems: from issues with work or residence permits, to subsistence economies, through spaces for recognition and production of shared identities linked to actions, aesthetics, leisure, etc. This variation of the groups towards mutual help spaces has also been accompanied, in parallel and as a consequence or as a cause, of a certain change in the role of women within the group.

Thus, while their role was much more residual and was normally linked to sentimental relationships with members (and, therefore, they occupied a position close to but outside the group) at the beginning, at the end of the first decade of the 2000's their role was gaining importance and recognition, reaching the point that at certain specific moments it was women who occupied the leadership spaces.

It is within this framework that most of the "new" groups studied are included, which makes it necessary to rethink some analytical approach techniques and also causes them to be understood as a matter in motion to understand the internal dynamics and, mainly, the forms of identification of its members and the entry and exit processes. It is under this prism that we can understand that similar groups are generated in the different neighbourhoods of each city (also in more remote spaces such as Lleida or Canet de Mar), without having a specific connection under a common group umbrella, as if they could give in groups like the Latin Kings.

In addition, these new groups allow us to analyse the functions that the group can fulfil and the interests that lead each member to join from other perspectives. Here some parallels can be established with the more structured groups of the beginning of the century, since all of them also served as subsistence spaces on which their members leaned on in times of need, and also as spaces for mutual recognition many times in societies and communities where these young people experience processes of marginalization. Beyond these common features, which are what allow a comparison between the three groups studied, it has also been possible to observe how, apart from differentiated internal structuring and more "lax" common identification processes, there are differentiated relationships with other agents and social institutions depending on the type of group and its members; relationships that in some cases try to distance them from the most peripheral positions, as we will see.

2.4.2. The Latin Kings and Queens of Barcelona: 20 years of history

This is the 'historic' street youth group par excellence both in Barcelona and in Catalonia and Spain. Since its appearance in the early 2000s, facing accusations of murders and conflicts with groups such as the Ñetas, its social, media and political journey has varied, going from moments of maximum public exposure to moments of virtual disappearance. This alternation of excessive visibility to near oblivion can only be understood if we analyse it from the point of view of what political function all of this has had; that is, in summary, in what way they have been used as subjects and groups that could generate social processes of greater scope and be used for political changes of dimensions greater than that of youth street groups.

In this sense, this group has been the centre of political practices of various kinds: from the application of persecution and repression policies to the application of mediation and 'integration' practices. All of this, in short, has had direct consequences both on the future of the group itself and on the individual trajectories of its members. Therefore, to understand what position the group currently occupies, it is necessary to take a historical

tour of the last 20 years and thus be able to shed light on the possible effects that each 'political change' or strategy may have had on it.

Linked to the more general political processes, we can venture to affirm that both the processes of repression (before and after the application of the Barcelona Model) and the processes of mediation and institutional relations had positive effects (in the case of repression very reduced) and negative for the groups. For this, it is analytically interesting to divide the group's journey into three major phases: 1) the group's public appearance (2000 to 2004, approximately); 2) the Barcelona Model (2004 to 2011, approximately); 3) the return of the heavy hand and the attempt to eliminate the group (2011 to 2020).

Public appearance of the Latin Kings

Its social appearance was mediated through conflicts and violence between youth groups and also through a construction and definition external to the group. In the case of Barcelona, the main reason for the overexposure of these groups in the media was the murder of the young Ronny Tapias. This exposure was produced in a generalized way from an external view of the groups: it was journalists or opinion-makers who filled the world with the imaginaries and practices of these groups, and normally their members were not given any space for enunciation. The main political perspective on the phenomenon at that time was repressive and the attempt by all means to put an end to these groups, especially since some groups increasingly grew in terms of the number of members and in territorial expansion. In this context, it was treated as an unknown phenomenon that caused fear and curiosity for the rest of society. Newscasts and newspapers were filled with details of their violent practices and political discourses justifying the need for police and judicial persecution of the groups were generated. In short, a certain American imaginary of what the gangs were was transferred. The general vision of the phenomenon was built through a security perspective, and they were introduced as the main subjects that generate social ills.

In summary, all that initial process of public appearance by the media and stigmatizing had effects of greater clandestinity in the groups, a chain reaction due to the need to protect themselves against external attacks (from other groups and also from institutions), and concealment of the sense of groups by "fear" of manipulation and use. In general, the repressive practices of various dimensions (persecutory, but also media) meant that there was a withdrawal of the groups inwards and the concealment of their practices in internal spaces.

At the level of its members, this first stage, although it is narrated from the harshness of the moment (both due to the repression and the existing violence between groups), is also remembered as the moment of greatest expansion of the groups and as a historical moment of personal recognition (for example, through respect) at the level of relationships within the space of youth street groups. In this sense, this sometimes positive evaluation of some elements of that stage must be taken into account to understand certain stories built a posteriori and that, for example, underscore how important it was to be part of the group in those moments of expansion. Even so, on the negative side, certain internal dynamics were generated during this period that the group had maintained since its

creation, such as the non-recognition of women as queens, or at least not as agents who can occupy positions of recognition within the group, in addition to a very lax filter in terms of the group's entry requirements. Regarding the latter, several of the interviewees reported how problematic the rapid growth of the group in terms of members was, the entry of many young minors and the problematic consequences that this had, both with families, with institutes, as well as at the national level. There were also consequences internally due to the difficulty of generating deep implications for the group beyond being considered a "fashion".

Barcelona model

It was not until the middle of the first decade of the 2000s that an attempt was made to break with this dynamic and a coordinated effort was made for a new perspective on the groups. Various institutions such as Barcelona City Council, the city's *Sindicatura de Greuges* (Ombud's office), the Mossos d'Esquadra (local police) and the academic world sought to provide a more nuanced and contextualized response to the reality of these groups, in addition to giving them a certain voice at different levels: own definition, but also institutional recognition. The culmination of this process was the constitution of recognized youth associations together with a change in the police approach to the phenomenon (based on mediation and with the main purpose of understanding the groups better in order to mitigate the existing violence). Thus, one of the main effects of all this was the appearance of other voices that tried to fill the phenomenon with content from other perspectives.

STK_BCN_30/M45s: At an organizational level, there was someone who wanted... Who dedicated himself, in inverted commas, to thinking. But more than to think, to know. And when we get [the report on the gangs], well, we put the cogs in motion and that... What interests us? Finding out about this phenomenon. Let's see what more there is... (...) When we started looking for information on Latin Kings, Ñetas... Well, Puerto Rico, Chicago, the origins and such. And of course, since we had no fucking idea what you were or how you worked, but we did want to know, we contacted the Chicago police and talked to a sergeant from Chicago who handled the gang thing there and he sent us documentation of your Nation. The manifesto. And we said to ourselves... "shit, we have no fucking idea". And so many films, and so much influence and all this... And when we realized the dimension it had had in the United States: "how ignorant we are, right?" That's why it makes sense for there to be someone dedicated to [learning about the phenomenon].

Through this quote from one of the police officers responsible for the change in the policies used, we can observe how the focus of attention shifted from a search to eliminate and repress the groups to another vision in which one sought to know them and understand their dynamics. This process attempted to modify the ways in which those groups were defined. Not only internally, trying to give its members a voice, but also producing other types of mediated discourses that could have a social impact.

STK_BCN_30/M45s: We crushed the journalists because we looked like a sect because they came to us and said... There had been a brawl everywhere and with whomever, and the request came to the Mossos communication office to say, "An interview for the fight in the park that was", from L'Hospitalet, from Rubí or whatever. And the journalist would come and say "Let's see, what nationalities are they? what gang are they from? what weapons have they used? what drugs do they take? And what is its territory? And usually they would pass them to us and we would say

“do you have time?”. (...) And we said to the journalists “do you have time?”. “This one is going to tell me here...”. We had an hour and a half explaining to them “look, I'm going to tell you why this is in the United States, in Chicago in the 1940s more or less... Chicago...”.

In short, one of the most positive parts of this whole process was the search to give complex perspectives on the phenomenon and to give voice (mediated or direct) to the main subjects themselves.

In addition to this attempt to give voice, there were also coordinated actions between institutions and groups that sought to change certain internal dynamics that were the source of much of the stigmatization. These actions ranged from the acceptance and consolidation of women, both within the group and in management and leadership roles, and attempts to break with certain existing sexist dynamics and practices. There were also changes in the format of the people who became part of the group: a greater recognition and the acquisition of power of the younger groups (the *Peewees* in the case of the Latin Kings), at the same time as the non-acceptance of minors in the group or, in some exceptions, the claim of the authorization of the legal guardians for their participation. These practices, as I was saying, mediated by the different agents responsible for the Barcelona Model, sought to tackle existing internal problems in the groups and break with certain dynamics that increased stigmatization. A large part of these positive and change dynamics remained in the group up to the present day.

Even so, this process also had negative consequences or certain limitations that directly affected the future of the group. On the one hand, the limited time span of the coordinated political proposal meant limited support for the process and a sudden abandonment of it, which once again increased the dynamics of mistrust and, to a certain extent, the police and judicial capacity to prosecute the crime once again and members of these groups through certain information collected in the mediation period.

MEM_BCN_01/M41: No, let's see. On the one hand, I tell you I feel like I've been used, you know? Because we really wanted to integrate in a way that we can use the public spaces and integrate the youth so that they are not hanging around in the parks... So that they can use the areas and all that. But what was the use of all that if in the end...? A year or two years passed and they let go of our hands, and they left us like that, poof. So, it's like, I don't know, in the end what they wanted was “well, let's let them be visible and then when they're already visible, we know where they are and poof, let's catch them. And now they are no longer a legal organization. Now they are a criminal organization.” So, I say, why give you the opportunity if then they are going to fuck you over?

Clearly, this change in the process, which was preceded by changes in political and government strategies, meant an increase, once again, in the distrust on the part of these groups with the institutions and with their actions. Beyond this, the second negative consequence was the internal segregation in the group caused by the Barcelona Model due to the integration of some factions in the process, compared to others that did not want to participate. Internally, this meant the creation of different divisions and subgroups, which generated certain confrontations due to the delegitimization of this more institutionalized path. Those groups that did not agree with the process saw it as an attack on their principles and as a process of internal differentiation that was perceived as a constant threat. Beyond the internal level, externally it also meant a differentiated

adherence between groups (with, for example, the Ñetas) and the contradictory vision of the process depending on the participating group. For example, a Ñetas leader views the process as follows:

MEM_BCN_67/M40: Actually, we were forced to establish ourselves legally. Mainly to get the Urban Guard off our backs. Not the Mossos. The Urban Guard, because they were always in our faces. That already... As STK_BCN_30/M/45s said, we were lucky to have the link with the Mossos because, yes, it was like that "MEM_BCN_31, I want to talk to you." "What's up?". We would get together and "Look, we're going to have a big meeting in such and such a place". "Who's responsible?" For example, if we were in (...) the Pegasus. "It will be in the Pegasus." And he told us, "I need 4 managers." We went to the police station, and we already had all the details. Many guys tell you that 4 or 5 streets away there were 3 or 4 riot vans. But they left us to our meeting. Very different with the Urban Police, they disrupted everything. So, we were forced into this. But who forced us? The press, okay? And a Dominican boy who... We left or we made ourselves known or they made us known with the death of...

INT_2: Ronny Tapias.

STK_BCN_30/M45: Ronny Tapias.

MEM_BCN_67/M40: Exactly. When this boy was arrested, he said that he was a Ñeta. Well, he wasn't a Ñeta, okay? So, at that time, the National Police was also here. They began to arrest our boys. The most well-known. The great case of [remains anonymous] that still comes out if you look for it on the internet. When he passes by handcuffed, he passes by shackled, and the press... And he says "I'm a Ñeta, but we had nothing to do with the death of Ronny Tapias." From there we had the Urban Guard on us. The National Police that also did not last long and left. And the Mossos, I am not telling you that they were not on top of it, but in another way. In order to start working we were forced to legalize ourselves. There was no positive part. Definitely that for us there was no positive part. Why? Because we had a scheme, some rules, a philosophy, which for our Latin Kings *hermanos* is literature, that the less we ask of the government, the less we would have to account for what we did, okay? So much so that when we were in Parliament, my Latin Kings brothers acted in one way, we in another. We are... or it was, our philosophy, to work for those people who are in jail. And a rehab and keep the boys from going to jail. [That] those who are outside go to jail. I back off. Why was it negative? Because this was publicity that does not benefit us.

In summary, although it generated a drastic decrease in the volume of crimes and violence linked to these groups and internal changes in the practices and roles of the members, it did produce a certain intensification of the internal confrontation between groups.

On the other hand, and as the last vertex of the negative consequences that is necessary to highlight in order to understand the evolution of the group, the drastic change of models implied a variation of the internal dynamics of the groups and a re-hiding and closure of the members who later of the process remained at the forefront of these groups. The leader of the faction that was linked to the Barcelona Model process summarizes the path that was followed after that in the following way:

MEM_BCN_01/M41: It is not that it has changed. What happens is that they already hid again. They were ghosts again. Because they forced them to do that. Not because... Not because... Because the conflict continues, you know? And not because it has to do with Latin King or Ñetas. There are more conflicts in the clubs... outside the clubs or in the streets. But now, do they say that putting a heavy hand has changed things? What it does is make things worse. Because before, when we, there was a deal made, an agreement, a follow-up, and we all walked together in the

same direction. There weren't as many conflicts... In other words, they were reduced. And now there are. What happens is that maybe they don't want to take them out or they don't want them...

Return of the heavy hand

The last stage of the group is the one that goes from the end of the Barcelona Model to the present and that includes all the processes that were experienced back to the persecution of these groups (and other new ones that emerged over the years) and to the attempt of suppression and elimination through police and criminal channels. Starting in the second decade of the 2000s, different judicial processes followed one another with a large part of the subgroups of the Latin Kings in Barcelona, as well as with other groups such as the Ñetas, the Minors, among others. Many of these processes started from a police use of the data that, under other intentions, were collected within the previous police mediation process.

All of this meant a new invisibility for the groups, hidden once again and far from institutionalized processes and public channels for meeting, meeting and participation, for fear of constant reprisals and increased persecution. Although some of the seeds of the Barcelona Model were maintained, and proof of this is the attempt to replicate this process today and carried out by the youngest members of the group, at a general level this new stage involved processes of police raids, collective trials under the premise of criminal organization and prison time for some of the members. In this new scene, at an institutional level, it was no longer so much about combating and ending a phenomenon that insulted the conditions of exclusion and precariousness to which young migrants from the urban peripheries were often condemned, but rather what was sought 'to create' a public subject that would generate insecurity (although often this was subjective, if we stick to the real volumes of crimes and delinquency in the city), in order to apply greater security policies to control poverty.

To understand this last statement, it is necessary to transport ourselves to the political, economic and social context of the second decade of the 21st century. Halfway between two economic crises, and with the continued application of political austerity measures, different social movements and political protests had been emerging on the Catalan and Spanish scene as a consequence of the growing precariousness and existing inequalities. Faced with a panorama of increasing political protest, the search for "public enemies" such as gangs, and transferring the full weight of social problems onto them (accused of robberies, drug trafficking, violence and crimes), it also meant a disintegration of community social ties, mainly peripheral, and a social commitment (mediated by the media, political speeches and political-judicial action) to combat these evils through an increase in persecution and criminalization.

In summary, as can be clearly seen through the example of the latest police and judicial process against the Latin Kings of Barcelona, it did not matter so much whether the accusations were founded and real, materializing about substantial crimes in the city, as determining and pointing out that this group was the cause of these social ills. A magnifying glass on the social unrest that these groups "caused", instead of on structural issues such as unemployment, poverty, lack of resources, etc. An example of this is the

excessive media dimension related to the raids prior to the trial and the arrests, with appearances in the vast majority of local and state media, and instead the appearance of a single news item in a minority media reporting on the acquittal of the majority of the defendants (Ballesté & Feixa, 2022).

This duality allows us to link this idea of using these groups for greater political purposes and the production of a kind of scapegoat on which to inflict social ills that ultimately reproduce a disintegration of community networks and the reproduction of structural violence towards the horizontal.

2.4.3. Minors (and adults) migrated alone: New and old stigmas on youth groups

Although it is not a recent phenomenon, the arrival of unaccompanied minors (not accompanied by any family member or guardian) has seen an increase in volume over the last 4 or 5 years, although little data is available on this issue beyond certain official statistics (which do not count those young people outside the guardianship system) and various estimates. In Catalonia, the process of guardianship of minors who arrive alone falls under the jurisdiction of the DGAIA (General Directorate for Child and Adolescent Care), dependent on the Department of Social Rights of the Generalitat de Catalunya. According to the DGAIA itself, in the report published in 2022 on Unaccompanied Infants and Young Migrants in Catalonia, at the end of 2018 there was the highest volume of arrivals, with 3,710 minors in care and this high number was maintained for the next few years (2,219 in 2019, 808 in 2020, 1,282 in 2021 and 1,180 in 2022), contrasting with the number of minors under guardianship before 2016, which did not exceed 400 cases per year. Reduced to the scale of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, we see that the percentage of minors migrated alone compared to the total number of minors in care is 32.2%, and of these 96.2% are men, the vast majority of whom are between 16 and 20 (in some specific cases the guardianship is maintained for two more years once they are 18), and that 37% come from Morocco. More than the absolute values of this migratory phenomenon, it is necessary to highlight the real conditions that many of these minors and young people live, and the consequences of the migratory processes that build up behind them together with the political discourses that have been generated through or against them.

In addition, as mentioned above, we should add those minors who do not fall within the administrative guardianship channels to these data and also those young people who, once they reach the age of majority, are excluded from them. Thus, we can interpret that the absolute numbers of young people and minors who arrive throughout the country is notably higher than that shown above.

To begin with, it is necessary to analyse issues intrinsic to the entire migration process that have been highlighted by various associations, NGOs and other third sector entities. On the one hand, the difficulties and violence that are related to leaving their places of origin and all the transit until reaching the destination city: from processes of violence and violations in border areas, the danger of forms of migration and the risks of death,

the violence experienced both by the different police forces of various crossing countries and by other criminal groups linked to migration, to the personal processes of uprooting, loss of adult references or even precarious subsistence during the process (Garavito , et al., 2018). This violence is even worse in the case of girls who, although fewer than boys decide to migrate, tend to find themselves involved in much more extreme processes of invisibility and the different types of violence described fall more heavily on them. It is a violence that is often already part of the reason for their migration, and that often results in migration without the support or knowledge of the family. Among the reasons for migration, they would highlight "the flight from a forced marriage, the restriction of freedoms, the fear of reproach due to sexual orientation and other situations of abuse or exploitation by the parents" (Torrado in Quiroga, 2021).

On the other hand, although in a very summarized way, it is necessary to observe what is the situation that most of these adolescents and young people find themselves once they arrive in Spain. In most cases, such as that of MEM_BCN_35/M20, a young man of Moroccan origin who has been in Catalonia for more than 3 years and who was under guardianship when he was a minor, the first contact is usually with the police forces, either for the arrival by sea and subsequent interception, as well as for being the first institutional body to which they turn to be able to enter the guardianship processes⁷.

First contacts on arrival

Continuing with the case of MEM_BCN_35/M20, this can clearly summarize a social and situational reality experienced by many of these young people. After several attempts to reach Spain, and with all the violence suffered at the Moroccan border and in migratory transit, his arrival by boat was immediately followed by a search on how to move quickly and not be intercepted by the police (because he did not want to stay in Andalusia, but to get to Catalonia), although he was eventually 'imprisoned' in an Andalusian migrant detention centre. Thus, the first contact that he had once inside Spain was with the police, who chased him, intercepted him and transferred him to this centre.

This type of contact with the police is repeated several times in most of the life histories and it is exclusively upon arrival. Once he escaped from said centre and upon his arrival in Barcelona (the city where he wanted to settle), he went of his own free will, advised by other young people who had arrived before, to the nearest police station to explain his situation and that they could transfer him to the DGAIA and later to a centre for minors. This summary makes it possible to show the institutional channels that these young people contact upon their arrival: the border police and the different local or state police, and it is not until a second stage that other agents such as educators or social workers come into contact, although they also normally do so from spaces of retention, confinement and, to a certain extent, 'social concealment', such as the centres. In this

⁷ It is interesting to observe, as it appears in several interviews, the internalization for these young people of the police as the first institutional agent to turn to if they seek to find protection. This denotes the "real" way in which the entire reception of migrant youth and the administrative processes of guardianship are structured, always from a context where the central or first agent is the police. And, with this, we can observe all the violence that already occurs in the first contact of young people with the country of destination.

sense, the situation of these young people is constructed through a punitive or security perspective, which places them in a specific social space of marginality and which links them directly to the right hand of the State (and when the left hand does, they are normally subject to processes of seclusion and social control).

In addition to this social positioning linked to the institutional relationship of the groups, it is necessary to understand what social realities young people encounter once they arrive at their destination. Institutional coverage, as already mentioned, is limited and is built through a fund project that, in short, focuses on retaining young people in minimally safe spaces until they reach the age of majority. As STK_BCN_05/F26 explained, the situation in juvenile centres can become desperate or complicated for adolescents:

STK_BCN_05/F26: Lately it happened to us that they didn't like the centres where they were. They weren't happy. That the conditions in the centre were not good or that they were being harassed by other minors. (...) And they wanted to request the change, but of course, the problem is that you have to wait about 48 hours for them to change your centre. In other words, once you have escaped from the centre, come back in 48 hours and try to ask for a change. But these changes are not always for the better and you never know (...) the same goes from being one of 12 to one of 30 (young people). (...) And second, having many children in the same room, not having a space and not having the right conditions in a centre. Many don't have Spanish classes or anything. I mean, they weren't educated...lots of hours with nothing to do. They don't know what to do for I don't know how long...

In this context, some of these adolescents and young people prefer to live on the street or outside the guardianship framework so as not to suffer from these situations. This leads to the question of minors and young people migrating alone taking on the aspect of situations of poverty, living on the street or entering criminal circles depending on the place where they end up living. For example, in the town adjacent to Canet de Mar there was a squatters' house that where several migrants with no other residential possibility were living. But, in turn, this space was controlled by other groups of young people and adults who imposed their rules in order to live (some of which were linked to the obligation to commit criminal acts to pay specific rents). This situation is not only experienced by minors who leave the centres, but there are other young people who do not enter the institutional channels for various reasons and, even more, many young people who are already of legal age who, once their guardianship is lost, have no other spaces to go.

Papers, residence and irregular situation

One of the situations that generates the most vulnerability for these young people (although it is also a common feature shared with the other groups of young people studied) is recognition and their legal situation in the country of arrival. The difficulty imposed by the Immigration Law to obtain residence and work permits mean an immediate condemnation to marginalization and the situation of 'non-citizens' or 'second-class citizens'. It is in the hands of the guardianship spaces such as the centres for minors to carry out the procedures to obtain these permits. But, as has been seen throughout the field work, there are often irregularities, saturations or other situations that mean that this is not carried out correctly. An example of this is the situation discussed in an assembly of the EXMENA's group:

MEM_BCN_16/F25: But what I'm talking about is a girl, not a boy. I mean, it was a girl. Normally the subject of girls never comes up or I don't know what. Well, this girl says that she has not been issued a passport. She has been told "find your life". I said "Really?" She has been with them for two years without papers and without anything.

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Damn!

MEM_BCN_16/F25: I told her, "They gave me a paper to sign, I don't know what it was and they told me that your papers are being processed." I contacted [a girl who hasn't met before] and she said, "Put me through to the girl". I passed the phone to her, she has looked for it and it seems that there was nothing to renew it. They weren't doing papers or anything for her. She is now on the street and without any paperwork that shows that she's a person that exists, you know? She doesn't even have a passport.

INT: And they haven't done anything for her in all this time...

MEM_BCN_16/F25: Nothing. Nothing. She, well, she has been sleeping on the benches, in the boxes, and then...

MEM_BCN_38/M23: The girl? (Upset)

MEM_BCN_16/F25: Yes, the girl, the girl...

MEM_BCN_09 / F22: Do you see her? This isn't about the cutbacks anymore. Because she is a girl, you have her there. You already know that she's going to spend these two years with you, why haven't you moved your fucking ass to...?

Problems such as these have been repeated throughout the field work: situations in which the workers at the centre do not process the corresponding permits, situations of blackmail for their processing or, simply, forgetfulness and reluctance to carry them out. For those minors or young people outside the guardianship system, this situation becomes even more dramatic. Thus, for minors who do not have this support, it is almost impossible for them to be able to make requests. But when they are of legal age, the documentation system changes and makes the requirements to obtain them even more demanding: justifying that they have a large amount of money to be able to survive, 1-year full-time work contracts, among others. These marginalization processes are even more pronounced in the case of girls, as we see in the example, who tend to have fewer support networks here (many times because they migrate without any close contact or family members) and in some cases they enter into processes of exploitation and various forms of violence.

All these situations linked to documentation exacerbate the marginalization and vulnerability of young people, since they not only cause 'unrecognized people' to be constructed, but also have direct effects on the experiential and economic possibilities of subsisting: finding work, find a place to live, be able to go to certain social services, etc. All of this generates a series of differentiated consequences depending on the personal situation of each young person and also on the possibilities of support networks that they have around them.

On the one hand, the limitations of the guardianship system with these minors often try to be alleviated or covered through other entities and associations that try to find solutions. For example, associations like Itaca in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat in the INSERJOVE project (linked to job placement and education) dedicate a good part of their

time to helping young people who come to regularize their legal situation, to be able to process the validation of studies and later to cooperate so that they find some potential jobs. In this sense, the third sector entities dedicated to these young people currently use a large part of their resources to try to alleviate those limits that the law and the institution have. And this is the case for not only formal entities: once again EXMENAS dedicates a good part of its actions to help and redirect such situations:

STK_BCN_05/F26: So, there is this situation of not having papers, not having a house and not having a job. Therefore, some tend to squat or live on the street, so what the MEM_BCN_16 (F – 25) usually does is help process the papers, and what they usually do with these kids is take them from the squatter houses to his house.

Even so, these groups and the entities that work on the subject are limited by time and resources and cannot deal with all the problems. This means that those young people who do not have this support network are normally plunged into situations of poverty and helplessness, in which youth groups come on the scene and offer the possibilities that they will provide spaces for mutual support and help in providing subsistence. As will be seen in the next point, these group aids can both be generated through spaces of comfort, through which those young people who have a 'better situation' can extrapolate that in a group aid, or through delinquency spaces in which that this option is the only way to move forward. This last path sometimes leads to extreme situations such as addictions, crime linked to traffic or robbery, living on the streets, prostitution or exploitation of different kinds. This, at the same time, conditions the formats that the different groups acquire and also, depending on this greater or lesser support network, allows us to observe more or less peripheral and marginal positions.

In relation to these situations, two foster mothers from Canet de Mar reflect on the different situations experienced by unaccompanied young migrants:

STK_BCN_29/F40s: The guy who doesn't... who... I don't think... I imagine, as everywhere, that there is always the guy who prefers to take the easy route, doesn't want help, and easy money is easier for him and quick and that's it.

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yes, yes. There are also ones like this. Obviously.

STK_BCN_29/F40s: There are also these everywhere. But it is true that when you see a boy from these immigrants who is lost because of drugs, who is sleeping on the street and who has hit rock bottom, it is because there is no one to really help him. So, that kid will never be able to get out of that well because there is no one behind him to give him a kick up the backside and tell him "Get up and go onward and upward."

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Nobody. What has to happen for this boy to get ahead?

STK_BCN_29 / F40s: He needs to commit a serious crime, that he goes to jail for and that at least the time he is in prison, that time...

STK_BCN_33/F50s: It's sad, but that's how it is.

STK_BCN_29/F40s: It's sad, but that's how it is. During the time that he is in jail, that kid gets back a little stability... Not his stability, his... his... how can I tell you? His life. Well, he has a roof over his head, he has food, he has medicine if he is sick, if it rains he doesn't get wet. But there comes a time when the sentence ends. Now you have to go out into the street again and you find yourself alone again. What are you going to do? Either you find someone to guide you and help you, or you come back...

MEM_BCN_35/M20: You go back as before.

STK_BCN_29/F40s: Or you go back to what you already know. And you say “well, if they catch me again, I will have a roof over my head again again”. Many think so. They have no other choice.

Grouphood as a support space

It is under these specific contexts that grouphood appears as a common space from which to deal with situations of vulnerability and exclusion that they suffer, although, as we have seen, depending on the format of said grouphood, the paths followed can help leave certain marginalities or, instead, delve deeper into them. What has been observed in the field work is that the group is the first social and collective space for support and support for young people without family or support networks.

Moving away from the view that certain extreme right-wing political discourses construct and that are supported by some media, by which these groups are constituted in order to commit crimes, the analysis has allowed us to understand them as spaces for subsistence and survival in the face of and hostile situations.

In Canet de Mar, it was possible to observe the two paths taken by this construction of the group: external and internal. On the one hand, through the accounts of the young people themselves and other social agents of the town, it was possible to recompose the context in which different racist demonstrations against the recently created centre for minors took place. STK_BCN_29/F40s, a woman in her 40s from the town experienced both sides of the process. When the centre was created, she promoted some of the demonstrations against young people based on the idea that they had come here to commit crimes:

“In principle I was against all this, because when they arrived, well, the typical thing, fear of the unknown, right? Guys who come from Morocco. “Moroccans are all thieves, they are all rapists...”. And it scared me. And then, given the insecurity that I had, I moved a lot of things to be able to hold a demonstration in front of the town hall against the... In other words, in favor of security. A racist demonstration, covered by security”.

This explanation allows us to understand how images of these groups are built through external agents such as political discourse and the media. She explains that once she got to know the boys at the centre through her daughter, whom she became friends with, she understood that all of this was part of a stigma that she had created against them. Such was the process that she herself went through that, after a few months and faced with a municipal search campaign for foster mothers (who could help these young people to get to know the town), she ended up "tutoring" two of them and their house became a common space for the group.

On the other hand, the group, far from being a self-defined entity with common codes that solidify the sense of belonging (as in the case, for example, of the Latin Kings), is built internally through recognition and relationship between young people who live similar realities and who are under common spaces (such as the centre for minors or also the street). In cities like Barcelona or L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, due to their size, these group processes tend to be much more difficult to follow. On the other hand, in Canet de Mar, being a much smaller and more manageable town, it was possible to observe in an

integral way and understand how these groups were constituted and what relationships they generated around them.

As has already been seen, internally the group acts as a space for subsistence, generating mutual aid processes such as finding work, sharing economic resources among its members, providing shelter and lodging, or also helping with mobility transits, etc. During the fieldwork, due to her personal situation, MEM_BCN_35 / M20 became a fundamental pillar for the rest of his friends. He got a paid job, was able to regularize his administrative situation and was also renting his own apartment. All of this, far from being a factor of distinction within the group and seeking distance from the other members who were in a worse situation, made him the centre of subsistence. In those months, he financially supported several of his friends with loans that were repaid when each young person could without 'fixed' terms (and some never repaid him): first, he put up MEM_BCN_36/M25 in his home for a few months and then did the same for MEM_BCN_61/M19 when he got out of prison and had nowhere to go. He had met them, like other members of the group, at the Canet de Mar juvenile centre, but he did not know either of them from Morocco.

Beyond the figure of MEM_BCN_35/M20, there were also other members of the group who, in different situations, enacted these aid processes. For example, MEM_BCN_44/M23, a young man in his early 20s who had spent more than a year living on the streets of Barcelona, although he had a difficult personal situation (he had no papers, lived in a squatter house, and had had some problems judicial and police), was a figure within the protection and support group for those members who found themselves in more difficult situations on the streets or involved in issues such as small-scale trafficking. He would help them if they needed accommodation in his squatter house or, if they had any problems with other groups, he would take care of them.

In this sense, this alternation in the actions of the different members allows us to observe a common framework of help between them and, depending on the possibilities or the roles of each one, serve as sources to move forward and cover the needs of the different members of the groups. This group fostered in mutual aid and subsistence processes can also be faced with subsistence through informal economies, sometimes criminal, and that the only possible spaces are linked to issues such as squatting or crime. In our case study, these situations were only a more punctual and specific part within the more general framework of group actions and practices, even though they did exist. And they normally occurred among those members who, due to various situations, found it more difficult to access certain resources (personal, institutional, or other).

Finally, in this section, it is necessary to emphasize that these subsistence processes do not only occur internally in the groups, but are also supported by the relationships that the members of these groups can build with other social agents. It is often based on the latter that the group's possibilities of having more resources (not only economic) grow and this allows it to move away from illegal issues. Thus, returning to the case of MEM_BCN_35/M20, and of many of the different members of the group, their participation or connection with training activities or aid projects that different local

entities carried out, or also their knowledge of organizations such as Amb Papers allowed them to expand their network of contacts and increase their social capital, which in the end also benefited their potential opportunities. In this case, MEM_BCN_37/M19 found a job in a city in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area as a painter thanks to an institutional insertion project and MEM_BCN_40/M19 had been able to get into one of the few supervised apartments for young adults that existed in the region. All this is directly related to the possibilities of contacts that these young people have with entities or associations of the third sector, or even with institutions. It is a situation that is not always possible for all groups and young people. For example, those who no longer entered into guardianship processes upon their arrival and who had to live on the street and survive through clandestine or illegal activities, as is the case of MEM_BCN_44/M23, do not have the possibility of accessing these resources. In addition, these are resources that are closely linked to the normalized life processes that are built, that is, normally those young people who do not adapt to the norms set by centres, educators or other agents (which can range from strict fixed schedules, attendance at all available training processes, "behaving well", among others), remain excluded from the possibility of following institutionalized or tutored paths, and the system itself is expelling from it those with more complicated personal, vital or experiential situations.

2.4.4. Young people, peripheries and daily life: About trap, squares and associations

Once the most traditional groups, how the Latin Kings or the Ñetas have lost some weight and importance in terms of volume of members in the cities studied, and how the young migrants alone are constituted as more dispersed groups in the cities and are 'labelled' as groups more externally than internally had been analysed, it became necessary to understand what happens with the youth of the peripheral neighbourhoods, what their reality is and under what processes they come together. Although the presence of self-defined groups constituted under the same identification scheme (membership, common signs, forms of entry and exit, and a certain hierarchical scheme) has gradually disappeared, there are still shared group spaces in which groups of young people recognize each other, establish common practices and coexist generating shared identifications through the presence in the public space, the informal economic practices of subsistence and the elaboration of shared codes with elements such as, for example, trap, rap or drill music, and also through their attitude towards everyday problems.

Thus, participant observation developed in neighbourhoods such as Raval and Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and La Ribera in Barcelona, and La Florida or La Torrassa in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, linked both to observation and interaction in public space, as well as in activities and actions carried out by third sector entities for young people from those places, showed a certain common thread in the presence of youth groups in the streets. Although most of these groups did not know each other, nor did they share any relational space, they adopted very similar formats and dynamics in each of the different locations.

To understand how these common frameworks are built, it was necessary to observe the formats that these groups acquire in their constitution, the imaginaries that they produce

and, mostly, the function that the group fulfils in a daily sense. As previously explained, the neighbourhoods analysed can be defined as spaces with a high volume of youth migrant population, where unemployment, precariousness and informal economies are all too present. As a consequence, they are spaces where different structural violence is also assimilated and reproduced within the same neighbourhood dynamics, and they are also places where different insertion, non-formal educational and recreational policies are deployed that seek to partially alleviate the situations of vulnerability and precariousness that are experienced.

The mixture of all these situations stimulates the appearance of youth street groups that coexist and face the dynamics of structural violence that occur in the neighbourhoods, that make up spaces for the production of respect through belonging, but that also dialogue constantly with other agents in the neighbourhood as tools to enhance their ways of 'surviving'. It is from this articulation that the young protagonists of the study themselves seek ways of subsisting and advancing in their daily lives that involve alternating between informal or sometimes criminal activities in order to meet their economic needs, where group membership can be established and a series of codes that identify them and give them respect can be displayed, and a constant negotiation with other agents outside the group, and sometimes outside the neighbourhood, which produce the internalisation of structural violence (such as, for example, police action) or which emerge as possible escapes from life situations (such as, for example, social projects implemented by neighbourhood associations). A brief example of this daily internalization of structural violence can be found in an event experienced by two sisters, MEM_BCN_27/F22 and MEM_BCN_28/F22, who are participants in the INSERJOVE project. In the middle of an activity which aimed to learn to recognize the dangers of the neighbourhood and the negative aspects, the two young women shared an example of an interaction they had had with the police. Some time ago they had the two electric scooters that they had in the family stolen and one day on the street they found that their scooter was being carried by a boy. They notified the police, and upon arrival they explain that the police began to question their story and increasingly believe the boy who had the scooter. As they express, it was because he was white and they were not. In conclusion, the two ended the story by explaining that the police never help them or people like them.

Beyond internalizing and reacting to certain obvious violence on a daily basis, there are also structural problems that are constantly present in the lives of young people:

STK_BCN_18/M43: This [the precarious family situation] means that there are kids who have to assume responsibilities that they shouldn't have to. And that there are children who have seen that their parents don't work, with all that this entails. Because if you spend three years without working, you as an adult don't have a good time (...). Sure, what happens then? That young people, in general, or those that we end up detecting, grow up without a clear goal. And, from there, I believe that everything is built. What do they do? They seek life. How do they look for life? Well, how can they... many dealing, many stealing... Not in the neighbourhood, but outside of it. There are also older people who have their own plants in their homes and the boys act as [caretakers or watchmen].

As this social educator from Florida explains, the lack of "possible" life horizons produces a proliferation of different types of economic forms that allow young people to move

forward and have a certain degree of autonomy. During the field work, the option of 'working' in marijuana plantations in the neighbourhood was very present. It was a way of earning some money that, although criminal, used to be less risky than being on the street dealing deals. The group is often designated as the space where these contacts can be achieved and that allows finding ways to survive.

Along the same lines of subsistence in a context that is normally unfavourable for them, the person in charge of youth projects in a Raval entity explains her impressions about the reason for being of the groups themselves.

STK_BCN_06/F34: I think that many times due to the very violence [structural linked to poverty, marginalization, and social exclusion] that we mentioned before, these groups are also created. And this part of wanting to go unnoticed, because in the end it's that. If I'm young, a migrant, without money, without training... If I visualize myself and see that society does not accept me, then surely from my group I try to go unnoticed, or at least not to get scratched. Either this, or the other way around, the groups that don't want to go unnoticed and then express all this... like this, bad vibes, but perhaps more violently, right? I don't know (...), but I do think a lot about (...) kids who, that, whether they have arrived older or younger [of legal age] (...) but like, many times, the kids who have done this migration process they only come together because of course, that gives them a help, support network... Among them they are often like brothers.

Similarly, understanding that the groups are created to cover those spaces that are not covered socially, family or economically for these young people, we will be able to understand what functions they have, how they are structured and also what they are responding to. For this, it is essential to understand the structural violence that falls on these young people and that not only ranges from the macro level (precariousness, poverty, and exclusion), but also becomes visible on a daily basis in police interventions and other forms of social control. In relation to this, ways of mediating, resisting or even overcoming these situations appear; one of them, common in most of the groups and with a very strong presence, is music and urban art as a space for escape. A specific example of this interrelationship between urban art and mediation or resistance can be found in one of the members of the same group of EXMENAS. MEM_BCN_09/F22, in mid-2021, explained to me that she was trying to start a solo musical project (as a trap singer) that would serve as one more tool to raise awareness and help young migrants from the Forat de la Vergonya neighbourhood and surroundings. Inspired and helped by several friends of hers from the neighbourhood who were dedicated to it and who already had a certain reputation, she had begun to record songs and publish them on her Instagram. Although the project was not sustained over time, it is interesting to observe how urban music could be an easier and closer channel to reach certain young people, as well as to denounce different neighbourhood problems.

Structural violence and relations with external agents

In these neighbourhoods and on these young people, one of the main external agents linked to the institutions that interact with them in the public space are the police forces of various kinds. Throughout the field work it has been possible to verify how the police is normally the main relational agent. Normally, it is a relationship that is built through an oppressive act that seeks to persecute these young people, both for being members of 'unwanted' groups that occupy the public space, as well as for the images that have been

built on them as dangerous groups. This produces that, beyond the structural violence that falls on young people, it is in daily life where said oppression takes shape through the processes of control, persecution, and surveillance that these bodies carry out. An example of this is collected in the following excerpt from the field diary that condenses the situation in the post-pandemic Raval, where there was (even more if possible) an increase in police pressure on these young people.

“I get out of there and go around the whole neighbourhood. The street looks quite quiet. Maybe it's the time or the situation we live in. I get to Calle Hospital, as almost always, and head towards Rambla del Raval. Just when I got to the corner, I see three young men lying on top of two motorcycles chatting. They are smoking and chatting when, at once, two police on motorcycles arrive and get off to go towards them. The young are unfazed. One of the police officers asks one for documentation, he gives it to him. The other two act as if the police didn't even exist. They neither look at them nor interact with them. The other policeman turns the motorcycle around and looks around for a bit. They spend a few minutes there, looking and looking again. The three young people, once they have the documents back, continue chatting stretched out on the motorcycles. The police, when they finish “watching”, get on their motorcycles and go back the way they came. I am surprised by the situation. Firstly, why have they been stopped (racial reasons, pandemic reasons?), and secondly, the reaction of young people who, tired, used to it or I don't know why, have reacted as if the agents did not exist.” (OBS_2020-11-05, Rambla del Raval, the Raval).

Young people, as we can see, internalize these constant police presence and interpellation as a naturalized element of their daily lives, and generate response processes against it that can range from confrontation to normalization of the situation and a consequent search to break the roles of power and control through actions such as not responding, pretending they are not there, etc.

Although this type of response is the most common, the position of the police as their main enemy is also built within the groups. Previously, groups such as the Latin Kings articulated this enemy through confrontation with other groups, but at present it has been possible to observe how the detection of the police as a common element to be "confronted" in general misleads the different groups present in the peripheral neighbourhoods studied. In the end, this becomes a kind of code that produces internal respect and that generates common dynamics that end up defining the position and actions of the members. In other words, the interpretation of the police as the main enemy generates a series of daily responses in the interaction with these agents that end up being internalized as a specific behaviour to carry out if you are young and a member of said groups, and that ultimately becomes an almost defining code of the group itself. This extrapolation of this situation can be observed in this observation from Lleida, where a group of young people assimilate ‘responding’ to the police as a common element of the respect-producing group.

“At 11:15 p.m. at night, a patrol car arrived in the area from the side of the red track. Before it arrives, everyone discusses what to do. Some, few, run just to see them. The rest stay in the same place, in separate spaces, always keeping an eye on the agents. They get out of the vehicle and, like the other day, they go one by one to talk to each group to inform them that they must leave the park. It gives me the feeling of a certain defiant attitude that, after a while, is confirmed. When they go to each group, at first, no one moves. They respond by objecting and asking for reasons to leave. The policeman tells them that more will arrive shortly and that, if they stay there, they will

be fined. That makes most get up and slowly leave. They move a few meters and stop again. The police are slowly chasing them until they reach Passeig de Ronda, the biggest street. There they all stop and, from the other end, they see a van and another patrol car arrive. They are like "excited" and convinced not to leave. Seeing the van, two run away. Most start yelling at them "Both MDLR, MDLR...and then you do this! This is not from MDLR, don't back down...". I am completely blown away. They choose to perform a song from Morad from L'Hospitalet that talks about street children. They leave, but they come back. The police circle them until finally, lights on and in a hurry, they surround them on the street ahead. They all run out and that's how the night ends." (OBS_2020-07-15, Red Track Park, Lleida).

In summary, all these situations condensed through ethnographic vignettes come to materialize a daily process that occurs in the neighbourhoods and that produces a constant daily reality that positions these groups as marginal and peripheral agents. Since the police and not other social agents are the main body of interrelationship with young people, there is a constant positioning of these groups as unwanted groups or groups that should be. The raids, the constant stops asking for documentation or the simple habitual presence of the police are internalized by the young people, generating an assimilation of marginality and the search to rebuild that assimilation through the respect sought with attitudes and responses to these situations. All these situations come to deepen the idea of overlapping the security model and control of poverty and marginality as the main form of government in the peripheries; a model that, far from solving possible conflicts and violence, often accentuates them and increases the processes of exclusion.

The role of associations

Beyond the police, the constituent agents of what has come to be called the left hand of the State are also present in these neighbourhoods and fulfil certain functions of social correction in the face of these existing inequalities. Thus, both social services and other third sector groups (whether they are entities, NGOs, associations or community groups and social movements) seek through their limited resources to try to respond to these existing processes of marginality. In this sense, in recent years the function that public social services had previously carried out in some of these neighbourhoods has turned into a greater assumption of these functions by entities of the third sector, with financing usually shared between public and private organizations.

Most of these entities have limited resources (not only economic, but also temporary, capacity for action or temporary implementation of actions) and therefore must build their projects and programs under the premise of being effective projects that produce tangible results, being aware that they are limited, and that they will not be able to provide general solutions to structural inequalities. This premise constantly affects the expansion of initiatives and projects and clearly has an involuntary component of generating processes that deepen social differentiation. Thus, although its purpose is to try to fix inequalities, the fact that not all young people can participate in these projects, that they cannot have structural changes as their goal, and that they must achieve successful results in the short and medium term leads them to focus in those young people who, for different reasons, can give an answer and can become 'subjects' of success, since they will be the ones that allow the future reproduction of the projects themselves developed.

For this reason, although associations such as Itaca, Nou Sidecar or Casal dels Infants play a central role in processes of integration, promotion of training, and support in structural problems (obtaining papers, mediating in community or family conflicts, etc.), their actions are always limited, which causes them to end up being spaces where certain types of young people normally end up participating or accessing; young people who can commit themselves temporarily, who can stay in courses or annual projects, young people without legal problems, young people with expectations, etc. In addition, it has been possible to observe how, unlike the groups observed in the public space, within these entities, in their activities and formations, there is usually a greater presence of girls. For example, in previously mentioned projects such as INSERJOVE in La Torrassa, or also in the Nou Sidecar evening club, in Florida, more girls than boys participated (or, at times, numbers were equal), and they also did so equally and in a more constant way.

As a consequence of these limitations that entities have and the need to continue through success, 'success' cases are usually small and, although they are usually the most visible to the outside and highlighted (as we see in the following excerpt from interview with some educators from La Torrassa), have a less successful counterpart involving many other young people who 'stay by the wayside'.

STK_BCN_04/M26: Also, in the personal case, we also had a young man who came here a lot, who came to our youth space a lot. He had been living here for a year and had family problems and also his personal ones, and he began to... to go out more. Instead of coming more to the youth space, he went to the parks more, huh... And of course, what was going on with him? That he was a person who, at the level of resources, was emotionally very weak, very susceptible, very vulnerable... He ended up getting involved with a group. Within that group he went from being a person who did not take anything, to smoking cigarettes, to smoking marijuana. From smoking marijuana, they ended up setting him up to sell marijuana and they paid him with more marijuana. And... in the end he got into this circle and, as an association, we intervened, and in the end he ended up leaving that circle. But...

INT: How did you do a little?

STK_BCN_04/M26: Eh... Well, apart from the fact that the family situation was problematic, we reported it to the head of social services. The childhood and youth coordinators here met to talk with... with the... Because we also have his little brother. Well, we also have his little brother and... so we made a direct intervention at the association, school, social services. "This is what is happening. Be careful how things will go." And an intervention was held and in the end...

STK_BCN_03/F30: Guidelines were set from the school, the entity, social services... and the family, the four of them were like, okay, this kid leaves school at such and such a time, we can get him to the dining room space. Come eat in our dining room. From there he makes it to a youth house. We try to...

INT: That it was always from a place...

STK_BCN_03/F30: Sure. And then social services got in touch with the CAP. So, good. Looking for the formula because in the end the kid demonstrated, without words, that it wasn't... that he was there to feel welcomed, but that he needed to go but that someone was there.

Trap and urban music, horizon of hope or visualization of exclusion?

Finally, in relation to this format of groups, it is necessary to introduce the role that music has played in recent years both in its constitution, as well as in the format that they acquire

and, to a certain extent, as a space for the manifestation of realities of these neighbourhoods and also for the construction of alternative routes for young people.

The appearance of the Morad (briefly described in the introduction) has had a direct impact on youth street groups, not only in L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, but in general in the different contexts studied. With him, a new genre has appeared, the trap/drill which, emerged in England and the United States had not yet got much of a foothold in Spain in generally and in Barcelona in particular. Its appearance, along with that of other artists who have followed in his footsteps, has led to the construction of a continuum of shared identities among young people who experience similar situations, coming to produce their own groups or, if not, the acquisition of codes through implementation within existing peripheral street youth groups.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: Me when I was... Yes, when I was younger, I did agree a lot with him. Now you won't remember why when you become famous you forget things, right? But... uh... Do you know the Luxum club and all that? Everyone in the neighbourhood, well, you go to the club until 9 at night because we are 14 years old and you can't take it anymore. And there a lot of us meet. Me, in that season I already knew him and Benny and all the stuff. What's happening? And that's it. I never saw him again and I never saw him party again and when I heard from him again it was when he was in Can Llupià, in the closed centre of Can Llupià. And, from there he came out, and it looks like he is the biggest criminal in the world but he makes music. You know? So, I don't like that part. Why? Because what he sings is super interesting, there are a lot of people who feel super identified... I love his music. I sing it, dance it and shout it and everything...

INT: A lot... Because I'm from Lleida, for example, and all the kids are all about El Morad.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: It's... Sure, and when I listen to it I think... I mean, stories that kids have told me, it's kind of... it's that... it's what you're telling, you know? It is what you are counting. But, I would have really loved it... I would have really loved it if everything I said, I would have really loved it. That's the only thing missing. And he is already. I'm not saying I'm lying or anything, because movies will have also had, eh. But... the way to "get out of prison" is I'm leaving a closed centre for minors...

MEM_BCN_09/F22: (...) I think the topic is very good. I like it because the kids usually feel super identified. What's happening? That they can't say it that way either. And music is also a way... of how little... it would help them to defend themselves or I don't know, they learn it from the Morad. From "Fuck you. You're a cop. I want my food, you don't help me, stick it up your ass". I think it's quite interesting, you know? I... To me... I don't know, they interview me and I do like him... you know? The contrast. The roll... The difference.

Based on this, the groups studied have assimilated a set of practices that are related to what it should be to act or be a young man on the street (an M.D.L.R.) and that manifest different ways of responding to the violence received and to the various conflicts that occur in everyday life. More than analysing what the lyrics and songs of the various artists linked to this style are in a concrete way, this analytical point of view allows us to observe what effects music has on those young people who listen to it and whom it comes to represent. In relation to the differences in the reception of these musical genres between boys and girls, through the example of Morad we observe that, both in his video clips and in a large part of his lyrics, there is an almost exclusive representation of the masculine and very little direct interpellation. (beyond certain "love" verses) to the girls. Even so, the young girls who have come across each other during the fieldwork habitually listen

to this artist, or other similar male artists, through a mixture of the common identification of the stories with their own daily lives, surely added to other processes such as “being in fashion” that involve both boys and girls. A clear difference is found in that other female artists, who are popular among young girls in the field, do not have an equal impact on boys.

Trap and drill are musical genres that are normally based on telling what life is like in a marginal neighbourhood; lives that are traversed by transversal issues such as migration and the social position occupied by young migrants, but also by issues of social class and marginality. Thus, it has been possible to observe how, for the young people studied, this musical genre becomes a reference that marks some of the paths to be followed on a day-to-day basis to deal with the different existing problems: from the relationship with the police, the importance from respect in the neighbourhood, the processes of imprisonment or confinement in centres, to the ways of subsisting in existing poverty.

Beyond delimiting these behaviours, the emergence of a good number of artists from these same neighbourhoods (many of them, for example, come from the Florida neighbourhood), has made music materialize as a possible vital career for young people. and as a possible goal for a more hopeful future. This has influenced many of the young people to take up singing and, furthermore, to support and be supported by those members of the group who are beginning to stand out. In short, it be implemented as one of the central practices that articulates its daily life in the neighbourhood. In particular, as explained by one social educator from Florida that we interviewed, this influence has been more profound in those groups that previously did not have these exhibition spaces, such as young Maghrebis.

STK_BCN_18/M43: But here Latino kids, especially Dominicans, who sing and sing rap and sing many things, there have always been. (...) But we would say yes, Morad... In other words, the Dominicans and Latinos were already doing it, without this impact, and now the Arabs have been added. Because what Morad has done is make many kids in the area do it too.

Such is the influence of music in these areas that, in addition to being a space for the production of identifications and practices, it has also become one of the best tools for mediation with these groups of young people. The different associations studied promote rap, hip hop or trap courses as a way of approaching and retaining young people, being recognized as the activities that work best. In addition, there are different cases of young people, both male and female who after going through some of these courses, have managed to have a musical career. For example, in INSERJOVE, between 2019 and 2020 a girl of Dominican origin participated actively, released a self-produced R&B record and began to get a small gigs.

Finally, as a collation of this point, the case of MEM_BCN_04/M27 allows us to observe the materialization of this transfer between music and the 'urban style' to a future horizon on which to build possible subsistence projects. He is a young man of Colombian origin who migrated once he was 18 and ended up starting up his own clothing brand that sponsors different freestyle singers in the city. Although without papers, and in a rather precarious way, this has allowed him to survive in recent years and acquire a mid-term

economic project, which also allows spaces for mutual aid using friends or acquaintances who are in an irregular situation.

MEM_BCN_04/M27: Of course, in the end my friends got to know me and they followed my idea. The guys here followed my idea. So the... Demad (brand name) has sold itself here. What happened? Well, then I feel that what was done with Demad was like giving that cog to that gear. You understand me? So, he already began to move that machinery. He began to move the machinery. So Demad already what he did was open a characterization in the hip hop of Barcelona. Because the artist was already known, he was dressed, he was asked to rap, to make a video clip, the brand began to post... So, more began to arrive "I want to dress in the brand. I want to wear the brand." And so good. So, it was like a little snowball that grew, grew, grew, and now to the point where it grows by itself, you know? She's already alone.

2.4.5. Brief examples of mediations

Latin Kings in the wake of the process

The effects that the Barcelona Model had on the young members of the Latin Kings in the mid-2000s had a direct impact on how the group perceived this initiative as a formula to get away from conflict and a certain marginality. Although, as seen above, the whole process had many nuances, and the return to the "strong hand" had a direct impact on the expectations of the members of the group, in 2019 one of the groups that was still active maintained the idea of establishing itself as an institutionally recognized association again as a formula to get away from conflicts and violence. In this sense, this projection, although it will not actually happen later on down the line, allows us to understand how this process was internalized by the members, who saw it partly as a possible way to move away from the social position previously occupied.

Furthermore, the fact that it is a historical event has allowed the construction of a temporally broad analysis that helps to understand the different consequences that each political process with these groups has had for their members and for the social position they occupy. Thus, it has been possible to observe how the entire evolution of the group in Barcelona has been marked by the wake of the application of the Barcelona Model, the differentiation in the position occupied by these young people at each historical moment and by the effects on the perception that the youth about their position.

EXMENA's

The constitution of this political group, founded by young migrants (mainly women, some of whom are ex-guardians) who, upon seeing the situation and conditions that migrant youth and minors lived alone in and faced with the media stigmatization that that experienced, decided to articulate as response group and political pressure to change and denounce the different situations they were experiencing. Away from the institutions, this group with the help of different critical journalists established themselves as a support space in the middle of the Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and La Ribera neighbourhoods where young people and minors went to try to solve various problems such as lack of documentation or its processing, conflicts or irregularities in centres for minors, situations of living on the street, the need for food or basic resources, and also advice and institutional guidance. Carrying out activities such as distributing food to young people

in street situations, political protests against irregularities or racist practices by the administration, or also welcoming and accompanying young people and minors in vital and administrative processes made them become a benchmark at the state level.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: For us when we started you want it or not, we weren't even of legal age, do you know what I want to tell you? We also had no knowledge or... In other words, the only thing we could help with was the language issue. Translate. The tools, in the end, who had them are (...) the institutions, the couples...

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Well, he would go to Montjuïc to give routes to see if there were kids like they didn't have a house, or food, or anything. And how they lived, and what they did there.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: We called it patrolling.

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Yes (laughs). We went around and... Well, they went and saw that there were kids who weren't... who were getting cold and who didn't have any kind of help or anything and... they spent their days there.

INT: And what did you do when you met people on the street?

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Well, ask them why they were there, how they'd ended up there, if they got any help from any centre where they were living...

MEM_BCN_09/F22: If someone had come to ask them, why are the street workers there too, you know? And sometimes you find that someone tells you "oh no, because he has come...". I do not know. Sometimes you even went there and you found that they [the educators] were there but accompanied by the police and it was like "okay, now how do we intervene?" Because of course, we would go and it was like "well, whatever happens happens".

Thus, its functions were expanding to give workshops and courses to institutes, administrations or centres explaining the real situation that young people are experiencing or also to try to introduce certain mediation practices that move away from the conflict. In addition, one of their main roles was to denounce false and stigmatizing information that appeared in the media, on social networks, or even in political speeches. They did the latter by interspersing their high participation in social networks, as well as organizing protest actions and responses to these situations.

Finally, it is important to highlight how the group is constituted mainly by young girls, who living in the Ciutat Vella neighbourhood and knowing first-hand the problems that young migrants had been suffering alone, decided to establish this group of response, mediation and claim. It is notable because most young migrants alone are male but this solidarity group is led by females, also migrants, but not "alone".

Host mothers in Canet de Mar

In the specific case of Canet de Mar, the project for foster mothers promoted by the town hall had a long journey in terms of community mediation. Although the initial administrative impulse was very limited (as a premise, the mothers could only act as guides for the young people and they had clearly defined limits of involvement, as can be seen in the following fragment of an interview with two foster mothers) and had a very short duration (as they explain, the support of the city council was approximately two months), the basic idea was maintained through the involvement of the different mothers.

STK_BCN_33/F50s: In other words, obviously whoever says that everything is easy... It's another culture, it's another way of being. We had a handicap with the language. At first it was an adventure

every time we had to meet, because I would sweat because I only said yes or no. And I spent three hours thinking about the questions I was going to ask and finished in two minutes because it was yes, no... And we left... And well, my children immediately got involved. My husband too. Well and MEM_BCN_62/Ms/n today... I'm his mom... And well, right now I'm fighting with him, but I guess I eat with my daughters. No problem. I fight with my daughters every day, well, the same with MEM_BCN_62/Ms/n. And well, I think that... it's not that I have... In other words, to start with, they proposed mentoring... Because this is another matter. I didn't like the way it was set up. What I've seen and how we've done it, and what the mentoring itself was. Because the mentoring itself was super cold. They were... just to speak the language. You couldn't get him into the house. Above all, "Don't ask him about the family." Well, the day we met them "Don't give them two kisses because it's Ramadan." The first thing MEM_BCN_62/Ms/n did was jump around my neck and give me two kisses. And I ask, "Can I touch you?" And he tells me, "Of course, it's no big deal." I say, "I don't know, they told me no...". In other words, it was something that was sold to us as very cold. Very distant, right? I guess there are couples who have stayed that way. Other couples as we have each evolved in their own way.

STK_BCN_29/F40s: I think they wanted us to be their references in the town, period. Without having any type of right or any...

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yes. That we take them for a walk...

STK_BCN_29/F40s: For people to see them with us and not be afraid. As if they were animals that are accompanied.

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yes. That we take them shopping. Let people see them. But nothing to bring them into the house... Everything was very taboo, right?

Thus, at present, these continue to act as a safe space for many of these young people, becoming a reference for them, and through which they can find different supports to be able to face situations such as not having papers, not having a job or not knowing who to turn to in case of conflict.

This space for natural mediation is interesting to observe various channels of conflict resolution where, for example, a significant part of these is focused on a stigmatizing view of these young people produced through political discourse or the media. The articulation of a network of 'mothers', beyond serving as vital points of reference for young people, also meant the creation of response spaces in the face of attacks and demonstrations with a racist component that took place in the town. Thus, beyond a daily mediation, this example allows us to observe what adding a political dimension of struggle and demanding for the rights of young people is like.

2.5. Analysis and detailed results by groups and clusters

2.5.1. New codes and explanatory MEMO's

Practices

Mutual help

This code was added to relate it to those processes of legal, informational, economic or other help that members of the group carry out on others. The code was created considering a broad vision of the concept of mutual aid that is carried out from the idea of non-direct intervention by other agents or institutions. It was not conceived as a process

in relation to other groups, but rather internally in the group, among its members, although this may be more or less structured.

A clear example that appears is how the groups help and give information on how to carry out the legal processes of obtaining papers to their members. Even so, it is not an issue that is limited only to regularization issues such as migrants. Examples also appear in the Latin Kings and Queens group of how the group helps its members to find work. The case of the Ñetas is interesting, since their purpose as a group is to help members who are incarcerated or also those who have been released from prison. In them, we find examples of how the group helps them find jobs once they have left. A process that normally occurs in companies that have members of the group. Also, in the case of the Latin Kings and mainly in the Barcelona Model period, the Queens were the ones that led certain specific aid campaigns for their members or other agents of the community. They were in charge, although not exclusively because sometimes they were also accompanied by men, of monitoring the educational processes of the youngest members of the group. They also created spaces for women to help each other with different problems, and promoted campaigns to distribute food between members of the group or neighbours in need.

In the MENA's and EXMENA's group, beyond the issue of paper processing, this code becomes very relevant. In the case of MENA's, the group itself is a daily livelihood that helps in the search for a place to survive, in obtaining economic resources for subsistence or also, sometimes, in entering criminal matters. Likewise, in the group of EXMENA's, its central function is to help young migrants who are alone. It is interesting to show how much of this role of mutual aid or solidarity between members of groups appears to be led by women: both in the case of the Latin Kings and in the EXMENA's collective, they were the ones who promoted many of these highly focused care spaces. Even so, it is also necessary to highlight that, in the same groups, or in others such as the MENAs or the peripheral neighbourhood youth (mostly male), processes of solidarity and mutual aid were also generated.

Lastly, I would highlight other processes that occur in a less visible way but that serve to help group members in a timely manner: whether in conflicts, in family situations, etc.

Occupancy of flats

This code has been added because it is a topic that regularly appears in field work, mainly with the MENA's and EXMENA's groups and the Neighbourhoods of Torrasa, Florida and Ciutat Vella groups. The occupation of flats can be both a vital subsistence practice (having a home to live in) and also a subsistence/economic gain practice (being able to get an income from it), or both at the same time.

Normally, it appears to be linked to young people who are in a situation of marginality, either due to poverty, lack of work or lack of regular documentation. In the case of young migrants alone, we find that this practice becomes an option when these young people reach the age of majority and public policies stop assuming their guardianship.

We find, for example, the case of La Bruna in Calella (next to Canet de Mar). First, a political project structured through a Squatted Social Centre that, over the years, has been

abandoning the political structure to become a squatter house that is a resource for families and youth in the area.

In this precise case, like in some others, we see that these spaces may be controlled by certain groups of people who demand compensation from the young people who live there such as in the form of paying rent for living there, although this money is often obtained through criminal acts like participating in the sale of drugs. In short, they become spaces for criminal or illegal economies, which in turn increase these marginalization processes.

Drug sale

This code is added to refer to those situations in which the sale of drugs appears in the field, normally linked to a way of obtaining an economic benefit for subsistence. Although it is included in PRACTICES, it does not mean that it is a group activity: it can be personal or orchestrated by the group. It could also appear in the second level category "Deviance", although personally I see a more central and important economic weight for it.

It is necessary to specify that on some occasions there is a reasonable doubt as to whether it is the sale of drugs or personal consumption. On those occasions, it has been codified in both "Drug sales" and "Consumption".

In all three groups, the sale of drugs appears as a possible economic option for survival. In groups like the Latin Kings and Queens and other similar groups, the image of drug traffickers had always gone hand-in-hand with the name. Although it might be true in some cases, the most interesting thing here is to analyse and understand the stigmatization that this image represents for the rest of the group. In the process of normalization and constitution of associations, those opponents used that as a tool to criticize those processes. Similarly, in criminal matters, most of the trials they have had as a group have been accompanied by accusations of small-scale trafficking.

In the group of MENAS and EX-MENA's, the issue of drug sales normally appears linked in a more residual way to those young people who find themselves in situations of greater marginality. That is, living on the street or in squatter houses, where sometimes they are forced to sell drugs to pay, or other times it is their own choice as a possible way out of the situation of economic poverty.

Lastly, in the group of neighbourhoods, it appears as a real problem for certain youths who inhabit these spaces. It is both a daily situation of certain young people, and a problem that is detected by the neighbours and the authorities as central in these places.

Consumption

The "Consumption" code is added due to the repeated appearance of issues related to drugs, other illegal substances and also alcohol. It is added in "Leisure" although it could also appear in "Deviance", since it is not normally associated with "fun" consumption. In the three groups studied, consumption is important and appears recurrently. Sometimes in the present, but mostly as a past issue that refers to a vital moment of crisis (according to their narratives). For example, we find many stories that explain their lives in their

countries of origin where, normally, the situation was more complicated and the subject of consumption is more common.

This is done in a very clear way in the case of Latin Kings and Queens, where many tell of their situation in Ecuador or in other countries of origin as one of high consumption of drugs and alcohol. Sometimes they also refer to their arrival in Spain or Barcelona under this situation.

It also appears in the group of MENA's and EX-MENA's, although in a minor way and usually refers to drug use. It is rarely in the first person, but more for secondary characters who appear in the fieldwork that relate addiction problems. Many times, as in previous added codes, these situations are related to those young people who find themselves in situations of greater marginality: they live on the street, do not have papers, are in squatter houses, or become part of mafia networks.

Lastly, in the group of neighbourhoods the issue of consumption is also important. It is usually a stigma that falls on the population of these neighbourhoods (and youth even more so), being perceived by the rest of the city's inhabitants as spaces for the consumption and sale of drugs. Although sometimes this image is exaggerated, there is a strong presence of drugs among young people.

Repression

This code is added to refer to police and/or judicial practices that seek to end "gangs" through large operations, raids, etc. It is a process linked to the "strong hand" as a way of acting and a practice that youth street groups do not carry out, but rather receive and act in response to. Other practices developed by social agents (not exclusively institutional) that exercise repressive functions against these groups (from security guards to people who work in the institution, but not directly in security tasks) are also extracted from this dimension.

The code is usually accompanied by the Police or Justice codes, since they are the agents that most clearly apply these situations. In all groups we find processes of social or economic persecution that, ultimately, seek to highlight their condition as stigmatized, marginalized or excluded people. As emerged in some of the debates that accompanied the process of analysis, repression is often aimed at exterminating possible forms of subsistence for these groups or individuals, at the same time as clearly seeking to limit them to peripheral places within the social space.

In the Latin Kings and Queens, the entire trial process that was observed (as well as like other past situations) highlights how police and prosecutorial action is organized based on a belief that these groups are bad and must be eliminated by all means necessary. The lack of evidence to support this reinforces this idea of repression.

Secondly, the MENA's and EX-MENA's, who are still normally found in more marginalized social spaces, are constantly harassed and "persecuted" by law enforcement: from raids, to arrests, fines, etc. This is even more visible in those young people who, due to key situations, live on the street or in squatter houses.

Finally, in the neighbourhoods there is also a particular relationship between the youth in street groups and the institutions. Although the repression, as I said, comes from more sources than the police or security forces and can be experienced in social services and other agents, without a doubt, the police play the largest role in this.

Homeless

This code was added with special reference to the situation of minors (or adults as well) who are living on the street and homeless. It was added to Deviance because it is the code that can best adapt to it.

In the first study group, this category does not have a significant weight. But in the next two it did, although for different reasons.

In the case of MENA's and EX-MENA's, this situation refers to those young people who have ended up living on the street for different reasons. It can refer either to having escaped from a juvenile centre (where they were not comfortable or were victims of problems with other young people), or to having turned 18 and being left without the protection of guardianship services, or, in some cases, for issues related to drug use. In all of them the common pattern is poverty and lack of regularization. Once again, this code is related to that of Papers, which is transversal and transcendental in my opinion.

In the last group, that of the neighbourhoods, this situation is experienced directly because it is usually a space for the accumulation of people sleeping on the street, which is seen mainly in Ciutat Vella. In the public space, there are interactions with other groups of young people or with the neighbours, which is often accompanied by certain conflicts. In addition, it becomes an alarming issue due to the media that increase the stigma that falls on these neighbourhoods. In this sense, the difference that occurs between Barcelona neighbourhoods such as Ciutat Vella and L'Hospitalet is interesting. Barcelona, being a "neuralgic" centre accumulates many homeless people in its centre (also due to the influence of tourism, etc.). On the other hand, in L'Hospitalet we find almost no cases of this.

Relations

Papers

This code has been created to relate it to those situations related to papers, to obtaining or losing jobs, residence or citizenship permits in which a large part of the young people who appear in the investigation find themselves. It is a recurring theme in the Latin Kings and Queens and also for the neighbourhood youth studied, but even more central is with the analysis group MENA's and EXMENA's.

It is a recurring theme in the case of unaccompanied migrant minors, since the stories are repeated in which, during their arrival in the country and their stay in centres for minors, no formalities have been carried out in this regard. In this sense, it is interesting to observe, on the one hand, how having or not having papers generates processes of marginality and exclusion (becoming the central axis from which to consider certain horizons of expectations or short-term objectives).

On the other hand, the institutions (in this case the Catalan government, the DGAIA and the centres for minors) can use the issue of papers as a blackmail or persuasion tool. "If you behave well, we will process your papers or we will find you a flat." In my opinion, normalization processes revolve around this issue.

Finally, returning to the case of the Latin Kings, the roles were also a central issue in the process of establishing associations. Well, those who had them could more easily be valid interlocutors. In parallel, the processes of police or legal persecution also imply an alteration of residence permits or nationality. We can find ourselves in the case of MEM_BCN_01/M41 who, due to his stay in prison, was unable to renew his papers and, having lived in Catalonia for more than 15 years, suddenly found himself without that recognition.

Racism

This code is added to collect those relationships that members or other participants have based on or with clear components of racism. Although it is a fairly generic code, it is intended to include all those issues that appear in the field and that can be considered racist. It is clearly linked to how many institutions act at times (police, judicial, etc.) but it is also sometimes linked to social responses to these groups or with the way in which they are represented by the media.

Clearly, in the group of MENA's and EXMENA's we found direct signs of racism in the demonstrations against them that took place in Canet de Mar. We also found racist situations in the police action that occurs in peripheral neighbourhoods.

Finally, there are also reproductions of racism within the groups themselves (although they are the fewest examples) in an attempt to transfer the stigma to new groups or collectives in a more unfavourable situation. A clear example is the FG with the Itaca youth group, where several of the participants of Latin American origin make racist comments about the North African people.

Lawyers

The Lawyers code was added within Civil Society because it is necessary when it comes to understanding some of the key agents in the relationship between members of youth groups and institutions, the justice system and/or the police system. Although the presence of these agents is transversal in all the groups, they appear very clearly in the first group of Latin Kings. During the observation of the trial that took place at the end of 2018, they played a key role in the defence against the accusation of criminal organization. One of them was also interviewed.

On the other hand, in the case of MENA's and EXMENA's, they also appear, albeit sporadically, as agents linked to the process of regularization of administrative situations or other types of judicial processes.

In short, they are a key agent in understanding how the judicial system works, which is often related to these groups of young people.

Cross-cutting issues

Gender violence

This code was added to be able to specifically locate situations or stories linked to gender violence that appear directly in the field work or are reported by the participants. Although it is also a fairly broad code that can include different examples or situations, it helps us to locate the issue of gender in the field of study from oppression and inequality. Linked to other codes on the subject, this specifically seeks to group those comments, situations or experiences linked to machismo and violence.

There are examples of this in all groups. The Latin Kings have historically held certain views or ideas about the membership of the eminently *macho* group and that excluded women from the group or gave them a completely secondary and complementary role linked to sentimental relationships with members. Although these situations were gradually overcome throughout the first years of the establishment of the Latin Kings here, and mainly also through the Barcelona Model, certain internal differences continued to exist in the group and, although some Queens were able to occupy certain leadership spaces, the percentage was normally much lower than that of men and also its temporary duration and capacity for action was more limited.

In the case of MENA's and EXMENA's we clearly see a masculine bias in almost all the topics that surround them, and women tend to appear very sporadically. Based on the fact that the total volume of women who enter these recent unaccompanied migration processes is significantly reduced, as mentioned before, on many occasions those who do suffer greater invisibility or marginalization for different reasons: difficulty finding networks of support, lack of support (or ignorance) of family of origin, entry into exploitation networks, etc.

Finally, in the peripheral neighbourhoods, and also within the mediation spaces that exist there, it is a recurring theme.

Participatory methodologies

This code is added to bring together some methodological issues related to the research and that may be of interest for the scientific production of the project itself. They appear more prominently in the process of creating the documentary with young people from Canet de Mar and, mainly, in the theatre workshops that accompanied it. This makes it possible to analyse the research spaces created by the project itself and which serve as a certain innovation (or at least reflection) for research with groups of street youth.

Investigator position

This code is created to collect those experiences or situations that question or support the position of the researcher/s in the field of study. Following the example of "Participatory Methodologies", this new code aims to collect situations or moments where the position adopted by the researcher in the field has been key to the functioning of the work. Also linked to the case of documentary and audiovisual workshops, it is a code that mainly includes reflections on research that allow understanding differentiated positions in the field of the traditional "researcher" versus "researched". The code, also used in data from

the three groups, can serve as a tool to discuss the position of the researcher ethically and methodologically in a complex field, and difficult to access, such as youth street groups.

2.5.2. Latin Kings and Queens Barcelona: Evolution of the gang

Organization

NVIVO's coding in relation to the organization of the Latin Kings has allowed us to capture in detail the evolution that the group has experienced over the last two decades. It has been possible to complete the entire journey from the group's formation to the present, going through issues such as the impact of the Barcelona Model or the “iron hand” phases.

Disengaging the group through differentiated positions and memberships has allowed us to have an image of its structure and also observe how this structure has varied over the years. In relation to this, the position that MEM_BCN_01/M41 has occupied as leader of the group, or of MEM_BCN_67/M40 as leader of the Ñetas, has been crucial to understand how the dynamics, practices and internal rules of the group have been modified based on a changing internal structure. They themselves highlight how, different practices linked to internal rules were modified through the evolution of the group in Barcelona:

INT_3: If you went back, what would you do differently in your role for those years?

MEM_BCN_67/M40: Taking several orders that I took... Eh... over time. When things came to me. Of the orders that I threw back, of the usual ones, the forever law, it's over. “MEM_BCN_67 how...”. “Yes, yes, yes. The forever law is over.”

INT_1: What is the forever law?

MEM_BCN_67/M40: You are a Ñeta and you cannot leave here. There were only two paths that for those who don't know... It was, become religious or die. No other choice. And we helped you die, right? That is the forever law. And I'm like "no, no. Whoever wants to leave leaves." “MEM_BCN_67, how do you...”. They called me from Ecuador, they called me from New York... “Yes, yes. Here the leader is me. The one who cuts the cake is me and the forever law is over.” “Forget bugging MEM_BCN_67 about that...”. “Well, pay for the trip and we'll discuss it here because we're not going to get anywhere by phone.” That was one of the first laws that I threw out. The second law that I threw out is fundraising. My goodness what a problem because, even though... Well, you know a little more INT_2. But I as a leader could not collect. I couldn't. That's why there was someone in charge inside... But it turns out that the funds were always lost.” (laughs).

In addition, this section also includes a set of positions and statements by the members themselves about what it means and has meant for them to be part of the group, along with certain external visions and speeches by agents involved in the Barcelona Model. For example. MEM_BCN_03/F32 thus reflects on the entire image that was built, and that is still operating, around what it means to be a 'gang':

But... During... Me, the time I was there; in the time that we were together or that we were like this, eh... The violent part that is seen on TV had nothing to do with what was really happening. And I still comment on it... if really, the Latin Kings were the ones who lived off drug trafficking and I don't know what, or they were the ones who were... they threatened and had hitmen there. Well, we really were rich. Or the association would be in a foundation, and we would be there

making money. It's that you have to see it that way, because the great people who really move money are hidden, we don't know anything about them, and they are richer and... Those who really do the damage, right? And... the four guys that are there are...

Finally, the entry and exit processes of the group are also collected. Some issues that have often been turned into the most problematic part of these groups. As can be seen, although there were entry rules and restricted forms of exit, the speeches of the members themselves seek to distance themselves from all those constructed imaginaries. This has been a key point when it comes to spreading stigmatizing imaginaries about the group, since it was usually the media, among others, agents external to the group that exposed a series of practices of entry and exit, based on tests and punishments, which they were usually oversized or based on previous stories present in other countries. It is, therefore, one of the main issues that, in the development of the group in cities like Barcelona, and also through the impact of the Barcelona Model, sought to be eliminated, denied or minimized. For example, in relation to this, MEM_BCN_67 (M – 40) explains the role that certain punishments could also play as producers of groupness and identification, although little remains of all that:

“Someone had to receive a punishment, X, about 20 punches because I disrespected my brother while drunk and such, I deserve the 20 punches for disrespecting him (pointing to MEM_BCN_01)”. And you gave them to me (STK_BCN_30). Well, the punishment ended and the three of us were still the same. That was beautiful. No, we are talking about a gang. We are not talking about a gang. It was very good because then between the three of us we took care of each other's backs, between the three of us we got out of any bind. You don't see that today. Not here, let alone Ecuador, where they are killing each other. That's the positive part. And the negative part, according to my own analysis.”

Identifications

Regarding the identifications, one of the most relevant aspects has been the different link that the group has had with the territory, either with the neighbourhood or with specific streets and spaces. Thus, the analysis includes the progressive loss of weight of the group in the public space, the certain abandonment of the form chapters take on (subgroups present in each territory) and a retreat for different reasons to less exposed or private spaces. As we can see in this quote from a former leader, it went from a substantial increase in the presence of young people in parks or squares to a practical disappearance from public spaces today.

MEM_BCN_02/M36: I already told you. Yes we started in the park. Then we had... We kept changing parks because numbers were growing. We needed more room. We were splitting up. Because of course, there couldn't be 80 people in a park. Then, 120. And of course, in the end you have to find a place that is no longer a park and where you are no longer cold, where people are not pointing a finger at you because you are there. If the police come to you... That in the end it was that. That the police come to you, interrupt you or that several *hermanitos* who have problems take them away. Are you looking for a bit of comfort...

A change that, for example, MEM_BCN_10/F32, one of the former members of the Latin Kings attributes, among other things, to his age: "So, I don't know why, I don't know if it's because of my age that I no longer see those things, but before everyone maybe at 6 or 7 in the afternoon to the park. And to the park, and to the park... So, wherever I went

I knew that from that hour they were all going to be in the park”. In this sense, age is situated as a main point when it comes to understanding the change in dynamics. In other words, a certain aging of the group that, added to other causes such as the decrease in new younger participants as time progresses, the repression experienced or the attempt to distance themselves from certain conflicts, makes them lose weight in the public space.

Beyond the presence in the public space and the group identification that this produced, artistic and aesthetic expressions also appear in this category as generators of common and shared frameworks. On this, a discussion group that was held with several rappers members of the group allowed us to assess and ponder the importance that hip hop has had both for the group and for individual trajectories. Thus, once the group is practically inactive in most of its facets, this element is one of the few that continues to maintain a certain composition and structure: either to record songs, to start new projects or, in some cases, to carry out activities related to other social agents.

Lastly, in retrospect, rap was also one of the most important spaces for creating identifications and disseminating the group. As we can see in the interview with MEM_BCN_13/M31, one of the most important Latin Kings rappers on the scene of the early 2000's, memories of the importance of music in his own career and in the group's career are essential to understand processes identifiers within the group.

MEM_BCN_13/M31: Music. I have the Latin Kings forever... Without them... Maybe I wouldn't have achieved what I did in that time, I'm telling you... I'm not saying that I was the best, but I was one of those people who didn't want to face myself musically, right? And yes, it is thanks to the name that was behind me. Because there were so many of them, they were in charge of recording my music, of making me known, of... So, at the concerts you felt the warmth of those people. Seeing him there yelling your name and knowing the songs, it was something... whiff. That I always There was a concert in Vía Júlia, which I always... one of the best that I have enjoyed, I have experienced. And that day I realized that, that... That it was organic, you know? That they liked you as a musician, and they liked your music, and they liked what you said and what you sang. And the moment that surprised me the most was seeing the Ñetas sing my songs. It was the first concert that was mixed. OK? So, when I saw the Ñetas sing my songs I said “Hey... They really like me”. They know that I am a Latin King, they know that I am from the opposite side and still they like my music. So, in that part I do know that they had a lot to do with it. For me, they had a lot of weight in what I was...

Finally, there are also outstanding things in relation to aesthetics, clothing and other symbols that once generated processes of unity and identification in the group, but which are somehow much less present today. As the same group that over time has been changing and losing structure, all issues related to aesthetics have also been abandoned and are sometimes remembered as a matter of the past and the beginnings of the group. One of the causes that explains this abandonment is the repressive practices experienced, mainly by the police, always linked to dressing as a way of identifying group members. Thus, moving away from certain ways of dressing, or from specific colours, also served as a tool to avoid suffering the same degree of police pressure.

Practices

Regarding the practices, as previously stated, the data have shown the importance of mutual aid processes as intrinsic elements in the different groups. In the case of the Latin

Kings, an important weight has been observed, both present, but above all in the past, of the meetings as the main space for internal decision-making. Likewise, leisure and playful celebrations continue to be central and make up most of the group's practices today.

Regarding activities related to education and the economy, it has been possible to see that the majority of the members contacted at present have a job, and that is primarily thanks to formal and non-formal training processes that they experienced throughout their time in the group, although other factors have contributed to the youth reaching this end. The case of MEM_BCN_02/M36 is illustrative since during his time in prison serving a sentence for different crimes related to fights and brawls during his time as a member of the group, he began to study and ended up completing a university degree that currently allows him to focus his energies.

MEM_BCN_02/M36: Yes, in the end, a little forced because when I was in prison I needed to get out. She was pregnant. She needed money. She needed to work. I started working at Nissan, maintenance. He had done a higher degree. And it's over. So, my contract ran out and it was to be back inside without being able to get out or find a way to... to... to get a permit. And the way to get a permit was either study or work. When my job contract finished... in which I realized, MEM_BCN_03 had enrolled me in engineering. (everyone laughs).

Although in different ways, all the interviewees agree that their time with the Latin Kings served them as an accumulation of learning that they have later applied to different situations in their lives. These practices linked to mutual aid or training lived through the group itself, the women members played a certain main role. In Barcelona, for a good part of the time that other types of mediation practices were developed and promoted, and that an attempt was made to reverse some of the group's most negative internal dynamics, it was done under the leadership of MEM_BCN_68/F40s. In addition, as previously mentioned, the women promoted within the group spaces for attention and follow-up on the main problems that members of the group could be experiencing, from work or studies to family problems, etc.

Similarly, there are and were other types of criminal economies followed by certain members of the group. As MEM_BCN_01/M41, the main leader of the group during the Barcelona Model, explains, the same group was expelling or separating those factions that followed other paths:

STK_BCN_36/M60s: And surely... there is a percentage of people who...

MEM_BCN_01/M41: No, no. And I'm not going to deny it. There is also a very small percentage that at that time there were people who liked drug dealing.

STK_BCN_36/M60s: Yes, yes.

MEM_BCN_01/M41: That he liked shit. So, we are not going to be in favour of these people. And of course, logically what they did was separate, but they continued to call themselves Latin Kings and even formed their little group there. But we were the majority, and they are not going to be able to deal with us. Who are these people? At best they are in jail. I have seen and I have known that some are imprisoned. But of course, we are not going to tell them now, "Ah, I told you, we will let you know."

On the other hand, in the Social Media section it has been possible to observe the importance that these digital spaces have been acquiring as tools to maintain relationships

(national and international), as well as to expand and disseminate issues related to the group (such as, among others, the different musical projects carried out).

Finally, in the sections related to issues such as crime, fights, violence or repression we find mostly elements from the past, from other historical moments of the group where criminal situations occurred, where there were internal or external fights with other groups, and also repressive periods where external agents (mainly the police) exercised persecution and repression policies on the group. Regarding the fights, the different testimonies from police officers, social educators and members of the groups are interesting, explaining how, during the Barcelona Model and with the police mediation policy, they jointly sought to end conflicts and violence between groups:

STK_BCN_44/F30s: We were in contact with STK_BCN_31. STK_BCN_31 called, "Hey, the Latin Kings and the Ñetas are going to fight somewhere today." And I say, "Oh, okay". "Let's all go there." "Hey, MEM_BCN_01 come here. Today I don't know what chapter is going to fight in such and such a place with the Ñetas. I'm going with STK_BCN_31. Give me an update or we stop the fight or... But all the Mossos d'Esquadra will be there, yourselves". And we were there and not even God appeared (laughs).

STK_BCN_36/M60s: The issue of timetables...

STK_BCN_44/F30s: No, no (they speak at the same time). And I say... And we were there and well, "Of course, they aren't going to come here to fight." But I mean, there are several interventions and communications, and... say "I, please, I'm going to have to go now at 12 at night to a place where there is a possible fight at the exit of the club or where the police are going to be there looking at everyone and looking for whatever. We are going to try and make sure that these things don't happen, alright?"

At present, during the fieldwork process, there was no visualization or direct knowledge of situations of violence between groups or within the group. In most cases, these were stories from the past. This is due, among other things, to the very evolution of the group in terms of practices and presence in the public space (much less than in the past), as well as a change in the groups present in this format whereby the groups with more Historical rivalries, such as the Ñetas, were also in a similar process of reducing their presence on the streets and internal changes within the group. The only event linked to this type of conflict was the story that several of the young people gave about some of the reasons that led them to try to promote an association model again today. As MEM_BCN_05/M30s explained, being able to have their own private spaces, although linked to the institutions, would also distance them from certain conflicts that are experienced in the streets when two groups meet. Even so, it is difficult to clarify if it was a real and existing problem, or a discourse of its own that would justify the creation of the association.

Relations

This section, after the NVIVO coding, allows us to determine which social agents interact the most with this group, which allows us to compose an image of the way in which they act with or against the groups and, with this, determine what social position the groups occupy. groups at any time.

In the case of the Latin Kings, due to their long history, we observe very diversified relationships between social services, civil society agents and authorities such as the police, the judicial system or the prison. All of them are linked to different historical moments. The discussion groups that were created with leaders of the Latin Kings and Ñetas, along with police representatives, social educators from the third sector and representatives of the Barcelona City Council in the early 2000s showed these constant interrelationships between the different agents.

On the other hand, the entire case study that was carried out through the 2018 collective trial allows us to show the entire opposite process, the progressive abandonment of the relationship with what has been called the left hand of the State, and a single interrelationship with the police, the judicial agents, the prison, all of which is transferred by the role of the media.

As an example, the defence lawyer for MEM_BCN_01/M41 in the trial explains how the process of building an entire accusation of criminal organization was through an imaginary produced that these groups and their leader were exclusively dedicated to committing crimes. This interview is highly illustrative to understand how the action against gangs was articulated in times of heavy hand and the ways in which the social imaginary that associated gangs with organizations created for crime acted. In general, the entire trial case (collected through interviews and field observations) allows for a deep exploration of these processes:

STK_BCN_01/M35s: Sure. With all this construction that you were telling me... How is this generated? It's obvious. When they bring all the accused, but I have been able to experience it more from the logic of "MEM_BCN_74 (F - 30's)" and "MEM_BCN_01". The case of MEM_BCN_74 would be a separate case, right? In other words, for me I think that "MEM_BCN_74" is there by extension, let's say, of the stigma and the perception and prejudices that operate on "MEM_BCN_01". Beyond let's say the real evidence that there are few for MEM_BCN_01, less for MEM_BCN_74. Then he arrives, sits down, and in front of that judge literally assumes that what the Mossos d'Esquadra is telling him is true, because it basically coincides with his system of values, with his imaginary, with his way of thinking and understanding the world. And the problem is that since they are not prepared to be aware that when we analyse any reality we are doing it based on that logic and they are not given good training in this matter. Well, this lady, who also nobody reviews her because the judges do not. These types of matters are reviewed and they can take a lot of years, and if everything has that belief in values, then directly take and put in jail...

In this section, interesting analysis has also appeared on the changing relationship that these Latin Kings have had with other groups such as the Ñetas, and the different moments that this relationship has experienced: moments of coexistence, of truces, but also of conflicts. And also at an internal level, it allows us to understand certain processes of internal disintegration that were experienced mainly when the main group decided to choose the course of establishing itself as an association and joining the Barcelona Model. On the one hand, some members of the group did not welcome the rapprochement between the institutions and the group throughout the Barcelona Model. This led them to separate from the main group and create other parallel groups that were not integrated into that process. In addition, beyond the mistrust and disbelief in this process, there were also other situations that generated this disintegration. One of these was the assumption

of more power by the younger groups and the queens within the main group, an issue that was sometimes seen as an attack on their power by some male leaders.

Imaginary

In the imaginaries that are generated about or through the group, the analysis has determined that the role of media representations of the phenomenon hold substantial weight. As previously mentioned, both the overexposure and the concealment of the phenomenon in the media at certain times generates a direct projection on the common imaginary that is held about these groups.

The collective trial made it possible to see how a macro exposure in the press of the police raids and the practically non-existent appearance in them of the exculpatory sentence had a final function of projecting these groups as public enemies and generating subjective images of insecurity. In this sense, it was not so important to verify whether the crimes were proven or not (as was later seen), but rather to delve into that constructed image of criminal groups.

Beyond the trial, in the assessment of the Barcelona Model carried out by leaders, police officers and social educators, a common point was the agreement on the damage caused during the entire process by certain stigmatizing media.

STK_BCN_36/M60s, one of the police officers responsible for the mediation policies with these youth groups, explains the tactics they followed to try to intervene and show other visions from the media as follows:

STK_BCN_36/M60s: From there, we draw two conclusions. One, that the media would try to take advantage of all the sensational potential that this...this phenomenon would have. Because we did this before the murder of Ronny Tapias. This was the months that we worked, almost a year before, it gave us the advantage in this sense, of doing as if we were preparing a little at the level of the police force and that they knew what this phenomenon was about. We knew that there would be this exploitation and we warned that when there is some type of somewhat serious incident, there will be and the stereotypes of the criminal immigrant will be promoted, labels will begin to be placed... And here we have to fight it. And how did we do it? Well, since we had generated knowledge, our uh... When a journalist came... After Ronny Tapias, they all came more or less with the same questions. What they were: this is a chronicle of events; it is a fact that we are going here to put a photo and such. And they told me who were they? If you knew. They asked you where are they from? But what country? If they were from Ecuador or... Assuming that if there was a fact that had to do with Latin Kings or... well it had to do with foreigners from somewhere. What weapons had they used? What drugs did you take? Always, because it was assumed that they were always people... The name of the group, what gang you were from. But there were facts they didn't have... That they weren't gang members in on it. Someone could be there for other reasons, but it was already taken for granted that they had to be from a gang. And then they wanted to know what their territory was. Where they dominated and where... And then we told them... We told the journalists; do you have time? I'm going to... Okay. And we were trying to explain it to them for an hour and a half, "This... Let's start with the origin. United States, deportations... In Ecuador there were already gangs...". You already know it better than me. Then, among the deportees... And what the model is that they transferred there. And then they come here. And then, between explaining to them, we try to show them that we are facing a social phenomenon. They were not... And what he gave importance to what the effect of other much deeper and much more powerful causes was. And we told them "and one of the main people responsible for how this evolves is you in how you narrate what happens and such."

On the same topic, several of the interviewed members agree that the role played by the media, beyond going against them, generated distorted images of reality.

MEM_BCN_02/M36: Yes, what appeared in the newspaper or on the news bothered us because of course, if you are inside and you are experiencing it, it is very difficult for you to understand what people see from the outside. You feel... you feel rejected again. You felt like the finger was pointing at you again. Clear. You, you are you, but what you are saying is not true. The information that they've given you is not correct. Not well. (...). We once did several interviews with the newspapers. In their time I remember that they went through each of the parks asking "Hey, can I interview you?" What you said wasn't what was reported. It always changed. So sure. We were less and less receptive to explaining ourselves to people.

Cross-cutting issues

In this case, it is necessary to highlight two main issues such as mediation and issues related to gender. In the mediation section, the different practices developed both by the group and by other external agents that are directly linked to conflict management and the different strategic lines that were followed during the Barcelona Model have been codified, and the impact of what can stay up to date with all of this.

STK_BCN_36/M60s: What happens is that I... Of course, everyone has their opinion. But I... The perspective that I have is... to the normalization process extracted from the longer-term context, since it has the usefulness that it has. And, therefore, that of normalization... Well, it was a moment that I think, a moment if you want the media, public... In other words, the whole world... Society... those who were not involved in history... So therefore, the people of Barcelona who saw the press and saw the battle, I don't know what, the Clot party, the police, beheaded... As you said, the media pressure is lowered and therefore this gives a certain balm to do things. But I think so if we see normalization as a discourse that remains in the historical memory of this city, and this city is also made up of groups of young Latinos. I think that people there know that something happened in Barcelona.

Furthermore, the different members interviewed also reveal how they dealt with the conflicts of that moment and the strategies, often informal, that they carried out to ensure that things did not go to more. Both MEM_BCN_01/M41 and MEM_BCN_67/M40, the two leaders of antagonistic groups, maintain a friendly relationship that was forged throughout those years. A relationship that had its beginnings in the search to reduce conflict between groups and that led them to directly manage situations with members that promoted confrontations.

Finally, the issue of gender is transversal to this group and occupies a fundamental role in its constitution and evolution. Although over the years there have been certain processes to eliminate or reduce the differentiated role between men and women (such as, for example, the inclusion of the figure of the Latin Queens, and to a certain extent their occupation of positions of power), there is still a disparity in roles and participation due to gender issues. In the field, the presence of women has been extremely reduced, and normally it has always been linked to sentimental and relational issues of the members. This is mainly due to two reasons. First, due to the minimal presence of women in the group's activities linked to the general reduction of group members over the years and also to the format of current practices that turned the group into a kind of relational space of friendship in which the core group were just males. Second, to the limited access

that the ethnographer had to the spaces where women appeared, which were normally related to private family spaces.

On the other hand, their role, although historically important in the day-to-day of the groups and in the acquisition of mutual aid and group roles such as those explained above, has rarely had a significant or equal weight in the total of the group cluster. Along these lines, the interview with MEM_BCN_10/F32, a Latin King leader from Alicante who was crowned by MEM_BCN_01/M41, explains the different problems that she encountered, and that she tried to overcome, because she was a woman and leader of the group. First, problems related to her own participation in the group as a woman, mainly in a phase where the role of the queens was not yet recognized, and she was subjugated to being a "couple of". In her case, this difficulty of participating was even more profound due to the fact of being Spanish and the distrust that this generated in the rest of the group, as she points out. Then, in a second phase when she already held leadership positions through the intermediation of MEM_BCN_01/M41, she recounts the difficulty because all the members of her section respected her and followed in her footsteps, and since it was the direct support of MEM_BCN_01/M41, she which initially helped him to consolidate.

2.5.3. MENA's and EXMENA's: New informal street youth groups

Organization

The analysis done with NVIVO has allowed us to verify how the categories linked to the organization of the group, in the case of MENA's and EXMENA's, have had to be readapted to observe other less formal formats.

In the case of the EXMENA's group, as an example of a more formally constituted group, it has been possible to analyse the evolution of the group itself from its creation to the present day and understand what its central intention has been and how it has varied over the years. Thus, first through a anti-racist demonstration, the group began to form itself around the municipal youth space:

"The [*casal*] Palau Alòs was precisely a space where many of us came, right? (...) Of course, this is open to everyone. The kids also came here a lot and all that. What's happening? That there was also here, like, the conflict that they come in here, the police are here all the time in front and stuff, and all that. (...) Once they arrive in the neighbourhood [recently migrated minors], it already becomes a little more visible, they sing a little bit, we realize it, the families are there... What I told you before. So, we intervene."

From that initial intervention, continuing with mediation processes that they already carried out informally individually, the group gradually formed until it became a local and state benchmark, but in between there were several phases in which the expansion of their own knowledge to society helped them it implied processes of assimilation and management of the boom. MEM_BCN_09/F22 and MEM_BCN_16/F25 reflect on times when attention and requests for help overwhelmed them:

MEM_BCN_09/F22: So, it's something huge, right? So of course, we did have that period of downturn that freaks you out, look, if we have to go out "I don't go out", if we have to give the number "you give it, I don't give it anymore". Of course, that generates a disorder within us, you

know? Within the group, uh... of the management that we have with the networks, you know? Because in the end there was a time when I saw it... I didn't see it, I don't see it now (laughs). We ran away. In other words, we wanted to put it aside. I mean, we've all had our season of the roll up to here I get, I can't take it anymore.

MEM_BCN_16/F25: Yes, there have been many moments like this...

MEM_BCN_09/F22: But, for that, it has also served me precisely because when I was a child and I had educators and it was like... "I can't take it anymore". And it was like, you can't what, you know? And now I see myself and there are many things that you understand when they happen to you...

Similarly, issues such as member integration processes, internal positions and differentiated implications, and forms of expansion of the movement have also appeared about this group. As the different members explain, the group's main difficulty was attracting new members or retaining the participation of young people came to the movement who at any given time. At the same time, the issue of migrant minors only had such a high volume of repercussion in the public, political and media debate that it meant a growing accumulation of work for the 5 most involved young people in the movement. STK_BCN_05/F26 explains that "Of course, it is also kind of because a lot is asked of them (...), of a group of 5 kids, who cannot manage the crisis of unaccompanied minors in Catalonia. It is because it is a huge undertaking (...). They don't have resources, they don't have a space, they don't have a salary...".

Likewise, it is notorious to highlight the role played by 3 young girls as leaders, who from the very beginning have held the reins of the group and have been the central axis from which to articulate the different responses carried out by the organization.

Finally, in summary, in the case of EXMENA's, it has been possible to observe how the organization of the group itself and the format that it has been taking has also meant its practical disappearance at present, due to being overwhelmed by the group's own need for work.

In the case of other groups, such as the young migrants alone from Canet de Mar, the research itself linked to the process of creating the documentary film and the performance of the theatrical workshops has allowed us to observe internal processes of solidification of the group and of different positions of each of its members. As previously mentioned, MEM_BCN_35/M20 has been taking on roles of power and leadership within the group (a group that, although it already existed, increased its cohesion through its own participation in the research) during the project, which has made it possible to observe the entire leadership constitution process (to the point of observing certain confrontations with other members in said process) in addition to the practices that it has carried out. As an example of this, this brief description of one of the workshops: "The three of us agree that MEM_BCN_35/M20 currently acts almost as the leader of the group, with an apology to MEM_BCN_36/M25 [the one who had previously been thought to be the benchmark]. He is the one who brings together all the people around him, the most "charismatic" and the centre of everything that is happening.

Although other analytical categories delve into the evolution of the group and its positions, in this first section it is possible to build that general image of how the group has been moving and solidifying itself in new roles and positions of its members.

Identifications

Continuing with what happened for the analysis of Latin Kings in Barcelona, groups such as EXMENA's and the young migrants alone from Canet de Mar maintain a strong link with certain specific spaces in neighbourhoods, parks or squares.

EXMENA's, originally formed by a group of racialized girls who live in the neighbourhood of Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and La Ribera, specifically in the Plaza del Forat de la Vergonya. Through their daily presence there and observing the conflicts that were generated in the neighbourhood due to the presence of migrant minors, they began to work to reverse xenophobic or exclusionary discourses and practices. As previously highlighted, EXMENA's initiative has 3 women who lead the group. To understand this mainly female presence in a group that works to improve a situation that mainly affects males, different reasons must be taken into account. First, these young people have weight in the neighbourhood because of their previous participation both in different mutual aid initiatives and in institutional youth projects (attendance at camps, recreational activities promoted by neighbourhood agents, etc.). Thanks to this, they had an in-depth knowledge of the neighbourhood, of the situations that were lived in it and of the different agents (formal or not) that sought to improve the situation of young people. Second, some of them also went through youth centres in their childhood/adolescence. Although these were situations that were somewhat different from those currently experienced by unaccompanied minors (because they had family here, for example), this generated a kind of solidarity with these young people, as well as a deep understanding of the situations that they were experienced in the centres. Third, being young people of colour from the same neighbourhood, speaking Arabic and with families and networks of migrant friends, placed them as central points of reference for young people who had recently arrived in the city. Unlike other public resources, they understood them and were able to chat with them fluently, they understood the situation they were experiencing and also shared certain shared identities.

Therefore, in her case, the neighbourhood and specifically that space is constituted as the central place that allows her to understand her creation, at the same time that it articulates a good part of her practices. For example, one of the first actions they carried out as a group was visit all the stores in the neighbourhood that could sell glue, to insist that they do not sell it to young people or minors:

MEM_BCN_16/F25: We have also done that thing about going to the Chinese, so they don't sell glue, do you remember?

MEM_BCN_09/F22: Yes.

MEM_BCN_16/F25: One of the first things we did.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: Of course, when we started there were still many people who sniffed glue. What's happening? We all know that the glue is "I go to the Chinese, I buy a pot of glue for one euro and...". Well, we went from Chinese to Chinese from the neighbourhood (laughs), you know?

We and the Mothers of Courage, from the “please, there are some kids who buy this... They don’t buy this to paste paper, they buy it for that. Please don’t sell it.” And that’s it. It’s just that they were... In the end they are small details that you say. I do not know. We have been doing things like that.

MEM_BCN_38/M23: They don’t sell it anymore!

Although later, and mainly due to the exponential growth of the group, they have carried out actions in other neighbourhoods and parts of the city such as the Raval or the Montjuïc park, their permanent articulation is with the neighbourhood where they live and with trying to promote other perspectives. About this phenomenon within the same site.

In the case of young people from Canet de Mar, the situation is, to a certain extent, similar. Although their presence in the town is relatively recent, they quickly articulate a belonging with certain public and private spaces that they appropriate as those of the group or, furthermore, those of the young migrants. For example, MEM_BCN_35 / M20, the referent of the studied group, in a joint activity began to mention the places of reference for him and his group in the town:

“MEM_BCN_35/M20 mentions, as places he frequents, the boulevard, the library, the Onze de Setembre square. Another place that he frequents is the “Pixa”, a kind of basement/lower part of a building where young people from the town gather to smoke. Also, the beach is a place that he frequents with other friends to spend some time together. Another place that he likes is the field that STK_BCN_29/F40s has, they have often gone there to spend the day outdoors and he feels very comfortable”.

With this, it is possible to verify the strong link that these groups have with the nearby space, and how this articulates to a great extent their practices, until it becomes the main space for relations and solidification of identifications.

So much so that the spaces themselves become referential for young people who have not yet arrived in the town or city. For example, the “little square” gradually became the central space for various groups:

MEM_BCN_33/F25s: Look, me, in the times that it was my turn to come. When a few months had passed since I came here, they told me “MEM_BCN_33, see you there in the little square”. And everyone, everyone who came from 2010 onwards told everyone “Hey, see you there in the little square.” “Are you going to Barcelona? See you there in the little square.” That was the little square and that was where you found everything...

MEM_BCN_28/F22: Sure. I have been here for 2 or 3 years and that is the little square. “I’ll wait for you in the square. Let’s get together in the little square...”. Everything in the little square.

Finally, within the identifications it is necessary to name all those processes that are linked to aesthetic and artistic issues. In all these cases, the assimilation of their own style of clothing and hairstyles, and also the reproduction of certain artists and musical styles, generate another dimension of the internal identifications of the groups. Just as an example, and which can be transferred to most of the groups integrated here, clothing becomes a hallmark for young people and is linked to the aesthetics of being young on the street:

“In the northern part of the square, where there are a few benches, I see groups of 4 or 5 young people sitting, chatting. They all have a very similar look. Dressed in sports tracksuits, some are

wearing branded flip flops (Adidas or Nike, usually) and, on their heads, almost all of them wear a cap that's sitting high. Those who do not wear a cap have a short haircut with the sides and the back shaved by machine and the top part longer" (Observation the Raval, 2020-02-03).

A large part of the influence in the aesthetic field is also linked to the musical. Thus, referents such as El Morad or Benny Jr., through their own video clips, materialize that typical style of the neighbourhood, which is somehow incorporated into the different groups studied and materialized as another tool for the generation of shared identities.

Practices

The universe of practices linked to the groups studied here is very broad and diverse. First of all, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between EXMENA's and other street groups made up of young migrants alone.

In the case of EXMENA's, we find that most of the practices are articulated through the goal of the group itself, which is political vindication, the production of mutual aid, and the expansion of 'informal' mediation practices. In this sense, the practices linked to resistance, whether from the articulation of protests or demonstrations, such as the creation of political campaigns, are the main ones of the group. To disseminate these events, the main tool used by the group is social networks, with a very high frequency of Twitter. Examples of all this can be found in the organization of a political protest against the DGAIA for the suicide of a young migrant to whom the age test was applied and he was considered, within the guardianship processes, as older (with all the implications that this entails in the different format of guardianship between minors and adults). Thus, this demonstration was fully disseminated through social networks from the group itself and also with the collaboration of other political groups from the Raval neighbourhood and from the same city.

In another dimension, the stories and experiences accumulated by the members of EXMENA's also make it possible to compose an image of the main practices carried out by young people or minors who migrated alone. Thus, through the group itself and its experiences, we can compose an image that helps to understand the daily life of these groups. Among others, it is through EXMENA's reports that new analysis codes have been added such as "Drug sales" or "Occupation of flats". These two realities, introduced within economic subsistence formats, allow us to understand and encompass those practices, often clandestine and underground, carried out by certain young people and groups in order to earn some money or also to have a roof to sleep in. EXMENA's stories allow us to clarify and relate them to the stories of the young people of Canet de Mar themselves.

For example, for MEM_BCN_35/M20, the sale of drugs is not an issue that is present exclusively here, upon arrival in Barcelona or Catalonia, but rather it was already part of his life in Morocco: "From there I start selling it myself. What happens is... What happens is that... he was with a girl. And we're dating, but his father sells drugs and sells everything." Added to this, the link of this group with the squatter flats is permanent. This is constituted as one of the experiential options when the others fail, or when you find yourself in a situation of absolute precariousness. This means that the situation of

squatting is normally linked to different problems: mafia groups that control the houses, drug trafficking or consumption, etc.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: At least if they had papers... If they had papers and could work, at least they will have a chance.

MEM_BCN_61/M19: You're right.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: If you don't have the papers to work, you can't work, what are you going to do? There is no option to work. You have the option of stealing and so on.

MEM_BCN_61/M19: These guys have papers. You know. All the boys don't have papers... And without work. Everything. What are you going to do? Getting Spanish papers is like paying your phone. I pay 10 euros here...

MEM_BCN_35/M20: It's like, every time you have to...

MEM_BCN_61/M19: What to pay.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: To have them you have to pay. To renew them...

At the same time, faced with situations of police persecution of these groups in public spaces, squatter houses or other similar spaces are the only possible places. An example of this was this meeting organized by young people in Canet de Mar to celebrate an anniversary:

According to the person they had rented the rural house from, the group of friends decided to give up and MEM_BCN_39/F18 returned home, while STK_BCN_23/M49 and the others looked for another place to meet. Because of the high police presence in the public space, they finally went to a squat, where MEM_BCN_44/M23 lives. STK_BCN_23/M49 shared with us a rather unpleasant memory of the night spent there because of the curfew: some of the people living in the squat are engaged in drug dealing and other illicit activities, STK_BCN_23/M49 tells of an unpleasant atmosphere and reports that he was even robbed of cash and a card, although with very limited damage.

In this sense, through the group of young migrants studied alone, we have been able to understand how the articulation of subsistence practices that move between what is legal, what is legitimate and what is illegal is very close and changing depending on each specific personal situation. Thus, although most seek to avoid those practices that could lead to legal problems, there are moments in most personal trajectories in which they are determined as the only option to survive.

Relations

The relationships maintained by these groups make it possible to clearly depict the different agents that interact or act with and against them. In all cases there is a predominance of the relationship with institutions such as the police or prison. So much so that the majority of young people contacted directly, or through the stories that EXMENA's members expose, explain problematic situations with the police: from random identifications, searches, persecutions, among others. In this sense, the police is the main institutional body that interacts with these young people, beyond their stay in the guardianship centres, and this is usually the case before emigrating and during the transit process. About police interactions at borders and migration, the story of MEM_BCN_35/M20 is enriching and highly illustrative.

Normally, since their arrival in Spain, the relational experiences with the police tend to be the first. MEM_BCN_35/M20 explains his arrival in Andalusia this way: "And a police officer like that passes by on a motorcycle. He sees us and hasn't said anything to us. And he walks by and... well, he hasn't said anything. And suddenly two policemen come and everything and (pokes hands) they have caught us. I say "For fuck's sake... I've been walking all day and in the end they catch me..."

This type of police encounters have been maintained throughout their trajectories, with personal and group assimilation of police action being common as a daily element, such as, for example, at any party or event they organize.

INT_2: But were there a lot of police around here on those Holy Week days?

INT_1: STK_BCN_23 says yes. That those weekdays...

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Yes.

STK_BCN_23/M49: The day that... Well, they stopped you when you were coming with your friend from up here, who was in the car.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Oh, yes, yes.

STK_BCN_23/M49: The police stopped you...

INT_2: In the car?

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Yes.

STK_BCN_23/M49: There was a raid opposite the house of... of... There where we were the other day. There is a campsite.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Yes.

STK_BCN_23/M49: The police came, they raided the place, they took people... Yes, yes.

INT_2: How awful.

INT_1: This is what you were telling me about the party, right?

STK_BCN_23/M49: Yes.

Beyond the police, but closely linked to it, the prison is also one of the assimilated institutions on the possible horizon of many of these young people. Many of the young people, for reasons linked to illegal economic forms, but also to criminal issues that are more difficult to clarify (such as group arrests, group accusations, etc.), have had experiences in detention centres. Some experiences that, in most cases, can mark them for life as they make it difficult and almost impossible for them to obtain citizenship papers.

In this space, their passage through juvenile centres, the situations related to obtaining or processing their documentation, and the different conflicts that all this generates in their own lives have been themes that have appeared in most of the stories.

On the other hand, and almost in the opposite space of the relational part with the institution or with other related agents, we find that the majority of these young people maintain relationships with social services or also with social educators linked to associations or NGOs. In this sense, the different examples of projects carried out by

associations such as Itaca, Nou Sidecar or Casal dels Infants whose objective is to alleviate some of the structural difficulties experienced by young people are illustrative.

In addition, in the case of Canet de Mar, but we can also extrapolate it to the case of EXMENA's, there are different groups that are more or less informal and are linked to these groups that seek to help them or establish themselves as benchmarks. The case of EXMENA's or the foster mothers or Amb Papers of Canet de Mar would fall within this space. Some groups that, among other things, also seek through their own actions to combat spaces of daily racism that young people themselves experience and suffer. For example, several of the members of EXMENA's define some of their actions like this:

MEM_BCN_09/F22: For us to know how we can intervene, if we can help or not. And, apart from that, instead of so much... We believe that we have already made it very visible and making it visible does not mean going around with a microphone and that's it. Making it visible is also a matter of the activities...

MEM_BCN_38/M23: We have also been to many demonstrations where...

MEM_BCN_09/F22: Sure.

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Where kids I don't know what was wrong with them. That a kid too... Do you remember in the centre that they began to say that the children began to steal I don't know what or I don't know how many...

MEM_BCN_09/F22: Or when the centres attacked. Or because of the age issue, the age test.

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Exactly, yes.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: Or what do I know, many things.

MEM_BCN_38/M23: That has also contributed a lot because we have gone there, we mobilized as an association, we lent a hand...

Other issues that have appeared in the analysis of relationships, and that are somehow also linked to those mentioned above, are community relations and the different processes of acceptance or rejection that these young people experience in the towns or neighbourhoods where they live.

Imaginary

As in the previous group of the Latin Kings, the greatest producer of imaginaries about these groups comes from the media. These are the ones who articulate specific perspectives on the role and *raison d'être* of these groups and of the young people who are part of them. Normally, the overall view of this phenomenon is produced through marginalization and the production of stereotyped images that foster stigmatization. Even with that, it is interesting to observe in a comparative way how in the case of unaccompanied foreign minors the production of media discourses tends to be more polarized, ranging from stigmatizing publications or others that seek to understand and explain the difficulties that these young people experience. On the other hand, in the previous group of Latin Kings, we observed that the discourse tends to be unidirectional under the sole premise of generating stigma about the group.

For example, the members of EXMENA's themselves reveal the way in which the media have served as a channel for the expansion of discourses and alternative views:

MEM_BCN_09/F22: I think that one of the most important things we have done... Because there are many people who talk to us as if it were, "Ah, before there was a lot of TV, a lot of TV, and now I don't know what, I don't know how many." You know? I do think that there is the part of the media that I criticize a lot, but there is another part that we can say that, for us as an association, what has helped us most precisely is the issue of the media. More than anything because we have been able to use it as a subject of complaint, how to make it visible, that there are people who do not consider it important, but it is super important. Because if I tell you the number of people I have met throughout this project...

MEM_BCN_16/F25: Yes, yes.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: I had no fucking idea. That there are people who don't even know that they exist, you know?

INT: Yes, yes.

MEM_BCN_09/F22: That this abbreviation exists, or what this word is, or what is happening to them. Only *morito* steals, *morito* steals, *morito* steals... you know? What do you say, really? Or people... I'm not talking about people who don't plan to watch TV and that's it. No. I'm talking about educated people, who in theory know, do you know what I want to tell you?

MEM_BCN_38/M23: Totally.

Finally, another of the categories that has appeared strongly within the imaginaries is the one linked to the future, to the expectations and vital objectives of young people. In this sense, it is interesting to observe how, in many cases, passing through juvenile centres and all the consequences that this can have (years of 'waiting', not processing paperwork, not being able to work or the lack of a training program available, among others), generates a widespread expectation of a reality clash between the expectations and objectives generated prior to migration, and the lack of visualization of a dignified future once here.

The story of MEM_BCN_40 / M19, who has been alternating between different jobs in the fields throughout Spain, is illustrative to observe how his initial expectations are being frustrated:

MEM_BCN_40/M19: I was in a centre there for a week and then I went to Granada, such a week. And then I changed because I don't like the centre there because it's on a mountain and it's a bit difficult. And then... Because I have a friend who lives in Murcia and I have spoken with him, he has explained everything to me, and he has told me "You can come." Then I lived with him for almost 4 months. I have also worked in the fields... Because I have neither money nor anything and I have worked for that. Then I also went to Almería because I have a friend there too. I went to work. Because I was working in Murcia and it was a season, and I couldn't keep working. Just one season and that's it. And I went there for a while too, in Almería, to work there. And it's a bit hard, really. Because I have thought like, if I have come here to work in the fields and work hard, I am not coming. I stay with my family and work with my father there.

But, in contrast to that story, we find that some of the young people who, at least temporarily, find themselves in a somewhat more stable situation, once again produce discourses related to the possibilities that do exist here and not in their country. This conversation between MEM_BCN_35/M20 and two foster mothers is interesting because it seeks to contrast the look of the mothers, which is much more pessimistic, with the answer that MEM_BCN_35/M20 gives them:

STK_BCN_29/F40s: I tell them the same thing many times, both to one and to the other "you have risked your life to get here. Look what you have that, unfortunately, others do not have the same luck that you have had, in quotes, you. Push forward. In other words, the worst is already here. That you still have a lot of bad. But push forward because now you only have a straight line. Keep fighting".

MEM_BCN_35/M20: If, as we say, coming here from Morocco is one step. And now you already have a very long road, you know? So, now... You have to wake up. So, you already have to look everywhere for who can help you, how you can reach your goal...

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yeah, but sometimes I guess they get desperate... Most... Not everyone is like you. There are many people who are desperate.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Exactly, but...

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Because they don't see the light.

STK_BCN_29/F40s: That they feel alone.

Even so, it is interesting to note that, in the vast majority of cases, this gradual loss of objectives or expectations does not generate regret about the migration process (even when it has normally been very hard). On the contrary, the idea that in Catalonia or Spain the opportunities are much greater is maintained:

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yes. But who says that it will be easy here?

MEM_BCN_35/M20: It's just... Neither... We didn't say it's easy either, you know? But at least when you get here, you are already alone, yes, you are already alone, but at least you will have more job opportunities than in Morocco.

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yes? You think?

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Yes.

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Even with what you have found, what you have experienced up to now, do you still think that there are many more possibilities here than there?

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Yes, I'll explain. In Morocco my brother wanted to work as an ambulance driver. He has to pay money to work.

STK_BCN_33/F50s: Yes, yes. Everything is paid for there, I know.

MEM_BCN_35/M20: Do you know? He has to pay to work. It's just... crazy.

Cross-cutting issues

Finally, regarding the transversal things that permeate the rest of the analytical categories, in this group issues such as migration and the entire migratory process take on a lot of prominence as specific situations that constantly impact their stories and their own lives, although this already appears in an overlapping way in many of the previous analyses.

In addition to this, all those public policies that the institutions have been developing to try to find a solution to the reality of these young people are also collected here. At a national level, the entire process of guardianship and internment in centres for minors is analysed, with a critical look at understanding what effects all this produces. As a way of visually summarizing some of these situations, the example of an EXMENA's meeting with a young minor under guardianship is interesting to see the negative consequences

that the model itself produces and the same limitations that this public guardianship policy has:

“STK_BCN_05 and the other journalist start talking to one of the young people who has come for the first time today. I don't quite understand who they are. I lean in to listen and they're finding out where he's from. The young man explains that he is 15 years old, that he has been here in Spain since he was 13 and that he has already passed through 6 juvenile centres. The other boy is his 18-year-old brother. The youngest explains that he runs away from the centres because he is afraid. He has been in the centre with about 30 young people, all older than him, sharing a room with 10 of them. The situation is dramatic. Everyone present is shaken by the story. The young man, who has not removed his hood at any time, has a very grim expression on his face. At 15 years old, he has lived longer than many of those present. He never smiles. He speaks Spanish, but with difficulties and, at times, he explains himself in Arabic with the young people, who act as translators. When asked about the papers, he says that he does not have any and that no centre has started any process for him. The passport is in the last centre that he escaped from. When asking to go to a centre, one of the men says that the best option is to go to the nearest Mossos d'Esquadra police station and say so. There the entire DGAIA protocol will be activated and they will look for a centre. (...) The policeman explains that they do not manage any of this, that it is the DGAIA. They report a minor here, and the DGAIA comes looking for him and takes him away. He says that usually it's to the same centre. The policeman himself says that he understands that if he has been assigned a centre he cannot say that they should change him just because he feels like it. That puts a long face on everyone. Feel like it? He has just explained that it is out of fear, he is 15 years old. The situation seems surreal to me. It is as if everyone stopped thinking that we are talking about a minor who, in order to return to the centre, has to share a room with 10 other boys who are 2 or 3 years older... It is dramatic. After thinking about it, they tell the policeman to notify the DGAIA. He tells us to go over to the benches on the end to wait. The youngest has half-red eyes. He notices that he does not want to go back there, but that he needs a centre to sleep in.” (Observation Sant Pere, Santa Caterina and la Ribera, 2020-02-03).

In this transversal section, it is necessary to re-emphasize the role that the variables of age and gender play in the situation of these groups and of young people. The first, as already described, is central when it comes to understanding what reaching the age of majority implies when it comes to staying outside the institutionalized channels of child protection. For the majority of these young people, reaching the age of 18 means a break with the established path of passing through guardianship and moving on to a subsistence-based situation. In the most favourable cases, this means receiving the help of other agencies or social entities that try to cover this institutional vacuum, but in the most negative, it means moving into a situation of greater marginality (living on the street, squatting, getting involved in informal or criminal economies, etc.). Thus, the gap that is opening up at this moment in the personal trajectory also supposes a process of increasing marginality that mainly affects those young people who, for different reasons, have not been able to weave a network of contacts with other agents. It is at this precise moment that the group reappears as a space for mutual aid, since it helps to cover the needs of those who cannot access certain resources.

On the other hand, gender differences as a transversal issue also affect personal situations of greater or less invisibility and marginality. Thus, the few girls with whom there has been knowledge or contact throughout the field work normally experience processes of making their own situation invisible (due to entry into networks of exploitation or lack of family support networks of origin as detailed above). Added to this is the fact that the

resources allocated to them are much more limited: most of the third sector entities that act in these situations focus their projects on men, normally due to the volume and visibility of the situation, and only a few such as Casals dels Infants -an apartment for exclusively young women- have specific resources for young single migrant women

Finally, it is necessary to highlight how through the theatre workshops that were promulgated with the young people of Canet de Mar, the analysis allowed us to observe and raise a series of reflections and methodological questions that deepen the forms of study and relationship with young people in the margins. Within the categories of participatory and position methodologies, there are different examples related to the trust and access that theatre allowed, about the importance of care and the body in the construction of these relationships, and also about ethical issues that the process itself ethnographic linked to these dynamics had.

2.5.4. Peripheral neighbourhoods: Young people, livelihoods, and mediations between L'Hospitalet de Llobregat and Barcelona

Organization

In this last group, issues related to its internal organization have lost some importance or relevance when compared to the previous ones. One of the most interesting points is to observe the changes that the groups have undergone over the last few years. Some groups that, far from being placed under the umbrella of names, rules and common practices, are generated through shared identification processes, where often the place of origin has an important weight:

STK_BCN_04/M26: Within my experience within the youth space that was Claqueta, we have seen how gangs have entered... gangs like... I define it as a group of friends. Normally, from the same country of origin, they get together, they normally have their place or their strategic position in some area of the neighbourhood, such as, "I occupy the Spanish square, I am in Piri (the Pyrenees), I am the square of the glass...". Everyone has their place, their area, yes that is true.

STK_BCN_03/F30: Sure. Then also, perhaps we are not aware, but then we go to the institutes, and they tell us, when we talk about "What would you change about the neighbourhood?" And they always tell you about security, cleanliness, youth coexistence and these things come out of "No, we Dominicans cannot go to this square. Not because we can't go down this street. Not because the Pakistanis don't know what". And you say, oysters, this is something, it's there and it's super hidden because we don't see it or know it and nobody raises the alarm. In other words... there is a gang or there is a group or there are young people who are trying... There is. But we don't see it. They don't identify themselves or anything. Of course, they only tell you that when we find them in the cabbages.

This evolution to less visible and hermetic formats than the previous ones has led to some of the categories in this block being difficult to apply to this group.

Identifications

On the other hand, the identifications, as in the previous cases, hold a very great weight when it comes to producing the groups and how they generate shared processes. As in the previous groups, the territory, the space, becomes the first space par excellence for the generation of shared frames.

The analysis has shown that continuous link between the neighbourhood and specific spaces in the neighbourhood with the production of groups and with the articulation of groups of young people who experience similar life situations. In this sense, it has been observed how in the three groups studied the specific territory takes on a dimension of common meaning and shared space in which the group develops and grows. Clearly, places like the blocks in Florida, but also the Canchas in Lleida, or some of the squares in Raval are reappropriated by young people and become the main face-to-face meeting space. In Lleida, during the last phases of the confinement, it was possible to observe first-hand the formation of a group and its growth through its continued presence in the park.

July 25: It is the weekend and with it the busiest hours in the square. Lleida is still in confinement, about which there is no news or information that suggests it is finishing any time soon. The tired atmosphere is felt in the city, in the neighbours and in the young people themselves. It has gone from a few weeks of more or less mild weather to a heat wave. The park is impassable for a good part of the day. All afternoon the sun shines directly on it and with temperatures of more than 35 degrees, it is impossible to sit there.

When night falls, the park becomes a festive space. The different groups of young people shout, drink, smoke, some girls dance in front of a sideboard in a corner, others chase each other (the youngest), as well as other things. The neighbours of the two adjoining blocks look at him perplexed. The police have also come more than 7 or 8 times and, even warning the young people that they cannot be there and that they must leave due to the confinement, but they return every day. Some nights the neighbours also yell at them, although the youngsters either don't listen to them or make them see it.

Movement has also begun to be generated in other parts of the basement of the building in front. Different groups gather there. The evenings go by like this, without much news about it. Simply, there is more attention paid every day to see if the police are coming. When a car appears nearby or some blue lights appear, everyone falls silent, and some prepare to start running.

Beyond the territorial and coinciding with the analytical results of the previous group, it has been observed how aesthetics and music are a transcendental part not only in the constitution and growth of the groups, but also in the importation and homogenization of groups throughout the territory. Here the idea of M.D.L.R. is the main one to observe how through music, ways of dressing and an attitude towards daily conflicts most of all, which emerges first from the Florida neighbourhood, is expanded throughout the rest of the territories studied. Previously, the example in Lleida of police interception with a group and their attitude towards the police, questioning what it really means to be an M.D.L.R. For this reason, these artistic and aesthetic elements continue to be central when it comes to distinguishing memberships, although the groups no longer maintain that more hermetic format.

2.5.5. Practices

Clearly, it is in these peripheral neighbourhood spaces that most of the daily activities linked to the groups take place, but it is mainly their members. Beyond economic issues and formal training, such as work or school, the public spaces of these neighbourhoods occupied by each group is where the main meetings and encounters between its members take place.

Far from being coordinated and formal meetings, as in groups like the Latin Kings, it is a daily group interaction similar to heading to the *plaza* to join the group when you have free time.

Beyond the daily routine, some of these groups and members of the groups carry out subsistence-related activities that sometimes cross the line between what is legal and what is illegal. Previously, the example of marijuana plantations, their care and surveillance has been cited as one of the main economic horizons for many young people. In addition to that, other related practices have been appearing in different interviews. For example, a social educator from Florida shares this daily summary of some young people:

STK_BCN_18/M43: Yes, yes. And today (...) the kids move in what happens in the street. That is to say, in a kind of present continuous: "I don't know what's going to happen to me today, I go out with my colleagues and I can give hell with a Pakistani because we've taken whatever it is" to "I'm working on a plantation of marijuana that they have under the house and they give me 100 bucks" or "today is Saturday and I'm going to the entrance of a disco somewhere to see if I'm lucky enough to catch a fool and take his wallet, shoes or whatever". I think it moves more from this logic. I know there is a lot of drugs (...). I know there is a lot of drugs and a lot of kids involved.

INT: But now more than before?

STK_BCN_18/M43: I think now more than before. Yes, and when I say youth, youth are not the ones who neither plant nor earn [money]. In other words, young people are the intermediaries. In fact, a few months ago there was a raid here and they seized 8 marijuana plantations. When I say plantations I mean houses, eh. That is, below the house. In fact, they squat in houses to make the plantations. And the police find out, the Mossos find out that there is a plantation there because the electricity is syphoned. Then it goes off and it's like very [obvious] (...). Mainly, in the Blocks. More than in the rest of the neighbourhood, although there has always been a trade. And there have been kids who trafficked unknowingly because the adult on duty gave them a high... Yes.

In a way, this example summarizes the set of subsistence economic practices that these young people often carry out to get out of precarious or vulnerable situations. Although they remain as a horizon of possible progress, they ultimately deepen the issues of marginality and production of conflicts and interpersonal violence, and sometimes also in repressive or punitive issues.

Lastly, one of the practices that is taking hold with these groups and in these contexts is the repression suffered by young people in their daily lives, normally by the police forces. This situation is experienced and internalized by them as a normal situation in the neighbourhood, even more so due to their condition as street youth, which causes an increase in conflicts with these agents and an increase in repression, persecution and imprisonment.

Relations

Continuing with the previous point, and also related to what was explained in the relationships of the previously analysed group, the police are usually the main institutional agent that interacts with these young people, and normally they do so from a persecutory and punitive point of view. This produces a generalized rejection by young people, who habitually come to see them as some of the main causes of their daily conflicts. The feeling often goes beyond the barriers of the youth group itself, and is

extrapolated to other residents of the neighbourhood, as we can see in this example of the Florida Blocks:

INT: We were talking about the Florida Blocks, the differences...

STK_BCN_18/M43: Oh, yes (...). The Blocks... If the neighbourhood [la Florida] is fragile in itself, the Blocks are even more so. And the general or specific dynamics of renting in the Florida neighbourhood are not healthy, and even less so in the Blocks. And there is also a particularity (...), those of the Blocks feel like they belong to the Blocks (...). A very, very brutal feeling of belonging. Very brutal. There are even channels on Instagram where they publish, what do you call them, the misdeeds they do. What do you say "You are putting yourself at risk, why are you doing this?"

INT: Do the young people of the Blocks do it?

STK_BCN_18/M43: Yes, they are from the Blocks. And, well, defying the police. They have cut off the power [in the neighbourhood] to be able to confront [the police]. I don't know, it's a huge deal.

These situations of police confrontation produced, mainly by the harassment suffered by young people, are reproduced in most of the groups and neighbourhoods studied. These relationships in some way maintain or deepen the very peripheral and marginalized positions that these young people occupy. Both the police forces themselves highlight this position with their actions, as well as the response of the young people, even if it is through forms of daily resistance, they hold that position.

In contrast to these relationships, there is a large presence of agents and associations, linked to the institution or to the third sector, who work with or on these young people to seek to remove them from these processes of marginalization and who seek to help alleviate the effects of structural violence that they experience. It might seem contradictory, though, since the effect of both policies or forms of intervention is built and has diametrically opposite consequences.

Entering this second group, it is necessary to recover some of the previous analytical arguments that show how these interventions are never proposed as structural policies, with sufficient financing and that seek to articulate general responses to the situation experienced by young people in these peripheries in the long-term. On the contrary, they are normally short-term projects that have resource limitations and the achievement of certain short-term objectives in order to have funding available again. As a result, this means that the majority of projects carried out in these neighbourhoods, indirectly and without this being their purpose, continue to reproduce frames of differentiation and internal stratification in young people.

Similarly, the INSERJOVE project, dedicated to the educational and labour insertion of young migrants from La Torrassa, lasts for one school year and its purpose is that a few of the participants can finally opt for a financed study scholarship by an NGO. Along the way, the educators who carry it out seek to build help spaces for all participants, with Catalan lessons, documentation aids or job searches, but the purpose of the annual project is still to "compete" in order to get that scholarship.

This generates the production of internal differentiations in the group of young people between those who can maintain a continuous participation in the classes and those who cannot due to different personal and family situations. The latter normally, due to their "lack of commitment" tend to become separated from the project.

This dynamic of competitive projects with limited resources and possibilities is reproduced in the majority of third sector associations that have been studied. In addition, public entities and institutions have progressively gained influence and presence in these neighbourhoods (where social services previously centralized a large part of the projects), to give space to this outsourcing of services to the third sector; a sector that is maintained through public financing, but mainly private.

In this sense, this explanation, which could also be included in the transversal section but which is highly linked to relationships, allows us to understand from what point of view they are thinking and to articulate the insertion project for young people in these peripheral neighbourhoods.

Imaginary

In this case we find a clear bifurcation between the imaginaries produced externally to the groups and those produced internally. The former, as in the rest of the cases, usually have a stigmatizing component, the result of their appearance in the media or in specific political discourses, and it always comes to identify these groups as producers of insecurity and conflict.

What is interesting in this case is that a strong common representative imaginary is produced internally, which has important channels for disseminating a different image in this case. Thus, the musical production, for example, and the appearance of several famous singers that come from these neighbourhoods and these groups, allows the appearance of an alternative discourse to the mainstream that seeks to complexify and explain the realities of these young people. A discourse that also allows young people to have a direct voice (although mediated by the singers), a situation that does not happen with the previous groups, and that here affects both men and women because there are shared references and also in both directions. This is interrelated with the personal and group presentations that appeared in the previous section on identifications.

On the other hand, in relation to the construction of objectives and possible futures, there is a strong presence of discourses linked to the lack of a future and the non-commitment to achieve certain objectives. Discourses that maintain, albeit involuntarily, a certain stigmatizing vision and that are assimilated and reproduced also by certain educators or associations:

STK_BCN_10/M47: And then, many times I also see that they lack it... Some don't, eh. But others do, of future scenarios that you consider, of dreaming... Of course, if the model that you have at home is that you should work in the supermarket, because it is your only option, or that is what you envision... You cannot imagine studying, or you can't imagine yourself working in I don't know where... If you don't dream, there's no way you can look for it. So, I think that many times it is this... they find future scenarios that are not very motivating and not very rich. So, here I also

understand that it is one of our tasks, to teach them other options and accompany them so that, if they want, they can achieve them.

Of course, this discourse, although it is raised from the accompaniment and mediation in precarious situations, does not take into account the structural issues that impact these young people due to their occupied social position, and leaves the personal choice and motivation in the hands of personal choice and motivation. able to achieve specific goals. In some cases, this can further deepen scenarios of frustration and no future, which project even more certain stigmatizing imaginaries.

Cross-cutting issues

Lastly, in relation to the different cross-cutting issues, as previously mentioned, the analysis has made it possible to break down the national and local political forms that apply to these young people, their limitations and the ways in which they are constructed.

Through these limitations we find that other more informal or community intervention frameworks appear that seek to implement mediation processes through daily practice. A mediation that normally does not focus on conflicts between young people or groups, but rather tries to alleviate the effects of structural violence (poverty, precariousness, unemployment, lack of basic resources, etc.) and tries to prevent it from turning into violence horizontal or interpersonal.

An example of this can be found in the figure of STK_BCN_34/M30s, a young adult from the neighbourhood who is highly respected and well-known by the neighbours and who, through having different siblings of very different ages, knows many of the young people. He started working managing the newly built football field between Florida and Torrassa. His role in the neighbourhood allowed him to have enough authority to stop conflicts. In addition, his football career in various semi-professional teams also gave him a role of respect as far as football itself is concerned. Little by little throughout the field work, his involvement grew and he was able to land a good contract with a neighbourhood entity, which today maintains him as a social educator of different projects and is almost the most sought after figure in this environment, both for his knowledge of the realities and the rules of the neighbourhood, and for the respect that he has accumulated.

On the other hand, it is necessary to highlight the low or non-existent presence of women in a constant manner in the majority of youth street groups studied. Although they constantly interact with the boys in these groups, they are not normally considered an integral part of them and form their own separate groups. These dynamics have been difficult to access and it has not been possible to gather enough information to propose firm hypotheses, but observation processes both in neighbourhoods and in community spaces have served to outline this situation. On the other hand, the majority group is usually women in the projects linked to the third sector of insertion.

2.6. Examples of participants and their trajectories

2.6.1. MEM_BCN_35, from a young ex-guardian to "leader" of the group

MEM_BCN_35 / M20 is currently 22 years old and lives in the town of Canet de Mar. He was born in Morocco, specifically in a small rural town, but a year later they moved with his entire family to the city of Er-Rachidia. Life as a child in that city gave him memories of joy, good living and sharing happy moments with friends and family. From playing football with neighbours and family in the streets of the neighbourhood to, a little older, finishing high school, although he highlights the nonsense he constantly did to get together with friends, chat while smoking a cigarette or sometimes have a bit of *mashou*.

His life there was structured around a solid and complete family, which shared deep ties in the peripheral neighbourhood where he lived. Although it was not flashy, it did not suffer from economic problems. Even so, his image of Morocco darkens when he explains the expectations for the future and personal fulfilment that he perceived there while he was growing up. The difficulties in finding a well-paid job were added to the situation that his different siblings were experiencing: one, the oldest, had had to emigrate to Qatar to work and had returned after a personal problem; the second oldest, already married and with a family, had to pay to be able to get a job. With this, the most immediate references for him failed to keep his objectives afloat.

All these situations caused him to decide at the age of 17 to emigrate to Spain. With the consent of his father, who had helped him on different occasions, he tried to cross the border in different ways. He remembers how hard the days were near Melilla, where groups of street youth settle to intimidate and rob young people passing through the migration. For a few days, he had to go around armed with knives and look for groups of friends to be able to face the existing violence. The harshness does not end there, because in his different attempts to cross the border he received several beatings from the Customs police. Finally, when he had almost given up crossing and was back in a town, he was given the option of going across the sea in a boat.

In Spain, his situation continued to remain in an intermediate space between permanent surveillance, hiding and fleeing. First admitted to an Andalusian juvenile facility, he escaped shortly after in order to achieve his goal of reaching Barcelona. On the route, which he mostly did alone or accompanied by his cousin, he gradually met other young people who advised him about the new codes.

In Barcelona, the first thing he did was go to the police station (as he explains, he first went to eat because he was starving, and since he could not pay because he had no money, he went to the police). At that moment, he officially entered the guardianship system that would shelter him for the next few years through different centres for minors in Maresme until, finally, he spent most of his time in Canet de Mar. There he met most of the members of the group that he is currently in. Sharing rooms with many young people, he experienced first-hand the displays of racism from people in the town and, furthermore, understood that there was no further plan for them than to have them in there while time passed.

During the endless hours spent in front of the library, he met MEM_BCN_39 / F18, a young woman from the town with whom he struck up a friendship. Her mother was reluctant about the presence of these young people in the town at first, but as the days went by and she got to know him more, she changed her political position until she became the foster mother of two of the young people, and became the reference symbol for MEM_BCN_35/M20.

At present, and after different moments of precariousness in which he had nowhere to live or means to support himself after leaving the centre when he came of age, MEM_BCN_35/M20 has found a job and is renting an apartment in the town. As these issues were happening, he became a central point of support for the rest of the friends he knew in the centre. All those who have needed it have slept in his house, for single nights or for longer periods. The salary he earns from work also reverts to the rest of the group, whom he often invites to eat.

The rest of the group lives in different cities such as Barcelona, Mataró or L'Hospitalet del Llobregat, but those who can join in celebrations in Canet de Mar do. Through the experience of the guardianship centre and the relationships that they built there, this is the central point for them. Within the group, some have a job and can also live emancipated like MEM_BCN_35/M20. Others, like MEM_BCN_44/M23, who still has not got papers and lives in a squat, or MEM_BCN_61 /M19 who just got out of prison for a crime he did not commit (he was present at a robbery), find themselves in more precarious situations. In all cases, MEM_BCN_35/M20 considers himself as a kind of unrecognized leader, keeping the group together and ensuring that, in some way, the possibilities and benefits are shared among all.

2.6.2. EXMENA's from the perspective of MEM_BCN_09: New forms of resistance and mediation from the margins

I met MEM_BCN_09 / F22 in 2019, it was STK_BCN_05 / F26, a journalist who helped and supported the EXMENA's collective since shortly after her formation, who introduced us. The two of them, together with 2 more young North African girls, a boy from Indonesia and 2 other journalists make up the active hard core of the group.

MEM_BCN_09/F22 is the daughter of parents who emigrated from Morocco, although she was born in Barcelona. She is currently 22 years old. As a child, due to family problems, she spent part of her 18 years in a centre supervised by the DGAIA. Through her personal journey, both from passing through the juvenile centre and from different experiences lived in her own flesh as a woman of colour, she began to carry out informal mediation strategies with young migrants alone in the surroundings of the Forat de la Vergonya. In 2017 and 2018, the question of the arrival of these young people flooded the media and political discourse, and the neighbourhood and even more so that park were reference spaces where some of the young people went when they arrived in the city. In those first moments, through acquaintances or friends who informed him of the situation that different young people and minors who had just arrived were experiencing, he began to carry out actions such as informing and accompanying them on issues such as

regularizing their documentation, helping to enter the centres or also small actions such as distributing food or providing accommodation in more extreme situations.

Like her, MEM_BCN_16/F25 and MEM_BCN_85/F20s had also promoted similar actions in the same neighbourhood. At the same time, all of them coincided in their afternoons and free time at the Casal Palau Alós, a youth reference space for social services in the neighbourhood, where they participated in different recreational and educational activities. The three of them, with the impulse that the educators themselves gave them, formally constituted the EXMENA's group. This group would be born between 2017 and 2018 as a reference space to denounce situations of racism and abuse experienced by young people and minors who migrated alone, while also serving as a political platform to demand the improvement of their conditions upon arrival in the city.

After organizing and participating in various protest actions against political parties that promulgated racist and stigmatizing discourses against these young people, or to denounce abusive practices that occurred in juvenile centres, the group began to gain momentum and quickly established itself as a point of state reference in the fight for the rights of these young people. These first protests were followed by specific campaigns that maintained the initial spirit of the actions of MEM_BCN_09/F22, but which, with the support of the group, could have a much greater impact: rounds and walks were made through different areas of the city to detect young people and minors living on the street and were informed of the alternatives, food was distributed in these different spaces, or they also went as a group to police macro-raids or places where some type of recent conflict had occurred (between young people, with other neighbours or also with the police) to mediate or exert pressure.

The three became the focal point of the movement. Increasingly, through the media boom that the issue of unaccompanied minors was experiencing, they began to become known, to be claimed on television programs, to receive requests for talks in schools or institutes (first in Catalonia, and then the rest of the state), until the institutions themselves had sometimes contacted them to mediate in certain conflicts. This exponential growth of the group, as MEM_BCN_09F22 acknowledges, was not accompanied by a growth of the group itself in terms of members and involvement that would allow tasks to be shared, nor by a greater interrelationship with other political groups in the city. Thus, two years after the group's birth, and coinciding with the pandemic, its activity gradually declined until it came to an end. The accumulation of demands made by different agents, as well as the need to survive at work and economically in their personal lives, wore them down to the point of eclosion and abandonment.

Even so, the group continues to be a reference at the local level for the construction of popular mediation and resistance tools in the face of situations such as the violence suffered by the young people and minors who migrated alone. Their condition as women of colour, who are also fluent in both languages and who, because they were born here, understand the different local administrative logics, made them activist referents in the city, but, even more, in referents for the young people themselves upon their arrival. As MEM_BCN_09/F22 explains, “I think that it is also what we say, as in reality we have

done something without having a fucking idea of what we were doing and what we were generating... We are not aware that, "Ah, give me your number." "Okay", "Give me your email." "Okay", without thinking that this was really going to spread and that we were going to start having emails, calls from television, that suddenly you think you are Beyoncé...". All this exceeded the initial expectations of the group and, although at times they tried to resist and stay afloat even when the necessary perseverance was overwhelming, it finally produced the gradual decomposition of the group.

2.7. Conclusions

The mutation of youth street groups over the last two decades has allowed us to understand the effects that the different processes that they have experienced both internally and externally have had on them. Thus, it has been possible to observe how the marginality that most of these young people occupy is fought, assimilated or resisted most of the time through the group (Solís, et al., 2022). For this reason, the natural mediation processes in the face of conflicts that cause the different structural violence received by young people and the product of their social position due to class, racialization, gender and age issues, are essential to understand the reason for the existence of these conflicts. groups (Collins, 2017). Mutual aid, cooperation for subsistence and daily forms of resistance to violence become central axes of these groups (Solís, 2017; Tilly, 2012; Scott, 1985).

In this sense, the use of the analytical framework of the "youth street groups space " has led to understanding the different relational processes that each group lives within the social space and, through this, understand the differentiated positions of greater or lesser recognition, more or less acceptance, they live. This, ultimately, allows us to understand the different processes of stigmatization or marginalization that groups experience through their daily interactions with other agents and that are often based on the construction of a "moral panic" that structures political forms of control over certain populations.

In most cases, these processes of greater or lesser marginalization are linked to the possible forms of subsistence for these young people who face an accumulation of structural inequalities that block and delimit their paths (Auyero, et al., 2015). The linking of these groups to criminal activities is normally determined by a set of complex social situations that either only determine these paths as possible, or convert them into forms of daily resistance. In other words, it has been possible to verify that the fine line that separates what is legal from what is illegal, and what is legal from what is illegal, is transferred depending on personal and group moments for all the groups. This allows us to understand violence or crime as one more product of the social position occupied (by necessity) and as a space for exit or reaction that is often unique. The case of young migrants alone from Canet de Mar exemplifies this situation: those with the possibility of regularizing their situation and accessing paid work reduce their activity in the constitution of criminal acts. On the other hand, those who, for different reasons and

personal trajectories, do not have these possibilities, are normally “pushed” to resort more habitually to these economies, from which they try to get out when they can.

Within this transit through the forms of subsistence described, there is a communion of processes that intersect with the lives of young people and that, as has been collected throughout the work, try to put a stop to or rebuild certain existing weaknesses. Associations, NGOs, social services, among others, implement partial policies that seek to remedy the effects of this existing inequality. Although, as has been observed throughout the report, these projects are increasingly ceded to third sector entities (and abandoned by the public function), with the consequences of limitations, temporalities and success needs that this entails (Wacquant, 2008; Parajua, 2014).

In a smaller dimension, from community relations and from the links established with non-constituted social agents, is where different practices of mediation or political response to the different conflicts have appeared, which have had their importance and which need to be highlighted as alternative forms, not only of intervention, but also of denunciation and political search for solutions. The mothers of Canet de Mar, the youth collective EXMENA's, the musical projects between the Latin Kings and Ñetas, or also the daily efforts made by educators and social workers (beyond the limits of their projects), highlight the importance of these strategies that go beyond the framework of the economic and result-based, and that also fill the mediation with political content, not with these groups, but with the realities they live.

In addition, in a transversal way, many of these groups do not have their own voices from which to be defined and recognized beyond their own scope, but are agents external to the group, mainly the media, which expose, delimit and they document their practices, reasons for being and existing. Even so, also as forms of resistance within said denied expression, diffusion and recognition strategies appear, such as music. Trap, rap or drill, beyond being common spaces where attitudes, aesthetics and ways of acting are shared, are spaces for more or less explicit enunciation and denunciation of the general conditions that young people live in peripheral neighbourhoods. Faced with the lack of a speaker and, in Spivak's words, the ability to speak and be for themselves, other strategies appear that break in as uncontrollable and direct expressions like these.

Returning to the starting point of the Barcelona Model and its different effects for the Latin Kings group, but also as a specific example that can be extrapolated to the research, we can conclude that, although this political proposal had mostly positive consequences, as in the rest of public policies and projects carried out with or on all the groups studied, economic and temporal limitations, external political dependencies, and also the general vision of "a problem to be solved" from where they are raised end up having limited routes, losing participants in their own course and, even more importantly, they do not usually directly attack structural issues such as inequality, marginalization and social exclusion as producers of conflicts and violence in these groups. In addition, in the comparison between the Barcelona Model and the rest of the projects and policies currently developed in the neighbourhoods for these groups, it has been possible to observe the materialization of a change of format in public policies and the growing

abandonment of the public function that yields their space to the private or semi-private function, with all the consequences that this entails in the form of intervention.

2.8. References

- Ballesté, E. (2018: NP). Forms and methodologies for the study of youth street groups in Barcelona. Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University, European Research Council.
- Ballesté, E. (2022a). Traces of Youth Street Groups in Barcelona (Catalonia). In Queirolo Palmas, L. et al. (Eds). *Researching Youth Street Groups in Southern Europe* (pp. 16-40). Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University, European Research Council.
- Ballesté, E. (2022b). Normalizing activism and marginalizing radical youth in Spain's post-15M social movements. *Social Analysis*, 66(1), 64-86.
- Ballesté, E., & Feixa, C. (2022). Creating insecurity through Youth Street Groups and applying security for control and governance: a case study of Barcelona Latin Kings. *Critical Criminology*, 30(3) (in press).
- Bourdieu, P. (1985). The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups. *Theory and Society*, 14(6), 723–744.
- Brenner, N., Peck, J., & Theodore, N. (2010). After neoliberalization? *Globalizations*, 7(3), 327–345.
- Brotherton, D.C., & Barrios, L. (2004). *The Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation. Street Politics and the Transformation of a New York City Gang*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Burawoy, M. (1998). The Extended Case Method. *Sociological Theory*, 16(1), 4–33.
- Cohen, S. (2011). *Folks Devils and Moral Panics: the creation of the mods and rockers*. London: Routledge.
- Comas, M., & Quiroga, V. (2005). *Minors who migrate sols from Morocco to Catalonia*. Barcelona: Editorial Mediterrània.
- Delgado, D. (2016). *Citizenship: the ethical and aesthetic reform of capitalism*. Madrid: Cataract.
- Fassin, D. (2018). *For a repoliticization of the world. Disposable lives as a challenge for the 21st century*. Madrid: XXI century.
- Feixa, C., & Porzio, L. (2006). Young “latinos” in Barcelona: cultural identities. In C. Feixa, L. Porzio, & C. Recio (Eds.), *Young Latinos in Barcelona. Public space and urban culture* (pp. 59–75). Barcelona: Anthropos Editorial.
- Feixa, C., Porzio, L., & Recio, C. (Eds.). (2006). *Young “latinos” in Barcelona: Public space and urban culture*. Barcelona: Anthropos Editorial.
- Feixa, C., & Romaní, O. (2014). From local gangs to global tribes: The Latin Kings and Queens Nation in Catalonia. In D. Buckingham, S. Bragg & M.J. Kehily (Eds.), *Youth Cultures in the Age of Global Media* (pp. 88-103). Berlin: Springer.
- Feixa, C., Sánchez García, J., Ballesté, E., Cano-Hila, A. B., Masanet, M.-J., Mecca, M., & Oliver, M. (2019). *The (Trans) Gang: Notes and Queries on Youth Street Group Research (TRANSGANG Working Papers No. 2–1)*. Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University, European Research Council.
- Feixa C, Sánchez-García J, Soler-i-Martí R, Ballesté E, Hansen N, Brisley A. (2020). *Methodology handbook: ethnography and data analysis*. Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University and the European Research Council.
- Fontana, J. (2011). *For the good of the empire: a history of the world since 1945*. Barcelona: Past & Present.
- Fontana, J. (2013). *The future is a strange country: a reflection on the social crisis of the beginning of the 21st century*. Barcelona: Past & Present.
- Garcia, S., & Avila, D. (2015). *Risk enclaves. Neoliberal government, inequality and social control*. Madrid: Traffickers of Dreams.
- García, S., Mediola, I., Ávila, D., Bonelli, L., Brandariz, J. A., Fernández Bessa, C., & Maroto Calatayud, M. (2021). *Metropolice: security and police in the neoliberal city*. Madrid: Traffickers of Dreams.
- Goikoetxea, Jule; Noguera, Albert. (2021). *Outbreaks: riots, class identity and political change*. Barcelona: Bellaterra Editions.
- Graeber, D. (2018). *Bullshit jobs*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks.
- Horvat, S., Zizek, S., & Murillo, E. (2014). *The South asks for the floor: the future of a Europe in crisis*. Barcelona: The Books of the Lynx.
- Kontos, L., Brotherton, D., & Barrios, L. (2003). *Gangs and Society: alternative perspectives*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishing.
- Lorey, I. (2014). *State of insecurity: government of the precarious*. New York: Verse.
- Nofre, J. (2021). The Florida Blocks, a diamond in the rough. *Tracce Urbana, Italian Journal Transdisciplinare Di Studi Urbani*, 10.
- Queirolo Palmas, L. (2014). The problem of gangs in Spain as an object of academic production and ethnographic activism. *Papers: Journal of Sociology*, 99(2), 261–284. <https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/papers.595>
- Queirolo Palmas, L. (2017). *How do you build a public enemy? The “Latin gangs”*. Madrid: Traffickers of Dreams.
- Queirolo Palmas, L., Ballesté, E., Grassi, P., Mansilla, J.C., Oliver, M., Núñez, K., & Feixa, C. (2021). *Researching Youth Street Groups in Southern Europe*. Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University, European Research Council.
- Quiroga, V. (2003). *Els petits harraga. Irregular immigrant minors not accompanied by Moroccan origin to Catalonia*. Doctoral thesis Rovira i Virgili University.
- Quiroga, V., Chagas, E., Camerota, N., Molera, L., & Moral, I. (2021). Adolescents and young unaccompanied migrants: from discrimination to the recognition of knowledge. *Quaderns de l'Institut Català d'Antropologia*, 37(1), 87-108.
- Rey-Gayoso, R., & Díz, C. (2021). Trap music in Spain: Youth aesthetics in times of crisis. *AIBR, Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana*, 16(3), 583-607.
- Solís, J. M., & Ballesté Isern, E. (2018). Action and reaction: political field, social space and dynamics of protest groups. In J. Sánchez, E. Ballesté, & C. Feixa (Eds.), *What happened to the indignant spring? Social movements, politics and youth on three continents*. Lleida: Millennium.
- Solís, J.M., Ballesté, E., & Úbeda, M. (2022: OF). *Living in the frame of structural violence: institutional regulations and daily life in Lleida, Spain*. Ethnography.
- Spivak, G. Ch. (1988). *Can the subaltern speak.pdf*. In Chakravorty, G. (1988). *Can the Subaltern Speak. Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*.
- Wacquant, L. (2009). *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Duke: Duke University Press.
- Wacquant, L. (2011). *Forging the Neoliberal State. Workfare, Prisonfare and Social Insecurity*. *Prohistory*, 16.

3. The metamorphosis of gangs. Beyond the *mano dura* in Madrid.⁸

María Oliver

Translation into English by Laura Styles

3.1. Introduction

The entrance to the field in Madrid was made when taking advantage of the Intercultural Mediation Seminar that we coordinated from the TransGang project and that was carried out between October and December 2018 through the collaboration of three entities: the UPF, the RUMIÑAHUI Association, and the UAM. Although the project was not yet in the field work phase, the opportunity presented itself and we decided not let it pass by because the project that was proposed to us was to coordinate a mediation seminar for young people belonging to youth street groups, in which young people from various groups could participate in training that would teach them how to be mediators and young liaisons between associations, civil society and the groups themselves. The seminar was held, despite the fact that our arrival in the field sparked some suspicions and misgivings among university professionals and associations who had previously been working with the same groups with whom we wanted to work. These suspicions were transferred to the groups, which during the week prior to the start of the seminar jeopardized its realization. Finally, the seminar was carried out with a majority of young people belonging to the group of Latin Kings (11) and young people who did not belong to any group, but migrants and related in various ways to the RUMIÑAHUI Association (5). Despite the opportunity of being able to hold this type of training in a relatively favourable local political environment in the city of Madrid under the mandate of the mayoress Manuela Carmena, the truth is that we did not manage to reach any agreement regarding the involvement of the city government to facilitate the labour integration of these young people, nor to promote training and employment plans more focused on mediation and conflict prevention work between youth street groups, with the youth themselves as the protagonist. At that time, the media impact of the so-called “Latin gangs” was almost nil, and there was no perceived need to direct efforts or resources towards prevention. It should be noted that in 2022 and after four years of trying, the party that emerged from the then mayoress, Más Madrid, is the one that has shown the most interest in our research work and in prevention and work with young people from these groups, but now they are

⁸ The TRANSGANG project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) within the framework of the European Union's Research and Innovation program HORIZON 2020, grant agreement No 742705. IP: Dr. Carles Feixa. Website: www.upf.edu/web/transgang. Contact: transgang@upf.edu.

no longer in the city government. The Intercultural Mediation Seminar, for our part, served to establish contact with one of the youth street groups of Latin American origin settled in Madrid, the group of the Latin Kings, and to maintain it from that moment on, as well as to establish a cordial and collaborative relationship with the RUMIÑAHUI Association, which has made it possible to observe the group's relationship with this entity and with the environment.

During 2019, the team dedicated the year almost exclusively to the drafting of project documents, such as the Concept Paper, the Background Paper and the Research Plan, and although group observation and monitoring activities were carried out so as to maintain contacts that had already been established, the start of the fieldwork itself did not begin until 2020, a year affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and which forced us to rethink research and the possibilities of observation and fieldwork in general. Thanks to the contact established previously and the personal trust between the local researcher and several of the young people from the Latin Kings group, it was possible to lightly monitor the situation through their publications on social networks and also direct contact through messaging applications. These observations were also possible in other contexts and locations of the TRANSGANG project, and despite the fact that neither the private conversations nor the observations made on private social networks are likely to be published, general and comparative observations could be made between the different research teams and sites of the project, which were collected by completing a questionnaire and publishing an article (Sánchez et al. 2020). In mid-2020, thanks to the progressive lifting of mobility and physical distancing restrictions, we were able to observe the return to face-to-face sociability of the young people in the groups. We have also witnessed an escalation of conflict associated with the groups. Over time, interviews and talks in educational centres have come to relate to the use of social networks during confinement, and to imitation dynamics and calls for attention by adolescents who either showed their affiliation to a group or pretended that they belonged without it being true, out of simple admiration for the aesthetics, music and symbology associated with the "bands". Of the back of the field work of TRANSGANG in Madrid, in 2020 contact was established with Spanish members of the DDP group (Dominican Don't Play) and with a member of the *Trinitarios*, which later, as of 2021, is complemented by the information obtained in previous years for the doctoral thesis of Dr. Katia Núñez, a specialist in these two groups and with the field work that she carried out as a local researcher in Madrid during said year.

Most of the participant observations were carried out in 2021 once most of the restrictions due to COVID-19 had been overcome and, furthermore, fostered by a growing need for learning and cooperation by local entities that work with local young people in group environments: institutes, social services, associations and even families seek training and support in the face of a situation of violence that they consider to be growing dangerously. From all the social agents, we hear a very similar story and that has to do with the return to educational centres and contact with minors after confinement: they perceive an increase in the presence of "gangs" in their centres, mainly Trinidadians and DDPs, or in the environment, a drop in the age of the young people who seem to belong to or be

related to these groups, and a distancing from entities such as the school or social services. We contacted several educational centres where we carry out violence prevention workshops with young people between the ages of 12 and 16, which is of great value for research because, despite the fact that people under 14 are not eligible as participants in the research on an individual basis, the observation of educational environments and the perception that groups are held in them, together with the shared imaginary of minors about "gangs", allows us to have a very complete vision of what is happening in the streets of Madrid and the evolution that the groups have had in recent years. Everything points to the fact that one of the main problems perceived by social agents is the drop in the age that young people to join groups and the attraction they feel for violent behaviour, so the possibility of observing groups of these characteristics has been very enriching for research.

Despite the fact that the field work itself should have finished in the last quarter of 2021, the truth is that the output has been slower and more progressive than expected, due to requests for help, training and collaborations. In February 2022, when we had finished carrying out the field work, we found two homicides that were the results of conflicts between the DDP (who were the perpetrators on this occasion) and the Trinitarians (who were the victims on this occasion), and we decided to accept multiple interventions in the press as a way of to make the object of our research reach the general public, which has also allowed an analysis of the treatment of the phenomenon that is made in the various media. At the close of this report, we continue to collect information and piece together events related to the groups involved, although unfortunately they cannot be included here.

This report consists of eight sections: the first is this introduction; in the second, the methodology that has been followed for the field work is briefly collected and the analysis materials are summarized; the third presents a review of the ethical issues that arose during the field work; in the fourth, there is a general introduction to the situation of youth street groups in the Community of Madrid; in the fifth, we present a more detailed description of the work carried out with the groups investigated; the sixth section summarizes the results by clusters of the coding with NVivo; the seventh draws the profile of a member based on her life history, and the eighth section presents the conclusions of this report.

3.2. Methodology

3.2.1. Multi-Sited Ethnography

The fieldwork methodology of the TRANSGANG project is included in both the Concept Paper (Feixa et al., 2019) and the Methodological Manual (Feixa et al., 2020) and the Background Paper (Queirolo, coord., 2021), and it would be repetitive to add here again an exhaustive description of it. It is enough to remember that all the investigations carried out in the project locations are based on the Extended Case Method proposed by Buroway (1998/2009), which in our specific case materializes in the work of local researchers for each case study. This means that the person who writes this report and has done the field

work in the city of Madrid is a researcher who lives and knows first-hand the observed reality. To carry out the research work, a mobile multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) has been carried out (Büscher, Urry & Witchger, 2010; Coleman & von Hellermann, 2013; Falzon, 2009), which has allowed for the monitoring the target groups and for investigation in their movements by the geography of the city, as well as in the virtual world; “The attention is focused on the different spaces and times, as well as on the cultures of the youth street groups. (...) there is the importance of connecting with issues within digital ethnography, on the one hand, and with personification, on the other.” (Feixa et al. 2019, p. 82). Finally, from TRANSGANG it has been considered fundamental that whoever carries out local research incorporates the reflexivity and positioning of the researcher in the research approach.

From this perspective, researchers will also be asked to take positions regarding the broader social and political implications of the phenomena studied: the TRANSGANG team is committed to an ethical approach that deconstructs the hegemonic visions of street youth groups. Therefore, TRANSGANG investigators, critically distancing themselves from the dominant criminal perspective, will position themselves in the field as active agents rather than neutral ones in the social and political arena. They will be asked to explore their own contradictions and power relations in order to gain a more critical understanding of the phenomena and to devise more effective forms of intervention that challenge the dominant neoliberal models (ibid. p. 94).

In the case of the person making this report, it is therefore relevant to point out that she was an active and founding member of the Latin Kings & Queens group in Madrid between 2000 and 2010, and that from that position, combined with that of researcher, the field entry has been made. These personal circumstances have conditioned the relationships with the participants of that group, with other groups, with young people who do not belong to groups, and also with the social agents and with the state security forces.

3.2.2. Field work

Madrid is one of the contrasting cases of the TRANSGANG project, and therefore focuses on analysing “youth gang policies, experiences and mediation processes.” (ibid. p. 86). For this, semi-structured interviews, discussion groups, interviews for life stories and participant observations have been carried out and analysed, distributed as follows:

Interviews	MEM	9
	STK	5
Discussion groups	MEM ⁹	1
	STK	1

⁹ 2 FG were performed simultaneously with members, but the transcript of one of them has not been delivered. After multiple attempts to recover it and given the lack of time to repeat it, the decision is made to end the coding without including it.

Life Stories	MEM	2
--------------	-----	---

Participant observation	2018	73
	2019	5
	2020	44
	2021	118

It must be remembered that when considering these data that more hours of participant observation have been carried out, many of which have served to strengthen the presence in the field or to establish relationships of trust, but which did not show new data or data that needed to be registered. Hours spent on interviews, focus groups, and life story interviews are not included in these participant observation hours. To adjust to the requirements of the project, those that could provide the most information have been coded, and have been included, as they are the most recent and those that provided information on one of the issues that have been repeated the most, both among the participating youth and among the students. social agents, the observations in the public institutes of the Community of Madrid and those referring to the treatment that the press has given to the phenomenon and to the violent events that have happened more recently.

Regarding the people who have participated in the project, a total of 76 participants have been anonymized. They are the people who have had a direct relationship, either during participant observations through participation in interviews or discussion groups. The rest are those who may appear due to allusions or in the context of a narration have also been anonymized, although in a generic way and without being given a code.

Although applying a gender perspective to research has been one of the requirements of the TRANSGANG project since it was designed, it has not been possible to achieve anything even close to parity in terms of participating members in the case of Madrid, which does not imply in itself a failure in the application of said perspective, but that the unequal participation is a reflection of the unequal participation of women and men in the investigated groups, and as such must be analysed and taken into account when analysing the research results. Of the 24 participants registered as MEM who are part of the research, only 6 are women. On the other hand, as far as stakeholders are concerned, the number of female participants exceeds that of men: of 52 participants registered as STK, 27 are women. Although there has been no direct participation of minors, data has been collected on their presence in the groups through participant observation both with the groups and, mainly, in the educational centres visited.

PARTICIPANTS				
MEM	Men	18	Latin King (ALKQN)	11
			Dominican Don't Play (DDP)	4
			around women (DDP)	1

STK	Women	6	Trinitarios (Trinis)	2
			Latin Queens (ALKQN)	3
			Around DDP	1
			Around Trinis	1
			Around DDP	Around Trinis
	Men	25	Associations	10
			Teachers	2
			Police	1
			Social services	11
			Church	1
Women	27	Associations	3	
		Teachers	12	
		Social services	11	
		Family	1	

As can be seen from the data in the table above, the predominant group in the research was the ALKQN, with a total of 14 participants of both genders, followed by the DDP group with a total of 7 participants divided between men (members) and women and a man (from the environment). Although the representation of members of the Trinitarians is symbolic, with only two members and a woman from the environment, the group is included due to the amount of information collected both through observation and through its presence in the media and in the collective imagination over time and throughout the length of the field work.

Nº	Fecha	Código entrevista	Grupo/entidad	MEM o STK	Distrito	Sexo	Edad
1	30/1/20	MAD_INT_MEM_MAD_050	Las 30	MEM	Villaverde	F	23
2	2/12/20	MAD_INT_MEM_003	LK	MEM	Vallecas	M	22
3	10/2/20	MAD_INT_STK_006	RUMIÑAHUI	STK	Ciudad Lineal	M	55
4	20/2/20	MAD_INT_STK_007	Policía	STK	Chamartin	M	50
5	10/10/20	MAD_INT_STK_009	Familiar miembro	STK	Villaverde	F	45
6	16 y 30/10/20	MAD_INT_MEM_012	DDP	MEM	Villaverde	M	18
7	21/10/20	MAD_INT_MEM_MAD_011	Trinis	MEM	Vallecas	M	17
8	29/10/20	MAD_INT_MEM_013_Y_014	DDP	MEM	San Blas	M	18 y 18
9	3/5/21	MAD_INT_STK_51	Centro Ayuda Cristiano	STK	Arganzuela	M	45
10	18/5/21	MAD_INT_MEM_021	DDP (entorno)	MEM	Villaverde	M	24
11	28/5/21	MAD_INT_MEM_019	LK	MEM	Ciudad Lineal	M	24
12	21/7/21	MAD_INT_STK_030	PIC	STK	Villaverde	M	32
13	22/1/21	MAD_LS_MEM_015	LK	MEM	Ciudad Lineal	M	34
14	4/3/21	MAD_LS_MEM_018	Pareja DDP	MEM	Villaverde	F	22
15	24/11/18	MAD_FG_MEM_01	LK + RUMIÑAHUI	MEM + STK	Ciudad Lineal	M y F	20 - 30
16	26/4/21	MAD_FG_STK_01	IES Pradolongo	MEM	Usera	M y F	40 - 60

Figure 3. Interview table of Madrid

The information collected by way of interviews, discussion groups, life stories and participant observations has been systematized using the templates provided for this purpose by the TRANSGANG project, with the personal data duly anonymized, and, once the field work is finished, it has been incorporated into the NVivo program for proper first-level coding according to the code tree common to all project locations.

The spaces have also been studied during the field work and subsequently analysed and this applies to not only the physical spaces, but also the social, political and virtual ones.

It is clear that the members of youth street groups live on the margins of these spaces (Mignolo, 2003): the neighbourhoods in which they live, even when they occupy a physical space close to the centre of the city's geography, can be considered as border spaces from the socioeconomic point of view. Socially, the members of youth street groups find themselves, on most occasions, in peripheral situations, and when they are targeted, it is usually by the media and because of some negative event (Queirolo, coordinates, 2021, p.46).

3.3. Ethical issues

3.3.1. Participants

During the development of the field work, the ethical protocol designed by the TRANSGANG project has been taken into consideration at all times, which implies highlighting the importance of the knowledge provided by the informants, the need to always have their consent from the moment they agree to participate and inform them of the possibility of leaving the project at any time. In this sense, all the people participating in the project and even those with whom we had contact sporadically during the participant observations have been aware of the identity and role of the researcher during her presence in the field. Participants have had access to the informative document on the research and the treatment of information and their personal data, as well as have had the opportunity to ask any aspect that was not clear to them before signing the informed consent document for participants. To guarantee that the treatment of the information received is adequate, not only in terms of its use but also in terms of its proper anonymization and storage, all the “raw” data collected—recorded oral interviews, code book of the participants, signed consents and ethics reports— have been stored on the secure server provided by UPF for this purpose.

In the same way that research and field work have gradually adapted to the reality of the field since first contact and establishing who was going to participate, a part of the ethical protocol of the project was compromised in Madrid as soon as it entered in contact with members of the LK. They were offered the chance to participate in the project and were given the informative document to read, which in its original wording stated that the research team had the obligation to inform the authorities if they were ever aware of any illegal actions being carried out. This caused considerable uproar during the reading of the document, leading to several of the young people refusing to sign it, some of those who did sign under a pseudonym, and most reticent to talk about their own experience as active members of their group when the focus groups were being recorded. For my part, and in order to avoid similar situations in the future, I conveyed this concern to the person responsible for ethical issues in the project, who understood the situation and drafted a more appropriate and realistic document for future occasions.

Here, it is important to remember that in TRANSGANG, we work with youth street groups that are in the intermediate space between classic gangs and youth cultures, and that it is, therefore, possible that their members may occasionally carry out illegal actions



in some of the cases. But we must also remember that “the boundary between criminal and non-criminal actions is fluid and diffuse, and the definition itself is part of the process of “social labelling” of youth groups.” (Feixa et al. 2019, p.31).

Figure 4. The TRANSGANG Continuum

Source: TRANSGANG Concept Paper

This labelling of groups in Madrid is more than social; it is a criminal and police matter. Belonging to a youth street group in the Community of Madrid is persecuted by the police and legally penalized, and therefore the young people who belong to these groups cannot speak openly about their membership, even less so with unknown people and that they are told in writing that they must notify the authorities if they become aware of illegal actions. Once the informative document was modified, the rest of the informed consents were signed without as many misgivings as the first ones.

3.3.2. Researcher positioning

Among the notable ethical issues that have been found during the field work in Madrid, and that have been recorded in the corresponding bi-monthly ethical reports required by the project, it is worth noting the complexity of investigating a group, the ALKQN, of which the researcher has not only been a member, but of which one has participated in its foundation and implementation in Spain. This makes anonymity with the participating members impossible and conditions the relationship established with them. Delimiting and separating the information that I have received as a researcher from the internal information that has been transmitted to me confidentially because I consider myself a historical member of the group has been complex at certain times. This same relationship has generated situations that could be considered risky for the researcher, since the police who monitor the young people in the group could make erroneous interpretations of my renewed relationship with them, even considering the hypothesis that I had rejoined the leadership of the group in some way. By knowing the modus operandi and by sheer coincidence in time with telephone calls from some of the young people, I have come to be certain that my personal mobile phone has been tapped.

3.4. General perspective on youth street groups: Presentation of the context and the groups investigated.

3.4.1. State of affairs

In the Community of Madrid, since the first police and judicial interventions with the so-called "gangs", there has been a context of heavy-handed policies that have not been mitigated or modified, except for their hardening, in the practically 20 years that have been in force. This is the reason why the case of Madrid has been considered a contrasting case within the comparative study of the TransGang project. *Mano dura* and even *super mano dura* policies are inspired by gang policies exported from the US, first to Latin America (Wolf, 2017) and later to Europe. Although during a four-year period, between 2015 and 2019, there was a slight tendency to open more mediation spaces with youth groups because the city council—in the hands of a coalition of progressive overtones—opted for integration policies and from the left, this trend was reversed from mid-2019 with the change of government, which led to the entry of the far-right party VOX into the Madrid city government, in coalition with the right wing Popular Party. The party is known for its discourse against migration and its open criminalization of migrants, which is why, as expected, it maintains a demand for strong-arm policies towards gang members and migrant youth in general.

(Trans)gangs in Madrid have been investigated to date from various perspectives and with different objectives. From the academy and social entities (generally in collaboration) to the police forces (with special units dedicated to these groups) and the general prosecutor's office. However, TRANSGANG's vision of youth street groups as agents of mediation has been less explored and this has been the main objective of our research.

Although youth street groups from Latin America arrived first in Madrid, research with them began in Barcelona with the work of Carles Feixa with Latin Kings and Ñetas (Feixa 2006, 2008, 2011, 2015), and spread to Madrid thanks to the mediation of both young Latin Kings & Queens from Barcelona and the Feixa team, which allowed for a channel of communication to be opened and for there to be contact with the group of Latin Kings & Queens from Madrid. Although the phenomenon drew the attention of the media, academia, and authorities in both cities, in the case of the authorities, the interest and response to the appearance of these new youth street groups was very different in the communities of Madrid and Catalonia. While in the second there was interest in treating the groups from a social and anthropological perspective, in Madrid repressive policies and measures were sought. Although the vision of the academy did not necessarily coincide with that of the authorities, the latter was key in the development of those first investigations, because the police and judicial persecution affected the trust between researchers and participants. In addition, the iron-handed policies made it almost impossible to develop social measures with the groups.

Following the path traced by action research in Barcelona, action research also began in Madrid (Scandroglio and López, 2010): the original focus of the research was to understand why they were here, "so far from home", to know what attracted young people

to them and if they could interact as agents of social integration for their members. From a political and police point of view, the main interest was to find ways to prevent young people from joining a “gang” and limit their growth in cities where they had already been detected. From our perspective of more than 10 years later, this statement seems, to say the least, naive, since from then on youth street groups went through a phase of rapid growth even under close police surveillance by some of their members. Both in Madrid and Barcelona, the starting point of media and academic interest stems from two murders: Ronny Tapias in October 2003 in Barcelona and Rafael Amaya (King Maestro) in November 2004 in Madrid. This homicide in Madrid is key to understanding the development and evolution in the relationship and conflict between the Latin Kings and Ñetas in the following years.

The first great (trans) gang that arrived in Madrid (and Spain) were the Latin Kings & Queens Nation. According to their own internal documents, they were "officially" constituted as a group in February 2000. Others followed: Ñetas, Dominican Don't Play (DDPs) and Trinitarios (3nis), and these four groups are those that currently have the greatest presence in the city of Madrid. Brought by the migratory flows of the beginning of the century that caused not only adults or young people to migrate for economic reasons but also families to be temporarily separated, these groups often acted as natural mediators to its newly arrived members, sometimes just teenagers. Since the last third of the 20th century and until the start of the western crisis in 2008, the Community of Madrid has been the recipient of migrations mainly from South America, Eastern Europe, China, and North Africa. Those large migrations were the ones that led to the arrival of young people in search of their own migratory project and of adolescents who were part of their families' migratory project. The first youth street groups that arrived in Madrid between 2000 and 2004 were nourished by both.

Returning to the policies developed in the Community of Madrid, the heavy hand seems to have increased in recent years, but it has been the main line of action since the arrival of the groups. Queirolo Palmas, who investigated gangs in Madrid and Barcelona from 2011 to 2013, wrote "discourses of barbarism and illegalization were protagonists for a long time in Madrid" (Queirolo Palmas, 2017, p. 23). The police forces of Madrid have a special body dedicated to the surveillance, tutoring and orientation of the youngest citizens, the Guardian Agents. Although they were not created to work with gangs in particular, they met them on the streets and have accompanied many of their members since their appearance on the public scene, since most of the places where they exert their influence can be considered *bandolandas*, that is parks, street corners, school exteriors, etc. The main objectives are to prevent school absenteeism, monitor young people with minor sentences, and prevent drug dealing and other illegal activities among minors and young people. However, since its creation in 2002, its numbers have varied: from more than 200 agents in 2011 to just under 170 in 2018 (FEMP, 2019). As Scandroglia and López (2010) pointed out at the time, theirs was a unique participatory action research project in the region and that did not have support from the authorities or the media: “The difficulty to implement alternatives to the preeminent individual control and intervention

strategies in our context, marked by the existence of extremely negative and scarcely contrasted social images of this type of grouping.” (p.252).

Prior to the investigation by Scandroglio and López, in the period from 2003 to 2010, there were several press and academic articles that dealt with the phenomenon of youth street groups in Madrid, but they tended to be a more or less complete analysis of what was reported in the US news, police reports, and street gang reports (Castro et al. 2012; Corral 2008). Interesting, however, is the results report published by Martín, Martínez and Rosa (2009), who investigate violent behaviour in 40 youth and young adults belonging to urban tribes (Latin youth street groups, football fan groups and left and right political groups), through comparative semi-open interviews:

The results obtained are consistent with the "primary socialization theory" (26) and with the "differential" socialization theory (27). It is possible to postulate an oversocialization of the violent group and an undersocialization of the other socializing agents. This imbalance is clearly observed when analysing the interaction between personal, group and social identities. Thus, when the (violent) group identity is dominant and emerging in different environments, young people present more extreme behaviours and their relationship with the violent group is greater. (Martín, Martínez and Rosa, 2009, p. 134)

Although the main focus here is the violent behaviour of the groups, the results and conclusions focus the problem not only on the groups themselves, but also on the lack of support and opportunities of the rest of the social agents, and suggest that one of the best ways to counteract spending so much time on the street is having a stable and satisfying occupation, ideally a job, since: “it favours the normalization of their behaviour and reduces the chances of falling into violent behaviour. A job with sufficient financial reward and a good work environment that includes alternative social support is considered satisfactory. (ibid., p. 132).

The book “*Reyes Latinos: The secret codes of the Latin Kings in Spain*” (Botello and Mora, 2005) should also be mentioned here. It was the first book on this group in Spain. The work is a compilation of details about the Latin King & Queen Nation mostly from their time in the US and the story of how the police found out about the existence of the group in Spain, written by a journalist and a police officer. Beyond the contribution of more or less verified data, the text does not provide an academic analysis of this or other youth street groups.

The scarcity of resources in Madrid, along with persecution and restrictive policies, became a breeding ground for some violent factions of street youth groups to gain strength. This seems to show that restrictive measures from a punitive perspective by which young people who have been members (or are active members), or are simply part of the environment of these groups are stigmatized and delegitimized, did not have the desired effect, but rather quite the opposite. The groups continue to be active in violent events, as occasional as they may be, have continued to occur and the sometimes disproportionate media echo contributes to generating a climate of social alert.

3.4.2. Present

Migrations

Although the trend of reception of the migrant population was reversed during the years after the crisis, in recent years the data on immigration once again show an upward trend. According to data from the 2021 Foreign Population Report prepared by the Immigration Observatory of the Community of Madrid, there are 1,037,671 registered migrants in the region, compared to the 893,276 in 2018, when we entered the field. In other words, around 15% of the total population of the Community of Madrid is of migrant origin, but taking into account that this figure is based on people registered in the census, we must consider that the total number, counting people both with nationalized as in an irregular situation, will be higher.



Figure 5. Comparison of registered foreign population and residence authorizations. January 2008- January 2021

Source: Registered Foreign Population Report (2021)

The issue of migration is key in the research of the TRANSGANG project, since the members of the youth street groups that we have investigated have some experience of it, either through personal experience or through a close relationship, including of course the groups to which they belong, their origin and the cultural baggage that is transmitted through them; by the youth that compose them or have migrated themselves (or their families) or share an important part of their lives with someone who has gone through that experience. There is an approximation offered by the Government of the Community of Madrid in its 2019-2021 Migration Plan of the percentage of the population migrating for economic reasons based on origin, distinguishing migration from developing countries from that of developed countries; thus, it is considered that the economic migrant population is 61% of the total migration, originating in Latin America (23.75%), Romania and Bulgaria (16.88%), Morocco (16.30%) and China (4.75%). The rest, broadly speaking, comes from the United Kingdom (5.11%), Italy (4.37%), Germany (2.35%) and France (2.09%). Regarding age, the average age of the migrant population in Madrid is 34.5 years. The young migrant population, between 15 and 24 years old, represents 14.83% of the total; 82.2% of the foreign population is in the range between 15 and 64 years, while only 65% of the Spanish population is in the same range. 5% of foreigners are over 65, compared to 20% of Spaniards. (Community of Madrid, 2021). This indicates that in absolute comparative terms the migrant population is younger than the autochthonous population.

Education

For what concerns our research, it was an important question to know the educational level and/or the current state of this young migrant population, because, as Queirolo Palmas quotes, "for the subjects expelled from the educational system, the book and the written text they are the code of a control machine" that "classifies them as culturally handicapped". (Queirolo Palmas, 2017, p. 106)

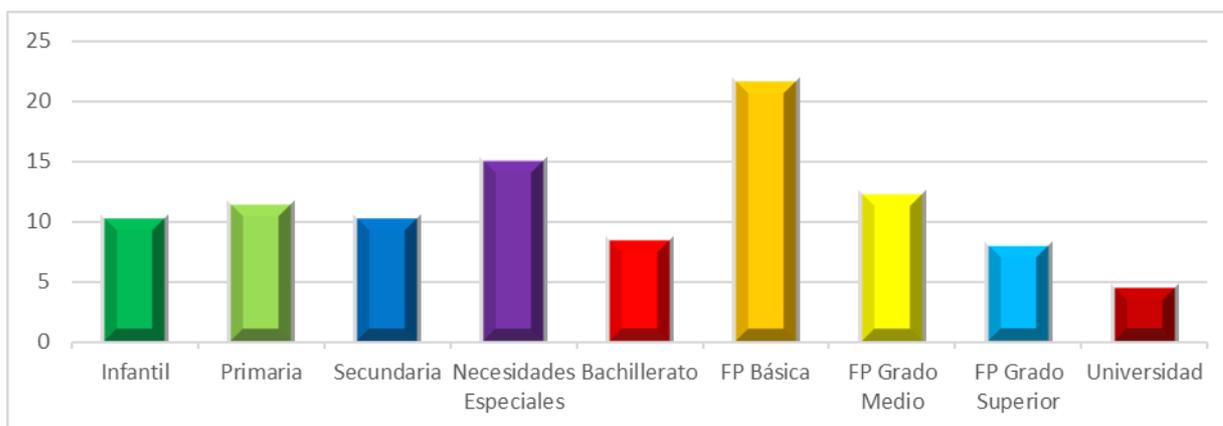


Figure 6. Schooling of migrants by educational level

According to the latest data from the Community of Madrid (2018) on the schooling of migrants, we can observe a drop as compulsory secondary education is reached, but the most relevant thing is the high presence of migrant students in two of the most important socially discredited branches: Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Basic Vocational Training. During observations in educational centres, it has been repeatedly confirmed that many migrant students of diverse origins fall into the category of "special needs" due to the curricular gap that migration has caused them or due to lack of knowledge of the language. This category, thought out and designed for students with cognitive and learning difficulties, thus becomes a mixed bag that does not allow it to be used for its purpose, and that contributes to stigmatization and detachment towards education:

It is possible that a child who has come, as we have observed, a child who has come as a child, has not felt so much discrimination, and when they go to school, when we get to high school, they appear there, and worse, there yes, and even more so, we have detected even more when adolescents arrive, there the difficulty is very, very great, and perhaps, I tell you, we can see which are the variables that influence, what is happening, what is sometimes aggravating the discrimination is greater or lesser. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

...but lisping but that it comes naturally to me, it didn't come out. And I told him no, and he always failed in Language. "It's just that here in Spain they speak Spanish!" (he bangs his fist on the table) "Yeah, but I speak Spanish," she told him, "don't tell me, don't answer me back!" So, and until I spoke and they took me down right there, but I had to go to support classes and I stayed for another hour, and I'm ashamed, because I saw that my level in the support class was higher than that of the kids and said "no". And I decided to leave... (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

The second notorious fact in the education sector is the high presence of migrant students in Basic Vocational Training, which, as its name indicates, is basic job training, aimed at

students who cannot or do not want to continue with their studies, even until they reach the end of compulsory secondary education. We find this training both in public centres and subsidized centres —often Catholic— with the common factor of the perception of the students that if they are sent there, it is because they are the last link in the educational system “Social Guarantee, yes. But I didn't know that they sent the worst of the worst there.” (MAD_MEM_015/M34). This de facto expulsion from the educational system, which in turn implies greater difficulty in accessing the world of work, has a lot to do with the young adolescents who find refuge in street youth groups: “those who are now in the street have been excluded from everything (school, work...)” (Queirolo Palmas, 2017, p. 179).

Context

At the start of the field work, therefore, we find ourselves with particularly vulnerable participants, who inhabit the margins of a society in which the working class never recovered after the 2008 crisis and that the fragmentation and inequalities have grown and have preyed on those who started from a more precarious base. The adolescents who today make up the “quarry” of youth street groups in Madrid, young people between 11 and 16 years old, do not remember a world without crisis; they have not lived through it. From their point of view, job insecurity, uncertainty and the absence of expectations for the future are not circumstantial, but the only reality they know, through their own experiences and those of their families. These vital experiences, both for young migrants and for native youth, are key elements in the construction of their identities both inside and outside a street youth group, and in many cases, it is in this construction of identities, in the absence of expectations and in the romanticization of violence in marginalized contexts where we find the answer for belonging to groups. In the TRANSGANG project, we understand identities as a fluid and changing concept rather than a fixed one. Social conditions such as those mentioned above (but not exclusively) shape identities, along with other factors such as age, gender, or ethnicity, which must always be taken into account in our analysis of the data collected. (Feixa et al., 2019).

During the COVID-19 pandemic and the stricter confinement, in which it was forbidden for the general population to leave the house except to carry out basic tasks, young people were forced to limit their sociability to social networks. This caused a very high consumption of content. This content was not only created by professionals, but it was more content created by their peers through platforms such as TikTok and Instagram. Among this content, which have not been limited to the confinement stage, of course, there are those made by young members of the groups, be it in the form of songs, images or videos flaunting the symbology of a group or other. Sometimes, these videos are even a wake-up call or an attempt to gain prominence through association with one of the groups, even though the person making these claims is not actually a member of either. Although there seems to be, in his perception, a certain impunity with what is uploaded to social networks, the truth is that it is very easy to transfer a rivalry or a confrontation from the networks to the street, and we have seen this more harshly after the months of confinement. The most serious case occurred after several months of harassment of a young man who “apparently the boy uploaded things on the Trinis (green hearts) networks

and apparently they already had him on file." (MAD_VIL_OBS_2021-11-28). The young man was murdered by four members of the DDP in July 2021, according to a participant, because they had located and labelled him as a member of the Trinitarians for uploading symbols that for them singled him out as such.

The "bubble" of information based on the consumption of content related to belonging to youth street groups was transferred to physical spaces once the strictest mobility restrictions ended and young people once again recovered the street as a space for sociability. One of the most repeated concerns by educators, social workers, and teachers during the contacts from 2020 onwards was that they felt that the situations of conflict and violence associated with belonging to groups had spilled over after the confinement. Members of the groups talk about these practices naturally:

Yes, with social networks, many throw themselves at each other, insult each other, end up hating each other, disgusting them, and they don't know each other, they've never seen each other! But there they look for a way to say "Ah, well look, I'm going to that side". They record themselves in the subway, when they see only one, they record "Oh, look at him there, running", I don't know what. (MAD_MEM_018/M18)

Of course, not all virtual contact is negative or intended to foster rivalry between groups. During the confinement, there were dynamics of participation, twinning and mutual aid (to the extent possible), which we observed from the distance of our own homes, and thanks to the networks of trust that we had previously woven with certain participants from our investigations in different territories. Cyberspace is essential to contact these young people and follow them. "In particular, I am using WhatsApp, Instagram and I follow some of the rappers on YouTube. The "stories" and the "state" are giving important information about the daily life [during the pandemic] of my interlocutors and their imaginaries." (Paolo Grassi, TRANSGANG Milan)." (Sánchez-García et al. 2020)

What Zaki (quoted in De Witte, 2020) coined as "distance socialization" has been practiced, as opposed to the term "social distance" that was repeated so often during confinement, but which could never replace physical contact nor to the daily activities of the group:

But for me, personally, it has been a period of time in which worry and sadness have dominated, since we have wanted to be responsible at all times, both with our brothers and with our relatives, and I have certainly thrown a lot missing being able to be with them and that feeling of emptiness having to pause all our group and social projects. (MAD_OP_2021-05-21)

This perspective, one of care, is repeated more frequently in the stories from women, either from one of the groups or from other social agents, which undoubtedly responds to the reproduction of differentiated gender roles that affect everyone in the social strata.

As far as members of the groups are concerned, we have observed with relative frequency how both the DDP and the Trinitarians upload images of explicit violence (sometimes even live) to social networks, of fights or street harassment of members of the opposing group who find themselves alone on the street, or outside their neighbourhood.

Yes, they start recording, they do their things out there... well, they don't understand that later the grouping is frowned upon, because you say that people from outside will say "no, these kids just

stop fighting." Or on top of that they are left to stick with another from another opposing gang. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

In the neighbourhoods, young people know each other and follow each other through social networks, even if they do not have direct friendships, they also follow other members of groups from different neighbourhoods and from different regions, and they even take advantage of virtual anonymity to spy on members of other groups:

They are harassed by networks, they create double profiles to get into the groups of... the DDP in the Trinitarians, the Trinitarians in the DDP, they have photos in which they say "look, it's him, this, this is the guy." It's him, in search and capture. (MAD_STK_009/F45)

Regarding the political and institutional situation, since the social alarm generated at the beginning of February by two homicides committed on the same night and in which the victims were two Trinidadians and the perpetrators were two different groups of DDP's, they were reactivated both in the city council from the city of Madrid as well as in the Assembly of the region some indications of interest in a way of working with gangs and violence prevention with young people who were inside or in the surroundings of the groups. Various political groups have taken an interest in the TRANSGANG investigation in Madrid and both the local investigator and the principal investigator have been invited to appear as experts in the Madrid Assembly to discuss the issue in greater depth. After a first approach with the invitation to the local researcher to participate in the Presidency and Interior Commission of the Madrid Assembly (Madrid Assembly, 2021a), at the time of closing this report, the Study Commission to Address the Phenomenon of Violent Youth Gangs is half done, Carles Feixa (IP TRANSGANG) (Madrid Assembly, 2021b) having already intervened and waiting for María Oliver (Local Researcher) to intervene, an intervention that will take place after the summer. Said commission attempts to obtain a global vision of the phenomenon beyond police interventions, although the truth is that the Government of Madrid still considers the police as the only way to deal with the issue.

3.5. Youth street groups in Madrid

As mentioned in the introduction, three youth street groups have been investigated in the Community of Madrid: Latin Kings, Dominican Don't Play (DDP) and Trinitarios. The Latin Kings were the first group with which we established contact since TRANSGANG thanks to the Mediation Seminar mentioned above, and with which it has been possible to develop and maintain the most ties over time, due in large part to the evolutionary moment in which the group is located and its history of collaboration with other entities and with the academy. The DDP were already part of the investigation of one of the local researchers of the project, and from their incorporation into the field work the contacts with the girls and boys of the group and their environment are incorporated into the investigation. The group of the Trinitarians is the most hermetic of the three, although it is possible to conduct an interview with an active member and the couple of a leader. In addition, a lot of information has been obtained not only about the groups, but also about the dynamics that operate in the neighbourhoods where they are present, about the public

perception of them and about the place they occupy in the collective imagination of youth with which share physical and virtual spaces.

3.5.1. Latin Kings (and Queens)

The Almighty Nation of Latino Kings and Queens, commonly known as Latin Kings, born on the streets of Chicago in the 1960s, appeared in a New York correctional facility in the 1980s, and from both Chicago and New York locations, and almost simultaneously, they arrived in Latin America, specifically Ecuador, at the beginning of the 1990s. Although they share the same foundations, the name and the Constitution, —name under which the group's norms are collected— the different literatures originated from both cities and there are some differences in symbology and traditions. The Latin Kings & Queens Nation calls literature the compilation of all those scriptures that include its rules, prayers, founding manifestos in each new location and the rest of the documentation created throughout its history. This dichotomy, which gives rise to the so-called "schools" of Chicago (KMC) and New York (Bloodline) within the group, was established in a very notable way and generated internal conflicts in Ecuador, where two differentiated factions were established, which they later reconciled, at least partially. When the group arrived in Spain, in 2000 in Madrid, one of the schools was established, that of New York, although with the passage of time and access to the Internet, information flowed more directly and contact was established with members from other places and membership was reformulated depending on whether they decided to follow one of the schools or both (double culture). This is an important point to take into account when addressing the differences and internal struggles that have been found during the investigation, although it is not the only one. The implantation of the group in Spain in the early years also led to a conflict as to whether or not it depended on the group in Ecuador, which generated two parallel “tribes”: STAS (Sacred Tribe America Spain) and STAE (Sacred Tribe Atahulapa Ecuador). These two tribes came to be at odds with each other. These differences continue to exist at the close of this investigation and although there is less conflict between the two factions, they are considered differentiated groups and have different structures. Many of its members know each other and recognize each other, they do not often confront each other, but they do not collaborate either.

After the arrest of the so-called "dome" of the Almighty Nation of Latin Kings and Queens in Madrid in 2006, and as a result of the trial that followed in 2007, the action-investigation with the group began thanks to the contacts established from the members of the group in Catalonia and academia, which allowed an investigation to be developed that wanted to replicate the process of pacification and "legalization" carried out in Barcelona. Scandroglio and López (2010) worked closely with the Latin Kings and Queens group in Madrid thanks to the recommendations of the young people who had participated in the Barcelona process and the efforts made from the academy by Carles Feixa. This experience happened between 2007 and 2009 and unlike that of Barcelona, it was carried out "independently or, rather, in clear opposition to the social and institutional context in which it was carried out." (ibid. p. 251). This investigative circumstance led to the Government of the Community of Madrid and the City Council to refuse to work with

the academy and other social actors in alternative proposals to deal with the situation. In the conclusions of the Scandroglio and López (2010) report, it is clear that the lack of institutional support was the main obstacle that prevented the expected results from being achieved, both by the group and by the research team. The dissonant voices with the official speech and the application exclusive of *mano dura* policies were few, although they did exist. An example is the Judgment on Urban Spaces and Youth Violence of July 15, 2009, cited by the Juvenile Judge of Madrid Concepción Rodríguez González del Real in her presentation “Violent youth groups. Intervention Strategies: Institutions Against the Social Conflict of Violent Youth Groups” (Agency of the Community of Madrid for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Offender Minors, 2010). As for “gangs”, he emphasizes that they do not necessarily have to have a negative connotation when affirming that far from being violent by definition, gangs are constituted as a substitute for the family and the close environment of the young person, providing a feeling of belonging to a group and, in a certain way, a concrete answer to the doubts of adolescence. (ibid. p. 8)

The document was prepared at the request of the Community of Madrid, and its conclusions state that more prevention and left-hand measures are necessary to deal with the phenomenon, naming some integration programs developed in the US as examples of good practices, such as the GRAN or Operation Ceasefire, since “the hardening policies followed in the US and the *Mano Dura* and *Super Mano Dura* programs [...] have failed. Birkbek has already shown the reactive nature of the gangs, hardening not only does not end them, but rather gives them cohesion.” (ibid. p. 14). The recommendations of this report, like those that appeared in Scandroglio and López's, were not considered by the institutions to have the capacity to make political decisions and implement social measures. In 2010, after the repetition of the trial against the “top” of the Latin Kings and the subsequent conviction, the social alarm practically disappeared, and the issue of the “Latin gangs” ceased to be considered a priority, both by the media communication and by the autonomous governments. As of 2010, the Latin Kings & Queens began to see their leadership dissipated as a result of the conviction of their leaders for illicit association, and, although the group managed to restore its structures, another police operation was carried out in 2013 that again arrested to an important part of its leaders, and as a consequence the group begins to lose presence in the streets, the number of members is reduced, and they gradually lose visibility.

The refusal of the Community of Madrid to facilitate mediation processes, together with the modification and hardening of the law for the members of these groups, which went from being considered illegal associations to criminal organizations through LO 5/2010 led the group to move into secrecy. This situation has continued until recently, although when we established contact in 2018, a small part of the group was dedicated to creating a legal association in parallel to the group, which could provide non-formal education and job opportunities to its members. During this time, they had the support of some civil associations, such as RUMIÑAHUI, and SUYAE, which provided them with safe spaces to participate in forums, congresses, and training activities. As of 2017/2018, there was a

rise in media interest, and cases related to violence between groups began to reappear, although this time the most mentioned were the DDP and the Trinitarians.

From an institutional point of view, in 2022 the situation has not changed. Even during Mayor Manuela Carmena's term between 2015 and 2019, which was the result of a progressive coalition, it was hardly possible for the associations to work a little more openly with groups, but on no occasion did the government offer to participate actively and be involved in actions that intended to work with young people in gangs, mediation, and violence prevention. As of 2019 and with the return to a mayoralty of a right-wing party supported by a far-right one, the situation returned to being one of strong-arm policies and zero tolerance with the members of the groups, relying on police action for all preventive measures. During the first months of 2022 and as a result of two homicides that occurred in Madrid on the same night, the criminalizing, repressive discourses and the application of the super heavy hand have once again been topical both in the media and in the mayor's office of the city of Madrid and in the regional government.

Some of the members of the group still remember, ten years later, some of the inconveniences that having participated in the investigation carried out in Madrid caused them, and they presently allege them as a reason for not participating in public life or in the activities proposed by other associations for social purposes. The most significant was the impossibility of reaching any type of agreement with the police forces about reconsidering their criteria of recruiting young people they considered members of the groups in the streets only to identify them as such; this situation prevented some members from attending activities and discouraged those who did attend from doing so again. The harshest consequence for the group was that some of the participants in the investigation, after being identified by agents of the National Police when they were attending a conference, were arrested and accused of illicit association a year later, the identifications being made in said conference used as part of the burden of proof. One of the key objectives of the research, "to turn the group into a recognized, legitimate social agent, connected to the social and institutional networks of its environment" (Scandroglio & López, 2010 p. 251) therefore could not be achieved, and continues to hamper action research in Madrid, at least with the Latin Kings & Queens group. We cannot clearly determine whether this setback negatively affected the participation of women in the group, but the truth is that after that time, such a high number of women active in the group has not been observed again.

The situation of the group at the time of entering the field of TRANSGANG in Madrid is an example of what has happened with the group in many of the other cities and countries where the group exists: from the initial arrival and growth (2000-2007) has undergone many changes in both numbers and directions. Starting in 2006, with the arrest of 14 members considered leaders at the national and regional level, the group lost a large number of its members, not only due to the threat of being imprisoned themselves, but also due to the lack of leadership that, in part, had held the group together in the past. The previous years, especially between 2004 and 2006, had been especially violent:

Yes, for me at least personally yes, personally at least yes. There are some who belong to the group that I am in who are not convinced, because they think that we are dealing with the police maybe,

because sometimes they take our ID, or documentation, well they believe that. But no, for the moment, up until now, what I have seen here in the association here, well, everything is really good, they support us a lot, and help us to find work, studies, to write a CV, they support us in everything they can. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

This situation has been observed and has been taken into account at the time of the investigation, to the point that it has been necessary, in the coding phase with NVIVO, to create a new specific level 1 code, that of Relations > Insiders > Conflict, since conflict only appeared as an option with external agents (outsiders), but it has been a recurring theme in field work with this group.

In the group itself there is an internal anger in all the groups there is a powerful internal situation. There is a part that is wanting to normalize, to work with NGOs, to carry out projects, to make them more visible. And there is another group that wants to live clandestinely, in the dark, but also there it would be necessary to see the interests that are brewing within them. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

At the social and public level, the group has hardly any repercussions at the moment, it is thought to be extinct at all relevant levels and it is not considered a threat to public security, as is the case with the DDP and the Trinitarians; "The Latin Kings identify them as historical but disappeared" (MAD_OP_2021-11-11). For the members of the group this is an advantage, since it allows them to interact with each other without too much fear of being arrested and affiliated randomly or consciously, and they prefer that the media have stopped associating their names with violent events between groups:

Yes, that's what they say, but it's better that they say that about you, both outsiders and the police, because many times the police kind of don't let things be done for better or worse, I mean, we do bad things, boom, the first ones, we do good things, they nudge us so that we do something bad, you know? (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

Despite now being subjected to less police pressure, the number of women in the group, as active members, does not seem to have grown significantly, although once the data collection and analysis was completed we were aware of a small group of around of 6-8 young people, between the ages of 16 and 25, led by a Queen, who had obtained permission to form a Queens chapter, which indicates that such a chapter did not exist just a few months ago.

Since the beginning of the field work and continuing up to the present, it has been observed that the group is not extinct, but its numbers have been greatly reduced over the years, maintaining a majority of male members, without any substantial modification being observed in the ages of the participants, and that the internal differences and the questions of leadership and direction of the group have led to an internal fragmentation that prevents their growth and work together. The faction with which the most research has been carried out, and the one that has contributed the participants, belongs to the so-called STAS, but is, in turn, a subgroup of it. STAS was the original name of the group upon arrival in Madrid, founded by the "godfather", who in 2022 is celebrating his nineteenth year of imprisonment for various counts of sexual assault. STAS is divided in turn between those who have denied the "godfather" for his crimes, and those who remain faithful to him and consider that his imprisonment is part of a judicial conspiracy for

having founded the group. The participants in TRANSGANG belong to the first subgroup, although we have also had contact with the second, at their request.

In terms of organization and territory, we have observed that the chapters, despite continuing to be associated with one district or another, are made up of young people who live in different parts of the city and who meet and "report" in a chapter that does not it is necessarily located in its own neighbourhood or district: there are not enough young people to have a large presence and in many chapters, and therefore those that do exist organize themselves into chapters in the neighbourhoods where they do have a presence and travel to them to live together:

Exactly, no, they are not so territorialized. And also, another of the elements, perhaps, a little less since what happened. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

Women in the group

The reason why this section is titled "Latin Kings (and Queens)" is due to the absence in practice of women's chapters in the group, and of women integrated into mixed chapters. Since the beginning of the investigation in 2018, a majority of male components was observed, which, on the other hand, has always been the most common, but it has not always been common for there to be no female chapters.

Unlike what happens with the DDP and Trinitarian groups, in this group women do enter it following their own processes similar to those of men, they go through the same testing phases and get to have "full-fledged" membership. under normal circumstances. Latin Queens usually form women's chapters, unless their presence is so sparse that there are not enough to form their own chapter, in which case they join one of the men's chapters until more women arrive. The economy of the Latin Queens is generally independent, they collect their own dues and usually allocate them to support each other or members who have minors in their care and are in a more precarious situation. On paper, on their own literature, they have the same right of access and membership as the male members, even though their functions are different. In the case of women, the literature emphasizes their reproductive function, and male members are urged to protect them based on these sexual differences, preventing them from participating in violent conflicts, for example. Although there have been exceptions in the leadership of the group as a whole, in general the higher spheres have always been reserved for them. Furthermore, in practice, the male leaders of the group reserve the power to decide when and when women cannot "report", that is, exercise their membership, and when they should stay aside. Historically, they have used this power at times of greatest conflict on the streets, alleging that it was dangerous for them to be in the same spaces as them.

Of course... they are groups... let's see... you don't have to take away a hair there and you have to say it as they are, they are very *macho* groups, the woman is being, it is, it is brutal as they see it, "it is the matrix of the future king." (MAD_STK_006/M55)

From 2018 to 2022, the only women that were observed in the group environment were two already crowned queens, that is, they have completed the steps to access the group and are therefore full members. They are the partners of several members who accompanied them to some of the sports activities or with the RUMIÑAHUI association

and some young women aspiring to join the group, who were not usually present at the activities.

If a girl comes, she does so as a companion to one of the boys, either a student or one of those who come to get a haircut, and they have a rather passive role and attitude. They stick with the boy they're with and they do not speak to nearly anyone, except if they are addressed specifically to them, in which case they answer with monosyllables. (MAD_OP_2021-05-19)

When these young women were offered the possibility of being participants in TRANSGANG, they responded evasively, placing the answer on the next occasion in which we met or directly declined, explaining in a veiled way that they did not have the permission of the group to participate in the project. At this point, it is important to note that none of the male members of the group ever seemed to have to ask permission to participate or be interviewed, and if they did, they were not denied.

I get in touch with several of the women I have met from the LQ group, although the only one I know from Madrid does not dare to participate for fear of not having the approval of the group's leadership, since she also not queen yet. (MAD_OP_2021_05_19)

Despite the narratives that the media have repeated about the entry and participation of women in the Latin Kings & Queens, insinuating that they should provide sexual favours to the Kings, the truth is that the entry of women occurs in a similar to that of men, going through a process of showing interest and commitment to the group, through their participation in collective activities such as sports days or attendance at common events with associations, parties and any other type of sociability. During the observation phases prior to the coronation, the applicant is observed and her commitment and compliance with the norms of the group. When her superior deems it appropriate, the candidate is proposed for her coronation. Depending on the make-up of the group at that time, she can be crowned by a woman or a man of higher rank and with the power to crown new members. This is the process indicated in the literature, which does not imply that there are no situations of abuse of power by Kings, some of which have led to criminal proceedings for sexual assault, in which the King assures the woman applicant that the quickest way to access the group is by maintaining a relationship with him. These situations should always be considered within the framework of sexual abuse and abuse of power, in no case do they form part of the group's regulations.

Regarding the activities that women carry out within the group, the organization of events, whether sporting or cultural, the preparation of food for sale and fundraising, mutual support between women and especially those who are mothers and young people with few resources stand out in addition to accompanying the male members in holding internal meetings. Frequently it is the Queens who go to police stations and courts when one of the male members is arrested¹⁰.

Minors in the group

¹⁰ During the field work, these dynamics have not been observed because the participation of women in the group has not been observed, as has already been indicated. The details here come from his own experience as a member of the group.

One of the things that has come to mind and that would explain this widespread belief that the Latin Kings are no longer active, although those of us who work with them know that they are, is that this group does not allow entry to such underage people, minors, as these other groups are doing. (MAD_OP_2021-11-12)

Within the ALKQN there is a specific denomination for its underage members, the Pee-wees, although the group shows greater "responsibility" when it comes to incorporating minors into its ranks and normally does not have members under 14-16 years of age.

On the second of May in Móstoles, the chapter was opened there, the Peeweess chapter was reopened, which was no longer for Peeweess, it was for all older people. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

Although there have been some exceptions in certain chapters in which one of the leaders has tried to take advantage of the general lowering of the age of entry into the groups to attract minors and have them "work" for him selling drugs. Although this situation, according to the members themselves, occurred at a specific moment and due to the lack of supervision in which the chapter was left when MAD_MEM_019 was imprisoned, the truth is that it is a story that is repeated and that speaks of a matter of selfish and negative leadership, in addition to unequal treatment of members based on age:

Either they don't want to give, or they don't want to give that to people who are minors, as it happened with us, they gave us, they didn't give us everything that was. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

The fact that underage members are denied access to the complete literature of the group has to do on the one hand with their immaturity, always according to what the group itself tells us, but it also responds to a historical way of treating to new members and to "earn" them access to knowledge, which might not be bad per se, were it not for the fact that some leaders have used it to manipulate younger members by asking them to take actions that contravene the rules of the group.

It is that it is assumed that my... in my organization there is no reason... there it does not state anywhere in the literature that I see another group, or another association and I have to kill myself with them. On the contrary, many people, after being a brat, well, they don't... they don't see that, and they see what it's like to fight, fight and fight, until one is given a book about us and that's it... you see what you can what not to do, and then you can see that we cannot be involved in acts of vandalism, although many do, and it continues to be done, the truth is, but we have to stop little by little like that. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

Some of the youngsters who today are among the oldest in the group but who joined it as minors, show their surprise when they discover the complete and original literature of the group, the KMC (Kings Manifesto & Constitution):

He gave me literature and said "read. Reading is going to open your eyes." And I read that it didn't say anything about aggression, that in the community you can't steal, you couldn't smoke... that is, other types of drugs, angel dust, cocaine... marijuana joints were accepted, but you couldn't come to meetings while high. And I said, "I mean, this, they tell me one thing here, that this is good, and do we do bad things? (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

MAD_MEM_001/M22: Our knowledge teaches us that we have to kill, no, our knowledge teaches us to live with people, to really worry about what we have to worry about, that is, not to be selfish with ourselves, to a third world does not make us the same, it is something that, no, we had a lot of very hidden information. (MAD_FG_01, 2018-11-24)

The older leaders who have made these reflections in what refers to their own experience are not very supportive of having young people under 16 years of age in the group, because for them it is more important to maintain a stable group which is convinced of its principles than to be present in the streets at any cost. Some other leaders, however, maintain the way they treat minor members just as they had been treated, and this can lead to conflicts not only in the streets with young members of other groups, but even with the associations with which they belong. They say:

Look at what has happened here with RUMIÑAHUI, they have done things wrong, how [STK_MAD_006] expresses himself in the sense that he does not want to know anything about us. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

Even from the outside, from other groups, the perception that there are no minors in the Latin Kings is widespread:

A Latin King, but now... since there are no minors there. (MAD_MEM_014/M18)

3.5.2. DDP's and Trinitarians

Both groups are closely related, and it has been considered convenient to make a joint compilation of their characteristics, pointing out their differences where they exist. The DDP, according to the account of its members, were born on the streets of New York as a split from the Trinitarios, which had been formed in a New York prison in 1989 (Durán, 2018). Both groups arrive, as in the case above, to the countries of origin of some of its members as a result of migration and deportation from the US, and in the case of the DDP, a group of young Dominicans replicated the group and its structures in Madrid at the end of 2004. Although the historical development of the group is not completely clear due to the absence of first-hand sources that confirm any of the versions, the most widespread and reproduced is that contrary to what happened in New York, in Madrid it was a split and this first group of DDPs was created shortly after by the Trinitarios group in 2005. Curiously, in both cases a fight between leaders over a woman is alleged as the cause of the splits.

The internal regulations of DDPs and Trinitarios are quite similar, which makes sense due to their shared origin, and consists of a series of behaviour rules for their members, their symbols and codes, and an organization chart of the positions in the group organization; The same thing happens with its symbology, which is strongly based on the colours of the Dominican flag (red, white, blue and green), and its ideology, which has a lot to do with the values of liberation of the Dominican homeland. "Homeland" is, in fact, what they call their sign of greeting and identification. As they share values, symbols and colours, the DDP are distinguished by the use of black, while the Trinitarios use green. Regarding the leadership positions, in both groups the names "Supreme" —First, Second and Third Supreme— are those who hold the highest positions in the organization, although in the rest of the positions we find different denominations for each group. The DDP speak of Supreme, Pearls (trust positions of the Supreme), and Soldiers (low members without leadership position). In the case of the Trinitarios, we find Supreme, Security, Discipline, Treasurer and People (low members). Since the investigation, there has been no access to more written literature than the one mentioned, and when asked by

the participants about it, they have answered that it is private, but they have confirmed that it is not an extensive literature as in the case of the Latin Kings & Queens, for example.

Both groups developed in a context in which there were already two other youth street groups that had a strong media presence and were based in territories in the Community of Madrid, the Latin Kings & Queens and the Ñetas, and during the first years had a moderate growth and less presence than the first, who felt capable of controlling their growth and their visibility in the spaces they shared. From the point of view of the Latin Kings:

MAD_MEM_002/M24: But they assumed that we were, you know. We used to say “look, this is our area, since we don’t want problems, this area belongs to us. When you think that you are brave, that you are empty, we collide. Meanwhile here you do not raise anything and this area belongs to us, to the kings.

MAD_MEM_001/M22: They couldn’t wear the necklaces...

MAD_MEM_002/M24: Or throw your shit in front of us.

CF: Why not? Why couldn’t they?

MAD_MEM_002/M24: Because that’s our zone. Kings’ area.

MAD_MEM_001/M22: It was the power, to say “I am more than you.” (MAD_FG_2018-11-24)

Following the loss of presence in the streets of the Latin Kings and Ñetas groups around 2013, the DDP and the Trinitarios expanded their own and began to grow moderately and to occupy and claim spaces that had not previously been felt with the force to occupy. In this case, it is the Latin Kings who are forced to go back and give up space:

MAD_MEM_004/M30: There were fewer of us and more of them.

MAD_MEM_002/M24: And there came a time when they did neg on our power, but the hard way. Boom, Latin King that they saw, Latin King that they sounded like, now, do you understand me? So already there we did become intimate enemies. (MAD_FG_2018-11-24)

Since entering the field in 2018, but especially from the end of 2020, a strong presence has been observed both in the media and in the collective perception by young people and adults in the districts where they have the most presence. In the secondary schools to which we have gone to do observation, talks for young people and interviews with teachers, the general tendency is to overestimate the scope and presence of members of these groups in the Villaverde neighbourhoods, mainly, but also Vallecas and Usera, for example. One of the most striking observations about the presence of DDPs and Trinitarios in the Villaverde district is a kind of determinism that many young people describe: “A girl explains that if you pass through the territory of one or the other you open yourself up to being assaulted, and then in the end you join one or the other group to avoid being assaulted by the other one.” (MAD_OP_2021-02-11) It seems that they identify that one of the reasons for joining one group or another has to do with something as basic as which is the dominant group in the neighbourhood where they live, in the purest style of the first American gangs.

One of the most notable differences that we have observed in the groups is that there seems to be a greater presence of native Spanish youngsters in the DDP than in the Trinitarios, although there are also some in this second group. In fact, of the four DDP participants interviewed for TRANSGANG, three of them, sworn members, are Spanish and of Spanish descent. In any case, both groups mix young people of increasingly diverse origins, with the majority of DDP being of Dominican, Ecuadorian, Spanish and, to a lesser extent, North African and Eastern European origin:

K.N.: There were always Moroccans, even if it was around.

MAD_MEM_021: Yes, yes

K.N.: It does not mean that they were only Dominicans, for example...

MAD_MEM_021: No... It was a mixture of everything, there have been Romanians, Russians, Spanish... many Spanish as well and they change accents. (MAD_MEM_021/M24)

In the case of the Trinitarios, the predominant composition continues to be that of members of Latin American origin, although there are also Spanish, North African and Eastern European members, to a lesser extent than in the case of the DDP:

“Who, the Dominicans?” You know? Although we are a little, you know? Although we weren't all Dominicans (...) In quotes, they already saw us as dark-haired, now... boys with curls now, we are all Dominicans, we are the pit and that's it.” (MAD_MEM_011/M17)

Both groups do have in common the symbology based on the Dominican homeland and a very strong cultural roots with its symbols, its language and its origin, so that the young members who become part of the groups, regardless of their origin, they tend to adopt the Dominican accent, idolize their flag and imitate the aesthetics of the young Dominican members of the group:

“I didn't quite understand why the Dominicans either, right? Because let's see... it has nothing to do with... we have nothing to do with the Dominicans, I don't know anything... and well, it's a passion for the Dominican flag... “(MAD_STK_009/F45)

Both the Dominican Don't Play and the Trinitarios are strongly linked to the territories they occupy, so much so that the chapters are defined based on the district they live in and sometimes they do not have good relations with members of their same groups but from different districts. This means, for example, that in Madrid there is a First Supreme Court of the Trinitarios in Torrejón de Ardoz and another in Villaverde Alto, and neither of the two leaders recognizes the other as superior. As in the narrative of the original split in New York that gave rise to the DDP, and the split in Madrid that gave rise to the creation of the Trinitarios group, the cause indicated for the divisions between the chapters of the same group also seems to stem from personal feuds between leaders who argue over women:

“There are their problems that they have had with women, or because of, because the problem always comes from a woman, always. In other words, I am a woman, the problem always comes from a woman, so no...” (MAD_MEM_050/F23)

Women in the groups

Unlike what happens with the Latin Queens, neither the Trinitarios nor the DDP's groups have found women with full membership and comparable to that of men, although the

truth is that in the case of the Trinitarios its norms are headed by the title "Normas de los Trinitarios o Trinitarias". The women considered to be closest to the group, the most "respected" by its members, seem to be the ones that show a more "masculinized" behaviour:

"I'm a girl who's never...no...I've had friends, because I'm very rude, I'm very antisocial, no, it's true, I'm very antisocial, I don't like choirs with women, I don't like it, so I always hung out with boys (...) I was like a boy, just another kid, you know?" (MAD_MEM_050/F23)

Although within the DDP there is no female membership per se, from what we have been able to learn from participant observation and from their internal documents, the women who socialize with the male members of the group often go on to form their own groups which are satellites to the male ones. This is the case of "Las 30", a group of women formed around the DDP chapter of Villaverde, which in any case had a relatively short journey as it was linked almost entirely to the attachment of the women with the members of the DDP of that district who were part of it at that time. Their activities did not go beyond accompanying the male members of the group in their leisure meetings, and occasional confrontations with women from the Trinitario environment. The formation of the group and the reproduction of the structure, under the guidelines of the DDP leaders, seem to obey a need to organize themselves in a significant way and as similar as possible to the male group. Despite not allowing, with very specific exceptions, the membership of women in the group, according to the account of one of the leaders of Las 30, the women's group was not really independent or autonomous, since certain rules were imposed on them. and directives from the male leadership of the DDP:

"So, when I meet my son's father, I tell him more about what is happening and such and such and he tells me like my friend has invented the organized gang, what's up, he taught me the rules and everything and he tells me that this is not the case, that's not, no, no. So, he offers me, uh, that we do the chorus to run, without her. (...) they set the rules for us (...) they chose the punishment, but they did not give it." (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

It is also relevant and part of the shared imaginary of this group and the rest of the groups investigated to separate women into two groups: the respected and the used:

"Like some hides, yes. I mean, there are always two types of women in the gangs, there are women they consider to be their family, their sister, and women they consider to be a sucker for, who can fuck them whenever they want, who are skinny. That is our difference, in our choir." (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

The perception of the relationship that the young men belonging to the group have with women, known or unknown, is generally negative and linked to their "usefulness" to satisfy their sexual needs:

"I think, to the woman, from what after that I have read in the conversations they had on Instagram, as a result of her phone interception and such, quite degrading. The treatment of women is quite vexatious. They don't take it into account, the girls' opinions are like... they are what they are, and they are worth what, I don't know, let's see if you understand me." (MAD_STK_009/F45)

"Let's see, some of them don't wear them at all, but they do, almost all of them are very *macho* and I don't know, if one fucks her, they all fuck her, and..." (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

Another element that we have found repeated in various conversations and interviews is the use of women to provide different services to the members of the group, from carrying hidden weapons:

“They use come take me this, take it you. Most of the girls are the ones carrying the guns.”
(MAD_MEM_018/F22)

to acting as bait to attract a member of the opposing group or spies to obtain information:

She says that they used her to get information from the DDP, that they sent her as a spy to their parties to get information from them. This vexes me because I have heard it from many other young men, both from the Trinis and from the DDP, although I still find it shocking the way women are used in these two groups in particular. (MAD_OP_2021-06-19)

MAD_MEM_012: No, no, nothing. And there was V, the one I told you about the floor she occupies, with some friends.

MO: And there were no boys?

MAD_MEM_012: No, no, just her and his girlfriends. Trinis was not there.
(MAD_MEM_012/H18)

Minors in groups

In the more than 100 hours in which we have been present in educational centres giving talks on violence prevention with young people and carrying out informal interviews with teachers and social work teams, we have come to the conclusion that both groups, DDP's and Trinitarios, are part of the urban landscape, the collective imagination of the students and the daily life of those who inhabit the neighbourhoods in which they live.

No, it was a friend from class that I started hanging out with... let's see, I listened to the songs and that, I always liked them, and from here in the neighbourhood there has always been what there has been and in the end you find out, even if you are small you know what they are, and who there are. (MAD_MEM_012/M18)

There is practically no one who does not know them, and most students also know certain details about them, such as the places where they meet or the colours they use.

Imitating the gang aesthetic has become, for many young people, an end in itself, regardless of whether they really want to belong to a group or simply make it appear so. Being a gang member is fashionable in the neighbourhoods we have visited:

Yes, it's true, of young people... well, what young people want to do is to make noise on the street, on social networks more than anything (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

and is related to a greater attraction of young girls towards boys,

Yes, but we flirted too much. Exaggerated. I swear, we got into some trouble.... Everyone “who, the Dominicans?” You know? Although we are a little, you know? Although we were not all Dominicans... (MAD_MEM_011/M17)

This, on the other hand, is not new. The attraction towards the "bad boy", or *hibristofila* (Ramsland, 2012) who is based on the myth of romantic love, has been studied and justified. "They are attracted to the idea that they can save them, that they can get them out of the world in which they are and make them good." (Torres, 2017).

So, it's not emotional dependency, not me, I think I can live without him, what happens is that he's one of those people who has shown me that he can't do without me... (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

For the leaders of both groups, minors, some as young as 11 years old, have sometimes become pawns for drug dealing, again without the need to be recruited, they simply feel attracted to the groups:

She (and the other educators) thinks that there are girls and boys very close to the Trinis and the DDP and what worries them most is that fewer and fewer are showing signs of being interested in these groups. (MAD_OP_2021-03-15)

In most cases, the minors themselves, according to the older members, get "out of control" and generate many problems for the group associated with their impulsiveness:

He said that youngsters are ready for anything, without thinking about the consequences (...) sometimes the problems are with the youngest and on the street with minors (...) He said that you have to work with those under 14, 15, 16 and 17, because those are willing to take a machete to go kill themselves in the streets. (MAD_OP_2021-11-28)

The question of the attraction and entry of minors in the early years of adolescence is one of the main concerns of the social agents with whom we have dealt during the field work, both in secondary education centres and at work. street or from associations, and is also generating a social alarm due to the repercussion that the media is giving to the issue, which can have the opposite effect to that desired by causing a "call effect" by imitation of what is being reproduced both in the media and in political and social discourse:

The fishing grounds, of which there are more, more... joining is increasingly earlier. They are not considered to be in a gang because they have not committed a crime, but they are already in the gang environment, since they are in the process of recruiting and joining the gang itself. (MAD_STK_051/M45)

3.6. Stakeholders in Madrid

During the fieldwork in Madrid, we had the opportunity to work with stakeholders from various entities, each of whom has contributed to the global vision of the research by contributing perspectives and experiences from their own fields of work. The participation of secondary education teaching staff, educational social services, such as guidance, or PTSC (Technical Teacher of Educational Services), street education personnel and associations that work with adolescents and young people from various contexts stands out.

3.6.1. Teaching and non-teaching staff of institutes

As has already been explained in the general context of this report, during 2021 we had the opportunity to access several secondary education centres in Madrid, in all cases at the request of a member of the educational community of the centre in question, who came to TransGang either through the search for information about the gang phenomenon, or by recommendation of someone who knew our work or, in the last case, because they had seen us in the press.

The first request that all the centres had was to receive information, both on the topic of gangs in general and on the situation of these groups in their areas of coverage. Without exception, all the teaching staff with whom we have had contact during the investigation has pointed out the lack of training they have in this regard. They have not received any type of talks or training workshop within the continuous training programs that are offered each year to teachers, nor have they received a response when they have demanded training of this type from the educational inspectorate.

In short conversations in the teachers' room, several expressed their interest in the topic of the talks, (...) and in general they all show the same concerns regarding the groups: that the conflict reaches the centres, that it goes over the walls and that have problems with violent confrontations. (MAD_OBS_2021_11_10)

One of the agreements we reached with the institutes to do participant observation there was being able to hold informal conversations with the teachers and hold violence prevention sessions with the students. For the violence prevention sessions, we used the material that the publication *Futurum Careers* (2021) did on gangs and anthropology based on the work of the TRANSGANG project.

All the centres we went to during the 2021-2022 academic year have certain similar characteristics: They are public institutes located in districts that are known to have street youth groups settled in them: Villaverde, Usera and Vicálvaro. The management teams also coincided in pointing out that there are no "gang" problems as such within the centres, although they do believe that there are when they leave the premises, and that some of their students may be involved in them, which they detect, among other things, because they perceive a change in attitude, friendships and relationships and a sudden rise in absenteeism.

The reason that brings me to visit this neighbourhood is, in fact, the apparent arrival of youth street groups there — DDPs and Trinitarios, they say in the institute — and the situation of growing tension and violence that is perceived from the headquarters of studies of the only IES of Butarque. Teachers, counsellor, director and head of studies agree in pointing out the connection between San Cristobal and the social housing in the west of the Butarque neighbourhood as the main focus of the situation they report. (MAD_OBS_2021_02_11-A)

Another of the characteristics of the collaboration with educational centres was the privacy demanded, not only in relation to the students, from whom specific individual information was never collected, but from the centre itself as a participant in these collaborations. Their management teams were concerned that if it became public and known in the neighbourhood that the centre considered to have a problem with gangs, it would cause an exodus of students to other centres, or that the problem would be blamed on poor management of the centre.

And what happens? That some teachers, or people who are in charge of the centres, admitting that they may have a problem with the gangs is like they feel they are failing, right? or that the school is ungoverned. (MAD_STK_051/M45)

Based on these experiences, we have concluded the need both to work on the prevention of violence with adolescents in the first years of high school, and for teachers to have a basic knowledge of what youth street groups are and their participatory dynamics, so that

the subject can be worked on in a transversal way with the students, and to demystify some of the most deep-rooted beliefs, but with little scientific basis, that we have found repeated in the observations. For this, we could start from the base of this decalogue prepared by Carles Feixa and his research team after the first study on "Latin gangs" carried out in Barcelona between 2004 and 2005, published in the book *Jóvenes Latinos en Barcelona*:

1. Most Latino youth do not belong to youth organizations.
2. Most young people who belong to Latino youth organizations are not violent.
3. Latino youth organizations are not criminal organizations.
4. Young people who are part of Latino youth organizations may become involved in illegal activities.
5. Youth organizations are ceasing to be exclusively Latino.
6. Youth organizations are ceasing to be exclusively male.
7. Youth organizations do not control territories, but they can join them.
8. Youth organizations can evolve into social and cultural movements.
9. Youth organizations can only evolve from within.
10. Some youth organizations want to and can evolve. (Feixa et al., 2006)

3.6.2. Social work and street education staff

In the case of social work and street education personnel, the people with whom most contact has been established in the course of the investigation and from whom the most relevant information has been obtained has been educators of the so-called PIC (Integral Plan of Coexistence), which operate in various neighbourhoods of Madrid in collaboration with educational centres and Social Services. The service that this project offers is a public service, but it is outsourced and is developed by various companies depending on the intervention area of each one. The same situation is repeated in several of the Social Services centres visited. One of the problems that this generates is that there is no homogeneity in the specific training that the technicians who carry out the functions of education and accompaniment of young people receive, nor continuity in the projects. The precariousness of working conditions means that the mobility of workers is frequent, and change and instability negatively affect the trust that is sought to be established with the young people who receive the service, something that they replace the educators with a vocation and a close and very open attitude that is evident in the interactions that I observe during the accompaniment:

I continue for another hour to observe the relationship with the young people who are meeting on the street, in the park... they greet them, ask them some questions about the institute, future activities, comment on day-to-day issues, it shows that they have a good relationship, trust. (MAD_OP_2021_05_18)

For the field work, participant observation was carried out accompanying street educators from the PICs of all the neighbourhoods of the Villaverde district, managed by the external company ACAIS.

The educator tells me what the program consists of: the educational centre, in this case the IES, detects students who need special monitoring both during school hours and outside of it, a referral is made to the PIC through the social services of the district and always with the knowledge and consent of the families. In this way, these students have extra follow-up during breaks, during school hours and also during non-school hours in the extracurricular activities that the PIC develops in the neighbourhood. They are inside the institute for a few hours every morning, they are present at breaks and offer reinforcement and accompaniment in case a student has a punishment. They cover the exits from the institute and observe the relationship dynamics that exist at the door; They observe who the students go out with, who goes to the door even if they do not belong to the centre or are in a situation of expulsion, for example. The educator also explains to me that the majority of those who attend are males between the ages of 12 and 16 who live in the rehousing houses. (MAD_OBS_2021_02_16)

The resource has a good base but it could be improved with a greater endowment that would allow a greater presence in the neighbourhood during non-school hours, since in most cases the PIC is a team of 2 educators for each neighbourhood, whose working day does not allow continuous presence in the centre in the mornings and in the afternoons in the streets of the neighbourhood. This reduces their presence in the neighbourhood during non-school hours to 2 afternoons a week; one that they dedicate to a sports activity and some observation of the area, and another to another type of cultural activity with a different group of young people.

He explains to me that they are in the neighbourhood two afternoons a week, Tuesday and Thursday, and that the activity on Thursdays is totally different from Tuesdays; It is a more cultural activity, based on plastic arts and theatre, and the young people who come to it are from a different context and much less “marginal” than these young people we are with today. (MAD_OBS_2021_02_16)

In the same way that it happened with the teachers, the street educators accuse the absence of specific training as far as youth street groups are concerned. They admit that neither during their years of university training nor in the specific training provided by the company that hires them have they received information about these groups, neither theoretical nor practical.

They are the educator of the PIC (Comprehensive Coexistence Plan) of Butarque. They explain to me that they work 4 mornings a week in the centre, and two afternoons in the neighbourhood. They are interested in working with youth street groups and admit that they have not been provided with any information in this regard. (MAD_OBS_2021_02_11-B)

3.6.3. RUMIÑAHUI Association

The RUMIÑAHUI Association is a Spanish-Ecuadorian association founded in Spain in 1997 with the aim of welcoming and accompanying the needs of people who came to Spain from Latin America. It currently has four offices in the Community of Madrid, two in the Valencian Community and another in the Region of Murcia, in addition to the support projects at source and support for voluntary return in Ecuador, and it is one of the associations of people largest in transit in Spain. It serves migrants and native people with specific programs for youth, children, women, job placement and legal guidance, and is present in several local, regional, state and international roundtables, such as the Ciudad Lineal District Gender Roundtable, the Immigration forums in Madrid and Murcia, the State Forum for the Social Integration of Immigrants or the World Migration Forum.

Its president, Vladimir Paspuel, is an Ecuadorian teacher who migrated in the mid-90s, who has known the dynamics of youth and youth street groups in both Ecuador and Spain, and who has very firm ideas regarding work with young migrants is concerned.

So, an important element of RUMIÑAHUI has always been the young, right? Because perhaps it is one of the most forgotten groups, but also the most vulnerable, since when they come as children it seems that in the society of arrival there is less rejection of those who are different, and since minors are incorporated much better, it is easier, on the other hand, when they... we have seen that when they come young, and when they come, especially in their adolescent years, between 13 and 16 or 17 years, I think it is the age more critical, more difficult than we have detected and that generally everyone goes through, there is no interest, there is no work from organizations here, like there, like governments, in working with these young people, and I think that It is very worrying because perhaps that is where integration is being marked, or success or failure is being marked at the school level, at the level of feeling welcomed or accepted, and I think that in general we are doing so badly that it is the result of it. These are all the difficulties we are having with young people, especially, and much more with these young adolescents and also these young Latin Americans, where they have practically ended up careening off. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

The RUMIÑAHUI association began working with members of the Ñeta Association.

So that's when I made contact with one of the first groups, with the Ñetas. RUMIÑAHUI did work with the Ñeta population for at least 10 years, to the point that we also started these processes when there was not yet much talk of pacifying them, of normalizing them. We made several attempts to establish an association, we were even already debating the statutes with them, at that time we had another office in Embajadores street, what's more, they operated there, in Embajadores, it was their meeting office, we met with a board that they named and there we saw how to work. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

Although they affirm that they have always had the doors open for young people from any of the youth street groups in Madrid to make use of their facilities and participate in their activities, they have not really managed to make them cohabit in it more than in specific and individual cases. As the RUMIÑAHUI association also came into contact with members of the Latin Kings, those of the Ñeta Association gradually withdrew.

It is part of the process, they believe that when you work with them that you owe loyalty to them, and they have not understood that RUMIÑAHUI or that Vladimir is a technician, or is a person, that RUMIÑAHUI is an organization that works with everyone (...) that it is not exclusive, that it does not have exclusivity with anyone, and when RUMIÑAHUI a little bit, also in that process we have already been talking to the Latins a little bit, the Latins get a little more attached and we start working then the Ñetas end up separating ... how is that? He is working with our enemies in quotes... so, even though that had been explained, they can't understand and can't assimilate, right? That is why we then went on to work with the Latins, it is perhaps with the two groups that we have worked. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

One of the elements that makes the RUMIÑAHUI Association closer to these two youth street groups, Latin Kings & Queens and Ñetas, is the shared imagery between its president and the members of both groups, at least in the beginning, at the beginning of the 2000s, since most of those who made up the groups at that time were young people from Ecuador, as well as the president of RUMIÑAHUI.

Exactly yes. That is what I was going to say, more than closeness, I see an important issue in that a person from that country who knows many social elements also becomes a benchmark of person and respect, because he knows, because he knows, because he is recognized as theirs. In inverted commas, of course. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

This shared cultural baggage and what it contributes to the relationship with the members of the youth street groups with which the association works is even more evident, if that is possible, when the absence of relationship with members of other youth street groups with whom the association is observed. Neither the origin nor that common imaginary of which the president speaks is shared.

Well, getting to work with the Caribbean population, right? There are two Didi, the Trini, I don't know, it seems more difficult to me, and I don't know if it's a veil, a difficulty that we as RUMIÑAHUI put on or I put on, that It's hard for me to get to know them, to work with them. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

The professional experience as a teacher and the previous knowledge of the groups in origin that he brought with him also made it easier for him to detect the presence of these groups before they were known by the general public based on the media noise generated around them, and, having identified those first origins, it could choose to make some attempts at early intervention, even mediation, following the Barcelona process, although the authorities did not participate or collaborate, so it had a very limited run.

RUMIÑAHUI, or my person, has been linked since 2000, when the first groups appeared, 2002, 3, 4... it is when the first groups appear, when I begin to detect that some young people who were seen there with some difficulties, begin to appear here a little thanks to that trend. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

During the time that the field work was being carried out in Madrid, the collaboration with the RUMIÑAHUI Association was constant, since the group of Latin Kings with which we have worked has an important link with the Association and with its president, although with moments of ups and downs, and several of its activities take place at its headquarters or with the participation of the youth of the group in activities organized by the entity.

TRANSGANG contacted RUMIÑAHUI based on the association's suggestion to do a mediation course for young people in collaboration with IMEDES, the UAM's Mediation Institute, and from that experience they have monitored both the group of young people who participated in the seminar and who belonged to the Latin Kings group, as well as the youth-oriented activities organized by the association and in which the group has participated. During the time that we have observed, the relationship between the entity and the group of young people has gone through stages of greater closeness and collaboration and others of cooling off and distancing, depending mainly on the attitude of the group at each moment, and in particularly from the leader of the group closest to the association. For this reason, during the stage in which we began the observation and during which we held the Mediation Seminar (starting in October 2018), the relationship and collaboration was very good since there were several leaders of the group involved in the group participating in the activities that were proposed to them; For the president of the association, the key is to work on the transformation of the group from positive leadership.

I believe that it is time to work with the leaders and the leaders for them to transform them into positive elements in the group, and this positive element transforms the group, because it imposes the good on it. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

As of mid-2019, two of the leaders are no longer present: one of them, MAD_MEM_019, for going to prison for accumulating minor sentences, and another, MAD_MEM_ for having moved to another community to live. As of February 2020, another young leader from one of the LK chapters in the Ciudad Lineal district took over the group and its relationship with the RUMIÑAHUI Association. All activities came to a standstill due to the pandemic until the fall of 2020, when some began to resume. Despite the fact that the same dynamic of hiring him as a young liaison was applied to the new leader, he did not comply with his minimum obligations of attendance at the job, programming activities and writing reports. He used his leadership position to turn the group against the association, and in a matter of half a year virtually all relations had been severed. When MAD_MEM_019 began to get out of prison, he went to the association's premises on several occasions to meet with the president and try to mend relations. The association, for its part, worked on a proposal for the reintegration of the young man that would allow him to be released from prison in the 3rd degree, probation, in exchange for working or doing training aimed at entering the labour market. Since MAD_MEM_019 can be released from prison, first on 3- or 4-day permits, and then on probation, relations between the group and the association are being built back up, which materializes in the previously mentioned hairdressing course, to which the association provides the material and space and MAD_MEM_019 is in charge of youth assistance.

No, but here it is up to the people who have already been imprisoned to put that mind to them that this is not bad, but that this, however, for a trial, they may stand up for you, say "you know that I, I have that kid and that kid has been doing these courses with me, he has supported me in this, in this and in this, that he may have a mistake, yes but look up to here he is doing well.
(MAD_MEM_019/M24)

The RUMIÑAHUI association also has an important gender program with involvement in issues of gender violence, domestic work and care and equality, in which I have participated as a volunteer on some specific occasions. From the coordination of the gender section of the association, attempts have been made, also without success, to bring the young members or those close to the Latin Kings group closer to participating in the specific activities for women that are carried out in the association. The only participation that was achieved was from Latin Queens women from various parts of Spain narrating their experiences as members of a youth street group during the pandemic, but, as has already been explained in the section corresponding to women in this group, none of those from Madrid participated.

3.7. Mediation experiences

The first contact with mediation as it arises from the TRANSGANG project is found in the Intercultural Mediation Seminar itself that we carry out in collaboration with the RUMIÑAHUI Association and whose memory and results can be consulted in the report corresponding to Annex I.

At TRANSGANG we have a special interest in the informal, intercultural and community mediation experiences that the young people belonging to the observed groups have developed both in the past and during the time that the field work has lasted.

In this context, the branches of mediation that cover our field of research are Community Mediation and Intercultural Mediation: "We talk about community mediation because, in some way, it seeks to rebuild the relationship ties of the community, displacing the perceptions of 'social danger'" (Cegri, Navarro & Aramburu, 2006). For Mediation to be effective, there are some Conditions that must be considered at all times (Chereji & Pop, 2014):

- Participation in the Mediation process is voluntary for all parties involved, with the possibility of leaving the process at any time.
- It is impartial. Mediators must remain neutral, regardless of their personal preferences and conceptions, maintaining their equidistance. This involves validating the parties (which is not the same as validating positions, which in some extreme cases cannot be validated), and helping the parties without showing preference.
- The parties should, ideally, trust the mediators.
- The parties work together to find a win-win compromise. (Feixa et al. 2019, p. 50)

The Intercultural Mediation Seminar organized by TRANSGANG, RUMIÑAHUI and IMEDES, carried out between November and December 2018, was a mediation experience in itself, both between the agents involved in the teaching and between the social agents and the group, starting with the need to establish the minimum trust so that it could be carried out. Just two weeks before the Seminar began, the young people who were going to participate, mostly members of the Latin Kings & Queens group, received a notice that it was not safe to participate in the Seminar, since there would be members from other groups and it would be in a "non-neutral" territory, in his opinion, for which reason his security would be compromised. The group informed the president of RUMIÑAHUI that they had decided not to participate for these reasons. At that point, an attempt was made to establish a communication channel between the group and the entities to assess whether there was anything that could be done to improve confidence in the process and move forward with the seminar. A veteran member of the group, MAD_MEM_015, who was not going to participate for work reasons, volunteered as interlocutor/mediator between the group and the organizing entities. On the other hand, the local TRANSGANG researcher in Madrid, the writer of this report, was also in charge of carrying out the functions of mediation and dialogue, with the commitment not to put the interests of the project before the mediation process. She was considered a good choice at the time because her status as a former leader made it easier to establish trust. MAD_MEM_015 also acted in some way as a mediator between the group and the entities, listening to both parties and facilitating dialogue and understanding without judging or imposing solutions. Finally, the Seminar was able to take place in a place considered to be in non-dangerous terrain for the members of both the Latin Kings & Queens and for the three people who came from the DDP environment, although the latter had not expressed reluctance regarding the territory. The process required two meetings and several exchanges of information between the entities and the group, the commitment of the group to participate, and that of the entities to guarantee their safety, if necessary, using taxis as a means of transportation and return of the space in which the Seminar was given. From a strictly formal point of view, it cannot be said that the processes carried out in preparation for the Seminar constituted an experience of orthodox mediation, since those who performed the mediation function were somehow involved with one of the

parties. Rather, it was an informal and community mediation process, with the active participation of the group as part and with one of its members acting as mediator, in the same way as the TRANSGANG researcher, both committed to the common goal of trying to carry out the project of the Intercultural Mediation Seminar.

Another of the mediation experiences observed throughout the field work has been that of the young liaisons who have worked in the RUMIÑAHUI Association, although we know that this same figure has existed in other similar entities, also with good results. The young liaison, as already explained in the section corresponding to RUMIÑAHUI, is a young person belonging to a street youth group, with some training in mediation that he receives from the entity that hires him, and who acts as a liaison between the groups in the area of influence of the association and the association itself.

It is important to stress that the young person also has to work with other groups, not just his own. This type of job position highlights and brings to the surface what is considered the hidden skillset of the young person, which takes into account the sociability, team and leadership skills, among others, acquired as a result of belonging to the group, and the take advantage of the job at hand. The young person is in charge of bringing members of the group, individually and/or collectively, closer to the entity for which he works, offering leisure and training activities that are in accordance with their interests and needs. The proposal is a win-win because, as a member of the group, he is aware of those interests and needs, and has direct dialogue, while as an association worker, one of his duties is to learn to deal with administrative and bureaucratic issues that he later transfers to the group and which can be used to carry out actions as daily as relating to the public administration. One of the biggest obstacles that these projects for hiring young people as mediators have encountered has been the lack of funding is that the associations are non-profit entities that develop their projects with public money, depending on contests and public funds that vary each year, so their templates are unstable. The president of RUMIÑAHUI explains how, through his contact with a member of the Ministry of Migrations, he manages to finance the hiring of these young people, their functions and the idea behind the position:

MAD_STK_006: then yes, I think he made a good decision, taking these projects to work with the boys. Where Tomillo came in, Cesal came in and RUMIÑAHUI came in, and giving support, Suyae. I also think that when the organizations meet, the kids, if not meet, at least that they know that we are working, at least the kids, with the buzz, that they start generating connections between them. You see, that sometimes, also another, at the proposal of RUMIÑAHUI, yes, the organizations decided to hire boys, the famous liaison boys,

MO: What is it, what does that figure consist of?

MAD_STK_006: You see, we have always seen the boys as the objects of, never as the subjects, so you see the objects there as guinea pigs, and you go to work with them. No, I think that the question, the key there is that we proposed that at least these four organizations that had these projects hire one of these young people, so as not to go looking for them, that they organize themselves in their dynamics, and that we work with them on what they ask of us. And then they are hired with a salary, all normal, so that they... one of the important things here is that they also have work tools, transmitting to the people who work here an academic outline or outline of how to work on projects. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

When the public financing of the project disappears, the figures of the young liaisons also disappear, because the entities cannot assume the expense that this entails.

As for the members of the groups themselves, it can be affirmed that they have acquired certain strategies of non-violent conflict resolution and mediation, which they have naturally acquired over the years in which they have had a social life as members of their respective groups. One of the examples that we have found repeated throughout the field work is the moment in which they are forced to share spaces. For example, this situation occurs because the members of more than one group are users of the same entity and the benefit that said entity generates for them (training spaces, job search, leisure resources...) outweighs the inconvenience of having to share it with members of other groups. In those moments, some of the young people may decide to leave the space, but others, who generally have more leadership skills, choose to negotiate coexistence in the space:

A cooking class... well, the only bad thing is that... that same one, the same one where they took those cooking classes, waiters... a lot of... a lot of gangs came, that... a different gang and like they always wanted that they only work in that association those of... those of the same gang. (...) Those of the opposite gang, and well, of course, they said "no, we don't want people from other places here, yes or what" and then they made their drama, they fought people, beat them, and well, people didn't come back. But I was the only one, since I was from the neighbourhood there too, there from that neighbourhood that was Cuatro Caminos, well that's where I started doing it, and there they also made a drama for me, they stopped me outside the... the association, about 20 people there, 20 or 30, wanting to intimidate me, so that the course does not end, but no, I kept going, kept going, and kept going until I finished the course. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

MAD_MEM_015: Yes, he's the chef, and, and he hated me, because he knew where I came from, and when he heard me do things with the kids, and things with, with others, he said "ah" and changed his perspective You already saw that I was not one of the bad guys, I was one of the good ones. On top of that, he saw, because he saw me, that I caught all the gang members and told them, "Look, I'm Latin King," because they caught me, that is, they told me, that they put a knife here, "Show me a sign! Take my crown!" And me, I'm like, "Just kill me."

MO That was in the kitchen?

MAD_MEM_015 Yes, in the kitchen. "Kill me," I tell him, "Because I am faithful to my ideals, I don't know what." Two Trinitarios caught me. And with the knife here [points to his chest]. Now we are great friends. That he wanted to threaten me "no, no, hit me, break me, no." And in the end, they took me and told me "You've sure got some balls." I say "Mate, seeing as you come to catch me, I am not going to say no, I live and die for what is mine. If you are a Trinitario, I respect you." So then he said, "let's talk" and he saw me, at the exit, everyone there, as if it were a meeting, talking, "I want to cook, I'm Latin King, I'm not in trouble, I'm on another level, in other things, and yes, whenever you want you can come with me." I was already with RUMIÑAHUI, talking about things, with SUYAE and TOMILLO. "Look, I do this, courses for kids..." "Okay", they told me. So, here we are cooks, so [name] already saw me, that I mediated that. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

Group leaders, particularly older or senior ones, can act as co-mediators between the younger members of their respective groups to avoid conflict. This is how a member of the DDP in Villaverde relates it, speaking about a recent past in which peace was maintained between the two rival groups, DDP and Trinitarios, in the Villaverde district:

No, because there was an elder of the Trinis, A, who was calmer like that, calmer, and he got along well with the elders of the Didis too, they respected each other. It was said that they were all from

the neighbourhood, that they all lived here, and you had to respect the neighbourhood and all that. But then A went to live in London, and K arrived, who is an African, more of a warrior, and between the time he arrived and the people from Orcasitas and those from Ciudad Lineal began to arrive at that apartment that V had, everything was over. it started messing up more. (MAD_MEM_012/M18)

In the case of these two groups, however, the situation has been deteriorating not only in the Villaverde district, but in general throughout the Community of Madrid. From the jail where he is serving his sentence, one of its leaders points out that he finds it difficult to reverse the situation, and shows great distrust towards the members of the opposing group and the process itself:

I asked him if a peace process was possible, that this is taking place in the DR. and in the N.Y. He said that he knew about the R.D., but that on the streets of N.Y. There was a serious fight, with a serious injury. He said that it is complicated here, because if there is someone who has received a stab wound, they will not forget about it and will want revenge, that there will always be something pending. That he does not believe that there is a peace agreement and that there is someone he has attacked, who then takes advantage of things calming down to attack him. (...) He said that it would be important that each one commit to give their word of non-aggression, that they will never be friends, but that each one follows their path without attacking anyone, and that is what seems complicated to him, but such time you can start to pose. (MAD_VIL_OBS_2021-11-28)

Although, on the other hand, this same leader admits that they have the ability to work with young people from the group's own leadership:

He said that you have to work with children under 14, 15, 16 and 17 years old, because they are willing to take a machete to go kill themselves in the streets, but if they are busy with other things, in the streets or in a centre, and he and the other leader are with them making music and other things that interest them, he is sure that things would calm down. (MAD_VIL_OBS_2021-11-28)

Up to now, and with the groups observed, we consider that the entities, associations and social services in general that work both with the groups as a whole and with the people who are part of them play an important role in these mediation experiences, since that it is in them, or through them in many cases, where they find shared spaces and people who are willing to accompany these processes.

I believe that it is time to work with the leaders and the leaders for them to transform them into positive elements in the group, and this positive element transforms the group, because it imposes the good on it. So, we have to, that is a job that we are doing, which is to detect the positive leader. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

3.8. Analysis and results of encoding with NVivo

Once the field work was completed, the observations collected and the interviews and life histories transcribed, the next step for the local researcher was to enter all the data into the NVivo software for coding according to the common code tree for all locations of the TRANSGANG project. This tree of codes consists of three levels (I, II, III) that correspond to the three levels of analysis to which the data will be submitted (local, regional, and transnational). In the first level coding, the data collected in the local investigation is coded in the level I nodes, which can also be extended in the event that some of the data collected is not considered defined in any of the nodes. existing.

3.8.1. New codes

In the case that corresponds to data coding in Madrid, it has been considered necessary to add the following first level codes:

I. Organization > Structure > MINOR: This category is considered necessary because the classification of young people in the groups into "major" and "minor" is very common in all the groups investigated, mainly in the DDP and Trinitarian groups.

IV. Relations > Insiders > CONFLICT: This category is considered necessary because in all the groups analysed issues of internal discrepancies have arisen with sufficient relevance to be taken into account in the coding and analysis.

V. SAW. Transversal > Gender > VIOLENCE: This category is considered necessary because it cannot be included in the more general category of violence between groups, nor can it be registered in any of the codes within the gender category, but enough examples of violence have been found macho enough to have to register them within their own code.

VI. SAW. Transversal > Public Policies > PAPERS: This category is considered necessary because the specific issue of papers is closely related to migration issues and future expectations and, on the other hand, it is perceived as a control tool through which the State can exercise violence against those who lack them.

3.8.2. Analysis of results by clusters

Biography

In this first section, the relevant biographical markers for the research of the participants are collected, predominating, the most predominant of which is that of the people who are protagonists of the life stories due to the length of the interview. Among the relevant information is that of the biography itself (place of birth, first years of life, family history, etc.). Among the people classified as STK, professional and personal information predominates (social work professionals, education, and a member's family member). Among the biographical information of people classified as MEM we find coincidences in childhood and early adolescence, such as the absence of the father, mother, or both parents for work reasons:

My parents worked a lot, my father was often not there (...) And my mother, she is a person who works, she has always worked, I mean, we have had a period of our lives when we had money, so who says, but it wasn't because my mother is... an architect or something and I don't know what and she takes €6,000 or €7,000, my mother maybe made €3,000, but because she worked 3 jobs. She had the hospital and then the others were jobs taking care of an elderly person, showering others... you know? So, she was out all day, and that takes its toll later, over the years, but thanks to that, because my mother is a hard worker, my father, well, she has also been a hard worker, so what happens? Yes, my family has instilled in me very good values, I mean, we are not a family of criminals, just saying. (...) And, and I felt very lonely, my sister also had a responsibility that was to take care of me all day. (MAD_MEM_003/M22)

Or for personal reasons:

So, I went with my mother. What's happening? That my mother left when I was 6 years old or so, but she left to be with a real man and left me in the care of my grandmother. (MAD_MEM_050/F23)

In this cluster, elements of the personal evolution of the participants are also collected, some of which are closely linked to the evolution also within the group to which they belong and to their growth within it:

MAD_MEM_002/M24: There comes a time when you say to yourself "if they are my friends, they are my brothers, why am I wrong, at home. If they are supposed to be my brothers, why are they giving me a knife to go stab someone? If they are supposedly my brothers" If they are your brothers, they don't give you a knife so you can go out and stab someone. No, you take the knife because "I want to be the handsome one, I want the limelight, and I'm going to stab him tomorrow when we meet to say," I stabbed him" "do you understand me?" "I was the one who did that to him." And that, from there, do you understand me? One is that it is harmed but it is not because the Nation takes you, the Nation sends you, none of that, that is already each one. (MAD_FG_01, 2018-11-24)

Now I go to Vallecas, and I think that in Vallecas I can't take seven steps without someone saying "hey!" (He waves a hand) but like, they know me. (MAD_MEM_011 / M17)

I have grown in the Nation, I have reached the top, original, not the one that E. taught us, the original, which is the Council. I have come to belong to the Council, I continue to be part of it, I have said "if you want, there is my position", I leave it. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

Although there are also some examples in which this evolution and personal growth occurs precisely when they leave the group:

So, you know, I work, I've gotten a driver's license, right now I'm living as a squatter, I have a flat for myself. What are they doing? Living with their mothers, out of their mothers' pockets, going down at 2 in the afternoon until 12 at night. In other words, yes, when you take off, you start to progress. Since I was young. I have more life aside. (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

When you mature, you realize that the most beautiful thing you have is freedom, you know? If they cut off your freedom, you're already screwed. (MAD_MEM_003/M22)

We have observed that the personal maturation of the members is often more than enough reason to leave the group without this bringing negative consequences for those who leave. Work and family obligations and the absence of unlimited free time give rise to a separation from the group that is not radical, but progressive. In the cases observed, the young people do not break ties with the group from one day to the next, nor do they break it completely, but they move away from daily life, from time to time "go down" to meet with some of the members with whom they have the most affinity and maintain membership that way, but they become passive in regards to the day-to-day actions of the group.

Organization

From this category, the impressions of the members of the LK on the process of creation and implantation of said group in Madrid are observed, as are its evolution, and that of its membership, by the states that its literature includes (primitive, conservative, and new king):

MEM_MAD_001/H22: If we don't develop knowledge, we don't develop our way of life, we will still be stuck in the stone age, I'm telling you. We have to move forward and really, if we want to change things, we have to change them from where they are changed. (FG_01_2018-11-24)

The information on the history and evolution of the groups in the case of the Latin Kings is collected mainly from the FG and the LS of one of the members. The date of creation of the DDPs in Madrid and the subsequent rupture that led to the creation of the Trinitarios also included, although for the latter there is no clear date. Both female participants, MAD_MEM_018 and MAD_MEM_050, know the story secondarily, since they are not members of the group, but rather women from their environment:

K.N.: You told me once that the Didis were created here on December 22. I remember that you and I had something that day, we met that day. What year was that, 2004?

MAD_MEM_018: I think so.

K.N.: Because it says in the newspapers that it was 2004, but they put it on both, both the Trinitarios and the DDP.

MAD_MEM_018: Here in Spain? That is, in Madrid.

KN: Yes.

MAD_MEM_018: Man, they started ringing at the same time (MAD_LS_02_2021-04-30)

It is also interesting how the groups view each other. DDP's and Trinitarios currently share the urban space and have an open dispute in the streets, so we consider that they are in a similar evolutionary moment, while the LK seem to be in a different evolutionary stage and from there, they remember part of their shared history and also analyse the moment in which the others find themselves and the possible causes of the evolutionary difference:

MAD_MEM_001/M22: They are experiencing what we experienced at the beginning...

CF: The primitive state.

MAD_MEM_001/M22: Ignorance, the primitive state. "No, the enemy is this, the Latin King..." because you know what happens? That people also, when they had a lot of power, abused duels, where they saw them (punches his hand with his fist) even if they were (...) They lined them up and did whatever, but today, the Trinidadians, what is wrong with you? That those who were young in their time are now older, they already have a rank there, so they have a splinter stuck there, they say "no, no, no" but they really don't have to... (MAD_FG_01_2018_11-24)

From the environment of the DDP's, this impression is confirmed:

They still have that gang mentality. (LS_02_2021-04-30)

From the point of view of the Latin Kings, part of the blame for the fact that the groups of the DDP's and the Trinitarios continue today in a more belligerent attitude is that the older ones of today were the adolescents whom they, the LKs, submitted to when they were superior in number and organization. However, the fact that it was the largest and most problematic organization at a given moment meant that it was the first to "fall" judicially speaking.

MAD_MEM_002/M24: And as time went by, over the years, people were falling prey, it was... they were deported, they were breaking down doors, it was happening, and then the tables were turning, there were already more, and we had less. (MAD_FG_01_2018-11-24)

This category also yields the structure and leadership data that have been mentioned in the section corresponding to each group, with the node added and already explained from the MINOR category, which within the Structure category is the second with the most references, 66, after of leadership, with 79. All the groups analysed refer to minors as being more impulsive, difficult to control and causing problems:

Yes, they start recording, they do their things out there... well, they don't understand that later the grouping is frowned upon, because you say that people from outside will say "no, these kids just stop fighting." Or on top of that they are left to stick with another from another opposing gang. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

And the feeling is reinforced that the idea of having such young minors in the group complicates the situation due to their impulsiveness and the impossibility of predicting their behaviour:

Now there are many more minors, many more. In fact, they are all children with stupid attitudes and do things that not even the grown-ups did in their day. (MAD_MEM_021/M24)

It also highlights how striking it is that there are so many minors of Spanish origin:

MAD_MEM_018: Yes, now there is another group that is like Spaniards and such, who have become minors of the DDP again (...) no, not Spaniards, Spaniards, which is the strangest thing, yes, because you know what, but the majority right now, they are Spanish, Spanish and they have started from scratch... (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

And those who have gone from being younger to being older within their groups are reflected in the behaviour of those who are now younger:

I do, I was a brat there... I do, in the same neighbourhood I have fought with the same people on the other side (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

MO: Ok, and you have been minors in a group.

MAD_MEM_014: Yes

MAD_MEM_013: Yes

MO: And have you felt that way, then? Like that feeling you say, I mean, have you felt the way you think you treat minors? Of...

MAD_MEM_014: No

MAD_MEM_013: No

MO: When have they used you?

MAD_MEM_013: When you're younger, you have to... so that they don't use you, you have to earn the respect of older people, so that they see you as someone older, and they don't see you as... someone younger of whom they can take... advantage.

MAD_MEM_014: There comes a point where age doesn't matter. If you, at 15, can be crazier than someone at 30, it doesn't matter.

MAD_MEM_013: If you, at 15, think like an 18-year-old, why don't you go hang out with those people? (MAD_MEM_013/M18 and MAD_MEM_014/M18)

Even the leadership of the group understands the need for the leaders themselves to promote activities, to mediate with other social agents to redirect minors:

He said that you have to work with children under 14, 15, 16 and 17 years old, because they are willing to take a machete to go kill themselves in the streets, but if they are busy with other things, in the streets or in a centre, and he and the other leader are with them making music and other things that interest them, he is sure that things would calm down. (MAD_OP_2021-28-11)

MAD_MEM_019: No... I'm not positive or anything! I force them to go down to the courses, force them, honestly, not that... of "come, please" not "get off! you're signed up, get off" you have to make them comply, because they don't say no, that it's all about hanging out in a gang there in a little park, having a beer or how it's green, you know what? "Come on, crazy". First, we train, that's the excuse, let's train,

MO: And do they get along well? I mean, are they good, do you like them?

MAD_MEM_019: Depends on the leader, how he takes it. (MAD_MEM_019/H24)

This leader of a chapter of the LK in Madrid acts as a link between the group and the RUMIÑAHUI Association. In addition to taking unemployed members of his chapter there to do hairdressing courses and other activities, he encourages them to play sports as a group. They meet in one of the neighbourhood parks, which has bars to do calisthenics, something that has become very fashionable as a form of training and that does not require more equipment than the body itself and the bars. After playing sports, he takes them to the Association's premises for the hairdressing course.

This section also includes the dynamics of entry and exit of the groups, the social conditions prior to entry:

They are poor families, families with some sort of breakdown, families that are overcrowded... that have problems there and here, school failure... there are families that have fallen on them all in one go, it is terrible to say it, but everything falls on them, horrible, but if you look at them, deep down, no matter how happy and powerful they look, deep down they are people in a lot of pain, with a lot of frustration, as if society has betrayed them... (MAD_STK_006/M55)

It seems that there is a different trend between young people who are of migrant origin—either because they migrated in their childhood/adolescence or because their families migrated—and young people of Spanish origin. The former seems to have more normalized the existence of groups,

At the end, 3 students approached me, a girl and two boys, to ask me which group I had belonged to. I have told them that the Latin Kings and she, a Latina, has told the other two “You see?! I knew it”. I asked her how she was so sure and she told me that because she knew that it was the first group that had arrived in Spain, because her entire family is from Ecuador. (MAD_OP_2021-11-11)

And... and what do I know, I saw my cousin, just like that and I wanted to be like them. So, at 12, I pick up a person, in the Santa Eugenia park, too, and tell him that I want to be one of the people “I want to be a Latin King and stuff.” (MAD_MEM_003/M22)

and belonging, while the latter seem to be attracted, in part, by what makes a difference and what is attractive to them,

But now my friend B, whose older brother is Didi, and I started to get to know them, I liked them and as before there were almost no problems or anything like that. Well, in the end you end up getting involved. And I already separated a little from my other group, although I didn't separate, but I got together less with them, and, in the end, less. (MAD_MEM_012/M18)

Identifications

In this category, the relationship and identification with the territory stands out, with 158 references for the neighbourhood code, followed by the self-presentation/group code, with 101 references.

As far as the territory is concerned, the results do not present much new compared to what was already considered in the initial hypotheses presented, that the groups that are most present in the streets, DDP's and Trinitarios, have strong roots in the territory and feel identified with the neighbourhood, to the point of considering it as "their" territory.

MAD_MEM_002/M24: Because that's our zone. Kings' area. (MAD_FG_01_2018-11-24)

No, there is no Didis, there is no Didis, I mean, well in Vallecas yes, but in Puente there are the Trinitarios, we are in Plaza de Vallecas, in Puente de Vallecas, but then there are the Ñetas, who are uh... above Puente, it is by the gas station, where the Carrefour is. (MAD_MEM_011, M17)

That kid from our neighbourhood doesn't step on it. (MAD_MEM_014/M18)

and since it was my neighbourhood, well, I walked as I wanted, until they arrived, well... those people from the other gang and well... the problem, and well, we had to defend ourselves. (MAD_MEM_019 /M24)

K.N.: And how many chapters are there right now of the Trinis?

MAD_MEM_050 Torrejón, is active (...) Orcasitas, Cuatro Caminos, Ciudad Lineal, Vallecas... (...) Villaverde at the Trinis level, is not active.

MAD_MEM_050: DDP: Villaverde, Embajadores, Cuatro Chorros, Alcobendas, El Carmen, (MAD_MEM_050/F23)

The novelty is that this distribution of presence and group-neighbourhood identification is not made only by those who belong to gangs but is recognized and normalized even by the rest of the young people with whom they share spaces such as educational centres.

They tell us about a place called La Mancha, in the Almendrales neighbourhood, where Trinitarios meet. They confess that they are their friends and that they usually meet there with them. (MAD_OP_2021-04-16)

The facilitator tells us about the concern in the neighbourhood about the presence of the so-called "Latin gangs" in the area. (MAD_OP_2021-03-30)

I ask a question about the groups that exist, or that they know of, in their neighbourhood. They name the DDP and Trinitarios and we start talking about territoriality and how they think it works. (MAD_OP_2021-02-11)

Entering opposing groups' territory can pose a problem for those who enter unaccompanied or outnumbered, but it is also used as a form of challenge to the opposing group. It is very common for them to record themselves in a neighbourhood of the opposing group and upload it live as a challenge or to demonstrate a symbolic conquest of that territory:

They are Trinidadians, the young man affirms, some of them could be the ones who attacked him, and they are there, in "enemy" territory, making a display of force the day after having made a fall on the DDP. (MAD_OP_2020-10-16)

Practices

In this category, those related to violence stand out far above the rest, whether it is against members, carried out by members, or carried out by other social agents, such as the police.

The violence node has 159 references, but social networks also stand out with 45 and non-formal education with 48.

Regarding violence, the normalization of violence that many of the member participants seem to have integrated stands out worryingly; although in the reports of violence exercised against them or in their environment there seems to be a first moment in which it does generate an adverse reaction,

The first day I went to Vallecas I came home trembling. They bottled someone and I don't know if they killed him or what. (MAD_MEM_011/M17)

then it goes to a state in which violent episodes between members are reported with relative normality:

No, let's see. Well, I already imagined that it could happen to me... (...) In addition to one of those who went with me, J, about two weeks ago he was also given, he was in a coma and everything. (...) Yes, they hit him with machetes here, [points to the trapezium], here [on the side of the arm, a little below the shoulder] and here [forearm]. (MAD_MEM_012/M18)

And because people are often violent. So at least in the environment in which we move, then... it can be arranged verbally, but there is always someone who is going to want more, and if the other person wants more, well... it is arranged violently. (MAD_MEM_013/M18)

Yes, you can do a lot, yes, but they shoot at you, if they've got good aim, it kills you. You can have four machetes, and with one good shot, they kill you. Here the gangs teach you that. (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

in contrast to the scandalization that it entails for the participating stakeholders.

What did shock me was the fact of violence for violence's sake. (MAD_STK_009/F45)

The references in terms of non-formal education have a lot to do with associations that work with members of the groups and that strive to find training alternatives that can provide them with a relatively quick entry into the labour market. The people interviewed talk about training mainly in hospitality and hairdressing, although the RUMIÑAHUI association, for example, tries to get them to acquire certain social skills that allow them to deal with bureaucratic and administrative procedures autonomously, even for the future management of your own organization:

Each team has its technical meetings, and the boy is learning, so it is a permanent transmission of information, and we go... well, what we did with the boy, we took him to the meetings with... with the Ministry, with the Administration. Come, find out, get hold of that information, interact with politicians, find out how this works. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

Education as a way of "ingratiating yourself" with the penal system also appears repeatedly on several occasions: taking courses to which they have access in order to demonstrate social integration, arguing in their favour against a possible conviction or to improve the conditions of one already existing:

And well, they also screwed me, because I had to take, take a course, a course and prove that I am studying, doing something for each time I was going to do the training so that they give me a piece of paper, like a sheet as if to say that I am behaving well. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

MAD_MEM_019: No, but here it is up to the people who have already been imprisoned to put that mind to them that this is not bad, but that this, however, for a trial, they may stand up for you, say "you know that I have that kid and that kid has been doing these courses with me, he has

supported me in this, in this and in this, that he may have made a mistake, yes but look up to here he is doing well. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

Although it is not the most represented, the node referring to social networks has a great weight because it is one of the novelties that TRANSGANG's field work contributes when compared to previous investigations on gangs: That of the observation of behaviour in social networks and of the dynamics that occur between the groups themselves.

The importance of interactions through social networks in terms of the exposure of young people from the groups has already been mentioned, and how they also serve to generate a kind of romanticization of the aesthetics and in general of the "gang member" lifestyle that makes many young people feel attracted to this type of life and tend to imitate behaviours, the adoption of symbols —hand gestures, clothing, specific colours— that they exhibit in networks that, although are private in theory, lack of privacy when their owners have thousands of followers.

Mmmm... more or less, because of the looks, because... I don't know, what they might see on... on someone's social network, because after all, everyone knows everything. (MAD_MEM_013/M18)

Of course! If that's why you don't see, for example, we have many followers, for example I have 3,000 followers, one has 5,000, another has 7,000... another also 3,000 such, each one knows a lot of people and whenever they upload something Mine, well, I have 20 follow-up requests, another 20, 10, such and such and such. (MAD_MEM_011/M17)

For members who have some relationship with the world of music, social networks are also a way to monetize their creations, and for this they use all existing platforms. Those who have fewer resources manage the uploads of their material to all digital platforms and have learned how the payment and payment systems for views work. “Sounding” on Instagram and YouTube, and getting views is especially important to them, and in fact it is one of their ways of measuring popularity:

No, it's that she really is one, she's really a bit of a star, because if you have more than four million on each track, well really... but now... what can you do? (laughs) (MAM_MEM_011/M17)

On the other hand, it has been observed that social networks are not only used as a space for consumption, but that symbology is produced and reproduced in them and that they are also spaces in which violent actions are carried out online that are frequently then transferred to the plane of physical violence. Recording yourself in "enemy" territory or disrespecting the symbology of another group are ways of provoking the opposing groups:

MAD_MEM_002/M24: A friend came out, a little brother of ours burning that shit with a paper of theirs, and stepping on it, he uploaded it to Facebook, to YouTube... that was a Thursday when they uploaded that video, that was Thursday, and already Friday, Saturday and Sunday three days in a row of fights. (MAD_FG_01, 2018-11-24)

MO: He shows me a video that looks like a screenshot from an Instagram story in which a young man, around 20, 25 years old, records himself to show that he is in Villaverde, and sending a kind of notice that they are in the area. It seems like a mix between warning and bragging about being in the place. (MAD_MEM_012/M18)

The practice of harassing a young person in a group to “lower” the signal of another group is also frequent, —even though the victim is not a member of any group— these are

actions that are the order of the day in the observed environments, including the institutes, in which the students talk about them with total normality. The networks are also used to spy on members of other groups, to take screenshots of their faces and point them out to later attack them in the street. The videos are shared by social networks like Instagram or TikTok, and they are also sent from each other by WhatsApp.

But yes, the times that I have checked on my son's phone and I have seen what is going on, I have seen that they are intimidated, they harass those who are boys... actually, uh... it is in the war that they have between gangs. They are harassed for networks, they create double profiles to get into the groups of... the DDP in the Trinitarios, the Trinitarios in the DDP, they have photos in which they point out "look, it's him, this, this is the guy." I mean, search and capture. (MAD_STK-009/F45)

Relations

In the Relations category, those of brotherhood within the group stand out, as was to be expected, but also gender relations, whose conclusions have already been seen in the corresponding sections of the group descriptions. It is also in this category where it has been considered necessary to add the aforementioned first-level node that refers to the internal conflicts of the groups, since they have proven to be a fundamental part of their evolution and key to understanding the moment in which meet and even to visualize possible mediation strategies in the future.

In the group itself, there is an internal anger in all the groups there is a powerful internal situation. There is a part that is wanting to normalize, to work with NGOs, to carry out projects, to make them more visible. And there is another group that wants to live clandestinely, in the dark, but there, too, it would be necessary to see the interests that are brewing within them. (MAD_STK_006/F45)

Regarding the relations between different groups, the references to the conflicts between them stand out, as was to be expected. However, there are also glimpses, more clearly in the group of the Latin Kings than others, of intentions to improve these relations, which go through the personal knowledge between members of different groups, the recognition of shared or similar imaginaries and even of an external common enemy, a more impersonal enemy, such as "the system" or "racist people"

MAD_MEM_004/M30: Yes, I think it also starts with ignorance, ignorance about a group. Because if you don't know my group, I don't know yours, there will easily be a conflict, I don't know his values the same as he does, or he doesn't know mine, that's also it, it's easier. (MAD_FG_01_2018 -11-24)

This node is directly related to those of Conflict Resolution and Gang Truces that are in the Transversal > Mediation category, and suggests that the two groups that present the most conflict on the streets of Madrid currently carry a baggage of conflicts that does not allow them to see the possibility of truces or peaceful conflict resolutions in the short and medium term.

Ugh, I think it's complicated. Because the Trinis are not left, and neither are these. And neither will want to be below the other. (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

[MAD_MEM_051] said that it's complicated here, because if there's someone who's been stabbed, they're not going to forget about it and want revenge, because there's always something pending.

That he does not believe that there is a peace agreement and that there is someone he has attacked, who then takes advantage of things calming down to attack him. (MAD_OP_2021-11-28)

Regarding the relationship with the authorities, the relationships with the police and with the justice system stand out, ranging from the perception of young people of police violence to imprisonment that may or may not be directly related to their belonging to the groups. Regarding the relationship of the groups with the members in prison to the groups themselves inside the prison, there are very different reactions between what those who have been inside,

No, but jail, with confinement, or without viruses, whatever, it's jail, however you want, you isolate yourself from your, from your loved ones (...) and if you, well if one, if you arrive as a gang, and there's more than one other gang in the centre where you are, because they are going to give you problems for sure, more than everything in Meco. In Meco, it's where many, many gangs are. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

who have accompanied someone who was inside,

MAD_MEM_002/M24: Me, you understand me, there are friends, my brothers, from the Nation, who have been imprisoned and have come out resentful, because they have not sent them letters, they have not called them, they have not given them I don't know what, you understand me, and they are people who have dedicated their life, their time, their freedom, to the Nation, and they have left through the back door to leave with a resentment, you understand me, that the Nation owes them something. (MAD_FG_01, 2018-11-24)

and those who only have distant references,

MO: Do you know what it's like to be in jail?

MAD_MEM_014: No, because I haven't been in jail.

MAD_MEM_013: No, because you don't know until you're there.

MO: Well, but someone tells you.

MAD_MEM_014: From what we've been told, well,

MO: What have they told you?

MAD_MEM_013: That there is always someone cooler than you and stronger than you in there.

MAD_MEM_014: Recommendations count a lot, once you go in, who you come from, who you can meet inside, who already knows you or comes recommended, or from what party, that makes you a lot. (MAD_MEM_013/M18 AND MAD_MEM_014/M18)

Imaginary

The imaginaries of the groups have a lot to do with the values and guidelines that they receive both from their norms and printed literature and from what is transmitted to them by the group's leadership. The symbology associated with the Dominican homeland is the one that dominates in the two groups that share it, DDP's and Trinitarios, while that of the Latin Kings follows an internal logic of colours and symbols typical of what they call their Nation. The symbology, whether in the form of colours, necklaces, or hand gestures, is considered sacred by the members of any of the groups, and used as a weapon to provoke and humiliate the opponent:

MAD_MEM_004/M30: Burning their necklaces... (...) Yes, similar, a video, a huge insult. (MAD_FG_01,2018-11-24)

They told me, that they put a knife here, "Show me a sign! Give me your crown!" (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

For several of the young people interviewed, expectations for the future go through having a job, although employment expectations are quite abstract. They agree that they want to have a job that gives them stability and a fixed income. Some of them are prepared through professional training modules or more accessible courses, such as those offered by associations, including hairdressing and hospitality, but when it comes to verbalizing how they see themselves in a few years, they do not point to a job or profession. concrete, only to the idea of having it.

MAD_MEM_014: Me... right now, in five years... I just hope to have a stable job and continue with the ones I follow. (MAD_MEM_014/M18)

MAD_MEM_013: I hope I look good, the same, with a stable job, maybe even with a girlfriend. Stable. (MAD_MEM_013/M18)

Or lives off music, in the case of the two who are specifically dedicated to it at the moment, at different levels:

Well, I don't know, really. I see myself living off music, yes. I want to live from music, I would like to be a composer, I would like to go for something, you know? It would be cool for me to live off this, to see myself somewhere... (MAD_MEM_003/M22)

For many, their expectations for the future include the group:

MAD_MEM_002/M24: It may be, I'm not telling you that four years from now we won't get one of the people to become a lawyer. (MAD_FG_01_2018-11-24)

Yes, in, as in... there are some new bars there and you can train well and yes, here we go, there and forcing them to do things in the way they have to be, that they look for that, progress, that now stops the people who have fallen prey, because we do not want more people to fall as we have. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

One day, me, my dream is one day to lead a training school and people (makes the quotation mark with her hands) pieces, teach them what I learned and the attitudes, and perseverance and all the perseverance because there are things that, for me, the kitchen is like the Nation, the truth is, you always have to be humble with respect, that a moment of... as in the meetings of, from there, that you speak, but that moment, because there are also colleagues who they are colleagues, and colleagues who are not, who come, take their work and leave. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

I do not want this environment for my son. But I don't want this environment like that, I don't want him to be a band, but I do want him to know what's on the street, what, oh my gosh, look here it exists. I would like him to get along with everyone and really classify people for how they are with him, not for what he is (...) I would like all those who come after him to continue improving. And open your eyes and say "I want to be a DDP because the DDP's teach me to write a resume and help me look for a job and that they have that, no... that to say, no, hey, what are you doing, you're at home, it's I need to do my resume". That they can help each other in that way, not like "Do you have a machete?" (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

Cross

Of the latter category, the migration experiences reported by the young participants whose families migrated and later regrouped stand out, and of which there is a very illustrative example in the life story that is detailed in the following section.

The information derived from issues related to informal mediation between groups is also relevant, sometimes even with the leaders themselves acting as co-mediators between their two groups:

No, because there was an elder of the Trinis, A, who was calmer like that, calmer, and he got along well with the elders of the Didis too, they respected each other. It was said that they were all from the neighbourhood, that they all lived here, and you had to respect the neighbourhood and all that. But then A went to live in London, and K arrived, who is an African who is more of a warrior, and between the time he arrived and the people from Orcasitas and those from Ciudad Lineal began to arrive at that apartment that V had, everything was over. it started messing up more. (MAD_MEM_012/M18)

Many of the experiences in this category within the Gang Truces and Conflict Resolution nodes are therefore closely linked to the previously discussed Leadership one.

In this category, gender issues are also analysed, a section in which the new level 3 node has been added, which includes the experiences of sexist violence experienced directly by the interviewees or observed by external agents such as family members or other social agents and that are relevant to the experiences of young people.

He hit me, he always hit me, he always hit me, in front of the choir he also hit me and all... (MAD_MEM_050/F23)

Because we were arguing, "I'll take you and hang you like this, just stick my foot in and do it like that so that you fall, and this nonsense will end." Because I was already pissed off, because the mother, everyone, was talking her into having an abortion, and she was already convincing her, and she started, tears came out and she began to cry "no... I want to have her... no..." And I saw her I said "Forgive me" we sat down, I said "Excuse me, I don't know what that was, what a bad day." (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

In other words, yes, maybe we argue, and the argument is so aggressive that sometimes you think it's going to kill me, but then when we're good, it's like a peace and tranquillity that you can be so comfortable with. (MAD_MEM_018/F22)

Although it is not the node that has the most references—which is 13—they are intertwined with those of gender discourses and roles, generating a picture that is not far from other situations of sexist violence that occur outside the environment of group violence and that responds perfectly to the cycle of sexist violence in young people and adolescents (Venegas, 2016).

Providing this information and analysing it to contrast the media discourse that frequently asks those of us who investigate youth street groups about the issue of sexist violence against the women of the groups has been considered.

In the nodes referring to Public Policies, as already indicated above, it has been considered necessary to add the Roles node. The papers are seen as an element of social control and that they contribute—or subtract—status:

You have the situation that you are a migrant, you do not have papers, you are not a citizen here, that is, they look down on you (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

There are also repeated stories of young members to whom the police have offered the papers in exchange for receiving information about the groups:

MAD_MEM_001/M22: Yes, we have a brother who told them to sign there, that "they are going to give me papers, they are going to give me a job, and not to worry about anything."
(MAD_FG_01, 2018-11-24)

During the life story collected for this research, the papers remain in the foreground or background of MAD_MEM_015's story:

You went out to work to live, not to live to work, and the institute did, but if you weren't registered you couldn't study. (...) and then I realized the level there was, and because we didn't have papers, we didn't have studies... So, it was very radical. (...) And I was there that day, my goodness, crying with emotion. It was in October, I remember so much, in October, I had to do the fingerprints I think it was in December, and mother, I jumped, I called everyone there, even on Facebook, I swear, I cried, literally, excited "the papers! finally, the Spanish dream!" screaming there.
(MAD_MEM_015/M34)

The references associated with COVID-19 have great symbolic importance for what such a radical and unexpected change in the field meant for TRANSGANG research, precisely in the year that the fieldwork itself was to begin. As previously explained and included in Sánchez-García et al. 2020, the trust between the researcher and the participating people was essential to be able to maintain close contact during that time. In the case of Madrid, the follow-up of the matter focused on a young member who was ill and confined in prison.

I did 100 days, and that's worse than a first-degree, they'll let you call there, but they wouldn't let me call or anything. I couldn't call my family, nothing. (MAD_MEM_019/M24)

And in the consequent action of penitentiary and health institutions with the prison population.

One of the things they tell me is that workers are not being tested for fear that the positives will leave the prisons without staff. (MAD_OP_2020-05-15)

Regarding the issues derived from the research and that are collected in the second level Research node, those related to cooperation between different entities, academia, associations and participants in the project stand out, which materialize in different combinations depending on the project, formal or informal, that is taking place.

Intercultural mediation seminar carried out in collaboration with the RUMIÑAHUI association and the UAM through IMEDES and the UPF through TRANSGANG. (...) The food that we have ordered from the young people of the group to collaborate with the group's economy so that we can actively participate in a circular economy that benefits both the young people and the proper functioning of the course. (MAD_OP_2018-11-10)

Experiences of unfulfilled expectations and conflicts between entities that work in the same field are also collected:

It's over in the era of association, of universities, but always the same, the damn POWER, the damn EGO. (MAD_MEM_015/M34)

Lastly, issues related to the ethics of the project have already been included in the corresponding section of this report.

3.9. Portrait of a member

MAD_MEM_015 was born in Ecuador in 1986. His father died when he was young, although he got to know him during the first years of his life. He grew up with his mother and his stepfather. He has an older brother and is one of triplets, although the eldest was raised by his maternal grandparents and one of the triplets was raised by an aunt who was unable to have children. For him the situation is normal, it happens, or it happened frequently in Latin America when he was little, if a mother could not take care of all her children, that some of them would stay with an aunt or grandmother. Although they always knew they were siblings, having separated while they were still babies, they maintain their closest relationship with the brother they lived with, and although they now get along well, during childhood they had more friction with the brother they did not live with, since he was raised as an only child by his aunt and was less inclined to share with the other two siblings.

He lived for a large part of his childhood (until he was 12 years old, approximately), in the centre of the city of Guayaquil, first with his mother, his twin brother and his father (who died when he was 5 years old), and later (after ages 8 and up) with her stepfather. The death of his father and the change of address a couple of years later when his mother joined his stepfather did not cause him much trouble, since they continued to live in the same neighbourhood and he continued studying at the same school. They lived modestly, but without deficiencies. His stepfather worked as a security guard but sometimes his stepfather drank and so he has witnessed situations of verbal violence in his house caused by the consumption of alcohol, but not physical violence. The area in which they lived was very central and well-connected; His house was in front of some recently built apartment blocks that were not common at the time,. It was a working-class neighbourhood, although he does not consider it suburban, due to its central position and close to the Malecón, where he remembers that boxes of bananas were loaded, he says, today they are eaten in Spain. The school and a large park were close by, where he spent the afternoons after school, and where he also sold candies to get some extra money for himself and for his house: with the money, in *sucres*, which his mother gave him for his daily lunch at school, he would buy something he could sell, like candies or cookies, and get money from it for lunch and for his own expenses, in addition to giving something to his mother, "he earned two dollars a day and told him 'one dollar for you and one dollar for me'". He wasn't a very good student in his college years, although he got better as he got older.

As he entered pre-adolescence, he gained more freedom when it came to moving around on the street and spent much of his free time in his neighbourhood, where he felt comfortable, ran his business selling candy and went to play in the arcade , a microcosm in which the turns to play the machines had to be negotiated and in which young people of many ages came together. Life passed in the neighbourhood because, according to him, going to another neighbourhood was not recommended if he did not have someone's "sponsorship", "...if I don't have family there or a friend there who introduces me to that neighbourhood, well I am cannon fodder for anyone". His first contact with the gangs in

Ecuador was with the so-called “La Gran Colombia”, which was the one in his neighbourhood and which he was invited to join on several occasions; Although he never accepted, he had a good relationship with the group because on one occasion he had helped the nephew of one of the leaders when he had been attacked. When he was 10 years old, in 1996, the Latin Kings had already been installed in Ecuador for a few years, and he knew them, but they did not have the representation in his neighbourhood that there was in many others and they were considered an American trend, although they started out coexisting with pre-existing gangs in the neighbourhoods, which followed the model of settlement by neighbourhoods and defence of the same against outsiders, but without most of the paraphernalia of colours, symbols and rituals that the Latin Kings did incorporate and that made them eye-catching. He remembers, in any case, that the small neighbourhood gangs had to ask permission from the larger ones to establish themselves there.

MAD_MEM_015 recalls the arrival of the dollar in Ecuador, and how the social perception at the beginning was of emotion and joy for sharing the North American currency, but little by little they realized the inflation that it entailed, and that the money did not go anywhere near as far as it did before. He makes the comparison of the change from the peseta to the euro, remembering that although when he arrived in Spain in 2001 the euro was already established, they were still conversions to pesetas.

When his mother travelled to Spain, she left them to live with one of her aunts, but her twin brother was somewhat problematic, and they sent him to live in another neighbourhood with his maternal grandparents. For the first time in his life, they were separated. Since they did not like being apart, MAD_MEM_015 ended up also going to live with his grandparents to be with her brother.

MAD_MEM_015 remembers the first summer of his adolescence, when he was 13 years old, the last one he spent in Ecuador, like a soap opera summer. He travelled to the "beaches" with his family to enjoy the carnival and there he fell in love with a girl a few years older than him and with whom he maintained a relationship during the time he continued in Guayaquil, despite the fact that it meant some family reluctance because she was a single mother with a young child. That relationship was what precipitated his family sending him to Spain. The worst part of the immigration duel is experienced by the separation of his girlfriend.

He arrived in Spain in 2001, at the age of 14, although he would soon be 15, together with his twin brother, and he recalls how difficult it was to register for school, the inconvenience of living in a shared apartment and the disappointment of not finding Madrid the great city that he had imagined. With the same spirit that led him to sell sweets or recycled packaging to earn extra money in his country, in Spain he began to work cash-in-hand, mailing advertising, working with someone else's papers, etc. He was still in close contact with the girlfriend he left behind in Ecuador and saved enough to buy her a ticket to Spain, but she rejected him. Once that tie was cut, he turned his attention to the place where he lived and began to socialize with young people his age. They were Ecuadorians, Dominicans, Colombians and Spaniards, and with them he faced situations

of racism and aggression, but he also began to have a life that was like that of an adolescent: they went out to the arcades, met girls and fell in love with a Spanish woman, etc. In 2004, he discovered the Latin Kings in one of the shopping centre arcades in Madrid that they liked to attend, and his entire group was invited to join. MAD_MEM_015 tells how he had his doubts because his girlfriend didn't like the group, but he finally joined the group in 2005. He remembers his admiration for the older members, his trust in them and his first steps in the group, until his coronation in an alley in the Fuencarral square.

Since then, MAD_MEM_015 has held various positions of responsibility in the group, including the highest in the kingdom of Madrid, and has also participated in violent actions, even witnessing the death of a young man from a group opposed to the one his colleagues attacked. He saw the harshest and most violent times of confrontations with rival groups in the streets, and he singles out certain leaders as being guilty of the violent drift in the group. Until now, his tendency to collaborate with academia and with associations, his attempts to legalize the group in the form of an association, and his openness to external agents, including the police, have often brought him into conflict with other members of the group who have started to consider him a snitch. At the time when we were finishing the interviews about his life story, he was involved in a judicial process for a pending case in which several leaders of the group were involved and in which he had gone from defendant to witness, which increased suspicions against him. The process ends with an agreement between the prosecution and the defence with the result that the case does not go to trial and only some of the members have to pay fines.

On a personal level, MAD_MEM_015 has 2 daughters, with two different partners, the first of whom he had when he was barely 20 years old with a partner who was still underage. Through the application of the immigration law in force in 2008 and the agreement with Ecuador, the girl is registered as a Spanish citizen, and through it he could obtain his first legal residence and work permit in Spain. He recounts the processing as something complex and a process in which he once again faced situations of racism and discrimination due to his origin.

Through his collaboration with various associations, he began to take his first formal hospitality courses, which have led him to rise in the level of the profession, a profession that he speaks of with great respect and for which he feels devotion. He always preferred it to construction or other more demanding physical tasks. He proudly recounts how he flaunts his membership of the Latin King in his work environment, causing surprise and disbelief in his colleagues, but helping to demystify what it means to belong to the group.

3.10. Conclusions

The fieldwork carried out for the TRANSGANG project between 2018 and 2021 aimed to analyse the characteristics of a contrasting case within the project's transnational research. One of the characteristics that made Madrid eligible to be considered as a contrast case was the treatment that the phenomenon of "Latin gangs" has been receiving since the police began to have knowledge of them in 2003 and they started appearing in

the public sphere through the media. Heavy-handed policies have been a constant in dealing with groups, and 15 years after that appearance we returned to the field to make a study and balance of the evolution of said policies and of the groups analysed.

From the evolution that the groups have suffered, it is clear that there is a part of the police and judicial action that can cause the groups to be reduced, evolve or even become something else, although it does not seem that these measures are the solution to tackle a problem of violence between members of the groups, or even delinquency on the part of them. The investigation has shown us an evolution in the two main groups that occupied the media space when speaking of "Latin gangs" in the 2000s, namely the Latin Kings and Ñetas. The former have seen their numbers diminish due to legal action against them, but also due to the group's own decision to move away from the streets and abandon the battle for the territory in search of occupying more representative and socially accepted spaces. In addition, and this has turned out to be a key factor, the group actively and consciously rejects the membership of members under 15 or 16 years of age, which considerably reduces their numbers, but also limits the number of problems associated with the impulsiveness of the youngest. The Ñetas, have not been the object of this investigation since members who wanted to participate could not be found, but their name remains present both in the historical review of the Madrid case and in the imaginary of the groups. Unlike the Latin Kings, and only from third-party references, it seems that the group has not completely disappeared but has evolved into the underground and drug trade, although, again, we have no empirical evidence of the latter, only suggestions from a social agent who had previously worked with them:

It does make me very sad that an impotent group of Ñetas has fallen into drug trafficking, in that little world, that there is already... there I don't know anymore... there I see it as very, very difficult to get them out of there. (MAD_STK_006/M55)

On the opposite side, the groups that had the least resonance when the phenomenon of "Latin gangs" came to light in Madrid are now the predominant ones on the streets. It makes sense, since they were created at the end of 2004 and arrived at a scene already dominated by the other two aforementioned groups and suffered violence and submission from them. It was the judicial processes that caused the reduction in numbers in the Latin Kings (and the Ñetas) that turned the tables and that the groups of Dominican origin grew while the others dwindled. Today we have found that the names of these groups have the most social resonance, and that part of their growth and presence in the imaginary of adolescence and youth in the neighbourhoods in which they are present has to do with a combination of members and very young applicants and widespread use of social networks. Both groups share a common past and their references to the Dominican homeland pervade all their symbology, but members of various nationalities and origins have been found in their composition, which is why the term "Latin gangs" seems to be mutating in public discourse into "youth gangs".

This change in the dominance of the groups shows us that the name or the practices of a particular group are not so important if attention is not paid to an underlying structural problem that is that of violence. The violence that youth receives and the violence that youth exert is reproduced and channelled in different ways —structural, economic,

horizontal, symbolic— and is evidence that youth street groups, or gangs, are the symptom through which resistance is manifested to the violence received, without necessarily the exercise of violence being the end of the groups. We have observed how friendship and mutual support networks are established, and that young people feel that their affective and group needs are covered by belonging to the group.

The groups studied have profound differences in terms of three fundamental issues: the presence of minors —understood as those under 16 years of age—, the membership of women, and literature. The presence of minors has proven to be a determining factor for the rapid growth of the DDP's and the Trinitarians, just as the non-presence of these has meant a lower social presence of the Latin Kings and a decrease in their numbers. The membership of women only occurs in the group of Latin Kings, although at present their presence is merely testimonial. The treatment given to some of the women in the testimonies collected about the groups of the DDP's and the Trinitarios is not very different from the growing social perception that there is a setback in equality in terms of personal relationships between males and females: increasing use of pornography, high percentages of males and females who consider that gender violence does not exist, etc. As for literature, the most extensive by far is that of the LK group, which consists not only of a series of rules of behaviour for its members but also includes a compilation of founding manifestos of each territory and calls for the rights of the Latino “race” in the social struggle in its Constitution. At the level of integration and collaboration with entities and informal mediation practices, a substantial difference has been found between the Latin Kings group and the rest of the groups analysed, the former being more interested in reaching agreements that allow them to participate in the community life of the districts in which they live, mainly in work with nearby entities such as associations.

The experiences of Madrid and Barcelona are usually studied jointly and comparatively, despite the fact that it would be a mistake to associate the evolution of the situation of youth street groups in both regions exclusively to the different policies carried out in each one. But there are two completely different patterns of treatment were found from the outset: the so-called Barcelona Model of integration and pacification of the groups, alternating especially from 2010 with that of *mano dura*, and what we could call the Madrid Model, of uninterrupted policies of *mano dura* since 2003 and which, up to now, has been shown to be ineffective in solving the problem of violence among youth street groups.

3.11. References

- Assembly of Madrid (2021a) Presidency and Interior Commission. (7/3/2021) Retrieved from: <https://mediateca.asambleamadrid.es/watch?id=YjBjYWI0OTgtN2RkYy00MWU5LWE1YWMTM TYINTFIYzRkYjM0>
- Assembly of Madrid (2021b) Study Commission to address the phenomenon of violent youth gangs. (6/17/2021) Retrieved from: <https://mediateca.asambleamadrid.es/watch?id=OTIIMDQ3OTctODhlNy00YjJmLWlWxMDMtOTdl ZmQwMTIzNTA1>
- Buscher, M., Urry, J., & Witchger, K. (Eds.). (2010). *Mobile Methods*. London: Routledge.
- Coleman, S., & von Hellermann, P. (Eds.). (2013). *Multi-Sited Ethnography: Problems and Possibilities in*

- the Translocation of Research Methods. London: Routledge.
- Community of Madrid. (2021) Immigration Plan of the Community of Madrid 2019-2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.comunidad.madrid/transparencia/informacion-institucional/planesprogramas/plan-inmigracion-comunidad-madrid-2019-2021>
- Community of Madrid Agency for the Reeducation and Reintegration of Offender Minors (2010). Retrieved from: <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjC9o-Ispv5AhXP16QKHSaJDPUQFnoECAoQAQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.madrid.org%2Fvirtual%2FBVCM018083.pdf&usq=AOvVaw1vR02LEBBH-eCkY0OPmAhY>
- De Witte, M. (03/19/2020) Instead of social distancing, practice “distant socializing” instead, urges Stanford psychologist, Standford News. <https://news.stanford.edu/2020/03/19/try-distant-socializing-instead/>
- Duran, A. (2018). Gang Exportation and the Reproduction of Violence: The Trinitarios in the Crucible of Mass Incarceration. Senior Project submitted to The Division of Social Studies of Bard College. N.Y.
- Falzon, M.-A. (2016). Introduction: Multi-sited Ethnography: Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research. In M.-A. Falzon (Ed.), *Multi-sited Ethnography. Theory, praxis and locality in contemporary research* (pp. 1–23). New York: Routledge.
- Feixa, C., Porzio, L., & Recio, C. (Eds.). (2006). *Young “latinos” in Barcelona: Public space and urban culture*. Barcelona: Anthropos Editorial.
- Feixa, C. (Dir.), Sánchez García, J. (Coord.), Ballesté, E., Cano-Hila, A. B., Masanet, M.-J., Mecca, M., & Oliver, M. (2019). *The (Trans) Band: Notes and questions for the investigation of street youth groups*. Barcelona: Pompeu Fabra University & European Research Council. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2019.wp02.2>.
- Marcus, G.F. (1995). Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Site Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24(1995), 95–117.
- Mignolo, W. (2003). Cultural studies: geopolitics of knowledge and institutional demands/needs. *Iberoamerican Magazine*, 203, 401–415.
- Queirolo Palmas, L. (2017). How do you build a public enemy? The "Latin gangs" Madrid: Traffickers of Dreams.
- Ramsland, Katherine (2012). "Women Who Love Serial Killers". *PsychologyToday*.
- Sánchez-García, J., Oliver, M., Mansilla, J, Hansen, N., & Feixa, C. (2020). Between cyberspace and the street: ethnographing street youth groups in times of physical distancing. *Hipertext.net*, 21, 93-104. <https://doi.org/10.31009/hipertext.net.2020.i21.08>
- Sánchez-García, J., Oliver, M., Mansilla, J, Hansen, N., & Feixa, C. (2020). Between cyberspace and the street: ethnographing street youth groups in times of physical distancing. *Hipertext.net*, 21, 93-104. <https://doi.org/10.31009/hipertext.net.2020.i21.08>
- Scandroglio, B., & López, J. S. (2010). Participatory-action research with the Latin King group in Madrid: potentialities and limits of an alternative strategy to control conflictive youth groups. *AIBR. Journal of Ibero-American Anthropology*, 5(2), 223-255.
- Venegas, M. (2016) The structural conflict of gender violence: a look from adolescence in a context of social vulnerability. In Becerril, D. and Lozano, M: (eds.). *Sociology of conflict in contemporary societies. Peace and conflicts*. Madrid: Dykinson.
- Wolf, S. (2017). *Firm hand. The Politics of Gang Control in El Salvador*. Austin, Texas: The University of Texas Press.

4. Gangs of Milan, Where Are You? Street Groups, Rap and Urban Territory Within and Beyond a City in Transformation.¹¹

Paolo Grassi

4.1. Introduction

“Gangs of Milan, where are you?”. This could be my very non-academic and “desperate” question that has guided my research since January 2019 within the TRANSGANG project. While Milan was described – at least till 2017 – as the European capital of Latin American gangs, my fieldwork could only recompose some traces of a social phenomenon that seemed almost non-existent. Thus, through what I could call an “archaeological” approach, I tried to follow some of these traces, to understand what was going on in the Milanese streets.

Also drawing on to the Milanese TRANSGANG background paper (Grassi 2021), four more theoretical questions were formulated through the research process: what are the street groups of Milan nowadays? How has their forms of sociability changed in the last few years? And, above all, why did it change, apparently, so fast? And, finally, are or were there local experiences related to conflict mediation or conflict resolution inside and outside these street groups?

Answering these questions meant moving from a history of the Latin American street groups of Milan to a social analysis of new practices connected to the urban territory. Within this movement I discovered (or re-discovered, as I will show) rap music and the marginal neighbourhoods of Milan.

A part from this introduction, this paper is divided in five additional sections. Section 2 will introduce the research techniques applied to the Milanese case study (i.e. observations, interviews, but also online ethnography and ethnographic walks). A brief reflection on the way the COVID-19 pandemic affected the research process (especially in 2020) will be also developed.

Section 3 will describe the ethical issues and how these were addressed by the Milanese research group. It will explain how interlocutors were identified and involved within the research and how the transparency of the process was guaranteed.

¹¹ This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 742705. IP: Dr. Carles Feixa. Website: www.upf.edu/web/transgang. Contact: transgang@upf.edu.

Section 4 will first present the context of the research, i.e. the city of Milan – focusing on its recent process of transformation and youth policies – and the social housing neighbourhood of San Siro, where I carried out the second part of the fieldwork. Then it will introduce the groups researched. There are basically two groups: the Latin American street groups of the early 2000s and rap crews who have appeared in the last five years. Some considerations will also be developed on the supposed waves of youth violence that exploded during the pandemic period at a national level and labelled by the media with the expression “mega brawls” (*mega risse* in Italian).

Section 5 will develop some general issues, especially referring to the Nvivo analysis carried out at the end of the fieldwork. These themes refer to the organisation, identification processes, practices, relations, and imaginaries of those groups.

Section 6 will present two brief life stories, or portraits of two youngsters representing the two groups investigated.

Combing a literature on post-cultural studies and reterritorialization processes, the conclusion (Section 7) will underline some interpretative dimensions useful for the comparative analysis that characterises the TRANSGANG project as a whole.

Along the definition proposed by the TRANSGANG Concept paper (Feixa et al. 2019), the Milanese street groups will be considered along a continuum, in one whose extremes are the delinquent groups (the gangs themselves) and another the groups linked to free time (the youth cultures). For this reason, this report will use both the terms “gang” and “street group”, where “gang” will be more associated to a shared point of view used by media, institutions, but also the youngsters themselves, while “street group” will be more associated to an academic construction aimed not to develop criminalising and stigmatising interpretations of this complex social phenomenon (Brotherton and Barrios 2004).

4.2. Methodology

According to the TRANSGANG Methodology Handbook, the research in Milan was based on an ethnographic approach aimed at following configurations of relations, constructing “youth street groups micro-cosmos” encompassing those agents that are part of it (state, academia, media, the gang, themselves among others) “to understand how this field works, what positions each of these agents occupies” (Feixa et al. 2020: 7).

The ethnography in Milan was developed through two main phases interspersed in 2020 by the COVID-19 pandemic and a consequently by the interruption of any fieldwork. In the first phase the main target group was the Latin American street groups, in the second a rap crew of the social housing neighbourhood of San Siro.

Since 2019, at least 240 hours of observations were recorded. Here, a multi-sited (different places – Marcus 1995) and multi-scalar (different socio-spatial spheres – Calgar and Glick Schiller 2018) ethnographic research was applied in several Milanese areas. Some “incursions” into the adjacent city of Varese have also been realised, following the trajectories of Latin American street groups. The ethnographic research was based on

participant observations and interviews with selected stakeholders and members of street groups. Through participant observations, I took part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of the social actors (De Walt and De Walt 2011), from some football matches to religious group meetings, from public events to leisure activities, in city parks, bars, restaurants, public spaces, and several marginal neighbourhoods of Milan. Particular attention was paid to urban space (Lefebvre 1974, Massey 2005), its organisation and signification according to the point of view of street groups.

Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted during the research¹², focusing on the imaginaries and practices of street groups (Feixa et al. 2020). Six of them were selected and shared with the other members of the TRANSGANG team. The others were used to contextualise and deepen the research insights. Two life stories of male ex-gang members (two former Salvadoran members of Mara Salvatrucha – then in their thirties – the first one active in El Salvador, the second one active in Milan) were collected. Three focus groups were also organised (one with a group of stakeholders – social workers and researchers who operate in Milan –, one with young Milanese rappers, and one with young girls living in the San Siro neighbourhood). The research therefore focused on young men between the ages of 18 and 30. This is because both the pandillas and rap crews are typically male forms of socialisation. In both groups there is also the presence of girls, but often in subordinate or more marginal positions.

During the pandemic the fieldwork slowed down. Among my interlocutors, I kept in touch with one ex-gang member through WhatsApp, who was hospitalised due to Covid-19. However, after some months, I lost contact with him. Especially during the lock down (between 2020 and 2021), online ethnography – or virtual ethnography – was conducted, or, better to say, I constantly moved back and forth between conventional and virtual ethnography, thus trying to produce “strangeness and hence the ability to question the taken for granted nature of the technology” (Hine 1994: 15), especially deconstructing the imaginary created around Milanese street groups. More specifically, I observed the social profiles of a group of San Siro and constantly monitored the local press referring to the project theme.

Observations, interviews, life stories and focus groups were then analysed through Nvivo program, according to the nodes tree shared by the TRANSGANG project. Nine second level nodes were added to the original scheme: education (Biography node), parks (Territory node); graffiti (Artistic expressions node); parties (Leisure node); definition (Gangs node); mediation between institutions and youngsters, mediation between civil society and youngsters (Mediation node); love (Gender node); everyday changes (COVID-19 node). In addition to those indicated by the project, the nine extra nodes emphasise specific dimensions that can be traced back to the Milanese case. In their testimonies, many young people made explicit reference to the topic of education and the school institution (Education node) and to their love stories (Love node). Parks and parties in private homes constituted socialisation places especially for the Latin American

¹² Twelve with stakeholders (social workers, policemen, members of the local institutions, researchers), six with young male between 18 and 30 years old.

pandillas of the early 2000s (Parks node and Parties node). Similarly, graffiti constituted an important form of expression for them (Graffiti node). The research also made it necessary to specify the types of mediation carried out over the years (Mediation between institutions and youngsters node; Mediation between civil society and youngsters node). Finally, a node relating to pandemic-induced changes was added (Everyday changes node)¹³.

In conclusion, the field research lasted about three years, with a period of inactivity during the toughest months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The field moved from a multi-site search for traces of Latin American gangs to an ethnography (online and offline) focused on a street group in a single neighbourhood. As the objective of the research shifted, I continued to monitor the presence of Latin American street groups through local and national newspapers.

4.3. Ethical issues

According to the objectives of the project, I initially identified and recruited study participants based on their experience of mediation and conflict resolution within street groups, and between gangs and the civil society. I made contacts with members and former members of the street groups and their leaders, young people belonging to the social milieu of the street groups, and stakeholders (members of institutions and professionals).

The research was based on participatory observations in some public spaces of Milan and interviews with adults and healthy subjects. I worked in contact with some Milanese organisations that are considered experts in the matter (for example, the social research agency Codici, the non-governmental organisation Soleterre, the NGOs Comunità Nuova and Tuttinsieme). Such collaborations with experts already in contact with members or former members of street groups contributed to the protection of the physical and psychological well-being of the interlocutors, as well as their privacy. Interviews were conducted after obtaining an informed consent (usually oral, in some cases also written).

The TRANSGANG project was approved by the ethical boards of the European Union, the University of Milano Bicocca and the Pompeu Fabra University of Barcelona (Feixa, Sánchez-García, Brisley 2020). The project therefore complied with the guidelines, codes and standards promoted by European legislation. In particular, in accordance with EC Regulation No. 45/200, every necessary measure was taken to protect any personal data. Furthermore, the procedures adopted were based on the ethical codes of the International Association of Sociology and the American Anthropological Association. The objective, methods and products of the research were communicated to the partners, the results were shared and respectful relations with all stakeholders were guaranteed. The collected data were stored digitally and accessible through the use of a password.

¹³ For the explanation of the single nodes, I also refer to the NVivo file related to the Milan case study.

My professional profile attested my commitment and attention to youth and social work. My experiences as a social worker, street educator, and teacher show how I have always supported the organisations with which I have collaborated over the last fifteen years.

Finally, the research was supervised by Prof. Carmen Leccardi, of the University of Milan Bicocca, in synergy with the other project partners and under the direction of the TRANSGANG project coordinators. This network of researchers provided constant monitoring of my activity, guaranteeing the protection of all partners involved.

4.4. Analysis per Clusters General perspective on youth street groups: presentation of the context and the groups researched

4.4.1. Milan: a city in transformation

Milan is the economic capital of Italy. The World Expo of 2015 guaranteed an enormous flow of investments (the GDP of the event was 13,9 billion euro, according to its official report; Expo 2015 s.p.a., 2018). Giuseppe Sala, the commissioner of the public agency responsible for its management, is now the mayor of the city. The city has put a lot of resources for the regeneration of vast urban areas and the realisation of mega-renovation projects. New squares, skyscrapers and infrastructure have sprung up. Through this mega-event, Milan changed not only its skyline, but also its identity, becoming a capital capable of competing with other major European cities. The rhetoric of the “Milanese Renaissance” has been promoted by local and national politicians and media, sometimes hiding the problems that the marginal neighbourhoods of the city are forced to face (see Cognetti, Gambino and Larena Faccini, 2020). Milan has thus defined itself as a two-speed city, in which some areas continue their development, while others seem to lag behind, excluded from the stimulative dynamics described, despite the plans implemented and the projects subsidised by public and private social actors.

In 2018 in Milan there were around 260.000 foreign residents (19% of the population). Most of them came from Philippines (15.6%), Egypt (14.3%), and China (11%, National Institute of Statistics – ISTAT 2018, elaborated by Tuttitalia.it). In the same year, there were around 176,000 boys and girls between 10 and 24 years old (Ibidem). In 2016, 6,545 children were born in Milan from foreign parents (around 24% of the new-borns, Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali 2017).

Even if Milan is not characterised by high levels of spatial and social segregation (see Pacchi and Ranci 2017), a “periphery issue” has been growing in the last few years. With periphery issue I mean an increasing political and public attention on the more marginalised areas of the city. Two urbanists describe this process in a book published in 2021, criticising the dominant political and media narrative that painted Milan as an inclusive and innovative European capital and international city (Larena Faccini and Ranzini 2021).

The deep transformation of Milan has its roots in the late nineties, when, after a long period of difficulty that began in the seventies linked to the stagnation of population growth and the process of deindustrialisation, the building intervention regained strength

thanks to the action of private investors. However, the authors underline that the major projects that followed one another lacked public direction and an overall vision. “Strongly private settlement models and introverted in architectural forms” are affirmed (Larena Faccini and Ranzini 2021: 19).

The Albertini (1997-2006) and Moratti (2006-2011) councils, focusing on abandoned areas, laid the foundations for some substantial transformations that today characterise the urban fabric of Milan and its image (City Life, Bosco Verticale, Piazza Gae Aulenti - see Bolocan Goldstein and Bonfantini 2007). However, the securitarian approach adopted in this period contributed to eroding and impoverishing the public space, also affecting the socialisation of young people. “A private vision of housing” prevailed (Larena Faccini and Ranzini 2021: 21) which left no room for the question of public housing. In the meantime, the city was contracting, depopulating and seeing its population age.

In 2008 Milan won Expo (the World Exposition of 2015), but at the same time began to experience the effects of what was defined one of the greatest economic crises in contemporary history. The self-employed and atypical workers, who had grown considerably in the years immediately preceding, paid the price in the city.

Mayor Pisapia (2011-2016) marked a strong discontinuity with respect to the two previous councils, proposing a model of urban development that was attentive to the dimension of participation and dialogue with basic realities. At the urban level, however, the already introduced policies continued, driven according to the logic of the “big event”, namely Expo 2015. The employment system also polarised, between specialised profiles and workers expelled from the shrinking sectors.

Expo 2015 marked a phase of economic growth (GDP increased by 9.7% between 2015 and 2019). The city again attracted population (1,400,000 inhabitants in 2019) and capital. The Sala council, which took office in 2016, paid specific attention to the peripheries issue. A Peripheries Directorate (*Direzione Periferie* in Italian) was established. A “Periphery program” was defined, aimed at the requalification of five marginal urban areas for priority intervention (Larena Faccini and Ranzini 2021: 30). However, the Periphery Plan was abandoned shortly thereafter, or rather included in a broader Neighbourhood Plan, launched in 2018. The vision of a specific intervention on some of the most fragile urban areas of the city was no longer considered necessary. A rhetoric related to the idea that speaking of suburbs was “wrong”, because it was stigmatising, spread in the city.

Milan increasingly has catalysed the interests and aspirations of a cosmopolitan and creative middle class, leaving other social strata behind. Having occurred throughout the national territory, the Milanese institutions delegated the management of gradually larger pieces of welfare to the Third Sector, effectively fragmenting and weakening the offer of local services (Grassi 2022). For instance, referring to the field of youth policies, in the last few years Milan has experienced a progressive disinvestment on some types of youth policies closer to the territories, aiming at initiatives with more selective access criteria, to develop the participation of young people and their empowerment (Mansilla, Grassi

and Queirolo Palmas 2022). This is how a social worker who participated in a focus group organised in February 2021 described this process:

Here we have working classes excluded from social and public policies that are inside the territories, live the squares, live the parks [...]. It is true that they [the Milanese youngsters] are now invisible because they are less in terms of numbers, they are not seen very much, they are also in more hidden places while before they were in the centre of the squares and showed themselves. Because it is almost a thing to be ashamed of being in the street!

On the other hand, in the last few years Milan has experienced consecutive waves of “moral panic” connected to securitarian responses (Cohen 1972) apparently justified by specific events and groups, in which the categories of “youngster”, “migrant” and “poor” have often intersected and overlapped.

The crisis related to the management of asylum seekers and the terrorism alert observed at a European level since 2015 contributed in mounting fear (Grassi 2018). The “spectre” of the Milanese gangs grew within this framework. However, after a phase of police repression, this wave of moral panic has slowed down. Only with pandemic the young Milanese have once again become a “problematic issue”. Some episodes of violence amplified by social media have brought public attention back to the matter, as I will describe below.

4.4.2. The Latin American street groups of Milan: an “archaeological” approach

In the background paper of the project, I underlined how understanding the Latin American “gang space” of Milan meant interpreting it as a dynamic matter. My interlocutors described the phenomenon as extremely aleatory and unpredictable (Grassi 2021). That gang space was not about control of neighbourhoods, it was about inscribing and re-inscribing the city, signifying it, through fluctuating modalities. Thus, in Milan gangs a peculiar action of “territorialization” was implemented, i.e. a socialisation process of urban space, a form of symbolical mediation within the city of Milan (Raffestin 2012).

Gangs or Latin American street groups in Milan referred to a phenomenon related to young male migrants or sons of migrants that developed around the 2000s and then decreased after 2015 following a strong police repression¹⁴. In a first phase my field work therefore consisted of what I can define a “street archeology”, corresponding to a mapping of the main meeting places of those groups and interviews with stakeholders who, for various reasons, had closely known them:

February 2019

It is a cold Saturday afternoon, but the sun is shining. I reach Padova Street and walk around. During this first month of fieldwork I tried to create a map to orientate my research. I had a phone call with Luca Queirolo Palmas, of the University of Genoa and area coordinator for the TRANSGANG Project. Luca approved my research plan and encouraged me to continue my fieldwork in the streets and parks of Milan. I had a Skype call with a PhD candidate member of

¹⁴ Girls also participated in the activities of these groups, but in more marginal positions, not as actual members in most cases (see Bugli 2009).

the Transcrime research group (Catholic University of Milan). I contacted Donna De Cesare, a journalist, photographer and professor at the University of Austin, who had researched in Milan for a few months last year on Salvadoran gangs and migrants. I also write to Lucia Capuzzi, reporter at *l'Avvenire*, a catholic journal. She asked me to write to her in early March because she's currently on a mission in Latin America. I had a long talk with another researcher of the Catholic University of Milan. He is an expert in security studies and has been carrying out a mapping of the gang phenomenon in Milan for some years. He provided me with a list of "hotspots" to look for street groups.

I started to check some of the hotspots that he had indicted. I went to the Central Station, Padova Street, up to the Crescenzago subway stop, Porta Venezia, Machiachini, Affori and San Siro. Till now, I made only contacts with a group of three homeless South American boys. I must say that one of the three immediately spoke to me of violence and maras in his country, but they were definitively not members of a gang.

The Latin American street groups of Milan developed at the beginning of 2000s had some peculiarities: they were a contemporary phenomenon, the result of recent migration dynamics connected to transnational practices and globalised imaginaries. A group of researchers started working on this issue, using a participatory perspective. The group was related to an independent research agency called Codici. Together with the non-profit organisation *Comunità Nuova*, they started working in the streets of Milan, trying to develop a mediation process between those groups and the Milanese institutions.

The street groups of Milan negotiated through their practices a new provisory identity in search of freedom and social emancipation. That identity was constructed in contraposition to other groups, at a symbolical level and also through violent conflicts (Conte and Bugli 2008). A "Latin American Milan" was inscribed in the urban space, through specific practices and imaginaries (Conte, Meola and Milanese 2008).

After that, gangs in Milan seemed to disappear from Italian academia. Codici continued to work on this topic for one additional year thanks to another project. The first police operations in Milan dated back to 2005, but repression grew more intense between 2012 and 2015, when four police operations followed one after the other. Latin American gangs of Milan experienced an escalation of violence related to their conflicts. Other new groups added to the old ones (Latin Kings, Comando and *Ñetas*), and the Central American Mara Salvatrucha (MS13) and Pandilla 18 also appeared. Media began to portray these groups exclusively as criminals, often providing stereotypical and stigmatising representations¹⁵.

After spending months trying to find out some ex-gang members of those years, I got in contact with some of them. The first one was Oscar (all the names I will mention in this report are fictional), a Salvadoran citizen then in his thirties, member of the Mara Salvatrucha in El Salvador. According to his point of view, the structure of the Milanese gangs was very different from the Central American one:

¹⁵ I mention two headlines as examples, the first taken from *la Repubblica*, a centre-left newspaper; the second from *il Giornale*, a conservative newspaper.: "Drugs and machetes, that blood-red code of the Latin gangs" (Saviano 2015); "The favela in the centre of Milan" (Giacalone 2016).

There is not a tight structure here, and I hope it will never come to that. Compare it to my country, where they are more than pandillas [gangs]. They are “mafias”: money laundering, extortions, guns, drugs. Here [in Milan], gangs never developed, never got power¹⁶.

The second one was José, a former leader of a Milanese clika of Mara Salvatrucha (see Section 4.6.1), then in his thirties, too. I met him in June 2019. He also underlined the gap between the gang phenomenon in El Salvador and its proliferation in Italy:

I started creating my clika [gang unit]. At that moment, I was not thinking of anything. I used to steal. We hit people. However, attacks as serious as in El Salvador, such as murders, never occurred here at that time. We almost always avoided confrontations.

José stayed in his clika for a couple of years, but doubts started to crowd his mind. As in many cases recorded globally (Hazen and Rodgers 2014), José’s maturation process was accompanied by a departure from the gang and his “crazy life”.

I said: - Puta, I have a good job, a family, I don’t want to go back to my country, because there is no life there.

However, José had already gone too far. The police grabbed him during one of the operations mentioned above. José was arrested and spent some years in a Milan jail. In prison he changed his life, but never totally rejecting his gang identity, his past as leader of the Milanese Mara Salvatrucha. José had achieved a social recognition, although “dysfunctional”, in some respects.

The pandemic and the lock down phases did not allow me to maintain relations with José. For a few months, I continued to follow his social media status. I know he fell ill with Covid 19 and was hospitalised. More recently, he had been contacted by an important television network to provide some sort of advice to the producers of a television series about gangs in Milan¹⁷.

For different reasons, both Oscar and José asked me to start an activity as volunteers in two social cooperatives. I thought these two requests were excellent opportunities to try and develop mediation attempts. However, as I will explain in the next section, both of these attempts failed.

The third former gang member (again in his thirties) whom I spoke with was a leader of Barrio 18 in Milan. After killing the leader of the Milanese Latin King in 2009, he ended up in prison where he is still serving his sentence:

I looked at this thing as a game for many years... perhaps you do not recognise the impact that you can have when you are in prison. Because of your young age you didn’t realise [...] perhaps I reconsidered everything, getting to know the importance that... the consequences that I had caused¹⁸.

While Milanese social researchers stopped investigating gangs, this social phenomenon evolved. For the very first time, gang violence was directed outside of the groups and the Latin American communities. On the 11th of June, 2015, another clika of Mara Salvatrucha – formed by a new generation of pandilleros not in relation with José’s group

¹⁶ April 2019.

¹⁷ “Blocco 181”, produced by Sky. The television series was released in May 2022.

¹⁸ July 2021.

– attacked a ticket inspector at Milano Villa Pizzone train station. One of the boys pulled a machete out and severely injured the inspector, who almost lost his arm in the attack (Galli and Giuzzi 2015).

After five police operations, Latin American gangs in Milan seemed weaker and more fragmented than the years past. Thus, their peak can be dated back to 2015 and 2016. Among others, Massimo Conte, the man in chief of Codici, confirmed this in an interview carried out in February, 2019. According to the researcher, it is possible to meet “residual” subjects on the street nowadays, i.e. adolescents or youngsters with more problematic social profiles, or former gang members.

There are certainly other groups with higher criminal profiles, but they are hardly traceable and observable. Two recent homicides showed that somehow gangs still exist in Milan. The first one (March 2019) is linked to Mara Salvatrucha, the second one (June 2019) to Barrio 18.

During 2020 and 2021 I continued to monitor local newspapers for incidents attributable to conflicts between street groups. Many of these are actually difficult to ascribe to the gang phenomenon due to the lack of details relating to the identity of the youngsters involved (see for example Guarino Guarino Ranieri 2022).

4.4.3. The rap crew of San Siro

Some of my interlocutors argued that my difficulty in finding street groups in Milan was also linked to changes in the way youngsters socialised. For example, a manager of a social cooperative that has implemented several street education projects over the last 15 years, during an interview on the 9th of July 2019, explained to me that the public space of the city does not provide stable meeting points for groups of adolescents and young boys and girls nowadays: “They use Whatsapp, they don’t hang out around”, she stated.

Actually, public space of Milan was targeted by specific policies aimed to regulate it in a repressive way. In addition to the well-studied urban policies connected to gentrification processes that affect minorities and homeless population (see Smith 1996), there are many punitive policies registered in Italy in the last several years. In 2017, a security decree sponsored by Interior Minister Marco Minniti considered homelessness a threat to “urban decorum” (Pisianello, 2017). Several municipalities had already launched anti-beggar ordinances starting in 2008. Examples of “hostile architecture” also began proliferating in Milan (blockers, barriers, benches designed to prevent people from lying down, etc.). Therefore, the possibility of using public space by young migrants intersects with economic factors, the social control of institutions, and the accessibility of services and resources.

But what has changed more deeply was the social and urban structure of the city of Milan. As I described before (Section 3.1), on the one hand, Milan has increasingly become a destination for international migratory flows. On the other hand, the so-called “second generation” kids have grown up. At the same time, the city has developed through major investments starting from World Expo 2015. Today Milan is a regenerated city, but which

has seen its social and spatial polarisation increase: the centre is more opposed to the peripheral neighbourhoods, increasingly seen as a “problematic issue”.

Thus, the issue was not so much looking for Latin American street groups in the public space of Milan, but understanding how the forms of socialisation of its young residents (especially male residents) had changed.

Actually, within this context, some newspaper articles started to use the term gang to refer to a new phenomenon (Santucci 2020, Giacalone 2021). In some marginal neighbourhoods, groups of male youngsters began to come together, sometimes using rap as a form of artistic expression. Occasionally, they also named themselves as “gangs” (for instance, the Gola’s lokos, KO gang, Z4, etc.). Some of their members were linked to deviant activities like robberies, drug dealing, fights, some were arrested, some were experiencing a reintegration process. For these reasons they attracted the attention of the local institutions.

One of these groups targeted by the local media was located within San Siro, the social housing neighbourhood where I have been working since 2017, collaborating with an action research group of the Polytechnic of Milan that opened an office there in 2014¹⁹.

San Siro is a square shaped neighbourhood built between the Thirties and the Forties in a then peripheral area of Milan to accommodate the families of workers employed in the local factories (Migliucci, Oriani and Schiavi, 2016). It is managed by ALER, a public agency within the Lombardy Region. Now centrally-located thanks to the expansion of the city centre, San Siro has a population of about 12,000 inhabitants and is one of the largest public housing neighbourhoods of Milan (around 6,110 apartments). In the last few years, San Siro has become an area of great cultural diversity, characterised by the presence of a young population of foreign origin (around 50% of the total), with 84 different nationalities, besides Italian. Many children and youngsters of San Siro were born in Italy, but, as for all children of migrants, national legislation does not allow them to obtain citizenship until they are 18 years old. On the contrary, a majority of the Italian residents is formed by elderly inhabitants. Between young migrants and elderly Italians sometimes there are problems of coexistence, which arise in particular in conflicts related to the management of courtyards and public space (Cognetti and Padovani, 2018).

Thanks to the public housing allocation mechanism, which favours people in need, many fragile subjects live in San Siro: in particular, single-parent and single-income families, and people with disabilities, especially with psychological problems. However, San Siro also constitutes a “laboratory” of social activities, i.e. an urban area where different local actors (ngos, local committees, volunteers, and so on) interact, promoting various projects, even if often short-term and not always well coordinated with each other (Maranghi, 2019).

¹⁹ The group is called Mapping San Siro. Since 2013, it has developed a stable Urban Living Lab, with an office located at the street level of San Siro. Through this space, the research group has had a continuous and daily presence in the neighbourhood – the hallmark of its research approach. The lab instituted an open platform for knowledge exchange and research monitoring, generating empowering processes for different actors (www.mappingsaniro.polimi.it).

In recent years, San Siro has often been described by local and national media as a “casbah”, an unassailable Arab fortress in the centre of the Lombard capital. San Siro has become the neighbourhood which the city needs to give a name to its own fears, currently linked above all to immigration dynamics (Toubon and Messamah, 1990). Thus, the “foreign” (according to the Italian law) youngsters of San Siro move in and out of this stigmatised and deprived context, between different urban areas, educational institutions and scarce job opportunities.

Within this frame, a group of six boys formed a rap crew – called Seven 7oo – that, since 2018, has progressively achieved success nationally and internationally²⁰. Neima Ezza, Sacky, Vale Pain, Rondo da Sosa, Keta, Kilimoney, are their names. They are young men just over 18 years old who grew up together in the neighbourhood and became passionate about rap. Their crew is therefore a spontaneous, grassroots artistic formation, which has been supported over the years by professionals linked to the music business.

Their lyrics are similar, they speak about suburbs, drugs, money, prison: the repertoire of the transnational imaginary of the gangsta rapper, or the modern trapper. All of them express also a deep bond with their neighbourhood and with their area, Zone 7, using the name of the District where San Siro is located. Through rap, on the one hand the stigma that marks that portion of urban territory is turned over into an emblem, on the other the neighbourhood and the city are re-defined and re-signified, as these Lyrics of Rondo da Sosa show:

I have a stick if you want beef [problems]
San Siro, Paris, check out my drip Givenchy
I have 50 bullets in my glizzy [gun], we run into the buildings
San Siro stadium in this zone, we keep our roots²¹

The six rappers collaborate through the label Real Music 4Ever, even if not all of them are directly contracted by it. After realising some singles that got millions of streaming and views on the social networks, they published a mixtape in 2022.

The Seven 7oo crew has been monitored by the institutions especially since April 2021. In fact, Neima Ezza then shot a video clip in the neighbourhood with Baby Gang, another rapper residing in a city near Milan. Hundreds of young people rushed in, creating a gathering in the middle of the pandemic period. The police intervened, launching tear gas into the crowds.

From that moment a new wave of moral panic generated. The local media before and the national ones after started to write articles about San Siro rappers, generally providing negative or merely descriptive representations (see Pisa 2021). In the middle of an electoral campaign, the Milanese politicians began to visit the neighbourhood more and

²⁰ The San Siro rap scene is a purely male phenomenon. Girls do not participate in the activities of the crew. A focus group organized with some girls from the neighbourhood revealed different forms of socialisation.

²¹ Ho la stick se vuoi il beef / San Siro, Parigi, guarda il drip Givenchy / Ho 50 colpi nel glizzy scappiamo dentro gli edifici / Stadio San Siro nella zona noi restiamo con le radici.

more frequently. Municipality, ALER and prefecture signed a collaboration agreement putting the youth issue at the centre.

4.4.4. Juvenile violence and the pandemic: the “Mega brawls”.

During the pandemic, Italian newspapers gave increasing prominence to episodes of youth violence that deserve a reflection. In Varese, Padua, Milan, Piacenza and Rome, to name a few cities, groups of young people organised meetings through social networks aimed at beatings and fighting, often filmed with mobile phones and thus amplified by the local and national media.

For instance, in Milan this happened on 27th of February 2021 (Repubblica 1/3/2021) and on the 22nd of May of the same year (Repubblica 22/5/2021). The newspapers described them as fights between groups of young people, mainly foreign citizens, divided perhaps into two or more factions. However, these episodes reached their climax on the night of the 31st of December 2021, when several groups of boys surrounded some girls and harassed them. The groups were formed by Italians and “second generation” youngsters, living in Milan and in other cities. Police described them not as stable units, but as extremely “fluid” (Giuzzi 2022).

It is difficult to interpret these events, even in light of the lack of data and in-depth research. Certainly, with Carmen Leccardi it is possible to underline “the importance of avoiding falling into labelling processes - in terms of deviance and a ‘social problem’, antechamber of moral panic - of phenomena that are also very different. Not all youth street groups must in fact be considered as gangs; not all rappers are to be considered subjects ready for violence. And certainly, the nightlife – of which the term *movida* has become synonymous – does not imply deviant behaviour as such” (Scudieri 2022).

After all, it is good to remember that adolescence can be, at least in our society, a period of conflict where youngsters need to redefine themselves through relationships with their peers, namely the “group”. The dimension of violence has always been associated with adolescence. What has currently changed is firstly its amplification through social media.

4.5. Analyses section

4.5.1. Latin American street groups

Latin American gangs in Milan have a quite short history that dates back to the beginning of 2000s. Since then, the geography of the phenomenon has changed a lot. The oldest groups were Latin Kings, Comando and Ñetas. Central American Mara Salvatrucha (MS13) and Pandilla 18 appeared later. My research explicitly focused on these latter groups.

Formed by male youngsters coming from several countries, some of these street groups evolved, while others disappeared. Today, the Latin American gangs of Milan seem more hidden than in recent past. While according to some interlocutors it is still possible to indicate some urban “hotspots”, in general the “Latin American Milan” looks very different.

Gangs in Milan are thus a dynamic and fluctuating phenomenon that especially interest a small number of boys. Their practices are the result of structural forces combined with local dynamics. Their imaginary feeds on the trafficking of transnational symbols. At least two waves of moral panic have hit these Latin American street groups since their birth. The first one was in 2006; the second and more damming one was in 2015, after an attack on a train inspector perpetrated by a *clika* of Mara Salvatrucha.

Today no less than two active groups – Mara Salvatrucha and Barrio 18 – are still present in the city, or, better said, are still in the public eye – even if through less sensationalistic tones – mainly because of two recent violent events (the homicides of two young Latin American citizens in March and in June 2019).

The collected data were processed through the qualitative analysis software Nvivo. Below are the six main issues highlighted.

Organisation

The Nvivo node relating to the structure of the gangs highlights some passages already mentioned from the interview conducted with Oscar, the former member of Mara Salvatrucha, and large excerpts from an interview carried out in April 2019 with a policeman who was then a member of the Milan flying squad and expert in foreign criminal organisations:

[In those years, at the beginning of 2000s] we understood, obviously also with the help of the technical activities of the Judicial Police, that these people were organised in real associations. There were those who dictated the rules, those who complied with them, that is, they organised themselves in the sense of affiliation rites to join them, punitive expeditions against members of the opposing gang [...].

The policeman explained how in Milan those groups presented structured and hierarchical organisations at beginning, but these have changed over the years, becoming more blurred and fuzzier:

[...] At this time a real structured organisation, as well as those that we investigated a few years ago... at this time we can say that there are not. Even if the phenomenon is still constantly monitored and controlled.

Today the phenomenon seems a minor issue, according to his point of view:

The numbers? How many people are we talking about? Few dozen people, I guess.

About Thirty. We quantify them in this way even if, for example, when we go to follow them in these parks, we see that there are about fifty people who gather. Since it is considered by us as a meeting place for all members, in this fifty there are also families with children, with wives, who obviously are separated from this phenomenon... We isolate them and try to understand who it could be, who has a criminal record, who should be followed ... And we identify them at this time with about twenty, thirty people.

Identifications

Referring to identity and identification processes, as already reported by the first research on gangs (Asbury 1927, Thrasher 2021), Latin American street groups of Milan

were characterised by a strongly contrasting structure. The definition of one gang was always related to the opposition of others.

At subjective level, the interview with José highlighted some elements worthy of attention. The motivation that drove him to join the gang was related to the fear and respect this could instil in other young men, even if, once he grew up, he understood that such respect was fictional:

Yes, I said to myself: “I’ll be part of it”. I liked the respect, fictitious actually, because people do not really respect you. But they are a little scared when you are part of the gang because maybe they say: “He doesn’t think twice about shooting you, killing you”. They do not respect you; they are afraid²².

José is also the interlocutor who more than anyone reported a gap between his generation of pandilleros and the current one. In particular, he described how the new Latin American street groups as more tied to the “mother” gangs in their home countries, so less independent, in his opinion.

Qualitative data analysis highlights the thoughts of some stakeholders who reflected on the motivations that lead youngsters to identify themselves with street groups. One social worker, for example, in February 2021, argued that:

Inclusion is difficult here [in Italy] with respect to many parameters, like school, culture, language and many similar things. This makes it a little easier for the youngsters to be attracted to contexts where they feel something familiar and they find cultural references and even banally a language that they understand and know, and a containment, a structure that somehow also reorganises their growth processes... A hierarchy, a discipline, very precise codes, rituals, something very charismatic for young people...

Similarly, a lawyer engaged as a volunteer in the San Siro area, in reflecting generically on the “street groups” issue, argued that the main motivation for these young people consists in:

The anger towards a society that basically does not welcome you, that is absent to respond to your needs, this difficulty of considering yourself “somewhere” because wherever you are, you are never in the right place, because in your country you are no longer from that country, in this country you are not from this country... Socio-economic difficulties make everything more difficult

Yes, sure. Trivially, if I don’t have opportunities, crime can be an alternative, even a very fascinating alternative...

Yes, very fascinating because it can also correspond to an economic need... These are very simple reflections, but they are also things that are studied by researchers.

Practices

Referring to practices, the interviews highlight activities related to leisure and public space. The Latin American street groups used to meet in the parks, in the discos of the city, they controlled small portions of urban territory, occupying it and tagging it, but

²² June 2019.

more symbolically than concretely. Also conflicts between rival gangs can be pointed out.

For instance, the policeman interviewed in 2019 declared:

All of them are always on the same level: drinking, getting drunk, having fun, going to the disco and, above all, organising punitive expeditions against members of the enemy gang simply to assert territorial supremacy.

As already described, the conflicts between Latin American gangs have experienced different waves followed by repressive actions. Regarding the clashes between rival groups, José explained to me how his group tried not to exceed a certain limit of violence, basically to avoid getting into trouble and ending up in prison:

Here [in Italy] you can see a [member of Barrio] 18 and you do nothing. There [in El Salvador], if you tell it, they tell you: “So, if you didn’t kill him, we’ll kill you”. Many, even those who are active in the gang, do not say it, they hide it. At that time, if we saw someone, maybe we would beat him, without killing him, but with a beating... All these things I saw, even these guys who killed the Albanian. I said: “But sorry, you could have killed an 18 and not an Albanian”. At most, you gave him two slaps, you send him home. Even at that time, when we were having trouble with the Latin Kings, the same thing. We walked around with machetes, everything. When there was a problem against them, I said. “Give me the machetes, nobody can use them”.

Relations

Analysing the relationship between members of Latin American street groups and adults, migratory and transnational experiences that connect countries and families often emerge. The life of José, again, can be considered prototypical, connecting the history of *maras* to the policies of deportation perpetuated by the U.S. government between the end of the Nineties and the beginning of 2000s:

Did you grow up with your parents?

No, my mother came here [in Italy] when I was 2 or 3 years old. I grew up with my grandmother [in El Salvador], with my brothers. My grandmother had a small shop, a tienda, she also sold food for the cops. My father was part of the military, the police... my whole family. They were soldiers, policemen, both on my mother’s side and on my father’s side. We spent the days alone. My sister, who was older, was practically our mother. At that time, for as long as I can remember, there were no gangs, it seems to me. It was all concentrated in the Zurita, everyone came from there, all the people who were deported from America [United States] went here.

The Milanese institutions seem at this precise historical moment not to explicitly deal with what could be defined as the issue of spontaneous youth aggregation in public urban space. To deepen what has already been described in paragraph 4.1, I report the statement of another social worker, who, during the focus group realised in February 2021, stated:

[...] We only talk about it [juvenile aggregation] when somebody steals a cell phone in CityLife [a rich area of the city], but really, we just talk about it, in the sense that there is almost no more attention and action on spontaneous aggregation... As if it were no longer a manageable or approachable topic! [...] The reviewers of the foundations that finance these types of projects, but also the public administrations tend to consider... tend only to consider the specific case in terms of treatment and not in terms of prevention or knowledge. We, as social workers, have also changed ... It is as if this theme of spontaneous aggregation were elusive, no longer contemporary.

José's experience seems to testify to a similar lack of interest. When he was released from prison, he decided to engage in voluntary prevention activities, but, despite his efforts, he could not find a really interested interlocutor:

Yes, I spoke with the Caritas [catholic charity], I spoke with some politicians who came [to the prison]. Nobody finished anything. I said, "I'm here, if you want". I can't do it alone [...]. I went to the consulate saying the same thing [...]. I want to do prevention, I want to be able to help people who come: "Eh, but I don't know, we don't know, we are not in our country. If you don't get the protection [refugee status, i.e. a one of the few legal opportunities to reside in Italy as a foreigner]". But I don't want protection, I'm not coming to ask for something. I ask there if there was anything that can be done to avoid all these things [...]. I'm a plumber, I can teach someone my job. If you want" ... No one said anything to me.

Imaginaries

Referring to imaginaries and values of the group, the Nvivo analysis highlights the opinion of the policeman, interviewed in April 2019:

[...] basically, the ideals are always the same. There can be differences with the rules... Everybody has their own rules, but some of these rules are maybe common, like the one to never betray the gang members or the fact that once you join the gang you can't leave it except with death. Some of the groups, I don't remember which ones, postulated a kind of clause, in the sense that you can't leave the band but you can have a certain period of inactivity, but never betray the members of the group... You must attend the meetings that are periodically held, you have to contribute with small fees to maintain the gang... These are rules that are more or less common.

As mentioned by international academic literature (Covey, Menard, and Franzese 1992), also the Latin American street groups of Milan have cosmologies and mythologies that explain their origin, rules and histories. These mythologies are fuelled by media narratives and do not always correspond to the "reality", even if they certainly produce real effects.

Latin American street groups tend to refer to a *macho* imaginary, a combination of honour, respect, courage and physical strength, i.e. the declination contextually located in Latin America of the patriarchal code (or the so-called "hegemonic masculinity"). This model is therefore not peculiar to the gang world. Rather, it is a dominant common pattern, in politics, in economic life and professional activities, in the media and social relations (Cannarella, Lagomarsino and Queirolo Palmas 2007).

Hegemonic masculinity defines not only the male gender role, but also that of its female counterpart. However, an ambiguous attitude is maintained in the relationship with women. In fact, women alternatively constitute sexual objects and domestic consolers (*la ama de casa* in Spanish – see Geller and Stockett 2006). In other cases, the figure of the woman becomes more active, but still relegated to a domestic role, as in the case of mothers left alone by their husbands, able to look after the family.

Transversal Issues

Referring to the transversal issues underlined by the Nvivo analysis, I will focus on two of them: transnationality and mediation. A very debated issue is the level of transnationalism achieved by Latin American street groups of Milan. The research highlighted weak links – but still existent – between Milanese groups and "mother" gangs in Latin America. José, the leader of Milanese *clika* of Mara Salvatrucha, argued that

younger affiliates have closer relationships with the Central American gangs, while his generation had an interest in maintaining some degree of independence:

They put these guys [the new generation of Mara Salvatrucha] here in jail. They are different, easier to be influenced from there (El Salvador). From there, they have noticed that it is easier to influence those who are here and begin to control them as they want. They are still doing it. They send some of us there. They explain to them how to do things here in Italy... from there they wanted to extort someone. If you are here and you have a family there, they tell you: "We will kill your family", not here, because you go to jail here, but there yes.

So, they extort people in El Salvador from here?

No, from there to here [...], okay?

Yeah

Mediation is another big issue at stake. How did the group manage conflicts? Were they involved in formal processes of mediation? In this sense, the research highlighted a single mediation process between street groups and institutions in Milan. It was carried out by Codici and Comunità Nuova from 2005 to 2008, a non-governmental organisation managed by a catholic priest. Through this project, a group of Latin Kings formed a formal association, called "Movimiento Real Juvenil" (Grassi 2021). Today, this association does not exist anymore and no organisation is working on mediation processes with these adolescents and young men.

Along the research, I personally tried to develop two individual mediation processes between my interlocutors and some Milanese organisations. In both cases, my attempts failed. Qualitative data analysis reports a couple of significant fieldnotes that describes these processes. The first one is about Oscar, who, during an interview, asked me to introduce him to a social cooperative to do volunteering jobs.

May 2019

I arrive early at Mare Culturale Urbano, but Oscar is late. Mare Culturale Urbano is a centre of artistic production active in the west area of Milan (on Novara street) [...]. My contact is a social worker that I interviewed some weeks ago. The office of his organisation is next to Mare Culturale Urbano. He told me that he would like to involve ex-gang members in prevention projects, so he accepted to talk with Oscar. I decide to meet Oscar at the nearest metro station. I wait for him for ten minutes, I see people coming out quickly from underground, while I am sitting on a bicycle rack with the phone in my hand. Then, Oscar appears. He is wearing a military jacket, a black and white T-shirt, a pair of jeans. The tattoos on his body emerge from his clothes. On his forehead, the badly cancelled M and S are still perfectly visible. We talk a bit, while returning to Mare Culturale Urbano. We arrive at our appointment thirty minutes late. The social worker makes us sit inside a bar. We talk for an hour. Oscar quickly explains his story: the asylum request, a raped daughter, the period spent in prison in Italy. The social worker pursues him with questions. It almost seems an interrogation. Eventually, the social worker explains that without documents he cannot involve Oscar in any project. I am disappointed, I wonder why he did not tell me before [...]. I drive Oscar to a bus stop.

The second one is about José, who asked me the same. While Oscar thought that a volunteer activity could somehow help him in obtaining the documents to legally reside in Italy, José's motivation seemed more linked to a question of social redemption:

July 2019

At 1:15 pm José arrives with his blue Toyota. I go with him to the meeting point, where Massimo Conte from Codici is finishing a pedagogical supervision. I contacted him a few days ago, asking if he could help José find an organisation doing voluntary activities. José, Massimo, Emanuele – a social worker – and I sit around a small wobbly table. Emanuele works in some centres for minors. Massimo proposed José to volunteer at one of these. José would organise some activities doing sport. The first meeting between José and the boys will be next Thursday. Our meeting lasts about thirty minutes. I listen without intervening. Massimo will talk with José to better know his opinion on this opportunity. He does not really take me into consideration while addressing to José. I wonder what is his objective. Probably he would like to work with José on an individual level, without opening up to a group dimension. On the contrary, I am very interested in this second dimension, but I do not know if it is possible or not. [...] After a couple of weeks, I write to José sending him the text of our interview. I ask him about the voluntary activity. José answers soon: “Hi, everything is good”. This is the last message I received from him. I followed him on WhatsApp for some months, checking his status, but after that he disappeared. He also changed his telephone number. Massimo told me he stopped the voluntary job after a couple of meetings. Another mediation process inevitably failed.

4.5.2. The rap crew of San Siro

The rappers of San Siro, as well as the “old” Latin American street groups of Milan, mix local and global dimensions. However, while Latin American street groups were quite ethnically homogeneous, the San Siro’ rappers show more hybridity. Among the six rappers of the crew analysed through this research, one has Latin American origins, four have North African parents, one is the son of an Italian-Egyptian couple. Around the crew there are young men of the neighbourhood of various ethnic groups.

The rappers of the Seven 700 crew are not the only youngsters of San Siro who rap. In this sense, it is possible to refer to this artistic expression as a “scene”, i.e. a non-homogenous space sum of single individualities that subjectively re-elaborate and locally situate certain transnational stylistic features (Barone 2019). For instance, Mohammed, a 17-year-old boy who was born in Egypt but grew up in San Siro, has a different point of view. In February 2021, during an interview, he said:

I wrote about racism because when I went to middle school, I suffered from it myself. They made jokes about me because I was Arabic. In the class there were boys from the upper-middle class... and we from San Siro were seen as barbarians. This is no longer the case now in high school, where in each class there are at least half who have a non-Italian origin. It is good.

His raps do not speak of drug dealing, or weapons, but explore the working-class world and the Milanese social movements, without however ever fully recognising himself with it.

Girls seem excluded from this phenomenon. Their forms of socialisation seem different. The participants in a focus group organised in July 2021, for example, reported that they prefer certain squares outside the neighbourhood, or that they make more use of their homes. The girls of San Siro do not rap, even if some of them obviously know their artistic peers. As in the case of Latin American street groups, the figure of the woman is often stereotyped in boys’ imaginaries, on the one hand through the idealised figure of the mother, often abandoned by their husbands, but able to look after their children and raise

them; on the other, through the image of the woman-object, flaunted in some rhymes and video clips.

The Nvivo analysis presents less data relating to this second street group, which was investigated more thoroughly only after the toughest phases of the pandemic (from the second half of 2020), when the research material required by the TRANSGANG project had already been delivered. In any case, it is possible to use the same categories used for the Latin American street groups, highlighting above all a series of differences.

Organisation

As already highlighted (Section 4.3), the crew currently consists of six rappers plus a producer. All are connected to the Real Music 4Ever independent music label, even if only some of them are directly contracted by it (Neima Ezza for example has a contract with a major record label).

With respect to the organisation of the crew, it is possible to highlight (at least throughout 2020), an assiduous presence in the public space of San Siro. The group had made a specific street and building its “headquarters”, the meeting place where its members and aspirants (other young rappers from the neighbourhood and friends) used to hang out.

Between 2020 and 2021 the crew gave itself a name (Seven 700), referring to the number of the Milan district in which San Siro is located. The Seven 700 is not a gang, nor properly a “street group”. In fact, the crew does not have a structure (other than that linked to the label), or specific rituals, a part from those related to their artistic practices.

Along the continuum established by the TRANSGANG project’s definition of gang (The Trans Gang research team 2019), the Seven 700 can perhaps be defined as a “youth culture”, even if its relationship with street life (real or represented) constitutes a very strong identity marker.

However, it is interesting to note how, in the wake of the moral panic arising from the month of April 2021, the crew was instead explicitly defined as a gang by local media (Ziniti 2022)²³.

Identifications

The Seven 700 crew shows what Feixa and Mecca has defined as a “nomadic identity” (Feixa and Mecca 2019) – that mixes different syncretical elements– yet still embedded in a specific portion of urban territory, that “Zone 7” idealised in their rhymes.

The Seven 700 crew built its identity first of all on a specific expressive language – that of rap – and on a style connected to it. At a territorial level, the most substantial oppositions concern the clash and competition existing with other crews from other neighbourhoods and conflicts with the police (see Section 5.2.4).

Referring to style, on one hand the rappers often use tracksuits, men’s purses and sneakers; on the other they display also expensive clothes from famous brands, jewellery

²³ The article refers to the members of the crew as the “gangsta rappers of the Seven 700” and describes Neima Ezza as their leader.

and watches. The rappers portray themselves as those who've "made it", who've managed to redeem themselves socially, but do not deny where they are from, their "roots". The videos and the rhymes of their lyrics reproduce a transnational "gangsta rap" or trap imaginary: expensive cars, motorcycles, weapons and drugs are often shown and narrated. Even in the case of the San Siro crew, a macho and patriarchal imaginary is re-proposed. Women are never present, or are portrayed as sexualised objects or as subjects sublimated in the archetypal figure of the mother, guarantor of unconditional support and protection.

In March 2020, I had a long conversation with a professor of law who is also a volunteer in San Siro. To justify the use of that imaginary, she used the metaphor of the "bad guy" mask, explaining why it is so appealing:

In fact, referring to rap, the mask of the bad boy is very present. So it is true that it is also taken, flipped, mocked and exaggerated, and this mask becomes almost grotesque...

Well, but that mask is the one you've been wearing since you were little, it's the one you feel when you walk down the street just because you have a little darker skin, and it's the one you can't take off.

It is also the one that can be seen in a neighbourhood where there are certain dynamics, and those cannot be hidden.

The dynamic exists and probably exists in all districts, more or less submerged and more or less qualified. If you take a tour of CityLife, you don't see different masks, maybe you'll see guys a little better dressed [...]. So, it is a dynamic that is quite evident in every child.

In other worlds, that imagery is fascinating to any guy and that is why it is perhaps so popular, although its effects are different depending on who applies it.

Practices

The activities of the crew are related to leisure in public space and music production. Its members seem to have claimed a reoccupation of public space, often disordered (combined with graffiti, street parties, hangouts). This reoccupation has worried older local residents and law enforcement, who have gradually adopted a repressive approach.

The focus group organised in February 2021 with a group of stakeholders (members of non-governmental organisations and researchers) highlighted some interesting elements about the contemporary use of public space in Milan. For instance, a social worker who operates in Giambellino (another social housing neighbourhood of Milan) reflected on the fact that, in his opinion, public space is now used less by the middle classes, and more by the lower classes, who are however expelled from certain areas of the city:

Public sociability on the street has decreased in recent years because, first of all, our narration as adults is often negative... And that has greatly limited participation and the use of public spaces by children in recent years. Secondly, because it is not politically recognised: everything has to be inside clubs, inside places where they can consume and where they can be controlled in some way, which was not the case before. So, slowly the middle class [...] has disappeared [from the street] ... Now in the streets of Giambellino we see the most disadvantaged youngsters hanging out [...] While it remains the characteristic of the lower social classes excluded from social and public policies that live the territories, squares, parks [...]. It is true that they are now invisible because they are less in terms of numbers, they are not seen very much, they are also in more hidden places,

while before they were in the centre of the square and showed themselves ... Because it is almost a thing to be ashamed of being in the street! One of our little boys [a boy who attend the centre managed by the organisation] told us that in CityLife he was overwhelmed by the guards who threw him out just because he was a little darker skinned!

Relations

The relationship between the institutions and the San Siro crew is nuanced and ambiguous, and somehow emblematic of the more general relationship the former has with the younger generations in Milan. The rappers on the one hand oppose the police and other law enforcement agencies which, indeed, have taken a particularly repressive attitude towards them in recent years. On the other hand, rappers entertain relations with other institutions, including some non-governmental organisations, schools (in part) and the municipality itself.

Referring to this point, the events that have affected San Siro since April 2021 are emblematic. In fact, after the recording of the video of Neima Ezza and Baby Gang mentioned in Section 4.3, patrols by the police intensified in the neighbourhood. This repressive attitude was registered also by other residents, as confirmed by a woman to a newspaper: “The police stop everyone. My eldest son went to an aeronautical school, he is 21 years old, he only goes out in the courtyard at night. He meets his friends down here: one brings tea, the other biscuits. Yet they are continuously monitored, even here in the courtyard” (De Vito 2021).

In August 2021, following a fight that broke out outside a club, the police commissioner, through the so-called DASPO Willy, prohibited access to entertainment venues and public establishments to Baby Gang and Rondo da Sosa, essentially preventing them from working on the territory of Milan.

The repressive wave reached its peak in January 2022. Baby Gang and Neima Ezza, together with a third boy, were arrested for alleged robberies that took place between Milan and Vignate the previous summer. Shortly thereafter, the charges against the two artists were lifted for lack of evidence in the investigation.

On the other hand, the institutions tried to establish a dialogue. On the 16th of April 2021 Rondo da Sosa and Sacky were received by the mayor of Milan through the mediation of a priest, Don Claudio Burgio, chaplain of the Beccaria juvenile prison and head of the Kayros community, considered a reference figure for many young people who have faced legal problems, including some rappers from the neighbourhood. At the end of the meeting, the mayor Giuseppe Sala announced the structuring of a path for the realisation of educative interventions (Melley 2021).

In the same month, the City Council approved the Resolution no. 1003, which established the creation of an agreement between ALER Milan, the Prefecture and the Municipality itself. The agreement explicitly mentioned the events of the 10th of August and set up a series of interventions, some already financed, others to be carried out, for the “regeneration of the San Siro neighbourhood”. The protocol focused on the issue of youth “social discomfort”, territorializing it. In addition to structural redevelopment and educational actions, the proposed solutions concerned the “contrast of illegality and [the]

dissemination of a culture of legality”. The prefecture was committed to encouraging the participation of the police in unspecified training initiatives, to support their presence in the area, and to prevent housing occupations.

The patrols, arrests, and investigations define an institutional will to restore a social order that is reflected in an urban geography, while educative actions seem to acquire a palliative function. These interventions are often financed by foundations, or by public-private partnerships, implemented by associations and cooperatives, which is in fact contributing to the privatisation of public welfare. In June 2022 the projects announced only partially started. Furthermore, a broad strategic horizon is missing.

Imaginaries

The music of those rappers is related to a transnational imaginary that connects several cities around the world. This transnational imaginary gave those rappers “hope” and the possibility of thinking about themselves elsewhere, even paradoxically starting from an extreme attachment to their own neighbourhood, or to their “zone”. The neighbourhood itself and their common social condition define their identity. They refer to the suburbs but project them on a global scale. In this sense, rap shows another phase of Milanese youngsters’ socialisation in relation to Latin American street groups (Mansilla, Grassi and Queirolo Palmas 2022).

The rappers of San Siro do not look – or do not only look – to Cairo, Casablanca, or Guayaquil, the cities of their origins or where their parents were born. Rather, they look to the global cities of music, such as New York, London, Paris, and Marseille (see Ritzer, 2003). Rap music has been established as a cultural and creative scene of this segment of “second-generation” kids (Belotti, 2021a).

Rap provides many of these youngsters with the capital with which to oppose social and economic marginalisation. Within this capital, the fascination with crime and gangs plays a particular role. Rap helps those guys to establish a symbolic order, overturning the dominant one. The stigma to which those youngsters are subject is taken in an “interpretative” key, we could say, a way to classify groups, individuals and urban spaces according to opposing logics: inside or outside the “zone”, the “barrio”, the “block”, the “favela”, to quote some of their rhymes, again.

Transversal Issues

By considering the transnational dimensions related to this second group, I will make references to two central issues: media representations and globalisation.

Local and national media have built a stigmatising representation of those rappers, fomenting the wave of moral panic unleashed especially after the events of April 2021. Rappers have been described as violent, problematic and, as already mentioned, gang leaders, based on the ambiguous imaginaries produced and reproduced by them (Ziniti 2022). However, rather than focusing on the criminal imaginaries, it is necessary to shift our attention to the institutionalised violence and repression that we can find at the basis of the construction of those imaginaries. Prison is a leitmotif continually evoked and normalised by rappers, a close reality, experienced in first person or through the stories

of friends and relatives. The same goes for the police, the tangible institutional enemy to vent one's anger against (see Fassin, 2013). Contemporary rap and above all some of its sub-genres such as trap and drill show how some areas of our cities are subject to a stigmatising criminalisation that refers to often unspoken urban hierarchies (Nofre 2021). However, prison and the conflictual relationship with the police become a source of pride, an element to display in rap rhymes (Molinari and Borreani 2021). Ostentation of violence turns out to be a rejection of the social and inter-generational re-production of inequalities (Belotti 2021b). The matter of representations and their ambiguity emerge again.

Referring to globalisation, in a paper written with Mansilla and Queirolo Palmas (2021), I underlined how the dynamics of San Siro's young people are the result of cultural/imaginary references transmitted globally (thanks to the internet and the massive use of connected telephones) and reappropriated locally. San Siro refers to a common phenomenon of marginalisation of groups of young social actors, which in some respects intensifies their sense of belonging, which also passes through glocal imaginaries. Internet allows the consolidation of hybrid moral communities (acting on physical and digital realms) of double action, local and global (Ritzer 2003; Robertson 1995), which favours the construction of transnational networks of collective identity.

4.6. Member Portraits

4.6.1. José. A Salvadoran *pandillero* in Milan

I interviewed José in Milan, at the Polytechnic office located in San Siro. I managed to get an interview thanks to a researcher from the Catholic University who found his profile on Facebook. First, I called and met him to explain the details of my research. After several unsuccessful attempts, I finally managed to interview him. After the interview, we stayed in touch for a few months. I tried to help him find an organisation to work as a volunteer (see Section 5.1.6), but my attempt failed.

José is a man in his thirties, born in El Salvador and entered the Mara Salvatrucha from a young age:

My mother came here when I was 2 or 3 years old. I grew up with my grandmother, with my brothers. My grandmother had a small store, she also sold food. For as long as I can remember, there were gangs, I think. I said to myself: "I'll be a part of it".

I liked the respect, fictitious actually, because people don't respect you. They are a little scared when you are part of the gang because maybe they say: "Look, he doesn't think twice before shooting you, he kills you". Then they do not respect you, they are just afraid.

When José was 14 years old, his mother – who had understood what was happening to her son – took him to Italy.

Yes, my grandmother used to tell her: "Either they kill him or he is going to kill someone and he'll go to jail for life". So, I came to Italy.

The description of his arrival is vivid memory in his mind:

I came in winter. You know, I imagined everything: going to another country, like in American movies, the neighbourhoods with the houses, the gardens, everything quiet. I arrived here, we took

the bus – we came with the bus from Malpensa [Milan’s main airport] – back then I saw graffiti and this meant gangs. I saw them and thought: “Are there gangs here too?”. I saw these buildings; you don’t see many tall buildings there in El Salvador. I honestly didn’t like them... I was still living near to where the train passes. From time to time I felt the house vibrate. I would wake up suddenly, always scared. Because you can't live there in El Salvador when you're part of the gang. You must always be careful, even if you sleep, because you know that the police, the opposing gang, can come at any time. You no longer live in peace; you have no peace of mind. There was a time when I was still scared, I would wake up and be scared.

Faced with this migratory experience, José approached his compatriots who had had relations with the maras in El Salvador. Members of his group talked about the possibility of creating a Mara Salvatrucha clika in Italy, but José was not totally convinced.

In that period, they arrived... I met about 25 people who were part of gangs in El Salvador. They all came here. Six or seven people were part of a clika, they all got together, a whole family. There was me and there were other people. When we got together, we met again: “We have to go back to the gang, we have to do something”, we started to say. But since there were so many heads together, you know, everyone has their own rules. I told them: “Let’s do it”. But at that time my son was about to be born, I had found a job.

José ultimately decided to raise his clika after a specific event, experienced as particularly “critical”:

The first big attack they did here was against a boy, in 2008. They gouged out his eye. In that period, a lot of the [Barrio] 18 came from there, from El Salvador. There were already enough MS [Mara Salvatrucha] here. There have already been clashes. You could no longer walk calmly. What prompted me to return to the gang was this: I was dating, I don’t remember if she was my wife or my girlfriend at the time. I was walking around with her and the very small baby and I hear three of the 18 behind me saying: “Look at this piece of shit, it’s an MS”. I turn around, look at them and see them. I call my wife, give her the baby, tell her: “Go away”. My wife left. I told them: “What is your problem? You’re an idiot”. In the end nothing happened, but there I looked for the gang.

José was different from the other members of the group, or so he thought. What is certain is that some characteristics of his personality made him become the main leader of the Mara Salvatrucha in Milan, among others: greater reflexivity and a tendency to look forward into the future, to want to economically improve his own condition.

His clika had very mild relationships with El Salvador and their level of violence was never too high:

I started to create my clika. At that moment, I didn’t think about anything. I used to steal. We used to hit others. Attacks as serious as in El Salvador, like murders, never happened here at that time. We almost always avoided confrontations.

So, José continued his “crazy life” for two or three years, but doubts loomed in his head. As in many cases recorded globally (Hazen and Rodgers 2014), José’s maturation process was accompanied by a distancing from the gang:

I said: “Fuck, I have a good job, a family, I don’t want to go back to my country, because there is no life there”.

However, José had already gone too far. The police caught him. He was arrested and spent some years in a Milan jail. Some of his younger gang members were the protagonists of the violent events of 2015 and 2016 (the attack on the inspector and the

homicide of the Albanian boy). Prison marked a turning point in his biographical trajectory. He changed his life, but never totally rejecting his gang identity and his past as a leader of the Mara Salvatrucha. José had achieved social recognition through the gang, albeit “distorted” and anomic. Journalists contacted him several times. His life is now focused around his family. He would like to buy a house, get out of Milan, fulfil the dream of a successful life and economic well-being.

4.6.2. Daniel. A (former) rapper of San Siro

I followed Daniel especially between 2017 and 2019, when he was about 20 years old. I got to know him through a social worker of a local organisation who told about his life story. We met almost every week in San Siro for a coffee, a walk, or just a chat. One of the most significant encounters was in June 2017. Daniel arrived forty-five minutes late for our appointment. We drank a coffee in a bar in Piazza Monte Falterona, on the external border of San Siro. He told me he arrived in Milan when as a child. He is a son of a foreign couple, attended compulsory school, obtained Italian citizenship and started to work.

One day, he asked me to help him write his resume. Clerk, bartender, waiter, electrician, warehouse worker: these were the precarious work experiences that punctuated his still short biographical trajectory. The same experiences that came back in the rhymes that Daniel noted in crumpled school notebooks: “I am the son of a worker, I lived in a dump / Working to eat, we did what was necessary”²⁴.

The aesthetics he drew from to build his imaginary was transnational. In his songs, San Siro was like a Latin American barrio, an American ghetto, a Parisian banlieue. It was both the “periphery” from which to redeem oneself and the support to hold on to. It unified it with adolescents and young people residing in other countries:

Everyone dreams of a stage
but they don't know that to stay there you have to bang your head until your skull is shattered
One is born more aggressive if one is born in the barrio
But what pieces and style, I have the coldness of a hitman²⁵.

“[San Siro] It's a normal neighbourhood”, Daniel explained to me as we were walking around. “It's a suburb: it has its positive and negative sides. There are those who are born and raised in this neighbourhood and see it as their home. Maybe someone from the outside can say the opposite”.

We left the neighbourhood and walked to Piazza de Angeli, about twenty minutes away. We continued to a little park, then got back on tram number 16. Beyond the windows of the tram, I saw boutiques of prestigious brands appear in front of my eyes, I observed boys going out from private schools. More than ostentation, I recognised in passers-by alternative ways of life, structured around daily practices.

²⁴ Sono figlio di operaio, ho vissuto in un topaio /Lavorare per mangiare, si faceva il necessario.

²⁵ Tutti sognano un sipario / ma non sanno che per starci devi sbatterci la testa fino a frantumarti il cranio / Si nasce più aggressivi se si è nati nel barrio /Ma quali pezzi e stile, ho la freddezza di un sicario.

Back to the neighbourhood we entered into the Mapping San Siro office. Daniel carefully observed a map hanging on a wall. It was the map of the neighbourhood. Daniel was hooked on it. He listed nicknames given to portions of urban territory; labels that outlined his connection with San Siro: a building in Piazzale Segesta had the shape of a gigantic kebab, the intersection of three streets created a large “H”, and so on.

In those years, Daniel did not find a job that was not precarious, an accommodation that was not temporary. He occupied an empty apartment for a while. In his city Daniel did not have the opportunities that would have allowed him to live what he called a “dignified” life.

Rap provided a useful language for symbolically solving the contradictions that he experienced every day, just as the top rappers of the Seven 700 crew.

Daniel was part of the musical “scene” (Barone 2019) of San Siro. His position highlighted how this scene was not something homogeneous – Daniel did not hang out with the rappers of the Seven 700, even if he knew them – but how it was the sum of single individualities that subjectively re-elaborate and locally situate certain transnational stylistic features (Muggleton and Wienzierl 2003). Daniel, as the other rappers of San Siro, talked about his city and the neighbourhood, connecting them to other cities and other “scenes”.

Over the years, Daniel first participated in a big social project aimed at producing a documentary on the Milanese suburbs that allowed him to gain a little visibility. Later, after having some legal problems, he managed to get a good job in a real estate agency. He got engaged and decided to move out of San Siro.

We continued to chat via Whatsapp, even throughout the pandemic period, then my contact with him became more and more sporadic.

4.7. Conclusions

The concept of territoriality, originally developed in the field of human geography, and essentially corresponds to any spatial manifestation of power (Storey 2012). Territoriality occurs when a space is claimed, regulated, or controlled, when borders are established and, consequently, when inclusion and exclusion mechanisms are activated within them. If in a first phase the emphasis of geographers was placed on the function of territoriality in controlling social actors, thus on the role it played in reifying certain devices of power (Sack 1986), more recent approaches have instead used the same concept in procedural manner, considering it as a product of interactions between subjects, groups and their wider social environment (Raffestin 2012).

Territories reflect particular ways of thinking about places, which in turn substantially contribute to producing identity constructions (Soja 1971). Here a “relational conception” of space emerges: geographical and social elements intersect, also through the dimension of territoriality. Social practices spatialise themselves, defining limits that are always contested. On the one hand, urban ecology crystallises, circumscribing areas according to institutional, functional and symbolic criteria: private and public areas, recreational and

commercial spaces, centre and suburbs, town halls and “zones”, etc. However, these crystallisations can be re-appropriated and contested. Strategies of territorialization go hand in hand with reterritorialization tactics, we could say, borrowing the lexicon of de Certeau (1980).

This working paper has showed both territorialization and re-territorialization processes related to a specific social phenomenon within the urban space of Milan. Referring to territorialization, the police patrols, arrests, and investigations define an institutional will aimed at imposing a social order that is reflected in a peculiar urban geography, based on the division between centre and periphery, between regulated areas and marginal zones. In this process, public and media narratives acquire a fundamental role, sometimes confirming and reproducing those divisions (even unconsciously), constructing impenetrable, violent and foreign urban margins, different from the “good” city (see Saviano 2015, Giacalone 2016, Pisa 2021, Ziniti 2022).

The left hand of the state seems to fulfil a palliative function. The educational interventions have difficulty in starting, or are carried out on the basis of short-term actions that struggle to place themselves in strategic planning horizons. The history of European welfare state is actually accompanied by the reorganisation and development of the penal one. Repression, no longer directed only at deviance, becomes an instrument of control of social groups considered superfluous or unwanted, such as the poor, young people and foreigners (Auyero, Bourgois and Schepers-Hughes 2015, Wacquant 2009). Where present, educational interventions can fulfil a territorialising function, in some cases. For instance, in Milan the privatisation of welfare is helping to change the urban landscape of the city, financing interventions that accompany the building redevelopment of abandoned areas²⁶.

Referring to reterritorialization, the juvenile practices described here show a different grasp on the city. The first ones date back to the beginning of 2000 and reflect a recent migration dynamic – concerning also Latin American citizens – that then invested Milan. In an article of 2008, Valentina Bugli, Luca Meola and Matteo Milanese perfectly explained how in those years a “Latin American Milan” was inscribed in the urban space through specific imaginaries. Even if Latin American boys and girls were not socially segregated in Milan, they were considered as a “potential danger” by dominant groups because they were young and migrants. Thus, “reinventing” the city meant resisting this exclusion process. Drawing tags or graffiti, using public spaces, meeting at the discos or in some private houses in the morning indicated their strategy to signify their marginalisation (Conte, Meola & Milanese 2008). This was the gang space of Milan, a space that was not about control of neighbourhoods, but about inscribing and re-inscribing the city, signifying it, through fluctuating modalities (see Raffestin 1984).

Rap crews testify another stage of that process, in which “second generation” youngsters have formed different street groups, with different attachments to the city and its neighbourhoods, developed also through rap. By drawing on “subcultural” and global traditions at the same time, rap has spatialised itself and established divisions, again

²⁶ Such as the recovery of old farmsteads for the organisation of social activities.

between the city centre and the peripheries and among the marginal neighbourhood themselves. Rap has also contributed to symbolically redesigning the urban ecology of Milan.

Between structural constraints and freedom of action, the San Siro rap scene thus provides many of its young members with the cultural capital with which to oppose social and economic marginalisation. Within this capital, the fascination with crime plays a particular role which, only in some extreme cases, turns into actual deviant practices. Rather, rap helps those youngsters to establish a symbolic order, overturning the dominant one. The stigma to which those young men are subject is taken as an “interpretative” tool, as a way to classify groups, individuals and urban spaces according to opposing logics: inside or outside the “zone”, the “block”, or the “barrio”, to quote some of their rhymes.

Thus, as demonstrated, the spatial lens of territorialization and reterritorialization dynamics can account for the complex relationship between migratory dynamics, youth culture and urban policies, rooting it to the ethnographic context from which this analysis has started.

4.8. References

- Asbury, H. (1927). *The Gangs of New York*. Garden City Publishing Company, New York.
- Auyero J., Bourgois P., and Scheper-Hughes N. (eds.) (2015). *Violence at the Urban Margins*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Barone S. (2019). *Metal, Rap, and Electro in Post-Revolutionary Tunisia: A Fragile Underground*. Routledge, London and New York.
- Belotti, E. (2021a). *Birds in the trap*. Bordeaux Edizioni, Roma.
- Belotti, E. (2021b). “Il Cavallo di Troia con dentro gli altri”: diseguaglianza socio- spaziale, marginalizzazione scolastica e lavoro nell’opera di Marracash. *Tracce Urbane*, 10, 195-207.
- Bolocan Goldstein, M., Bonfantini, B. (a cura di) (2007). *Milano incompiuta. Interpretazioni urbanistiche del mutamento*. Franco Angeli, Milano.
- Brotherton, D. C., Barrios, L. (2004). *The Almighty Latin King and Queen Nation. Street Politics and the Transformation of a New York City Gang*, Columbia University Press, New York.
- Bugli, V. (2009). *Diventare latinos e latinas a Milano*, in Visconti L.M. e Napolitano E.M., *Cross generation marketing*, Egea, Milano.
- Çağlar, A., Glick Schiller, N. (2018). *Migrants & City-making: Dispossession, Displacement, and Urban Regeneration*. Duke University Press, Durham and London.
- Cannarella, M., Lagomarsino, F., and Queirolo Palmas, L. (eds.) (2007). *Hermanitos. Vita e politica della strada tra i giovani latinos in Italia*. Ombre corte, Verona.
- Cognetti, F., Gambino, D., and Larena Faccini, J. (2020). *Periferie del cambiamento. Traiettorie di rigenerazione tra marginalità e innovazione a Milano*. Quodlibet, Macerata.
- Cognetti F., Padovani L. (2018). *Perché (ancora) i quartieri pubblici. Un laboratorio di politiche per la casa*. FrancoAngeli, Milano.
- Cohen, S. (1972). *Folk, Devils and Moral Panics. The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*. McGibbon & Kee, London.
- Conte, M. and Bugli, V. (2008). *Latin Kings a Milano. Dagli scontri alla costituzione in associazione*. In C. Cannarella, F. Lagomarsino & L. Queirolo Palmas (Eds.). *Messi al bando. Una ricerca-azione tra i giovani migranti e le loro organizzazioni della strada* (pp. 40-63), Carta, Roma.
- Conte, M. Meola, L. & Milanesi, M. (2008). *Milano. Giovani latinoamericani alla prova della metropolis*. In C. Cannarella, F. Lagomarsino and L. Queirolo Palmas (eds.). *Messi al bando. Una ricerca-azione tra i giovani migranti e le loro organizzazioni della strada* (pp. 102-121). Carta, Roma.

- Covey, C., Herbert, Menard, Scott e Franzese, J., Robert (eds.) (1992). *Juvenile Gangs*. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield.
- de Certeau M. (1980). *L'invention du quotidien*. Vol. 1, Arts de faire, Union générale d'éditions, Paris.
- De Vito L. (2021). Sumya, Amina e le altre. "Noi donne di San Siro in lotta contro il degrado". *la Repubblica*, 5 May.
- De Walt K.M. and B.R. De Walt (2011). *Participant Observation. A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Altamira Press, Lanham.
- Expo 2015 s.p.a. (2018). *Report ufficiale di Expo Milano 2015. La sfida dell'Italia per un'esposizione universale innovativa*. Expo 2015, Milano.
- Fassin, D. (2013). *La forza dell'ordine. Antropologia della polizia nelle periferie urbane*. La linea, Bologna [2011].
- Feixa C., Mecca M. (2019). *Transnational Gang as Agents of Mediation: Experiences of Conflict Resolution in Youth Street Organizations in Southern Europe, North Africa and the Americas*. Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, European Union, Horizon-2020, European Research Council.
- Feixa C, Sánchez-García J, Ballesté E, Cano AB, Masanet MJ, Mecca M, Oliver M. (2019), *The (Trans) Gang: Notes and Queries on Youth Street Group Research*. Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Co-published by the European Research Council, Barcelona.
- Feixa, C., Sánchez-García, J., and Brisley, A. (2020). Gangs, Methodology, and Ethical Protocols: Ethnographic challenges in researching youth street groups. *Journal of Applied Youth Studies*, 3(1), 5-21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43151-020-00009-1>.
- Feixa C, Sánchez-García J, Soler-i-Martí R, Ballesté E, Hansen N, Brisley A. (2020). *Methodology Handbook: Ethnography and Data Analysis*. Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Co-published by the European Research Council, Barcelona.
- Galli, A. & Giuzzi, C. (2015). Milano, capotreno ferito col machete, Intervento di 8 ore per salvare l'arto. Due fermati, membri di gang latinos. *In Corriere della Sera*, 11 June.
- Geller, P and Stockett, M. (2006). *Feminist Anthropology: Past, Present and Future*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.
- Giacalone, G. (2016). La favela nel centro di Milano: così si uccidono i sudamericani. *Il Giornale*, 13 November.
- Giacalone, G. (2021). Milano a mano armata Bande, baby-gang, rapine e degrado: così è diventata capitale dei reati. *Dossier del Machiavelli* n. 30 - 30 May.
- Giuzzi, C. (2022). Milano, le violenze a Capodanno in piazza Duomo e la Generazione zeta del branco: le «bande fluide» tra il web e la vita di strada. *Corriere della Sera*, 12 January.
- Grassi, P. (2018). Le fantôme du terrorisme dans une banlieue de Milan. *Journal des Anthropologues*, 154-155, 215-236
- Grassi, P. (2021). (Trans)gangs in Milan: Re-socializing Migration Experiences in the Richest Italian City. In Queirolo Palmas, L. (Coord.), Ballesté, E., Grassi, P., Mansilla, J. C., Oliver, M., Núñez, K., Feixa, C. (Dir.). *Researching Youth Street Groups in Southern Europe (TRANSGANG Working Papers 6.1)*. Universitat Pompeu Fabra & European Research Council, Barcelona (pp. 123-143). DOI: 10.31009/transgang.2021.wp05.2.
- Grassi, P. (2022). "Non sanno le cose. Non le possono capire". Un'etnografia del welfare milanese durante l'emergenza epidemiologica da COVID-19". In L. Rimoldi e G. Pozzi e (a cura di). *Pensare un'antropologia del welfare. Etnografie dello stato sociale in Italia* (pp. 266-287), Meltemi, Milano.
- Guarino Ranieri C. (2022). Difende un amico: ragazzino di 16 anni accoltellato al campetto, è grave. *Milano Today*, 18 May.
- Hazen, J. M. and D. Rodgers (eds.) (2014). *Global Gangs. Street Violence across the World*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Hine, C. (1994). *Virtual Ethnography*, 3th International Conference on Public Communication of Science and Technology (PCST), Montreal, Canada, 10-13 April.
- Larena Faccini J., Ranzini A. (2021). *L'ultima Milano. Cronache dai margini di una città*. Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, Milano.
- Leccardi C. (2020). Postfazione. Uno sguardo lungimirante. In C. Feixa. *Oltre le bande. Saggi sulle culture giovanili* (pp. 127-153), DeriveApprodi, Roma.
- Lefebvre H. (1974). *La production de l'espace*. Anthropos, Paris.
- Mansilla J.C., Grassi P., Palmas L.Q. (2022). *Contemporary Youth Culture at the Margins of Marseille and*

- Milan: Gangs, Music, and Global Imaginaries. *Youth and Globalization*, n. 3(2), 359-385.
- Maranghi E. (2019), Il ruolo della conoscenza locale nell'attivazione di comunità di pratiche e di progetto. Il caso della rete Sansheroes (Milano). *Tracce Urbane*, 3(6), 177-195.
- Marcus, G. F. (1995). *Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Site Ethnography*. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24, 95-117.
- Massey D. (2005). *For Space*. Sage, London.
- Melley M. (2021). Sala spiega perché ha incontrato i rapper di San Siro: "Bisogna pensare alle cose che non vanno". *Milano Today*, 22 april.
- Migliucci D., Oriani A., Schiavi S. (2016). *Tutte donne! Le storie, l'impegno politico e sociale a San Siro (1940-1968)*. Archivio del Lavoro di Sesto San Giovanni, Milano.
- Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali (2017). *La presenza dei migranti nella città metropolitana di Milano*. Ministero del Lavoro e delle Politiche Sociali.
- Molinari N., Borreani F. (2021). Note di ricerca sul rapporto tra musica, spazio e violenza nella scena trap di Torino Nord. *Tracce Urbane*, 10, 58-86.
- Muggleton D., Weinzierl R. (eds.) (2003). *The Post-Subcultures Reader*. Berg, London.
- Nofre, J.M. (2021). Los Bloques de la Florida, un diamante en bruto por explorar. *Tracce Urbane*, 10, 88-112.
- Pacchi C., Ranci C. (2017). *White flight a Milano. La segregazione sociale ed etnica nelle scuole dell'obbligo*. FrancoAngeli, Milano.
- Pisa M. (2021). Trecento ragazzi per il video del rapper Neima Ezza, pietre e bastoni contro la polizia che li disperde con un lacrimogeno. *La Repubblica*, 10 April.
- Pisanello C. (2017). *In nome del decoro. Dispositivi estetici e politiche securitarie*. Ombre Corte, Verona.
- Raffestin, C. (1984). Territorializzazione, deterritorializzazione, riterritorializzazione e informazione. In A. Turco Angelo (eds). *Regione e regionalizzazione: colloquio internazionale* (pp. 69-82), Franco Angeli, Milano.
- Raffestin C. (2012). Space, Territory, and Territoriality. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 30(1), 121-141.
- Repubblica (2021a). Rissa con assembramento in centro a Milano: decine di giovani senza mascherina si picchiano e sfondano la vetrina di un fast food. *Repubblica*, 1 March.
- Repubblica (2021b). Milano, maxi-rissa tra 50 giovani vicino al Duomo: interviene la polizia. *Repubblica*, 22 May.
- Ritzer, G. (2003). Rethinking Globalization: Glocalization/Globalization and Something/Nothing. *Sociological Theory* 21 (3), 193-209. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9558.00185>.
- Robertson, R. (1995). *Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity*. Global Modernities. sage Publications Ltd., 2, 25-44. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250563>.
- Sack R. (1986), *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Santucci, G. (2020). Aler e Mm, appartamenti sfitti o inagibili. Diecimila case po- polari vuote. *Corriere della Sera*, 13 October.
- Saviano, R. (2015). Droga e machete, quel codice rosso sangue delle gang latine. *La Repubblica*, 14 June.
- Scudieri, E. (2022). Baby gang, risse in piazza, movida fuori controllo. *Bnews*, Università di Milano Bicocca, 14 February.
- Smith, N. R. (1996). *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. Routledge, London, New York.
- Soja, E.W. (1971). *The Political Organization of Space*, Association of American Geographers, Washington.
- Storey, D. (2012). *Territories: The Claiming of Space*. Routledge, London
- Thrasher, F.M. (2021). *La Banda (The Gang). Un estudio de 1313 bandas de Chicago*. NED-UPF-GIG-UNAM, Barcelona.
- Toubon J., Messamah K. (1990). *Centralité immigrée, le quartier de la Goutte d'or*. L'Harmattan, Paris.
- Wacquant, L. (2009). *Punishing the Poor: The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Duke University Press, Durham.
- Ziniti, A. (2022). Le 13 baby gang che terrorizzano Milano. Armi, crimini, idoli: ecco la prima mappa. *Repubblica*, 10 March.

5. Youth in Marseille Associative, traffic and social mediation networks.²⁷

Juan Mansilla

Translation into English by Laura Styles

5.1. Introduction

"The terrain" is not a thing, it is not a place, nor a social category, nor an ethnic group, nor an institution. It can be all that, depending on the case, but it is above all a set of personal relationships where "one learns things"... ethnography is relational, as is the object that seeks knowledge of a world of relationships. (Michel Agier, 2019, p. 30).

5.1.1. Document structure

This analysis is divided into four main parts. *The first part (5.1 Introduction)* presents the main results, the objectives and the research approach. An analysis of the social, economic and political context of Marseille is also presented, along with the case study created. *The second part (5.2 General perspective on the investigated youth street groups)* details the construction of the case study, and the relational ethnography approach chosen. *The third part (5.3 Methodology)* exposes the tools, and modes of use, used in the collection (observations, narrative interviews, discussion groups) and data analysis (NVivo). The challenges of the field of study are mentioned. *The fourth (5.4 Analysis)* discloses the ethnographic narrative (results obtained) following the evaluation dimensions (clusters) proposed in TransGang. A general conclusion and a part of annexes, with the research questions, hypotheses and dimensions of the initial research plan, complete the analysis.

5.1.2. Approach and objective of ethnographic analysis in Marseille

The focus of the study is the dynamics of the different manifestations of youth street groups, their relationships with other agents of socialization (government, school, family, religion, associations, internet), the foundations of their subjectivities (ethnicity,

²⁷ The TransGang project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) within the framework of the European Union's Research and Innovation program HORIZON 2020, grant agreement No 742705. IP: PhD. Carles Feixa. Website: www.upf.edu/web/transgang. Contact: transgang@upf.edu

ghettoization)²⁸, their interaction spaces (transnational, face-to-face, virtual, political, illegal) and their forms of social mediation (institutional, informal)²⁹.

The general objective has been to understand the functioning of multigenerational spaces in the social mediation of conflicts of young people and inhabitants of the case study, and of these with their ecosystem (*campo banda*). The impact of these mediation practices on the life trajectory of the young participants in this study is also analysed: whether or not they can be considered as a "set of lasting changes in the lives of individuals" (Mohammed, 2015, p. 48).

5.1.3. Relevance of the Marseille case study

Marseille, with its socio-historical characteristics, the living conditions of young people from popular neighbourhoods (economic, school, work), its dense associative social fabric, local institutional social mediation policies and its strategic location in drug trafficking to Europe, is a pertinent –and highly complex– case study on the formation and disaffiliation of youth street groups, as well as on the experiences of cultural resistance, crime, neighbourhood solidarity and social mediation.

In *section 5.2.1. Construction of the case study: the relational ethnography* approach we explain the theoretical and epistemological support mobilized in the process of development of the case study: the limits, the approach and the dynamics. For now, a brief definition of the nature of what a case study is useful:

Table 1. Definition of case study

Case studies are not singular units of analysis, but an interdependent set of actors registered in a defined social space where a certain number of resources influence their interdependent evolutions and dynamics.

5.2. GENERAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE STREET YOUTH GROUPS INVESTIGATED

5.2.1. Construction of the case study: the relational ethnography approach

It is important to point out that the case study in Marseille does not correspond to a group of individuals delimited by their geographical, ethnic, religious or socioeconomic belonging. True, we have started from the premise of a geographical anchorage: a

²⁸ Do not confuse ethnicity with xenophobia, Islamophobia or racism. In this study, "ethnicity" works as a strategy of the stigmatized to obtain "secondary benefits" (Goffman, 2006, p. 21), that is, ethnicity is the transformation of stigma into an emblem. On the other hand, xenophobia, Islamophobia or racism refer to the forms that said stigma can take. Of course, both processes are interdependent, remembering that "the normal and the stigmatized are not people, but rather perspectives" (Goffman, 2006, p. 160).

²⁹ These different forms of interaction between the actors under investigation occur in the "*campo banda*", which "intends to encompass those agents that are part of it (government, academy, the media, the youth groups themselves, among others), to understand how this field works, what position each agent occupies (even if they are variable positions) and see what dynamics are generated" (Feixa et al., 2019, p. 114).

neighbourhood located in the third district of Marseille that, due to its socio-demographic characteristics, as explained above, is relevant to the TransGang framework study. At the same time, we have taken into account the general study premise of TransGang: to identify and study the social mediation practices of youth groups in the participating cities.

Of course, the geographical reference allows us to identify institutional actors, inhabitants and young participants who, through their daily activities, actively intervene in the future of the study neighbourhood. However, we have not limited ourselves to the residential circumscription of said actors and young people, which would result in an artificial fragmentation of their social realities (complex in terms of the interdependence of conditions), and which expands beyond administrative conventions. Nor have we limited ourselves to the ethnic origin or religious identity of the young participants. In the case of Marseille, beyond the generational variable proposed by TransGang, i.e., excluding individual members of youth groups who are older than 30 years –a valid approach from the operational point of view of a global project, but limited from a generational ontological point of view– whose objective is to achieve a certain homogenization of the object of study, we have given priority to the study of a particular phenomenon: the institutional and informal social mediation present in Marseille, where young people (and their collective practices) sometimes appear as managers and in others as the target public, or even occupy both positions at the same time.

We therefore employ a relational ethnography approach, in which we have decided to study the fluidity and movement (movements) of the phenomenon through people, *places* and *spaces*, public policies, urban spaces, artistic expressions, media and information available. Relational ethnography is built by “studying fields and not places, boundaries instead of delimited groups, processes instead of processed people, and cultural conflicts instead of group culture” (Desmond, 2014, p. 548). We have given a central role to the logic of the phenomenon investigated in the construction of the case study, as well as to the porosity between the formality (institutionality) and the informality (self-financing community practices) of the places and actors involved in the case study. This relational approach allows us to identify and study the key sites in the “mental maps” (Mohammed, 2016, p. 21) of the young participants in the study.

Despite the fact that in LaFab there are places that respond to different interaction logics, depending on the institutional or informal character given by the interactions of social actors. Our interest has been to study the convergence of relational dynamics and the vortex function of a multiplicity of spaces (spaces) in the *campo banda* (Feixa et al., 2019, p. 65): family, neighbourhood, school, sports, cultural, transnational, social, political, illegal and digital. The veracity of the premise about the dichotomy between the institutional and the informal of places is relative, and often ineffective, highlighting the porosities and diffuse limits, insisting on the back and forth of young people, between institutional and informal mediations, as we will present to you in the analysis section.

The following figure shows the complexity in the interdependence of the actors present in the case study:

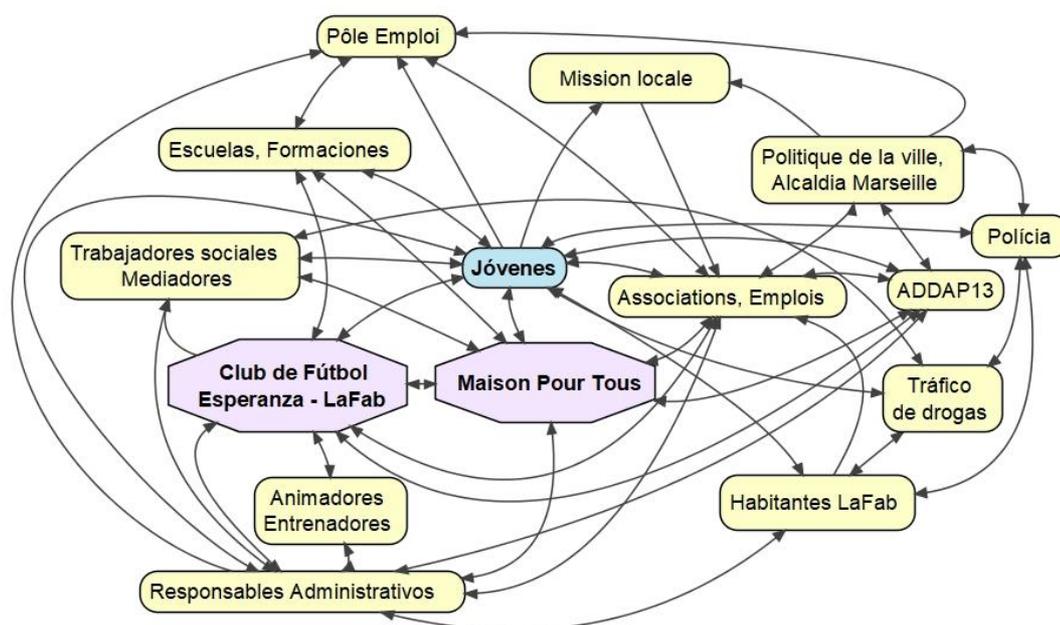


Figure 7. Interdependent logics in the construction of the Marseille case study.

Within the framework of this study, the composition of the case study followed a logic of interdependence and synergies between field actors, aimed at a comprehensive analysis of the band field. Said analysis was achieved from the collection of perceptions (discourses) and practices (observations) of the actors that make up said social space. The result is the identification of resources and dynamics (material, political, institutional, community) that intervene in the resolution of conflicts in the social space of the youth of the neighbourhood, the latter being agents or beneficiaries of said actions (of course, such a dichotomy only operates on the analytical level, reality being the object of imbrications, comings and goings between both characters). As can be seen in Figure 1, the case study presents an interdependent network of actors (in yellow) that gravitate around the youth of the neighbourhood and the two chosen associations (in purple).

5.2.2. LaFab neighbourhood: geographical anchorage of the case study

Located in the Saint-Mauront district, the LaFab neighbourhood extends over a territory of 4.5 hectares (Figure 2). The neighbourhood was built on an old soap factory between 1957 and 1960, forming a mixed co-ownership of social housing and private accommodation.

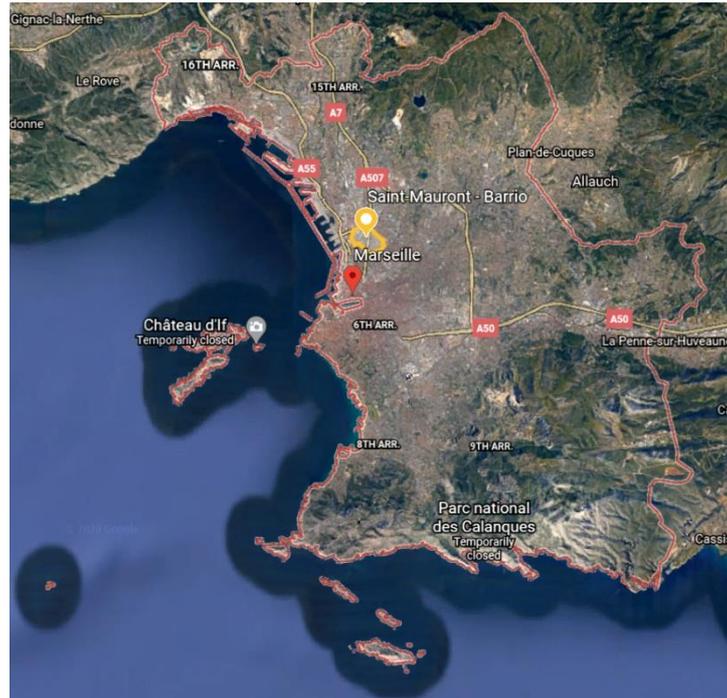


Figure 8. Location of the LaFab neighbourhood, third district of Marseille.

About 3 kilometres from the city centre and with about 814 homes, LaFab has welcomed several waves of immigrants from the Maghreb and the Comoros. Regarding the number of inhabitants, there are no clear and updated figures. In 2020, various reports and newspaper articles mention a figure of 3,000 inhabitants, and in 2015, INSEE identified 676 young people between the ages of 15 and 29 (INSEE, 2015). LaFab is connected to the centre of Marseille via the metro. The neighbourhood has many small stores (fast foods, supermarkets). Young people (mainly men) are in the public space (football field, squares, streets). A few metres from LaFab, La Maison Pour Tous (MPT) de Saint-Mauront, run by the Léo Lagrange Méditerranée association as part of a public service delegation from the Marseille mayor's office, offers young people from the neighbourhood weekly guidance in their job search in the presence of a community counsellor, a counsellor from Pôle Emploi (the national government's unemployment benefits office) and a mobility counsellor³⁰.

LaFab is known as the “poorest neighbourhood in France”, not only because of the INSEE poverty statistics, but also by the media, which contributes to an intense stigmatization of the neighbourhood (drug trafficking, violent grudge matchups between the gangs, youth unemployment).

³⁰ Since 2017, two mobility advisors have been working in two priority sectors (QPV: *Quartiers Prioritaires Ville*) of the city. In the form of individual sessions or collective actions, they receive all the citizens residing in these neighbourhoods, especially young people under the age of thirty, in order to eliminate the difficulties of displacement that they encounter on a daily basis, and thus promote access to the different modes of sustainable mobility, job search and access to professional education.

5.2.3. Neighbourhood associations: Phenomenological anchoring for the case study

A response to the objectifiable approach, where an observer defines the nature of what is observed but without taking into account the subjective constructions and ongoing identity processes, is useful in understanding a social space that emerges from the life experiences of the actors involved (people, organizations). It is about the phenomenological approach in qualitative research, as explained by Guillen & Elida (2019):

The phenomenological approach to research arises as a response to the radicalism of the objectifiable. It is based on the study of life experiences, regarding an event, from the perspective of the subject. This approach assumes the analysis of the most complex aspects of human life, of what is beyond the quantifiable. According to Husserl (1998), it is a paradigm that tries to explain the nature of things, the essence and the veracity of phenomena. The objective pursued is the understanding of the experience lived in its complexity. This understanding, in turn, seeks awareness and meanings around the phenomenon. To carry out research under this approach, it is essential to know the conception and principles of phenomenology, as well as the method to approach a field of study and mechanisms for the search for meanings. Knowing the experiences through stories, stories and anecdotes is essential because it allows us to understand the nature of the dynamics of the context and even transform it.

In this way, the two chosen associations allowed us to (re)construct the life experience of young people, managers and social workers who participate in the activities of said associations. These life experiences also gave us elements of understanding about the relationships that these subjects have with decisive actors in the evolution of the neighbourhood -such as police officers and politicians- but who, for reasons of time and resources related to the investigation, were not directly included in the surveys.

The gateway to the land, and consequently to the construction of the case stud, developed around two associations formally established and previously recognized as social mediation actors: Club de Futbol Esperanza – LaFab and the Maison Pour Tous (House for all). Both associations are physically established in the neighbourhood, each one with its own premises and a schedule with regular activities.

La Maison pour Tous de Saint-Mauront (MPT-SM) carries out popular education, art and participatory democracy projects aimed at families and young people in the Saint Mauront neighbourhood (including LaFab). Financed by the local public authorities and run by the private association Léo Lagrange³¹, the MPT-SM is the main cultural centre near LaFab.

³¹ Acting on behalf of the municipality of Marseille (Ville de Marseille), Léo Lagrange defines himself as "a player in the social economy". Families and young people access the activities of the MTP-SM by paying an annual subscription of 10 euros.

Semaine du 20/10 AU 24/10				
MARDI 14H-19H	MERCREDI 14H-19H	JEUDI 14h-19h	VENREDI 14h-19h	SAMEDI 14H-18H
Projection du film réalisé par les jeunes en partenariat avec les têtes de l'art au comptoir de la Victorine	Sortie piscine « projet apprendre à nager »	Préparation de la décoration « HALLOWEN »	Action citoyenne sur le quartier Nettoyage du stade gris Goûter partagé Music	Sortie éducative 

Semaine du 27/10 au 31/10				
MARDI 14H-19H	MERCREDI 14H-19H	JEUDI 14H-19H	VENREDI 14H-19H	SAMEDI 14H-18H
Sortie bateau  UN BATEAU POUR TOUS	ATELIER THEATRE AUDIO Association KIF KIF	ATELIER THEATRE AUDIO Association KIF KIF	SORTIE OKCORAL OK CORRAL 	Animation de proximité Présence sociale sur le quartier, activités sportives « foot, Basket... »

MPT/CS St Mauront/National



Figure 9. Poster for the October 2020 program from the Maison Pour Tous (MPT-SM)

The Esperanza Football Club - LaFab, whose full name is “Youth Sports and Cultural Association”, was legally created in 1990 in the LaFab neighbourhood. The Club currently has 11 teams registered with the *Fédération française de football* (FFF): one senior men's team over 18 years of age in the Ligue Méditerranée (amateur departmental league³²) of the Provence district, 7 men's teams under 18 years of age in different categories (U19 - U18, U17 - U16, U15 - U14, U13 - U12) in the *Championnats des Jeunes* (annual youth championship) and 3 teams under 12 in the *Football d'animation*³³

³² The departmental level corresponds to the base of the pyramid of professional football in France. In this league, the teams with the best results in the competitions gradually rise in category until they enter Ligue 1, the highest competition at the national level (where teams like L'OM and PSG face each other).

³³ "Educational game" for "football apprentices", where the most important thing is the participation of the youngest and instilling values such as fair competition.

division (two male and one female). In its administrative headquarters, leaders, coaches, volunteers and young people meet. The youth of Club de Futbol Esperanza - LaFab train in the new football stadium that has been opened to the public in September 2020. Figure 4 shows said stadium.

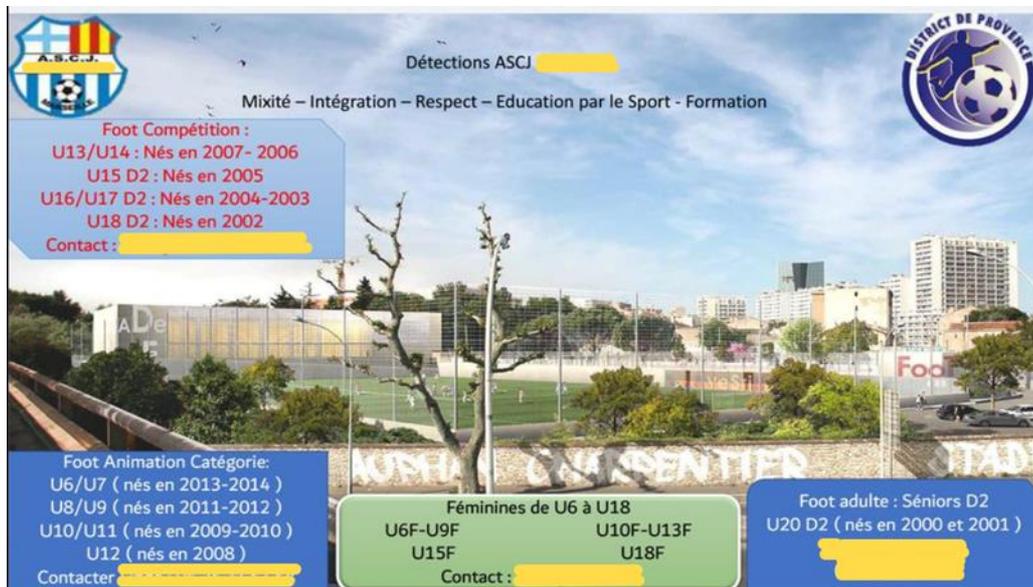


Figure 10. Advertising for the courses offered by the LaFab Football Club.

5.3. Methodology

5.3.1. Types of data collected

Given that Marseille is a contrast city within the TransGang research device (UPF TransGang Team, 2019), the case study was based on:

- › 7 narrative interviews: 3 with youth, 4 with stakeholders.
- › 2 youth life stories: 1 woman, 1 man.
- › 3 focus groups: 1 with young people, 1 with interested parties, 1 with young people and residents of the neighbourhood and those responsible for community projects.
- › 280 hours of participant observations focused on the conflict in the *campo banda* and the types of institutional and informal mediation found. Observations were carried out every day of the week, at different times: morning, afternoon, and night.
- › 8 interview memos
- › 3 focus group memos
- › 8 node memos
- › 32 participant observation memos

5.3.2. Analysis of data

Data analysis was performed in three main stages: writing, verbatim transcriptions of interviews, and coding. Writing was established from the beginning of the field work, through field diaries, composed of reflections, analysis and daily observations of the researcher. Certain interviews were chosen to be transcribed at an early stage of the field due to their typology: 2 with young people, 2 with interested parties. This allowed for the reformulation of certain initial questions in the investigative approach. The rest of the transcriptions were made once the field was completed, and before starting the coding. This last stage was carried out with the NVivo computer program, following the 6 clusters and 34 categories of TransGang analysis, as proposed in the Strategy for Primary Data Analysis using NVivo part of the TransGang Methodology Handbook (Feixa et al., 2020).

We use NVivo³⁴ to perform the interpretation of the data collected. This computer program allows the coding of categories of analysis to process data from unstructured surveys (i.e., from different sources, such as interviews and field observations). The objective of this approach was twofold. On the one hand, it was about answering the questions formulated in the proposed research plan. On the other hand, our interest was to build empirical categories that would make it possible to give a coherent meaning in the understanding of the observed phenomena³⁵. The empirical categories, found during the field work, thus become key factors for the interpretation of the results.

The following figures (Figures 5 and 6), extracted from the data analysis in NVivo, demonstrate the relational approach of the study: the proportion of coded references is higher in VI clusters. Transversal (node: conflict resolution practices) III. Relations (node: intergenerational) and II. Identifications (node: territory), in comparison with I. Organization and V. Imaginaries.

³⁴ Qualitative data analysis (QDA) software.

³⁵ This grounded (inductive) theorizing perspective (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) supports the argument about “the lack of information and reliable data that illustrate the great complexity of this type of (popular) neighbourhoods” (Calderón, 2012).

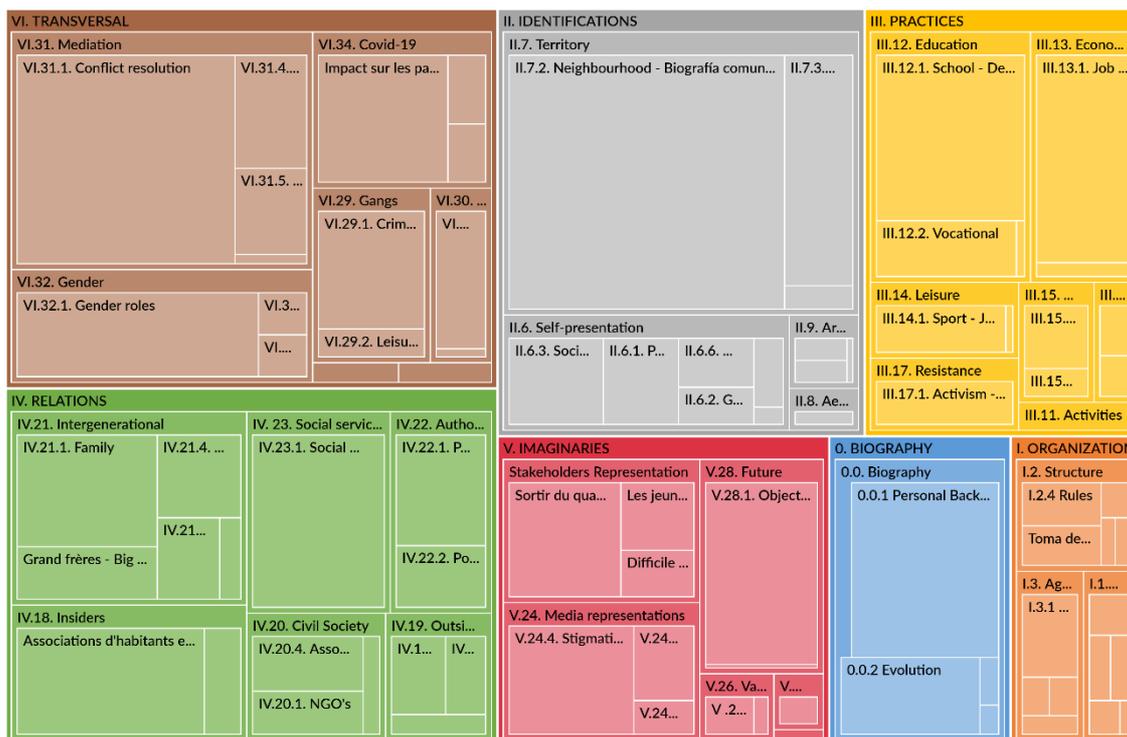


Figure 11. Comparison of the number of references coded using NVivo, Marseille case, mode A

Códigos			
	Name	Files	References
<input type="radio"/>	0. BIOGRAPHY	9	89
<input type="radio"/>	I. ORGANIZATION	5	62
<input type="radio"/>	II. IDENTIFICATIONS	35	191
<input type="radio"/>	III. PRACTICES	20	110
<input type="radio"/>	IV. RELATIONS	30	280
<input type="radio"/>	V. IMAGINARIES	23	112
<input type="radio"/>	VI. TRANSVERSAL	35	296

Figure 12. Comparison of the number of references coded using NVivo, Marseille case, mode B

5.4. Analysis

«Go to Marseille. Marseille will answer you. This city is a lesson. The guilty indifference of her contemporaries does not get her down. She's attentive, she listens to the voice of the whole world and on the strength of her experience, she engages in conversation with the whole world in our name. A banner flapping in the wind on the infinity of the horizon. That's Marseille» (Albert London, 1927)

To interpret the results, we follow the six analytical dimensions (clusters, i.e., level 3 nodes) proposed by TransGang (Feixa et al., 2020). Each analytical dimension is composed of themes (level 2 nodes) and subthemes (level 1 nodes). The 34 themes proposed by TransGang's research orientation were more than enough to classify all the data collected in Marseille. However, due to the particularities of this field of study, we

have added three themes: two in analytical dimension IV. Relations and one in V. Imaginaries. Some subtopics were added, although most of those that had been proposed turned out to be relevant in the coding.

In each analytical dimension, the presentation of the results is in the following order:

a) Presentation of the elements to be evaluated:

- ✓ Reference definition of the cluster from the TransGang Codebook (Feixa et al., 2020, p. 36).
- ✓ Resonance between the studied cluster and one or several of the four dimensions of local research proposed in the Background Paper Marseille (J. Mansilla et al., 2021, pp. 105-107), according to the evidence collected in the field of study.
- ✓ Initial questions and hypotheses proposed in the Research Plan Marseille and in the Background Paper Marseille (J. Mansilla et al., 2021, pp. 108-111).

b) Data interpretation:

Based on the analysis of the different TransGang working documents – TransGang Concept Paper (Feixa et al., 2019), Methodology Handbook (Feixa et al., 2020) – and the evaluation questions proposed by the TransGang team for the preparation of this analytical report, the results obtained are presented. This analysis starts with an evaluation question (proposed by the TransGang team or by the local studio in Marseille). Following are response elements based on the evidence collected. Said argumentation is supported with excerpts from the speeches of the participants (young people, social workers, inhabitants, heads of associations) and from the observations made during the field work. Speeches by young people are identified by blue in their header, while those by stakeholders by magenta. The focus groups (regardless of profile, both young people and interested parties) have a yellow header. Some portions of the speeches are in French, others have been translated into Spanish³⁶.

Below, we detail the results of the study by analytical dimension (cluster), following the aforementioned presentation protocol.

5.4.1. Organization (cluster I. TransGang)

Presentation of the elements to be evaluated

Reference definition from the TransGang Codebook

→ Forms of internal organization of the group that support its history, structure and functions. It includes structure and agency (at the group level), procedures for entry, affiliation and exit from the group (at the individual level).

Reference local research dimension(s) (Background Paper Marseille)

→ The neighbourhood and hyperlocal identity: the organization of youth practices.

The organization of several of the youth collective practices in the field of study responds to the logic of organization of the neighbourhood. We will show how identification with

³⁶ The original working language for the project was Spanish.

the neighbourhood is the element that structures the practices of the young participants. These practices sometimes have visible forms of organization (football in the neighbourhood association) and other times they seem more fluid (community associative projects without necessarily having a formal or legal organization). We will analyse the organization processes of the youth groups of the LaFab neighbourhood and the influence of bureaucratic logic in the organizational decisions of said groups.

Initial hypothesis(es) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ The intergenerational factor is a necessary but not sufficient cause of social mediation in the marginalized neighbourhoods of Marseille. Intergenerational ties foster spaces for conflict mediation in street gangs and between these and other actors in the *campo banda*.

Initial question(s) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ How do the neighbourhood youth groups interact in the *campo banda*?

→ Are there gateways between the collectives and the institutional framework? How do they operate?

Analysis of data

Evaluation question(s) proposed by the TransGang team and relevant to the Marseille case

→ What is the decision-making process like in the group?

→ What are the mechanisms and processes for affiliation and disaffiliation in a street youth group?

→ How has the past affected the creation and evolution of youth street groups according to the context?

Node I.1. History (Results)

a) Bureaucratic logic of the organization of youth groups: the innovation of the "territorial booster" and "civic services".

→ What are the triggers for certain forms of organization of youth practices in the neighbourhood?

These are youth initiatives financed by institutional actors that innovate in the relationship and communication with young people. In the neighbourhood studied, young people know the dynamics of subsidies and institutional support, which does not mean that they are willing to work with said institutions.

A new project financed by the French government (Project I.) and delegated to a non-profit foundation has been developing professional integration actions in the neighbourhood. The particularity of Project I., consists in creating the role of territorial booster: a qualified employee (with a university master's degree), whose personal and relational qualities make young people participate in the activities proposed in Project I. The territorial booster walks the neighbourhood, communicates with young people, via social networks and gives them his cell phone number where young people can contact

him directly. This is a complete novelty in a world where the distance between institutions and young people is marked by formal relationships via email, service platforms and face-to-face appointments days and even weeks in advance.

The logic of bureaucracy weakens the relations between the youth of the neighbourhood and the institutions. However, the immediacy of the territorial booster generated new ways of organizing youth mediation initiatives in the neighbourhood.

MRS_MEM_002, when asked about the origin of her organization, narrates how her work experience in a civic service³⁷, as well as the meeting with the territorial booster, was the starting point to create her youth group in the neighbourhood.

Once the contact with the territorial booster is established, the young people integrate the need to participate in the bureaucratic logics to obtain the monetary benefits and the public recognition that gives political and material resources to their actions.

However, the tension between the possibility of government financing that is slow to arrive and the need to take advantage of the motivation of the members of the collective in the face of a situation in the neighbourhood that they themselves consider to be urgent, makes these youth groups adapt to the available and missing resources (for example, the lack of a venue to hold meetings and activities) to effectively carry out its objectives and activities.

a). Islam organized in forms of association

→ What type of social mediation is organized in popular neighbourhoods based on religious practices?

One of the participants is an Imam of Senegalese origin, MRS_STK_002, who arrived in Marseille when he was 18 years old. The mosque where he practises is near the Gare de Saint Charles, in the 1st arrondissement of Marseille. MRS_STK_002 has been one of the founders of a Muslim association whose objective is to improve the life of the community, Marseille and other cities in France. According to MRS_STK_002, presenting their activities under the form of an association allows them to be supported by local institutions, especially in the loan of meeting rooms for their activities. It is therefore a bureaucratic logic that gives material and symbolic resources to all kinds of groups in France: youth, religious, educational.

We have verified that the Muslim religion is a determining factor of certain behaviours of young people in the neighbourhood and in society in general. We will return to this point in the section on gender (Transversal cluster) and perception of the neighbourhood and self-representations (Identifications cluster). At this point, the important thing is to note is that there is a dialogue between a part of the youth in Marseille and the practice of Islam (going to the mosque). The organization of these meetings is marked by the

³⁷ “Civic service is a voluntary commitment to a mission of general interest, lasting from 6 to 12 months, 8 months on average, for at least 24 hours per week. Aimed at young people between the ages of 16 and 25, it can be divided into the following nine areas, recognized as priorities for the nation: solidarity, health, education for all, culture and leisure, sports, environment, memory and citizenship, international development and action. humanitarian, emergency interventions”. Source: <https://www.culture.gouv.fr>

rituals of Islam, an aspect that is not considered in this analysis. However, a global vision can be given of the intention of said dialogue in improving the well-being of young people and their neighbourhoods.

Node I.2. Structure (Results)

b). Affiliation processes to youth neighbourhood groups

→ What are the mechanisms and processes for affiliation and disaffiliation in a street youth group?

On the one hand, it is clear to young people that opening up to all kinds of public in their collectives can become a strength. Behind such a perspective is the idea that change needs motivated hands, regardless of the age of the members, whether they are grandparents, parents, young or old, as MRS_MEM_002 stated for his group.

The openness and dialogue with other neighbourhoods in Marseille are a recurring idea of the same young people from LaFab, considered an important factor for the well-being of the neighbourhood.

As regards the profile of the members, when asked, "And in your Collective are there young people of all ethnic origins?", MRS_MEM_002, responds.

On the other hand, the trust necessary to carry out an institutionalized community project, which involves grant money, requires, in the case of the 143 Street Game association, the participation of members of a close circle, such as family members.

c). Horizontal decision-making according to individual objectives and the needs of the neighbourhood

→ What is the decision-making process like in the group?

The Collectif 143, of which MRS_MEM_002 is its founder, works like a group of friends where each one expresses their tastes and short- and medium-term goals. The Collectif then comes to support these initiatives. Within the Collectif, as explained by MRS_MEM_002, work subgroups are created (sports, cultural animation, for example) and they must respond to the overall objective of the Collectif in that they respond to the needs of the neighbourhood. In short, each member of the Collectif does what really motivates them and takes care of the coordination part. In other words, decision making is horizontal.

This horizontal decision-making strategy aims, according to MRS_MEM_002, to generate more confidence in the initiatives and attitudes of the youth of the neighbourhood.

The neighbourhood, its needs, conflicts and possible solutions, and use as a reference for the hyperlocal identification of young people continues to be the common denominator of the activities and forms of organization of the groups in the neighbourhood.

The neighbourhood as a stigma and the neighbourhood as a potential for development are the two perspectives on which the collective actions of young people are built. It is about the constant tension of the future of youth practices in LaFab.

143 Street Game, an association that is currently being created and whose founder is MRS_MEM_001, also explains the need to divide the activities of the association into work teams, to have highly trusted members such as family members, and the possibility of generating a salary thanks to the organization structure in association. This demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the different roles, responsibilities and advantages of the associative structure formalized in the French and local legal system.

Node I.3. Agency (Results)

d). Discourse of empowerment of neighbourhood youth organizations

→ What are the discourses and subjectivities that originate in the different forms of organization of neighbourhood youth groups?

Several factors were identified in the production of discourses of empowerment and emergence of collective youth organizations in LaFab. First, the awareness, on the part of young people, of a state of emergency of the neighbourhood. That is to say, the young people confirm that there are conflicts and aspects that must be improved in daily life in the neighbourhood: lack of motivation of the young people, distrust in a better future. Some decide to take action and organize actions to raise awareness and transmit this empowering awareness, as indicated by MRS_MEM_002.

The empowerment of young people and the search for a social change in the neighbourhood requires, first of all, the creation of spaces for expression (youth groups), or at least the promotion of qualities of expression and communication that restore the dignity of the inhabitants and the territory that have been historically marginalized through the processes of ghettoization³⁸ of these popular neighbourhoods.

MRS_MEM_002 inhabits LaFab, knows the youth and their abilities. His collective empowers the discourse of young people who have lost hope and motivation for the future.

5.4.2. Identifications (cluster II. TransGang)

Presentation of the elements to be evaluated

Reference definition from the TransGang Codebook

→ Forms of subjective identification of the individual in relation to the group and the community; elements of identity that convey the feeling of belonging to the group.

Reference local research dimension(s) (Background Paper Marseille)

→ Ethnicity and claim of *Magribidity* and Muslimness.

The young people of LaFab, born in Marseille or having arrived at an early age from the Maghreb, inherited the Muslim culture of their parents. Their identities and subjectivities are the result of a French context, built on the ideology of secularism, and of a family

³⁸ Ghettos can be racially determined spaces (Wacquant, 2007) or segmented social organizations (Lapeyronnie, 2008). Such a conceptualization reveals the diversity of the ghetto, not only in terms of the type of groups that compose it, but also in terms of its causes, processes, and consequences.

heritage, where Islam and the values linked to the culture of origin serve as the basis for everyday life. We will analyse the discourses of young people on the tension between these two visions of the world and the impact that this has on their individual and collective practices.

→ The neighbourhood and hyperlocal identity: subjectivities and elements of identity

The youth of LaFab recognize a double function of the neighbourhood: both a historical condition of marginalization and a place of social capital, family and neighbourhood protection. In order to understand all conflictive practices and youth social medication in the case study, it is essential to understand the representations that these young people make of the neighbourhood, the street and the city in general. We will analyse how these subjectivities and elements of identity structure the life trajectories of the young participants.

Initial hypotheses (Research Plan Marseille)

→ If the trajectories of social ascension are carried out outside the neighbourhood, the new generations that successively renew the “culture of the street” will not have close referents of conflict mediation practices.

Initial question(s) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ In a context of “space of flows” (Castells, 1999) enabled by the new communication technologies on the internet, how do young people (re)define their cultural frameworks between national (France), local (their neighbourhoods in Marseille) and transnational (coming from the other side of the Mediterranean)? With what objectives (explicit and implicit)?

Analysis of data

Evaluation question(s) proposed by the TransGang team and relevant to the Marseille case:

- How are the needs of young people met with the help of local actors?
- How do individuals negotiate their role and identity within the group?
- How is group identity constructed in contrast to other social formations?
- Is being a member an advantage or a disadvantage in getting a job?

Node II.6. Self-representations (Results)

e). Self-representations of young people (Personal)

→ What factors influence the construction of the individual identity of young people?

The young people of LaFab do not identify with the classic political sphere: political professionals, periodic elections, and political news in the mass media. They are defined as a “disconnected” part of that sphere.

Disaffiliation from the classic channels of political participation is a widespread dynamic in France for those under 25 years of age, as shown by the statistics for the presidential

election in 2022, where 41% of those between 18 and 28 years of age abstained from voting (Source: Ipsos, 2022).

For certain young people, the categorization of “delinquent” is trivialized, and it is used for any behaviour that at school is susceptible to being labelled as indiscipline.

Sometimes, the migratory path of young people who arrive in Marseille from the Comoro Islands and do not speak French constitutes not only a challenge to adapt to the new context, but also a trace of their identity. For MRS_MEM_004, who arrived in Marseille at the age of 10, the language marked her relationship with school, friends, and family. When asked, “When you came to LaFab, was it easy to make new friends?”, she answers.

The professional practices of young people result in a generator of identities and relationships in society. For example, for MRS_MEM_003, who was a professional boxer and currently trains LaFab youth in boxing, his sports competitions define the expectations and social norms of his behaviour. The management of anger and the profile of a dangerous person of him being a boxer, according to French law, are fundamental elements in the daily life of MRS_MEM_003.

Another factor that triggers the self-representation of young people is the categorization of their state of health that they receive from the institutions. For example, for MRS_MEM_005, dyslexia represents a determinant of her current school and career path.

However, these categorizations about the state of health are not limited to recognizing the difficulties, but also to identifying the strengths.

The professional activity of young people is also a factor that influences their individual identity. One of the particularities in Marseille is that youth social workers are often defined as “mediators”. It is a role (mediator) where the social worker facilitates the young person's access to administrative and financial resources that can eventually positively impact her school or professional trajectory. Due to his work with an institution for contact with street youth in poor neighbourhoods, MRS_MEM_005 is often defined as a “mediator”, preferring it to the term “educator” or “social worker”.

f). Collective identities: between community biography and recreational spaces (Group)

→ What factors influence the construction of the collective identity of young people?

The neighbourhood's community biography – with twenty-storey social housing buildings, public schools and migrant families mostly from the Comoros and the Maghreb – makes young people create strong collective identities. The neighbourhood, the building, the school are places of socialization where young people build said collective identities. The term “gang” (*bande* in French) means of a group of friends, with no objective beyond friendship, and generational and neighbourhood camaraderie. One question asked is, "And if I tell you, for example, that you are a gang, what do you think of that?"

Of course, the collective identity is built from individual practices that take on a new significance in group dynamics. For MRS_MEM_003, her taste for fighting in the streets

is transformed into a collective practice where her friends also fight, and where the limit between individuality and collectivity appears blurred. This individuality, supported by a group of friends, led to her building a professional career in boxing, and today she continues to train the new generations of boxers in the neighbourhood.

The collective dynamics of young people at LaFab are driven not only by shared elements of community biography, but also by the creation of spaces for play that reinforce the bonds of friendship and the feeling of a "gang" of friends. When older brothers or sisters from the neighbourhood are involved in these spaces of friendship and fun (GRAFS, cf., Background Paper Marseille), solidarity and collective practices can be directed towards objectives of improving the quality of daily life of the inhabitants and of the same youth. This is the case of the cleaning challenge, led at LaFab by various associations and with the participation of MRS_MEM_003 (considered a GRAFS by the youngest). The playful aspect and friendship are combined in a practice that reinforces the collective identity of young people and LaFab, and even tends to revalue it and restore dignity to (historically ghettoized) young people and to the neighbourhood.

The “Cleaning Challenge” comes from an initiative that went global in 2019, in which people in different cities around the world collected rubbish and litter and posted videos on social networks. In Marseille, the initiative was called “*Ma cité va briller*” (My neighbourhood is going to shine)³⁹ – a clear allusion to the stigmatization suffered by popular neighbourhoods considered by the inhabitants themselves and by external actors as dirty and gloomy places in the city. Here it is a reappropriation of the stigma to generate collective identification and territorial dignity.



Figure 13. Community initiative “Ma cité va briller” (My neighbourhood will shine)

g). Social expectations: cultural references, secularism (Social)

→ How does the social context influence the collective and individual identities of young people?

Participants affirm that many aspects of their lives are determined by social restrictions and cultural constructions. For example, MRS_MEM_003 recognizes the difficulty that

³⁹ This video shows an example of the initiative in another popular neighbourhood of Marseille: *Ma cité va briller: le challenge qui fait bouger les quartiers* (My city is going to shine: the challenge that gets the neighbourhoods moving): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JN62aX-Hac>

exists today to obtain money doing an activity that people like, in his case earning a living from boxing is not viable right now. The justification of such a statement is related to the organization of work and the mode of production and consumption in society. Although this issue cannot be explored here, it can be verified that industrialization has created a culture of wages for work for the majority of people, and this is when there are job opportunities. The consequence of this is that other ways of life and subsistence are excluded.

During an activity of board games and video games in the cultural house of the neighbourhood (Maison pour Tous), it was observed that the youth groups of LaFab use names of popular cultural references (sports, movies, music) to identify themselves on their equipment, as well as ways of dressing and attitudes popularized by gangsta rap style music. Of course, these references generate behaviours in young people about how they should act. Wearing an article of clothing with a hood is almost as iconic and rebellious today as wearing blue jeans was in the 1970s. Online videos and the style of gangsta rap music have popularized this style of clothing, with baggy garments, large coloured shoes, hoods. The 50 young people in the described activity have created groups of up to three people. Everyone faces off at game stations, and games won, regardless of game type, are noted on a board. The board has the names of the teams. The names of the groups chosen by the youngsters are above all the names of football teams, but they also refer to a whole universe of gangsta rap and street culture: *Guirri Mafia*, *Marlboro*, for example. It is important to note that the *Guirri Mafia* is a well-known national and local rap group whose members are from the LaFab neighbourhood.

The national context is important in the collective and individual representations of the participants in the field of study. MRS_STK_005, for example, states that "the community in Chicago organizes itself to solve its problems and they don't wait for the government, the idea of community works there, whereas in France, talking about community is taboo, it's wrong, communitarianism must be avoided". This social representation of the sense of community marks the work of mediators and social workers in Marseille, where secularism (the opposite of communitarianism from the French perspective) must prevail in their relations with young people from popular neighbourhoods - despite the migratory trajectories and their Muslim culture. There is a fragmentation of collaborations at the community level, a recurring theme in all meetings with young people, educators and residents of the LaFab neighbourhood. There are multiple reasons: competition for subsidies, stigmatization of communitarianism in France, and even gentrification. In this last aspect, MRS_MEM_005 comments on an idea that appears several times in the meetings with the participants: urban renewal in France seeks to do away with poor neighbourhoods and send the inhabitants to different areas, which weakens their collective dynamics. This leads onto:

h). There are no gangs in Marseille from the perspective of Gangs (Social)

→ What forms of aggregation is given to youth?

If we assume the educators, mediators, and social workers that we have found as a terminus of concrete policies at the street level and visualization of what is perceived as

problematic by public actors, our informants do not speak to us of “gangs” and the term simply does not appear. There are no conflicts between groups of young people linked to cultural issues and symbolic distinction that can transcend the criminal. Of course, there are some well-known logics of illicit drug trafficking in Marseille, but unlike the alarmist and politicized media discourse, this phenomenon does not structure youth community practices or the future of neighbourhoods⁴⁰. When MRS_MEM_002 was asked about gangs, she did not understand the question. And a similar reaction was noted when she was asked if there are youth political spaces or anti-racist movements in the city. “Here, politics is clientelism”. Here, too, the gangs do not appear in the discourse, and when they do appear, they are linked to networks of friends without any specific connotation or significance.

MRS_MEM_001, MRS_MEM_002, MRS_STK_006 and the other unnamed social workers we met did not include the word “gang” in their concerns and interventions. Other terms did appear: drugs, sales, poverty, police, politicians, clientelism; and with a more positive bias, as a possible way out: we heard sports and eloquence. There are no “gangs” in Marseille. It is therefore important to ethnographically understand sports, theatre and other more porous meeting and entertainment places where different youth practices and trajectories can coexist.

i). Ethnicity: “Floors are racist, not people” (Ethnic)

→ What is the position of young people in the face of historical and current ethnic stigmatization?

The following dialogue between young people and a social worker shows how the generational difference influences the perspectives on what is and is not racism today. For the social worker, there is racism in LaFab, since the floors of the buildings are divided according to ethnic origin: Comorian in one, North African in another. Given this, one of the young women replies that the racists are the floors, and not the people. This shows that the new generations in LaFab inherit the spatial configuration, which is often ghettoized, of the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille and the migration⁴¹ histories of their parents and grandparents, but that this does not mean that their perceptions align with those of the generations that fought against racism in the mid-1980s in France. The social context has changed.

j). Between family cultural heritage and French cultural values (Religious Identity)

→ What is the influence of Muslim traditions on the construction of young people's identities and self-representations?

Religion is a word that has disappeared from the map of encounters with young people: it is not a topic that our informants mobilized to narrate the present of the neighbourhood, social conflicts, or youth practices. However, some stakeholders, social workers, on average 40 to 50 years old, referred to religion as a structuring aspect of life in the

⁴⁰ cf., Background Paper Marseille, section “6.1.6. Drug trafficking and youth gangs in Marseille”.

⁴¹ cf., Background Paper Marseille, sección “6.1.2. Historias de inmigración: Marsella ciudad obrera, ciudad popular”).

neighbourhood and in Marseille, particularly the way of dressing and the way men and women relate. The tension between Muslim tradition and French-style secularism is evident in his speech.

For a group of young women interviewed, Marseille, unlike Paris, is a place that is tolerant of the Muslim religion.

Despite this, the young women themselves affirm that they live in a Muslim neighbourhood, LaFab, where the gaze of men, fathers in particular, constantly reminds them of the social weight of Muslim traditions.

Even Cannes, less than an hour by train from Marseille, can be considered "*l'Amérique*" as people walk around in bathing suits on the streets of the city, something that MRS_MEM_005 perceives differently than in Marseille.

The neighbourhood is a social universe where everything can be known, where parents constantly communicate what they do and who their daughters spend time with. The young women recognize that the gaze on them in the neighbourhood is different from that in the rest of the city, for example on the university campus, "where nobody looks at us." This does not mean that the neighbourhood is considered a place full of prohibitions to be avoided (it is rather a place of protection and mutual appreciation) and the rest of the city an open space of French-style freedom (it is more of a place where attention must be paid to the unknown and different). Being able to wear shorts and skirts on the beach or on the university campus, the young women affirm that they do not do so, because even there, "they feel the gaze of others".

Whether or not they are free to wear a traditional Muslim veil, some say they want to wear it. And when asked if this is due to a suggestion from their parents, they even affirm the opposite, since parents are often concerned about how their daughter will be seen (and accepted as a Muslim) in other spaces of urban life in France.

The construction of their youthful identities is thus marked by the cultural heritage of their parents. Sometimes this is implicit, such as when parents do not intervene in their daughter's decision to wear a traditional Muslim veil but others react, like when a mother is shocked that her daughter wants to wear shorts on the street "*astaghfirullah!*".

In the streets of LaFab it is common to see women wearing veils in accordance with the Muslim tradition and generally speaking veils that do not cover the entire body. However, in a participatory observation activity in LaFab, where we delivered medical protection material (masks, antibacterial gel, shampoo, soap) directly to the residents' homes, we found two sisters, around 20 years old, wearing a veil that it covered the whole body, including the hands, like a chador. It is important to note that religion is not present in the *campo banda*. In the neighbourhood, religion is mainly rites such as Muslim funerals and prayers in the mosque for men and women on average 50 years and over. The neighbourhood's relationship space is made up of police officers, young people in traffic, young people who travel between school and work and the residence, of educators and associations.

Node II.7. Territory (Results)

k). Community biography, perceptions and discourses on the LaFab neighbourhood (Neighbourhood)

→ How do young people build their identity within the neighbourhood's territory?



Figure 14. Panorama of the LaFab neighbourhood

The young people participating in the study perceive LaFab as a neighbourhood made up mainly of Comorians. “Marseille is the second capital of the Comoro Islands, hahahahaha” says MRS_MEM_004 smiling. The lists of parents at the school, placed at the entrance of the LaFab school, reflect the composition of the neighbourhood: there is not a single “French” name, even if the majority of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood are surely French by citizenship. Little by little, the Algerian and Maghreb component of the neighbourhood has reduced and now LaFab is above all a place for Comorians. Unlike the northern neighbourhoods of Marseille (historically of African immigration), LaFab is considered by the young people interviewed as a neighbourhood that is more connected to the centre of Marseille, with better public transport infrastructure. This generates a “greater openness and solidarity of its inhabitants”, contrary to the northern neighbourhoods “urban deserts, abandoned”.

The neighbourhood has a history of enjoying rap music and of a whole generation that grew up listening to lyrics and melodies composed by young people from the neighbourhood, narrating everyday life, expressing the feelings of that generation of young migrants mainly from the Comoros and the Maghreb through music.

The 1990s was a time of denunciation through rap, but today this has changed. Young people have a multiplicity of identification possibilities in an increasingly globalized world. Despite this, the image of the neighbourhood continues to be one of the factors in the construction of the life trajectories of the new generations. A neighbourhood that generates a feeling of abandonment from the rest of the city, disconnected, with precarious public spaces is not the dream of this new generation.

The stigma towards the youth of the neighbourhood also comes from the labour market, where the fact of living in LaFab means an additional difficulty in finding a job. A

company leader, upon seeing a candidacy from a young man from LaFab, says "It's a neighbourhood of crazy people, I'm not going to hire someone who's going to create problems... that's it" comments MRS_MEM_001. This stigma turns the neighbourhood into a space for peer valorisation and protection for young people, where what happens outside the territory of this extended family matters little (Elias, 2001).

Although it is considered a space for protection, projecting oneself living in the neighbourhood is a source of concern for the new generations, and the desire to leave the neighbourhood is latent.

Although not all young people perceive the possibility of leaving the neighbourhood in the same way: "it seems that the other girls in the neighbourhood don't want to leave the neighbourhood," observes MRS_MEM_005. Even the first generations of immigrants in the neighbourhood are perceived by young people as people who do not leave the neighbourhood.

1). "Time stopped in LaFab": perceptions about the future of the neighbourhood (Neighbourhood)

→ What does the neighbourhood and territorial identity mean for young people?

"The neighbourhood is like a child, it needs us to take care of it", "Respect, solidarity, the street is also our home": these are some of the messages that appear in a popular neighbourhood in Marseille.



Figure 15. Territorial awareness art in a public space in a popular neighbourhood, Marseille



Figure 16. Territorial awareness art in popular neighbourhood, Marseille

In this example, in the Calvet Jalou neighbourhood, art serves as a vehicle to sensitize the collective imagination of the neighbourhood's inhabitants. This perspective of the territory as a structuring element of family and social life in popular neighbourhoods appears frequently in the field study. The neighbourhood as a network of relationships between the inhabitants is an extended family (Elias, 2001), where neighbours, friends from schools and inhabitants build ties of solidarity. Young people go to the same school following national education policies in France, where students enrol in schools based on address of residence. This is what creates ghettoized spaces, as observed by MRS_MEM_003: "the school is right there in front of the houses, so the young people say to each other 'I'm staying at home', that's what the governments did, they created ghettos."

The public spaces in the neighbourhood evolve, urban renovations follow local and national logic, and the inhabitants of LaFab observe these changes with some mistrust. Between indifference and the feeling of exclusion, the inhabitants of LaFab affirm that the changes are not run past them. Youth participation in the consultation tables for the urban renewal of the main LaFab park is entirely absent. Only a certain type of inhabitant decides to participate in these consultations: pensioners, new residents with a profile "external to the life of the neighbourhood", and one social worker or another. Even if young people are invited to participate in these instances, it is unlikely that they would be involved in consultation processes with the public administration: "even if they are invited, they will not come." states MRS_STK_006. It can be affirmed that the lack of coordination with the community as well as the lack of union and interest of the inhabitants for urban renewal issues create an atmosphere of indifference on urban renewal issues.



Figure 17. Absence of young people in the LaFab urban renewal consultation tables

The participants in the study are aware of the lack of coordination of the inhabitants in collective issues for the defence of the interests of the neighbourhood. The factors are multiple, but as MRS_STK_010 points out, a collective attitude is generated in the neighbourhood, where "we believe that help will come from outside", that is, from governments, associations and actors outside the neighbourhood. According to MRS_STK_006, it is difficult to dialogue with neighbourhoods like LaFab, since there are many interlocutors defending different interests, there is social housing mixed with private properties, the mayor's office, and so on.

One of the criticisms of the ongoing renovation plans is that they do not address the fundamental issues of improving the quality of life in LaFab, such as the cleaning of the common spaces in buildings, the garbage in the streets, the lack of places for culture and leisure: "the problem with the (urban renewal) project is that it does not touch LaFab," says MRS_STK_006. For many inhabitants, something has to change regarding the precariousness of the social housing towers in LaFab. Even MRS_MEM_005 believes that "in twenty years the government is going to destroy these housing blocks."

During the field observation, we checked the inside of several LaFab buildings: the smell of urine and humidity is strong in the corridors, the yellowish paint on the walls is peeling, revealing the cement next to hundreds of graffiti. There is little light in the corridors, they are quite abandoned, their walls are without paint, garbage is on the floor, there are broken doors and plates, and the atmosphere is gloomy. Several residents invited us into their apartments. In general, they are clean, tidy, a lot of light enters them, and in the middle of the wall, there are large windows from which you can see the mountains that surround the Marseille coast and the Mediterranean Sea in the background. In one of the apartments, a blonde woman of North African origin opens her door for us. She tells us that Marseille Habitat, the person in charge of the tower's common spaces, has forgotten them. "Look in here, come in, I have everything clean, everything is fine." His apartment smells good, it is clean, and well-illuminated. "But look outside, everything is falling down," says the woman. Another woman in her 30s who seems North African judging by her accent in French opens her door for us. She tells us that Marseille Habitat is letting the tower fall: "Inside everything is fine, we have everything we need, but outside, no words are needed, you've seen it, it's really good, we paid 500 euros, and it's big, but with

what happens in the neighbourhood, you know”, says the woman referring to the problems of public spaces in the neighbourhood: drug sales, stigmatization.

Another woman opens the door of her apartment for us, we explain to her about the APPI (Aide aux Populations Précaires et Immigrées), where they can advise them on housing aid. The woman, surprised, holds her face with both hands. "A place to live! That's what we need, there are nine of us living here, we don't have much space, please help us with that!" she says in a tremulous voice, wanting to cry, while her husband and son look at us attentively. Marseille Habitat, the government agency in charge of maintaining and restoring the common spaces in the towers, is often the target of criticism from the inhabitants we meet: "I even have the mobile number of the person in charge of Marseille Habitat (the tenant entity of the entire property, in charge of maintaining the common spaces), I call her, but she doesn't want to hear anything, they don't respond to our requests, and look at the state of everything, it's really embarrassing inviting friends over, people even come here to help our children's school, and all this stuff falling down in the common spaces, they don't even want to paint, or clean, the smells are unbearable”, says a woman of about 30, of North African origin.

The dirt in the neighbourhood and in the common spaces of the tower buildings is also the responsibility of the inhabitants, as one of the community leaders found pointed out: “There is nothing to do in this neighbourhood anymore, I have tried for 50 years, and look how everything is, garbage everywhere, garbage in the trees. First it was the Italians, then the Arabs, now the Blacks, they all come and go, and nobody is interested in what is happening in the neighbourhood. I am. But they have a dump, and they leave the rubbish on the street”. It is therefore a problem of civic culture that several inhabitants point out as responsible for the stagnation of the neighbourhood.

The corridors of the towers and the stairways, gloomy and often smelly, serve as meeting spaces for the young people who live in the towers. One of our informants is with two other men, one young man in his 25s, and the other in his 40s. They're smoking *hashish* on the tower stairs. The older man explains that he is the security agent (*gardien*) of the tower, and that there is also a concierge: "Everything is calm" he tells me as he is smoking.

The contrast between the interior of the apartments (clean, bright, pleasant to be in) and the exterior of the common spaces (dirty, smelly, dark, miserable) is surprising. This indicates that the fragmentation of collective dynamics in the modern city through the comfort of individualized and private life (television, internet, hot water) continues its course with special force in the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille, where the neglect seen in the maintenance of public spaces does not seem to concern governments or the majority of the inhabitants themselves.

In Marseille, the wind blows hard, plastic bags draw ephemeral eddies at the entrances to the LaFab buildings. These are housing towers of about 20 storeys each, which form a set of eight towers, divided between social housing and private residences, all with quite deteriorated façades. The last cultural centre in LaFab was closed, among other reasons, because it contained asbestos, microparticles that are harmful to health, and the removal of which is expensive. Although the buildings in the neighbourhood seem doomed to

oblivion –the elevators are frequently damaged and the environment with its smells and garbage is dirty– neighbourhood solidarity emerges, and the youngest assist the oldest during the summer heat waves, as can be seen in the speech of one of the residents of the neighbourhood, MRS_STK_009, a social leader of Comorian origin.

Our informants have the impression that the urban infrastructure of LaFab is in a state of neglect, where key elements of leisure and culture, such as stadiums and libraries, are missing, unfulfilled promises on the part of the local government administration.

The youth spaces inside LaFab are abandoned. The neighbourhood is often considered a place "where nothing happens", where "there are no libraries to cultivate", where the generation gap is accentuated with immigrant parents who do not have the French cultural codes to pass on to their children, but where despite these obstacles, everyone wants to live French-style (have a house, study, have a career, live in peace).

The young people evoke the need for new infrastructures within LaFab to support the inhabitants. The culture of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, of closing themselves in on the territory, with their needs and available resources, means that the aid and infrastructures that are outside the neighbourhood territory are not considered to be for the inhabitants of LaFab to use. For this, MRS_MEM_005 deems that a support centre for administrative processes as well as a cultural centre within the neighbourhood is today necessary to improve the lives of the inhabitants of LaFab.

The implementation of said infrastructures and instances of community mediation requires the participation of managers who inhabit the neighbourhood, since "it sensitizes" and gives the other inhabitants confidence, as mentioned by MRS_MEM_005. The hypothesis of urban renovations that respond to the neighbourhood's needs, with concerted community participation, would thus generate territorial dignity because "people are interested in our neighbourhood, there are good things that happen".

The lack of infrastructure and planning of public spaces in the neighbourhood, as well as the perception of a stagnation in the evolution of the neighbourhood, "the same as it was when our parents arrived in the 80s and 60s", is a fundamental theme in the inhabitants' community biography speeches.

"Time has stopped in that neighbourhood," says MRS_STK_006, referring to LaFab. Even LaFab's analogy with the poverty of the *favelas* of Rio de Janeiro appears in the discourse of one of the young people.

Institutional actors perceive LaFab as a territory where there is nothing, apart from the new football stadium, as pointed out by MRS_STK_003. The experience of exchanging cultural practices between a group of girls from LaFab and Berlin, within the framework of a project of the NGO Une Terre Culturelle, shows how the girls from LaFab perceive LaFab as a territory of no interest to someone who comes from outside, such as the German girls who went there. "They were ashamed when the girls from Berlin came (to LaFab), because in Berlin, even the popular neighbourhoods are green, there are trees", observes MRS_STK_003.

The lack of motivation of young people for a more promising future is a constant in the speeches of the participants. And the neighbourhood with its shortcomings and ghettoized configurations has a lot to do with this lack of confidence and motivation. For MRS_MEM_003, the State built the services in the neighbourhood so that young people do not leave it, "isolated from the sea, from the sky, surrounded by large concrete towers, grey, dirty, with garbage in front of their houses", which generates low morale and low self-esteem in youth.

The following observation note explains the alternatives taken by the youth of the LaFab neighbourhood in the face of a no-future perspective:

Ems, the young man who offered me drugs reappears, he's in a good mood, summer nights bring many clients. I ask him if he is always in this place, in general yes, you can find me here, although if you call me, it will be easier to find us, he tells me with a deep voice, sure of himself. And the police don't bother them much, I insist on knowing the details of what he does there. You have to keep your eyes open, but I only contact people, I never have anything (drugs) with me. I start by telling him about the LaFab neighbourhood, I tell him that there are always young people there selling drugs, I want to know what he thinks of those young people. I live there, I know the LaFab neighbourhood, there is nothing to do. What do you want to do, spend all day having a wall! Pffff..., there's no work, I don't want to work for a miserable wage, receiving orders from a bastard, in one night I can earn what I would earn in a week. I don't want to keep on selling (drugs), my idea is to get a good plant and then see what I can do; but for everything you need a plant, something to start with. A client approaches us, and in a naive way, complains to him, telling him that the prices of marijuana are very high. Ems, quite dazed, with his round white eyes that contrast with the black skin that covers his almost two-meter body, reminds him that we are in Marseille, which is Europe, and that we are in Cours Julien, the centre of the city, and not in the northern *favela* neighbourhood.

Participation in networks for the sale of illicit drugs is, according to our informants, an alternative to the precarious salary of the youth of the neighbourhood. Identifying with a neighbourhood where nothing happens, devoid of professional projects is a constant in the discourses of young people found.

m). Multicultural LaFab: Participant observation (Neighbourhood)

→ What can be confirmed regarding the cultural composition of the neighbourhood?

A field experience has been quite revealing. We have participated in a delivery of hygiene kits for the inhabitants of LaFab during the confinement period in 2020. MRS_STK_012 explains how the hygiene kits should be distributed. "It is about giving news to the inhabitants, going door to door, introducing yourself, explaining why we are there, giving them the Addap13 social mediators contact details, telling them that we have stays on Tuesdays at the Maison pour Tous and at the Appi (a help association for migrants), to know what the inhabitants need during this period of confinement and, incidentally, to identify if there are young people who can join our framework of action, young people between 13 and 30 years old, for school support and help to professional insertion, the search for a job or a professional practice".



Figure 18. Mainly social housing buildings in LaFab

During field observations we have been able to verify that the LaFab social housing towers are inhabited by immigrants not only from the Maghreb and the Comoros islands, but also from Eastern Europe and Asia. In one of the apartments, there were two Afghans, and they told us that three friends actually live in the same apartment, and that they arrived in Marseille a year ago. In another apartment, a blonde woman told us that they arrived three years ago from Georgia, because her husband was very sick. On the advice of a doctor in Georgia, they decided to come to Europe, where perhaps her husband could find treatment for his illness. A friend from Georgia welcomed them in France. Now the daughter goes to school, and her husband is doing much better. The husband has French classes every day until 4pm, while the wife takes care of the children and the apartment. The woman tells us that she wants to volunteer in aid activities, such as the Red Cross or other organizations, but that, with the confinement, everything is closed.

In our action to deliver hygiene material to the residents of LaFab (one of the many participant observation activities) we realize that many people are isolated from the news of the neighbourhood. Two women told us that it was the first time, since they arrived in the neighbourhood in January 2020, that someone had come to visit them in this way, to give them information about what is happening in their community and the neighbourhood's leading institutions.

Some parents found during this observation action told us that they were concerned about the environment of drugs and bad habits of the youth that exists in LaFab. A woman in her 50s explains that she was fine, but that she was worried about the future of her 13-year-old son in a neighbourhood like LaFab. "Well, we all know the problems there are, I don't want him to stay around without doing nothing, in bad company, he likes football, I prefer that he's there playing football, maybe in the neighbourhood he can sign up for some sport". Sport is seen by parents as protection against deviance and misbehaviour of the youth of the neighbourhood.

n). "We were the most dangerous neighbourhood, the big team" (Neighbourhood)

→ How does drug trafficking influence the processes of individual and collective identity construction of young people from LaFab?

In Marseille, when groups of young people sell drugs next to the buildings, in the streets of the neighbourhoods, they are known as Le Réseau (The Network), regardless of the neighbourhood. LaFab has a well-known Réseau in the city, which has generated a whole collective imagination about life in the neighbourhood.

The dirt in the neighbourhood, the lack of security in the streets (with refrigerators and garbage thrown out of the building windows) and the daily disorder are characteristics of the community biography of LaFab that the young participants narrate. Added to this is an effort by associations which have multiplied projects to improve neighbourhood life in recent years.

However, the perception of insecurity in the neighbourhood and the problem of youth vandalism continue to be a current concern in the neighbourhood, as shown by the speech of an informant, a pensioner of North African origin: "Even if you wanted to, you can't get in the A building, the young people are selling drugs at the entrance, you can't say anything to them, and if you say something, they'll smash the windows of your car or set fire to the house. It became dangerous. And it is the same in the other northern neighbourhoods. In Les Rosieres, la Castellane, the same. You can't go in anywhere anymore because drug trafficking has taken over the neighbourhood. They put the garbage cans in the middle of the street and only they can enter, the rest have to ask for permission, they look at what they have in the car, and decide whether or not to let you in. I am always in this area." The man is quite upset with what the neighbourhood is experiencing today, and he not only blames the administrations, but also focuses his criticism on the residents themselves, "who don't care about the neighbourhood."

Drug trafficking is therefore an important factor in the identity of the neighbourhood and the city. The difficult economic conditions for a part of the population in Marseille seems to be the reason for the growing drug trafficking involving young people from poor neighbourhoods because it is "a way of bringing money home."

During our field work we have come across young people who sell illicit drugs in LaFab. These young people question us by asking about who we are and what we are looking for in the neighbourhood. The young people act as guardians of the territory and sometimes police the area. Sometimes they photograph those from outside the neighbourhood and the image of the intruder circulates among the neighbourhood networks. It is important to note that the youngsters at LaFab know each other, those who are in the Réseau for drug sales and those who are not: they are permeable spaces, there are no clear lines of distinction and incommunicability. On the other hand, the educators have a recurring profile: they were born and raised in popular neighbourhoods, but they cultivated a certain school capital outside of them.

o). “Cosmopolitan Marseille”, “Marseille is the *Olympique de Marseille*, you understand” (City)

→ What perception do young people have of the Marseille neighbourhood?

All our informants agree on one idea: Marseille is different from the rest of France. The affirmation often results from a comparison with the capital, Paris, considered a violent space, in which terrorist attacks and fights between youth gangs take place. This is considered different from what happens in Marseille, which is a multicultural city, of immigration, of easy treatment among its inhabitants. Every weekend, at the city's triumphal arch near the Gare Saint-Charles, the flags of Algeria and the Comoro Islands fly under the sun: dozens of people denounce conflicting issues in their countries of origin on the other side from the Mediterranean. The same site, symbolic of the city, regularly welcomes illegal immigrants passing from Italy via Ventimiglia, or other clandestine migration routes. Dozens of Gambians, without French residence papers, gather there every day, in the same square where French-Algerians sell contraband Marlboro. Both sides exchange symbolic resources (a presence that annoys the police system) and material resources (drug sales). The square is the midpoint between LaFab and the Vieux Port of the city, the closest access point to the sea for the youth of the neighbourhood.

Marseille is therefore considered a "cosmopolitan" city, "a mix of cultures".

MRS_STK_005, a social worker, considers Paris a violent city, where street mediation via the institutionality of associations would not have the same results as in Marseille. This is due, according to MRS_STK_005, to a more supportive mentality in Marseille than in Paris.

However, when it comes to precariousness and poverty, Marseille is perceived as the most forgotten city in France. Of course, forgotten by governments, but not by its inhabitants, who show deep roots of identification with Marseille, a city that loves and defends itself, despite the current socioeconomic and ecological problems it is experiencing.

A common thread – overcoming generational gaps, social classes, economic conditions, and political ideologies – carries the narrative of the Marseille imaginary: Olympique de Marseille, the city's football team.

In Marseille, football is considered an essential factor of social cohesion (Soto & Therme, 1999, p. 59) "the symbol of a specific mode of collective existence that embodies the style of play of the team" (Bromberger, 1987).

p). Hybrid glocal spaces of reputation of youth groups (City)

→ What impact does the influence of globalization and the Internet have on the identity of youth groups from poor neighbourhoods?

The young people of the 3rd arrondissement of Marseille, where LaFab is located, have an important identification with their territory: they feel united by a kind of solidarity of territory and community biography: "Strength to the 3rd arrondissement of Marseille, this is the most united district of Marseille does not represent a neighbourhood but a district, in 14 or 15 it is each one their neighbourhood" affirms one of the followers of ZAMS, a rap group that films a video clip on a cement football field in the centre of the city. The young people who are filming use the codes of the neighbourhood bad guys and of crime, without having anything to do with this type of practice. It is about dramatizing a strong

imaginary in the local space of reputations of gangs of friends, conveyed today on social networks thanks to the Internet. This "local space of reputations" (Mohammed, 2007, p. 5) materializes in hybrid socialization networks (face-to-face and virtual) through cultural practices such as the production of video clips and the constant broadcast of information around a mode of communication that can be valued by peers. During our field study, we observed a group of about 10 young people in their 20s to 25s using small recording equipment, costumes, fireworks, a luxury car, and a portable speaker. It is the ZAMS collective who claim to have started the production of a series of video clips called *Ola la la*, (that works well), intended for social networks and online video platforms such as YouTube.



Figure 19. Audiovisual series distributed on YouTube produced by young people from the third district of Marseille

It is convenient to consider the “glocal” nature of these spaces of reputations. Internet access facilitates an extraterritorial dimension of youth groups, although this perspective is not foreseen at the origin of their referential practices and objects (Mansilla & Schwartz, 2017, p. 176). The local actions of such youth groups are fed (back into) by fictional global narratives (myths) about what gangs are and how they operate, i.e., “glocalization”, a widely discussed term (Ritzer, 2003; Robertson, 1995). "Emotions and desires, shaped by discrimination, racism and social exclusion, are the motor of the glocalization of gangs (groups of friends from poor neighbourhoods)" (Hellemont & Densley, 2018, p. 170). These perceptions are the fuel of its symbolic organization. In Marseille, some of the young people found (Algerian-French-Maghrebi) aspire to have a better salary, to the social valorisation of their Islamicate⁴² in France and to a better future, in Marseille and/or in Algeria. The democratization of the Internet, online social networks and connected mobile devices are now transforming the symbolic organizations and

⁴² From a critical perspective, the term Islamicate, coined by historian Marshall G. S. Hodgson, is appropriate to refer to “the dynamic mosaic of forms of social and cultural life that exist not only in Muslim-majority societies, but also in Muslim communities of the diaspora.” (Saffari et al., 2017, p. 2).

glocalizations of gangs of friends, from local gangs to global tribes (Gemert et al., 2013; Leccardi, 2016).

q). The streets of Marseille: tension between urban renewals and community life (City)

→ What meaning do young people give to public space and streets in Marseille?

Marseille is a city that lives in the street, in the passing of time in the open air, under the sun, the dust and the conversations that mix with the sounds of the seagulls. In LaFab and the city centre, different people, young and old, spend the day talking or simply watching the world go by. In a few days of observation, we came to recognize people who spend the whole day in the streets. It does not mean that they are homeless. It is just a case of that in Marseille, perhaps because of the clement weather, life in the open air is essential. In the fluidity of the streets, with people moving and occupying public spaces, the mental maps of young people in Marseille are built.



Figure 20. Youth and adults in public space, city centre, Marseille

The young people of LaFab move around the city: between the neighbourhood, the city centre, the beach and the shopping centres. These places are meeting nodes and places of otherness with young people from the southern neighbourhoods, young people from the centre of the city and tourists. They mobilize in a group of friends, with styles of dress that circulate in the latest rap videos and television series. The hoody style is almost as iconic and rebellious today as wearing blue jeans in the 1970s. Online videos and gangsta rap music have helped popularize these dress codes, with baggy garments, large coloured shoes and hoods. Young people from popular neighbourhoods are distinguished by the way they dress: football shirts from Spanish and English clubs and, of course, the red and green of Olympique de Marseille, L'OM, accompanied by Gucci caps and tiered briefcases.

Right now, the greatest social and geopolitical challenge facing Marseille is concentrated in the city centre, where, unlike other French cities, the poorest neighbourhoods are located. For more than thirty years, the centre of the city of Marseille (an area of strong

sociability and solidarity of successive generations of immigrants of Muslim tradition) has been the subject of major urban renovations that have reinforced segregation processes (Bouillon et al., 2017; Samson et al., 2015). The latest operation underway is the Euroméditerranée consortium, a public establishment for land use planning (EPA) created in 1995 to "energize" certain districts of the city. Its main interest is the creation of commercial premises and offices to develop the tertiary service in Marseille, as well as museums, business hotels and, to a lesser extent, homes. Considered the third largest commercial district in France, Euroméditerranée operates on the main roads and pedestrian areas of the city centre and on the urban waterfront.



Figure 21. Euroméditerranée urban renewal project in the centre of Marseille

The centre of Marseille thus represents the nucleus of the social, political and economic conflict that the city is experiencing today. One of our informants, a 50-year-old youth educator, affirms that community projects are actually stages of transition towards an increasingly segregated city centre: “Many of the spaces that pass for community, really only serve as a façade for future real estate projects in the centre of Marseille. These structures are meant to make the changes in the city’s urban space happen more easily and without so much resistance”. This logic of implementing real estate projects in the centre of the city brings populations with higher salaries, who consume more and bring a standardization of ways of thinking and relating to each other. It is precisely this cultural diversity that will disappear from Marseille if it continues along this line of gentrification.

It can be concluded that the diversity of problems linked to public space is a relevant frame of reference for understanding the processes of identity construction of young people from popular neighbourhoods in Marseille. The study of the youth groups that occupy these central spaces (popular classes, immigrants), their evolutionary trajectories, their practices and their relationships with society allows us to understand the urban and social dynamics at a local, national and even global level that influence the construction of collective identity of Marseille.

5.4.3. Internships (cluster III. TransGang)

Presentation of the elements to be evaluated

Reference definition from the TransGang Codebook

→ Ordinary and extraordinary activities of the members of youth street groups.

Reference local research dimension(s) (Background Paper Marseille)

→ Community and institutional social mediation.

The practices of the youth groups found are part of a continuum between the self-management of community impact projects and the influence of professional mediation institutions and social networks. We will show how this tension becomes the triggering factor for the mediation, artistic and illegal practices of the youth groups studied.

Initial hypotheses (Research Plan Marseille)

→ The intergenerational factor is a necessary but not sufficient cause of social mediation in the marginalized neighbourhoods of Marseille. Intergenerational ties foster spaces for conflict mediation in street gangs and between these and other actors in the *campo banda*.

Initial question(s) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ How do the neighbourhood youth groups interact in the *campo banda*?

→ Are there gateways between youth groups and institutional associations? How do they operate?

Analysis of data

Evaluation question(s) proposed by the TransGang team

→ What activities does the group carry out to access the different resources?

→ What are the daily and intersectional practices of the group and its members?

→ What kinds of practices do they have? And what public spaces do they use?

→ How is the coexistence of members in public spaces with other social agents?

→ What are the uses and practices represented in the media?

→ How does the group mobilize social resources in situations of crisis and need?

Node III.12. Education (Results)

r). Youth demotivation in a stigmatizing educational system (School)

→ What influence does the school system have on the stigmatization of young people?

Many of the young people of LaFab (born in France to migrant parents) follow a school/professional path that has been pre-established for them since the beginning of their adolescence, from around the age of 15. Knowing no more than what school counsellors tell them about what's best for them, young people end up on career paths they know only by name, and which years later turn into boredom, frustrations and meaningless blackouts, where school dropout (accompanied by more interesting, sometimes illegal, activities with their peers) ends up taking them in search of adrenaline and lost interest: "They are asked from a very young age to choose their professional orientations, some do not know what to do and, in general, drop out of school", says MRS_STK_006.

Our informants recognize the school as a key space in the construction of the professional and personal trajectory of young people at LaFab. This institutionalized space is considered at the same time to be the cause of the problems of “social deviance” of the boys and an opportunity to develop a certain economic and social capital for the future of the young people. MRS_MEM_001 insists on the influence of the school, because it is there, he says, where the boys deviate and start doing foolish things. The recurring criticism of the educational system in France is that it tends to deepen the cultural and social heritage of young people: those who come from families with few economic resources and of migrant origin (in popular neighbourhoods) all go to the same school and are guided towards the same technical jobs, while the doors of higher education are opened to others.

Young people at LaFab know that sooner or later the school will guide them towards technical professions that generally do not motivate the new generations: construction worker, auto mechanic, for example. Of course, reality is more complex than a categorical analysis like this one, and there are young people whose dream is to be a mechanic or a plumber. The point is that young people see school as a promising dead-end road to a well-paid job: school is what bores and humiliates you, while work is precarious and poorly paid. MRS_MEM_001 states that he went to school because it was compulsory and not because he thought it could be useful for him; and MRS_MEM_007 says that he does not go to school anymore because “it's useless”. Even higher studies at university are perceived as an investment that will not bring a desired job: MRS_MEM_006: “going to university? To do what after? For MRS_MEM_003, in education in France, “nobody teaches you to make money, they only talk about history, geography, blah blah, but nobody teaches you to count money.” This shows the gap between the knowledge provided in national education and the needs and motivations of young people. Therefore, there is a professional orientation in school that is not in line with the interests of young people, and this generates demotivation in the school and professional trajectory of young people in the neighbourhood.

In France there are two types of Baccalaureate. The general one, which gives students access to university, and those which teach young people about different branches of knowledge, e.g., scientific, literature, artistic, according to the disciplines proposed in higher studies. The second type is the professional, which allows young people to complete a two-year training course and then immediately join the labour market. Young people in vocational high school have a greater number of classes on technical aspects of a profession (engine repair, heating appliances, painting), and fewer classes on literature, science, mathematics. As a general rule, the professional Baccalaureate is the option that young people from popular neighbourhoods in France, such as LaFab, must follow.

The actions of parents, in favour of a general Baccalaureate that opens the doors to a higher education diploma, is also decisive in the school trajectory of young people from these neighbourhoods - although these are exceptions, since immigrant parents, in general with less important French school capital than the new generations, they unconditionally accept their children's orientation towards technical careers. MRS_STK_005-a, a social worker of Tunisian origin, tells of the obstacles that national education places in France

if a young man from a popular neighbourhood in Marseille (in this case La Castellane, known for drug trafficking) wants to embark on the path that leads them to university studies, "I fought, and I had this opportunity (for your son to integrate the general branch that gives access to higher education), because I have the resources that other parents do not have."

When you come from a "tough neighbourhood" you deserve a low-level school, as MRS_STK_005 states. Some parents of LaFab youth choose to send their children to private schools outside the neighbourhood, hoping for a better level of education and, incidentally, avoiding bad influences and visible behaviours that exist in the neighbourhood. However, the lack of spaces and other administrative obstacles end up making this difficult to achieve.

For MRS_MEM_004, who obtained a professional bachelor's degree in Electronics, the moment national education asks you to choose between professional and general, and specifically the professional branch, many of the young people do not know what they want to do and end up signing up for professional branches that do not motivate them, and this is followed by school dropout. At this point, the difference between a desired career path, or at least valued by the young person, and dropping out of school is at stake at the level of the relationship between the young person and a teacher, or the young person and an education guidance professional.

Today, MRS_MEM_004 continues her professional training at the hands of institutions that develop specific programs for young people from poor neighbourhoods in Marseille: this is the national public policy PIC (*Plan d'investissement dans les compétences*) of the Ministry of Labour. MRS_MEM_004 today attends the Kourtrajmé film school that trains young people from popular neighbourhoods in audiovisual professions in Marseille.

Several of the young people interviewed have followed an educational path beyond high school, obtaining diplomas that qualify them as electrical technicians or professional mediators in poor neighbourhoods. The modalities are diverse, but in general it is a matter of allowing the young person, in association with an institution such as l'ADDAP13 (*Association départementale pour le développement des actions de prévention 13* – Departmental Association for the Development of Preventative Actions 13) to carry out studies and professional experience in parallel.

The personal trajectory of a young person is what makes them integrate programs and use professional insertion tools. However, family history and economic conditions determine access to education and continuity in school trajectories for many young people. This is the case of MRS_MEM_003: "Well, I dropped out of school, because we needed money."

The lack of freedom to choose a school and professional path is seen, on the part of young people, as an unfair imposition of a system that measures you with your "current conditions (resident in a difficult neighbourhood, parents out of school, immigrant, with low school performance, bad grades) and not with your potential (project yourself as a doctor, for example)".

In France, MRS_MEM_003 says that there is a problem in public education, since young people are never given personal motivation classes, which generates a lack of confidence in the professional trajectories of young people.

Node III.13. Economies (Results)

s). Institutions of social mediation, technical internships and subsidies (Jobs)

→ What types of work are offered to young people?

The young people interviewed obtain economic support from various sources and jobs: educator, electrician, unemployment benefits. The most representative jobs are in social action: educator, summer camp facilitator, sports facilitator, boxing trainer, facilitator of access to information for young people. Two characteristics are common to these jobs. The first is the target audience: young people, since these are jobs that seek to influence life in the neighbourhoods and the professional trajectories of young people. The second is the dependence on the institutional framework: jobs are offered by social mediation organizations subsidized by the government, or it is the State, through unemployment subsidies, that provides some economic support to young people. In LaFab, the strength of the informal economy appears clearly: during the field work, we observe a man who arrives with his work bench and starts fixing phones, while next to him some North African youths are waiting for clients for something.

Next, we analyse these forms of work that young people have:

- › Creation of projects with a social impact in the neighbourhoods with the support of adults who believe that young people can find vocations.
- › Jobs in institutions that mediate and facilitate access to employment for young people from poor neighbourhoods, such as l'ADDAP13 and the CRIJ.
- › Internships that allow technical diplomas to be validated after high school.

Often the professional trajectories of young people are supported by a figure (teacher, coach, social worker) who knew how to connect with the potential and abilities of the young person, knew how to motivate him and generate self-confidence.

However, as stated by MRS_MEM_003, "few people can really make a living from what they like to do", which in his case is boxing. Although he became a professional at the age of 19, MRS_MEM_003 today lives mainly on RSA (Active Solidarity Income), which provides people without resources with a minimum level of income that varies according to the composition of the household⁴³.

Sometimes, family history is a determining factor in professional orientation and the jobs that young people seek to do. This is the case of MRS_MEM_005, who decided to pursue professional training as a specialized educator for the public with disabilities, since her brother is disabled.

⁴³ The RSA is open, under certain conditions, to people who are at least 25 years old and to young workers from 18 to 24 years old if they are single parents or have a certain period of professional activity.

One of the social workers from ADDAP13, a benchmark for prevention through sports, affirms that he usually hires young people from LaFab who are not attending school and who are walking the streets all day: "Those young people who are without work, without school, we offer them temporary contracts in specific sports animation actions in the neighbourhoods, and this allows them to earn some money, and therefore not stay on the street, near the drug sales networks that also offer them work and money, but that it has awful consequences on their lives." Sometimes these young people are offered a kind of six-month internship with the possibility of training in the same ADDAP13 association, which can lead them to apply for a job educating young people.

Node III.14. Leisure (Results)

t). Young women playing football (Sports)

→ How do the young women of LaFab build their mediation practices?

The young women interviewed affirm that they are interested in playing football, but that the stadiums set up in the neighbourhood are always full of boys, as if only boys are allowed to play football.

The low presence of women playing football is a factor that annoys the young women interviewed.

And when asked if they conceive of playing in other spaces in the city, outside the neighbourhood, such as on the university campus, the participants point out that the opinion of their parents also prevents them from continuing to play football, since they "resent" their playing football.

The young women even affirm that in the culture of their parents there is only football as a sport and few sports options for women: "Parents only know football, we have sports in the kitchen", points out MRS_MEM_008. This demonstrates once again the tension between family cultural heritage and French cultural values lived by the young people of LaFab regarding the construction of their identity and the realization of cultural practices (cf., section 6.2.2.1.).

In general terms, young people perceive sport as a practice that opens the doors of friendships, creates new relationships, and teaches multiple values: respect for others, teamwork, and self-confidence. Boxing conveys particular values such as anger management.

Physical health and having a good time are also some of the main reasons for practicing sports.

Football is also perceived as a factor of cultural openness for young people from popular neighbourhoods. According to an educator of prevention through sports from ADDAP13, it is quite interesting to see how football was what led him to get to know different neighbourhoods from Marseille. It is implicitly verified how the secrecy of life in popular neighbourhoods is a structuring characteristic of the lives of these young people (cf., f. Collective identities: Between community biography and recreational spaces, section 5.4.1.)

Node III.15. Social Media (Results)

u). Social networks to socialize, communicate and exist (Social networks)

→ What influence do the new media and information have on the construction of collective and individual identities of young people?



Figure 22. YouTube advertising of cultural youth groups on the street

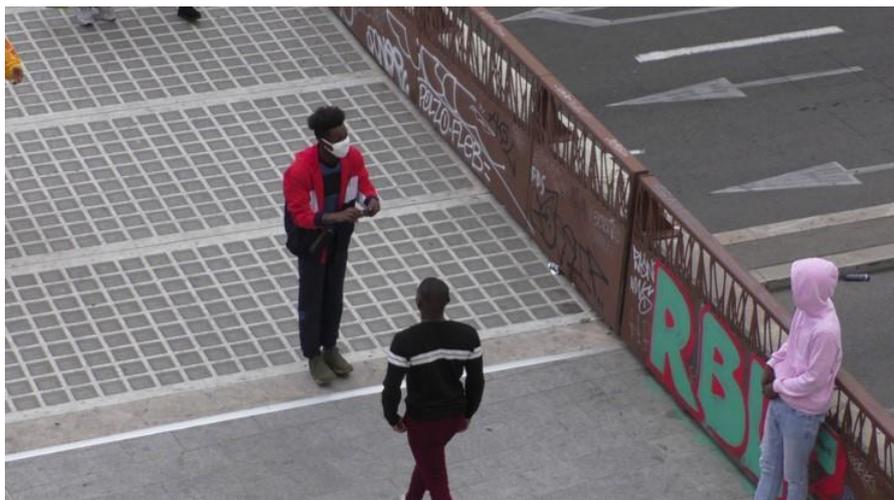


Figure 23. Young people recording video clips in the streets of downtown Marseille

The Internet and digital communication networks are used for multiple purposes in multiple settings. The *campo banda* and the social life of the neighbourhood are no exception. All the young people interviewed have phones connected to the Internet and are constantly paying attention to the messages and notifications that appear on their phones. The information conveyed in digital networks serves to inform about events in the neighbourhood, and develop relationships, until building collective identities amid a space of symbolic reputations (cf., p. Hybrid glocal spaces of reputation of youth groups, section 5.4.2).

The initiative “*Ma cité va briller*” (cf., f. Collective identities: between community biography and recreational spaces, section 5.4.1.) was communicated to the youth of the neighbourhood through Snapchat, Facebook and by word of mouth. Loving relationships

between young people begin on the beach or on Facebook, another sign of the influence of digital social networks on contemporary youth life.

Social networks are the most popular source of information among young people and educators: “You look at them at night and you know what is happening,” says MRS_STK_006. However, the voices against the effects of an overvalued media image of crime and almighty money –images present particularly in the theatricality of gangsta rap musical productions and drug-related television series– are raised to alert about the harmful effect on the youth behaviour.

It should be noted that social networks are also used to spread religious messages, as is the case of Imam MRS_STK_002, who participates in a local radio station where his message of improving community life through Islam reaches many young people from popular neighbourhoods in Marseille; His sermons are also regularly broadcast on Facebook.

Node III.16. Deviation (Results)

v). Marseille, drugs and violence (Crime and fights)

→ How does the imaginary of violence and drug trafficking operate in the practices of young people?

In this section we will provide elements of the context of life in Marseille, the perceptions and stories of LaFab built around the imaginary and practices of crime and violence. It is not a question here of exposing deviant practices of a particular youth group, but of giving the reader referents that influence certain practices of young people from popular neighbourhoods in Marseille in general, and of LaFab in particular.

The entry of young people from LaFab into drug trafficking networks, according to MRS_MEM_002, responds to a series of factors that accumulate and lead the youngster to carry out said illegal practices. On the one hand, there is a growing stigmatization towards the youth of the neighbourhood: “The youth try to do things and they are told, ‘No, it can’t be done, it won’t be possible, no, you won’t succeed, there is nothing for you.’” On the other hand, the new generations see the older ones in luxury cars, and they want to have the same, even though they have no training or job.

Some informants, inhabitants of LaFab with an average age of 40 years, agree that the new generations and themselves had the same dream of earning a lot of money; The difference is that they had a kind of limit, or implicit rules, not to exceed, a “respect”. On the other hand, today, any young person can traffic drugs, it is no longer a problem, everything is “trivialized”. “Before, you had to have contacts, there were few, nowadays any child, between 11, 12, and 13 years old can already earn 60 euros a day, simply sitting in a building and checking that the police don’t turn up.” (this is the role of *charboneur* in the Réseau). The trivialization of drug trafficking is particularly evident in LaFab, where the police station is just two blocks from the towers where the Réseau sells drugs every day of the year, advertising the prices of each type of drug in the form of huge graffiti on the neighbourhood entrance.

The trivialization of drugs and violence is one of the most common themes in the musical narrative of gangsta rap, a popular genre among the youth of the neighbourhood. The relationship between violent media referents and criminal behaviour is a problem denounced by MRS_MEM_003: “Crime broke out (in Marseille), and I saw it, crime skyrocketed from that moment: television series and rap.” This issue is dealt with in the section on media representations and their relationship with youth imaginaries (section 5.4.5. Imaginaries).

Violence and fights are visible in Marseille depending on the observer. During our field work, we found few fights in the public space: minor temporary altercations between drunks. However, the following speech by a young Gambian, around 25 years old, without French residence papers, and who usually frequents the centre of the city, near the Arc de Triomphe, reveals a world that generally remains hidden from the majority of the population, the media and the growing national and foreign tourism.

At night you have to be more careful. Two Mondays ago, some Nigerians, at my house, by Frais Vallon, beat me up with sticks. There were ten of them, but a man has to be strong. I defended myself, and I only have something on my lip, but it's nothing. Then a couple of days ago, a Nigerian came, right here to the square, and we fought. His face got cut and soon he had blood all over his clothes. My people defended me too. Here, in the square, it's where we Gambians come. I come here because we are safer here. In Frais Vallon (another popular neighbourhood known for its drug dealing) I don't want to meet Nigerians. Even Arabs are dangerous people. Those who are there playing. Also a few days ago, one of them wanted to hit me. He passed by real close to me once, a second time, pulling his body against mine, a third time, the same. Then he picked up stick and hit it so hard that there was no doubt. My people helped me too. Marseille is great, bro. There are many things we don't know. Here it is calmer than in the suburbs, there are more police. Well, although, even right here, some Arabs recently beat up a civilian (a policeman in plain clothes). Sometimes they look at you and say give me this you're wearing and this. And if you don't, problem, they take out a gun or a knife, straight to your head. You have to defend yourself. I am no longer afraid of those things.

Regarding the violence in the city, our informants affirm that before the confinement it was violent, with several settling of scores, “but a bit rude, who no longer even have the elegance to make settling scores. Today, they use weapons that come from Eastern Europe and that they throw like brutes”.

Node III.17. Resistance (Results)

w). Youth empowerment, need for institutionality and informality (Activism)

→ How do community and institutional practices operate in youth groups?

Different collective youth practices that seek to improve the daily life of the inhabitants of the LaFab neighbourhood were verified during the study field. A common element defines them: their dependence, to a greater or lesser degree, on the bureaucratic logic of subsidies and legalization of collective movements before the local government, (cf., section a. Bureaucratic logic of the organization of youth groups: the innovation of the "territorial booster" and "civic services", in section 5.4.1.)

For example, the collective *La Cité des possibles* (cf., c. Horizontal decision-making according to individual objectives and the needs of the neighbourhood, section 5.4.1), led

by MRS_MEM_002, seeks to empower the youth of the neighbourhood through contests eloquence audiences, where a topic is proposed and young people must publicly argue a point of view.

MRS_MEM_002 works in an association financed by the local government which is related to neighbourhood associations. However, what distinguishes his action is the desire and the attempt to set up a collective of independent youth that does things directly for LaFab: an independent collective that also becomes an association. There is a critical look at all the associations that come from outside, that depend on public money and that are in competition for it. “The other associations see us badly, as one more competitor”, he affirms. At the moment, in the MRS_MEM_002 collective there are only young people from Comoros, but what he wants to do is federate young people from all neighbourhoods, including those from wealthy neighbourhoods. His idea is the integration of various audiences: he wants to build a civic space for relationships linked to youth more than origin, residence, or social class.

Other young people understand the openness to new experiences as a positive factor in the development of their life trajectories. For example, a young man from LaFab proposes setting up a project so that young people can talk about Europe and citizenship and that they can travel with other young people from other (popular) European neighbourhoods, so that they can discuss and learn more.

For her part, MRS_MEM_001, uses her social capital, both as a youth mediation professional (she holds a job in an association financed by the government) and as a resident of the LaFab neighbourhood, to propose an associative project for professional insertion, through of basketball, for young people who have dropped out of school and are unemployed.

Sport thus appears once again as an agent of social mediation for young people (i.e., improvement of living conditions in the neighbourhood), especially when school and family difficulties are present (cf., paragraph a. Young women playing football, section 5.4.3.). Sport is the gateway, the first point of contact that the gauges offer to young people.

We have verified a collective initiative led by the older brothers of the neighbourhood (GRAFS) and some young people from the neighbourhood. The name of the collective “*Todos Juntos*” proposes to federate the different actions that are currently taking place in the neighbourhood, creating an association that can become a legitimate interlocutor with the government. It is an initiative that seeks to unblock the competition for public money that the different initiatives of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood have. Such a proposal must go through the bureaucratic logic of becoming a legal person, which sometimes slows down the realization of community projects on the ground.

However, a first action, without waiting for the validation of said bureaucratic logic, was carried out by members of said group. The urgency of a situation in the neighbourhood becomes a priority in collective practices – ignoring all expectations of subsidies and institutional recognition: If we don't do it, who's going to? And we have to do it now, if

we wait for spring, we are going to be swimming in garbage”, says MRS_STK_009, referring to the garbage collection action that I lead with several parents and young people from the neighbourhood. Even the publicity of such initiatives on social networks can be considered by some inhabitants as an obstacle rather than support. People care more about creating a public image on social media than actually meeting and acting together, as MRS_STK_009 says: “We only need bags of garbage, the mothers and the young people already have masks and gel against bacteria, and the communication has already been done by the young people through social networks, more than communicating we are going to do it”.

5.4.4. Relations (cluster IV. TransGang)

Presentation of the elements to be evaluated

Reference definition from the TransGang Codebook

→ Social relations of the members of the street youth groups, both internal and external (with other groups, with adults, with the State and with civil society).

Reference local research dimension(s) (Background Paper Marseille)

→ The neighbourhood and hyperlocal identity.

In the case of Marseille, the *campo banda* has an important geographical anchor: the neighbourhood. We will demonstrate how the relationships of young people with the different social actors are produced not only in the physical spaces of the neighbourhood (football fields, association premises, snacks, public transport, building stairs) but are also based on the collective imagination. that generates living in the neighbourhood.

→ Community and institutional social mediation.

Relations in the *campo banda* revolve, on the one hand, around practices (legal and illegal) self-managed by young people, and on the other, around practices supervised by adults (institutions). We will analyse the institutional or informal nature of the relations in the *campo banda*.

Initial hypotheses (Research Plan Marseille)

→ Multigenerational integration in the neighbourhood (i.e., recurrent interactions between different age groups that lead to the formation of a space for dialogue⁴⁴) favours the emergence of conflict mediation practices in youth gangs (a necessary but not sufficient cause).

→ The intergenerational factor is a necessary but not sufficient cause of social mediation in the marginalized neighbourhoods of Marseille. Intergenerational ties foster spaces for conflict mediation in street gangs and between these and other actors in the *campo banda*. In contexts of community associative experiences around sport or culture, the

⁴⁴ From the perspective of D. Bohm (Bohm, 2004) "dialogue" allows individuals to become aware of the processes of "fragmentation" (separations) that govern the totality of our reality (social, political, epistemological). The objective of the dialogue is therefore to identify the paradoxical patterns of thoughts and sensations in order to change the way in which they occur collectively.

participation of older brothers or sisters (GRAFS) who are former gang members between the ages of 30 and 40 can mean new ways of mediating conflicts for young gang members of the new generations.

Initial question(s) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ How do street youth use institutions and how do institutions try to penetrate informal youth mediations?

→ To what extent do intergenerational interactions in the *campo banda* lead to the practice of conflict mediation by these youth street groups? In what kind of spaces (physical, virtual, social, political, associative, institutional, school, religious, relatives) do these intergenerational interactions occur?

Analysis of data

Evaluation question(s) proposed by the TransGang team

→ How does the group relate to the adult generations?

→ How does the group relate to the State/Administration?

→ How does the group relate to other street youth groups?

→ How is the relationship with other social groups? And with civil society?

→ How are relations with relatives and families of other members?

Node IV.23. Social Services (Results)

x). Relations with social mediators (Social Workers)

→ What types of relationships and how are they built between young people and educators?

In Marseille, there is a life trajectory profile common to many of the neighbourhood social workers: men and women between the ages of 30 and 50 who live, or have lived for most of their lives, in popular neighbourhoods, with similar problems in those who work today. Educational and associative work is a tool for social and labour mobility for the youth of the neighbourhoods. The social workers are a mirror of the youth of the neighbourhood they care for: they have origins from the Maghreb, Comoros, Guadeloupe, they are Black and North African, and generally come from popular neighbourhoods. Youth intervention social work is therefore a way of generating relationships of trust under shared cultural codes with young people.

The world of neighbourhood associations deserves the respect and trust of the youth of the neighbourhood. For example, MRS_STK_012, "territorial booster" of a neighbourhood professional insertion program financed by the national government, lived in one of the LaFab towers for a year, and this allowed her to make a wide network of contacts, from minors, adolescents to the elderly and elderly people in the neighbourhood. Said recognition facilitates his actions in the neighbourhood.

MRS_STK_006 is a social worker who grew up in one of the northern neighbourhoods of Marseille with the most reputation for drug trafficking and socio-economic difficulties

who today works at LaFab. Her work often consists of listening, being a psychologist, where young traffickers can become difficult and go back to being teenagers: "I know so many things on top of that that I wouldn't want to know either. What I know is dangerous, and so is my position, that's why I don't work with the police, I don't want to be associated with them. It's very frustrating too, knowing you can't do anything." The prevention work done by MRS_STK_006 and her team is aimed at young people who want to get out of drug trafficking, those who were in prison, those who are close to but not integrated into the sales groups. Even social workers have opted for harm reduction not only for young users, but also for young dealers.

It is important to note that social workers often complain about the salary conditions of a job that, according to them, is not valued by society and is emotionally and physically demanding: "it is miserable, but I do it because I don't want the young people from the neighbourhood end up involved in crime", affirms one of the social workers. This reveals another of the constants in their speeches: social workers are professionals committed to the youth cause and the improvement of the quality of life of vulnerable populations. In this regard, MRS_STK_006 affirms: "the adolescent and youngsters of the Drug Réseau that I follow earn more than I who do not reach 2000 euros even if they have a university degree."

One of the key sites for cultural activities in the neighbourhood is the Maison pour Tous, where recreational and social activities are offered to families, mothers, and young people. For the latter, two social workers ensure that young people have someone to guide them: one is in charge of cultural and sports activities, while the other is in charge of prevention, that is, the young people who are outside the school context. La Maison pour Tous is an exemplary intergenerational site⁴⁵, where the relationship between social workers and young people is one of camaraderie: educators play with young people, listen to them, guide them, without the need for an appointment. Of course, the relationships between social workers and young people respond to the logic of all kinds of human relationships, that is, to the affinity between individuals and their individual characteristics.

The "educators" or "mediators" – as the social workers found call themselves – meet the young people, either through referrals from institutions present in the neighbourhood (Mission Locale, ADDAP13, Maison pour Tous), or through urban tours and personal contacts on the street. Social workers build personalized accompaniment programs with young people, the result of the projects, preferences and aspirations of the young, and of the policies and financing possibilities present in the governmental and associative youth intervention ecosystem.

For example, financial and administrative support for young people to obtain a driver's license is one of the most common mediation actions. On Tuesdays, at the Maison pour

⁴⁵ cf., section Grand frères et soeurs (GRAFS) – Big Brothers, 5.4.4. Node IV.21. Intergenerational (Results).

Tous, there is a stay of a mobility counsellor who guides the young people of LaFab in Driving license financing.

Social workers offer young people *chantiers d'action*, intervention activities on the ground. These are concrete experiences to improve public spaces where young people develop manual, technical or professional skills, and that have an impact on the community, inside or outside the neighbourhood (facade painting, maintenance of a garden and public spaces). The interest of this approach is to generate relational skills in young people that can later be used in situations of employment or teamwork. According to one of the social workers found, what the young people of LaFab are looking for "is to have a frame of reference, a frame of authority if you will, since in the neighbourhood they do not have this frame of reference, neither family, nor school, nor good relations with the police." Then the Maison pour Tous becomes "a kind of sacred place where certain rules have been clearly established: say hello, say goodbye, don't steal." He tells me that he can leave a wallet full of money and go away, leave it alone, and the young people do not take it, they respect that it is not theirs, "if exactly the same thing happens outside, at home, or in the neighbourhood, no they are going to hesitate to take it", he affirms. The intervention of social workers deals with the transmission of civic values while facilitating the realization of their individual and collective projects.



Figure 24. Cultural project of initiative of an NGO in collaboration with the youth of LaFab

The relationship with new actors in the intervention ecosystem has benefited the emergence of collective projects of the youth of the neighbourhood. This is due to innovative practices in communication with young people, while diminishing the bureaucratic logic of community initiatives (cf., section a. Bureaucratic logic of the organization of youth groups: the innovation of the "territorial booster" and the "civic services", section 5.4.1).

In certain cases, such as MRS_MEM_005, young people benefit from specialized support according to their health situations. These are medical-social interventions, where various professionals intervene in the young person's life trajectory.

Node IV.18. Insiders (Results)

y). Community associations: formalize youth groups (Insiders)

→ What kind of relationships exist in the neighbourhood around community and institutional mediation initiatives?

In Marseille there is a network of NGOs (*Associations Loi 1901*, according to French law) created by the young people themselves and inhabitants of the popular neighbourhoods (i.e., community associations). These are not NGOs run by external actors from the neighbourhood, but these community associations are perceived as part of the inhabitants themselves. We have identified two cases: the *La cité des possibles* collective, made up of young Comorians from LaFab, in charge of producing the empowerment event through eloquence contests in the neighbourhood, and directed by MRS_MEM_002 (cf., section 6.1.2.2. Node I.2 Structure); and the 143 Street Game collective, at the initiative of MRS_MEM_001, which aims, through basketball, to lead young people who have dropped out of school and are unemployed in the neighbourhood, towards the achievement of objectives that value their experiences and generate self-confidence, cf., section w. Youth empowerment, need for institutionalism and informality (Activism), section 5.4.3. Node III.17. Endurance).



Figure 25. Clothing advertising for the 143 Street Game community association project

In the current state of declining public social and cultural resources in France, according to our social worker informants, the multiplicity of new community associations creates tensions regarding competition for grants. MRS_MEM_002 affirms that his group was criticized and rejected by other community associations established in the neighbourhood.

MRS_MEM_002's reveals the tension between the autonomy that comes from acting in informal spaces and logics (community, neighbourhood, and family networks) and the material support that can be achieved by obtaining a subsidy and entering into bureaucratic logics: On the one hand MRS_MEM_002 expresses distrust of everything that comes from outside and enters the neighbourhood as a political-associative project, and at the same time his personal and collective project consists of taking the youth of the neighbourhood outside the social and spatial limits of the neighbourhood.

This level 1 Node cannot be located in the level 2 Node IV.20. Civil Society, since they are not actors external to the neighbourhood, but rather the inhabitants themselves (Node IV.18. Insiders) who take forms of community associations as resistance strategies, producing conflict and collaboration among the inhabitants. There are other types of NGOs that are perceived as actors external to the neighbourhood, since they carry out activities throughout the south of France and even internationally (cf., bb. NGOs in the associative fabric of the neighbourhood, section 5.4.4).

"The problem in an association is trust, who manages the money," says MRS_MEM_001. However, the tensions between the community associations do not only emerge at the financial level and in the competition for subsidies but also in terms of spaces for action and points of implementation within the neighbourhood. LaFab does not have any community hall or cultural house – the closest one is in the next neighbourhood: La Maison pour Tous de Sain Mauront. The last youth cultural centre in LaFab closed due to a scandal of violence on the premises. In 2022, the municipality decided to reopen said premises and receive new projects from the community in the form of legally constituted associations. It is a place that is highly sought-after by the many gatherings of citizens of the neighbourhood, since the lack of spaces, added to the lack of financing and own organization of community projects, make the development of the neighbourhood even more precarious. That said, a single location for all the neighbourhood associations is also a source of envy and insight among community leaders. Recently, new projects have emerged among the inhabitants to create formal community associations, from the legal point of view. The municipality of Marseille must open the door to community associations in this new location in LaFab, and not only to NGOs perceived as external actors in the neighbourhood, in order to avoid the violence of the past: "the fact of making people from the neighbourhood come to this new associations project regulates (such violence)." affirms MRS_STK_006.

In LaFab, the inhabitants have difficulties agreeing on associative projects, since the shadow of the institutionality that subsidizes and politicizes often creates tensions that cannot be overcome among the inhabitants. The suspicion among the community associations, impacted by the historical clientelism in the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille, means that many of the inhabitants and social workers do not believe that the

associative projects are really community action, for the improvement of the neighbourhood.

“The problem is that everyone is out for themselves (their association), the family, the community. They don’t allow an entire neighbourhood to live”, affirms one of the educators found. The lack of communication between community associations is one of the factors that weakens the articulation of mediation projects between the inhabitants, and of these with the institutional actors.

The interdependence between community associations and the institutional framework (represented by local government agencies or private NGOs delegated to them) is the guiding thread of mediation practices at LaFab. The community associations decide to enter into subsidy logics, and the institutionality intends to regulate the community movement through public financing policies, as can be deduced from the discourse of MRS_STK_006 who conceives the relationship between said community actions and the *Politique de la ville* (public financing for the municipality) as a necessary stage in the evolution of associative mediation practices of young people and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

z). Friendship and extended family (Insiders)

→ What is the cultural influence on neighbour and family relations in the neighbourhood?

The concept of extended family (Elias, 2001), referring to a network of interpersonal relationships that group family, neighbourhood and friendship ties, allows us to understand the nature of the ties of collaboration, friendship and identity construction of the young people of LaFab. In what our informants told us, the categories of friends, cousins, siblings are used in a discretionary manner to refer to close people with whom significant life experiences are lived. Regardless of the name they are given, these people share the same characteristic: they all live in the same neighbourhood and have known each other since childhood. This is the case of MRS_MEM_003, who started boxing accompanied by "cousins and neighbours from the neighbourhood."

Of course, the bonds of friendship can go beyond the territorial references of the neighbourhood, and relationships can be created with other people outside the neighbourhood. Even as a way of claiming openness to new experiences outside the neighbourhood (an aspect generally valued in the imagination of many young people, cf., k. Community biography, perceptions and discourses on the LaFab neighbourhood, section 5.4.2), the young people from LaFab reaffirm their friendship ties outside the neighbourhood, while minimizing those in the neighbourhood.

"*C'est la Famille!*" (It's family), is a common expression in LaFab, and in Marseille, to refer to a friend, friend, or acquaintance, who is trusted and appreciated. These are attitudes that would be expected in any family relationship. In LaFab they play football every week, they go around the neighbourhood in cars smoking and listening to loud music, sell drugs, go to school, eat snacks (fast food), go to the beach, and time is spent in the streets *en famille*.

Node IV.19. Outsiders (Results)

aa). Alliances and conflicts (Outsiders)

→ How does the associative fabric operate in this territory of extreme urban marginalization?

In the narrative of the case study in Marseille, the alliances and conflicts refer to implicit agreements of coexistence (collaboration, competition) and of uses of public spaces between the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, the youth of the Réseau of drug sales, the institutions government agencies and external NGOs that develop activities in the neighbourhood. It is therefore possible, from this perspective, to identify three types of alliances and conflicts in LaFab.

The first among the inhabitants and young people of the Réseau who sell drugs (cf., n. "We were the most dangerous neighbourhood, the big team", section 5.4.2). To sell drugs to final customers, the young people of the Réseau occupy the back stairs of various buildings in the neighbourhood. Sometimes the stairs are blocked with furniture and abandoned pieces of wood: a kind of security against possible police raids. The inhabitants use the same stairs to enter their homes. For the observer, the agreement is implicit: neither the young people nor the inhabitants discuss the blocking of the stairs, nor the lines of customers that come from various parts of the city and that sometimes accumulate on the stairs. Young people and inhabitants seem to live an implicit agreement (with moments of readjustment and conflict, surely) on the use of said spaces. We have observed a corner in the neighbourhood that is sometimes occupied by young people to sell drugs, and other times by older people for the informal sale of bananas, vegetables and other foods. The young people of the Réseau are involved in the daily life of the neighbourhood on some occasions: carrying shopping bags for the elderly, since the elevators of the twenty-story towers often do not work; or even buying inflatable pools and entertaining the neighbourhood's children in the streets with an afternoon of music, sun and water during the summer⁴⁶.

The second type of alliances and conflicts occurs between the inhabitants and the government institutions in charge of the urban renewal of the public spaces of the neighbourhood (cf., 1. "Time stopped in LaFab": perceptions about the future of the neighbourhood, section 5.4.2). In this case, it is rather a constant tension between two parties that are often considered contradictory since the interests of both sides make it difficult to find a point of agreement. The inhabitants of the neighbourhood (Blacks and North Africans) are absent from the neighbourhood's urban renewal consultation tables. Our informants know that the balance of power between the municipality and them is not in their favour, and they prefer to start waving the flags of strategic alliances. "What's better? Stay as spectators or get involved in the renewal processes?" they ask, but not before criticizing the lack of critical thinking of the same inhabitants of LaFab in the face of external logic, "White people with a piece of paper, in the name of the Republic".

⁴⁶ cf., section II. Types of mediation, sport and drugs (Conflict resolution), 5.4.6. Node VI.31. Mediation (Results).

The distrust towards the urban renewal that occurs in Marseille, and especially in some popular neighbourhoods, is recurrent in the discourse of our informants. In the next section, MRS_STK_005 gives a detailed reading of how gentrification, according to him, operates in Marseille, increasing rental prices, creating public transport routes, and displacing the most popular classes to the outskirts of the city.

In the context of these urban renewal projects, and possible strategic alliances, MRS_MEM_001 proposes to play the employment cards so that labour from the neighbourhood is hired, or to insist on the renovation of buildings.

However, the development of these alliances requires the participation of the inhabitants at the consultation tables proposed by the municipality, moments of dialogue where the inhabitants are conspicuous by their absence. “I went to one of those meetings, it was disgusting, there were only associations (NGOs in the sense of this study), officials, a couple of old people from a tower who tried to talk a bit, nobody cared, everything was already planned.”

The following photo shows a model of the urban renewal of the neighbourhood proposed by the public authorities. The green parts, with gardens, currently do not exist, and the mistrust of the veracity of said works is high among the neighbourhood residents.



Figure 26. LaFab neighbourhood urban renewal model

The urban renewal of the neighbourhood comes to change the balance of existing alliances in the neighbourhood. For example, our informants wonder about the response of the young people of the Réseau if alliances in terms of employment in renovation projects are achieved with the municipality. They affirm that these young people would not accept intervention in their territories of operation, or that they could even ask them for a part of the money destined for the involvement of labour from the neighbourhood.

Alliances with government institutions also occur informally, although they appear accurately in the imagination of our informants. For example, the mother of one of the

young women intercedes with the Logirem (the entity that manages part of the LaFab social park) so that new residents of the neighbourhood can access housing within the neighbourhood.

In LaFab's residents' meetings, where the directive line is community empowerment, external actors are often characterized by their opportunistic attitude, seeking financing at the expense of the residents and their needs.

The third type of alliances and conflicts is the one that occurs between the youth/inhabitants and the networks of community associations and NGOs established in the neighbourhood (cf., Bureaucratic logics of the organization of youth collectives: the innovation of the "territorial booster" and "civic services", section 5.4.1, and Community associations: formalize youth groups, section 5.4.4). On the one hand, the inhabitants benefit from actions and resources (material, administrative, and political) which are made available to part of said associative and institutional networks. On the other hand, the latter need a vulnerable population that year after year renews its demands for help and intervention, to justify budgets and continuity of operations. There is a multiplication of interventions, actions, profiles, NGOs, all financed by the public, partly in a situation of concurrence, partly as a link between notable politicians and subaltern classes.

Regarding the conflicts, MRS_MEM_002 points out that the interests and time frames for action from the institutions are not always the same as those of the youth from the neighbourhood. The bureaucracy of these institutions –with people occupying posts and intervention missions in the neighbourhoods “despite the fact that they have never seen inhabitants of the poor neighbourhoods, or even experienced the smell of the neighbourhoods”– reveals the degree of disconnection that can be felt by the young people with actors outside the neighbourhood. These are the statements of MRS_MEM_002, referring to his vision of the job he holds in an institution that helps young people from working-class neighbourhoods all over Marseille.

A common aspect of the three types of alliances and conflicts in LaFab is that they become a continuum, of collaborations, rejection and competition, where the reading of the situation depends on the argument that you want to make visible. The multiplicity of organizations acting in the neighbourhood around youth “has a suffocating effect on these young people”, as MRS_STK_005 reported.

Node IV.20. Civil Society (Results)

bb). NGOs in the associative fabric of the neighbourhood (Outsiders)

→ How do the inhabitants and youth of LaFab perceive and relate to the institutional framework and mediation projects endorsed by organizations outside the neighbourhood?

The associative fabric (NGOs and community associations) has a preponderant role in the articulation of social policies at the territorial level, something that will appear later from a critical perspective in the accounts of our informants, under the term "clientelism" and of competences between actors in play (cf., aa. Alliances and conflicts, section 5.4.4). If associative work is so anchored in the relationship between popular classes, migrations

and urban planning, it is because there is a local policy that places it at the centre of a set of exchanges and organization of consensus and social balance.

Unlike community associations, created by residents and youth from the neighbourhood, there are several NGOs in the associative fabric that are perceived as actors from outside the neighbourhood. The relationships of alliances and conflicts between young people and these NGOs have been explained in section aa. Alliances and conflicts (Outsiders). These NGOs carry out activities throughout France and even internationally. The main NGOs identified in the associative fabric of the neighbourhood were:

- › **Groupe Addap13** (*Association Départementale pour le Développement des Actions de Prévention des bouches-du-rhône (13)*), association that provides social services throughout the department (prevention, mediation, MENAS): 600 workers do the work that local authorities outsourced.
- › **La Maison pour Tous de Saint-Mauront** (MPT-SM) carries out projects of popular education, art and participatory democracy aimed at families and young people in the Saint Mauront neighbourhood (including LaFab). Funded by the local public authorities and run by the Federation Léo Lagrange⁴⁷, the MPT-SM is the main cultural centre near LaFab.
- › **Uniscité** (an association that mobilizes nearly 2,000 volunteers in more than fifty cities in France) has been proposing activities at LaFab for the last 4 years. In general, the volunteers are young people who live in the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille.
- › **Private foundations of national and international scope** that intervene in the neighbourhood via PIC financing (Ministry of Labor)

La Maison pour Tous is a public space financed by the municipality that brings together the work of many groups, governmental (professional insertion) and community (collectives of parents). This hybrid composition, halfway in the classification between external and internal actors of the neighbourhood, places Maison pour Tous in a particular category: it is a space of strong identification with the neighbourhood and its inhabitants, young people respect the work of educators and social workers, while they receive dignified and valuable treatment from the professionals. "It's a second home for the neighbourhood kids" says one of the social workers. For parents, it is also a space of protection for their children: "The parents of the young people are calmer when they know that they are coming to La Maison pour Tous, it's understood, it's better if they're here and not getting up to no good wandering the neighbourhood." affirms the same social worker.

Node IV.21. Intergenerational (Results)

cc). *Grand frères et soeurs* (GRAFS) – Big Brothers

→ What is the role of GRAFS in youth mediation practices?

⁴⁷ Acting on behalf of the municipality of Marseille (Ville de Marseille), the Federation Léo Lagrange defines itself as "a player in the social economy".

In Marseille, the figure of the older brother or sister in popular neighbourhoods, including LaFab, is at once familiar, neighbourly and friendly. For this reason, a new Tier 1 node is created, and it is in Tier IV.21. Intergenerational.

The *grands frères et grandes sœurs* (GRAFS) are an important figure in social mediation among young French individuals of North African origin from the poorer neighbourhoods of Marseille (Duret, 1996). A GRAFS is someone who uses his past experience as an example of positive transformation for those who are now living and working on the streets, as can be seen in this example of a young man in his thirties who intends to develop a community garbage collection project in LaFab.

Institutions have criticized them for being "self-proclaimed mediators who have no training and are not even supervised" (Comité interministeriel des villes, 2011, p. 12). Even so, the GRAFS are essential actors in their neighbourhoods. Their role as mediator and example in the socialization of the youngest evidences the social and family dynamics of youth street gangs. The GRAFS base their mediation relationships with the youngest on the respect due to being the most experienced (*les aînés*), trust and affective ties. They are distinguished from parents essentially by the use of a non-prescriptive authority (Duret, 1996).

The autonomy of the youngest is the leitmotif of their relationships with the GRAFS, the latter considered "more as a reference than a model" (Soto & Therme, 1999, p. 57), both for ways of mediating conflicts and for the sharpening of forms of illegality. The GRAFS contribute to improving the neighbourhood environment and enhancing it, intervene in conflicts between gangs, their families and the school, and even give material aid to the youngest. The GRAFS professionalize their role as mediators by integrating a position, which is precarious due to their contractual instability, in community associations and public socio-cultural and sports institutions in the neighbourhood, or by following a sports or musical career. Such is the case of MRS_MEM_003: "Today, most young people know me, because I am a *grand frère* (GRAFS), in fact. And they want to look like me. You know, sporty."

It is therefore a relationship of advice and listening, where the GRAFS places capital or life experience that is immediately useful in the project or particular situation of the young person and his ecosystem at the disposal of the young person. The GRAFS has a reputation in the neighbourhood, which allows them to carry out actions to mediate and improve the quality of life of young people and residents. However, the biggest challenge for these mediation actions is the generation gap, where the GRAFS see that it is not always easy to understand the new generations' way of thinking. According to the GRAFS, the new generations (under 20 years of age) have values that do not correspond to those of their generations: "respect is not the same".

According to our GRAFS informants, two cousins of MRS_MEM_001 who are similar in age to him and who are also former inhabitants of LaFab, the new generations "are quite impulsive but, in the end, they don't know anything, these last two generations of young people at LaFab had no references, examples to follow." For these GRAFS, the situation has changed, because before they had the GRAFS, and if they did something

wrong, they were immediately warned that they could not smoke, “there was something like respect”. But these young people have changed their references. "You can't talk to them anymore because they are very aggressive, if you tell them something, you don't know what they've got in mind and they can come to get their revenge later, you know, there is no longer respect for the fight, a code of honour, before we used to fight, and we looked for each other with bats or iron bars in our hands, and at the time we talked to each other, today it is not like that”.

The generation gap between the GRAFS and the neighbourhood youth was accentuated due to the life trajectories of the GRAFS, which, in many cases, lead the latter to live outside the neighbourhood, in search of social and economic advancement.

In a world that is hyperconnected by the Internet, not only have the references to the way of life changed for the new generations of young people at LaFab, but the expectations about what a dignified and successful life is have, too. The first generations of North African migrants in Marseille and in LaFab (the parents of today's young people) arrived and wanted to provide a roof, an education and food for their children, but the new generations born in France not only expect to satisfy basic needs, they also want to be part of society, being valued for their work or activities, and leave behind the "ghetto" (of marginalized neighbourhoods), a word that often comes from young people.

On the other hand, the relations between the young people and the GRAFS and also allow a support in the direction of the latter. For example, in the drafting of administrative documents or bureaucratic procedures where young people have more experience.

dd). The influence of family and teachers (Family)

→ How do the family and educators influence the trajectory of young people?

The parents of the young participants play an important role in the life trajectories of the young participants. Parents often tell young people that the street is a dangerous space which should be avoided. Young people grow up between the tension of accumulating social and friendship capital on the streets, on the one hand, and following their parents' instructions not to wander aimlessly on the streets on the other.

The search for a school career is a family heritage that parents seek to pass on to their children. Education is a way of economic and social advancement.

Of course, the concern of the street as a dangerous space is always present. Parents influence the leisure activities, dress styles, and religious identities of the youth at LaFab⁴⁸. Regarding the practice of football, the participating young women have to face the obstacle of their parents regarding an activity considered inappropriate for women, "contrary to the Koranic code" and exclusive to men, despite the growing interest of women. young people to practice it.

⁴⁸ cf., Section t. Young women playing football (Sports), 5.4.3. Node III.14. Leisure (Results); and section j. Between family cultural heritage and French cultural values (religious identity), 5.4.2 Node II.6. Self-representations (Results).

Family networks also serve to manage young people's misconduct. For example, for MRS_MEM_001, the crisis of adolescence and rebellion in LaFab led to his parents sending him to Paris to live with a Comorian uncle, while his cousin, who was the same age at that time, was sent for a year to live in the Comoros. Teachers and mentors were important elements in the life trajectory of two of the young participants. For MRS_MEM_003, his mentor and boxing coach, she was the one who "showed me perseverance and made me believe in my qualities." For MRS_MEM_005, her *lycée* teacher (last year of high school) was decisive in her decisions about where to apply for a job and what professional orientation to follow: "She called us even late at night, you could say that she considered us as her children, she it helped me to get onto the training course to be a professional educator after the *lycée*." Teachers and mentors were therefore decisive in the professional trajectories of young people.

Node IV.22. Authorities (Results)

ee) Mistrust in politics (Politicians)

→ How do young people perceive politics?

Gentrification, the product of a public policy aimed at relocating social classes with more purchasing power in the centre of Marseille, as well as the lack of coordination in urban plans⁴⁹ are two situations that are constantly reported by the participants. Young people feel used by politicians and the lack of trust in the government system grows.

Faced with this panorama, young people think about acting on the ground, creating a "ground policy: where each one does according to the needs they have in their living spaces."

With or without political help, young people perceive the future of the neighbourhood and its living spaces as a question where only they can answer, in the way that best suits them.

The alliances with the traditional political parties in the neighbourhood are so discredited that the political seal is synonymous with distrust. "People think that whoever gets involved in politics in the neighbourhood does it for a personal advantage, because they have been paid to gather votes" states MRS_MEM_002. Large social movements, originating in Marseille, such as SOS Racisme, were recovered decades ago by traditional political parties, something that today does not produce enthusiasm among the youngest.

However, the GRAFS acting in the neighbourhood are still in tension between political endorsements and the power to act in the community, which weakens the development of mediation and improvement actions in the neighbourhood.

"Politics is clientelism. They use you for their purposes. It is not sincere", affirms MRS_MEM_002. Peraldi & Samson (2020) explain the link between local policies and associations very well, qualifying the term "clientelism": it is not about the immoralism of corrupt rulers, but about a "political relationship where public resources are distributed

⁴⁹ cf., section I. "Time stopped in LaFab": perceptions about the future of the neighbourhood, 5.4.2. Node II.7. Territory (Results).

through a personalized relationship". Many associations in LaFab are also part of this mode of operation, occupying the intermediate space – mediation – between the individual and the State. In the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille, the fundamental resource managed by notable politicians has historically been the roof (access to public housing), but employment around the social sphere is a crucial element. Thus, a group of young people who want to formally set up a new association in the neighbourhood disturbs the political balance.

We do not find independent mobilizations or youth groups of political intervention in today's generation in Marseille. With the *gilets jaunes*, the peripheries in Marseille and in the main French cities did not move, everything remained still, even if the young people commented and approved.

ff). The police and young people: a relationship without interest (Politicians)

→ How do young people and the police interact in public spaces?

The relations between the police and the young people of LaFab are merely cohabitation, nothing beyond a relationship without interest that does not advance or regress. Patrolling the streets, the police pass a message of the presence of government order in the neighbourhood. The illicit drug outlets in LaFab are located a few hundred meters from the police station that occupies the other side of the school building. The whole community and the police know everything about the trafficking. There is an unofficial tolerance of micro-trafficking. Customers from all over the city stock up at LaFab every day of the week without fail. The youngsters in the Drug Réseau have a whole alert system, in case of a police presence close to the sales site: nothing is new, it seems like a repeated game, without interest. Young people are not afraid of the police, and the police ignore young people. Of course, political and electoral factors disrupt this tedious daily life, and eventually police operations are organized. There is nothing new and this is within the predictable of neighbourhood life.

Regarding the young migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, visible in the centre of the city, the police act differently: operations with undercover troops are carried out almost daily, in order to catch retail drug dealers, who are also illegal immigrants. Perhaps the latter is a more politically accurate reason than disturbing the economic balance that generates traffic in the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille: generally involving minors and young people born in Marseille.

5.4.5. Imaginaries (V. cluster TransGang)

Presentation of the elements to be evaluated

Reference definition from the TransGang Codebook

→ Symbolic elements that transmit the personal and group identity of the members of youth street groups.

Reference local research dimension(s) (Background Paper Marseille)

→ Spaces for immigration and ghettoisation.

Stigmatization is a central element in the individual and collective dynamics of the young participants found. The media accentuate the social references of the groups: "youth problems from popular neighbourhoods", "the problem of clandestine migration", "insecurity in the streets", "a youth without a future", are some of the ideas that circulate in the mass media and on social networks. We will show how these media impact the imaginary and the consequent future of young people in LaFab.

Initial hypothesis(es) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ Different intergenerational subcultures are created as a form of direct confrontation (violence, transgression of institutional norms) or adaptive response (social mediation, creation of cultural or sports associations) to the stigmatization and violence imposed by the dominant society.

Initial question(s) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ In a context of "space of flows" (Castells, 1999) enabled by the new communication technologies on the internet, how do young people⁵⁰ (re)define their cultural frameworks between national (France), local (their neighbourhoods in Marseille) and transnational (coming from the other side of the Mediterranean)? With what objectives (explicit and implicit)?

→ What is the intersection between Islamophobia, the French republican identity discourse and the emergence of logics of direct confrontation and adaptive responses of these young people?

→ What meaning do these young people give to violent behaviour in their daily lives, to the staging of violence in their cultural productions (gangsta rap video clips) and to the fact that they make violence (received or inflicted) visible in their social media posts? digital social?

Analysis of data

Evaluation question(s) proposed by the TransGang team

→ How do other social groups view and perceive street youth groups? Are the representations also reproduced over time and generations?

→ What are the group's values? How are the values represented?

→ What are the aspirations of a member who joins a gang? What meaning does being a member give to their lives?

→ How does the group help to forge meaning in their lives?

V.24 node. Media representations (Results)

gg). Stigmatizing narratives in a mercantile media logic

→ What are the effects of stigmatization on young people's imaginaries and mediation practices?

⁵⁰ In this document, by "youth" we refer to the young members of youth gangs in the case study.

The participants point to the mass media as directly responsible for a stigmatizing imaginary of popular neighbourhoods in France, particularly in the case of LaFab. Issues such as violence and drugs in Marseille are at the forefront of headlines on television and traditional media. Few times the positive stories of social mediation or improvement of the neighbourhood are mediated in said media.

Added to the increase in media stigmatization is the phenomenon of digital social networks, which are full of actors selling audiovisual content over the Internet, such as Netflix. Social networks are quite popular among young participants, whose narratives about life in popular French neighbourhoods generally respond to mere commercial interests. And of course, turbulent, drug, gun, and highly sexualized stories are an easier sell than reporting on positive citizenship practices. Audiovisual series and rap music have been co-opted by major players in electronic commerce, generating sounding boards where the same imaginaries managed by artificial intelligences in charge of generating more at less cost show similar stigmatizing content over and over again. Of course, young and old are aware of this, but the impact of repeated exposure to such narratives on behaviour and daily practices is far from fully understood. One thing is certain: the perception of various GRAFS on the impact of the media and violent narratives on the behaviour of young people points in the same direction in that the media, the Internet, and cultural references seem to create violent and apathetic attitudes in the new generations.

Even the cultural productions of young people (rap video clips) follow the gangster narratives, not because the young people belong to violent gangs, but because the global imaginary dictates that a mediated video (that achieves thousands of million views) must have such elements because it is the iconography of the entire gangsta rap universe⁵¹:

Bearing in mind that technology and its use is the result of a precise state of human development (at a technical and behavioural level), it is important to indicate that new technologies are not in themselves the cause of said neurotic tendencies, since these are only the reflection of a current economic, political and community system:

hh). Stigmatization: employment, education and revaluation actions (Stigmatization)

→ What are the logics that support the discourses of stigmatization of popular neighbourhoods?

The young participants perceive their ethnic and religious condition as a source of stigmatization. Since the attacks in Paris in 2015, the media stigmatization of the Muslim religion in France has increased. The young people interviewed are aware of the constant amalgamation between the Muslim religion and terrorism, of verbal and physical violence towards Muslim symbols.

⁵¹ cf., section p. Hybrid glocal spaces of reputation of youth groups (City) 6.4.2. Node II.7. Territory (Results); section v. Marseille, drugs and violence (Crime and fights), 5.4.3. Node III.16. Deviation (Results); and Social networks to socialise, communicate and exist (Social networks), 6.3.2.4. Node III.15. Social Media (Results).

LaFab is a neighbourhood highly stigmatized in the media and its youth considered despicable (*racailles*). When it comes to looking for a job and sending resumes, several of the young people interviewed prefer to give a false address, outside of LaFab, since they believe that their application will not be considered if their address is in LaFab.

In France, young people whose parents were born abroad (*issus de l'immigration*) but with an equivalent level and academic trajectory have twice the risk of being unemployed than those whose parents were born in France (Brinbaum & Guégnard, 2011). This is something that repeatedly appears in the speeches of our informants: “In France when you wear a veil (Muslim garment) it isn't easy to find a job, it's difficult, because when they have an interview the employers don't want it. And they get frustrated and back out. They are impatient,” says an educator.

There are factors that deepen the stigmatization, such as the economic precariousness of the neighbourhoods and their inhabitants. In the case of the LaFab football club, the person in charge affirms that many families want to enrol their children, but they do not even have enough to ensure that they can buy food every day. Young people do not have the basic material to play football: uniforms, sports shoes, balls. Amid this precariousness, the administrative manager of the club says it has been the case that any material disappears, so they are hesitate to loan out material because items sometimes do not make their way back. The person in charge emphasizes that the youths cannot be judged, and it is due to their precarious situation. She compares this fact with an experience she had with young people from poor neighbourhoods in Germany, where a group of young women from LaFab travelled to Germany so that another group of young German women would later be received at LaFab. The young women from Marseille were surprised to see that in Germany all young people had uniforms and sports equipment was made freely available.

When receiving the young Germans in Marseille, the young women from LaFab were concerned about the opinion they would have of their neighbourhood, which they considered unattractive compared to what they saw of popular neighbourhoods in Germany because they had parks and better infrastructures than in LaFab.

One of the educators interviewed is aware of the bad reputation that LaFab has and of the need to create spaces for community coexistence such as the Maison pour Tous: “of course the neighbourhood we are in is a well-known place for selling drugs, but it's not just about that. It is difficult to get that idea out of the neighbourhood, precisely what the Maison pour Tous wants is for it to be open all day to receive proposals and positive dynamics.” This work of revaluing the neighbourhood is carried out by educators who were born and raised in popular neighbourhoods of Marseille, and who themselves know the weight of stigmatization in the trajectories of young people and their collective proposals.

The way the Maison pour Tous acts is to propose activities outside the neighbourhood for the young people of LaFab (outings to museums, parks, sports activities). It is about not only promoting recreation, but also training skills for coexistence and respect in real situations: “Many times, young people ask me 'Well, what else can doing all this be useful

for, a trip to a museum, a playful activity or whatever?', I tell them that they are going to meet many people in life who are going to treat them or look badly at them, meaning that in the poor neighbourhoods we are different, but this is precisely why this is the best way to counter this, not with a knife or a gun, but with respect, and that is a very important part that is learned with all this, with young people, what we want to transmit to the new generations”.

The school system in France, with students assigned to schools based on their address, reflects the socioeconomic imbalances of the territories. This is the case of Marseille and its popular neighbourhoods, a factor that adds to the existing imaginary of stigmatization⁵². According to our informants, the stigmatization of LaFab, with the media that only talks about the violent and negative aspects of the neighbourhood, has led to a lack of trust in young people, a lack of interest, and increasing violence.

Thus, for young Maghrebis in Marseille, religion and culture become tools of rupture, resistance and affirmation against the "dominant assimilationist ideology" (Cesari, 1993, p. 91). Their non-Western cultural frameworks are mixed with those of global popular culture, together with those of French national culture, "negotiating the adaptation of one framework or another according to their objectives" (Sánchez García, 2010, p. 137). From a psychosocial point of view, these young people experience a "bivalent empathy"⁵³ that shows their ability to adapt their discourses and cultural practices in specific contexts based on their multiple identities (J. C. Mansilla, 2017, p. 210). The other side of history is a political and economic resource game where the emergency and problematic nature of the phenomenon of popular neighbourhoods and unemployed young people without studies feeds said logic of stigmatization. Politicians and funders need a discourse of this type to free up resources.

V.28 node. Future (Results)

ii). Community projects, family and professional life (Objectives)

→ How do community projects become personal and professional life trajectories?

Several of the young people interviewed conceive of their futures within a community project that can provide decent work for them, while improving the well-being of the neighbourhood. This is the approach of social mediation from which the ethnographic narrative carried out in Marseille starts: mediation is the collective change on what is thought to be living in community well-being, a state of collective consciousness, a collective action that focuses on living well. An example of a mediation group action is the one carried out by MRS_MEM_002 with his collective *La Cité des possibles*: eloquence workshops to empower the public oral expression of young people from LaFab and the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille⁵⁴. At the moment, in the MRS_MEM_002

⁵² cf., r. Youth demotivation in a stigmatizing educational system (School), 5.4.5. Node III.12. Education (Results).

⁵³ The logic of bivalent empathy allows young people to adapt to different situations through a cognitive process called "systemic coordination dynamics" (Oullier & Kelso, 2006, p. 353).

⁵⁴ cf., w. Youth empowerment, need for institutionality and informality (Activism), 5.4.3. Node III.17. Resistance (Results).

collective there are only young people from Comoros, but what he wants to do is to federate young people from all neighbourhoods, even from wealthy neighbourhoods. His idea mixing them: he wants to build a civic space for relationships linked to youth more than origin, residence or social class. In the case of MRS_MEM_005, his future project consists of creating recreational spaces for neighbourhood women, young people and mothers, and also generating access for people living in situations of disability.

Studies as way of gaining access to the labour market persists in the imagination of young people as an effective way to achieve personal goals (economic independence, family) and professional goals (careers and activities of interest).

The idea of leaving the neighbourhood, moving away to discover other regions in France but in general returning to the Marseillaise region, is recurrent in the discourses on the personal future of the young people interviewed.

Leaving the neighbourhood is equivalent to having a more comfortable way of life and conducive to a family life project.

The lack of motivation of young people for a more promising future is a constant in the speeches of the participants⁵⁵. Educators at LaFab admit that it is difficult to guide young people, as they ask for jobs with unrealistic salaries.

On the other hand, the future perspective of clandestine migrants from sub-Saharan Africa, highly visible in the centre of Marseille, is completely different. The idea of continuing their journey to England or Germany, becoming recognized by a European football team, or selling drugs to finance themselves day after day marks the perspectives of these young people: "I'm going to school, it's not easy with French, but if I want papers I have to go to school, continue training. This is my path. I want to be a football player. When I have papers, I'm going to play with a team, I like Paris, I've been there a couple of times. Then I'm going to ask for nationality, and I can go back to Gambia, play for my country's national team, play in Europe, you know".

5.4.6. Cross-cutting issues (VI. cluster TransGang)

Presentation of the elements to be evaluated

Reference definition from the TransGang Codebook

→ Transversal information to all clusters, for the three key concepts of the project (gangs, transnationality, mediation), for the gender perspective and for the impact of COVID-19

Reference local research dimension(s) (Background Paper Marseille)

→ Community and institutional social mediation

We will present the main information collected on cases of community mediation (initiated by youth and residents of the neighbourhood, without the participation of

⁵⁵ cf., I. "Time stopped in LaFab": perceptions about the future of the neighbourhood (Barrio), 5.4.2. Node II.7. Territory (Results).

organizations) and institutional (initiated or managed by organizations), as well as the feedback dynamics between both.

→ Spaces of immigration and ghettoization

We will present examples of clandestine youth immigration from sub-Saharan Africa, making an analytical link with the territory and immigration stories with the youth of LaFab.

Initial hypothesis(es) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ The intergenerational factor is a necessary but not sufficient cause of social mediation in the marginalized neighbourhoods of Marseille. Intergenerational ties foster spaces for conflict mediation in street gangs and between these and other actors in the *campo banda*. In contexts of community associative experiences around sport or culture, the participation of older brothers or sisters (GRAFS) who are former gang members between the ages of 30 and 40 can lead to new ways of mediating conflicts for young gang members of the new generations.

→ Different intergenerational subcultures are created as a form of direct confrontation (violence, transgression of institutional norms) or adaptive response (social mediation, creation of cultural or sports associations) to the stigmatization and violence imposed by the dominant society. More than a dichotomy between criminality or adaptation, the responses to such stigmatization and violence must be understood as a continuous flow between activities of resistance, adaptation, and confrontation.

Initial question(s) (Research Plan Marseille)

→ How do the neighbourhood youth groups interact in the *campo banda*?

→ To what extent do the experiences of football association (subsidized) and informal football (on the corner, on the neighbourhood pitch, or one that is not organized or supervised by adults) generate gateways between the gang and the mediation practices of conflicts?

→ To what extent are the limits reconfigured between the experiences of formal social mediation (i.e., generated from or thanks to the presence of legally constituted associations) and those of informal social mediation (i.e., that occur in border spaces⁵⁶ generated by local or transnational family networks, school or neighbourhood)? How are these limits expressed – or what are the difficulties to establish them – in the spaces and places of the actors of the band field?

→ How do street youth use institutions and how do institutions try to penetrate informal youth mediations?

⁵⁶ Youth study associations occupy “border spaces”, that is, their members occupy not only a physical space (which may be peripheral) but also have a political and social position within the modern/colonial world, which they seek to break, consciously or unconsciously, with the epistemic and ontological forms decreed as unique (Mignolo et al., 2015).

→ To what extent do intergenerational interactions in the *campo banda* lead to the practice of conflict mediation by these street youth groups?

Analysis of data

Evaluation question(s) proposed by the TransGang team

→ How does the group handle conflictive situations? Are they involved in formal or informal mediation processes?

→ How does the group mobilize social resources in situations of crisis and need such as COVID-19?

→ How are the gender relations in the group? How do individuals negotiate their role and identity according to their gender within the group? What are relations like with relatives, relatives of other members and neighbours, especially women?

Node VI.29. Gang (Results)

jj). “Le Réseau”: youth and drug networks (Criminal)

→ How do the imaginary and practices around drug trafficking influence mediation practices at LaFab?

The main illegal activity observed in the case study neighbourhood was retail drug trafficking, mainly marijuana. In Marseille, said traffic is known under the name of “Le Réseau” (The Network), referring to a certain structure in the operation of the supply chain and sale of illicit street drugs. In general, Le Réseau de LaFab is maintained by young people with an average age of between 15 and 20 years. Trafficking networks know that a minor in France cannot be prosecuted, says MRS_STK_005. Although it is not part of the main theme studied for the TransGang case in Marseille, it is worth pointing out certain dynamics of these illegal activities impact not only the daily life of the neighbourhood, but also the collective imagination of young people and their mediation projects.

Unemployment or precarious jobs are indicated as one of the main causes of the involvement of young people in drug sales networks: “Le Réseau is a huge temporary employment office” says MRS_MEM_001. Of course, it is reductive to think that only unemployment is the cause of this phenomenon, but at least it allows us to understand the role of economic factors in criminal activities.

MRS_STK_006, an educator, follows 40 young people linked to the Réseau for the sale of drugs. MRS_STK_006 affirms that the youths earn 80 euros a day for their security work (*gnetteur*), and that they are probably armed, “there are many weapons, a pistol costs 200 euros, and if you have drugs in your house they pay you rent for a few hundred euros (*nourisson*), the vendors (*charbonneur*) earn 200 a day, the teenagers and youngsters of the Réseau that I follow earn more than me, I don't get to 2000 euros even though I've got a university degree”. Questioned about the operation of trafficking networks in Marseille, a person in charge of an association for the reduction of harm from drug use in Marseille affirms: “You work in two shifts from 10 to 17 and from 17 to 1 in the morning. The whole day of work is worth 300 euros. There is a risk premium and in

certain more dangerous places of sale the rates rise. It is a capitalist logic, where the managers are the small businessmen, who depend on the "big wigs, and those below are their employees". What is clear from the words of this person in charge is that trafficking is a job, and that it does not generate a culture of sociability among its members: "the young people tell me that they are going to work and that they do not do business with the others in the trafficking group. Nothing else." The emic term for the activity – *charbon* – is explained by its members, linking it to work in the mines or on the trains.

In one of our observations, a young man refers to a lack of interest in a formal job, where the employer-employee model of subordination is criticized, and that of a trader on his own account (selling drugs) is more attractive:

I live there, I know the LaFab neighbourhood, there is nothing to do. What do you want to do, spend all day having a wall? Pffff..., there's no work, I don't want to work for a miserable wage, receiving orders from a bastard, in one night I can earn what I would earn in a week.

The sale of drugs needs buyers, and young people from wealthier neighbourhoods (the centre-south neighbourhoods of Marseille) appear in the equation, who buy drugs at LaFab. The coexistence between Le Réseau and the residents of the neighbourhood is another important point. Each Réseau has a manager, and as in every company, the commercial culture, and everything that comes from it, depends on the recommendations that the manager gives to his subordinates: "the relationship with the neighbourhood depends on the manager of each area. There are managers who tell the kids to get along, to be kind to the residents, to help, and others that they are only interested in the money the kids make." says the head of the association for harm reduction with drug use in Marseille.

At LaFab, the young people of the Réseau and the young people participating in the TransGang study have good relations: "They should not be stigmatized because they also do good things for the neighbourhood." says MRS_MEM_002. Even the residents of the neighbourhood and the educators are aware of the positive actions that the youth of the drug network do for the community, such as the inflatable pool that they buy every summer and install in the streets of the neighbourhood so that the smallest of the neighbourhood can have fun playing with water and music in the open air, with tolerance from the police, whose central station is only two blocks away.

Other factors – such as stigma, globalized cultural references, and educational and professional backgrounds – influencing youth criminal activities at LaFab were discussed in a previous section⁵⁷. For the educators at LaFab, one thing is certain: the phenomenon of youth participation in the sale of drugs in popular neighbourhoods are so complex that, in order to analyse it or to intervene socially through mediation, there is a lack of response elements.

Node VI.30. Transnationality (Results)

⁵⁷ cf., section v. Marseille, drugs and violence (Crime and fights), 5.4.3. Node III.16. Deviation (Results), and section n. "We were the most dangerous neighbourhood, the big team" (Neighbourhood), 5.4.2. Node II.7. Territory (Results).

kk). Dreaming Europe (Migration)

→ How do clandestine migration and precariousness influence the imaginaries and collective practices of young people in Marseille?

The life stories of the young people at LaFab intersect daily with the stories of irregular migrants currently arriving in Marseille. The parents of the young people interviewed are all immigrants, mainly from Algeria and Comoros. Migration issues have been detailed in part 5.4.2. Identifications (cluster II. TransGang)⁵⁸. It is now worth making reference to the phenomenon of clandestine migration, a phenomenon that structures not only the use of public spaces in Marseille, but also the collective imagination of young people in popular neighbourhoods, a historical place of settlement of migratory flows (regular and clandestine) in the city.



Figure 27. Homeless immigrant man in the city centre

During our field work, young clandestine migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa and Algeria were present on our urban tours. They are examples of dozens of stories that share the same goal: reach Europe in search of a more promising future. Below is one of those stories, whose interest lies in transmitting to the reader the atmosphere that Marseille is currently experiencing with the phenomenon of clandestine migration, relations with the police and the idea of the future of migrant youth once they set foot on territories Europeans. The following is an excerpt from our field diary, which describes the daily life of a square near the Saint Charles central station, a meeting point for groups of young people from Gambia and Algeria:

The murmur of the people around us becomes thunderous, we are dozens of beings wandering, crossing our gazes in the land of the sun; the flags of Algeria and Comoros hung from the few

⁵⁸ cf., m. Multicultural LaFab: participant observation (Neighbourhood), 5.4.2. Node II.7. Territory (Results).

living trees left by the construction companies, barely resisting the ravages of the wind; suddenly, the siren of a police car is heard, the entire square is now a blur of uniforms

There are about thirty young people, they seem to be Gambians, they seem to know each other. In the upper part of the square, other people, young and old, especially men, gather around various makeshift tents and ancient wooden chairs. The fallen trees, along with the yellowish stones and the copper bars –which are intended to cordon off the ongoing work on the new buildings– give the scene a devastating appearance.

“I hate myself when I smoke, but it's very difficult, it's very cold at night. Here not everyone smoked; but when you arrive, you start smoking. There in the background, next to the tents, sometimes we put up a stove and cook together. Sometimes there are people who bring food, they want to help us. But I need to have papers, and nobody helps me. When I get really tired, maybe I'll get out of here. I don't like Germany, maybe England.”

I remember Keyta's shiny, black skin under the incandescent midday sun, and the yellowish dust that flew between us every time our eyes met in the distance.

“I arrived in Marseille three months ago. It has been a long journey. I left Gambia, then I went through Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Libya, Italy, and now here. Today I don't know where to sleep, but I'm going to stay here. Nobody wants to say that they are going to sleep here, but many of us sleep here. The hotel costs 35 euros a night. Today I only have 10 euros. The hotel is two blocks away. I'm going to stay here to see what happens. There are always people in the square, if you come at 5am or 7am, there are always people. I come here every day. I don't know if I can say that they are all my friends, we help each other if we can, but in the end you're alone here, and that counts more. The police come every day. The other day they told me that I couldn't stay here, that I should go home. I told them that I had no home. What else could they say? They gave me this mask, because of the epidemic, and they left.”

The last message I received from Keyta was three days ago: “I'm fine bro, I'll go to the Place this afternoon”. It's 9pm. I have never seen Keyta at night.

“Sometimes we cook behind the cement pavers. But every night is colder around this. I want to continue to Germany, but first I should go to Paris and then to Strasbourg, at the border. Or to the Netherlands. In these countries they give you a room, there are better conditions. It's more, cold than here. I believe in God, and I respect that everyone believes in what they want. My father was Muslim and my mother Catholic. On Sundays many of those who are here go to the mosque, in the block next to the square.”

The policemen cross the avenue and enter the square. We, the other group of points, scattered, out of time and space, reacted for the first time, police! some of the guys yell. Everything begins to accelerate, in the midst of a strange tranquillity.

“You have to be more careful at night. Two Mondays ago, some Nigerians, at my house, by Frais Vallon, beat me up with sticks. There were ten of them, but a man has to be strong. I defended myself, and I only have something on my lip, but it's nothing. Then a couple of days ago, a Nigerian came, right here at the Place, and we fought. He cut his face, and soon he had blood all over his clothes. My people defended me too. Here, at the Place we are Gambian people. I come here because we are safer here. At Frais Vallon, I don't want to meet Nigerians. Even Arabs are dangerous people. Those who are there playing. Also a few days ago, one of them wanted to hit me. He passed close to me once, a second time, bumping into me, a third time, the same thing. Then I picked up a stick and hit him so hard that there's no doubt. My people helped me too.”



Figure 28. Young Gambian immigrant in the city centre of Marseille

Node VI.31. Mediation (Results)

II). Types of mediation, sport and drugs (Conflict resolution)

→ How do community and institutional practices emerge at LaFab?

Based on the definition of mediation proposed for the case of Marseille - mediation is the collective change on what is thought to be living in community well-being, a collective state of consciousness, a collective action that focuses on well-being. We have identified three types of mediation practices, depending on the actor who conceives or manages the initiatives: institutional, community or informal, and hybrid. “The question is to know how life can be improved in underprivileged environments, either through studies or sports.” says MRS_STK_005-a. The first, which we call institutional, concerns proposals to improve the neighbourhood and the lives of young people where government organizations and external associations (NGOs) intervene in the conception and execution of the projects. For example, the ADDAP13 association offers paid internships to neighbourhood youth where they help people with motor disabilities.

The second, which we call community or informal mediation, is an initiative of neighbourhood residents, young people and adults, and is carried out without major institutional intervention to respond to a specific problem of daily life, such as the accumulation of rubbish in the streets of the neighbourhood. In general, this second form is led by young people aged thirty or more and who are residents of the neighbourhood. This is the case of the inflatable boxing rings that MRS_MEM_003 installs in the streets of LaFab so that young people can "have fun in respect and joy"⁵⁹; or the garbage

⁵⁹ cf., section cc. Grand frères et soeurs (GRAFS) – Older Brothers, 5.4.4. Node IV.21. Intergenerational (Results).

collection initiated by MRS_STK_009, where digital social networks and the sociability of the neighbourhood were the necessary means to make the initiative emerge, without waiting for institutional financing⁶⁰.

Regarding territoriality, the actions of this second mediation path are distinguished by the expansion of the limits of the moral community (Harper, 1992, p. 143) that originates the mediation practices, going beyond the neighbourhood (LaFab) and encompassing contiguous neighbourhoods (the third district of Marseille). Adult residents, youth and GRAFS participate in this initiative of community federation, where all the initiatives of the inhabitants and former inhabitants of LaFab, like them, can come together and have the same voice. The project has been called Ensemble13.

The sense of community in our work, as Harper (1992, p. 143) points out, describes a set of cultural expectations and practices, rather than a population in a specific place. This is the case of the Comorian community in LaFab and in the Comoros. For example, if there is a street that needs to be fixed in the Comoros, everyone from LaFab contributes and sends money. They also contribute every year because many do not want to be buried in France, so they make contributions so that when the person dies they collect the money they have and send it to do all the paperwork.

The third, which we call hybrid mediation, is part of the community initiative of young people and GRAFS who live or have lived in LaFab, but it is carried out to the extent that the institution contributes material and financial resources, in the form of subsidies.

In this third way of mediation, we have verified the case of MRS_MEM_002, who leads the youth collective *La Cité des possibles*, structure to the youth initiative of LaFab that has been integrated into a recent financing project of the national government that seeks to generate skills professionals for young people from popular neighbourhoods in Marseille⁶¹. Another example is the case of MRS_MEM_001, who promotes the creation of the 143 Street Game collective, where basketball is the gateway for the young people of LaFab to return to schooling⁶². This last group has decided to formalize and apply for subsidies to start their activities.

Other initiatives related to sports and the improvement of the life trajectories of the youth of the neighbourhood were confirmed, such as the MRS_STK_001 project. In this case, the project expects the support of a national program financing initiatives in poor neighbourhoods.

Of course, the alliances and conflicts between the institutions and the inhabitants are part of the mediation dynamics found in LaFab⁶³.

⁶⁰ cf., section w. Youth empowerment, need for institutionality and informality (Activism), 5.4.3. Node III.17. Resistance (Results).

⁶¹ cf., section, ii. Community projects, family and professional life (Objectives), 5.4.5. V.28 node. Future (Results).

⁶² cf., section c. Horizontal decision-making according to individual objectives and the neighbourhood's needs, 5.4.1. Node I.2. Structure (Results).

⁶³ cf., section aa. Alliances and conflicts (Outsiders), 5.4.4. Node IV.19. Outsiders (Results).

Mediation also occurs around everyday conflicts, such as the use of public space. LaFab's central park has been converted into a large outdoor car park. Even trucks passing through the city park there, right in front of the neighbourhood elementary school, which raises concerns for parents. In this case, there are associations such as ADDAP13, whose educators, officially called "mediators"⁶⁴, regularly circulate around the neighbourhood to listen to the complaints of the inhabitants and bring them to the attention of the government and corresponding institutions.

The street mediators (educators from ADDAP13 and other youth aid associations) are aware of the obstacles to employment and education that accumulate in the lives of young people and residents of LaFab. It is true, their work involves attentive and friendly listening that allows the young person to feel valued and accompanied in administrative procedures and personal projects. However, the socioeconomic reality of young people often exceeds these intentions, and the only way of mediation that educators find is to continue motivating young people in the defence of their human and citizen rights.

One of the mediators explains her work to us: "we are a link between the people of the neighbourhood – of all ages – and the State. We work on access to rights. The people here are very frustrated, they don't have a good experience of the relationship with the institutions. This is mediation for us".

Despite good intentions, often turned into militancy, mediators (educators) face the bureaucratic tangle, where "you should not do someone else's job" even if you know it harms young people, says MRS_STK_005.

As has been detailed, the young people of LaFab are stigmatized, their trajectories must often overcome slights from employers and prejudices that block their personal projects. Educators are aware of this and insist that it is possible to enhance the skills of young people (creativity, spontaneity) and not just increase prejudices.

In Marseille there are consultation tables on the life of the neighbourhoods between public, private and resident actors. Regarding the youth of the popular neighbourhoods and the possible conflicts of coexistence, the field educators (mediators) and the young people themselves are largely absent from these consultation tables. Large and small associations are represented, as are the police services. This shows that there is no horizontal mediation work in Marseille, where the interested parties, the political and economic actors of the neighbourhoods intervene with equal weight.

It should be noted that conflicts in the neighbourhood are also dealt with by a series of family mediators, husbands, uncles, cousins, friends, and religious. MAR_STK_002, in his role as Imam, advises families and young people in resolving daily conflicts. MRS_STK_002 considers the Mosque (mosque), "like a school, like when you go to school to learn to live in society, in the Mosque, it is also the same, you learn to live and respect others, regardless of whether they are different". Young people who are looking for a mediator in their family conflicts come to see MAR_STK_002 on their own

⁶⁴ MSADS: Médiateur social axé sur l'accès aux droits et aux services. Social mediator for access to rights and services.

initiative. However, young people who belong to drug trafficking networks are an audience that MRS_STK_002 recognizes is difficult to reach, since they are discreet in their practices in the Mosque.

Deep rage, anger, is a fuel for youthful conflict, as stated by MRS_MEM_003. Being himself a GRAFS⁶⁵ from LaFab, MRS_MEM_003 channels the conflicts of young people through boxing and recreational activities: he brings together the youth of the neighbourhood to develop collective activities that promote development and improve life in the neighbourhood, such as recreational activities, garbage cleaning, social gathering. MRS_MEM_003 participates in the resolution resolves the school and family conflicts of the young people who attend his boxing club, his method: work harder in training and give the young people a voice so that they can express with words why they have rage and anger.

MRS_MEM_003 ensures that with boxing you learn to manage anger, as well as values of coexistence.

To understand the boxing project of MRS_MEM_003 is to understand that the youth of LaFab are angry and that beyond judging the relevance of these feelings, a space is needed where young people can express their frustrations and transform them into respect, teamwork and self-esteem, for example, through boxing: "It's stress relief, actually, coming here, it's stress relief."

According to one mother we interviewed, sport is a way to ensure that her son does not fall into one of the jobs offered by drug trafficking networks in the neighbourhood: "I don't want him to stay around doing nothing, in bad company, he likes football, I prefer him to be there playing football, maybe in the neighbourhood he can sign up for some sport". Of course, sport or artistic and cultural awareness does not eliminate drug trafficking, nor do cultural and sports practices: many young people circulate between both practices and they participate in illegal acts but they also participate in cultural, art and sport in the neighbourhood. In general, it is these activities that take the young people and LaFab out of territorial secrecy that bases their collective and individual identities.

Concerning drug trafficking networks, young people who participate in networks such as Le Réseau have historically responded creatively to the lack of recreational places for the younger children. Without institutional support, Le Réseau buys an inflatable pool every summer, puts it in the middle of the street in the neighbourhood and organizes a day of activities for the young children, with music and lots of water games. In the following note from the field diary, it can be seen that the inflatable pools add a playful component to the neighbourhood's daily life, without this implying that the sale of drugs is stopped:

To my great surprise, there were inflatable pools filled with water and more than 60 young people singing and in swimsuits are right on the streets of LaFab. One of them has a large hose that shoots up jets of water more than 6 or 7 metres high. Other young people are sat on the roof of a bus stop, listening to rap and hip-hop music at high volume. It should be noted that the neighbourhood police station is only two blocks from there, but the police never showed up that day. Of the 60

⁶⁵ cf., section cc. Grand frères et soeurs (GRAFS) – Older Brothers, 5.4.4. Node IV.21. Intergenerational (Results).

young people, more or less half are between 8 and 12 years old, and the rest between 15 and 25 years old. I keep watching the moment, the minutes go by, I see a young man who's about 18, white, he approaches me and asks me if I'm looking for something. I answer him with a question, telling him that he wanted to know if the inflatable pools were just for today or was it something that happened regularly in the neighbourhood. The young man, somewhat confused by the question, tells me that it is best that I do not stay in that corner and that I go to the other side of the street with the other young people who are bathing in the pools, he seems a little nervous. I decide to follow him and join the other young people by the pools. I see how this young man murmured something in the ear of another young man who is not in the pool, pointing at him. The young man who asked me the question disappears behind the building, next to the pools. Before leaving, I see the young man who initially asked me the question handing something to another young man who is arriving on a scooter. The young man who asked me the question passes to the other side of the street, just where I was standing, he joins other young people and hands one of them several bills. The young man who receives the tickets puts them in his backpack and leaves in the opposite direction of the pools, moving away from the site.

Young people use the money from the sale of marijuana not only in a selfish way, as society, the police and all anti-drug policies could classify it, but a part is invested in actions for the rest of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, as was the case with the pool in the street in the month of July in LaFab, in activities for the same community. Of course, the youths who sell drugs also help support their families who cannot live on government subsidies alone. Regarding relations with the inhabitants, according to MRS_MEM_002, relations are calm with the young people of the Réseau: "They are from the neighbourhood, we went to the same schools, we know them. They respect us for what we do. And they also do things for the neighbourhood".

Once again, the example of inflatable pools is cited as something that the Réseau brings to the children of LaFab. Other avenues of mediation with young traffickers are opened from the work of associations that militate for the reduction of harm in drug consumption and trafficking: "criminal activity must be normalized. Just as we do harm reduction with consumers, we also have to do it with young traffickers", affirms the person in charge of said association.

Conflicts also arise during sports activities. At the Esperanza Football Club in the LaFab neighbourhood, some young people were expelled for violence towards a referee. This caused its directors to reevaluate how to follow the intervention through sports in the lives of the youth of the neighbourhood. They decided to emphasize the sports project towards a transmission of coexistence values rather than towards competitive achievements. Of course, before reprehensible acts of violence, the young people were sanctioned and expelled from the club. In 2020 with the inauguration of the new LaFab football stadium, these young people presented themselves to the club again demanding that they be reinstated, because "they are also part of the neighbourhood." The directives decided to accept them and a new team with young people from the neighbourhood, both members of the Réseau for drug sales and other young people from the neighbourhood train together every week. The logic of giving a new opportunity emerges when it comes to advancing conflict resolution with young people.

mm). Gender and youth practices (Gender roles)

→ What gender trend do mediation practices and youth sociability have?

In LaFab there is an influence of the Muslim religion in the behaviour of its inhabitants, particularly in that of young women⁶⁶. This is reflected in certain youth practices, such as football, where the majority of young men occupy the neighbourhood stadium (which annoys some of the young women interviewed), and even in drug sales networks in the neighbourhood, where it is rare to see a woman watching or selling in the streets. This can be explained by multiple variables, but one of them is worth noting: the perception of insecurity on the part of the parents (explained in detail in a later section of this report). To train at the neighbourhood sports stadium, a young man would be autonomous to move between his home and the football club, while for a young woman⁶⁷ it would be preferable for her to be accompanied, as indicated by one of our informants, the head of the football club.

However, the young women actively participate in cultural exchange activities, where young people from neighbourhoods in Marseille meet with young people from neighbourhoods in Germany or in other cities in France. Obviously, a gender cannot be categorized by activity (although they are not the majority, there are women who play football and men who participate in cultural exchanges) but said trends between gender and practices are verified. It is now worth pointing out the example of the MRS_MEM_003 boxing club, where it is observed that despite being a sport with high male participation, women are invited to participate, and in fact they do. For the first young woman to join the boxing club it is difficult and intimidating to see only men, but for the second and third, seeing other women involved, it is a kinder space. This shows again that, when talking about gender, the word "role" is limiting, giving the impression of a fixed state, while the word "practice" is more useful to understand gender phenomena, since it gives the impression of a movement, which evolves with the conditions of a particular social context.

The inclusion of women in sports and cultural practices is a gateway for gender diversity and practices in the neighbourhood. This is confirmed by MRS_MEM_005, who assures us that "when there are only boys, the girls are not going to go there, to talk to the boy, there must be a girl every time in a sports team."

As we explained earlier, some parents of Muslim origin do not agree with their daughters playing football beyond a certain age, generally when they begin adolescence, since, according to our informants, this would be contrary to the Koranic code or Muslim tradition⁶⁸. The young women go so far as to affirm that their parents believe that women's sport "is practiced in the kitchen"⁶⁹, an example of the tension experienced by the young women of LaFab between some of the dominant values of contemporary French society and certain Muslim family traditions. as the sacred value of marriage, of the body.

⁶⁶ cf., section j. Between family cultural heritage and French cultural values (religious identity), 5.4.2. Node II.6. Self-representations (Results).

⁶⁷ cf., section t. Young women playing football (Sports), 5.4.3. Node III.14. Leisure (Results).

⁶⁸ cf., section dd. The influence of family and teachers (Family), 5.4.4. Node IV.21. Intergenerational (Results).

⁶⁹ cf., section t. Young women playing football (Sports), 5.4.3. Node III.14. Leisure (Results).

In the Muslim culture of the neighbourhood, the young women must help their mothers and take care of the younger brothers. Of course, this is not exclusive to Muslims, many cultures in the world conceive of the role of the eldest daughter as a second mother to the younger brothers and sisters. However, the fragile socioeconomic conditions of certain families in LaFab, the family culture and traditions make daily life depend on the domestic actions of the daughters of the family, on their support in domestic chores, such as looking for the younger brothers leaving football training at the neighbourhood sports stadium.

The interactions in the public space of LaFab between young men and women is not something common: "It is normal, girls and boys do not mix much, that in sports, apart from school, it is not that it is not..., but it is really minimal." says MRS_MEM_001. In general, more young men are observed occupying the streets, the corners, the entrances of the buildings and the parks of the neighbourhood. Young women generally move in small groups, without stopping in the streets, rather going from a point A, such as the subway or the bus, to the school or their residences. The fear of bad habits that the street brings, the dangers of an alarmist society and the loss of traditional values make parents protect their daughters more than their sons.

This does not mean that women are absent in the future of the neighbourhood. On the contrary, many of the community mediation actions (food distribution to the most needy, care for the little ones, education for sons and daughters, participation in community consultation tables) continue to be created and managed by GRAFS mothers and women. from the neighbourhood

Node VI.34. Covid-19 (Results)

nn). School trajectories and daily life (Impact on school and leisure pathways)

→ How did the confinement impact the school trajectories and practices of the young people of LaFab, as well as the daily life of its inhabitants?

The first impression we had when walking in LaFab, in times of a pandemic, is that urban life is relaxed and does not convey a climate of fear: many people go around without a mask, hugging and shaking hands. Officially Marseille was confined, but in LaFab, during our field work, none of us wore a mask as we were talking calmly in an open public place that should have been closed; the life of the popular classes continues to adapt creatively to the management of the epidemic. The first lockdown, at the beginning of 2020, affected life in LaFab in various ways. For some of the young women participating in the study, the isolation measures were the excuse to generate new community practices and strengthen ties with their neighbours, such as going out of the windows every night with pans at the same time to shout in support of the medical personnel and wait for the sound that a large ship, anchored in the bay of Marseille, and which can be seen from the upper floors of the LaFab social housing towers, makes each night.

However, for a large majority of the population of LaFab, the ban on going out into the public space produced an individual and collective mental state of anxiety: "I think of the

children, they are sad, they don't play sports like they did before," says a resident. During our field work, we visited two-bedroom apartments where nine people lived. The confinement was undoubtedly a difficult test of coexistence.

The confinement accentuated the lack of exchanges that the young people of LaFab have with other young people from other neighbourhoods of Marseille, a secrecy that becomes a space of protection accompanied by peers⁷⁰. It is not possible to affirm that a scenario other than confinement would have generated the social openness of these young people, but it is possible to bring up the perceptions of the participants regarding the dynamics of certain young people of not leaving the neighbourhood, their demotivation, the school dropout and the role of lockdown, even after lockdown was lifted.

The confinement also affected the school trajectories of the young people interviewed. A whole generation of young high school graduates felt abandoned by their teachers and the educational system, professional orientation after the high school diploma was absent, which generated anxiety in young people and demotivation.

In the same way, the pandemic impacted the activities and motivation of young people and parents in the construction of a long-term sport project as a motor for social mediation in the neighbourhood. The first affected were young people, since the licenses of players registered with the LaFab Football Club "drastically decreased," according to the club's coordinator, MRS_STK_003. "The period of confinement stopped many things," says MRS_STK_004, a football coach at the club. The women's team at the football club also disappeared, despite the fact that before the confinement they were all very participative.

The cultural exchanges between the girls from LaFab and the girls from Germany were done over the Internet, something that according to the head of the Football Club is not the same, but at least it was done⁷¹.

Despite the difficulties caused by the confinement, the inhabitants of LaFab continued to think about improving their daily life during the confinement, various mediation actions, such as the garbage collection led by MRS_STK_009, emerged⁷².

5.5. Conclusion

For two years, from 2020, we conducted an ethnographic study in Marseille. We interviewed young men and women responsible for associations, educators, religious men, clandestine migrants, public officials, fathers and mothers, and inhabitants of LaFab (study district, third district of Marseille). The analysis of this study has been done in several stages, generating conferences, workshops and academic articles (J. Mansilla et al., 2020; J. Mansilla, 2021; J. Mansilla et al., 2021, pp. 73-122; J. Mansilla, 2022; J.

⁷⁰ cf., k. Community biography, perceptions and discourses on the neighbourhood Lafab (Neighbourhood), 5.4.2. Node II.7. Territory (Results).

⁷¹ cf., hh. Stigmatization: employment, education and revaluation actions (Stigmatization), 5.4.5. V.24 node. Media representations (Results).

⁷² cf., section w. Youth empowerment, need for institutionality and informality (Activism), 5.4.3. Node III.17. Resistance (Results).

Mansilla et al., 2022). Today, with the delivery of this ethnographic report, the study is concluded.

Paying attention to the practices of young people in Marseille, in particular in LaFab, one of the most emblematic neighbourhoods of the city for both drug trafficking and the large number of community and institutional social mediation projects represents a challenge of analysis for any observer.

Starting from a discretionary definition, but useful in our exercise, we have focused on youth practices that seek to improve the well-being of the neighbourhood, from public spaces (with community garbage collections), through the development of skills of young people who drop out of school. and unemployment (with specific government programs), to the commitment to sports and culture as factors of change and resistance (with community associations for football, boxing, and argumentation and eloquence techniques).

Understanding mediation as a collective action focused on improving the neighbourhood, the lives of its inhabitants and their own life trajectories, the youth groups of LaFab (highly stigmatized) develop recreational practices (football, boxing, basketball) or illegal (sale of drugs) in self-managed spaces (the street, the football field) or supervised by adults (La Maison pour Tous). Beyond the dichotomy between positive and negative practices, collective action in LaFab must be understood as an individual endeavour that manages to resonate with a group of individuals willing to achieve certain objectives. Social mediation does not always generate dynamics of community well-being (on the contrary, competition and jealousy for subsidies come to weaken healthy coexistence); and the young people of the neighbourhood's illicit drug sales network (Le Réseau) do not always pursue individual and selfish interests (as shown by the inflatable pools that the young people of the Réseau set up in the open air in the neighbourhood in summer, which is a way of avoiding that the smallest of the neighbourhood suffer the precariousness of not leaving the neighbourhood, a perception repeated several times by our informants).

The collective codes and practices of the young people of LaFab respond to the interaction that they develop with resources (material and informational) made available by government policies materialized in a dense fabric of NGOs. The understanding of youth street groups in Marseille does not, therefore, go through the logic of drug trafficking or ethnic quarrels, but rather through a network of synergies between government institutions, financing programs for precarious youth, and community initiative youth associations. These factors, added to the current clandestine immigration, the multi-ethnic composition, and the stigmatization of young people from poor neighbourhoods, make Marseille a particularly pertinent case in TransGang, since it allows us to understand youth practices of social mediation in a context of migratory flows and of globalized hybrid cultural references (in physical and digital spaces).

With regard to drug trafficking, enough has been said about the causes and its trivialization in Marseille, portraying the phenomenon in various ways: a solution within reach of any youngster from slums or way to restore stigmatization through obtaining

money and recognition from peers. Without being a key topic in our research agenda, drug trafficking appears in our ethnographic narrative as a structuring element of LaFab's imaginary, of its community mediation projects, of the idea of the present and future of its youth. Islamophobia was a unifying force in the popular neighbourhoods of Marseille in the 1980s and 1990s. This allowed the emergence of protest movements and cultural resistance among the first and second generations of North African immigrants in Marseille. However, for the children and grandchildren of those immigrants, the third generation, born in Marseille in this century, economic and job insecurity is the main driving force behind collective mediation actions, whether through sports, culture or in illicit drug trafficking.

There are no Chicago-style gangs in Marseilles,. There are no Barcelona-style gangs in Marseille. There is a phenomenon of banalization of sales and consumption of drugs in Marseille. This is true. Young people organize themselves in neighbourhood networks to buy and sell drugs. They function like any company, with a manager, assistant managers, and workers. The same young people manage the networks at the neighbourhood level, but they do not have the perspective of brotherhood of certain gangs in Barcelona or Chicago, for example. A manager of a network can be changed if his economic results do not satisfy the big bosses and here the ideology of money must be respected. And although in Marseille there are account adjustments and clan rivalries for the control of sales territories, the figures are anecdotal compared to large port cities and metropolises in the world.

There are no gangs in Marseille, but there are young people who appropriate public spaces around recreational practices (football, boxing, basketball) or illegal practices (drug sales), self-managed spaces (the street, the football field) or spaces supervised by adults (la Maison pour Tous). At this point an important figure from the neighbourhood appears: the GRAFS, older brothers and sisters. Following a family culture of African origin, GRAFS are located in the extended family, where friends, cousins and neighbours are considered part of the family, respected and listened to. The GRAFS live or have lived in LaFab, have accumulated life experience and want to pass it on to the new generations. Increasingly fragile, the relations between the GRAFS and the youngest are an open door to social mediation, to the improvement of life in the neighbourhood, which can be consolidated with the professionalization of GRAFS in a job as a sports coach for the neighbourhood, social worker or even “mediator for the defence of the rights of the inhabitants”, a job recognized by several NGOs financed by the French government.

Finally, it is important to note that in LaFab, and in general in Marseille, the emergence and consolidation of youth mediation practices are in constant tension between the autonomy provided by acting in spaces and informal logics (community, neighbourhood and family networks). and the material support that can be achieved by obtaining a grant and entering into bureaucratic logic. The youth groups studied in Marseille are formed and evolve in a continuous shift, back and forth, between the institutional and the community, the formal and the informal, between the urgency of acting from the community and constant competition for public resources and institutional guarantees.

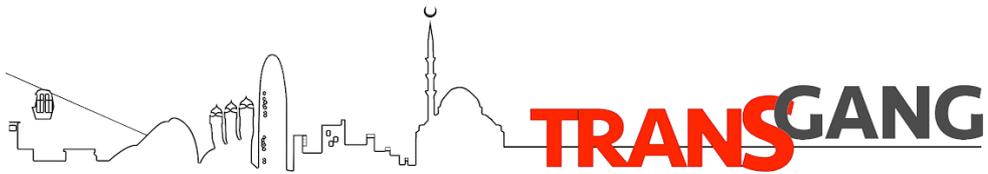
5.6. References

- AGAM. (2013). Insertion des jeunes métropolitains, quels enjeux? (Société No. 12; Regards de l'Agam, p. 4). agAM [Agence d'urbanisme de l'agglomération marseillaise]; ISSN: 2266-6257. https://www.ampmetropole.fr/sites/default/files/2017-09/AGAM_Regards-12_INSERTION_JEUNES_2013.pdf
- AGAM. (2015). Quand la jeunesse s'invite dans les enjeux métropolitains (Société No. 32; Regards de l'Agam, p. 8). agAM [Agence d'urbanisme de l'agglomération marseillaise]; ISSN: 2266-6257. http://doc.agam.org/doc_num.php?explnum_id=3771
- Agier, M. (2019). La sagesse de l'ethnologue. poof.
- Althabe, G. (1985). Production de l'étranger, xénophobie et couches populaires urbaines. *L'Homme et la société*, 77(1), 63-73. <https://doi.org/10.3406/homso.1985.2221>
- Audren, G., Baby-Collin, V., & Valcin, M. (2018). L'école, une ressource pour les populations migrantes. Regards croisés de l'institution et des parents d'élèves dans le centre-ville de Marseille. *European Review of International Migrations*, Vol. 34(4), 93-118.
- Blokland, A.a. J., & Nieuwebeerta, P. (2005). The Effects of Life Circumstances on Longitudinal Trajectories of Offending*. *Criminology*, 43(4), 1203-1240. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-9125.2005.00037.x>
- Bohm, D. (2004). *On dialogue* (Routledge classics ed.). Routledge.
- Bouillon, F., Lafaye, C., Baby-Collin, V., & Deboulet, A. (2017). Ville ordinaire, citoyens précaires. Transition or disparition programmée des quartiers tremplin? (p. 106) [Research Report]. PUCA, report 2017. <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01643207>
- Brinbaum, Y., & Guégnard, C. (2011). Parcours d'insertion et sentiment de discrimination des secondes générations en Zus. 34, 13. <https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00603365>
- Bromberger, C. (1987). L'Olympique de Marseille, La Juve et le Torino: Variations ethnologiques sur l'engouement populaire pour les clubs et les matches de football. *Esprit*, 125 (4), 174-195. JSTOR.
- Calderón, C. (2012). Social Urbanism—Participatory urban upgrading in Medellín, Colombia. In R. J. Lawrence, H. Turgut, & P. Kellett (Eds.), *Requalifying the built environment: Challenges and responses*. Hogrefe Publishing.
- Castells, M. (1999). Grassrooting the Space of Flows. *Urban Geography*, 20(4), 294-302. <https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.20.4.294>
- Cesari, J. (1993). Les leaders associatifs issus de l'immigration maghrébine: Intermédiaires ou clientèle. *Horizons Maghrébins - Le droit à la mémoire*, 20(1), 80-95. <https://doi.org/10.3406/last.1993.1170>
- Cesari, J. (1994). Marseille face its communautés. *Esprit* (1940-), 202 (6), 66-77. JSTOR.
- Chamboredon, J.-C., & Lemaire, M. (1970). Spatial proximity and social distance. Les grands ensembles et leur peuplement. *French Revue de Sociologie*, 11(1), 3-33. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3320131>
- Chottin, A., Jobard, F., & Mohammed, M. (2009). The "troisième voie". Entertain with Marwan Mohammed. *Empty myself*, 49(4), 48-50. Cairn.info. <https://doi.org/10.3917/vaca.049.0048>
- Coing, H. (1966). *Urban renewal and social change*. Editions ouvrières.
- Inter-Ministerial Committee of the Villes. (2011). *Médiation sociale: Pour la reconnaissance d'un métier* (Cahiers pratiques Hors-série, p. 56) [Rapport du groupe de travail Interministériel et Interpartenarial]. General Secretariat of the Interministerial Committee of the Villes; ISBN: 978-2-11-128174-5. <http://www.ville.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/sgciv-ouvragedemediationsociale.pdf>
- Desmond, M. (2014). Relational ethnography. *Theory and Society*, 43(5), 547-579. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11186-014-9232-5>
- Donzel, A. (2014). *Le nouvel esprit de Marseille*. L'Harmattan.
- Donzel, A., & Moreau, A. (2005). *City and integration: Le creuset marseillais*. <http://faire-savoirs.mmsh.univ-aix.fr/Pdf/FS-5-2005-073.pdf>
- Duret, P. (1996). *Anthropologie de la fraternité dans les cités*. French University Presses. <https://doi.org/10.3917/puf.duret.1996.01>
- Durieux, S. (2016). Marseille concentrates the moitié de la population des quartiers de la politique de la ville de la région (INSEE, Ed.). See *Analyzes PACA*. <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2019628>
- Elias, N. (2001). *A solidão dos moribundos*. Jorge Zahar. <https://www.biblio.com/book/solidao-dos-moribundos-nome-do-autor/d/1428244892>
- Erving, G. (2009). *boarding schools* Amorrortu Collections.

- Farrall, S., Hunter, B., Sharpe, G., & Calverley, A. (2014). *Criminal careers in transition: The social context of desistance from crime* (First edition). Oxford University Press.
- Feixa, C. (2006). *Of Youth, Bands, and Tribes* (3rd updated ed.). Ariel.
- Feixa, C., Sánchez García, J., Ballesté, E., Cano-Hila, A. B., Masanet, M.-J., Mecca, M., & Oliver, M. (2019). The (Trans) Gang: Notes and questions for research with youth street groups (TRANSGANG Working Papers 2.2, p. 126). Pompeu Fabra University & European Research Council. <http://dx.doi.org/10.31009/transgang.2019.wp02.2>
- Feixa, C., Sánchez-García, J., Soler-i-Martí, R., Ballesté, E., & Hansen, N. (2020). *Methodology Handbook: Ethnography and Data Analysis*. Pompeu Fabra University & Europe an Research Council.
- Ferrell, J., Hayward, K.J., & Young, J. (2008). *Cultural Criminology: An Invitation* (1 edition). SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Gemert, F. van, Peterson, D., Lien, I.-L., Peterson, D., & Lien, I.-L. (2013). *Street Gangs, Migration and Ethnicity*. Willan. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781843925453>
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (2009). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research* (4. paperback printing). Aldine.
- Glueck, S., & Glueck, E. (1940). *Juvenile Delinquents Grown Up*. Commonwealth Fund.
- Goffman, E. (2006). *Stigma: Damaged identity*. Lovortu.
- Guillen, F., & Elida, D. (2019). Qualitative research: hermeneutic phenomenological method. *Purposes and Representations*, 7(1), 201-229. <https://doi.org/10.20511/pyr2019.v7n1.267>
- Hajjat, A., & Mohammed, M. (2013). Islamophobie: Comment on the French elites making the Muslim problem. *La Découverte*.
- Harper, D. (1992). Small N's and community case studies. In H. Becker & C. Ragin (Eds.), *What is a case? Exploring the foundations of social inquiry* (Cambridge University Press, p. 254).
- Harrison, P. (1985). *Inside the inner city: Life under the cutting edge* (Rev. ed). Penguin.
- Hellefont, E.V., & Densley, J.A. (2018). Gang glocalization: How the global mediascape creates and shapes local gang realities: Crime, Media, Culture. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659018760107>
- INSEE. (2015). *Données sociodémographique par quartiers et arrondissements de Marseille (from 1982 to 2012)*. <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2385003>
- INSEE. (2020). *Dossier complete Commune de Marseille (13055)*. INSEE - National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies. <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2011101?geo=COM-13055>
- Jordi, J.-J., & Témime, É. (1991). *Migrance: History of migrations to Marseille. The shock of decolonisation: (1945 - 1990)*. Edisud.
- Jovchelovitch, S., & Bauer, M.W. (2000). Narrative interviewing (M. W. Bauer & G. Gaskell, Eds.; pp. 57-74). Sage. <http://www.sagepub.co.uk/>
- Kazatchkine, M., & Dreifuss, R. (2019, October 17). Plan national contre les stupéfiants: Non au tout répressif. *Libération*, Commission globale de politique en matière de drogues. https://www.liberation.fr/debats/2019/10/17/plan-national-contre-les-stupefiants-non-au-tout-repressif_1757909/
- Kronlund, S. (2018, January 25). *Enquête sur le 3ème arrondissement de Marseille: L'arrondissement le plus pauvre de France* [Radio broadcast]. In *Les pieds sur terre*. <https://www.franceculture.fr/emissions/les-pieds-sur-terre/enquete-sur-le-3eme-arrondissement-de-marseille-12-larrondissement-le-plus-pauvre-de-france>
- Langevin, P. (2019, July 13). *Marseille: Le cri d'alarme d'un économiste sur l'une des villes les plus inégalitaires de France*. *Challenges*. https://www.challenges.fr/economie/social/marseille-est-la-ville-ou-le-niveau-de-pauvrete-est-le-plus-important_664039
- Lapeyronnie, D. (2008). *Ghetto urbain: Ségrégation, violence, pauvreté en France aujourd'hui*. Robert Laffont.
- Leccardi, C. (2016). Youth Cultures in the New Century: Cultural Citizenship and Cosmopolitanism. In C. Feixa, C. Leccardi, & P. Nilan (Eds.), *Youth, Space and Time, Agoras and Chronotopes in the Global City* (pp. 115-130). SHINE. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004324589_008
- Libération (journal). (1979, May 28). *Antiracism through the Units of «Libé»*. *Libération (journal)*. https://www.liberation.fr/planete/2011/03/24/antiracisme-a-travers-les-unes-de-libe_724121#s4
- Liogier, R. (2012). *Le mythe de l'islamisation: Essai sur une obsession collective*. seuil. EAN 9782021078848

- London, A. (1927). *Marseille porte du Sud* (Les éditions de France).
- Mannheim, K. (2009). *The Sociological Problem of Generations* (pp. 163-195).
- Mansilla, J. (2021). Thinking society and cultural practices in the (digital) hybrid age: Notes and queries on Media Ecology Research. *New Explorations: Studies in Culture and Communication*, 2(1), Article 1. <https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/nexj/article/view/37373>
- Mansilla, J. (2022). Stigmatization et pratiques culturelles des jeunes à Marseille: Une étude ethnographique du projet européen TRANSGANG. *Jeunesses urbaines: expériences de l'intime et des espaces publics*. 89e Congrès de l'Acfas - Canadian-French Association for the Advancement of Sciences, Montreal.
- Mansilla, J., Ballesté, E., Grassi, P., Oliver, M., & Núñez, K. (2021). Researching Youth Street Groups in Southern Europe (TRANSGANG Working Papers 6.1) (C. Feixa & L. Queirolo Palmas, Eds.; Universitat Pompeu Fabra&European Research Council).
- Mansilla, J.C. (2017). Hybrid cultural resistance of the youth of popular neighborhoods in the digital age: Case study and qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) of Medellín, Paris and São Paulo [Université Sorbonne Paris Cité (USPC) – Université Sorbonne Nouvelle - Paris 3]. <https://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/STAR/tel-01910811v1>
- Mansilla, J.C., & Schwartz, G. (2017). Youth Culture and Digital Resistance: Paris, Medellín and São Paulo. In *Brazilian Internet Steering Committee & Brazilian Network Information Centre, Survey on the use of information and communication technologies in Brazilian cultural facilities: ICT in culture 2016* (Centre of Studies on Information and Communication Technologies (Cetic.br ; NIC.br), Committee of Internet of Brazil (CGI.br), pp. 171-180). Regional Centre for Studies on the Development of the Information Society – Cetic.br; ISBN: 978-85-5559-043-6. http://cetic.br/media/docs/publicacoes/2/TIC_CULT_2016_livro_eletronico.pdf
- Mansilla, J., Grassi, P., & Palmas, L.Q. (2022). Contemporary Youth Culture at the Margins of Marseille and Milan: Gangs, Music, and Global Imaginaries. *Youth and Globalization*, 3(2), 359-385. <https://doi.org/10.1163/25895745-bja10017>
- Mansilla, J., Sánchez García, J., Oliver, M., Hansen, N., & Feixa, C. (2020). Between cyberspace and the street: Conducting ethnography with youth street groups in times of physical distancing. *Hipertext.net*, 21, 93-104. <https://doi.org/10.31009/hipertext.net.2020.i21.08>
- Mauger, G. (2009). III. Des «blousons noirs» aux «loubards». In *La sociologie de la délinquance juvénile* (Repères, pp. 58-77). *La Découverte*. <https://www.cairn.info/la-sociologie-de-la-delinquance-juvenile--9782707149718-page-58.htm>
- McNeill, F., Raynor, P., Trotter, C., Maruna, S., & LeBel, T. P. (2012). The desistance paradigm in correctional practice: From programs to lives. In *Offender Supervision: New Directions in Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 65-87). Willan. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203832974>
- Mignolo, W. D., Carballo, F. J., & Herrera Robles, L. A. (2015). *Inhabiting the border: Feeling and thinking about decoloniality* (anthology, 1999-2014). CIDOB.
- Mohammed, M. (2007). Les voies de la colère: "violences urbaines" or révolte d'ordre "politique"? L'exemple des Hautes-Noues a Villiers-sur-marne. *Socio-logos. Revue de l'association française de sociologie*, 2. <http://journals.openedition.org/inshs.bib.cnrs.fr/socio-logos/352>
- Mohammed, M. (2011). *La formation des bandes: Entre la famille, l'école et la rue* (1re éd). French university presses.
- Mohammed, M. (2015). Sortir de la delinquance. *Economic and Social Ideas*, No. 181(3), 48-52. <https://doi.org/doi:10.3917/idee.181.0048>
- Mohammed, M. (2016). La dynamique des bandes de jeunes: Compensation et réputation. *Sens-Dessous*, No. 18(2), 17-23. <https://doi.org/doi:10.3917/sdes.018.0017>
- Monod, J., Kokoreff, M., Padis, M.-O., & Marchandier, I. (2008). Des Barjots aux bandes des cités. *Esprit*, Février(2), 39-54. <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.3917/espri.0802.0039>
- Moore, D., & Cesari, J. (2003). Les jeunes, l'islam et les pratiques culturelles. De l'indignité culturelle à la relegation institutionnelle (p. 269). Persee <http://www.persee.fr>. https://www.persee.fr/doc/debaj_1275-2193_2003_ant_13_1_1156
- Moore, J. (1992). Les problemes de l'inner city en Grande-Bretagne: La version anglaise des cités-guettos. *Les Annales de la Recherche Urbaine*, 54(1), 39-43. <https://doi.org/10.3406/aru.1992.1654>
- Oullier, O., & Kelso, J.A.S. (2006). Neuroeconomics and the metastable brain. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 10(8), 353-354. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2006.06.009>
- Peraldi, M., & Samson, M. (2020). Marseille in resistances. End of règnes et luttes urbaines. At

- <http://journals.openedition.org/lectures>. La Découverte.
<http://journals.openedition.org/lectures/40296>
- Pigenet, M., & Tartakowsky, D. (2003). Les marches en France aux XIXe et XXe siècles: Récurrence et métamorphose d'une démonstration collective. *Le Mouvement Social*, no 202(1), 69-94.
- Ritzer, G. (2003). Rethinking Globalization: Glocalization/Globalization and Something/Nothing. *Sociological Theory*, 21(3), 193-209. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9558.00185>
- Robertson, R. (1995). Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity. In *Global Modernities* (pp. 25-44). SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446250563.n2>
- Saffari, S., Akhbari, R., Abdolmaleki, K., & Hamdon, E. (Eds.). (2017). *Unsettling colonial modernity in Islamic contexts*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Samson, M., Peraldi, M., & Dupont, C. (2015). *Sociology of Marseille*. La Découverte.
- Sanchez Garcia, J. (2010). Youth from other worlds: urban tribes? Youth cultures? Contributions from non-Western contexts. *Social Anthropology Notebooks*, 31, 121-143. <https://doi.org/10.34096/cas.i31.2731>
- Sauvadet, T. (2005). Causes et conséquences de la recherche de «capital guerrier» chez les jeunes de la cité. *Deviance et Societe*, Vol. 29(2), 113-126. <https://doi.org/10.3917/ds.292.0113>
- Sauvadet, T. (2010). Marginalité juvénile et lois du silence: L'entre-soi des jeunes de rue des cités HLM (pp. 279-290). Rennes University Presses. <https://hal-upec-upem.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01330890>
- Schwartz, O. (1998). *The Notion de «classes populaires»* [Habilitation à diriger des recherches (HDR)]. University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines.
- Soto, H., & Therme, P. (1999). Les figures de l'exploit. Practice et supporterisme chez les jeunes des quartiers sensibles marseillais. *Agora débats/jeunesses*, 16(1), 53-60. <https://doi.org/10.3406/agora.1999.1148>
- UPF TransGang Team. (2019). *Ethnographic Fieldwork Handbook*. Transnational Gangs as Agents of Mediation: Experiences of Conflict Resolution in Street Youth Organizations in Southern Europe, North Africa and the Americas (p. 24). Pompeu Fabra University & European Research Council.
- Van Ginneken, E.F.J.C. (2017). Constrained Agency: The Role of Self-Control in the Process of Desistance. In E. L. Hart & E. F. J. C. van Ginneken (Eds.), *New Perspectives on Desistance: Theoretical and Empirical Developments* (pp. 241-265). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95185-7_11
- Wacquant, L. (2006). Reponse à la recension de *Parias urbains*. *Herodote*, 123(4), 227-228. Cairn.info. <https://doi.org/10.3917/her.123.0227>
- Wacquant, L. (2007). *Urban outcasts: Ghetto, banlieues, État*. La Découverte.
- Wilson, W.J. (2006). *The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy* (Paperback ed., [Nachdr.]). Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Ziegler, J.A., Kuhl, D.C., Swisher, R.R., & Chavez, J.M. (2017). Parenthood Residency Status and Criminal Desistance across Neighborhood Contexts. *Deviant behavior*, 38(1), 17-33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2016.11897586>.



© TRANSGANG & UPF

www.upf.edu/web/transgang

transgang@upf.edu.

This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's HORIZON 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 742705

