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# Debunking Spontaneity: Spain's 15-M/*Indignados* as Autonomous Movement

Cristina Flesher Fominaya

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movement cultures in periods of latency or abeyance in order to better understand the rapid mobilization of networks in new episodes of contention.

Keywords: Anti-austerity protests, global justice movement, Indignados/15-M, Spain, deliberative democracy, collective identity, autonomous movements, spontaneity, movement continuity, movement culture, genealogy

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Indignados is a term used by mass media and by which the movement is known outside Spain; activists refer to themselves as 15-M, arguing both that 'indignant' does not even begin to describe their anger, and that it overlooks other emotional responses, such as hope and solidarity. I therefore use Indignados initially as a descriptor of the movement, and 15-M thereafter.

<sup>2</sup> Other scholars have used the term 'movement' to describe the 15-M movement.

<sup>3</sup> This concept of 'movement' leads to the creation of a new landscape of autonomous movements.

<sup>4</sup> The 'movement' practices she witnesses are a peculiar narrative - the participation has long been a feature of other contexts.

<sup>5</sup> Movim

6. But is typical of activist narratives in the Spanish context which are often marked by a sense of inferiority with respect to other contexts, stemming from the fact that Spain 'missed' many of the social movement experiences of the 1960s and 1970s due to the dictatorship. It is true that this hampered the absorption of deliberative practices that flourished elsewhere during this period, but only strengthens the importance of local and national deliberative traditions in the Spanish context in the post-transition period.
7. Assembly practices can be traced farther back, to anarchist practices before Franco, for example although continuity is harder to prove.
8. A 2001 book on methods of asamblearismo practice states that the turno de palabra can be modified to favour those who either have not spoken or have not intervened in a long time, and to allow people to respond if they have been 'alluded to' (Lorenzo Vila & Martínez López, [2001](#), p. 57). Despite the availability of the book at social movement events, its recommendations were not widely adopted at the time.
9. 20-21 December 2003 Ciudad Real (La Mancha).
10. Autonomous assemblies are in principle open to all, but as individuals, not as members or representatives of parties or unions.
11. Interview with 'Txema' in Madrid 2002.
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16. Indeed the chants of the 15-M crowd with their hands in the air of 'These are our weapons' (Estas son nuestras armas) is a common one at mass protests in Spain, signifying non-violence.

17. Translation from Spanish by author.

## Additional information

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### Notes on contributors

Cristina Flesher Fominaya

Cristina Flesher Fominaya has an M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley, and a B.A. summa cum laude in International Relations from the University of Minnesota. She is senior lecturer at the University of Aberdeen. She has won numerous international

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