the wealth it produces collectively, in the face of the large mechanisms of privatization that parasitize the mutant space of the Web. When it comes to communities open to anyone, it becomes difficult to avoid the intrusion of ‘free riders’ like the big digital companies that make money thanks to the collaborative work of users to whom they give nothing in return. On the other hand, the pragmatic ‘hacker’ or ‘geek’ mentality, focused on the solution of specific problems, can lead to a certain degree of blindness regarding those same indirect processes of privatizing collective wealth, which often are not resolved simply by granting an open license or by the opening of a specific protocol. These types of ‘free culture’ resources can end up like small boats adrift on the sea of neoliberal privatization.\footnote{The study about ‘audiovisual commons’ I mentioned previously points out that some businesses are commonly seen to commodify the volunteer work that sustains those ‘commons,’ thus privatizing the wealth that others produce without contributing anything. This is because, the authors assert, the value is not just in the results, in the shared resources produced, but also in ‘the information generated during the interaction process needed to produce them’ (142). And this interaction and information is sometimes used for private, profit-making purposes. In this way, ‘Wikiwashing’ practices are undertaken—a term coined by analogy with the ‘greenwashing’ of the oil companies. This happens especially in the case of big profit-based companies like Yahoo and Google, which associate their image with ‘the values of collaboration and sharing’ by disguising their profit mechanisms. In this respect, see Lara (2013) regarding the unpaid collective work that benefits, for example, Twitter; see also Padilla (2010) on the inevitable ambiguity of Web 2.0 that makes it a niche for open value production, but also for privatizing business practices.}

In this regard, I think an interesting way to approach the 15M movement, which is the topic of the next chapter, is to understand it as a kind of attempt to respond to certain questions that arise from the contradictions inherent in the experience of online cultures, and particularly in the attempt to translate that experience to the analog world. Questions that, perhaps, could be formulated more or less in the following way: What if we constructed a small city where we could make everything we needed and it seemed worthwhile to us to do it using only distributed collaborative practices like those of the Web? What if we constructed a city removed from neoliberalism in the very heart of the neoliberal city itself?
CHAPTER 5

Combining the Abilities of all the Anyones:
The 15M Movement and its Mutations

5.1. Anyone’s Word and the Expert’s Word: An Alliance

5.1.1. Affected voices and technical voices: 15M, PAH, and Mareas

May 2011. A trembling voice; words heard over street noise—or perhaps cut off by a bad Internet connection in a YouTube video: ‘It’s just that you’re doing things I’ve always dreamed about being able to do …’ A pause, the voice breaks, and applause explodes. ‘Excuse me, but I’m just …’—more applause, and little by little the older woman speaking to the assembly, bending over the microphone, hands trembling, manages to go on: ‘What I meant to tell you all is that I think you are so much more creative than our generation, and so I’d like to ask you something, something I think we all need, and it’s that we not forget that …’ She falters for a moment, and then continues. ‘There’s a part of the population that’s not here. There’s part of the population missing here. It’s the population that’s even lower than low, the people who don’t have something to eat every day, who live in slums, the barrios—’ Applause bursts out again, interrupting her, and a hand settles on the woman’s back to support her. ‘—where the average life expectancy is lower than in other barrios, where illiteracy is much higher, where people die, they’re sick and they suffer in horrible situations.’ Another supporting hand appears on her back, as if sharing the weight of the words she’s still trying to say. ‘And we have that in almost every town in the region, and in Murcia itself, and somehow they have to have this life, it has to fall on them. I don’t know how to do it, but you do, I believe you do …’ Applause bursts out thunderously now, while the woman leaves the microphone and walks towards the people—who all stand up—and she loses herself among the crowd.

Shortly before or shortly after this, in May 2011, self-convened meetings in other plazas in cities and towns throughout Spain will see myriads of similar moments, at which so many other trembling voices will speak, often beginning with an apology. ‘I’m sorry, it’s hard for me to speak in