Introduction

The significant features of Barcelona include its history of social mobilisation, its active and innovative City Government and its shift from being a city mainly attracting immigrants from the rest of Iberia to a cosmopolitan city where an increasing number of people from all continents reside.

The main aim of this chapter is to analyse the political participation of foreigners in Barcelona by taking into account the ‘political opportunity structure’, the nature of migrant associations, and how they interact. It will be shown how, on the one hand, a city government relatively active in fostering residents’ political participation via advisory councils and, on the other hand, a diversity of big ‘indigenous’ NGOs, co-exist with a few cases of strong autonomous ‘foreign’ immigrants organisations.

Until recently people coming from other areas of the Iberian Peninsula or Europe mainly composed migrant communities in Barcelona. During the twentieth century, there have been two periods of rapid migration (Pascual...
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de Sans et al., 2000). Between 1916 to 1930 industrial expansion and public works needed workers that arrived from the geographically and, sometimes, also culturally closer areas to Catalonia. The estimated inflow was over 500,000 people. Then, between the 1950s and the early 1970s mass immigration into Barcelona was from more distant Spanish regions, where languages other than Catalan were spoken. The population increase due to immigration was around 1,400,000 people, largely to work in industry.

In the case of the European migrations, foreign immigration to Catalonia increased during the early industrial era (during the nineteenth century), when high-skilled workers, employers, and financial investors (and their families) arrived mainly in the Barcelona metropolitan region from Northern European countries. This group is still significant but is now a minority among the foreign population. In the last decades North Americans and Japanese high-skilled immigrants have joined this group (Solana and Pascual de Sans, 1995).

Foreign residents in Barcelona by main nationality, 1991-1996

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<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>1991</th>
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<th>Nationality</th>
<th>1996</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2,170</td>
<td></td>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>3,191</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1,994</td>
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<td>Peru</td>
<td>2,779</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1,914</td>
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<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1,784</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1,777</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>1,707</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>1,727</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
<td>1,693</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1,253</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
<td>1,589</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1,173</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total foreigners</td>
<td>23,402</td>
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<td>Total foreigners</td>
<td>30,455</td>
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<td>(1.4%)</td>
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However, during the last few decades an increasing number of people coming from other continents have influenced Barcelona’s changing population. During the late 1960s and early 1970s African people stopped in the metropolitan area on their way to Northern Europe. This settlement before crossing the Pyrenees was due to the increasingly hostile immigration policies in North-western countries and the economic growth in Catalonia. They were the pioneers of later arrivals from Africa during the 1980s and 1990s, especially from Morocco, Senegal and Gambia.

Also during the 1960s students from some Latin American countries and Equatorial Guinea found schools and universities open to them in Barcelona. During the 1970s refugees from South America found a haven in the city creating the pillars of larger communities from Argentina, Chile and Uruguay when economic crisis in those countries during the 1980s and 1990s brought more people from the South American Cone (Domínguez et al., 1995; Sepa Bonaña, 1993).

Furthermore, during the 1980s, inflows of Filipino women to domestic services, and Chinese immigrants to catering services took place. More recently, during the 1990s, domestic service has also drawn women from Peru, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic (in general through the contingents established annually by the Spanish government). Another recent significant group has been immigrants from Pakistan (some of them are owners of small food shops, while others work distributing gas cylinders).

Official statistics on foreign immigrants in Spain only allow general approaches to the real composition of the immigrant population, due to the existence of a significant number of ‘dedocumented’ immigrants. However, in any case, foreign immigrant population in Barcelona is still small compared to other European cities.

Immigrant Political Opportunity Structure in Barcelona

European, Spanish and Catalan government policies have a direct influence on the political opportunity structure for immigrants in Barcelona City. However, there are a number of ways initiated by the City Government on its own designed to foster political participation.

Foreigners do not have the right to vote in Spain, with the exception of those from European Union countries who can participate in local elections (plus some from a few countries with special agreements on this matter). In 1994 the number of naturalisations in Spain as a whole was 7,801, which is only 1.6 per cent of the documented foreign residents in Spain in 1993, and in 1995 just 6,756 foreigners were naturalised, which represents 1.4 per cent of the foreign residents in 1994 (461,364 people). Thus, these data suggest that only small minorities of the immigrants from abroad are Spanish citizens with full rights. However, there are diverse situations, as
Latin Americans and Filipino immigrants can obtain nationality (and the right to vote) after two years of legal residence while most others need 10 years.

At the City Council level, the two most important authorities are the Ajuntament de Barcelona (City Government) and the ten administrative districts of the city (until recently they had just a few competencies, today they have a few more, but a possible reform of the internal city administration may foster district governments in the future). From the first local ballot after Franco dictatorship to the elections of June 1995 the Partit dels Socialistes de Catalunya (PSC) ran the City Government. They held the simple majority of votes, and needed the support of Initiativa per Catalunya (IC), and Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC). However, in 1996, a fraction of ERC split to create the Partit per la Independència (PI) and the two councillors of that party became members of the latter. In June 1999, PSC won elections again and its candidate was elected Mayor with the support of IC.

In general terms, the key idea behind Barcelona City Government approach to foreign immigrants issues has been to consider them wherever possible just like any other resident and to channel their demands through the general administrative bodies. However, a few civil servants within the City Government have been specialised in 'foreigners issues', and among them Pere Novella (Social Affairs Area) and Josep Ignasi Urenda (Civil Rights Commissary) exemplify the two main visions that are influential in the local government immigration policies.

There has been a line of continuity between local policies that dealt with Spanish internal immigration during the 1960s and early 1970s and foreign immigration during the 1980s and 1990s, according to Pere Novella. Among the common themes, Novella emphasises an attitude that in general avoids a different treatment for groups based on diverse cultural or geographical backgrounds, denying the importance of a specific job called cultural 'mediator', instead everybody should mediate between different people. Following Novella, other aspects than just the country of origin have to be taken into account, such as rural and urban differences.

A university student from Dakar may have more in common with a university student born in Barcelona, than the latter has with a peasant from a small Andalusian village, even if both are Spanish citizens.

However, Novella also recognises differences between both immigration waves. Among a significant number of the immigrants arrived in the second wave there is a lack of full citizens' rights (in the case of foreigners), there are difficulties in understanding and speaking local languages (when immigration was mainly from the rest of Spain almost everybody spoke Spanish) and, apparently, there is an higher refusal to welcome foreigners among local people. This lack of full citizenship rights together with some particular needs provided reasons for the creation of alternative ways of foreigners' participation beyond voting.

Advisory and Participatory Councils

One way of possible political participation is via advisory and participatory councils. In 1986, under new district organisation and citizens' participation rules, Barcelona City Council created advisory councils on social welfare, professional and employment training, voluntary associations, women, elderly people and so forth. Thus in the Social Welfare Area (Àmbit de Benestar Social) of Barcelona City Council there is an Advisory Board on foreign immigration and refugees. It has been working since the late 1980s, with the participation of representative members of political parties, trade unions (some of them foreign workers), NGOs, universities, civil servants from local, autonomous and central governments, and professional associations. However, between 1990 and 1996 foreigners' associations were not members of the Council (see Consell Municipal, 1990-1996). They only participated a few times as guests at meetings. These were the cases of a member of the Centro Filipino in the period 1991-1993 and of two members of the Federaciö de Collectius d’Immigrants a Catalunya (FCIC) in 1996. The contacts between local government members and foreign immigrant associations' members were, in general, informal.

In the light of this situation, on 24 October 1997 Barcelona City Council inaugurated the Consell Municipal d’Immigració de Barcelona. This initiative had the support of the European Commission programme on local integration (LIA). In the origins of this advisory council Pere Novella has been a key character, managing the relationship with a few selected immigrant's associations along the way (those more sympathetic with the local government visions), and discussing in advance the rules of the Immigration Municipal Council with them.

This suggests how a (local) government may 'use' some social organisations (which become institutionalised) in order to elaborate and legitimise policies, without giving more power to people, and how other organisations are excluded because they do not have the kind of incidence that the government considers as right. Thus Antonio Gramsci's (1971) inspired approach to the state, as the addition of government plus institutionalised civil society, is reflected here. However, not all social organisations play
this game. Some members of organised civil society try to avoid institutionalisation processes, like Assemblea Papers per Tot Thom (Documents for Everybody Assembly), and try to perform in a more autonomous way.

Immigration Observatory

Beside the Social Welfare Area, in the Barcelona City Government, in early 1992, the then Mayor Pasqual Maragall (PSC) appointed Josep Ignasi Urenda as Mayor’s Commissioner for Civil Rights. He was put in charge of monitoring the developments of ethnic and religious minorities in Barcelona City. In 1995, after the local elections, a new specific government body (Regidoria) of civil rights was created, and then the commissioner’s main duties shifted to international relations (Barcelona Solidaria), although immigration issues were kept as a minor but significant part of his activities. Among them, there was the development of an observatory on immigration in Barcelona City, which consists mainly of the compilation of various statistical data from official sources and from some NGOs. There was also a small budget for grants to those NGOs and trade unions that collaborate with the Commissary providing data on immigrants for the observatory (mainly, Caritas and the main trade unions: CCOO and AMIC-UGT). Thus the statistical control of immigrants is partially “subcontracted” (without a contract) to some NGOs, in a neo-liberal fashion.

There is not just one point of view within the Barcelona City Government in relation to immigration. A coalition of political parties is in power and there is disagreement within them as well. Pere Novella’s visions contrast with Urenda’s perceptions of what happens when a ‘foreign immigrant’ from an impoverished country acquires Spanish nationality. For the latter, they are still a minority who needs special treatment and to be monitored, as exemplifies the creation of an immigration observatory. This contrast is more explicit when we discover what the ‘theoretical’ references of each are. Thus, while Pere Novella during the interviews is critical of the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ way of dealing with the ‘ethnic minorities’ issue, Ignasi Urenda’s administrative body’s name includes ‘civil rights’ because of an ‘Anglo-Saxon’ influence.

In any case, it has to be emphasised that both local administrative bodies share the core concern of the City Government’s immigration policy, which is based on avoiding the creation of administrative bodies specific to ‘foreign immigrants’, unless it is really necessary, and an explicit rejection in their discourse of the concept of ‘ghetto’.

Other Joint Forms of Participation

Other joint forms of participation between the City Government and other organisations have been implemented on immigration issues. Thus, there is an office that provides services for foreign immigrants and refugees, Servei d’Atenció a Immigrants Estrangers i Refugiats (SAIER) organised by five institutions and organisations: Barcelona City Council; the Centre d’Informació per a Treballadors Estrangers – CITE (this is the body of the trade union CCOO that deals with foreign workers’ affairs); the Associació Catalana de Solidaritat i Ajuda als Refugiats (ACSAR); the Red Cross; and the College of Barristers. However, the City Government mainly funds it. In 1995, 2,350 cases were dealt with in the SAIER, among them 73.8 per cent were ‘economic immigrants’ and 26.2 per cent ‘asylum seekers’ (see Gerència Àmbit, 1995). In terms of immigrants’ involvement, although one of the members of the office was an Equatorial Guinean immigrant naturalised Spanish (a member of CITE-CCOO), no ‘foreign immigrant’ associations participate in running this service. Thus it is an instance of collaboration between government and institutionalised civil society, and it shows how autonomous ‘foreign immigrants’ associations are excluded from the management of significant services directed at them.

Finally, the process of reaching an agreement to build a Muslim cemetery in Barcelona shows an informal joint form of participation. The ‘distance’ between the local City Government and the main Islamic associations based in the city was a difficulty in the negotiation process. Divisions among the Moroccan associations (the main Muslim ‘national community’ in Barcelona) also did not help. The role of a small Lebanese association was the key to reaching a compromise over a place for Muslim burials. One of the representative members of this association also participates in a trade union, and he was close to one of the political parties of the centre-left wing coalition that was in power in the Barcelona City Government. The fact he was not a member of a faction of the Moroccan community, and that he was not Muslim (thus he was not a member of any faction of the Islamic associations) but representative of an association with several Muslim members, were helpful points in reaching the agreement. Finally, this agreement was signed at the end of 1997 by Barcelona’s City Council and the following associations: Associació de Catalunya Líban, Centre Islàmic, Associació Palestina, and Associació per a la Protecció dels Drets dels Pakistanos. Thus the Moroccan associations did not participate in the signing, although some of them took part in the negotiations. In any case, the cemetery is open to all Muslim people, without discrimination.
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according to origin, sex or nationality. It is located in the general cemetery of Collserola, covers 552 square metres, and has a capacity for one hundred tombs.

In summary, Barcelona City Government tries to channel all immigrants into mainstream services, while respecting cultural diversity. However, taking into account the limitation of rights among foreigners (e.g. lack of voting rights) and some special needs (e.g. language and legal support), there is a Municipal Council of Immigration and other joint forms of participation with social organisations on these issues. Thus the City Government is tuning a few other channels in order to provide some services to 'foreign' immigrants.

Migrant Organisations and Mobilisation

Apart from the opportunities for political involvement or the services offered by the City Government, there are other ways immigrants participate in local life. The world of organisations of 'foreign immigrants' in Barcelona is too diverse to be analysed properly here. However, this section will underline two key issues for understanding how migrant communities mobilise in European urban areas, with illustrations from Barcelona. Firstly, it examines the evolution from mainly protest organisations (i.e. associations for transforming society) to services associations (i.e. associations to manage society). Secondly, it discusses their geographical organisation over territory.

From Protesting to Providing Services?

From being mainly 'protest associations' created to overcome unjust situations caused by governments (such as 'dedocumentation') or by capital (labour exploitation), some associations have been transformed into 'service associations' that receive funding from the same government that oppresses the same people they aim to serve. This change happened between the mid-1970s and the 1990s. Furthermore, in this process the members of such associations often turn from comrades in struggle to 'co-users' of services. This process was still an exception among most immigrant associations in Barcelona, because the funding they have received has been small. But it applies much more to NGOs run by local-born people or among trade unions. In fact, it is the same neo-liberal model applied to other areas of Catalan society and in other European societies (Casey, 1996). According to this model the NGOs in general (and also QUANGOs) perform social tasks which, during the implementation of Keynesian policies may have corresponded to governments. What changes with neo-liberalism is that the government apparatus only performs the basic orientation of activities and the control of these tasks (an example is the management of professional training courses by Generalitat de Catalunya). The daily running of the activities is transferred to those social organisations willing to toe the government's line and which allow themselves to be monitored by the government. (In the case of professional training courses there is a wide range of NGOs that offer them to 'foreign immigrants' among other people.)

This complex balance between, on the one hand, obtaining funding for the provision of services and, on the other hand, the denunciation of unfair situations is one of the key worries for GRAMC, which is the acronym for Grups de Recerca i Actuaciö sobre Minories Culturals i Treballadors Estrangers. GRAMC was constituted from a group created around the Samba Kubali school (an inter-cultural school based in a Catalan town called Santa Coloma de Farners, near Girona) which was registered in 1989. There was no GRAMC local group (assemblea local) in Barcelona until 1994. This NGO, which in 1997 had a 700-strong membership, is unique in the context of Catalonia. GRAMC is defined as a network of over 12 grassroots local organisations and their main headquarters are located in Girona. Curiously, the Barcelona group is the smallest local assembly and, according to Carmen Murias, who is one of its members, it performs very specific tasks mainly related to spreading information.

The issue of funding has been discussed by GRAMC. As opposed to many NGOs and trade unions that have assumed uncritically that the only way to proceed is to become an organisation that provides services, within GRAMC there was a debate between two main positions. On one side were those members opposed to this 'services' option and, on the other, those members aiming to self-organise training activities for social and personal transformation.

Thus some GRAMC members commented that, in case of becoming a services association it was necessary to compete with other NGOs that provide services, such as the main trade unions, Caritas and SOS Racisme. The latter anti-racist association, after internal changes in 1994, adopted an organisational structure based on business management. In this sense SOS Racisme, from having just a part-time administrative secretary as a salaried worker in early 1992, according to Isidoro Barba (general manager of this NGO), in 1997 had seven full-time employees. At the same time it created
Diverse Ways of Geographical Organisation

From a political geographic point of view, GRAMC’s territorial organisation has undergone interesting transformations due to their difficulties in coordinating local actions with actions at a higher territorial level. This difficulty led them to experiment with the representation in the executive committee: from having one representative for each local group to having a representative for mid-level territorial areas composed of three or four local groups. The aim was to enhance collaboration between local groups following geographical criteria (basically, proximity). In most cases it did not work. Thus afterwards GRAMC re-adopted a direct representation of the local groups in the executive committee, except in cases where regional co-ordinations worked well. In other words, flexibility at the territorial organisation level can be a solution for the difficult balance between local direct participation and supra-local co-ordination.

In the case of SOS Racisme, its economic extension has been also accompanied by a territorial spread that has varied over time, with some groups appearing and disappearing. In early 1998, apart from the people who meet in the headquarters in Barcelona City centre, there were nine local groups distributed mainly in the Barcelona and Tarragona metropolitan areas.

In any case, the debates within GRAMC did not occur in SOS Racisme to the same extent owing to their lack of an organisational structure that could enable debate and the decision-making process from the bottom up as in GRAMC. The minor territorialisation of SOS Racisme in relation to GRAMC, while SOS Racisme possesses more resources and a higher budget than GRAMC, confirms again SOS Racisme’s lack of interest in reaching a horizontal grassroots development.

Following this debate over territorial organisation, but in contrast to these large associations with presence in several towns, a multi-organisational local project was set up. In 1993 some NGOs oriented mainly towards North-South cooperation initiated the ‘Xenophilia project’ (Project Xenophilia) with the desire of becoming a local project, situated within Barcelona’s Ciutat Vella district limits. It had its main site in Avinyó Street. There were thirty people working in the project, almost all of them volunteers. When they obtained enough funding they employed somebody as a part-time and temporary worker (at some points there have been as many as three or four full-time employees, always in a semi-professional way). The areas in which they have performed have been the following: juridical (not a priority because other organisations already cover this area); women’s issues (including a course on becoming community agents for immigrant women, and a training workshop on resources and environmental knowledge); mediation (including a Servei d’Atenció i Mediació Intercultural in order to mediate between immigrants and public administrations, social services, schools, etc.); housing (including a Servei de Suport al Lloguer d’Habitatges, where they give information on flats to rent and help in the search, give advice about contracts, produce statistics on housing conditions, and help to find resources to pay the rent or renovation); and training (including IT, hotel and restaurant jobs, legal advice, social facilities, introduction to media, and technical training courses on mediation for foreign immigrants). At this local level, the Xenophilia project saw results. Following police aggression against foreign neighbours a platform of organisations and neighbours was created to support the victims was immediately formed. However, recent public funding shortages put an end to this project in 1998, showing how the life of a project funded from institutions may depend on how long it gets money. Even if it is a socially successful project when participants get used to depend on money it is difficult to keep on working when money vanishes.

Self-organising versus Patronage

The situation at big NGOs, where members are mainly Spanish citizens or both immigrants and Spanish, is different than at most foreign immigrants associations. In general, the latter are small organisations either modestly funded or not funded at all. Thus it is interesting to see the efforts of the Federation of Immigrant Communities in Catalonia (Federació de Collectius Immigrants a Catalunya, FCIC) at co-ordinating several foreigners associations, mainly settled in Barcelona province. The FCIC assembled 26
immigrant associations and collectives of immigrants living in Catalonia. It brings together persons from different origins, such as the Maghreb, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Europe. They have several working commissions, one of the most active of which addresses women’s issues. It groups women from Latin America, the Maghreb, the Philippines, Gambia, and Equatorial Guinea.

FCIC was founded in 1990, with the announcement of foreign workers’ regularisation. In 1991 during the Extraordinary Regularisation of Foreign Workers it began to consolidate itself. By then diverse NGOs, like SOS Racisme and Caritas, and trade unions, basically CCOO, had created a platform called Catalunya Solidària amb la Immigració (Catalonia Solidary with Immigration). It was in the framework of such a social organisations that the creation of a federation which grouped immigrants’ associations was possible: ‘a body that collected immigrants’ demands which was run by immigrants themselves’ in the words of Obam Micó, a member of the FCIC directory board. In this first phase there was a widespread response among the immigrants’ collectives. There were meetings nearly every week in the framework of Catalunya Solidària: FCIC was being consolidated. But after the regularisation process there was a breakdown, the co-ordination between associations became very difficult (interview with Obam Micó).

The hardest period of the post-1991 Foreign Workers’ Extraordinary Regularisation process coincided with the period when foreign immigrants’ associations were over-shadowed by SOS Racisme. This anti-racist NGO became the de facto leader among social organisations dealing with immigration issues in Barcelona when a debate on foreigners in Catalonia came to the public’s attention in 1992.

It is important to recognise that, to date, the influence of ‘indigenous’ NGOs (organisations of solidarity, trade unions, Christian charities, and so on) has been more significant in lobbying public authorities than the influence of foreigners organisations on their own. Some indigenous NGOs, like SOS Racisme, command a large amount of economic and human resources while, in general, foreigners associations precariously survive. Patronage is enemy of self-organisation.

An example of this is the organisation of the Festa de la Diversitat (Diversity Festival), an event organised every spring since 1993 in Barcelona City by SOS Racisme with economic support, almost every year, from the Barcelona City Council, the Generalitat de Catalunya, the Spanish Central Government, the EU, and private funding (apart from the funding, lately they receive also human help through the public bodies in charge of voluntary work). The budget is several million pesetas and it attracts over 50,000 people during a weekend. Some foreigners associations are invited to sell their products in stalls during the festival. In previous meetings they have been told by SOS Racisme what they should do until the festival and during the event: foreigners associations are not considered as equal partners of the organisation. SOS Racisme is in charge of the organisation while the foreigners associations offer ‘exotic’ drinks, food and music to mainly non-foreign people, in what becomes a fun fair. Thus, in 1996, twenty foreigners associations and other solidarity NGOs distributed an open letter to the public, the press, the public authorities, and to SOS Racisme in order to uncover this unfair situation. It reported that they were paying the organisation between 30,000 and 60,000 pesetas to have a stall, while the organisation was receiving public funding. In focusing the festival on ‘music stars’ that received a lot of money, it was not fair that immigrants’ music bands were playing a few metres away for free. This was not a new situation. Since the beginning of the festival in 1993 these and other issues (as the top-down relationship with the direction of SOS Racisme) were on the table. But until the fourth festival in 1996 things were not spread beyond the people directly involved in the its preparation. At the end of the open letter the associations underlined four points: ‘we are not killjoy’, ‘we only wish SOS Racisme would reflect on it’, ‘we wish to be taken into account’, and ‘we want to open a dialogue with a clear will to reach an agreement.’ However the result of that action, for some associations, was not as positive as it was expected. In 1997 they were not invited by SOS Racisme to attend the festival. This can be a problem for foreigners associations. The money they may collect during the Festa de la Diversitat weekend, in several cases, is the main source of funding for activities during the rest of the year. In 1999 most of these problems still remained.

However, SOS Racisme organises other activities apart from that festival that allow them to have good relationships with other foreigners associations (e.g. pedagogical activities, the report of racist attacks, training courses, information campaigns), even if the latter end up being dependant on the former. In fact, since the beginning of SOS Racisme, some foreigners associations’ members have been present in several areas of work. But lately its position is becoming stronger because being ‘friend’ of SOS Racisme is a way of having better access to funding. SOS Racisme has even created a private Foundation to fund activities, re-enforcing its role as manager and distributor of money.

In summary, in order to understand the mobilisation of immigrants in Barcelona during the 1990s three aspects have been helpful:
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- The extent to which protest or provision of services has been important among the activities done by organisations. This question is relevant in a decade that has seen the domestication of protests by the logic of the market and the new kinds of bureaucracy.
- The forms of territorial organisation have followed most associations. This question is relevant when, after the collapse of traditional forms, contradictory trends are taking place at the same time including groups characterised by grassroots flexible co-ordination, others inspired by neo-liberal business management, etc.
- The relations between 'indigenous' organisations' and 'foreign' immigrant associations. This is relevant because the existing divide partly created by big NGOs patronising immigrants and thus putting difficulties to 'foreign immigrants' self-organisation.

The Case of Moroccan Immigrants in Barcelona

People from Morocco are the main immigrant group in Barcelona if measured by nationality. In this section we will focus on associations mainly composed of Moroccans as a more detailed case study of the issues discussed above.

The presence of Moroccan people in Barcelona is not recent, and their arrival has not been a massive inflow concentrated in time. Instead a progressive settlement has been the pattern (Colectivo ïoé, 1994). There are three main periods of settlement since 1960, to which it is possible to add a fourth one corresponding to recent years. Such periods have also been characterised by different kinds of Moroccan immigrants' organisations and political participation.

1960-1975: Under Franco's Rule

During the 1960s, the age of 'desarrollismo' (development) under Franco, Moroccans settled temporally in some parts of Catalonia. They came looking for jobs, but when work was scarce they returned to Morocco or moved on to other European countries. The first Moroccans in Catalonia settled in Barcelona and the metropolitan area. They were single men who worked mainly in the foundry industry, and public works (roads and highways). In some cases, four or five years later their families arrived and then they stayed for a longer period. The lack of a 'foreigners policy' or rigorous controls made it possible for them to live without residence or work permits. There is therefore an underestimation of the number of Moroccans arriving in those years (in 1965 there were 129 Moroccan residents registered in the Barcelona province; in 1975 the number was 391).

Due to the political situation of dictatorship, political participation was limited to the fascist organisations of the regime and to cultural and leisure associations mainly linked to the Catholic Church. Of course, clandestine political organisations existed, but only a minority of people was active in them. The few Moroccan immigrants residing in Spain had little scope for political participation.

1975-1986: 'Democratic' Transition

This period started with the restriction on immigration in France and Germany, and ends when the Foreigners Law 7/1985 was passed in the Spanish Parliament, in Madrid. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, 'liberal democracy' began to filter through and the so-called State of Autonomies was installed in Spain. In local elections the centre-left-wing political parties obtained the power in the main urban city councils, and an economic crisis struck Spain's industrial areas, including Catalonia. At the same time, in Morocco the years of industrialisation through import substitution ended, and the IMF and World Bank 'adjustment' plans appeared.

The closed border of the Pyrenees since 1974 caused a concentration of Moroccans on its southern side. Thus a number settled in Catalonia, mainly in the Barcelona province. The available data show an increase in numbers of the Moroccan residents registered (from 263 people in 1970 in Barcelona province to 884 people in 1985), but the numbers of 'dedocumented' Moroccan immigrants also increased.

During the early years of this period, in the late 1970s, the arrival Moroccan immigrants coincided with the growing protest against Franco's regime and the first precarious 'democratic' government. With the legalisation of free trade unions in 1977 some immigrants managed to join those organisations. Thus in 1980, a group of Moroccan members of Comisiones Obreras (CCOO), after some basic training created the ephemeral Moroccan Emigrants' Association in Catalonia (AEMC) in the same headquarters that CCOO had in carrer Hospital, in the Raval neighbourhood (Roca et al., 1983).

In 1977, a few years before the creation of AEMC, the Arabic-Spanish cultural association Bayt Al Thaqafa already existed. It was formed by a
group of young Arabian immigrants and local Barcelonan people. They began to run a Cultural Centre in a place offered by the Catholic community of Sta. Maria del Mar church. In this centre different people with Moroccan origin and from other Arabian countries had the chance to meet each other in their spare time to perform cultural activities and give lessons in Arabian and Spanish. This centre registered itself as the Spanish Association of Friendship with the Arabian People Bayt Al Thaqafa and over time they have been extending activities and services. The flat that this association has in Barcelona (there is another one in St. Vicenç dels Horts) is currently placed in Carrer Princesa, in the Ciutat Vella district. This centre was the first NGO exclusively dedicated to foreign immigrants in Barcelona. Ever since the early 1970s Caritas had already been helping impoverished foreign immigrants who knocked on its doors. But Bayt Al-Thaqafa was original because it was created to attend to the needs of a specific group of people: Muslim and Arabic immigrants. This association is also an instance of a service association appearing when protest movements were more prevalent. Thus, in some aspects, it was a pioneer of the kind of association that later became hegemonic. However, during this period, the influence of money in this and other associations was still limited.


After the entry in the European Community in 1986, a clearer and more restrictive foreign immigration policy appeared in Spain, alongside other European countries that signed the Schengen Agreement. In May 1990 the compulsory requirement of an entry visa for Moroccan citizens was passed, and in 1991 the second regularisation process was initiated. In Spain, this was a period of relative economic recovery and growth. In Morocco, the neo-liberal policy caused unemployment and social unrest.

The restrictive measures did not impede the entry into Spain of Moroccan citizens. Some arrived before 1990 as tourists or students, and settled down in Catalonia. Others arrived later crossing the Gibraltar strait in the so-called pateras (risky boats) putting their lives at danger (an unknown number of them have disappeared in the sea), buying passports from corrupt Spanish consulates in Morocco, or bribing frontier police agents to cross the border line. Thus in 1990 Moroccan residents numbered 3,181 in the Barcelona province, and 13,680 in April 1992, after the 1991 regularisation process.

The data of this regularisation reveal which sectors the Moroccans worked in Barcelona province. They were found mainly in services (73.2 per cent), followed by industry (14.5 per cent), fishery (5.8 per cent), construction (5 per cent) and agriculture (1.2 per cent). Among them, only the 30.7 per cent were women. The majority of the Moroccans arriving in this period were single migrants, mainly young men, but also single, divorced or widowed women. Furthermore, a few families arrived, once the family head had obtained a relative stable situation in terms of work, housing, and residence permits.

Among Moroccan immigrants associative participation was still weak during this period, for several reasons. The associations were recently created; the Moroccan Consulate controlled some; sometimes there was a mutual distrust between Berbers and Arabs; and there was also a general distrust for politics among immigrants due to political corruption in Morocco. Thus relationships within the community were not well organised, in most of the cases just the visit to the mosques, to the cultural centres and to specialised shops allow the communication among them (Colectivo Ifé, 1994; Domingo et al., 1995). Del Olmo (1996) has classified their associations into three groups: governmental (dependent on the Moroccan government), ‘para-sindical’ (linked to the Spanish trade unions) and Islamic associations (dependent on the mosques). This is an interesting classification that situates the general trends. However the local reality of Barcelona is a more complex one, as it is shown below.

Furthermore, during this period, a few Moroccan immigrants became involved in the process of creating special bodies in trade unions (e.g. in creating the Information Office for Foreign Workers, CITE, in Comisiones Obreras) and the foundation of NGOs like SOS Racisme.

1993-1999: New Challenges

The most recent years can be considered a fourth period of immigration and politics. After the 1992 Olympic Games, the Barcelona metropolitan region (as other Catalan and Spanish areas) suffered an economic crisis that deepened the de-industrialisation process, and increased the unemployment rate up to over 20 per cent of the active population. However, there was then a macroeconomic recovery, bringing with it increased insecurity for poorer members of society.

New associations with new characteristics were formed in this period, like those that mainly work on issues related to the children of immigrants, the so-called second generation. An example is the Associació Socio-
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Cultural (ASC) Ibn Batuta, created in 1994 by several Moroccans who had been collaborating in Bayt-Al Thaqafa or SOS Racisme or other Moroccan associations. This association was created by Moroccan family men, who in a few cases have been living in Barcelona for more than 30 years. For Ahmed Yafou, an ASC Ibn Batuta member, obtaining a proper meeting place was an essential aspect of their first steps as an association, making explicit another aspect of organisational geography. Recently this association has started an extension overseas and a small group of members who went to Mallorca to work created a new group, conceived an auxiliary group on the island. However, one of the issues that this association wanted to resolve was children’s lack of fluency in (or lack of knowledge of) Arabic.

The person who expresses this, Ahmed Yafou – a member of the executive of the association – is Berber who can speak the Berber language (Amazigh). But he believes that their children should be able to speak Arabic as well, because it is useful if they travel to Morocco. However, in the association there are no Berber language lessons. This is a complicated issue because Berber culture has been banned in northern Morocco for decades. In contrast, there are other Moroccan associations that prefer boosting the Berber culture, such as the Associaciö d’Immigrants Marroquins a Catalunya (AIMC), which has its main site in Mataró (a town near Barcelona) and is one of the most recently registered Moroccan associations.

Moroccan Immigrants’ Autonomy versus Institutionalisation

Moroccan associations in Barcelona are characterised by diverse divisions. One of them is whether or not they are linked to the consulate. ASC Ibn Batuta has been accused many times of being linked to the consulate in some interviews. But Ahmed Yafou’s response is that they only have two links with the consulate. In their first year they applied for funding from the Moroccan Minister of Emigration in order to buy Arabic textbooks. When they realised that it was only 50,000 pesetas per annum, and that they had to fill in a lot of forms and to celebrate ‘national Moroccan’ festivals in return, they decided not to apply for it. On another occasion they accepted the services of an Arabic language lecturer who is a Moroccan civil servant attached to the consulate. For Ahmed Yafou there is a big difference between collaborating with the consulate and being part of it.

A number of associations like ATIME, Centro Averroes or AIMC were opposed to differentiation. They shared a political opposition to the Moroccan Alauitan monarchy. They regard ASC Ibn Batuta, Nahda and Amical as the creations of the consulate. In particular, Mohamed Derdabi, ATIME’s secretary, in an interview considered them as ‘yellow associations’ (sympathetic with power). Mohamed El-Bouhali, Centro Averroes’ member noted a similarly critical point of view, but he took his criticism further. For him ASC Ibn Batuta, Nahda and Amical are instruments of control, folklorist, and created by the consulate in order to avoid consciousness among Moroccan immigrants and to impede them fighting to change their situation.

Protest Versus Provision of Services

Centro Averroes had its moment of greatest social leadership when in autumn 1992, a significant number of Moroccan people tried to cross the Gibraltar strait by pateras for the first time. Many of them died. The change of the Spanish visa policy (following the Schengen Agreement) and the impact of the global economic slump on Morocco liebehind these deaths. This global post-fordist economic re-structuring (also called ‘crisis’) encouraged thousands of Moroccans to a desperate emigration. As a protest against those deaths, Centro Averroes, with the support of dozens of other social organisations, launched a demonstration in the Parc de la Ciutadel in Barcelona on November 15, 1992.

However, all associations receive criticism. Thus ATIME-Catalunya is accused by other organisations of being not much more than a satellite branch of the association created with the same name in Madrid in 1989. However, the integration of ATIME-Catalunya in the countrywide organisation with the same name gives them a certain degree of autonomy. This allows them to have almost no relationship with AMIC, UGT-Catalunya’s immigration branch, while in Madrid ATIME and UGT have close relations (in fact ATIME-Madrid was created from UGT). Despite all these differences, ATIME is a large and unique association with many local groups spread almost all over Spain. That critique is an instance of another general debate on the degree of autonomy of local branches in big organisations.

Another Moroccan association with a referent in Madrid is AIMC, whose members consider the Asociación de Emigrantes Marroquíes en España (AEME) members as comrades. However, they are two independent organisations with good relations, in the framework of a wider European network inspired by the leadership of the former political prisoner
who was in jail for the longest period under the rule of Hassan II. Abraham Serfati was released in 1991 after more than twenty years in prison; he currently lives in exile in Paris. These Moroccan associations have as trade unions contacts in Spain with the left-wing critical sector of CCOO and the anarcho-syndicalist trade union called CGT, depending on the locality. In other words, organisational and political differences between AIMC and ATIME in Catalonia are quite clear in the degree of autonomy in relation to their counterparts in Madrid (AIMC is independent while ATIME is dependent from Madrid), and in the kind of relations with Spanish trade unions (AIMC is closer to the left of CCOO and CGT, and ATIME is closer to UGT and the official sector of CCOO).

An interesting instance of strategy, mobilisation and engaging with 'top-down' participatory frameworks is a project called Al-Wafâ. They are a group of Moroccan women that are walking towards their social and work insertion, they aim to create a co-operative company in order to spread in Catalan society their culture and to commercialise Arabic food. They organise workshops of Moroccan culture, Moroccan cuisine, henna artcraft, and Arabic pastries and tea for schools, highschools, adult schools, civic centres, and other places.

They are a group of 6-8 adult women, all over thirty years, and married and with children. Some of them hardly speak Spanish or Catalan. The origin of the group was in the Health Centre where some of them used to go. A social worker with the City Council contacted the doctors in charge of that centre (situated in Ciutat Vella) in order to find out which Moroccan women spoke better Spanish or Catalan. Thus a couple were selected to start a programme to spread health education among Moroccan women. After the success the programme and the good relations created among some of the Moroccan women involved, their self-confidence grew, and they started to think about creating a co-operative, and later an association. They had the support of a social worker, who helped them in their spare time. At first they held meetings in a NGO headquarters (SOS Racisme) and had the support of Caritas. But later they moved to Ca la Dona, a Women’s House. This is a house managed by women, where several women’s groups have meetings. In Ca la Dona they hold weekly meetings often with the presence of the social worker. They plan workshops at the meetings. In May 1996 they published a book on Moroccan cuisine in the collection Cocinas de Alii, Aquí (Cuisine from there, here) of the Icaria editorial that had a second edition in April 1997.

So far, this approach to Moroccan immigrants’ participation in political and social activities in Barcelona shows how diverse things can be within a collective composed by people of the same ‘nationality’. Thus it questions the relevance of studying immigrant participation in European urban areas taking into account their ‘nationality’ or state of origin as the main criterion of definition. By the same token, this section also shows the relevance dualities like protest vs. provision of services, autonomy vs. links with institutions, and grassroots organisation vs. bureaucratic management.

Conclusions

Barcelona’s local government has tried to minimise the number and diversity of ‘multicultural policies’, in the name of equality of all residents. However, since the mid-1980s the local government has also recognised ‘foreign immigrants’ specific needs, e.g. language(s) support and legal aid. Thus the City Government has been active and, to a certain extent, supportive of some specific policies, which have been growing steadily. Often key civil servants were worrying about the possibilities of ghettoisation at the same time. This fear of social-cultural division was sometimes greater than the concerns for social-economic division. In the mid-1990s, after the local civil servants in charge of immigration issues realised of the weakness of the autonomous immigrants’ organisations they started creating a local advisory council on immigration with the collaboration of a few ‘foreign associations’ (i.e. those associations that are more sympathetic with the local government).

This situation is coincident with a general transformation in Iberian societies of the main forms of participation from protesting to offering services and institutional participation. In brief, neo-liberal ideas mean funding cuts in public services and a delegation of some services in private hands, i.e. private companies, QUANGOs and NGOs. Once social bonds have been reduced after new economic forms of production and government policies, many associations can only contact people by offering services or showing that they can obtain ‘things’ from governments.

Offering services is also a way of getting funding from governments or private companies. Often these public authorities or companies control what kind of services have to be offered (plus when, where, and by who). Thus, for instance, many associations feel that get funding, to offer services and to attract people they must have good relations with the local government. Thus they participate in forums as the municipal immigration advisory council. Money and a new kind of subtle bureaucracy are colonising the social world. However, in a more or less alternative way,
some groups also have mutual help among members as basis for action. Their members are considered as equals, they do not have divisions between those who offer services and those who are clients.

These issues affect both associations composed mainly by immigrants and those mainly shaped by indigenous, but there is a divide between these two groups. So far, the influence of big 'indigenous' NGOs (organisations of solidarity, trade unions, Christian charities, and so on) has been more significant in lobbying public authorities than the influence of foreigners organisations on their own. Some indigenous NGOs, like SOS Racisme, command a huge amount of economic and human resources while, in general, foreigners associations survive precariously.

Barcelona has a long history of social and political mobilisation, including movements of immigrants from other Spanish areas (Huertas and Andreu, 1996). However, as it has been shown in this chapter, foreign immigrants have found more difficulties in participating in Barcelona local polity. Several features are helpful in understanding this situation:

- the hegemonic neo-liberal context of the 1990s is less open to participation than the context of the 1960s and 1970s, when most immigrants from the rest of Iberia arrived;
- those patronising policies implemented by public authorities and big 'indigenous' organisations create difficulties for foreign immigrants' self-organisation;
- the numbers of foreigners are small (both if compared to previous internal immigration waves and 'foreign immigration in other countries);
- most foreign immigrants are only recent arrivals;
- many immigrants are not fluent in Spanish or Catalan language (unlike previous immigration waves);
- most of them work long hours in precarious conditions, what makes social life very difficult.

The City Government, 'indigenous' NGOs, foreign immigrant associations, trade unions, charities, etc. have been tuning in order to find what channels are best for their interests in the local polity. Large 'indigenous' NGOs, Catholic charities and mainstream trade unions have occupied most frequencies of participation, making it difficult for immigrants to express themselves. However, a few instances of successful autonomous foreign immigrants' self-organisation may point to a change of who is in charge of tuning the main channels of participation in the future.

Notes

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2. This concept avoids the negative implications of terms like 'illegal', 'clandestine', 'irregular', 'undocumented', etc. because it signals that their lack of documents is the responsibility of the states and not the immigrants.

3. This section is based mainly on original data from several tape-recorded interviews conducted with Pere Novella (official of the Social Affairs Area in charge of immigration issues, Ajuntament de Barcelona), and Josep Iagnasi Urencia (Commissioner for Civil Rights and International Solidarity, Ajuntament de Barcelona) in the framework of a larger research from 1996 until 1999.

4. The great majority of these naturalisations (4,355) were conceded to Latin Americans, and just a few to Africans (1,227) and Asians (1,086). This is because the legislation favours the nationals of most of the former Spanish colonies (Spanish speaking American countries, Equatorial Guineans, Philipincans) (see DGM, 1996).

5. Thus there are GRAMC local groups all along the Catalan coast and the North of País Valencià coast, from Costa Brava to Castellón.

6. From SOS Racisme it is said that they have 3,000 members in Catalonia, while GRAMC is said to have around 700 members.

7. They have received funding from the following organisations: Dirección General de Migraiones of Ministerio de Asuntos Sociales (which does not exist anymore), Área d'Alers Socials de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona, Districte de Ciutat Vella, Fundació de Serveis de Cultura Popular, Ministerio de Trabajo, European Union, and Mancimunitat de Municip de l'Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona (MMAMB). In contrast to SOS Racisme but in the same situation to FCIC, the Generalitat de Catalunya had not given them any funding.

8. Some of the foreigners' associations distribute leaflets, magazines and books. SOS Racisme also organise debates, but their importance in the festival is secondary.

9. Hassan II died in the summer of 1999, and was succeeded by his son Mohammed VI. It is still early to see if there will be significant changes in Morocco under the new ruler.

10. After a while he published in France a book called Inside the king's prisons (see Serfaty, 1992).

References

5 Birmingham: Conventional Politics as the Main Channel for Political Incorporation

ROMAIN GARBAYE

Introduction

The situation of ethnic minorities in Birmingham is remarkable in two ways. First, the city’s ethnic minority population is among the largest, most diverse, and most well established in Britain (with the exception of London). Second, Birmingham is arguably one of the cities in Europe where immigrant participation in local debates and local decision-making processes is the most successful, to the extent that one can speak of a real process of empowerment of ethnic minorities in the city. One must note at the outset, however, that there are important qualifications to this: ethnic minorities suffer from persistent disadvantage in the job market and are still plagued by numerous social problems (not least, relations between youths and the police, and drugs); racism is still rampant in party politics (as shown by the persistent failure of ethnic minority candidates for national parliamentary elections in the city), and several recent political developments in the city have underscored the fragility of ethnic minorities’ political achievements.

Having taken note of these caveats, this chapter focuses on the comparatively successful participation of ethnic minorities in the affairs of the city. This success is linked to the historical evolution of the issue of ethnic minorities in British politics. Over the last forty years this has alternated through phases of strong xenophobia in elections and progressive policy making. On the whole, it has resulted in a policy framework that formulates the issue of immigrant populations in terms of relations between different races and ethnicities and encourages local authorities to fight against racial discrimination and to institutionalise ethnic minority groups (in particular the Third Race Relations Act of 1976).

At the local level in Birmingham itself, minorities’ incorporation has taken three main forms: