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### Habitus and radical reflexivity: a conceptual approach to study political articulations of lifestyle- and tourism-related mobilities

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## Habitus and radical reflexivity: a conceptual approach to study political articulations of lifestyle- and tourism-related mobilities

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The following article develops a framework for the analysis of political participation and community involvement in destinations of lifestyle mobility. Based on central arguments of Bourdieu's Theory of Practice, the proposed conceptual approach defends the idea that the political activation of relatively affluent and often senior citizens in lifestyle communities can be thought of as an expression of habitus dispositions that are the subject of radical reflexivity. The presented frame is proved empirically by means of an analysis of both formal and informal political participation processes at the Spanish Costa Blanca (Alicante), a regional setting with conflictive political struggles related to urban development and symbolical appropriations of place and space. Amongst others, the tactical and strategic practices of a protest movement that complains against serious misuses of the regional land use regulation by local and regional authorities will be analysed. In this regard, lifestyle mobilities do not refer exclusively to persons but also include movements of capital, objects and knowledge that are implicated in local politics and urban development.

**Keywords:** lifestyle mobility; political participation; Bourdieu; habitus; radical reflexivity; Spain

### Resumen

En el siguiente artículo se desarrolla un marco conceptual para el análisis de la participación e implicación política en destinos de movilidad y migración por amenidad y estilo de vida. Basándose en argumentos de la Teoría de la Práctica de Bourdieu, la propuesta conceptual defiende que la activación política de ciudadanos, muchos de ellos de un nivel económico relativamente próspero y en muchos casos jubilados o retirados de la vida laboral, viviendo en destinos de la movilidad por estilo de vida puede pensarse como una expresión de disposiciones de *habitus* sujetas a reflexividad radical. Ese marco se irá comprobando mediante un análisis empírico de los procesos de participación formal e informal en la política en la provincia de Alicante (Costa Blanca). Se trata de un área en el que se desarrollaron una serie de conflictos políticos, especialmente en relación con algunas de las estrategias de desarrollo urbano aplicadas y con las posibilidades de apropiación simbólica de espacios y lugares concretos. Entre otro, se analizarán las tácticas y estrategias de un movimiento de protesta que rechaza la aplicación local y regional de una legislación urbanística. A partir del análisis podemos entender que la movilidad por estilos de vida no solamente se refiere a las personas implicadas sino que también

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incluye los movimientos de capital, de objetos y de conocimientos implicados en la formulación de las políticas locales y urbanísticas.

**Palabras claves:** Movilidad por estilo de vida; Participación política; Bourdieu; Habitus; Reflexividad radical; España

## Résumé

L'article suivant développe un cadre pour l'analyse de la participation politique et l'engagement communautaire à destinations de la mobilité des modes de vie (lifestyle). Fondée sur les arguments centraux de la Théorie de la Pratique de Bourdieu, l'approche conceptuelle proposée défend que l'activation politique des citoyens relativement affluents et souvent retraités dans les communautés de modes de vie peut être considérée comme l'expression de dispositions de l'habitus qui sont sujettes à la réflexivité radicale. Le cadre présenté est vérifié empirique par des méthodes d'analyse des processus de participation à la fois formels et informels de la Costa Blanca espagnole (Alicante), un environnement régional avec des luttes politiques liées au développement urbain et aux appropriations symboliques des lieux et places. Entre autres les pratiques tactiques et stratégiques d'un mouvement de protestation qui se plaint du mauvais usage du règlement régional de l'utilisation de l'espace par les autorités régionale et locale seront analysées. Dans ce sens, les mobilités de mode de vie ne se réfèrent pas exclusivement aux personnes mais aussi aux mouvements du capital, des objets et des savoir qui sont impliqués dans les politiques locales et le développement urbain.

**Mots-clés:** Mobilité des modes de vie; Participation politique; Bourdieu; Habitus; Réflexivité radicale; Espagne

## 摘要:

本文提出了一个框架，用于分析生活方式流动性目的地的政策参与和社区参与。本研究使用的分析思路以布迪厄实践理论的核心论点为基础，认为相对富裕的和老年人居多的生活方式型社区的政治活动就是一种对习惯倾向的表达，有必要彻底的反思。本文选择用于验证理论框架的案例来自于西班牙的科斯塔布兰卡（阿利坎特），这一区域的冲突性政治斗争与城市发展以及地方和空间的象征意义有关。本研究是通过正式和非正式的政治参与过程分析得出的。除此之外，文章将分析一次抗议活动的战术和战略实践，这次活动是抗议地方和区域土地利用监管当局对土地利用法规的滥用。在这方面，生活方式流动性并不专指人，也包括与当地政治和城市发展有关的资本、物和知识。

关键词：生活方式流动性；政策参与；布迪厄；习惯；彻底反身性；西班牙

## Introduction

The extensive work of Pierre Bourdieu, which was widely dedicated to reconciling the theoretical dilemma between structure and agency, between external social structures and subjective experiences, has been recognized as a highly relevant and important contribution to study socially embedded expressions of individual practice. Bourdieu's Theory of Practice is referred to in debates regarding three aspects that prove key for the debate aimed at in this article, namely questions of transnationalism (Kelly & Lusia, 2006; Waters, 2006), social movements and political involvement (Crossley, 2005; Taylor et al., 2009) and leisure- and tourism-related mobility (Edensor, 2001; Hall, 2005; Rantala, 2010). In accordance with theoretical debates in sociology (Lawler, 2004; McDonough, 2006), the Theory of Practice is a useful frame to study highly mobile individuals in flexible and dynamic late-modern societies. With this in mind, the following article discusses the possibility of conceptualizing political

participation and contentious dynamics in the Spanish province of Alicante (the so-called *Costa Blanca*) through the concepts of habitus and social field. The *Costa Blanca* is the most important geographical destination of lifestyle- and tourism-related mobilities, temporary or permanent home of at least 240,000 citizens of northern or western European origin, of which 155,000 are aged 55 or more (Huete, 2009; Janoschka, 2009a; Rodríguez, Lardiés, & Rodríguez, 2010). As we will argue throughout this text, political activation is frequently related to questions of urban development and symbolical appropriations of space, in other words: the negotiations of meanings ascribed to specific places.

In this article, three usually separated lines of arguments will be combined, namely research on transnational migration, debates on social movements and literature on leisure- and tourism-related mobility. We propose evaluating political engagement as an expression of habitus dispositions that can be the subject of radical reflexivity. This conceptual framework for the analysis of political participation and community involvement in destinations of lifestyle mobility will be subsequently developed and empirically proved. The arguments presented in this text will be structured as follows: after an introduction to the challenges that the analysis of transnational lifestyle mobility and migration faces, a conceptual framework that draws conclusions from recent discussions on the possibilities of transforming and reinventing habitus dispositions, will be developed. This relation will then be exemplified by an analytical insight to contentious dynamics at the *Costa Blanca* that activate both formal and informal participation among mobile citizens. In this way, the text provides empirical and conceptual insights to some of the practical outcomes of European Union (EU) citizenship that encourages mobile citizens such as European free movers in Spain to engage politically. Hence, the theoretical engagement allows us further comprehensions of a specific political protest and permits us to assess to what extent geographical mobility incites structural transformations of habitus dispositions (or not). Such a perspective offers new insights to a field that conceptualizes practice in a mobile world, addressed by research on the widespread geographies of leisure and tourism.

### **Migration – mobility – tourism: contingent and contested concepts**

At the interface between tourism and migration, lifestyle migration and leisure-oriented mobilities, conceived as (temporary or permanent) spatial mobilities of relatively affluent persons of all ages that move between meaningful places with an imagined and collectively perceived potential to provide a better quality of life (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009), have recently experienced a significant increase. Lifestyle migration can be evaluated as a privileged form of mobility in a contingent relation between the two poles of tourism and migration – privileged, because it usually does not occur primarily for economic reasons. Additionally, lifestyle migrants possess a privileged citizenship status in comparison to other migrant groups (Croucher, 2009). Individual narrations communicate this mobility as a way to escape the negative consequences of contemporary societies, and lifestyle migration can be seen as a facet of major trends such as individualization and a growing desire for self-realization (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009). Lifestyle migrants combine several assumptions about late-modern societies, liquid modernity and cosmopolitanism (Baumann, 2000; Beck, 2006; Giddens, 1991), they embody social transformations and challenge conceptions of migration, tourism, home, community and identity that are predominantly constituted on the presumption that people only have one residential place. Such reconsideration includes the critical

engagement with certain terminological confusion that responds to the existing continuum between varying but interconnected forms of (spatial) mobility related to the field of tourism and migration (Williams & Hall, 2002). For example, concepts referring to 'privilege' and 'elite' somehow contribute to the conceptual marginalization of the phenomenon (O'Reilly, 2007). While many northern European residents in Spain are retired professionals, a significant number are neither elite nor of a professional background but persons who moved to Spain to leave behind the constraints of social class (Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010). Moreover, concepts that widely reinforce tourism behaviour also fall into a trap.

Following Hall and Müller (2004), local population and local politicians may consider second home owners and residential tourists as outsiders and even invaders, with the consequence of being systematically denied the rights to participate in political questions. Although they bring important investment to an area and their lifestyle choice includes a long-term commitment to the place (Hall, Müller, & Saarinen, 2009) they may inclusively cause substantial resentment among the 'native' population (McWatters, 2009). Furthermore, the term retirement migration does not resolve the stated problems either as the concept itself fails at least at recognizing two aspects: first, there is a rising number of individuals and families of working age that recently moved from Britain, Germany or Scandinavian countries to Spain and other Mediterranean destinations in search for a better life (O'Reilly, 2007). Rodriguez et al. (2010) adjust this argument and show that only one-third of the registered European free movers<sup>1</sup> in Spain are aged 55 or more, slightly above 400,000 out of 1.2 million. Second, many supposed migrants do not migrate permanently but can be considered rather as seasonal or temporary movers. And as such mobility patterns do not respond to the binary opposition between 'migration' and 'residential stability', they should not be considered migrants at all (Janoschka, 2009b). Moreover, and although this does not necessarily mean mobility as a spatial attitude, many individuals conduct their own life somehow in-between different but mutually entangled 'worlds' that represent meaningful cultural narratives (O'Reilly, 2000). If we integrate in our analytical frame the movements of 'people, capital, information and objects associated with the process of voluntary relocation to places that are perceived as providing an enhanced or, at least, different lifestyle' (McIntyre, 2009), the widespread consequences of tourism- and lifestyle-oriented mobility such as questions of political participation and mobilization in specific, e.g. place oriented, issues of local development can be better analysed (Janoschka, 2011). The reference to lifestyle mobility offers an analytical strength in circumstances as given in the latter case study, where a variety of intertwined factors account for the political involvement of mostly European citizens in this specific regional arena in Eastern Spain.

### **Theory of practice and habitus: a conceptual approach for the study of political conflicts in destinations of lifestyle mobility**

The reconfiguration of the political life at places shaped by lifestyle-oriented mobility responds to broader transformations of how to conceive and conceptualize politics in tourism destinations. Mobile people who translate their complaints into collective forms of political action rely on different types of often transnational ties, e.g. permitting the flow of information or political interaction through the use of media and communication networks and technologies (Della Porta & Tarrow, 2005; Nicholls, 2009). To appreciate this socially embedded practice of contention, the following

conceptualization will adjust its lens through an engagement with Bourdieu's Theory of Practice. It focuses on the question of how the activation and transformation of habitus dispositions can be thought of through active engagement in contentious politics. Such an approach differs from common discourses in tourism geographies that refer to tourism habitus as a culturally embedded practice or interpret tourism practices as appropriations of 'authentic', 'historic' and 'traditional' places and as expressions of distinction (Crang, 1997; Crouch, 2004; Urry, 2002).

The frame class reproduction and distinction offer has also been addressed with regard to lifestyle-oriented mobility: despite the willingness to start a new and different life in Spain and the common application of a rhetoric which pretends not to be concerned with status, for instance, British middle-class individuals re-inscribe divisions as they believe that 'they *naturally* have certain tastes, interests, ideas and beliefs' (Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010, p. 57). At a first glance, it seems convincing that all lifestyle decisions are mediated through the embodied class culture, which is habitus (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). With relation to this, the reproduction of class structures as a symbolical way to express distinctive power relations takes place through the participation of mobile citizens in clubs and associations that express meaningful practices of cultural distinction (Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010). This follows the classical discourse that habitus is a system that regulates practice by durable dispositions that are widely outside the discursive consciousness but rule the individual practice as embodied cognitive patterns. Subsequently, any individual practice is based on group and class-specific habitus that are expressed in specific social microcosms, the social fields (Bourdieu, 1984).

However, practice theory does not represent a fully unified approach but includes a variety of notions (Rantala, 2010). Developed in and exemplified by a virtually pre-modern society (Bourdieu, 1977), it has certain shortcomings if the mobile conditions of people, capital, knowledge and practices in late modernity are reckoned. For instance, Reay, Crozier and Clayton (2009), drawing from a study with working class students in a British elite university, prove evidence that habitus change and transformation (as well as disquiet, ambivalence, insecurity and uncertainty) is likely when a habitus encounters a field with which it is not familiar. As discussed in studies regarding the (transnational) habitus of migrants (Kelly & Lasis, 2006; Waters, 2006), the incorporation of new situated practices that respond to the migration experience necessarily initiates certain metamorphosis of habitus via the permanent incorporation of reflexivity (Sweetman, 2003). Such argumentation also derives from the later work of Bourdieu, in which he argued about the flexibility, learning ability and deformability of habitus dispositions in situations when 'habitus is not necessarily adapted to its situation nor necessarily coherent' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 160). Thus, individuals incorporate changing and varying habitus dispositions and sometimes 'they even revolutionize elements of their world' (Krais, 2006, p. 130). On this basis, habitus can be creative and reflexive, especially if conflict situations (such as the political struggles empirically addressed in this article) and moments of rapid transformation of the life course, e.g. in highly mobile environments, are addressed. What does this mean for the perspectives and considerations of the Theory of Practice addressed in this study of contentious dynamics in destinations of lifestyle and leisure-oriented mobility?

The starting point to model such a relation is the assumption that radical reflexivity occurs whenever the common conditions of pre-reflexive practice (Figure 1, Image 1) suffer a rapid and shock-like transformation. Such an incidence that can be originated by mobilities as well as by social and political conflicts produces a field of critical attitude that requires new interpretations and incorporations of the social world (see



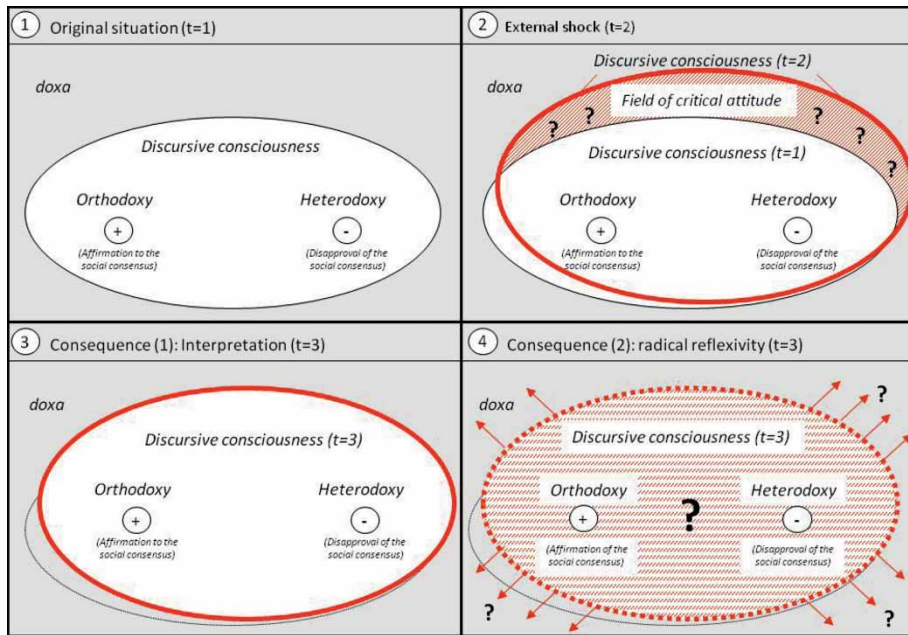


Figure 1. Habitus and radical reflexivity in social and political crises.  
Source: Author, based on Crossley (2003), Myles (2004).

Figure 1, Image 2). In this case, the pre-reflexive implicitness of the social order (doxa) becomes discursive and conscious, enabling the readjustment of discrepancies between habitus and field (Crossley, 2003). Reflexivity and critical attitude is a precondition to discover, to question and finally to challenge the established power relations, categories and relations of production and reproduction within the (conflictive) social world. However, the field of critical attitude requires new interpretations and incorporations of the social world enabling two possible reactions: on the one hand, the necessary interpretation may re-establish the difference between doxa and discursive attitude to proceed to a closure of the field of critical attitude (Figure 1, Image 3). As Fowler (2006) reminds us, the consciousness of habitus dispositions is per se nothing durable, and the opposite is more often the case: despite a temporary radicalized habitus, the weight of the reified world is still felt. But on the other hand a crisis can also initialize a permanently radicalized reflexive consciousness that increasingly questions and challenges further doxic perceptions (Figure 1, Image 4). In consequence, the dispositions of habitus can get permanently out of sync with the positions available in the field which may develop a 'subversive habitus' that is connected with 'dynamic friction' to the field (Bourdieu, 2005, p. 47). In this case, the establishment of radical reflexivity comprises a permanent disposition that also includes the knowledge to transform social criticisms into political participation and action (Taylor et al., 2009).

### Lifestyle migration and transformations in the political field

Lifestyle-oriented mobilities such as the temporary or permanent relocation of EU citizens to the Spanish *Costa Blanca* express the freedom of movement within the European Union (EU), enabled by the possibility to settle, work and purchase properties in

any part of the common market. But they are also a reaction to the Spanish local and regional politics that adapted specific planning legislations to attract more property investment in coastal areas. Since EU citizenship rights enabled lifestyle migrants to vote and stand as candidates in local elections they originate claims that increasingly challenge the established political regimes. In destinations such as the *Costa Blanca* a range of municipalities have a wide majority of registered foreign inhabitants (Janoschka, 2009a), and even much more people are unregistered, possess property and stay there for parts of the year. In several municipalities different forms of political mobilization canalize the complaints about deficiencies in the provision of public services in order to object the mentioned local development strategies. New political formations, protest organizations and even grassroots movements evolved amongst lifestyle migrants that possess resources to adopt winning strategies to get heard. For instance, at the *Costa Blanca*, foreign councillors are common in coastal towns and villages and several parties managed by and oriented towards the EU foreigners challenge local politics (Janoschka, 2010). If we proceed now to analyse this political involvement through the lens of the Theory of Practice, our aim is to provide an answer to the question if political participation can be thought of as a consequence of specific, shock-like conditions, in which temporarily or permanently radicalized habitus dispositions are established among activists. The central aim is to interpret political struggles in destinations of lifestyle mobility, reconstructing individual and collective strategies, meanings and significations. Such an approach basically concentrates on interpretative methodologies that refer to practices as a main analytical category (Lucius-Hoene, 2000).

Based on the empirical work carried out,<sup>2</sup> we were able to detect an important array of social and political participation that ranges from community involvement and informal volunteering to radical political struggles. Referring first to representative politics, it is of major interest that political activation primarily takes place among individuals with previous experiences in informal participation settings (e.g. volunteering, Agenda 21). The participation varies widely in each specific locality, but can be categorized via two major biographical incidences. First, it is important to consider that to a certain degree political involvement responds to the possession of specific knowledge and a previous experience in politics. However, such habitual dispositions, inscribed in the personal history, are not automatically activated to introduce oneself to the political field. Only specific, often negative occurrences motivate individuals to engage in political questions as illustrated by the following example:

There were a huge number of complaints about how the town-hall was run. I mean the rubbish in those days was just lying in the street and it was awful. So there was so much frustration and people complaining that I just said it's no good complaining, you have to put people in power. So I decided that I would form this party and I put an announcement in the newspaper and asked for people who were interested to contact me. About 15 people contacted me, foreigners, and so we started the party. And the purpose of the party was very simple. It was just a better management of the town. (Tony)

In other words, the political participation of lifestyle migrants in Spain results in the initial habitus dispositions and external incidences that, within the field of local politics, may, but not necessarily, awaken a (temporal) reflexivity of doxa. The combination of both factors explains the important regional discrepancies in political involvement as well as the themes and topics that are addressed by EU foreigners in Spain. At the



*Costa Blanca*, this activation ranges from the organization of public services to questions of urban development including, for example symbolically important notions of how to design public spaces.

It's just that I found they were planting a lot of green things which had no flowers, and I said we'd have to make this more, alegre [*happy*], and so I said: 'Look, I don't want any plants that haven't got flowers on them at some time.' And also the trees, they should have flowers on at some point. Just to make it, more flowers, you know; Hibiscus and things like that. So I have been pressing on that to have nicer flowers. (Tony)

The example shows the high value that a symbolical aspect such as the plants placed in public spaces may have for the EU citizens who live in Spain. The claims for flowering plants respond to reference systems with regard to aesthetics and beauty and express the desire of the newcomers to appropriate specific places. Additionally, they embody collectively shared interpretations of how an imagined 'happiness of spring time' should be expressed in a specific spatial setting. Such demands about the (re)production of an imagined landscape of how a Spanish *plaza* should look like are an example for the internalized and non-reflexive habitual dispositions people carry with them restlessly whether they are engaged in political issues or not. In such cases and regardless the mobility experience, internalized habitus dispositions rule the political action of lifestyle migrants.

We have to bear in mind that the incorporation of EU free movers to the local politics at the *Costa Blanca* originates major transformations of the political field, especially in reference to the subfield of urban politics. These changes encounter the mobility of culturally embedded appreciations of space and place but also include attached knowledge on how to enact political decisions. However, it is important to point out that formal political participation primarily takes into consideration the requirements and claims of the most stable lifestyle migrants that vote at their place of residence.

### **Lifestyle mobility and the establishment of radical reflexivity**

In addition to addressing the political involvement in formal local political issues we will now focus on the dynamics that can be observed if radical contention such as the struggle against the mentioned land use regulation (LRAU, enforced since 1994) is taken into consideration. The law regulates the practice in the field of urban politics at the *Costa Blanca*, especially the development of new residential estates. In summary, it allows real estate development at every place of a municipality aside from protected areas. Projects can be implemented whenever a developer presents a plan, even against the will of the property owner. Additionally, the promoters do not necessarily have to buy any land, as a system of forced concessions puts into practice a situation where the private owner has to pay the investor all costs deriving from urbanization and infrastructure. Furthermore, he must concede up to two-thirds of the total area to the developer (Soriano & Romero, 2004). For example, Klaus U., a German pensioner, lost the objections at different Spanish courts when his 2272 square metre plot became part of a development plan aiming at the densification of his neighbourhood. He was condemned to cede more than 764 square metres of his property and to pay additionally 24,000 Euros to the investor. This case stands exemplarily for the intentional abuse of individuals that have mobile life patterns. Following §46/3 of the law, the legal notifications about planned estates do not

necessarily have to be delivered by registered post, and any administrative appellation must be announced within extremely short periods. With regard to this, the affected pensioner states:

We have been here in spring time for seven weeks. And then we came back in autumn, and I find a piece of paper under a stone, completely yellowed. It said “ayuntamiento” [municipality], and we were told that this piece of land was getting urbanized. And, that the deadline for objections was 14 days. (Klaus U.)<sup>3</sup>

The application of such a law widely infringes individual property rights guaranteed in the Spanish constitution, the EC Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights to benefit a purely speculative regime arranged between local politicians, regional government institutions, state-controlled savings banks and investors/developers. By late 2002, a group of alarmed individuals (‘Abusos Urbanísticos No’) that was initially led by expatriates but subsequently included many Spaniards also began to struggle against the application of this law through informal ways of contention that included mobilization, protest and lobbying on different geographical scales. One important strategy was to de-localize the conflict by involving the foreign embassies of 17 countries in Spain, followed by effecting petitions directed to the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Court of Human Rights. MPs in different European countries as well as lawyers and the public in general (media) were pursued to engage with and critically inform about the consequences of the case. In the long run the protest was successful, and followed by a vote of the European Parliament on 13 December 2005 the European Commission opened infringement proceedings against Spain. Consequently, a new law (LUV) replaced LRAU legislation by the end of December 2005, but similar abuses were supposed to persist. Following the reports of the EU institutions dating from June 2007 and March 2009, the planning legislation established an ‘endemic form of corruption’ that makes citizens suffer an ‘abuse of rights and obligations enshrined in the EC Treaty, in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, in the ECHR and in the relevant EU Directives, as well as in other conventions to which the EU is a party’ (European Parliament, 2009).

An analytical insight to the protest movement helps to better understand the relation between the field of urban politics and habitus dispositions amongst the activists. In this regard, it is theoretically interesting on which individual assets the association, capable of challenging a regionally embedded political field, draws. Hereby, the role of the founder and initial president is of major importance.

One day, it was in the summertime, we were having a lunch party over here, just outside, I found some people walking across our land and we asked why they were walking across our land. They told me that they were here on behalf of the mayor, surveying the area. [...] So, I went and saw the mayor and we saw the plan, it would be this entire valley, everything you see here, it’s 104,000 square meters. We would then have about 60 to 70 houses in this area. What they’d plan to do, according to the plan I saw: they’d put a hotel up on the other side, which would destroy our privacy. And they would take away; they would divide our property into nine building plots. They would leave our house, but they would cut right at the back of the garage, right across our pool, take away our pool house, take away our little exercise shed, they’d even take away our septic system. So, we’d have no septic system, it would be on somebody else’s property. So, they would cut off our property there and we have a guest house down there which we built. That would simply all disappear! And we’d also lose our front gate, the road would be right out here by our round terrace and we’d lose our trees. And we’d probably have to pay, and nobody can quite calculate this. (Charles S.)

The personal description shows the shock-like situation that the founder of the NGO suffered, activating a radical reflexivity with regard to the political field of urban development in the regional setting. But it is of major interest that his reaction differed widely from that of many other affected persons: Charles informed himself and decided to set up a protest that began to be his central concern in daily life. Within a few weeks, he managed to engage with other individuals who, like him, had previous experiences with political negotiations, mobilizations and the organization of protest strategies on different hierarchical levels that range from local to transnational spheres. Analytically, the participation of these citizens can be thought as an expression of what Bourdieu (2005) refers to when he uses the term of a subversive habitus – persons who have learned to activate the dispositions that radical reflexivity implies in struggles within a specific field, which in this case is the field of urban politics.

Besides this engagement, the initialized protest movement rapidly began to account also on an important array of participants that explicitly express that they never had gained any experience in organizing protest activities before their active involvement in this specific struggle, less they assumed doing this when deciding to relocate temporarily or permanently to Spain. As recently as after suffering the specific negative experiences and threats in Spain, they transformed into ‘activated citizens’ as the following statement shows:

Oh, that was one of the most horrible days of my life. It is unbelievable! You go to the notary and the first thing, they let you wait. So we were waiting for one hour and a half and then finally, he showed us that plan. And then I saw this plan-, I will show it to you, it was a shock. You-, it was a shock. This is the complete plan, what they want to do. That’s our plot, the 30,000 square metres. And I saw directly that on our plot-, I asked the notary, what is this? – Houses! These are all houses they want to put on our plot. Houses, houses, houses! That was quite a strong shock for us. This plan is amazing, you can’t imagine that they can decide to put down the palm trees on somebody else’s property-, and they explain it! Put down the palm trees-, my car is downstairs, my parrots, everything is put down. Where the chickens are, they put down everything, oranges-, everything. And it’s in the cost of the infrastructure, and I have to pay for it! (Goodelieve)

After this shock, the affected Belgian couple began to fight for their property, although they never had showed any political interest in their former life. Analytically, the motivation for the participation can be evaluated as an expression of a mismatch between habitus and the social field of urban politics that leads to a temporarily radicalized habitus of the movement members. Such radicalized habitus dispositions and the subsequent transformations in habitus specifically refer to this political field. This means that given the specific rules of this specific game, habitus transformations cannot be transferred to other aspects such as, for example, people organize their daily life. But it shows clearly how habitus transforms as soon as a mismatch between its dispositions and the field occurs.

### **Radical and subversive habitus – an interpretation and conclusion**

The prototypical and powerful conflict referred to in this article illustrates how the Theory of Practice can be applied in highly mobile societies. From the conceptualization of a radicalized habitus and radical reflexivity that were addressed in this text both theoretically and empirically, we learn that political movements are able to change a social field within given political power relations due to resources given by

specific dispositions of the habitus of its members. The reference to habitus enables a conceptual link between agency and the structural constraints of action that reflect individual activities through the lens of social theory. Social conflicts, individual shocks and crises may suppress dispositions of habitus and establish a temporarily radicalized habitus as well as possibly activate the radical reflexivity inherent to a permanently subversive habitus. As discussed in this article, whenever habitus is conceived as flexible and adaptive, habitus analysis can be a helpful tool to explain political movements in destinations of lifestyle mobility that aim at changing the political regulation of the mobility with its inherent politics of scale and place.

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### Notes

1. Rodríguez, Lardies & Rodriguez refer to citizens of the EU-15 + Norway + Switzerland.
2. Since 2004, more than 90 narrative interviews were conducted with politically engaged actors in Spain. Interviews were transcribed and analysed with MAXQdA software to permit the application of hermeneutic and reconstructive analytical methods. It was attempted to focus the interviews on biographical aspects (Rosenthal, 2004), but the involvement of many activists let them often converse automatically about their implication in contentious dynamics at the Costa Blanca.
3. Statement translated, the interview originally was held in German language.

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