

Abstract submitted by Diana Bogado and Marta Solanas

*Title:*

**Squatting movements in Spain and Brazil: Resistance and autonomy in the occupation of empty buildings in central urban areas**

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Squatting phenomenon presents itself as an insurgent and resistant alternative to the current urban management that produces social inequality. In the contemporary context, the action of organized civil society culminates in movements that claim to meet basic needs and the quality of urban life. In these actions, both “squatting” and informal ways of using land and buildings<sup>1</sup> are intertwined.

Such movements have been successful, either by citizenship awareness, by pressure on the state to develop public housing policies, or due to the achievements that certain squattings and other housing occupations achieve, as resistance to the strategic removals of the aforementioned urban policies. Among the recent social manifestations that pressured the nation states for fairer cities, the most noteworthy are the 15M Spanish (begun on May 15, 2011) and its global developments, as assisted in Rio de Janeiro since 2013, consolidating a network against hegemony of interrelated actions on a global scale.

The main differences between the "Squat Movement" (more expressive on the European continent) and the social movements fighting for the right to housing (more common in Brazil), are the purposes of the struggle and the social unfolding of the "squats" and “occupations”. The "Okupa Movement" (squatting movement), with a more political bias, essentially seeks the social awareness of the production of scarcity and presents alternatives forms of life, based on anarchist ideals, mainly solidarity and mutual support. Besides, “occupation” have the purpose of assigning empty buildings to families who can't afford a decent accommodation. "Squatting" activities, unlike occupations, are not restricted to usufruct of the property, indeed, they seek

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<sup>1</sup> Both in Portuguese and Spanish a difference exists when speaking about okupação/okupación or ocupação/ocupación.

In the first case, okupação/okupación refers mainly to the “irregular” use of empty buildings in a revindicated way, with visible and political discourse.

In the second case, ocupação/ocupación is generally used when a need for housing is the main reason for using an empty space/house/building/land.

to present new possibilities of use of property and appropriation of the public space that claim social rights for minorities.

In our proposal we will share the characteristics of both phenomenon, in Brazil and Spain, confronting differences and similarities, past and future.

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**Key words:** Okupa Movement (Squats and CSOAs - Self-managed Social Centers); Sociocultural resistance; Social movements.