

‘The Struggle for the Streets’: Unemployed Hawkers, Protest Culture and Repression in the Barcelona area (c. 1918–1936)¹

CHRIS EALHAM

Saint Louis University, Spain

This article assesses street trade by unemployed workers in the Barcelona area in the years immediately before the start of the Spanish civil war. This practice, along with official responses to it, tell us a lot about the repressive nature of the state, as well as highlighting sharp social conflicts between commercial sectors and the unemployed during this period. Equally, the experience of the street traders, who were embraced by the anarchists as a sector from within the dispossessed, provides us with an example of the flexibility of anarchist mobilising strategies. Initially, it might seem incongruous that anarchists should defend a form of trade, which, along with the state, was seen by the anarchists as a major scourge of humanity. However, the street traders and their readiness to assert their right to the streets provided the anarchists with a radicalised social constituency.

Street trade plays an important role in everyday life across the contemporary world,² including Spain, where it is the near exclusive preserve of the new dispossessed of immigrants from Africa and South America. As such, this phenomenon has inevitably aroused much interest among sociologists and political analysts.³ Yet street trade remains understudied in its historical dimension.⁴ Historically, this activity was a relatively common practice in societies in the throes of capitalist economic transformation and which were accompanied by abrupt trade cycles and inadequate public welfare services.⁵ In the nineteenth century, we have the example of the costermongers in Britain and the trolley vendors in New York. In this article, street trade by the unemployed in the Barcelona area during the years immediately before the Spanish civil war is studied. As will be seen, the experience of the street traders throws into sharp relief the repressive nature of the Spanish state and its underdeveloped welfare functions. Official responses to this practice also highlight the sharp social conflicts between commercial sectors and the unemployed during this period.

Equally, the experience of the street traders, who were embraced by the anarchists as a sector from within the dispossessed, provides us with an example of the flexibility of anarchist mobilising strategies. At first sight, it might seem incongruous that anarchists should defend a form of trade, which, along with the state, was seen by the anarchists as a major scourge of humanity. Nevertheless, the street traders and their readiness to assert their right to the streets, provided the anarchists with a radicalised social constituency.

In the context of Spain's underdeveloped welfare state and its unstable and unevenly developed capitalist economy, street trade was a longstanding self-help strategy adopted by the urban dispossessed — the low-paid and the unemployed — in order to make their poverty a little more bearable.⁶ There was no unemployment benefit in pre-civil war Spain and the advent of the economic crisis in the early 1930s overwhelmed the already limited welfare provided by the Church and local authorities. The economic crisis, which meant not just unemployment but also reduced



FIGURE 1 Street hawkers, Barcelona, July 1936, (Agencia EFE).

working hours for many workers, placed tremendous strain on the family economy and meant that kinship networks and family solidarity were less able to respond to the needs of the unemployed. Given the central role of the family economy within working-class consumption patterns, it is no surprise that men, women and children became involved in street trade.⁷ As an entrepreneurial activity of sorts, street trade clearly afforded some possibilities for social mobility; but such upward mobility hinged upon individual traders being awarded licences by the local authorities, something that was rarely the case in the period under discussion here, when street trade met with increasing repression.

There are several problems relating to the study of street trade. Given its clandestine nature, there is a dearth of statistics relating to both licensed and unlicensed street trade. All the same, we can make some distinctions among the street traders. Some were, what we might call, 'established' street traders, who dedicated themselves to this activity as an alternative to work, regardless of the state of the economy, and who generally benefited from a rather benign treatment from the authorities. These established traders cannot be regarded as part of the working class as Karl Marx understood it; rather, they could be described as a strata within the lumpenproletariat of urban marginal types, which included organ-grinders, rag-pickers, tinkers, 'the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass, thrown hither and thither, which the French term *la bohème*'.⁸ The anecdotal evidence available would suggest that, in the period under discussion here, street trade was, for the most part, an 'occasional', temporary or transitional practice of unemployed workers, who, when employment prospects improved, would return to regular employment. It was also, as a rule, a modest form of commerce practised by unemployed workers who borrowed or invested the few savings they could muster in a small amount of merchandise that they sold on the streets near established shopping areas and markets. This was affirmed by a letter addressed to the local Council in l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, in Barcelona province, in which forty street traders pointed out that their 'trade' was a simple response to 'the pain felt by fathers when their children ask them for bread and they have none to give'.⁹

It is difficult to say with any great certainty whether the street traders were established urban dwellers or new arrivals to the city. From the few and obviously unrepresentative autobiographical sources available, we see a pattern of workers arriving in cities in the twenties, a period of urban expansion in Spain, becoming unemployed at the end of the decade and turning to street trade. Be that as it may, street trade, as it evolved, was unambiguously an urban strategy, framed by the vicissitudes of city life, cycles of employment and consumption patterns, and not a reflection of rural customs. We should also bear in mind that, owing to the tempo of Spanish industrialisation, most workers at this time could trace their rural ancestry with commensurate ease. Generally, however, urban workers did not retain a connection with the land. Urban conditions, even when desperate, as was frequently the case, were generally better than those in the large southern estates (*latifundio*), which were characterised by structural unemployment and underemployment (sometimes landless labourers spent one third of the year without work). Thus, southern migrants of recent rural origin who became unemployed in the cities generally preferred to take their chances in their new urban environment rather than return to their villages of origin.

What we can be sure of is the popularity of the street traders. Because their commerce incurred few overheads, they were able to undercut market traders.¹⁰ While the enemies of the street traders maintained that they peddled produce stolen from farms and allotments, the unemployed traders themselves claimed they purchased their wares from the same wholesale markets used by market traders and the commercial middle class.¹¹ Inevitably then they proved very popular with working-class consumers, especially if we remember that at this time the Spanish working class was predominantly semi- or unskilled and almost invariably badly paid; it eked out an existence on subsistence wages and consumption and material issues loomed large in its everyday life. Thus, the geography of street trade reveals that this commerce constituted an integral element within popular consumption patterns, forming part of the social fabric of working-class Madrid and Barcelona from around the start of the twentieth century and functioning as an alternative system of distribution.¹²

We might also speculate that some working-class consumers patronised street traders for reasons of class solidarity and identification. These sentiments were bolstered by the widespread popular suspicions felt towards the commercial middle class since at least the middle of the nineteenth century. Besides concerns about the adulteration of foodstuffs and the manipulation of weights and measures, it was widely felt that the middle class had systematically profited from the untrammelled inflation that occurred during and after World War One. These sentiments were, in turn, articulated by the organised labour movement: Spain's first-ever nationwide general strike, in 1916, when the socialist Unión General de Trabajadores (General Workers' Union/UGT) and the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo (National Confederation of Labour/CNT) briefly overcame their differences in order to pursue a united action, was motivated by uncontrolled food prices, part of the popular *abaratamiento* campaign (against inflation and soaring prices).¹³

Inevitably, street trade was perceived by shopkeepers and market traders as a frontal challenge to their interests and middle-class trade associations were at the forefront of calls for the repression of their unlicensed competitors.¹⁴ Street trade then underscored the highly antagonistic relationships between the working class and the petite bourgeoisie in Spain and, more specifically, between the unemployed and the state. These antagonisms were thrown into even sharper relief in the 1930s, when street trade came under renewed repression and much of the tolerance previously shown by the authorities evaporated.

This repressive shift on the part of the authorities reflected a range of complex political, cultural and economic factors. I will start with the economic dimension. In the late 1920s–early 1930s the Spanish urban economy went into a slump, as was the case in much of Europe. Yet it is no cliché to note that the Spanish economic crisis, at the outset at least, was due largely to domestic rather than global economic factors (Spain being poorly integrated within the international capitalist economy); the effects of the Wall Street Crash were not truly felt until 1933. All the same, by 1930, the limited state, church and municipal poor relief was proving woefully inadequate and the ranks of the street traders increased in many urban centres.¹⁵ Such was the growth of this commerce, street traders in Barcelona constructed *el mercadet* ('the little market'), a new space built on wasteland near the city centre, where unemployed traders sold their wares.¹⁶ Moreover, the increasingly shrill nature of middle class complaints about street trade might also be taken as proof of its increasing volume.

Yet the growing volume of middle class anxieties can also be attributed to the new political context in 1930s Spain. In 1931, the Second Republic, Spain's first liberal democracy was born, although subsequently cudgelled to death by Franco, Hitler and Mussolini during the Spanish Civil War. The Republic was ushered in by the political representatives of an inter-class coalition of the middle and working classes, or, to use republican terminology, 'the people'. This coalition formed in opposition to the Spanish monarchy which, it accused of prioritising the interests of a narrow financial oligarchy over those of the 'popular classes'. From the very start of the Republic, this anti-oligarchic coalition was plagued by rising unemployment, which drove a hard wedge between shopkeepers and the jobless, and ensured that its constituent parts collided with one another.¹⁷

The Republic represented a new political opportunity structure for the working and middle class alike. Since the middle classes were a key electoral constituency for the republican parties now holding the reins of power in government and in town and city councils, they naturally found new confidence to articulate their everyday concerns and fears through an intense and energetic lobbying campaign, organising a series of petitions and deputations to local, regional and central authorities.¹⁸ From the start of the Republic, commercial pressure groups, such as the *Associació per a la Defensa dels Venedors dels Mercats* (Association for the Defence of Market Traders) accused the police of being 'soft' on these 'lawbreakers' and pressurised the authorities to 'repress' street trade, 'using all means necessary'.¹⁹ Highly emotive language was frequently employed to describe the street traders, who were depicted as 'plagues' of 'rebel traders' and 'vagabonds'. In what is an interesting claim to ownership of public space by the middle classes, the street traders were accused of 'invading' and 'swarming around' 'our streets'.²⁰

The language of middle-class pressure groups grew markedly belligerent. The *Lliga de Defensa d'Indústria i Comerç* (League for the Defence of Industry and Commerce) in Sant Martí, a working class neighbourhood of Barcelona, was one of several groups to issue a thinly veiled threat to the Council that, if the 'unlicensed traders' were not removed from the streets, its members would take the law into their own hands, resulting in a 'breakdown of public order'. These warnings were combined with intermittent threats that market traders and shopkeepers would withhold tax payments, an important source of municipal revenue that cash-strapped local authorities could ill afford to forego.²¹ As well as wielding significant economic power, these commercial associations also enjoyed a certain influence locally: they were cohesive pressure groups, firmly based on social networks among traders in specific neighbourhoods or markets.

The new republican authorities proved extremely receptive to the demands of the market traders and shopkeepers. For all their earlier overtures to the labour movement and the working class, once in power, the republicans could not watch impassively while a key part of their support base bayed for the repression of a group that allegedly represented a frontal challenge to its interests. Moreover, there was a significant overlap between the nascent republican political elite and the commercial middle classes.²² For example, Enric Sánchez, the President of the *Unió General de Venedors de Mercats* (General Union of Market Traders), a market traders' group at loggerheads with the street traders, was a prominent figure in the *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya* (Catalan Republican Left/ERC), the ruling republican party in

Catalonia during the pre-civil war Republic.²³ Meanwhile, several leading republican councillors across Spain were drawn from a similar commercial milieu.²⁴ This middle-class influence was reflected in the culture of republicanism and even the most radical currents of republican opinion lauded the values of thrift and industriousness of the small commercial class.²⁵

Accordingly, just a few weeks into the Republic a string of Councils passed resolutions prohibiting street trade, in what amounted to a declaration of war on the unemployed traders.²⁶ The full range of police forces at the disposal of the authorities were now deployed against the street traders, including the hated paramilitary *Guardia Civil* (Civil Guard), which was notorious under the monarchy for its brutal practices. In addition, the newly created *Guardia de asalto* (Assault Guards), a specifically republican paramilitary police, came to play a front-line role in the cities, patrolling markets and detaining street traders.²⁷ The repression of street trade was most intense in Barcelona, Spain's biggest industrial city: here, where urban unemployment was highest and street trade was greatest, the local authorities believed the street traders were bent on converting the Catalan capital into 'an anarchic city'.²⁸ Thus, in August 1931, Barcelona Council established a *Brigada per a la repressió de la venta ambulante* (Brigade for the Repression of Street Trade), a 'special security service', headed by Lluís Puig Munner, himself a shopkeeper and a republican councillor.²⁹ The following month, in mid-September, on the orders of the Council, *el mercadet*, the main centre for street trade in central Barcelona, was demolished as police, local republican politicians, representatives from market traders' associations and street vendors looked on. Later, Assault Guards patrolled the area around the Council building to repel any possible protest by the street traders; meanwhile, a succession of delegations of market traders arrived to congratulate the local authorities on their repression of street trade, 'for the good name and the prestige of the city and the businesses of Barcelona'.³⁰ By November 1931, the scale of the activities of the *Brigada per a la repressió de la venta ambulante* were such that in just three days a total of 4000 kilos of foodstuffs were confiscated from street traders in Barcelona alone.³¹

As the repressive net placed around the unemployed by the authorities was drawn tighter, police actions against the street traders increasingly resembled military style operations, with paramilitary police units cordoning off areas frequented by the street traders and making incursions into what were generally hostile working-class districts.³² Police brutality, particularly by paramilitary Assault Guards, was an integral part of these operations. One Assault Guard explained to a journalist that policing often involved using truncheons against women ('Nothing annoys me more than those women who let themselves get involved in disturbances caused by rabble rousers.')³³ There were frequent criticisms of violence against women and child street traders.³⁴ In one tragic accident, a ten-year old girl street trader died under the wheels of a bus as she attempted to evade detention during a police raid on a market.³⁵ Besides having their wares impounded, street traders were also liable to internment under the 1933 *Ley de vagos y maleantes* (Vagrancy Act), an anti-nomadic device which, while justified as a measure against pimps and drug-pushers, was used by the police to criminalise street trade further.³⁶ Such implacable law-and-order policies

were central to appeasing and retaining the support of republicanism's middle-class base.

The draconian response of the authorities towards street trade reveals much about the policing of the unemployed. As has been argued, by Howard Becker and others, in times of economic crisis, the authorities ineluctably rely on the security forces and the penal system to impose social discipline on the growing numbers of workers no longer subjected to the informal, everyday fetters and coercion of the workplace.³⁷ In these circumstances, police violence towards the unemployed was directed more at imposing subservience than enforcing laws and inevitably this violence was played out in public spaces, the streets and parks where the unemployed spent a lot of time, and where, also, the street traders operated.³⁸

Yet, equally powerfully, the repression of street trade highlights certain authoritarian tendencies at play within Spain's short-lived inter-war democracy. We see there was a clear divergence between the discourse and practice of republicanism during the period of the opposition to the monarchy, when it appeared as a socially progressive, even radical, political force that placed the accent of its discourse on 'freedom'. In contrast, in power, republicans obsessively pursued the middle-class dream of order.³⁹ Accordingly, the republicans consolidated their power like traditional 'men of order', raising the costs of social mobilisation and protest, stockpiling repressive legislation and strengthening police units, much to the liking of urban middle-class pressure groups.⁴⁰ Thus, Lluís Companys, Barcelona's first republican Civil Governor and later President of Catalonia (1934–39), emphasised the need for 'discipline' and 'social peace' within a 'Republic of order' that would deploy 'strong measures' against those who represented 'the negation of authority' and wished to institute 'mob rule in the city'.⁴¹ Republican state repression was legitimised by a democratic ideology: repression was in the interests of all citizens; it would facilitate the consolidation of the new democracy and defend a 'power that is in the hands of all', as one republican newspaper explained⁴², thereby forging the optimum conditions for reform. However, there was no far-reaching reform package that might have defused urban social tensions; instead, the authorities increased spending on the security forces: the complement of paramilitary Assault Guards grew throughout the 1930s, reaching around 10 000 at the start of the civil war.⁴³ Although the 'Republic of order' was justified in terms of a reformist future, the exclusionary stratagems employed by republican politicians eroded civil liberties and the 'rule of law', weakening an already fragile liberal–democratic public sphere. This was enshrined in the aforementioned *Ley de vagos y maleantes* that revoked the rights of citizenship from the dispossessed and legalised the preventive detention of the urban poor.

The fight against street trade was accompanied by a fierce propaganda war in the press, as the authorities sought to justify the criminalisation of unemployed workers. A variety of arguments were invoked in order to isolate the street traders politically and thus expedite their repression. For example, it was claimed that by 'invading the public highway',⁴⁴ the street traders were a barrier to the proper functioning of the streets of the democratic city and, as such, they forfeited their right to the streets. But the most common justification for the repression of street trade was that 'illegal' traders endangered public health, that they could not be trusted to comply with either weights and measures legislation or that they sold hygienic and unadulterated

produce.⁴⁵ This was an important argument for the republican authorities, who were keen to be perceived to be acting in the interests of ‘the people’, in defence of a greater communal good, and not simply repressing street traders on behalf of the narrow, sectional interests of an important section of their middle-class support base. However, the problem with this perspective was that ‘legal’ traders themselves had a rather poor to indifferent record when it came to respecting the interests of the consumer: traditionally, commercial sectors had meddled with weights and measures and adulterated foodstuffs, a culture that endured among a section of the middle classes into the Republic.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, had the street traders sold food that was hazardous to human health, one would have expected it to have been destroyed by the authorities, who in fact generally donated confiscated food to hospital kitchens.⁴⁷

The moral panics surrounding the street traders developed in tandem with their repression. In the process, the street traders were constructed as a dangerous ‘Other’. At times, they were externalised and identified with ‘outsiders’ (*forasteros*) and Spain’s colonial subjects: for example, before its demolition by the authorities, Barcelona’s *mercadet* was described as ‘a disgusting Moroccan bazaar’.⁴⁸ Official discourse further identified street trade with crime and disease — thus, the street traders were described as ‘professional layabouts’ and a ‘plague of beggars’.⁴⁹ Again, this was a convenient argument. First of all, it allowed the authorities to appeal to an imaginary general interest. Moreover, besides suggesting that the street traders formed part of a wider challenge to public order, it bolstered the law-and-order consensus and allowed the authorities to identify unemployment as a ‘problem of public order, a simple police problem’.⁵⁰ As was often the case, moral panics spiralled into a general panic. Accordingly, ‘the rebellious attitude of the [street] traders’⁵¹ was depicted as one of many challenges confronting the Republic: they were thus denounced as ‘enemies of the Republic’⁵², ‘undesirables’⁵³, part of a criminal underworld of ‘evil people’ and ‘disruptive elements’, devoted to discrediting the new political system.

For all the repressive forces rallied against the street traders, they nevertheless remained on the streets throughout the republican years.⁵⁴ The experience of the street traders exposes the limitations of deploying state violence in a bid to curb practices that are essentially socio-economic in origin. Thus, by mid-1933, when unemployment peaked in inter-war Spain, one Council observed that street trade was ‘increasing on a daily basis’.⁵⁵ Indeed, the force of economic circumstances compelled unemployed traders to defy repression; in the words of one trader, to do otherwise represented ‘the death sentence for many proletarian families’.⁵⁶ This was further underlined by the aforementioned letter from forty street traders to the local authorities in l’Hospitalet de Llobregat, an industrial city with high levels of joblessness, in which it was explained that street trade was ‘their only means of existence’ in the ‘distressed situation’ of long-term unemployment.⁵⁷

This material context tempered the mettle of the street traders to defend their right to the streets. Since the street traders had few protest resources (*perforce* they had no labour or tax payments to withdraw), they tended to present their agenda to the authorities in the public sphere *via* street action and demonstrations. To a certain extent, the mobilisations of the street traders were encouraged by the new political circumstances occasioned by the coming of the Republic. In the course of the struggle

against the monarchy, the republicans had courted popular support by vowing, upon taking power, to enact laws that would enable workers to enjoy 'the right to live with complete security and dignity'.⁵⁸ They also promised concrete measures to alleviate the misery of the most downtrodden sections of the working class, including immediate action on behalf of the unemployed.⁵⁹ Unsurprisingly then, at the start of the Republic, it was widely believed that the new political class would favour the workers and out-of-work or would at least guarantee them new rights and freedoms. Thus, in the early months of the Republic, there were several peaceful demonstrations by street traders in an attempt to remind the local authorities of their earlier commitments. For a brief period, these marches also continued after the new authorities had started repressing street trade. So, in mid-August 1931, a demonstration arrived at Barcelona Council in order to submit a petition to the Mayor calling for an end to the repression of street trade. When the Mayor communicated to the marchers outside the Council building that there would be no cessation in their repression there was 'great excitement' among the street traders, a number of whom had voted for the Republic and expressed their frustration at what they felt was a betrayal by the new authorities. Although there were no reports in the press of violence by the marchers, they were nevertheless attacked and dispersed by Assault Guards.⁶⁰

With no institutional channels through which they might articulate their hope and frustrations, the street traders expressed themselves through street politics, a series of direct action mobilisations that approximated closely to Eric Hobsbawm's concept of 'collective protest by riot'.⁶¹ Thus, in the last quarter of 1931, police persecution of street traders prompted two major riots at markets in Barcelona, as jobless vendors, who were joined by members of the local community, destroyed stalls and seized food and goods, in actions that were designed to single out a social group (the market traders) deemed responsible for the repression of street trade.⁶² On one occasion, according to a local newspaper, there occurred an 'uprising' (*motín*) by street traders who, armed with coshes and knives, 'made themselves the masters of the area'.⁶³

Certainly, the protests of the street traders were inflected by the cultural traditions of Spain's long history of direct action protests; these, in turn, were nourished by the context of combined and uneven economic development, high taxes on foodstuffs, agrarian poverty and subsistence capitalism. As a result of all this, consumption issues played a central role in social life in nineteenth-century Spain and food riots endured into the twentieth century. The protests by the street traders, which at times resembled the food riot, therefore provided a connection with earlier worlds of protest: these actions typically occurred in the streets and for the most part took place outside the structures of 'modern' agencies of protest, such as the trade unions. Another similarity between the mobilisations of the street traders and 'traditional' consumption protests was the prominence of women. Female militancy in the 1930s was largely confined to consumption issues and, while some women were active in anarchist groups, they were underrepresented at leadership and activist levels within the unions, even in the textiles sector, which had a large female workforce.

Another defining feature of the struggles of the street traders was their anti-police content. There were periodic clashes between street traders and the police right up until the outbreak of the civil war in July 1936.⁶⁴ The worst violence generally



FIGURE 2 Street sale, Barcelona, 1936, (Francesc Bonamusa, Pere Gabriel, Josep Lluís Martín Ramos, and Josep Termes, *Història Gràfica del Moviment Obrer a Catalunya*, Barcelona, 1989, p.318).

occurred close to markets, where the enmities between non-licensed and licensed traders sometimes resulted in daily incidents.⁶⁵ Barrow boys often joined in on the side of the market traders in fights that occasionally developed into pitched battles.⁶⁶ There were innumerable instances of resistance to the security forces by the street traders and, if arrested, street traders routinely resorted to violence to escape punishment.⁶⁷ The struggle of the street traders with the police formed part of local popular traditions of collective opposition to authority and its agents on the streets. It was widely reported that passers-by warned street traders of approaching police patrols; there is also evidence that local residents offered itinerant traders shelter from the police. Such was the popular hostility to the police that detainees frequently appealed to passers-by to intercede on their behalf against the security forces. Crowds were often more than happy to oblige, attacking the police and attempting to free detainees whether they knew the arrestee or not.⁶⁸ In l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, for instance, the authorities recognised that 'the mob' (*la chusma*) repeatedly rallied,

often successfully, to prevent the police from arresting street traders. In reply, in a bid to immobilise street traders before they could appeal to the public to intervene on their behalf and/or hostile crowds could assemble, the police opted for quicker, inevitably more violent, methods of detention. These more robust police tactics were also deployed against women street traders and their children. In turn, this intensification of police brutality could only serve to raise the ardour of their opponents, confirming existing perceptions of the forces of public order and strengthening class identities and community loyalties.⁶⁹ By the same token, the readiness of members of the community to ally with the street traders highlighted the degree to which the criminalising discourse of the authorities met with little assent in working-class neighbourhoods, where dense social networks generated a supportive environment for the unemployed traders.

As we saw earlier, the street traders, like much of the dispossessed, expected the Republic to be a new broom. Their experience of the gulf between the reformist promises and the repressive reality of the Republic left them frustrated, a feeling that in turn gave way to radicalisation that was channelled by the anarcho-syndicalist trade union, the CNT. In keeping with its federal structure, the CNT established a series of local unions in an attempt to encadre the street traders. These unions of street traders were sometimes freestanding unions or commissions⁷⁰ or, in the case of the *Sociedad de Vendedores Ambulantes de Pescado, Legumbres y Fruta de Barcelona* (Fish, Fruit and Vegetable Street Traders' Society of Barcelona), they were a section within the local CNT *Sindicato de Alimentación* (Food workers' union).⁷¹ As with any other section of the working class, the CNT endeavoured to articulate the hopes, interests and struggles of the street traders. Yet the street traders obviously lacked the same protest resources as workers in work and they could not pursue their interests through conventional syndicalist praxis. Thus, even the struggles of the CNT street traders continued to belong to the street and, to a large degree, developed outside the organised labour movement. But there is evidence of radical activists mobilising the street traders and inciting them to attack the security forces: one police report observed that 'persons unknown', presumably CNT militants, were rallying the street traders and encouraging them to resist the forces of the state.⁷²

Where the CNT perhaps provided most consistent support for the street traders was by empowering them, overlaying their struggles with wider social significance and locating them in terms of 'the prevailing decomposition of the capitalist state'.⁷³ The cause of the street traders was championed in an array of CNT press organs, particularly in *Solidaridad Obrera* (*Workers' Solidarity*), its most important daily newspaper; at its pre-civil war peak, in 1931, the Barcelona edition of *Solidaridad Obrera* alone had a circulation of 40 000.⁷⁴ In the propaganda war, *Solidaridad Obrera* systematically rebutted the criminalising discourse of the republicans, abominating the police violence⁷⁵, through which the authorities sought 'to move the street traders from the streets to the hospitals'⁷⁶, and denouncing the confiscation of their produce, which, in keeping with anarchist counter-culture, was condemned as 'robbery'.⁷⁷ As *Solidaridad Obrera* put it: 'with the Republic, a new criminal type has been invented: the worker who is unemployed and who wishes to bring bread to his children must be jailed for public disorder'.⁷⁸

Solidaridad Obrera also condemned the hypocrisy of the commercial sectors who cried for the repression of the street traders. Displaying a keen spirit of investigative journalism, *Solidaridad Obrera* published a series of *exposés* of injustices and corruption concerning the repression of street trade. For example, scotching official claims that street trade represented a risk to public health, *Solidaridad Obrera* revealed that not only was the produce sequestered from the street traders by the police subsequently distributed by the Council to hospital kitchens, but that some was ‘creamed off’ by the police and sold to market traders, whereupon it would be sold to the general public.⁷⁹ Further belying claims that consumer interests were best guaranteed by the petite bourgeoisie, *Solidaridad Obrera* frequently denounced middle-class traders for ‘robbing’ the workers, occasionally also facilitating workers’ retribution by publishing the names and addresses of ‘shopkeepers and others who monopolise foodstuffs’⁸⁰, along with market traders who inflated food prices and adulterated foodstuffs and ‘manipulate their produce as they see fit’.⁸¹ Far from the stuff of journalistic creation, this struck a chord among working-class consumers, who had often mistrusted shopkeepers owing to their long established ‘deviant’ traditions of food adulteration and untrammelled prices. Indeed, these allegations were occasionally confirmed by the bourgeois press, which documented visits by Council inspection teams to La Boqueria, Barcelona’s central market. On one such occasion, it was revealed that the ‘majority’ of the stallholders there was cheating consumers with doctored weights and measures.⁸² In comparison, in the opinion of *Solidaridad Obrera*, the street traders were ‘worthy’ (*digno*)⁸³ and enjoyed moral superiority over the shopkeepers.⁸⁴

Through the pages of *Solidaridad Obrera*, the street traders were able to find a voice for themselves and articulate their central demands, such as the end to repression and the legal recognition of street trade⁸⁵, the ‘right’ of the unemployed traders to practice their ‘humble commerce’⁸⁶ in the marketplace and on the streets in the same way as the CNT defended the right of the jobless to determine themselves how best they could ‘struggle to survive’.⁸⁷ The street traders also expressed their willingness to accept a system of municipal licensing in which they were prepared to pay taxes proportionate to the size of their trade within a flexible system of taxation that would not hinder them from returning to work when the labour market permitted.⁸⁸

Yet we also see the extent to which the street traders were radicalised and politicised by the ‘tenacious persecution’ to which they were exposed by the authorities.⁸⁹ The disappointment with the new political order was summed up in a manifesto from the *l’Hospitalet de Llobregat Sociedad de Vendedores Ambulantes* (Society of Street Traders) at the end of October 1931, just six months into the Republic. Having been deceived by the ‘false promises’ of the republicans, the CNT-organised street traders announced that ‘the transition from the monarchy [to the Republic] was nothing more than a change of name and of [political] personnel, but the procedures, atmosphere and mentality of the authorities are all the same’.⁹⁰ The unemployed traders, however, would not bow to official pressure: rather than passively accept hunger, they announced that if the authorities continued to pursue them ‘like criminals’ and hunt them like ‘dogs’ in the streets, they would be forced to turn to illegal (‘criminal’) practices in order to ‘procure their daily bread’.⁹¹

The embrace of the street traders by the anarchists provides an interesting case study in anarchist culture and practice in Spain. At first sight, it might seem incongruous that anarchists should defend a form of trade. As one anarchist paper explained, 'to trade really means to rob, to deceive'.⁹² Along with the state, anarchists regarded trade as one the great scourges of humanity. We might argue then that the readiness of the anarchists to champion the plight of the street traders underscores the tactical flexibility of the former. Moreover, it highlights the open nature of the CNT, whose inclusive culture endowed it with a broad view of potentially *organisable* social groups that allowed it to encadre and mobilise marginal groups that were traditionally shunned by European social democracy as dark, ignorant masses.⁹³ This is bound up with the anarchist tradition of appealing not just to the factory proletariat but, more generally, to the dispossessed. The CNT inherited this tradition: it wanted to be the authentic voice of the oppressed and 'outsider' groups. Thus, it defended the 'right to the streets' of unemployed traders throughout the monarchy and into the Republic.⁹⁴

Yet the street traders also shared much in common with several of the occupational groupings that made up the CNT's social constituency in the 1930s: the majority of these workers were unskilled or semi-skilled and, by the nature of their employment, preferred to pursue their aspirations through direct action in the streets. As a group that was in near permanent conflict with the police, the street traders had much in common with the 'rough', undomesticated and aggressive street culture of the CNT's supporters.⁹⁵ It was this same culture that disinclined the CNT's supporters from channelling their demands into the state labour arbitration courts designed by Francisco Largo Caballero, the republican labour minister during 1931–33 and leader of the socialist UGT, whose attempts to institutionalise class conflict reflected a social-democratic culture of gradualism and the skilled ethos and 'respectable' artisan origins of the socialist union.⁹⁶ The social and cultural cleavages between the reformist UGT and the revolutionary-syndicalist CNT were laid bare in the 1930s, when the latter became the preferred union of most unemployed workers. Meanwhile, in keeping with their conventional rubric of working-class decency, the Catalan socialists of the *Unió Socialista de Catalunya* (Socialist Union of Catalonia/USC) described the anarchists and their supporters as *déclassé* 'down-and-outs', 'underworld parasites', 'professional layabouts' and 'crooked people'.⁹⁷

The continuing sense of socio-economic marginalisation and exclusion of the CNT's constituency ensured that their experience of the Republic was not significantly different to that of preceding regimes and it was their political alienation that laid the basis for the radicalisation of the CNT and the anarchist movement in the 1930s. Indeed, the growing militancy of the street vendors provided the CNT with an important radicalised constituency. This had an historic parallel with the costermongers of nineteenth century Britain, the rough equivalent to the street traders, who had a similar hatred of the police and a history of social agitation in the Chartist movement.⁹⁸

Secondly, the case of the street traders shows how the anarchists were determined to keep the unemployed within the orbit of the trade unions, where they would remain exposed to syndicalism's culture of collective action. The main attraction for the unemployed was the CNT's labour exchanges (*bolsa de trabajo*), through which



FIGURE 3 An unemployed workers' demonstration. The banner reads 'Without Bread and Work', (Francesc Bonamusa, Pere Gabriel, Josep Lluís Martín Ramos, and Josep Termes, *Història Gràfica del Moviment Obrer a Catalunya, Barcelona, 1989, p.191*).

the street traders, like the rest of the unemployed within the CNT, had the opportunity to find remunerated employment. The labour exchanges were also a conveyor belt, for those who wished to participate, for the CNT *Comités de defensa* (Defence Committees), which were responsible for picketing activities and fly-posting and whose members were paid the daily wage of a semi-skilled worker.⁹⁹ Thus, it was hoped, the unemployed would seek collective solutions to its problems and not become a weapon in the hands of reactionary forces. Perhaps the best measure of the success of the CNT's overtures towards the unemployed was the fact that, notwithstanding the emergence of authoritarian political parties in the 1930s, including the birth of Spanish fascist party in 1933, the Falange, workers remained generally aloof from the right.

Thirdly, the mobilisation of the street traders reflects the CNT's concern with consumption issues. Since its creation in 1910, the CNT had organised groups outside the workplace, mobilising around consumption as well as labour issues. These two spheres dovetailed in 1916 with a nationwide general strike in protest at the rampant inflation engendered by World War One. This same approach was theorised in the 1920s by Joan Peiró, one of Spain's leading anarcho-syndicalist strategists, in a series of articles and pamphlets in which he advocated the foundation of district committees, consumer cooperatives and community support groups dedicated to resisting economic policies detrimental to workers' living standards. For Peiró, this was no reformist gesture; indeed, only through such a grassroots labour could the

CNT extend its activities into every area of working-class life, whether in the factories or the streets, whereupon it could become truly revolutionary, ushering in the syndicalisation of the everyday life of the proletariat.¹⁰⁰ In the 1930s, this schema inspired the formation of an ephemeral *Comisión de Defensa Económica* (Economic Defence Commission/CDE) within the CNT, in an attempt to politicise working-class awareness of consumption issues. Before being banned by the republican authorities, the CDE praised the street traders as part of its struggle for a new urban meaning in opposition to the urban vision held by speculators, renters and shopkeepers, and indeed, by the republicans themselves, of the city as a place for profit and exploitation.¹⁰¹

Finally, the embrace of the street traders by the anarchists is explicable in terms of their direct action culture, which favoured modes of conflict based on irregular, non-institutionalised small group resistance in the streets. Since at least the 1890s, the anarchists had endorsed food riots, which they interpreted as evidence of an upsurge in popular militancy ahead of the impending revolution.¹⁰² By the 1930s, the anarchists embraced the existing constellation of popular street practices as a subversion of dominant urban rhythms, endorsing and encouraging a broad range of unemployed street politics (rent strikes, land invasions, and 'self-help' strategies such as shoplifting, the seizure of foodstuffs from hotels, restaurants and from estates). By 'throwing the jobless onto the streets' to disrupt public order, the anarchists hoped to transform the unemployed into insurgent shock-troops, preparing them for the future revolution and opening up a new guerrilla front in their war with the state.¹⁰³ The anarchists also championed the mobilising potential of other popular traditions, such as anti-police violence, in the hope of refining and projecting these 'traditional' practices conflicts into their revolutionary struggle against the state. Thus, during the state-wide anarchist uprising of December 1933, in effect a protest against the growing political power of the Spanish right, older worlds of social protest came to coexist with the new ideology of anti-fascism. So, in the few hours that armed anarchist militants seized control of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, a leading member of the local Falange was assassinated, while markets and shops were looted and burnt, acts that are explicable both in terms of proletarian 'self-help' strategies and as the vengeance of the victims of the repression of street trade.¹⁰⁴

This ability of the anarchists to build on earlier worlds of social contestation and combine them with their own protest repertoire constituted one of their mobilising strengths in the inter-war years. Anarchist mobilising tactics thus overlapped with the cultural fabric and experiences of a large section of the working class. As an example of this trend, it is interesting to dwell on one of the funding mechanisms used by the anarchists, the 'revolutionary tax'. Typically, the individuals selected and called upon to pay this tax were unpopular with the masses, generally due to their involvement in companies that had resisted CNT wage demands and strike actions and who were therefore deemed responsible for exhausting the resources of both the movement and their supporters.¹⁰⁵ It was no coincidence then that in 1933 Salvador Gil i Gil should receive a 'tax' demand from *Comité libertario pro-revolución social* ('Committee for Social-Libertarian Revolution'), for Gil i Gil, besides being a businessman and deputy mayor of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat, was an unyielding opponent of the street traders and had spearheaded their repression since 1931.¹⁰⁶ Unsurprisingly, a man of

order such as Gil i Gil, who was publicly committed to the repression of ‘lawbreakers’, refused to be intimidated and resisted payment of the ‘tax’, an intransigence that shortly afterwards resulted in an attack on one of his shops, presumably by members of the ‘Committee for Social-Libertarian Revolution’.¹⁰⁷ Gil i Gil remained unbowed and a few weeks later died, along with a police bodyguard, in an ambush organised by an unknown assailant or assailants.¹⁰⁸

For all their radicalisation, right up until the civil war the unemployed traders employed a variety of methods to advance their cause. They periodically lobbied local authorities, with letters, petitions and demonstrations, calling for a cessation in the repression of street trade.¹⁰⁹ Thus, in 1935, a collective letter to their local council, the street traders of l’Hospitalet de Llobregat, explained that their ‘trade’ had no subversive intent and, as such, did not justify the draconian response of the authorities.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, from 1932, it seems clear that the sustained resistance to the police from the unemployed traders and from members of local communities resulted in a stand-off situation between the ‘rebel traders’ and the local authorities, who tolerated a limited amount of unlicensed trading in most Spanish cities. Published complaints relating to the repression of street trade in the workers’ press would suggest that the attitude of local authorities towards street trade varied radically from area to area. Thus, it would seem that in Barcelona, the city with the greatest revolutionary tradition, with the highest level of unemployment and where the urban order was most fragile, street trade was repressed most intensely, whereas in smaller cities like Valencia and Zaragoza, and in Madrid, the authorities were more indulgent.¹¹¹ In l’Hospitalet de Llobregat, the Council attempted to co-opt some street traders by offering a limited number of licences.¹¹² But the cost of these licences — 100 pesetas per year — far exceeded the resources of most street traders and, moreover, the chance to legalise their trade was not much to the liking of most of the unemployed traders, for whom street trade was an occasional activity. What they really wanted was full-time work, not to commit their future to this trade.¹¹³ Anything less than an implacable repression was resolutely denounced by market traders and commercial sectors, who issued periodic calls for a clampdown on street trade¹¹⁴, along with new threats to withhold tax payments if this was not forthcoming.¹¹⁵ In an obvious attempt to preserve their electoral support, ruling republican parties would often increase the repression of street trade immediately before local or general elections.¹¹⁶ Yet at times of fierce repression, the street traders simply adapted their ‘business’ to the new restrictions imposed by the authorities, frequently operating from the doorways of houses, which provided them with a vantage point from which they could survey the streets and guard against the sequestration of their goods by the police.

In conclusion, the experience of the street traders shines light on some important trends and processes in inter-war Spain. We see how the Second Republic in Spain signified a limited increase in civil and political freedoms, while the everyday economic compulsion that weighed down on the working class remained essentially unchanged. Also unchanged was the state repression that greeted those who resisted social inequality, a continuity that resulted in a war for the streets between the unemployed hawkers and the security forces. In turn, this sealed the endurance of political alienation among the most downtrodden sectors of the working class, an

alienation that was channelled and cultivated by Spain's *sui generis* mass anarcho-sindicalist movement. The tensions between the street traders and the middle classes and between their respective political representatives — the anarchist movement, on the one hand, and the various republican groupings, on the other — laid bare the conflicts between the various social groups within the anti-oligarchic coalition in Spain, prefacing the fissures that came to the fore on the left during the revolution and civil war that would shortly come.

Notes

- ¹ I would like to express my gratitude to Matt Perry for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper.
- ² See, for example, E. J. Popke and R. Ballard, 'Dislocating modernity: Identity, space and representations of street trade in Durban, South Africa', *Geoforum*, 35, 2005, pp. 99–110; J. C. Cross, 'Street vendors, modernity and postmodernity: Conflict and compromise in the global economy', *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 20, 1/2, 2000, pp. 29–51 and J. C. Cross, *Informal Politics: Street Vendors and the State in Mexico City*, Stanford, CA., Stanford University Press, 1998.
- ³ See, for instance, V. Gozález Pérez, 'El reciente incremento de la población extranjera en España y su incidencia laboral', *Investigaciones Geográficas*, 8, 1990, pp. 7–36 and V. Gozález Pérez (ed.), *Inmigrantes marroquies y senegaleses en la España mediterránea*, Valencia, Generalitat Valenciana, 1995.
- ⁴ G. Nielfa, 'Conflictos de intereses entre los comerciantes establecidos y la venta ambulante en Madrid (1900–1930)', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, 1984, 21, pp. 469–482; C. Ealham, 'La lluita pel carrer, els venedors ambulants durant la II República', *L'Avenç*, 230, 1998, pp. 21–26.
- ⁵ C. Stansell, 'Women, Children, and the Uses of the Streets: Class and Gender Conflict in New York City, 1850–1860', *Feminist Studies*, 8, 2, 1982, pp. 309–335.
- ⁶ J. Romero Maura, 'La Rosa del Fuego'. *Republicanos y anarquistas: la política de los obreros barceloneses entre el desastre colonial y la Semana Trágica, 1899–1909*, Barcelona, Alianza, 1989, p. 130; J. Fabre and J. M. Huertas, *Chumberas y alacranes*, Barcelona, Edicions 62, 1976, vol.5, p. 216.
- ⁷ T. García Castro de la Peña, 'Barrios barceloneses de la dictadura de Primo de Rivera', *Revista de Geografía*, 7, 1–2, 1974, p. 83; J. Giménez, *De la Unión a Banet. Itinerario de una rebeldía*, Madrid, Ediciones Fundación Anselmo Lorenzo, 1996, p. 38; A. Paz, *Chumberas y alacranes (1921–1936)*, Barcelona, n.p., 1994, p. 109.
- ⁸ K. Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', in K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works, 1867–1870*, Vol.21, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1985, pp. 148–149.
- ⁹ Letter from forty traders to the Mayor, 29 August 1935, Arxiu Històric de l'Hospitalet de Llobregat (Historical Archive of l'Hospitalet de Llobregat Council, subsequently AH'HL).
- ¹⁰ See, for instance, *Solidaridad Obrera*, 26 August 1931. As John Cross notes in his general survey of street trade, 'the real problem' for the middle class was that informal commerce 'was too competitive with formal retail outlets' ('Street vendors, modernity and postmodernity', p. 41).
- ¹¹ C. Sentís, *Viatge en Transmiserià. Crònica viscuda de la primera gran emigració a Catalunya*, Barcelona, Edicions La Campana, 1994, p. 78; *Solidaridad Obrera*, 9 April 1936.
- ¹² Sentís, *Viatge en Transmiserià*, p. 78; M. Domingo y F. Sagarra, *Barcelona: Les Cases Barates*, Barcelona, Ajuntament de Barcelona, 1999, p. 106; Romero Maura, 'La Rosa del Fuego', p. 130; Nielfa, 'Conflictos de intereses', pp. 469–482; P. Villar, *Historia y leyenda del Barrio Chino (1900–1992). Crònica y documentos de los bajos fondos de Barcelona*, Barcelona, Edicions La Campana, 1996, pp. 27–28.
- ¹³ See B. Martin, *The Agony of Modernization. Labor and Industrialization in Spain*, Ithaca, ILR Press, 1990.
- ¹⁴ Nielfa, 'Conflictos de intereses', p. 469.
- ¹⁵ *La Batalla*, 20 June 1930; *Comercio y Navegación*, July 1931; J. Hernández Andreu, *España y la crisis de 1929*, Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1986, pp. 115–118.
- ¹⁶ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 15 February 1932, 9 April 1936; Minutes of Council meeting, 1 June 1933 (AH'HL).
- ¹⁷ For a discussion of this process see C.Ealham, *Class, Culture and Conflict in Barcelona, 1898–1937*, London, Routledge, 2005, pp. 102–129.
- ¹⁸ *La Vanguardia*, 9 July, 12 August, 23 September, 29 October, 2 December 1931, 4 March 1932; *Las Noticias*, 14 May, 5 December 1931; Fomento del Trabajo Nacional, *Memoria de la Junta Directiva Correspondiente al Ejercicio de 1931*, Barcelona, 1932, p. 201.
- ¹⁹ *La Nau*, 24 April 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 27, 30 August 1931; Letter from the Collblanc Union of

- Market Traders to the Mayor, 4 September 1935 (AHI'HL).
- ²⁰ *La Vanguardia*, 23 September, 29 October and 2 December 1931.
- ²¹ *El Matí*, 14 June 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 12 August, 13, 18, 23 September 1931; *L'Opinió*, 7 August, 20 September 1931; *Las Noticias*, 22 May, 2 October, 17 December 1931; Minutes from Council meeting, 28 August 1934; letter from the Collblanc Union of Market Traders to the Mayor, 4 September 1935 (AHI'HL).
- ²² J. Aiguader i Miró, *Catalunya i la Revolució*, Barcelona, La Sageta, 1931, pp. 12–14; letters to the Council, 1931–1936, and Council meeting minutes, 1931–1936 (AHI'HL).
- ²³ M. Dolors Ivern i Salvà, *Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (1931–1936)*, 2 vols., Barcelona, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1988–1989, vol.1, p. 78.
- ²⁴ P. Radcliff, *From Mobilization to Civil War: the Politics of Polarization in the Spanish City of Gijón, 1900–1937*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- ²⁵ Thus, *L'Opinió*, a paper associated with the left-wing of Catalan republicanism, praised 'the shopkeeper [who] has based his business around certain laws . . . , pays taxes and his staff . . . [T]he consumer and the seller complement one another', because the honest shopkeeper represents 'a genuine guarantee for the consumer', whilst street traders 'can pull off a scam, both in terms of quality and with weights'. *L'Opinió*, 19 November 1931, 14 January 1932.
- ²⁶ *La Nau*, 24 d'abril 1931; Acts of the Council Sessions, 6, 11, 20 and 27 August 1931 (AHI'HL); *La Vanguardia*, 13 August 1931.
- ²⁷ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 25 September 1931, 13 September 1932.
- ²⁸ F. Madrid, *Ocho meses y un día en el gobierno civil de Barcelona*, Barcelona, Ediciones de La Flecha, 1932, pp. 145, 156–157.
- ²⁹ *L'Opinió*, 11, 13, 16. 20 August 1931, *La Vanguardia*, 13, 19, 21 August 1931, *Las Noticias*, 6 October 1931.
- ³⁰ *Las Noticias*, 2, 7 October 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 19 September 1931; *L'Opinió*, 20 September 1931.
- ³¹ *Las Noticias*, 12 November and 16 December 1931.
- ³² *La Vanguardia*, 13 August 1931, 3 March 1932; *L'Opinió*, 1 June 1932; *Solidaridad Obrera*, 13 September 1932; Communiques from the local police to the Mayor, 8, 13 September 1934; Minutes of the Council meeting, 10 January 1933, 28 August 1934; Letter from the Mayor to the commander of the Civil Guard station, 7 March 1936 (AHI'HL); *Las Noticias*, 12 November, 16 December 1931.
- ³³ *Estampa*, 9 July 1932.
- ³⁴ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 1 February 1936.
- ³⁵ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 7 July 1933.
- ³⁶ L. Jiménez de Asúa, *Ley de vagos y maleantes*. *Un ensayo sobre peligrosidad sin delito*, Madrid, Editorial Reus, 1934; for an analysis of the law, see Ealham, *Class, Culture and Conflict*, pp. 78–80, 83–84.
- ³⁷ See H. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York, The Free Press, 1963, *passim.*; I. Janovic, 'Labour Market and Imprisonment', in *Crime and Social Justice*, Fall–Winter, 1977, pp. 17–31; R. Quinney, *Class, State and Crime*, New York, McKay, 1977, pp. 131–140.
- ³⁸ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 19 June, 11, 12, 14, 28–31 July, 1 August 1931, 30 June, 6, 21–31 July, 29 August, 7 September 1934; *Adelante*, 22, 30 January 1934; *L'Opinió*, 29 July 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 16, 30 July, 5, 21, 26, 29–30 August, 30 September 1931; Communique from the local police to the Mayor, 26 April 1936 (AHI'HL).
- ³⁹ P. Coromines, *Diaris i Records de Pere Coromines. La República i la Guerra Civil*, Barcelona, Curial, 1975, vol.3, p. 14.
- ⁴⁰ Letters from the Farmers' Society to the Mayor, 30 October, 12 November 1931; letter from the Presidents of the Barcelona Official Chamber of Property Owners, the Landowners' Association, the Shopkeepers' Guild, the Guild of Coal Distributors and the Society of Master Hairdressers and Barbers to the Mayor, 30 September 1931 (AHI'HL).
- ⁴¹ Madrid, *Ocho meses y un día*, pp. 136, 138, 143–145, 171–214, 250, 266; *La Nau*, 2 May 1931; *Las Noticias*, 1, 3 May 1931; *El Diluvio*, 30 May 1931.
- ⁴² *La Calle*, 8 January 1932.
- ⁴³ A. Vargas González, 'La Guardia de Asalto: Policía de la República', *Cuadernos Republicanos*, 53, 2003, p. 44.
- ⁴⁴ *Las Noticias*, 10 November 1931.
- ⁴⁵ *La Vanguardia*, 12 August, 13, 18 and 23 September 1931; *El Matí*, 14 June 1931; *L'Opinió*, 7 August 1931.
- ⁴⁶ Ealham, *Class, Culture and Conflict*, pp. 112, 158.
- ⁴⁷ *La Vanguardia*, 13 August 1931; *L'Opinió*, 1 June 1932; Communiques from the local police to the Mayor, 8, 13 September 1934; minutes from the Council meeting, 10 January 1933; letter from the Mayor to the commander of the Civil Guard station, 7 March 1936 (AHI'HL); *Las Noticias*, 12 November, 16 December 1931.
- ⁴⁸ *L'Opinió*, 20 September 1931.
- ⁴⁹ *L'Opinió*, 7 August 1931 and 1 June 1932; *La Publicitat*, 12 June 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 12 August and 13, 18, 23 September 1931; *El Matí*, 14 June 1931.
- ⁵⁰ *L'Opinió*, 17 July 1931.
- ⁵¹ *L'Opinió*, 20 September 1931.

- ⁵² *L'Opinió*, 17 July, 16 August, 1931; *Llibertat*, 6 June 1931; Minutes of Council meeting, 10 January 1933 (AHI'HL); *Las Noticias*, 4 June 1931.
- ⁵³ *L'Opinió*, 1 June 1932.
- ⁵⁴ *Las Noticias*, 10 November, 18 December 1931, 29 August 1935; *La Vanguardia*, 23 August 1935; Minutes of the Council meeting, 1 June 1933 and Communiques from the local police to the Mayor, 17 July, 7 October 1932, 10 April 1936 (AHI'HL).
- ⁵⁵ Acts of Council plenary sessions, 1 June 1933 (AHI'HL).
- ⁵⁶ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 3 February 1933.
- ⁵⁷ Letter to the Mayor, 29 August 1935 (AHI'HL).
- ⁵⁸ *L'Opinió*, 13 February, 13 March, 29 August 1931.
- ⁵⁹ *L'Opinió*, 13 March, 29 August, 3, 11 December 1931.
- ⁶⁰ *La Vanguardia*, 19 August 1931.
- ⁶¹ E. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men. Studies in the History of Labour*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1964, p. 7.
- ⁶² *El Día Gráfico*, 24–25 September 1931; *Las Noticias*, 1, 21 October 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 24 September 1931; *Solidaridad Obrera*, 30 October 1931. See also Ealham, 'La lluita pel carrer', pp. 21–26.
- ⁶³ *La Vanguardia*, 24 September 1931.
- ⁶⁴ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 15 February 1933.
- ⁶⁵ *Las Noticias*, 29 August 1935.
- ⁶⁶ *La Vanguardia*, 23 August 1935.
- ⁶⁷ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 30 April, 22 May, 27 June 1931; Communiqué from the local police to the Mayor, 17 July and 7 October 1932 (AHI'HL).
- ⁶⁸ *Las Noticias*, 9, 16 May, 24 December 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 9 September 1931; *Solidaridad Obrera*, 7 July 1933; Communiques from the local police to the Mayor, 14 June 1936 (AHI'HL).
- ⁶⁹ Communiqué from the local police to the Mayor, 10 June 1933, 10 April 1936 (AHI'HL).
- ⁷⁰ For the Comisión de los Vendedores Ambulantes, see *Solidaridad Obrera*, 9 April 1936.
- ⁷¹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 20 May 1931.
- ⁷² Communiqué from the local police to the Mayor, 10 April 1936 (AHI'HL).
- ⁷³ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 9 February 1936.
- ⁷⁴ S. Tavera, *Solidaridad Obrera. El fer-se i desfer-se d'un diari anarco-sindicalista (1915–1939)*, Barcelona, Diputació de Barcelona, 1992, p. 83.
- ⁷⁵ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 22 March 1933, 30 June, 31 July 1934 and 9 February 1936; *Cultura Libertaria*, 1 January 1932.
- ⁷⁶ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 30 October 1931.
- ⁷⁷ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 8 February 1932.
- ⁷⁸ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 22 March 1933.
- ⁷⁹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 8 February and 13 September 1932.
- ⁸⁰ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 23, 28 June, 3 July 1931.
- ⁸¹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 28 June, 3 July, 23 June, 30 October 1931.
- ⁸² *Las Noticias*, 15–17 November 1931; *El Día Gráfico*, 26 November 1931; *La Vanguardia*, 5 March and 7 April 1932; *La Calle*, 6 November 1931; *La Publicitat*, 10 January 1932.
- ⁸³ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 21 September 1935.
- ⁸⁴ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 26 August 1931.
- ⁸⁵ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 14 November 1935.
- ⁸⁶ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 21 August and 1 December 1931.
- ⁸⁷ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 20 May, 7 June, 21, 26 August, 29–30 October, 1 December 1931, 22 March and 24 November 1932, 13, 22 July 1934.
- ⁸⁸ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 22 July, 13 August 1931 and 15 February 1932.
- ⁸⁹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 20 May, 22 July, 21, 26 August, 29–30 October 1931, 22 March 1932.
- ⁹⁰ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 31 October 1931.
- ⁹¹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 1 December 1931, 24 November 1932, 3 February 1933.
- ⁹² *Solidaridad Obrera*, 23 June 1932.
- ⁹³ *Justicia Social*, 25 November 1933, 14 March 1936.
- ⁹⁴ Radcliff, *From mobilization to civil war*, pp. 231–232; *Solidaridad Obrera*, 24 September, 2 October 1930.
- ⁹⁵ For a further discussion see Chris Ealham, 'An "Imagined Geography": Ideology, Urban Space and Protest in the Creation of Barcelona's "Chinatown", c.1835–1936', *International Review of Social History*, 50, 3, 2005, pp. 373–397.
- ⁹⁶ For a general view of the internal culture of the labour movement see S. Juliá Díaz, 'Poder y revolución en la cultura política del militante obrero español', in J. Maurice (ed.), *Peuple, mouvement ouvrier, culture dans l'Espagne contemporaine*, Paris, Presses universitaires de Vincennes, 1990, pp. 179–191; for the culture of the anarchist movement, see Ealham, *Class, Culture and Conflict*, pp. 23–53 and 149–169.
- ⁹⁷ *Justicia Social*, 1 August 1931, 29 April, 22 July, 11 November 1933; *Cataluña Obrera*, 26 May, 9 June 1933.
- ⁹⁸ H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, London, Griffen, Bohn and Company, 1851, vol. 1, p. 22.
- ⁹⁹ E. Martín, *Recuerdos de un militante de la CNT*, Barcelona, Ediciones Picazo, 1979, pp. 91–92.
- ¹⁰⁰ J. Peiró, *Ideas sobre sindicalismo y anarquismo*, Barcelona, Grupo Solidaridad, 1930, pp. 106–108, 127–134.
- ¹⁰¹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 28 June, 3 July 1931.
- ¹⁰² C. Serrano, *El turno del pueblo. Crisis nacional, movimientos populares y populismo en España (1890–1910)*, Barcelona, Península, 2000, p. 290.
- ¹⁰³ Minutes of the Plenum of the Barcelona CNT Local Federation, 24 October 1931 (Archivo Histórico Nacional, Salamanca, Civil War Section).

- ¹⁰⁴ Communiques from the local police to the Mayor, 8 December 1933; letter from the mayor to the President of the Catalan government, 29 December 1933 (AHI'HL).
- ¹⁰⁵ *La Veu de Catalunya*, 16 May 1933; *La Vanguardia*, 19 May 1933; Communique from the local police to the Mayor, 20 March 1936 (AHI'HL); L. Massaguer, *Mauthausen: fin de trayecto. Un anarquista en los campos de la muerte*, Madrid, Fundación Anselmo Lorenzo, 1997, p. 14.
- ¹⁰⁶ Acts of Council plenary sessions, 6, 11, 20 and 27 August 1931 (AHI'HL).
- ¹⁰⁷ *La Publicitat*, 16 May 1933.
- ¹⁰⁸ The Committee was described as the 'Committee for Social Revolutionary Terrorism' in the daily press. *La Vanguardia*, 19 May 1933, 27 March, 19 July 1934; *Las Noticias*, 4 October 1934; *La Veu de Catalunya*, 16 May 1933; D. Marin, *Clandestinos. El Maquis contra el franquismo, 1934-1975*, Barcelona, Plaza & Janés, 2002, p. 184.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 9 April 1936. Acts of Council Standing Committee, 6 September 1935 (AHI'HL).
- ¹¹⁰ Letter from forty street traders to the Mayor, 29 August 1935 (AHI'HL).
- ¹¹¹ *Solidaridad Obrera*, 30 June 1934.
- ¹¹² Acts of Council plenary sessions, 15 September 1932 and 19 January 1933 (AHI'HL).
- ¹¹³ Acts of Council plenary sessions, 30 August 1932 (AHI'HL).
- ¹¹⁴ *El Matí*, 15 August 1935.
- ¹¹⁵ Acts of Council plenary sessions, 15 August 1933 (AHI'HL).
- ¹¹⁶ Sentis, *Viatge en Transmiserià*, p. 78; Acts of the Council plenary sessions, 10 January 1933 (AHI'HL).