Multiplying resistance: the power of the urban in the age of national revanchism

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Introduction

In his book *The Rebirth of History*, Alain Badiou has written that in the uprisings of the Arab world in 2011 one can discern echoes of the revolutions of 1848 in Europe. For Badiou, the uprisings of the early 2010s herald a worldwide resurgence in the liberating forces of the masses (Badiou, 2012). In popular uprisings, the act of rebellion originates from widespread willingness to resist injustice and extend power to the masses. In this context, urban space provides the platform, the living infrastructure for liberating the political potential of mass uprisings. As Erik Syngedouw puts it: "the emergence of political space […] unfolds through a political act that stages collectively the presumption of equality and affirms the ability of 'the People' to self-manage and organise its affairs" (Swyngedouw, 2014, p. 131). Swyngedouw uses the phrase 'Every revolution has its square' to make sense of the revolutionary value of urban space for recent social movements across the world (Swyngedouw, 2011). From this perspective, there is no restoration of national sovereignty that can be invoked in response to the crisis of Western-dominated globalisation, since the nation-state with its hierarchical organisation does not offer room for a radical transformation of society.

The proliferation of urban insurgencies since 2011 is rather a sign of the return to a street politics of emancipation showing the continued relevance, even the centrality, of urban public space in political terms. What is specific of urban public space that leads us to postulate its primary importance? French writer Érik Orsenna once wrote a dystopian story of an island city where a dictator prohibited his people from climbing the surrounding hills, fearing that once the inhabitants could view the world beyond they would begin to question king's absolute power (Orsenna, 2004). In other words, once the people view the world, their encounters lead them to rebel against the dictator. In this sense, it can be assumed that urban public space has the power to propitiate unplanned encounters and, in doing so, to offer unexpected possibilities for a communal life.

Moreover, revolutionary situations that emerge in urban settings 'naturally' tend to mobilise people from all levels of society. Historically, this propulsive force of the urban has shown itself vital in

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organising and carrying out large-scale change. In his book *Life as Politics*, Asef Bayat has described what he calls the 'epidemic potential' of protesting on the street, this latter being understood as a 'space of movement and flow', in bringing together the 'invitees' and the 'casual passersby' (Bayat, 2010, p. 13). Bayat goes on to describe the location of Revolution Street – a site of many protests during the Revolution in Tehran – as "a unique juncture of the rich and the poor, the elite and the ordinary, the intellectual and the lay-person, the urban and the rural". In this interpretation, Bayat conceives of 'Street Revolution' as the prevalent phenomenon that happened in Tehran, Cairo and Istanbul where the crowd can easily gather (Bayat, 2010, pp. 161-170). In this definition, the political 'community' is always in a process of becoming: never stable, always open to the future, always resisting the forces that repress and impede 'the whole of freedom' (Deleuze, 1966, pp. 112-118). So, to achieve a 'new community whose members are capable of a belief in themselves, in the world and in becoming', we need both 'creativity' and 'the people' (Deleuze, 1995, p. 176).

In this sense, what is customarily defined – in the US context – 'the resistance' to Trump's chauvinistic populism (Cobb, 2018) needs to be grounded in the street-level experience of urban public space, of its established order as well as of its possibilities for a 'reversal of perspective', as Raul Vaneigem (2001) would put it, aimed at a re-appropriation of life. In the global occupy movement and in the protests that swept across the Middle East in the early 2010s, street politics became the proverbial 'center stage' upon which people voiced their discontent with the current political situation and demanded democracy (Mehan, 2017a, p. 167).

In this chapter, we evaluate the politically generative dynamic of urban space. Notably, we put forward the notion of the 'multiplier effect' of the urban, referring to its ingrained tendency to multiply resistance to oppression and violence being exerted against subaltern groups and minorities and, in doing so, to turn this multiplied resistance into an active force of social change. We therefore look at the twofold valence of 'resistance': negative and affirmative. Resistance initially takes form as a defensive response to oppression and violence. When this happens, the urban becomes the living platform for a multiplying dynamic of encounter and, potentially, of inter-group solidarity, thus laying the foundations for a cooperative – rather than competitive, as in neoliberal rationality, or inimical, as in national-populist reason – way of 'being together'. After having developed this argument against the backdrop of the women's movement in Tehran and the urban disobedience to anti-immigration policies in Italy, our chapter concludes by reflecting on the multiplier effect of urban resistance within the current context of national revanchism.

The multiplier effect of resistance in urban space

In an inspired foreword to the English-language edition of the *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze's and Guattari's first joint work, Michel Foucault argued that their book could be conceived as an "Introduction to the Non-

Fascist Life" understood – he explained – as an "art of living counter to all forms of fascism, whether already present or impending" (Foucault, 1983, p. xiii). In order to achieve a 'non-fascist life', Foucault identified "a number of essential principles" capable of orienting action that he had acquired from Deleuze's and Guattari's book, including the following two that look particularly remarkable from the perspective of this text:

> Withdraw allegiance from the old categories of the Negative (law, limit, castration, lack, lacuna) […] Prefer what is positive and multiple, difference over uniformity, flows over unities, mobile arrangements over systems. Believe that what is productive is not sedentary but nomadic.

> […] Do not demand of politics that it restore the "rights" of the individual, as philosophy has defined them. The individual is the product of power. What is needed is to "de-individualize" by means of multiplication and displacement, diverse combinations.
> (Ibid.).

In this commentary, Foucault looks radically different from the kind of neo-Weberian theorist, analysing power relationships as an infallible iron cage, subtly seduced by aspects of liberal and even neoliberal thought that in recent times revisionist scholarship has associated with him (Zamora and Behrent, 2016). On the contrary, his work along with that of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, as well as of other critics of capitalist modernisation of that time, such as situationist theorist Raul Vaneigem (see below in this section), provides us with essential insights into the conceptualisation of resistance. These authors enable us to understand resistance simultaneously as a refusal of the negative (fascism in the form of today's authoritarian populism) and as an opportunity to experiment with a different use of life aimed at re-creating a shared sense of 'we' (Virno, 2015).

What does 'non-fascist life' mean today? With the political ascent of Donald Trump after his unexpected election in 2016, the idea of a return of fascism has become increasingly recurrent within public debates in the United States and elsewhere. What kind of fascism are we talking about? As Foucault underlines, by fascism it is not meant a repetition of the historical fascism of the 1930s, but the "fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behavior, the fascism that causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us" (ibid.). Resistance to new forms of fascism, therefore, has to be found in the realm of everyday life, where the negative can be reversed into an affirmative re-appropriation of a communal usage of life. Becoming a resistant, in this perspective, is a process that is not confined to the embrace of an ethical stance, represented for instance by an atomised act of indignation (Invisible Committee, 2015), but requires a collective praxis that at the same time arises from and engages with our daily life through connection with others (Ahmed, 2017).

Deleuze's and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* as well as their sequel on "Capitalism and Schizofrenia", *Thousand Plateaus*, can be used as a primer for collectively resisting the fascistisation of the public sphere that we are observing in today's national-populist era. A central notion in their conceptual framework is that of multiplicity. This notion allows an understanding of the different ways in which the multiplication of resistance that we associate with urban space can transform oppression and violence against ethnic minorities and subaltern groups into a life politics of emancipation. In the introduction to this text, our starting point has been that emancipatory politics primarily originates in urban settings as urban public space serves as the key theater of contentions. In fact, as Asef Bayat argues: "conflict originates from the active use of public space by subjects who, in the modern states, are allowed to use it only passively— through walking, driving, watching— or in other ways that the state dictates" (Bayat, 2010, p. 11). It is urban street-politics that can give rise to what Raul Vaneigeim defined "a reversal of perspective": a subjective gesture that enables the oppressed becoming a resistant to detect "the positivity of negation" (Vaneigem, 2001, p. 185). In Vaneigem's view, a reversal of perspective arises from the desire to re-appropriate of everyday life in its entirety: "in the sights of my insatiable desire to live, the whole of Power is merely one target in a wider horizon", Vaneigem contends (ibid., p. 188).

The question is now: how can a subjective 'desire to live' be turned into a larger emancipatory project? In this vein, this chapter aims to assess the political potential in the multiplier effect of the urban, namely how this multiplier effect can lead to a lasting project of emancipation in which cities become major sites of resistance to today's national-populist revanchism. There is no unitary pathway to emancipation, however, within a multiplicity-oriented understanding of radical politics. Pursuing multiplicity through street politics aspires to move beyond both the monism and the pluralism of standard political theory with their universalising assumptions, as regards the identification of the revolutionary 'subject' in political-ontological terms (Žižek, 1999) or that of the decision-making process enabling conflicting organisations to conform to the general interest (Dahl, 1978), respectively. In *Thousand Plateaus*, the sequel to Anti-Oedipus, Deleuze and Guattari refined their understanding of multiplicity in a social-productive fashion by putting forward their famous notion of rhizome, as opposed to the Freudian sense of unity and identity symbolised by a "tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 0). Deleuze and Guattari believe in a processual understanding of rhizomatic multiplicity: "the multiple must be made, not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety, with the number of dimensions one already has available— always n - 1 (the only way the one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted). Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted; write at n - 1 dimensions. A system of this kind could be called a rhizome" (ibid., p. 6). This leads them to define "the principle of multiplicity" as follows: "it is only when the multiple is effectively treated as a substantive, 'multiplicity,' that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world. Multiplicities are rhizomatic, and

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expose arborescent pseudo-multiplicities for what they are. There is no unity to serve as a pivot in the object, or to divide in the subject" (ibid., p. 8).

The next two sections of this chapter will provide illustrative evidence of some ways in which the process of cities becoming multiplicities through resistance can take place. As anticipated, we will look at the resurgence of the women's movement in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region, focusing especially on the insurgence of Iranian women in Tehran, and at the urban disobedience to anti-immigration policy in Italy.

Women's lives matter: Girls of Revolution Street

On 2017, the day after US president Donald Trump's inauguration, the civil rights movement, and the LGBTQ movement - a very diverse group of women - organised the Women's March on Washington and hundreds of sister marches across the country and around the globe that brought millions to the streets for a historic day of protest (Schnall, 2017). The Women's March had the momentum to build a resistance across the United States. Following from that, on January, protesters flooded US airports by the thousands in the chaos that followed President Trump's first executive order, which banned citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the US, as well as indefinitely halting the entry of Syrian refugees. [1] As the Women's March drives the resistance against the Trump administration, the #MeToo and #TimesUp movement has reached an unprecedented level of collective engagement against the commodification and victimisation of women as sexual objects and the gendered power differentials that persist in ways that gravely constrain the lives of girls and women everywhere.

In the MENA region, and especially in most Muslim-majority republics in the Caucasus and Central Asia of the Soviet and post-Soviet times (such as Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan), the women's movement has been intertwined with patriarchal and patrimonial patterns. Except for Tunisia, Turkey, and to some extent Morocco, egalitarian reforms in family law, whether by revising and reinterpreting sharia law or by replacing it with secular law, have been painfully slow (Tohidi, 2016, p. 78). Here, it is important to note that the type of collective actions practiced mostly in the democratic settings, which have come to dominate our conceptual universe as the women's movements, may not deliver under nondemocratic/authoritarian conditions (Bayat, 2007, p. 160). In many authoritarian Middle-Eastern states, such as Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, or the Islamic Republic of Iran, where conservative Islamic laws are in place, the state's gender ideology is grounded in the culture of patriarchy (which is entrenched in religious authoritarian polity), and justified by the patriarchal interpretation of Islam's holy sources (Barlow & Akbarzadeh, 2008, p. 23). In an authoritarian and repressive context, "collective activities of a large number of women organised under strong leadership, with effective networks of solidarity, procedures of membership, mechanisms of framing, and communication and publicity – the types of

movements that are associated with images of marches, banners, organisations, lobbying, and the like," are not feasible (Bayat, 1997, p. 162).

Focusing on the discourse of solidarity, social movements can be defined as the "organised set(s) of constitutes pursuing a common political agenda of change through collective action" (Batliwala, 2012, p. 3; Mehan, 2017b). In this interpretation, women's movements aim to bring women into political activities, empower women to challenge the roles they serve, and create networks among women that heighten women's ability to recognise gender relations that are in dire need of change (Ferree & McClurg Muller, 2004, p. 577). On March 2018, thousands of Turkish women flocked to Istanbul's city's iconic and pedestrianised İstiklal (or Independence) Avenue, for this year's International Women's Day demonstration to demand greater rights and denouncing violence. Women's chanted slogans including: "We are not silent, we are not scared, we are not obeying" and "Women are strong together". In the following weeks, women's rallies were also held in Ankara and the southeastern province of Diyarbakır. [2] In a similar way, across the Arab-speaking world, the popular uprisings in 2011 showed Arab women in countries like Tunisia and Jordan that they could push for legislative advances through cross-border solidarity. In Middle East, while Saudi Arabia lifted its ban on women driving, women have been at the forefront of pushing for change in Iran. Feminist Bettina Aptheker has discussed the significance of the 'dailyness' or 'ordinariness' of women's resistance (Aptheker, 1989).

Deploying the 'power of presence' over the past three decades, Iranian women have refused to be pushed out of the public domain. In Iran, as the result of a social media campaign which was initially called -My Stealthy Freedom (which was a Facebook campaign back to 2014) - by using the hashtag #whitewednesdays, every Wednesdays, images of Iranian women, hair uncovered and hijabs held aloft pop up in social media. [3]

As we said in the previous section, in popular uprisings resistance starts as a response to oppression and violence, setting in motion a larger process of insubordination that can lead to life emancipation. In this context, we have assumed that the urban acts as a multiplier, possibly turning single acts of rebellion into larger uprisings. Women's anti-systemic movement in Iran is illustrative of the multiplying dynamic of resistance that is only possible in an urban context. Dense urban environments of metropolises like Tehran possess unique junctions in the form of parks, streets and squares where the encounter between different inhabitants of the city – what in the introduction we defined 'invitees' and 'casual passerby' – can turn small protests into insurrections. Tehran expanded its spatiality of revolutions and discontents through recent protests – specifically, the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and the Green Movement of 2009. The recent women's movement highlighted the sociopolitical importance of the Revolution (In Persian: Enghelab) Street and Freedom (In Persian: Azadi) Square in building and representing spaces of protests in modern Tehran. This venue in the heart of current Tehran provides accessibility in people's everyday life. However, its unique centrality, accessibility and distinctive value for

national political memory, have transformed this place into one of the most important venues for political gatherings in Iranian modern history.

In today's new wave of women's activism in Iran, bareheaded Iranian women climb on platforms and benches in public spaces to protest daily against their lack of bodily autonomy and compulsory veiling (hijab). [4] These protests were originally inspired by an Iranian woman known for standing out on the utility box in the Enghelab (Revolution Street) in Tehran on 28 December 2017. The young protesters – known as "daughters of the revolution" – tied their white scarves to the end of poles and waved their hijab flag to protest. According to Homa Hoodfar, "the struggle is not about a piece of cloth on a woman's head, it is about the gender politics that cloth symbolises, and its use to silently and broadly communicate a rejection of state control over women's bodies" (Hoodfar, 2018). After that act of insubordination, the women re-enacted her protest (and posted photos of their actions), being branded as the "Girls of Revolution Street" on social media.

In this respect, the solidarity-action frame became dominant because of the activists push for equality among all women involved in the fight for the freedom. This led activists to build inclusive alliances with one another because of their collective desire for equality. As Fielding-Smith well noted, when the revolution came, no one asked about anyone's background, religious affiliation, political affiliation, regional affiliation, and ethnicity (Fielding-Smith, 2011). The imagery of rhizomes in which centerless assemblages formed by members who engage in horizontal and non-hierarchical relations describes these revolutionary dynamics. Such organ-less bodies are all made up of multitude individuals that can act quite effectively as a mass without any centralised leadership. From this perspective, in order to demand democracy under authoritarian conditions, 'becoming a resistant' is prerequisite. This process of becoming involves 'people to come' who are missing or lacking in the actual world and who 'have a chance to invent themselves' by resisting what is intolerable in the present (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 110). In this interpretation, if we consider urban society and democracy as elements that are struggling to emerge, resistance movements can be viewed as essential manifestations of the constitutive dimension of politics (Elkin, 1985). In this sense, subaltern groups and minorities who experience oppression and violence are not mobilising in order to pursue defined ends, but are mobilising primarily in order to assert the power of their presence in the public sphere (Phillips, 1998), the ends being the assertion of themselves as a 'willful subjectivity', obstinately speaking out against injustices (Ahmed, 2017). This vocal politics of presence is at the heart of street-level resistance turning small-scale insubordination into larger insurrections against authoritarian power.

Migrant lives matter: cities against and beyond the national fetish

In the current context of nationalist revanchism endangering liberal democracies, cities and their social environments are increasingly viewed as bastions of resistance nurtured by an everyday, cross-sectional

politics of solidarity. In Europe, as well as in North America, after the economic recession of the late 2000s and the early 2010s, with its impact on urban societies in terms of job losses and public-budget cutbacks, recent years have seen a re-energised localist politics in the form of a radical municipalism, or 'communalism'. The experience of Barcelona, where the previous leader of the anti-eviction movement was elected mayor with the support of a grassroots coalition named 'Barcelona en comù', is exemplary in this respect. The pro-immigrant 'sanctuary cities' movement, which has intensified after the election of Donald Trump in 2016, as well as the Black Lives Matter mobilisations that started in 2013 in response to the killings of unarmed African Americans in different US cities are other key manifestations of the political vitality of cities and urban social movements.

On a theoretical level, municipalism draws inspiration from the work of ecological-anarchist Murray Bookchin (Bookchin, 1992), which is now continued by contemporary radical theorists, such as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (Hardt and Negri, 2017). Today's idea of 'new municipalism' invites to get rid of any nostalgia for the nation-state and to resume the local scale as 'the space of the common', of solidarity and resistance to neoliberal austerity, through a decentered network (refusing centralised leadership) of community-based assemblies and councils. While liberal advocates of city-based empowerment place at the centre of their localist project the role of political and economic leaders in taking the lead in civic coalitions and public-private partnerships (Barber, 2013; Katz and Nowak, 2017), municipalists look at leaderless alliances comprising both social movements and city administrators who share a belief in an intersectional politics of solidarity among subaltern minorities. Undocumented migrants, ethnic and racial minorities, and a revitalised women's movement are at the heart of this politics of solidarity in today's reactionary moment in which a male-dominated ethnic-majority revanchism has become politically prevalent in a growing number of countries across the globe.

The political potential of neo-municipalism associated with what we define here the 'multiplier effect' of the urban can be appreciated by taking a closer look at the current political situation in Italy. In this country, the general election of March 2018 resulted in a political impasse that lasted two months and was resolved through a coalition government formed in June 2018 by the League and the Five Star Movement, two parties variously associated with the new populist tide. The former is a regionalist-devolutionist party that has recently embraced a sovereign-nationalist, more explicitly right-leaning position; the latter is an online-based, post-ideological political movement characterised by fierce anti-establishment propaganda but also for engagement in environmentalist campaigns at the local level against ecologically disruptive infrastructure projects. The leader of the League – Matteo Salvini, an ambitious politician known for his xenophobic positions, as well as his intensive use of social media – was appointed Minister of the Interior, pledging to adopt a muscular approach to vexed questions of crime, security and irregular immigration in Italy. From the very start, Salvini's main target have been the humanitarian organisations operating migrant rescue ships in the Mediterranean. Previously, also Luigi

Di Maio – the young leader of the Five Star Movement and currently deputy head of government along with Salvini – openly stigmatised NGOs, accusing them of speculating over 'the immigration business' and colluding with people smugglers in the southern Mediterranean (Rossi, 2018), even though he subsequently softened his position. Social movements and pro-migrant activists responded to these claims, denouncing anti-NGO discourse as a 'criminalisation of solidarity' (Collettivo Euronomade, 2018). Once appointed as Interior Minister in June 2018, Salvini immediately refused port access to migrant rescue ships, blaming the so-called Dublin Regulation on asylum seekers for overburdening Italy and other countries at EU's external frontiers with a disproportionate number of migrants and refugees.

The historical defeat in the general election deeply weakened the parliamentary left in Italy, which remained almost silent about Salvini's obsessive anti-immigrant discourse. On June 10, 2018, after having rescued about 600 migrants, the Aquarius – a rescue ship operated by SOS Méditerranée and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – was turned away by Italian authorities, struggling for many days to find another port of arrival. At the peak of the humanitarian emergency, the mayor of Naples – Luigi De Magistris – publicly declared that he would have disobeyed the government's decision to refuse port access to the Aquarius. De Magistris proudly announced that migrants would be always welcome in the city of Naples. His stance was widely endorsed on social media where the hashtags #umanitàperta (open humanity) #apriteiporti (keep ports open) #Aquarius became highly popular in response to Salvini's #chiudiamoiporti (keep ports shut). The resulting enthusiasm induced local politicians across the country to embrace De Magistris' position: mayors of major port cities such as Palermo, Messina, Reggio Calabria, Taranto, Cagliari, but even of small towns like Sapri in the southern Campania region sided with Naples' mayor despite their different political affiliations (De Magistris is left-oriented but politically independent). Even the Five Start mayor of the port city of Livorno initially joined the campaign, but had to hastily withdraw his support due to pressures from his party. The multiplier effect of the urban, therefore, unfolded at an inter-urban level, setting in motion a multiplying dynamic that involved mayors and other local administrators in different cities. Two days later, left-leaning parties, movements and unions finally broke the silence, calling for demonstrations in several Italian cities to protest against the xenophobic drift in Italy: an indefinite number of cities comprising Milan, Naples, Trento, Genoa, Turin, Como, Pisa, Florence, Brescia, La Spezia, Modena, Ferrara, Parma, Ancona, Lucca, Venice witnessed public gatherings of various sizes. Cities that took part in the protest were many and uncoordinated but altogether they formed a sparse, still embryonic multiplicity of dissenting voices collectively resonating on social media through the #apriteiporti (keep ports open) hashtag.

The mayors' disobedience and the subsequent wave of mobilisations, therefore, brought to the fore the multiplier effect of city-based resistance, thanks also to the amplifying power of social media, in opposing the exclusionary politics of national revanchism. However, one should not attribute the merits for this crucial role of cities in resisting xenophobic discourse and anti-immigration policies (only) to a

narrow circle of enlightened mayors and city managers. As spaces of transit, temporary refuge or settlement at the same time, cities and urban environments boast unique institutional thickness in terms of agglomeration and diversity: local-welfare services and a myriad of associations, social movements, independent activists and volunteers, as well as countless socially minded singularities. The political potential of cities lies in the contagious vitality of these 'ecosystems of solidarity' grounded in urban everyday life, providing what can be defined 'ius domicilii' urban citizenship in contrast to the exclusionary character of national citizenship (Rossi and Vanolo, 2012). In this sense, the value of cities and urban environments largely exceeds the sphere of local government, offering so far unspoilt possibilities for a re-founding from below of democracy and community beyond the national fetish.

Conclusion

This chapter has theorised the multiplier effect of the urban in instigating a multiplication of resistance processes within the contemporary context of national revanchism and authoritarian populism. In the social sciences, the notion of 'multiplier effect' is customarily associated with the work of economists dealing with economic-development issues, especially under conditions of recession or so-called underdevelopment. Writing in the aftermath of the 'great crash' of 1929, Richard Kahn detailed the Keynes-inspired idea of the multiplier, which he understood as an effect of an increase of 'home investment' (typically an increase in government spending) on aggregate demand (Kahn, 1931). In the 1960s, industrial economist François Perroux applied the notion of the multiplier to his theory of growth poles, arguing that investment on new industry has multiplier and accelerator effects on other sectors of the same regional economy (Perroux, 1966). In recent years, writing after the 'great contraction' of 2008-9, Enrico Moretti has amended Perroux's position, showing how the multiplier effect is more significant in sectors based on high-skill jobs (Moretti, 2010).

Economic theorisations of the multiplier effect are conceived as counter-cyclical policies tackling conditions of economic slowdown and insufficient demand in structurally depressed areas. Keynes' statement that is usually summarised as "The government should pay people to dig holes in the ground and then fill them up" [5] is illustrative of this idea of the economy that thrives through activity, which means subordinating public interest to the imperative of economic recovery. Within today's 'reactionary cycle' characterised by national revanchism and the crisis of liberal democracies in the West and across the world, an unconditional pursuit of resistance is vital to the recovery of democracy and even to its expansion, which occurs when small-scale or individual resistance unexpectedly gives rise to larger uprisings, as we have seen. To paraphrase Keynes, it can be concluded that in the current political context progressive political actors and social movements should experiment with small-scale resistance that can lead to the happy event of mass uprisings reclaiming democracy and justice. Under these circumstances,

the urban has the distinctive capacity to multiply the effects of resistance on politics and society, turning it into an active force of social and political change.

Notes

[1] See CNN Politics: https://edition.cnn.com/interactive/2018/politics/women-who-march-the-movement/

[2] See Hürriyet Daily News: http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkish-women-flock-to-istanbuls-center-to-demand-greater-rights-denounce-violence-128484

[3] See Global News: https://globalnews.ca/news/4014971/iran-hijab-whitewednesdays-girls-of-revolution-street-protest/

[4] In 1936, Reza Shah, the founder of Pahlavi dynasty, issued a decree known as Kashf-e hijab (Unveiling) banning all Islamic veils. However, a few months after the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979, a law forcing women to not only cover their heads, but also wear loose clothing to hide their figures, came into effect.

[5] Keynes' full sentence reads as follows: "If the Treasury were to fill old bottles with banknotes, bury them at suitable depths in disused coalmines which are then filled up to the surface with town rubbish, and leave it to private enterprise on well-tried principles of laissez-faire to dig the notes up again" (Keynes, 1964, p. 129).

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