
FROM THE XINO TO THE RAVAL

Culture and Social Transformation in Central Barcelona



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This study has been carried out at the initiative of, and financed by,
the Centre de Cultura Contemporànea de Barcelona
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on the occasion of its tenth anniversary.

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with the collaboration of Júlia Humet.

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PRESENTATION AND FIRST ELEMENTS

Introduction

The Raval today is a great space of social change, a territory of creation, a laboratory of social and cultural blending in the city of Barcelona. This study, which was commissioned by the CCCB, aims to analyse the processes of social, economic and symbolic transformation in the Raval neighbourhood. We wish to symbolise these processes by calling this study “From the Xino¹ to the Raval”. In other words, we describe how in twenty years the neighbourhood has gone from being the Xino, which is to say a stigmatised area with a reputation of social exclusion and neglect, to being a neighbourhood in the middle of a process of renovation, one that is socially and culturally mixed and a place that is visited by residents of Barcelona and visitors from abroad alike. In the terms of reference of some cultural productions, it has gone from being the Xino of *La Marge* by André Pieyre de Mandiargues, or that of Nazario’s comic-strip character Anarcoma, to being the Raval of the film *Una casa de locos* [*L’Auberge espagnole*, in its original title] or that of the cultural cluster of the Plaça dels Àngels.

The goals of the study, then, are to ascertain the magnitude of the change. To find out what roles have been played by the most significant interventions in the neighbourhood. What new dynamics we might find. What role is played, and can be played, by the Raval in twenty-first-century Barcelona. This is not to overlook the standpoints of the social actors and residents in the area. We are aware that a study of this kind and with such goals might have been one of many types and carried out in different ways, for example, focusing on the phenomenon of migration, or social exclusion, public policy, the cultural institutions, and so on. Our aim has been to produce a study that to some extent covers all the Raval’s dimensions: demographic, social, economic, urban planning, artistic, ideological, etcetera.

Behind this choice is the fact that we have taken into account a fundamental change in present-day societies in which, on the one hand, culture takes on a central economic dimen-

1. “Barri Xino” (literally Chinatown) traditionally meant, in the Barcelona context, a red-light district [translator’s note].

sion and, on the other, economic activities have become more open in style, while being less autonomous. The culture industries and cultural tourism are good examples of this mixture at the end of the twentieth century, and they appear to be among the key elements of the present historical stage. We should like to inquire whether the case of the Raval is a sufficiently clear example of what has been called “cultural regeneration”, which is to say urban renovation based on culture.

The research. This study was carried out over one year by a research team from the Institut de Govern i Polítiques Públiques (Institute of Government and Public Policy) at the Autonomous University of Barcelona. The directors were Joan Subirats and Joaquim Rius, and the team members Laia Ollé, Andrés Scagliola, Ismael Blanco, with the collaboration of Júlia Humet.

We should like to thank each of the 35 people we have interviewed individually, enabling us to meet first-hand the leading figures of this transformation. We are aware that, despite our efforts to record all the voices involved, it is very probable that we have missed people who have other views. We also wish to thank residents of the Raval and the Friends of the CCCB who made themselves available so that we could conduct the three discussion groups.

The study has been sponsored by the CCCB and without the determination of this institution to get to know the neighbourhood in which it was installed ten years ago it would never have been done. We thank the members of the Documentation Centre at the CCCB for their enthusiastic and efficient support in logistical and bibliographical terms. We should also like to thank the CERC (Cultural Studies and Resource Centre, Regional Council of Barcelona) for having offered us the use of temporary premises, thus enabling us to carry out our research work from the heart of the Raval.

First elements

The Raval neighbourhood has undergone far-reaching transformation over the last twenty years. The balance today is essentially positive, although there are still many uncertainties as to the final results of this process of transformation. These doubts are due to variable factors such as immigration and new social and economic dynamics, which were not foreseeable either at the start or during the early developments of the process. Hence, at this point we might speak of explicitly desired and successfully achieved transformations (the establishment of new cultural institutions, economic stimulation, the resettlement of residents in refurbished buildings) and of not explicitly desired transformations (the very rapid, and to some extent uncontrolled, social and ethnic diversification of the neighbourhood, a reoccupation by immigrants of interstitial spaces or of areas that are substandard in town planning terms). We might even speak of completed transformations (the cultural cluster of the Plaça dels Àngels and the incorporation of private initiatives in the north-east sector of the Raval) and of pending transformations (the south Raval area, the presence of more private investment). And we still have questions that only time will answer. Will the Raval become just another normal neighbourhood of Barcelona? Will it start losing its social mix and end up opting for one of the contradictory identities that are present today (a cultural-commercial neighbourhood, an immigrant neighbourhood, a leisure zone)?

We shall go on to discuss this set of transformations below.

Does the name make the thing? From the Xino to the Raval. Words are symbols that reflect an image, an evaluation, historical memory. We start out from the fact that the two toponymic ways of describing

the neighbourhood are not neutral, but reflect different images, a range of appraisals and historical memories or situations in the city that are also divergent. We know that the word “Xino” does not apply to the whole of the territory that is now known as the Raval. It would be located, rather, in the southern sector of the Raval. However, with this term we wish to include two meanings, to some extent opposite, that hover over images of the neighbourhood:

1/ A Xino that would evoke bohemia, the *canaille* (the French term is untranslatable) milieu, the district of cafés-concerts and cabarets of international renown. This would be a populist, nostalgic, positive and romantic view.

2/ A Xino that would evoke working-class life, poverty, prostitution and delinquency. This would be a view that sees only poverty, one that is pessimistic and critical.

The former is based on the glorious years of the “Barrio Chino”, the gold-fever years of the First World War that gave the neighbourhood its international reputation. The latter refers more to the idea of what was left of the Xino after the Civil War and the Franco dictatorship. The Xino of the artists and cabarets appears as the opposite of the working-class and poor Xino, the legend and the reality being as different as night and day. The duality, however, lingers on today, still relatively present in the citizens’ imaginary and in the thinking of some intellectuals, politicians and administrators.

The name Raval, nonetheless, also has a symbolic content. It is of medieval origin and was recovered very recently. Indeed, when people did not want to use the stigmatising word “Xino”, it was called the “Drassanes District” or “District V”, which was its administrative name. The fact that it was the only zone called by its administrative name shows, on the one hand, the desire to escape from the stigma of “Xino” and, on the other, the neighbourhood’s problem of identity. The Raval neighbourhood is a set of quite distinct territories and all they have in common is that they once occupied the space between the second and third city walls and that they were part of nineteenth-century urban planning. For some, simply using the name Raval represents the reform. There are even some people who speak of the name as one that was imposed from the top, by the powers-that-be, by the Administration. The name “Raval” corresponds to the “toponymy of rehabilitation”:

If there is a sentimental route that needs to be done urgently as a sales pitch in the turn-of-the-century Barcelona of design, it is that of the Xino neighbourhood. But please be politically correct and call it the Raval, the name on file for the toponymy of rehabilitation. Today’s Raval is a world of contrasts, as in the medinas.

Rafael Vallbona, “Adiós al Barrio Chino”, *El Mundo. La Revista*, no. 85, 13 May 2001.

For others, the name has its origins in the neighbourhood movement that wanted to participate in the processes of renovation, as a way of designating the whole territory, presenting itself to the administration as a single interlocutor:

The names adopted by the neighbourhood associations to delimit their respective terrains of action, names that were subsequently consolidated by the PERI (Special Plan for Integral Reform), are precisely those that have generated the new denomination. In other words, the neighbourhood movement, besides recovering more or less forgotten names of the districts, like Raval, or Fort Pius, or generating new names for zones that were so outside the general scheme that they did not even have a name, Nou Barris, for example, has modified the toponymy of the city’s oldest districts.

Miquel Domingo and M. Rosa Bonet (1998), *Barcelona i els moviments socials urbans* (Barcelona and Urban Social Movements), Fundació Jaume Bofill – Editorial Mediterrània, Barcelona, p. 26.

TRANSFORMATIONS

From top to bottom: the desired reform

The transformation planned for the Raval has a core target that, while it bears some relation to previous attempts, also renews them and reworks the former aims and instruments. It is understood that the main player could only be the administration from the outset, and the way of going about it had to be completely hierarchical in the sense that it is done from top to bottom because it takes off from a certain basic assumption that it is rational and right. The standpoint adopted was, significantly, the same as the original idea of cleaning up, but to approach it with the aims of keeping the population in the neighbourhood, dignifying it and improving living conditions, while doing so by means of instruments that took advantage of and reinforced the neighbourhood's somewhat underrated elements of historic value, these being its central location, history, legacy and cultural potential. The idea, then, was to respect the residents while improving their living conditions by means of considerable public investment that would then bring in private investment, and diversifying the population and uses of the area. The danger that lurked in the background of this operation, one that has been repeatedly pointed out over the years, was that the project as a whole would end up by causing the expulsion of the traditional and more vulnerable residents, along with a certain social desertification within a culturally and commercially oriented neighbourhood (pointing to the Marais district in Paris as an example of what might happen).

If we leave to one side the whole set of urban planning projects for the internal reform of the neighbourhood, or of the Ciutat Vella (Old City) zone as a whole, which were being formulated throughout the twentieth century by the different political regimes, to focus instead on what began with the end of the Franco dictatorship and the transition to democracy, we can distinguish several phases (Table 1). These phases enable us to situate the entire period from 1976 to 1988 as that of formulation, and the period from 1988 to 2002 as that of application, while the present phase is that characterised by managing the results and setting up new challenges.

We shall go on now to analyse the strategies and the results hitherto achieved in regenerating the old city centre in general, and the Raval in particular, in the recent democratic period. However, we wish to note beforehand that most of the studies we know of in this field have focused on the policies for bringing about the urban transformation in these spaces while

Table 1 / **Stages in urban regeneration policy-making in Ciutat Vella (1976-2004)**

Source: Gomà and Rosetti (1988), with additions by the present authors

YEARS	PERIOD
1976-1979	Residents' initiative phase
1979-1983	Basic formulation phase
1984-1986	Advanced formulation phase
1987-1988	Reformulation phase
1988-1995	Application phase
1995-2002	Advanced application phase
2002-	Phase of managing results and new challenges

neglecting other aspects where significant public intervention has also been involved. We do not wish to deny the centrality of urban planning policies in the programme of the urban transformation of the old part of the city, but we do believe that these policies do not cover the entire range of interventions that have occurred in the territory. In particular, we believe that the strategy of transformation may be grouped into three main areas of intervention: first, indeed, are the policies that aim at the physical transformation of the territory (urban planning policies); second are those policies that aim at the symbolic transformation of the territory (cultural policies); and, finally, are those policies that aim at responding to the social needs of the residents (social policies).

Urban development and reforms

There was no need for large-scale studies for one to come to the conclusion that in the early 1980s the situation of the Raval in urban development terms was extremely serious. Some of the main problems of the neighbourhood were (and, in some cases, still are) a lack of public space (squares and green zones), insufficient neighbourhood and city facilities (social centres, civic centres, libraries, museums, etc.) and infrastructure; the neglect of the buildings and, most particularly, of the housing estates; housing of very small dimensions and very poorly equipped even in terms of the most basic facilities (light, water, sanitary conditions, showers); a very high population density and insalubrious streets.

The policies for the urban transformation of the neighbourhood were thus geared to overcome some of the basic structural deficits that the Raval had been accumulating throughout its history.

The plan for the reform. The Special Plan for Integral Reform (PERI) of the Raval – approved on the basis of an agreement reached between the Raval Neighbourhood Association and Barcelona City Council – left aside the urban planning criteria on the basis of which the PGM (General Metropolitan Plan) had envisaged intervening in the district. The Plan is essentially based on four main areas (Gomà and Rosetti, 1998):

- To readjust the distribution of land uses in 10% of the total surface of the neighbourhood. The provision of new public facilities and open spaces (squares and green zones) was envisaged, thus shelving the option of gutting the area by means of large thoroughfares. In contrast with the PGM, the Raval PERI envisaged a radical decrease in the ground surface, residential ceiling and commercial ceiling that would be affected by the urban planning work.

- To demolish part of the most run-down housing estate in the neighbourhood in order to free ground space for collective uses, and provide new public housing and new facilities in the neighbourhood.
- To rehabilitate the least degraded sectors of the urban fabric through direct public support for private initiative, the introduction of new cultural facilities and creating open spaces.
- Finally, from the standpoint of the strategy of action in the territory, to centre the first interventions in the northern sector and its boundary areas until converging in the centre where the plan was to carry out a large-scale and concentrated policy of land management in order to create a big central square.

To give an idea of the magnitude of the change, it should be noted that in Ciutat Vella between 1980 and 2002 approximately 500 buildings were acquired by compulsory purchase and demolished, representing 400,000 m² of built-up ground, 4,200 dwellings, 800 business premises and 100,000 m² of land thus freed.

During this period the Public Administration or related bodies constructed 1,246 homes in the Raval out of a total of 2,725. Information provided by the company promoting the project, Procivesa (2002), states that 2,470 families have been resettled throughout Ciutat Vella. However, calculating that the average number of people per home in the Raval is 2.3 (according to the 1996 District Register), we must suppose that today approximately 2,866 people live in the accommodation that is part of the rehabilitation project, which would mean 6.3% of the 45,581 who live in the neighbourhood (according to the 2003 District Register). Private investment destined for rehabilitation in real estate from 1988 to 2002 was 200 million euros.

With regard to the rehabilitation of buildings, there are noticeable differences within the neighbourhood. As can be seen in the table below, the numbers of buildings involved between the areas to the north and south of Carrer Hospital are similar. Nonetheless, the renovation work has been a little more intensive in the northern sector, where the figure represents 49.8% of the buildings (Table 2). According to these figures, 45.4% of the buildings of the Raval have been totally or partially rehabilitated.

Table 2 / **Distribution of rehabilitation of buildings in the north and south of the Raval**

Source: Procivesa, 2002

ZONE	REHABILITATED	TOTAL BUILDINGS	%
North	382	767	49.8
South	301	737	40.8
Total	683	1,504	45.4

In the process of reforming the neighbourhood, the two main projects have been the construction of the buildings of the Casa de Caritat and the demolition and construction work in what is now the Rambla del Raval.

- In the case of the Casa de Caritat complex, one only needs to remember that the CCCB was inaugurated in 1994, the MACBA (Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona) opened its doors in 1995, while FAD (Decorative Arts Association) moved into its new quarters in the Plaça dels Àngels in 1999. It is envisaged that in the academic year 2005 – 2006 some 6,000 students will be enrolled in the new Geography and History Faculty.
- The Rambla del Raval is an avenue that is 317 metres long and 58 wide, representing a total of 18,300 m² of public space in which there are 230 trees and 800 m² of lawn as

well as a bicycle lane. This space was previously occupied by 62 buildings that were demolished.

One of the features of the public-sector interventions in Ciutat Vella is the great diversity of administrative branches that are participating. Also noteworthy is the fact that none of them plays a clearly predominant role. However, the role of Promoció de Ciutat Vella SA (Procivesa)² occupies first place with regard to outlay in terms of direct investment. Also to be highlighted is the fact that the sum of the combined investment of Procivesa and Barcelona City Council represented almost half the available capital (Table 3).

Table 3 / **Direct investment by the Public Administration (1988-2001)**

Source: Procivesa, 2002

BRANCHES OF THE ADMINISTRATION	EUROS (MILLIONS)	%
Procivesa	455.35	37.46
Barcelona City Council and Municipal Companies	153.68*	12.64
Regional Government of Catalonia and entities	285.74	23.51
Central Government and entities	163.89	13.48
Other public entities	156.99	12.91
TOTAL	1,215.65	100.00

* The 1996-2001 period does not figure.

How was the money distributed in this set of interventions? Most of it went to the installation of facilities for the city. Public space and new housing accounted for a similar amount, while the allocation for infrastructure and facilities at the neighbourhood level was considerably less (Table 4).

Table 4 / **Use of Public Administration resources (1988-2001)**

Source: Procivesa, 2002

PUBLIC INVESTMENT	EUROS (MILLIONS)	%
Infrastructure	103.10	9.71
Public space	215.92	20.33
New housing	207.85	19.57
Neighbourhood facilities	104.32	9.82
City facilities	430.79	40.57
TOTAL	1,061.98	100.00

As the process of transformation goes ahead, several areas of conflict have emerged between the City Council and the residents:

2. Promoció de Ciutat Vella SA (Promotion of Ciutat Vella – Procivesa) is the public-private municipal company that managed the reform. Based on public capital (the combined input of Barcelona City Council and Barcelona Regional Council represented approximately 60% of the company's capital) and private capital (the remaining 40% was put up by promotion, finance and commercial entities), Procivesa was dissolved in 2002 to be replaced by Foment de Ciutat Vella SA (Focivesa).

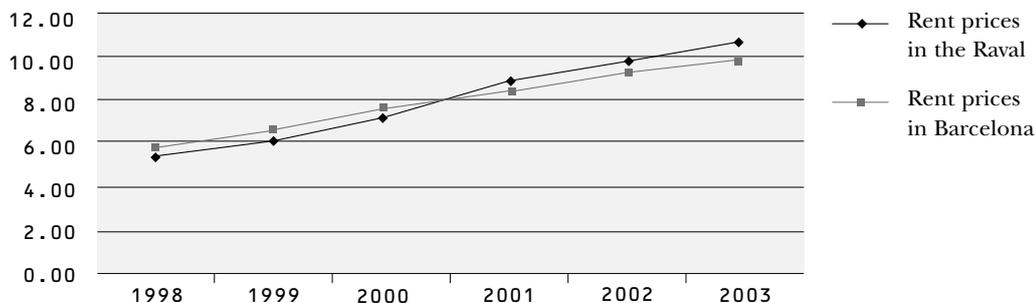
- Conflicts arising from urban planning affectations in the commercial and residential spheres of the neighbourhood. Decisions about which families are eligible for the right of rehousing or indemnification, the fixing of figures for indemnifications, decisions pertaining to the architectural quality of the new buildings in the public sphere, and prices that are to be paid for new housing have led to misunderstandings and tensions between the residents' movement and the institutions.
- Conflicts over the design and functions of the newly created public spaces and facilities.
- Conflicts linked with increased housing costs as a result of higher land prices in the neighbourhood as a whole.

It is precisely the real-estate market that has come to the forefront in the Raval neighbourhood. It should be borne in mind that this was virtually non-existent until the 1980s because the owners of the vast majority of the flats owned the whole house as well. This means that the movement in this market has been much more intense than in other zones. In fact, this type of property now only accounts for 30% of the flats.

The city's market dynamics – which have registered steady increases – mean that official figures on the evolution of prices are not reliable on the neighbourhood scale, and nor are they up-to-date in a lot of cases. This said, according to the statistical data since 1992, rents in the Raval have been only a little lower than elsewhere in Barcelona and have even gone higher in recent years (Graph 1). These figures, which went up to 10 euros per m² in 2003, demonstrate that although it may seem cheaper to rent in the Raval (since the flats are smaller, the total quantity paid is less), this is not the case in relative terms.

Graph 1 / **Evolution of second-hand rent prices in Barcelona and the Raval (1998-2003)**

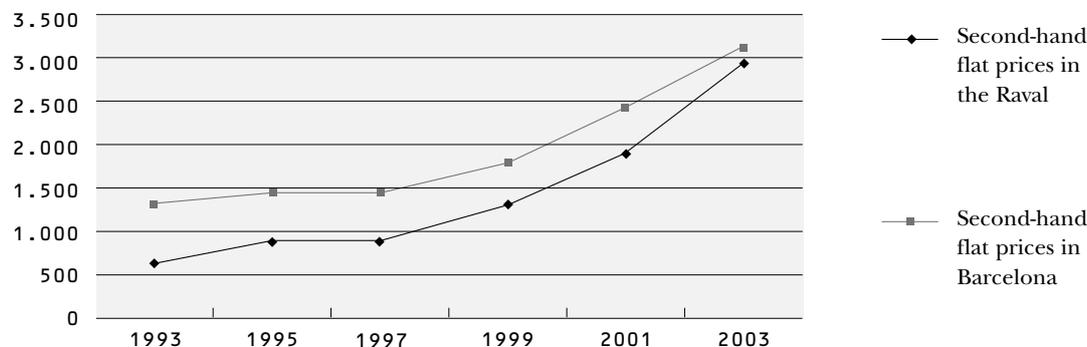
Source: Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council. Preus d'oferta dels habitatges de segona mà (Rent Prices) www.bcn.es/estadistica/catala/dades/timm/ipreus/h2mollo/merco242.htm [Accessed November 2004]



This negative differential in the case of renting a flat in the Raval does not apply in the case of homes for sale. In the market of flats for sale, there has been a significant increase in home prices and yet, according to the data available to us, the prices per m² are cheaper in the Raval than in the city as a whole. If a Raval resident wishes to sell a second-hand flat, he or she might expect to receive more than three times as much now than eleven years ago (792 € / m² in 1992 compared with 2,959 € / m² in 2003). In the city as a whole the prices of second-hand flats continue to be higher than those in the Raval, but the difference between them has been greatly reduced and the Barcelona prices did not undergo such a considerable relative increase (the prices in Barcelona have gone up by about 25%, while in the Raval the increase is around 37%), as Graph 2 shows.

Graph 2 / Evolution of prices of second-hand homes in Barcelona and the Raval (1993-2003)

Source: Department of Statistics of the Barcelona City Council. Preus d'oferta dels habitatges de segona mà (Prices of second-hand homes) www.bcn.es/estadistica/catala/dades/timm/ipreus/h2mave/merco222.htm (Accessed November 2004)



In the case of the market for newly constructed housing we only have figures from 1996 onwards and, as may be seen, here too there has been an increase in prices, but not to the same extent as with second-hand flats. If we focus on the changes in the Raval we can see that despite some fluctuation the general tendency of prices is upwards, but not as much as the Barcelona figures (although according to these figures the Raval prices exceeded the city prices in 1996 and 1997). The Raval is hence caught up in a consolidated tendency of price increases which, it is envisaged, will continue. This is a process that has not only affected this part of the city but has become general throughout Barcelona.

Shopping around. Given the scant reliability of data on changing prices, we undertook a small study in direct observation with five of the neighbourhood's real-estate agents, which were mainly newly opened. From this sample of forty prices and surface areas of housing in different parts of the Raval, several significant points emerged (see table 5).

Table 5 / Prices of second-hand housing in the Raval (October 2004)

Source: compiled by the authors

Average price	201,889
Average surface area	56,375
Average price m ²	3,853
Highest price m ²	5,424
Lowest price m ²	2,236

The average price is 201,889 euros. The average surface area of the homes in the survey is 56.4 m², which confirms that Raval flats are generally small. The average price per m² is 3,853 euros, while the highest is 5,424 euros for a flat on Paral·lel. The lowest price of 2,236 is in Carrer Roig, followed by a flat in Robadors at 2,287 per m². As we can see, the prices per m² vary considerably within the Raval. The more expensive flats are to be found at the edge of the Raval or close to the main roads, while the cheaper flats are in the narrow streets, the so-called bad areas that are still to be rehabilitated.

Social changes

The policies of urban and cultural transformation have evolved in parallel with a sweeping programme of public-sector initiatives to attend to the social needs of the residents in the neighbourhood. The social policies for the Raval have been organised around three main areas of substantive action: socio-cultural programmes, socio-health-care programmes and programmes aimed at specific groups within the population (Table 6).

Table 6 / **Social policy in the Raval (1980-2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

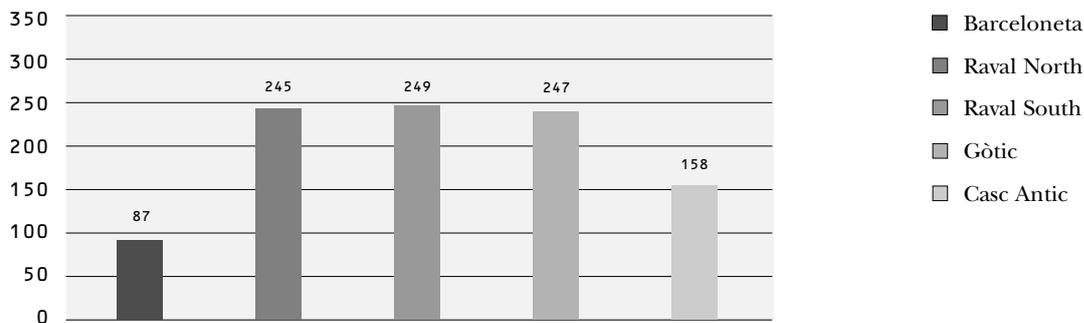
TYPE OF PROGRAMME	AREA OF INTERVENTION	ACTIVITIES
Socio-cultural	Education	Provision of educational facilities: nursery schools (Canigó, Mont Tàber and Cadí); public primary schools (Cervantes, Milà i Fontanals, Collaso i Gil, Rubén Dario and Drassanes); secondary schools (Milà i Fontanals and Miquel Taradell), along with other university and non-regulated educational facilities. Promotional programmes in education: school meals and book grants, social committees in the schools. Programmes encouraging relations between the schools and their surroundings: educational kit "A peu pel Raval" (On Foot Around the Raval), support for the linguistic integration of immigrants. Promotion of participation in schools: school counselling at school and district level, support for educational group initiatives.
	Culture and sports	Provision of new civic facilities (Drassanes), district libraries (Sant Pau and Santa Creu) and the creation of, and incentives for, many other libraries and cultural centres focused on the city. Organisation and support for traditional festivities and activities of popularising culture.
Socio-health-care	Health	School health programmes: vaccinations in the schools, health checks, fluorination, AIDS and drug-awareness programmes, sex education. Mothers and babies programme. Service for women. Service for the elderly.
	Social Services	Provision of two primary-attention social services (Erasmus Janer and Drassanes). Primary attention social services, children's service, social service in schools, social intervention with groups, social emergencies services and home buyers' assistance, dining-room services for the elderly.
For groups in the population	Children and adolescents	Children's centres (5 in the Raval), services for the age range 12-16, summer holidays, support for entities.
	Young people	Support for specific programmes in civic centres, fostering participation.
	Women	Programmes of prevention and attention, fostering and providing inputs for group activities.
	The elderly	Provision of two centres for the elderly, attention and prevention, fostering participation.
	Immigrants	Programmes of socio-cultural adaptation, intercultural mediation, fostering participation and support for entities.

As we have mentioned above, the Raval is a neighbourhood with serious social deficits and one that is also undergoing a process of constant transformations, some desired and others not. This is a key factor for understanding the public-sector response (and its limitations) through social policies.

The synthetic indicator of social inequalities (ISDS) and the index of family economic capacity (ICEF) show that the Raval continues to be among the neighbourhoods with the worst conditions in all the city. Again, the ICEF shows that the differences in economic capacity between the different sectors of the Raval (where the north is better off and the south has more difficulties) still pertain and are even increasing. If to this situation we incorporate data of economic assistance offered by the Ciutat Vella social services (through the Inter-Departmental Programme of the Minimal Integration Income – PIRMI – and other economic assistance), we find that the Raval is the neighbourhood in the Ciutat Vella district that receives the most assistance (Graph 3). This is determined both by the greater number of residents in the Raval and by the sub-standard economic circumstances of some of the residents.

Graph 3 / **PIRMI distribution in Ciutat Vella (2000)**

Source : *Serveis Personals (Personal Services), Barcelona City Council*



While only representing 7% of the city’s population, Ciutat Vella receives almost a third of all PIRMI assistance for Barcelona. Of this, the proportion going to Raval residents has been between 40% and 60%. If in the early 1990s the south Raval area received more than the north, the trend since the mid-1990s has levelled out. For example, in 2000 49.6% of PIRMI assistance went to the north and 50.4% to the south. However, it should be recalled that the population of the northern sector is greater than in the south (Graph 3).

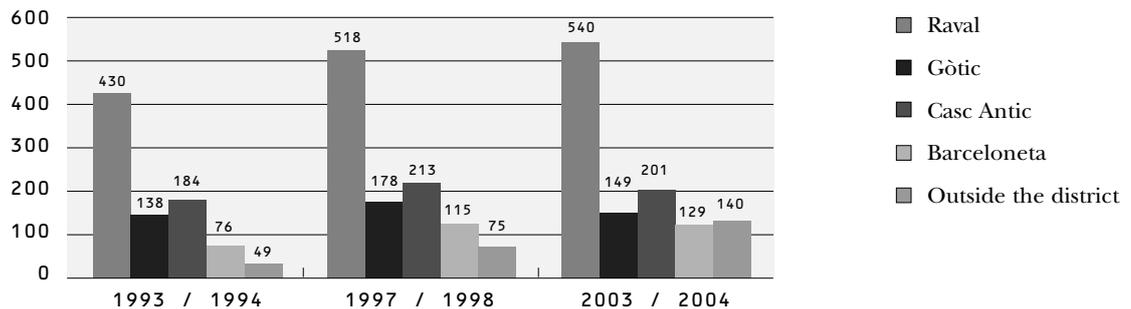
Again, the other types of economic assistance offered by the Ciutat Vella social services mainly go to the Raval. This assistance is distributed among five territorial units, Barceloneta, Casc Antic, Gòtic, Raval North and Raval South (because of the high levels of demand the social services have divided the Raval into two administrative units), and a sixth non-territorial category under the heading of Emergencies. In 2000 the combined north and the south Raval zones received almost 40% of the total assistance, which would rise to 85% if we discounted the category of Emergencies.

In the cases of both Ciutat Vella as a whole and the two Raval zones, the main focus of this assistance is housing (once again taking the data of 2000 as our basis). However, for Ciutat Vella in general, food costs were the second priority of this assistance, while in the north and south Raval zones the second position was occupied by *health care*. Dining-room and book

grants are other benefits offered by the social services and are greatly in demand throughout Ciutat Vella. Different branches of the Administration work together in supplying these grants because a little over half of all the resources that go to cover this part of school expenses comes from the Department of Education, while the remaining costs are covered and managed by the Ciutat Vella District Administration. Almost half of the grants always go to the Raval, which is partly explained by the fact that it has the highest figures of registered population in all the Ciutat Vella zone (Graph 4).

Graph 4 / **Changes in the distribution of dining-room grants in Ciutat Vella (1993-2004)**

Source: “Acció educativa a Ciutat Vella” (Educational Action in Ciutat Vella), in *Barcelona societat*, no. 9, Departament d’Educació i Districte de Ciutat Vella.



Again, if we focus on the changes in the distribution of this benefit over the last ten school years, we can see that the number of grants to be distributed has risen, even though it is known that once the benefit is fully allocated there are still applicants who would be eligible but who do not receive it.

An Account of the tensions arisings over the distribution of resources. “The problem arises from the fact that demand has risen but the resources remain the same. On top of this, they say, ‘And you give it all to the Arabs’. Well yes, I say, because their situation is worse than yours so I make a list of the grants. For example, Ciutat Vella is the only place where they offer dining-room and book grants. There’s a lot of red tape with all the papers and documents they have to bring and then, of course, you have the list of who’s received the grant, and most of them ... well, of course, you’ve displaced the ones who were poor before but they haven’t stopped being poor. In other words, they’re telling us, ‘You’ve left us aside, and we’re from here,’ and this has a double sense. On the one hand, they are absolutely right but when you tell them why, you’re telling the truth, totally. ‘No, no, we’re giving it to them because they have even less than you,’ but it’s also true that people from here who had dining room and book grants before got them because they were on the list and they’d still be there except now they’re at the bottom of the receiving list. So, when you close the allocations, that’s where you’re left or, in other words, you’re reaching much less of the poor population.”

Interview with Irene Martínez, former head of Serveis Personals de Ciutat Vella (Ciutat Vella Personal Services), 4 March 2004.

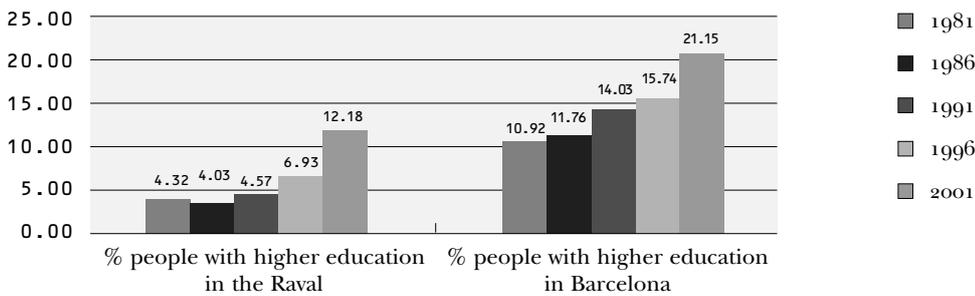
Despite the coming of a middle-class population (as we shall see below), the starting point for the Raval with the arrival of an immigrant population in very difficult economic circumstances has meant that the problems of social exclusion and poverty not only contin-

ue, but are also aggravated, especially in certain zones. Yet other indicators such as higher education, unemployment and socio-professional ranking tend to present a brighter picture.

For example, in the case of educational statistics for the residents, even though the Raval figures remain below those given for the city as a whole at all educational levels, the proportion of members of the population who have received some education has been rising continuously. The figures for people with secondary education, diplomas, university degrees and doctorates have risen. The population that has completed studies in this range of education has notably increased in the Raval, going from 4.32% in 1981 to 12.18% in 2001. However, the fact is that today, like twenty years ago, most of these people live in the area delimited by Tallers-Pelai, Acadèmia Ciències and Casa de Caritat, or the north-east sector of the Raval, but it is also true that the number of inhabitants with a university degree has risen in each and every zone of the Raval covered in our research (Graph 5).

Graph 5 / Evolution of the population with higher education in the Raval and Barcelona (1981-2001)

Source: doctoral thesis by Sergi Martínez, “El retorn al centre de la ciutat” (The Return to the City Centre, 2000), Register of inhabitants 1981, 1986-1991-1996 and the 2001 Census



With regard to unemployment, even though between 1986 and 2001 the figures were always higher for the Raval than for Barcelona in general, they were also reduced by over half (from 37.58% in 1986 to 15.88% in 2001). Between 1986 and 1996 the proportion of working-age population was less in the Raval than in the city, so the high rate of unemployed people in a smaller working-age population is conspicuous. However, in 2001, with the coming of a younger population to the Raval, the proportions evened out and the drop in unemployment, together with an increase in the employed population, is still more positive. All the zones have benefited with this drop in unemployment but, once again, the zones of the north-eastern sector of the Raval (Tallers-Pelai, Acadèmia Ciències and Casa de Caritat) were the most favoured with the lowest unemployment figures in 2001.

This period also presents significant changes in the socio-professional status of the Raval residents (Table 7). While it is true that the category of low-level socio-professional status is still clearly the majority group, the reduction in its numbers at the end of the 1980s is quite clear, and this drop is enhanced by the considerable growth of the category of high-level socio-economic status (directors, technical experts, educators, scientists and intellectuals), this being just one more indicator of the growing diversity of the neighbourhood, which is now coming a little closer to the mean socio-professional composition of the city (Table 8).

Table 7 / **Socio-professional categories in the Raval according to census data**

Source: doctoral thesis by Sergi Martínez, “El retorn al centre de la ciutat” (*The Return to the City Centre, 2000*) and the 2001 Census.

SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY	1978	1986	2001
High-level category	1,221	678	2,402
% high-level category	3.79%	4.19%	16.16%
Medium-level category	6,985	1,027	2,827
% medium-level category	21.70%	6.35%	19.02%
Low-level category	23,069	14,178	9,612
% low-level category	71.68%	87.69%	64.86%
Artists and Armed Forces*	907	286	20
% artists and Armed Forces	2.82%	1.77%	0.13%
Total	32,182	16,169	14,861
% total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

* Until 1996 there was a category that grouped Armed Forces and artists (sic) under a single heading, but the 2001 data only take into account Armed Forces professionals

Table 8 / **Comparison of socio-professional categories between the Raval and Barcelona (2001)**

Source: 2001 Census

	RAVAL	BARCELONA
High-level Category	16.16%	29.06%
Medium-level Category	19.02%	29.85%
Low-level Category	64.86%	41.09%

Cultural intervention

The data for investment in urban planning policies make it possible to note the importance that the installation of new cultural facilities has had in the process of change and, indeed, many of them have had a considerable impact on the city as a whole. The urban transformation that has occurred in the northern sector of the Raval, in particular, and above all in the Plaça dels Àngels, is the most outstanding operation in this regard. At the end of the 1980s new cultural facilities were installed in a phased process, not only attracting new users from the city as a whole but also, in the case of some, achieving a considerable international profile, thereby becoming a new focus of tourist interest in the city, along with bringing in agents and collectives concerned with the production and consumption of cultural products.

In the early 1980s Barcelona City Council commissioned a study³ on the possibility of installing a new modern art museum in the area of the Convent dels Àngels, the former Casa de Caritat and the Casa de Misericòrdia. The approval in 1995 of the new Barcelona Museums

3. The study was carried out by the architects Lluís Clotet, Òscar Tusquets and Francesc Bassó. The resulting plan came to be known as the “Del Liceu al Seminari” (From the Liceu to the Seminary) project. The aim of the study was to “evaluate the possibilities of creating a series of links, an itinerary with the historic legacy of the Raval while also assessing the architectural possibilities of a cultural reutilisation of spaces that, as former Church property, had been used for hospitals or hospices and that were now in semi-disuse.”

Plan gave new impetus to the project of the symbolic transformation of the Raval, which was already envisaged in the study, entitled “Del Liceu al Seminary” (From the Liceu to the Seminary). The Raval, along with the Montjuïc, Gòtic, Ribera and Ciutadella neighbourhoods, was then seen as one of the areas in which it was planned to reinforce cultural and museum infrastructure. In July 1987, confirming these plans, Barcelona City Council decided to construct a new building alongside the old Casa de Caritat to house the Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona (Contemporary Art Museum of Barcelona – MACBA).⁴ In the space occupied by the Casa de Caritat, another new key facility for the city was created in 1994: the Centre of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona. Next-door to that came the Centre d’Estudis i Recursos Culturals (Centre of Cultural Studies and Resources – CERC), the same year. Moreover, as we have noted above, the new Geography and History Faculty of the University of Barcelona is almost completed now, to which can be added the Journalism Faculty of the Ramon Llull University. Around the Plaça dels Àngels other facilities of similar characteristics have also been installed, notably the Centre d’Informació i Documentació Internacional a Barcelona (Barcelona Centre for International Information and Documentation – CIDOB) and the premises of the Foment de les Arts Decoratives (Decorative Arts Association – FAD).

Barcelona City Council thus decided to create on a large scale a number of cultural facilities that were to fulfil two functions: first, they were to provide new cultural services to the city as a whole and, second, they were to boost the strategy for regenerating the Raval neighbourhood. With the second aim, the policies for remodelling the neighbourhood were not unlike those adopted in other neighbourhoods that were considered as problem areas in other parts of Europe and the United States, where culture and art have modified the dynamics and processes of urban degradation.

Nonetheless, the installation of large-scale cultural facilities in the neighbourhood has given rise to significant disagreement between part of the residents’ movement and the institutions concerned. Some critics have complained that installing these kinds of cultural facilities has a high opportunity cost because the authorities have opted for a type of infrastructure that is not directly beneficial for the local residents. It is also thought that these kinds of facilities have contributed in part to the rise in housing prices in the neighbourhood and hence may have contributed towards an indirect expulsion effect with some sectors of the population that were paying lower rent (gentrification). Again, it is also argued that their location, more or less at the periphery of the neighbourhood, has meant that the attraction effect of bringing in new users has not come about in the neighbourhood as a whole, as many people expected. Those in favour of the new facilities argue, in contrast, that these kinds of facilities have contributed towards the symbolic transformation of the neighbourhood. Thanks to them, they contend, the Raval neighbourhood has ceased to be seen as a decrepit and poverty-stricken place to become what is regarded as one of the most culturally dynamic spaces of the city. As a result the Raval has attracted new commercial activities like those mentioned above, which have turned the neighbourhood into one of the most attractive zones of the city for young and go-ahead segments of the population. These facilities have also helped to regenerate the economic fabric of the area, in particular with the installation of new art workshops and galleries. Finally, the neighbourhood has an enhanced appeal as a place of residence for new social groups, especially young people in the medium- and high-level income groups.

4. The well-known American architect, Richard Meier, was commissioned to design the museum.

Whatever the case, what is not in doubt is the transformation effect wrought in the Raval by these new cultural facilities and the activities they generate (see below for the section in which we enlarge on this). The cultural policies in the neighbourhood have been acquiring their own significance beyond the general urban planning policies to the extent that they have been able to give content to the new facilities and to define their basic kinds of activity. However, whether these activities are the most appropriate in strictly neighbourhood terms is open to debate, but that is another matter.

From bottom to top, or the unforeseen changes: immigration

At the edges of this project, global dynamics and the great migratory movements of the end of the last century have meant that the Raval would go back to its traditional and recidivist condition as a neighbourhood of refuge for people with very few resources who come to the city seeking work and a future. This is a bottom-to-top process, which in practice has been much more far-reaching in its effects than the last time it occurred, but this time nobody imagined it would happen as it did.

The data on the Raval show that, traditionally, the numbers of people who leave the neighbourhood are higher than those for other parts of the city. Indeed, in recent years this tendency has been reinforced with a rise in the numbers of residents who have left – a trend shared with other zones appearing in the Ciutat Vella statistics, like the Gòtic (Gothic Quarter). They are even higher than the figures registered in the middle of the process of renovation, in the early- and mid-1990s.

What was not so usual in recent years was the great growth in population, which was registered in the Raval not long ago, both if we look at the Municipal Register or if we take into account the numbers by default.⁵ Hence, while in 1991 the figure for newcomers to the Raval population was around 14.9 people for every thousand residents, in 2002 it went up to 202.8. The number of newcomers to Barcelona as a result of immigration has risen considerably too, but not to the same degree (Table 9).

Table 9 / **Evolution of emigration and immigration figures in Barcelona and the Raval (1991-2002)**

Source: Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council

	1991		1996		2002	
	Emigr.	Immigr.	Emigr.	Immigr.	Emigr.	Immigr.
Raval	13.2 %	14.9 %	25.0 %	55.2 %	53.0 %	202.8 %
Barcelona	12.7 %	9.4 %	21.4 %	25.2 %	34.3 %	64.2 %

In 2002, 2,172 residents registered in the Raval – most of them in the northern sector – left the neighbourhood. A little over half (51.15%) of those who left are Spanish citizens. The other half consists of residents of other nationalities (Pakistanis, Ecuadorians and Moroccans). These figures are in line with the composition by nationality of the Raval residents, among whom the majority is Spanish. In 2004 the most represented foreign nationalities in the neighbourhood were Pakistani, Filipino, Moroccan and Ecuadorian, precisely those who also account-

5. The figure for registrations by default takes in the new Municipal Registers, which are produced according to two different criteria: either people have not registered even though they might have been living in the city for some time, or they have not renewed their registration; or they are foreigners who have registered in the city for the first time without coming from any other part of Spain.

ed for the highest figures among people leaving the Raval. The group that we shall call “resident *guiris*”,⁶ which by 2004 represented a proportion among the residents that was even higher than for other groups, has greater numbers moving into the Raval than leaving it.

With regard to the figures for immigrants in the Raval, the numbers of people coming in are much higher than those for people leaving. Again, the majority of people moving in come to the northern sector. In this case it is noteworthy that the most well-represented immigrant nationality in the Raval in 2002 was Pakistani (28.41%), after which came Spanish (12.28%) and Ecuadorian (11.22%). The Raval, then, continued to be the area that took in most of the immigrant population coming to Barcelona. While years ago the immigrant population came from elsewhere in Spain, there has been an extraordinary increase in recent decades in the figures for new residents from outside Spain (Table 10).

Table 10 / Nationalities of immigrants to the north and south sectors of the Raval (2002)

Source: the authors, on the basis of data from the Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council (2002)

	RAVAL SOUTH	RAVAL NORTH	RAVAL	PROPORTION OF IMMIGRANTS BY NATIONALITY
Spain	407	613	1,020	12.28%
Resident <i>guiris</i>	290	546	836	10.06%
Rest of Europe	68	158	226	2.72%
Pakistan	989	1,371	2,360	28.41%
Philippines	113	619	732	8.81%
Rest of Asia	242	304	546	6.57%
Morocco	209	386	595	7.15%
Rest of Africa	73	106	179	2.15%
Ecuador	237	695	932	11.22%
Rest of America	337	543	880	10.59%
Stateless / not stated	1	1	2	0.02%
Total immigrants	2,966	5,342	8,308	100.00%
% south/north in Raval as a whole	37.85%	64.30%	100.00%	

If it was not until the beginning of the twenty-first century that the number of foreign residents came to represent a significant part of the citizens of Barcelona as a whole, this fact was noticeable in the Raval well beforehand. Since the 1990s the Raval and Ciutat Vella have concentrated a higher proportion of residents of foreign origin than the rest of the city, so that they represented 48.8% of the Raval residents in 2004. It is in this sense that we might say (and we shall return to this below) that the neighbourhood can be understood both as a problem or as something to watch, and as a precedent or mirror in which the rest of the city should see itself.

6. We have constructed the category of “resident *guiris*” [*guiri* being a colloquial word for foreigner] more on the basis of income than geographical factors. However, it also groups people from western or westernised countries. It represents the European Union countries (15), other European countries like Andorra, Norway and Switzerland and, outside Europe, Israel, the United States, Canada, Argentina, Uruguay, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, so that the latter group of countries are taken separately from their respective continents

The increase in the numbers of foreign residents has been spectacular, and the Raval today is inseparable from an image of ethnic diversity. People of more than seventy nationalities live there. The most numerous are Pakistanis (10.34%), Filipinos (8.08%), Moroccans (5.40%) and Ecuadorians (5.40%).

With the newcomers the Raval has recovered many living spaces that had been left aside in previous years, and situations that appeared to have been definitively left behind after the years of high-density population in the neighbourhood in the 1950s and 1960s have now arisen again. Hence, previously abandoned or rejected sub-standard housing has reappeared on the market with people being packed into these dwellings so that former population densities have returned with the recent big waves of immigration. This time the immigrants come from all kinds of origins, and are of all colours, languages and religions. The new residents fill up the spaces that have not been transformed and stop or slow the incorporation of private capital into the dynamics of change because of the questions raised by this sudden and unanticipated change. Some observers suggest that there is a danger that the Raval will close in on itself and that it will generate borders between the neighbourhood and its surroundings, becoming a ghetto and reinforcing its status of exclusion and stigmatisation (an example would be the French HLM, or social housing districts).

The other newcomers

Along with the process of renovation and the phenomenon of immigration, there is another factor, which although it may be less visible, is equally significant. We refer to other new inhabitants in the neighbourhood who, because of their characteristics, we might classify in a number of ways according to specific features, but the point is that they are clearly different from original inhabitants and immigrants alike. Hence, we speak of modern people, artists, professionals, Erasmus scholarship students and alternative people.

These people come from different origins (many are foreign), occupy very different spaces, generate different dynamics from those of the traditional residents and contribute ways of doing things, use references, have discourses and even cognitive frameworks that situate them in their own particular position with regard to the issues at stake in the aforementioned processes of change in the Raval. Frequently their opinions and their actions prompt, or help to legitimise or illegitimise, the changes and alternatives that are appearing in the neighbourhood. We might say that if we look back we could regard their presence as positive in that it has avoided a strict bipolarity between the economic and cultural transformation and the immigration-related transformation that could have appeared and become aggravated in recent years. It is also true that if their presence had been greater, they might have brought about the theme-park style of scenario that is well-known in other places (the SoHo district of New York, and the Barcelona Ribera neighbourhood, for example).

Hence the changes in some of the socio-economic data for the Raval, such as the socio-professional standing of the residents or their educational level, indicate that most of the new residents who have registered (we estimate some 80% of the newcomers) are of Spanish citizenship and middle-class. As for the people leaving the neighbourhood, it seems that they can be evenly divided between the traditional Raval residents and middle-class residents.

Not all the new middle-class residents in the Raval have Spanish citizenship, however. Neither do they all come there to live. Some years ago migrant contingents moved into the Raval because they could only afford to live there thanks to the low price of housing. Nowadays, with

the reforms well advanced and after a rise in housing costs thanks to that (and also a change in the Raval's image outside the neighbourhood), this is no longer the only explanation for the arrival of a certain type of foreigner who comes to live there. Some, we would include among the resident *guiris*. Even though these residents are legally foreigners, in the eyes of the collective imaginary they do not coincide with the characteristics of the usual kind of immigrant.

This conglomerate of residents from the richer countries is one of the fastest-growing in the Raval. Hence, if in 2001 they represented about 2.70% of the Raval residents, the figure has doubled in three years and they are now ahead of other collectives (Table 11).

Table 11 / **Social composition of the Raval (2001 and 2004)**

Source: the authors, on the basis of data from the Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council, 2004

	POP. RAVAL 2001	% OF TOTAL POP	POP. RAVAL 2004	% OF TOTAL POP
Spain	26,956	74.47 %	20,978	51.19 %
Resident <i>guiris</i>	980	2.71 %	2,295	5.60 %
Pakistan*	1,998	5.52 %	4,237	10.34 %
Philippines	1,916	5.29 %	3,309	8.08 %
Morocco	1,234	3.41 %	2,211	5.40 %
Ecuador	929	2.57 %	2,211	5.40 %
Dominican Rep.	389	1.07 %	708	1.73 %
Other countries	1,794	4.95 %	5,024	12.26 %
TOTAL	36,196	100.00 %	40,973	100.00 %

* In the 2001 Census, there was no category for Pakistani citizenship, but other Asian countries with considerable numbers of fellow-citizens residing in the Raval did figure, for example the Philippines and India. Hence, given the existence of these other categories and aware of the social diversity of the Raval, we supposed that the heading "Rest of Asia and Oceania" included mainly Pakistani citizens along with some from Bangladesh.

Cool people, trendies, trendy lefties, modish people, the smart set, gentrifiers ... The fact that there are several different labels for pigeonholing these people shows that no one is very clear about what kind of group this is or if one can really talk of a group rather than individuals who differ considerably from each other. One of the main principles of the transformation in the neighbourhood was to facilitate the coming of middle-class people into the area. But what is appealing about the Raval for these sectors? Some factors are more evident than others and each one clearly has advantages and disadvantages (see the summary of this in Table 12).

How should we characterise these newcomers? If we had to produce a sociological portrait we could say that they tend to have completed higher education (more in the field of the Arts than Sciences), that they tend not to occupy dominant or privileged positions within the intellectual professions, that they are not businesspeople and nor do they occupy significant decision-making positions. They are therefore people who are a little on the fringes of the usual economic activities. They may be divided into those with stable jobs (working in the Administration or for some institution) and those without stable work (in situations of waiting for opportunities), while others somehow prolong their student existence by taking on small jobs or leading a double life (some practical job linked with a specific ability) that enables them to go ahead with their artistic or intellectual trajectory.

Table 12 / **Advantages and disadvantages of living in the Raval for middle-class residents***Source: compiled by the authors*

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
1. Rental market	Cheaper and more abundant flats	considerable renovation
2. Buying price	Lower prices and smaller flats	Repairs needed in flats and buildings
3. Types of flats	Old flats with decorative elements of “recoverable value”	Need for work and regulation of major work
4. Neighbours	Socially and ethnically diverse atmosphere	Possible conflicts over uses and coexistence
5. Situation	Historically central	At some distance from the economic and commercial centre
6. Connections	Well-connected by metro and train, appropriate for bicycle and walking	Vehicular transport is not easy: bus or car
7. Facilities	Good cultural offer, public facilities and markets	Public services are saturated and there are few large open spaces
8. Social composition	Multicultural coexistence, otherness	Saturation of public spaces, perception of insecurity
9. Social image	Lively, cool, creative neighbourhood	Stigma of deviation from the norm and social exclusion

This situation means that income in this social stratum tends to be discontinuous and uneven. They are not characterised, therefore, either by a particular social origin or by common elements in their social and biographical trajectories. Hence we cannot overlook the fact that even though they belong to a certain kind of middle class, there are significant differences among them in terms of their access to property, family stability, age and their main reasons for coming to live in the Raval.

Beyond the differences we can identify within this new middle class in the Raval, there is a certain community of concerns. Going to live in the Raval is, to some extent, seeking a lifestyle that differs from that in other areas of middle-class residence. Living in the Raval, and to some extent anywhere in Ciutat Vella, usually means distancing oneself from the family (which tends to live outside the former walled city or in the peripheral zones) and also distancing oneself socially from both the upper classes (who reside in the north of the city) and from the working-class districts of the periphery. In any case, remaining in the neighbourhood is another question. One quite widespread view is that “you can’t have children in the Raval.”

One of the problems I can see in this neighbourhood is that somebody like me (I don’t have a maternal instinct) wouldn’t have children here and I think that they are very important for the sustainability of the neighbourhood. I think that I wouldn’t have children but if I did, they couldn’t go down to the street to buy bread because it’s very unsafe. Maybe it’s not for me, but for someone who can’t look after himself or a child of ten years... and I think that you can’t let a child walk around the area alone and this seems to be the unsustainability of the neighbourhood. This can’t go on because

when we come in at a certain age we end up leaving and this appears to be a serious problem for all the Raval, even though as far as schooling is concerned it is very good, they tell me, but the question is how to get to the school and what the kids do after school.

New residents' discussion group, 20 October 2004.

Another reason for living in the Raval is the contradictory perception of being somewhere between the anonymity offered by a big city and, simultaneously, its feeling as a neighbourhood, a closed space where unlike other more impersonal zones of the city, the Eixample for example, a resident can identify with the area and feel at home.

And when I came here I took a room in Escudellers while I looked for a flat and what I liked, if not in the Raval, in Ciutat Vella, was something I didn't have in Mataró, which is anonymity. But this is an anonymity that is different from what you have in the United States, which is one where you feel that you don't matter to anybody. Here I found a kind of anonymity in which you feel welcome. You don't have this sense of everyone just doing his or her own thing. Or at least in Nou de la Rambla my opinion has been reinforced: in the Raval you can be anonymous but without being totally alone in the world.

New residents' discussion group, 20 October 2004.

The choice of the Raval is often attributed to a question of chance or the fortuitous find of an appropriate and accessible place to live. But neither of these two factors is sufficient to explain the concentration of lifestyles and ways of being that we noted above. What is true is that choosing a low-rent and central zone has the twofold advantage for intellectuals of uncertain income or for artists, which is that they can continue as they are or keep studying while they work, something that high rents and mortgages would not permit.

Finally, it should be remarked that these new residents generally support the desire to bring about reforms to improve the neighbourhood as long as it keeps its character. They are gifted in cultural capital and hence with intellectual tools and abilities for working with symbolic questions. Neither should we overlook the fact that many of them are engaged in professions that are related with the image or communication. They therefore have the ability to reverse the stigma and turn the neighbourhood into a place that is different, diverting, chic, cool, and so on. The work of evaluating the neighbourhood would thus be a collective symbolic task for this segment of the population, as can be seen in the numerous cultural productions about the zone.

The gay community. Among the collectives or communities attracted by this type of neighbourhood are gays and lesbians. One need not think of the Marais, which is known all over the world as a destination of pink tourism. The case of the Raval, however, is not as clear as that of its Parisian counterpart. In the south of the neighbourhood, in the Xino, was one of the well-known homosexual meeting places of the city, which Jean Genet starkly describes in *The Thief's Journal*. Despite the repression of the Franco dictatorship and the degradation of the area today, some of these bars and clubs still endure, for example La Concha and the Cangrejo en Carrer de Guàrdia. Moreover, if in the 1970s it seemed (although the area was the centre of the libertarian-underground scene led by Nazario and Ocaña) that the whole phenomenon was going to disappear, it has embarked on a new phase of glory today. La Concha, now refurbished by new Maghrebi owners, and the Cangrejo, with its transvestite shows, fea-

ture in the pages of *Lonely Planet* and *Time Out* and are full of tourists. Again, the underground bar La bata de boatiné, which is in the now-mythical street of Robadors, has been recommended by a magazine such as *Cosmopolitan* (October 2004). However, gay and lesbian businesses are more or less concentrated in the blocks known as the “Gayxample” (in the Eixample neighbourhood). The Raval continues to be the neighbourhood of the poorer homosexuals and, since the 1970s, those who are most politically engaged. In fact, La bata de boatiné is run by the radical sector of the gay movement, the Front d’Alliberament Gay de Catalunya (Gay Liberation Front of Catalonia – FAGC). In interviews and discussion groups we have seen that there are a significant number of gays and lesbians who have been attracted by the bohemian and socially mixed milieus of the old quarters. The Raval has not become an explicitly gay zone and nor are there any signs of community affirmation (rainbow flags) as in some districts of other European capitals. In any case, however, they do form one of the constituent elements of the new middle-class strata who have been attracted by the Raval and who have altered its social physiognomy and symbolic content.

MANY RAVALS

The fact is that now (2005) we have many Ravals taking shape and overlapping. It is not possible to say with any precision that it might be leaning to any one of the hypotheses we have discussed or any other that we might add. If we look at what happens in certain streets, squares and neighbourhood axes, or at what goes on in other parts of the area, we will end up with different signs and signals. The picture is complex because the reality of the Raval is complex. There are market dynamics (trends of buying and selling of business premises and housing, which are not yet clear) of marked ethnic and social homogeneity in some enclaves, along with very intense and tense mixtures, with potent manifestations of high culture in certain zones, night-time leisure zones and a notable presence of restaurants and bars, emerging cultural experiences without, however, a very significant presence of tourists (which is much more evident in other parts of the city). The Raval now has a present that is obviously better than it had in the 1970s, but it is also accumulating a lot of uncertainties that it did not have then.

The socially mixed Raval

Its complexity in Figures

In order to discover how many Ravals there are in the Raval one would need to do a breakdown of the data that cover the neighbourhood as a whole. We can do this on the basis of the thirteen zones of small-scale research that are used by the municipal administration for statistical highlighting.

The picture that has been taking shape in the northern part of the Raval, the part with the most positive indicators or that is closest to a more well-to-do situation, corresponds to the north-eastern sector of the Raval (Casa Caritat, Acadèmia Ciències and Tallers-Pelai). A quick glance at the social indicators shows that this part of the Raval has the highest levels of income. Furthermore, it is in this zone that one of the central projects of PERI was carried out, a complex that includes the MACBA, the CCCB and the future Geography and History Faculty of the University of Barcelona, which means that more members of the public now frequent this zone. As we have noted in the section on economic changes and new uses, a good part of the new businesses (restaurants, fashion shops, art galleries) have concentrated in this part of the Raval and are geared to a type of consumer with high acquisitive power.

The north-western sector of the Raval (Riera Alta, la Cera and Riera Baixa) is one of its most populated areas and it has one of the highest proportions of foreigners among its residents, in particular Filipinos (in 2001, more than 60% of the Filipino population of Barcelona lived in this area), but there are also Pakistanis, Moroccans and Ecuadorians. This is a sector of considerable migratory movement, except for Carrer Riera Alta because the Filipino community is very well established here. In this north-western sector there are also quite a lot of design and architecture studios (many in Carrer Ferlandina). Modern restaurants are now being opened and there is a micro-zone in Carrer Riera Baixa of shops selling second-hand and vintage clothing.

There is also what we would call a transitional zone, which we would locate between the Boquería market and the Plaça de Sant Agustí. This space is moving along the same lines as the north-eastern sector, at least with regard to the predominant tendency of the new shops and restaurants that are being opened, apart from the normal functioning of the market, which is the focus of attention for tourists and other regular shoppers. There is no doubt that this zone will be boosted with the future projects that are planned around it, for example the Robadors block project and the Filmoteca cinema and, in particular, the future underground car park in the Plaça de Gardunya and the new connection between the Boquería and the Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu, which is presently the headquarters of the Library of Catalonia and other cultural institutions.

The southern sector of the Raval, the Xino heartland, seems to be quite homogenous, with a significant presence of foreigners among its residents. In fact, the southern part is considerably more heterogeneous than it appears and we have, for example, the Drassanes zone that is very different from the cliché that associates the south Raval area with immigrants. Indeed, the demographic and socio-economic indicators for Drassanes suggest an area that is better-off than others in the neighbourhood, although it does not appear to be very active with regard to new businesses and other economic activities.

The zone that would evoke what we might call the Xino myth is the zone around the Liceu, which, despite the presence of the opera house that is so closely linked with the city's elites, has the highest unemployment rates in the Raval, while in the 1990s its population also had the lowest incomes (according to ICEF [Index of Family Economic Capacity] data). It is also the zone that includes Carrer Sant Ramon and the Plaça Pieyre de Mandiargues, a nucleus of prostitution that is still relatively active today. The renovation of the Robadors zone and the installation of the Filmoteca are projects that aim to change precisely this situation.

The zone comprised by Palau Güell-Carrer Nou de la Rambla would be a robot portrait of the Raval with regard to the indicators since all of them, both socio-economic and demographic, are always close to the average figures for the neighbourhood as a whole. This zone is notable because it is the one that takes us back to the history of the Xino *canaille*, the continuity of the Raval as one of the places of diversion for the rest of Barcelona. Even today, many of the nightlife spots of the neighbourhood, some of them almost legendary and the most visited in the city, especially in the early-morning hours, are to be found between Nou de la Rambla and Arc del Teatre.

The zone of Sant Pau del Camp and the Plaça Folch i Torres in the south-western sector of the Raval seems to have been somewhat overlooked in the urban reform work that has been carried out hitherto. In all the Raval this southern sector seems to be the part that is furthest away from the tendency of opening fashion shops and tourist visits (except to the Romanesque church of Sant Pau del Camp), while on the other hand it is notable for its presence of choral

societies and their premises, which recalls a tradition that was very widespread in the Raval in the past, revealing, therefore, a continuing presence of lifelong residents.

Except for Drassanes, it cannot be said that there is any part of the Raval that is not highly populated. All its areas have a higher population density than the rest of the city, in particular the north-western zones (Riera Baixa, la Cera and Riera Alta). Nonetheless, the residents of foreign origin are fairly well distributed throughout the Raval. What is to be highlighted, in fact, is that no part of the Raval has a lower percentage of foreign residents than in Barcelona as a whole. The zones that are above the mean figures for the Raval are some in the south, like Folch i Torres and Palau Güell, and others in the north-west like Riera Alta and la Cera. The distribution of the population by age explains the different death rates in the zones under consideration and also explains why the birth rates are higher where there are greater concentrations of foreign residents because of the evident factor of population rejuvenation that their arrival has meant for the neighbourhood. Even so, in some areas like Riera Alta the birth rate is quite high and well above the Raval rates for children of Spanish parents. Arrivals and departures in the different Ravals do not reveal much difference between the different zones although, logically, fewer immigrants come to areas where housing prices are higher. Other less expensive zones have higher resident registration rates, as in the cases of la Cera or Riera Baixa in the north-east, or Plaça Folch i Torres in the south-west (one of the areas of the Raval that is most removed from the urban renovation projects) (see Table 13).

Table 13 / **Details and summary of some demographic figures in the research areas of the Raval**

Source: compiled by the authors using data from the Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council

	% FOREIGN.		POP. + 65 01	DEATH RATES 02	BIRTH RATES 02	% BIRTH SPANISH PAR. 02	EMIGR. 02	IMMIGR. 02
	POPULATION 02	POP. 01						
Drassanes	1,240	14.3%	25.1%	18.6%	8.9%	81.8%	66.9%	121.8%
Palau Güell	4,179	26.6%	22.3%	13.4%	11.5%	52.1%	54.6%	204.4%
Liceu	1,721	20.3%	25.4%	12.8%	8.7%	60.0%	51.1%	216.2%
Sant Pau Camp	1,341	19.0%	28.0%	20.1%	9.7%	84.6%	43.3%	158.1%
Pl. Folch i Torres	4,023	30.1%	17.5%	9.7%	12.4%	58.0%	64.6%	248.3%
Sant Agustí	1,840	26.4%	25.4%	14.7%	6.0%	72.7%	57.1%	205.4%
M. Boqueria	1,262	23.5%	27.6%	9.5%	10.3%	38.5%	49.1%	216.3%
Riera Baixa	3,902	24.8%	21.5%	11.5%	5.6%	59.1%	61.0%	245.3%
La Cera	5,874	29.3%	20.7%	11.4%	9.5%	46.3%	58.2%	262.5%
Riera Alta	10,437	29.1%	22.1%	11.2%	12.5%	43.1%	46.0%	181.6%
Casa de Caritat	1,775	20.5%	28.4%	14.7%	9.0%	37.5%	42.3%	148.7%
Ac. Ciències	2,603	14.4%	28.0%	14.6%	6.5%	76.5%	43.4%	103.3%
Tallers-Pelai	771	18.4%	21.5%	11.7%	10.4%	100.0%	51.9%	184.2%
Raval	40,968	25.5%	22.8%	12.4%	10.0%	53.2%	53.0%	202.8%
BCN	1,527,190	6.3%	21.7%	10.1%	85.0%	80.2%	34.3%	64.2%

In the social indicators there are strong correlations between the trends indicated by the ICEF (Index of Family and Economic Capacity) and other indicators. Hence, apart from ICEF data,

other factors are lower rates of unemployment and a greater percentage of population with higher education qualifications and in top-range jobs. The clearest examples are the three zones of the north-eastern sector: Casa de Caritat, Acadèmia Ciències and Tallers-Pelai. Drassanes follows the same pattern. Examples of the opposite case are numerous but we shall note the cases of Sant Pau del Camp and Plaça Folch i Torres, which have the lowest ICEF values, the highest unemployment rates and fewest residents in the top professional range or with higher education qualifications (Table 14).

Table 14 / **Details and summary of some social components in the research areas of the Raval**

Source: compiled by the authors using data from the Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council

	UNEMPL. 01	% POP. TOP. SOCIOPROFESS. ALTA 01	% POP. HIGHER EDUCATION 01	INDEX FAMILY AND ECONOMIC CAPACITY ICEF 96
Drassanes	13.7 %	19.8 %	12.6 %	75.3
Palau Güell	17.4 %	13.6 %	8.9 %	61.8
Liceu	21.9 %	16.2 %	10.0 %	52.2
Sant Pau Camp	19.3 %	9.8 %	8.1 %	48.8
Pl. Folch i Torres	18.4 %	12.3 %	9.3 %	48.7
Sant Agustí	14.8 %	17.7 %	13.6 %	52.3
M. Boqueria	13.4 %	15.5 %	12.8 %	61.1
Riera Baixa	15.8 %	13.6 %	9.9 %	52.8
La Cera	14.0 %	12.4 %	10.8 %	53.5
Riera Alta	17.4 %	15.5 %	12.1 %	61.4
Casa de Caritat	12.1 %	18.2 %	14.1 %	63.6
Ac. Ciències	11.6 %	31.9 %	21.8 %	72.3
Tallers-Pelai	8.9 %	35.9 %	31.0 %	102.1
Raval	15.9 %	16.1 %	12.2 %	59.2
BCN	10.9 %	29.1 %	21.2 %	100.0

The social complexity of the Raval: a typological proposal

Many of the typologies that are usually used for describing an urban social reality are, we believe, quite obsolete when it comes to portraying the real internal diversity and complexity of a neighbourhood like the Raval. Phenomena such as worldwide migration on a massive scale, non-obligatory residential mobility (*guiris* and middle-class people), the shaping of cultural neighbourhoods in the historic centres of cities and the urban repercussions of a more knowledge-based economy make it necessary to reconsider the traditional frameworks. We wish, then, to propose a typology that is truer to what we have found, since we could not square our findings with the typological forms that were used some years ago. Furthermore, in fact, what concerns us here is not so much to achieve the most accurate possible description of the Raval's social structure as to try to relate social position and the processes of transformation in the neighbourhood (Table 15).

In the proposal that we reproduce here (Gomà and Rosetti, 1998), reference is made to social position and to roles within the social structure, while some interests are assumed in

the process of urban transformation of Ciutat Vella. We think it appropriate to update this perspective by taking several other factors into account. First, we understand that the Raval, more than being a closed space whose inhabitants struggle to impose their interests from a class standpoint or socio-economic position, is a neighbourhood that is undergoing change, which has provoked considerable debate among the different social strata of the whole city and this discussion to some extent settles the model of the city that is being constructed. In the Raval the interests of the present residents are taken into account along with those of residents to come and those of users of the neighbourhood. It was not in vain that the Raval was referred to in the 1980s as a “server” neighbourhood for the city (AAVV Districte V, 1980). The crisis of functional zonification linked with modern urban planning and the return of a diversity of uses to the historic centres as a strategic element in the development of cities has accentuated the social and symbolic struggle for the city centre.

Table 15 / **Articulation of social classes and strategic interests in Ciutat Vella (1998)**

Source: Gomà and Rosetti, 1998

S O C I A L C L A S S	D E G R E E O F P R E S E N C E	P O S I T I O N I N U R B A N R E L A T I O N S	L E V E L A N D N A T U R E O F A R T I C U L A T I O N	S T R A T E G I C I N T E R E S T S
Working classes	Majority	Subordinate	Middle Concentrated - intensive	Ciutat Vella as an integrated residential space
Middle classes	Minority	Not dependent	Weak Diffuse-extensive	Ciutat Vella as a diversified socio-economic space
Upper classes	Residual	Dominant	Weak Specific	Ciutat Vella as a tertiary-gentrified space

Nevertheless, the so-called working classes are diverse and heterogeneous, so that one can hardly attribute them with a single interest. For example, although a good part of the traditional residents might be mainly concerned about improving their conditions of life, there is no doubt that we would find a sector that has been excluded in some ways and that sees the process of reform as a threat to its more or less informal conditions of life. To all that, we can add the new immigrants in all their social variety, who modify or substantially diversify the social composition of the neighbourhood, while the multiplicity of their perspectives on the future and in relation with the changes occurring in the area is quite clear.

If we look now at the middle-level sectors or strata, their diversity is also evident. Those who continue to run what is left of the traditional businesses in the neighbourhood, the artisans and petty bourgeoisie who have always been present there, despite their present situation of decline, and the representatives of new businesses, would be more interested in a greater presence of more middle-class residents and more activities related with tourism. Another sector of immigrants, who are not from European Community countries and who have street-level businesses, might also be interested both in the coming of more immigrants and attracting tourists and new residents (depending on the type of business they have opened). We might speak, too, of a middle-class sector that has come to live, or might be interested in coming to

live in the Raval and that could manifest interests that oppose those of users of the neighbourhood or of its businesspeople (for example, over the issue of noise in some streets). If the arrival of new residents from the upper-middle class is consolidated, this might end up with the expulsion not only of the traditional residents but also of the first middle-class inhabitants, who may be rich in cultural capital but less so in economic terms. There would not be a single position, therefore, but rather competition or conflict over the social uses of public space between the commercial premises market and the housing market.

We do not believe that it is possible to speak of sectors that are very potent in economic terms or of economic or social elites in the Raval. There may be some exceptional cases of members of the dominant classes in the Bourdieu sense (the intellectual elite or powers-that-be), but we consider that they do not constitute a relevant stratum that might condition what is happening in the neighbourhood. In any case, they may have influence, or use the Raval, but they do not reside there.

We can even bring together the diversity of associations and entities in the neighbourhood and relate them with the remarks we have just made concerning our hypotheses of social structure, despite the social mix that some of these organisations reveal (Table 16).

Table 16 / **Social strata and organisations in the Raval neighbourhood (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

SOCIAL	STRATUM	ORGANISATIONS
Excluded	Not organised as a social stratum (organised by associations of prostitutes and former drug addicts)	
Traditional residents Traditional middle class	AAVV Raval, Taula del Raval, choral societies	
Immigrant residents	Immigrant associations, for immigrants and religious associations	
Immigrant businesspeople	Partially in associations of traditional businesspeople	
Traditional businesspeople	Associations of traditional businesspeople (Cera, Sant Pau, Nou de la Rambla, etc.)	
New businesspeople	Fundació Tot Raval, Món Raval	
New residents, 1st batch	Coordinadora Contra l'Especulació (Coordination Against Speculation), Las Agencias, etc.	
New residents 2nd batch	Not organised	
<i>Guiris</i>	Collectives: e.g. Atelier, Las Agencias, etc.	

In this study, and despite the problem of talking about specific collectives in the Raval because of the neighbourhood's extreme social diversity, we have made an approximate division into three groups: (1) "Non-European Community immigrants", (2) "lifelong residents" and (3) "middle-class newcomers". We believe that this distinction is the most useful for analysing the social dynamics of the neighbourhood. Besides, since they are not remotely homogenous groups, we think it would be helpful to consider the numerous variables that can create differences inside each group (Table 17).

Diversity in the territory of the Raval and the dangers of frontiers

Of the 40,973 persones appearing in the 2004 Census of the Raval, 20,978 are of Spanish nationality. The other 19,995 are foreign. However, within the category of foreigners we can

identify 2,295 *guiris* (immigrants from the EU or other OECD countries) and 17,700 people from the so-called Third World countries. The latter is not a homogenous collective, either, since its members come from more than fifty different states and represent the five continents. As the graph below shows, the social composition of the neighbourhood is a long way from being homogenous and it may not be too far-fetched to describe it as the most diverse neighbourhood in all of Catalonia.

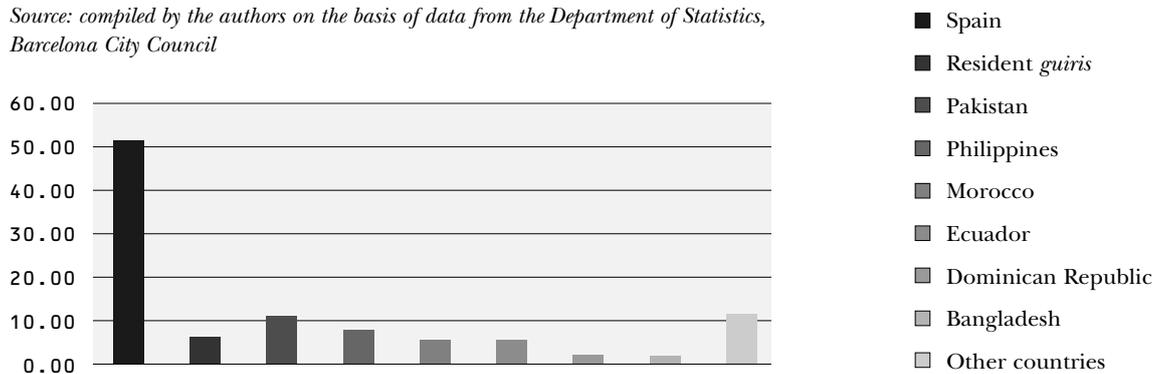
Table 17 / **Variables of differentiation inside each group of the population**

Source: compiled by the authors

NON-EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS	MIDDLE-CLASS NEWCOMERS	LIFELONG RESIDENTS
Origin: Pakistan, Morocco, Philippines, Ecuador, other	Origin: Barcelona and surrounding, elsewhere in Spain, EU, non-Community Europe	Social strata: middle-class, petty bourgeoisie, working classes, underclass / excluded
Housing situation: owners, tenants	Housing situation: owners, tenants	Language of social use: Catalan speakers, Spanish speakers
Occupation: business, wage worker	Occupation: professional, student	Ethnic group
Legal situation: "With documents", "Without documents"		Origin: immigrants, 2nd-generation immigrants, "locals"
Times of residence: recent immigrant, long-term immigrant		

Graph 6 / **Composition of the Raval population (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors on the basis of data from the Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council



Immigrants, then, presently comprise just under half of the Raval population and, if we subtract the *guiris*, they represent 43.21%. However, what is most relevant for analysing the neighbourhood dynamics is that at present there is not one foreign collective that represents much more than 10% of the population.

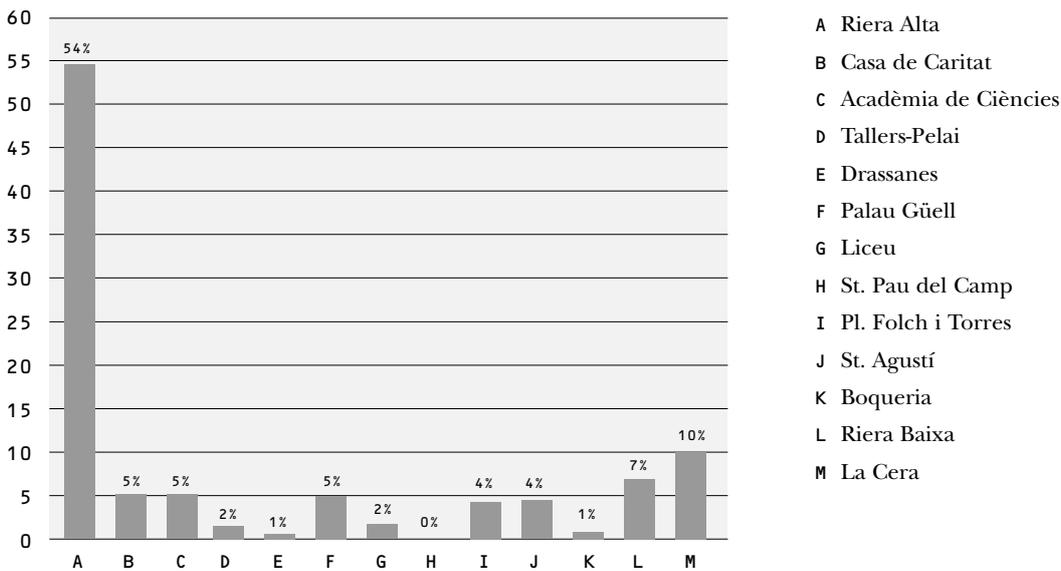
While it is true that, by statistical zones, differences appear with regard to the immigrant populations, we cannot talk about a concentration in any one zone of people of any specific nationality or ethnic group. A certain concentration by zones is more evident, perhaps, in the

commercial than in the residential domain. The Filipinos tend to set up or open businesses in the western area, while people from the Maghreb are more in the area of Carrer Hospital and Padró, while the Pakistanis are to be found more in the Drassanes zone, and so on. However, this does not mean that any nationality or ethnic group predominates in the zone in question.

We shall now go on to analyse some of the data on concentration of collectives in different zones of the Raval. The Filipino group, which is the most concentrated in spatial terms, has 54% of its numbers residing in the Riera Alta zone and 10% in the la Cera area. The rest, however, is scattered in small dwellings scattered through the other zones of the Raval.

Graph 7 / Distribution of the Filipino community in the Raval by zones of small-scale research (2001)

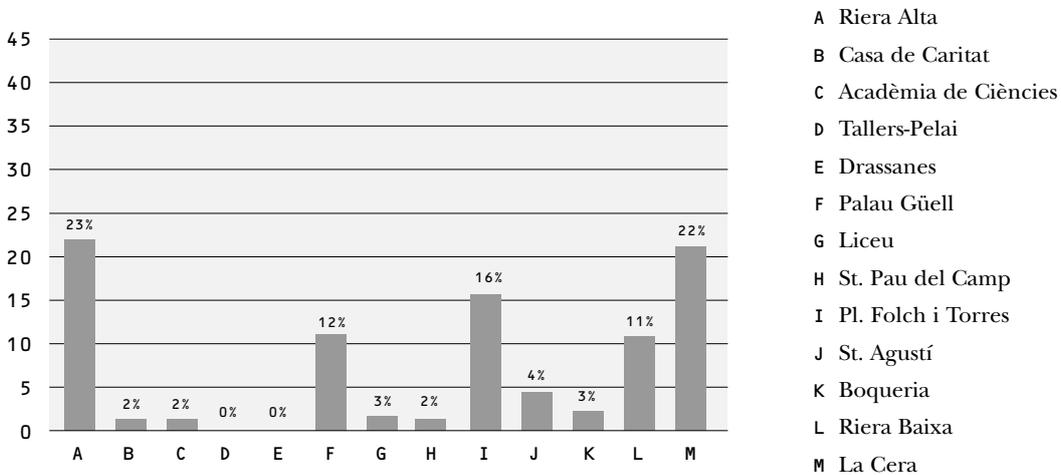
Source: Population Census, 2001



People coming from Pakistan are more widely spread, although the Riera Alta zone, as in the case of the Filipinos, is the most favoured and is chosen by 23%. The la Cera area has 22%, the Folch i Torres zone has 16%, while Riera Baixa has 11%. The remaining 33% are distributed throughout the other zones of the Raval.

Graph 8 / Distribution of the Pakistani community in the Raval by zones of small-scale research (2001)

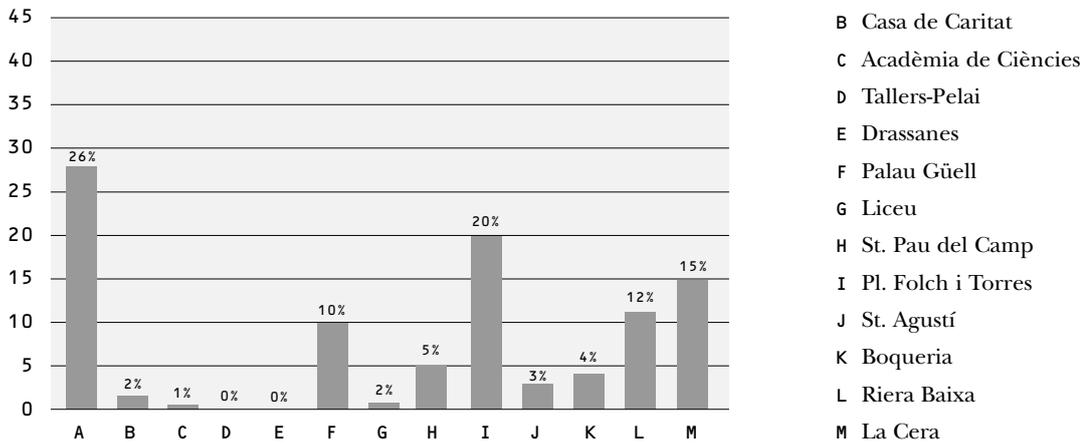
Source: Population Census, 2001



The distribution of Moroccan residents is quite similar: Riera Alta 26%, Folch i Torres 20%, la Cera 15% and Riera Baixa 12%. The nine remaining zones represent 27% of the Moroccan population.

Graph 9 / **Distribution of the Moroccan community in the Raval by zones of small-scale research (2001)**

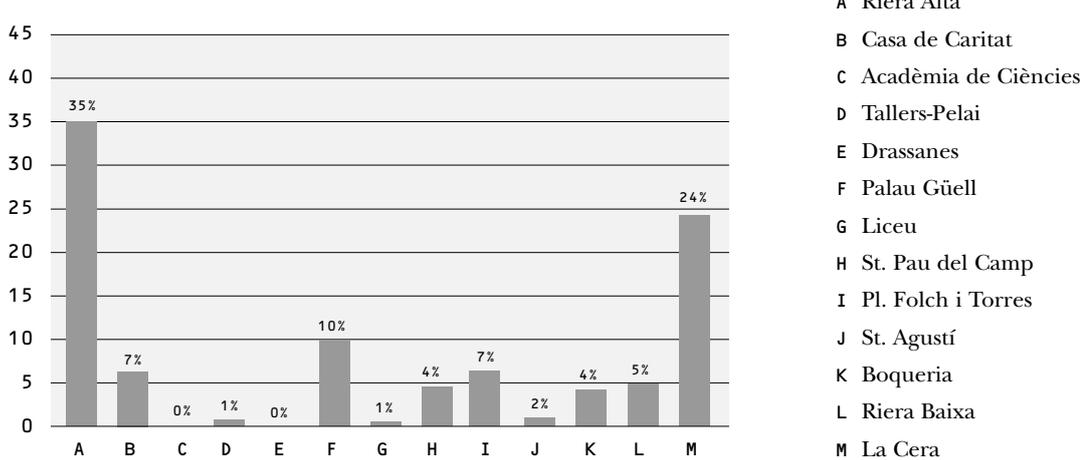
Source: Population Census, 2001



Finally, the Ecuadorian population is quite concentrated in the Riera Alta (35%) and la Cera (24%) zones, with much smaller numbers in the other zones, going from 7% in the Casa de Caritat area down to the insignificant percentage in the Drassanes or Acadèmia de Ciències areas.

Graph 10 / **Distribution of the Ecuadorian community in the Raval by zones of small-scale research (2001)**

Source: Population census, 2001



What is confirmed in our analysis is that the traditionally poorer zones are where most immigrants have gone to live, while, in contrast, fewer have gone to live in the richer areas of the Raval. We believe, then, that the variable that best explains the concentration of communities in certain zones is not seeking a community but rather economic factors (Table 18).

Table 18 / Correlation between ICEF and percentage of immigrants in the zones of research in the Raval

Source: Barcelona City Council and Population Census, 2001

ZONE	ICEF 1996	% IMMIGRANTS 2001
Pl. Folch i Torres	48.7	30.10
St. Pau Camp	48.8	19.00
Liceu	52.2	20.30
St. Agustí	52.3	26.40
Riera Baixa	52.8	24.80
La Cera	53.5	29.30
Boqueria	61.1	23.50
Riera Alta	61.4	29.10
Palau Güell	61.8	26.60
Casa de Caritat	63.6	20.50
Ac. Ciències	72.3	14.40
Drassanes	75.3	14.30
Tallers-Pelai	102.1	18.40

We do not believe, then, that it is possible to speak scientifically of Filipino, Pakistani, Moroccan or Ecuadorian zones, or (although we do not have such a fine breakdown of data) of streets or blocks of flats pertaining to one or other ethnic group. It is possible to speak of the tendency of some communities to locate themselves in certain zones but in no case does any ethnic group represent such a majority that it gives a particular ethnic identity to the zone. Neither is it possible to speak of zones of immigrants in general.

Speaking of ghettos. Sometimes concepts created by the social sciences are “smuggled” as Bourdieu would say, into common sense. And what is used to describe one reality becomes an idea that is wielded in the political and social struggle, sometimes deformed to the point that it becomes irreconcilable and confused. This is the case of the ghetto. According to Louis Wirth, the word *ghetto* appeared in 1516 to designate the Jewry of Venice. This system implies a physical separation, the establishment of a special tax on economic activities and the protection of the community against antisemitic attacks. The Jewish ghetto may also be seen by its own members as way of conserving the community, its bonds and traditions. This phenomenon, which has broken down in Western Europe, is still deep-rooted in the Eastern European countries, a pattern of conduct that was to be reproduced by German, Polish and Hungarian immigrants who settled in American cities. It was in the United States and at the beginning of the last century that this phenomenon was scrutinised in urban studies and references to ethnic ghettos began to appear in the academic literature, no longer confined to the Jewish community but extrapolating to other ethnic or national communities. The Raval is frequently referred to as a ghetto since it has the highest percentage of immigrants in Barcelona. The term “ghetto” is ambiguous and is used ambiguously, sometimes referring to social exclusion and sometimes to ethnic discrimination. If we strip the term of its ambiguity, we shall see that the Raval as a whole is anything but a ghetto.

What is the definition of a ghetto? There is no definition of ghetto that fits the reality of the Raval. A ghetto is what they had in Warsaw, you understand? But what does a ghetto mean? It is a homo-

geneous and closed-off zone. Of course there are ghettos. Pedralbes is a ghetto. I'm not joking because that's homogeneous. But the Raval, homogeneous? Please! Well, I suppose you mean that they're all poor, or a good part of them ... In that case, yes. But we're not talking about that. When you speak of a ghetto you mean that the essential feature is that there's a certain ethnic unity or something like that. From this point of view, the Raval would be anything but a ghetto. It would certainly be a hotchpotch but not a ghetto.

Interview with Manuel Delgado, lecturer in Anthropology, University of Barcelona, 10 September 2004.

What predominates, therefore, is the melange. But we cannot ignore the possibility that the danger could be a reinforcement of frontier dynamics that are only hinted at today. These frontiers, which are just emerging now, would be located within the neighbourhood and would generate four relatively differentiated quarters:

- Carrer Hospital along a north-south axis, Carrer Joaquim Costa along an east-west axis in the north, and the Rambla del Raval on an east-west axis in the south of the neighbourhood.
- The quarter consisting of Pelai-Rambla-Hospital-Àngels seems to be that which has undergone most transformation in socio-economic and cultural terms, while still maintaining considerable levels of mixing and having the space of the Plaça dels Àngels as its most visible centre.
- The Àngels-Rondes-Hospital quarter involves processes and dynamics that do not make it possible to derive definitive trends. The Hospital-Rambla-Santa Mònica-Rambla del Raval sector also has contradictory dynamics with a very substantial presence of Pakistani and Maghrebi immigrants, along with the big incognito of the Robadors block.
- The remaining quarter of Rondes-Hospital-Rambla Raval-Paral·lel, is perhaps the one that presents most social problems and is also the least dynamic in the neighbourhood.

All this seems to indicate that if the aim is to maintain the logic of a social mix, it would be necessary to work in a differentiated fashion in these territories and their micro-enclaves, emphasising the frontier points and centrality from standpoints that would generate bridges and links or bridging processes (in places and spaces like Rambla del Raval, Plaça Folch i Torres, Illa Robadors, Plaça dels Àngels, Carrer Hospital, Carrer Joaquim Costa...).

The future Ravals: question marks and precedents

The Raval appears as a great urban question mark right in the middle of Barcelona. We might even say that the Raval is now (as it has been at other times in its history) a strident precedent of the issues and dilemmas that the city will be facing. If we were so bold as to indicate some future tendencies, looking at what the neighbourhood has been and is today, we would say that the Raval will have fewer residents than it had in the past (because of demographic reasons and individual decisions), it will have more stable immigrants (because of the market and settlement reasons) and it will continue to have a population of modern and alternative people, but in a more discontinuous and floating fashion (because of prices, central location, cultural dynamism, leisure opportunities and its good connections).

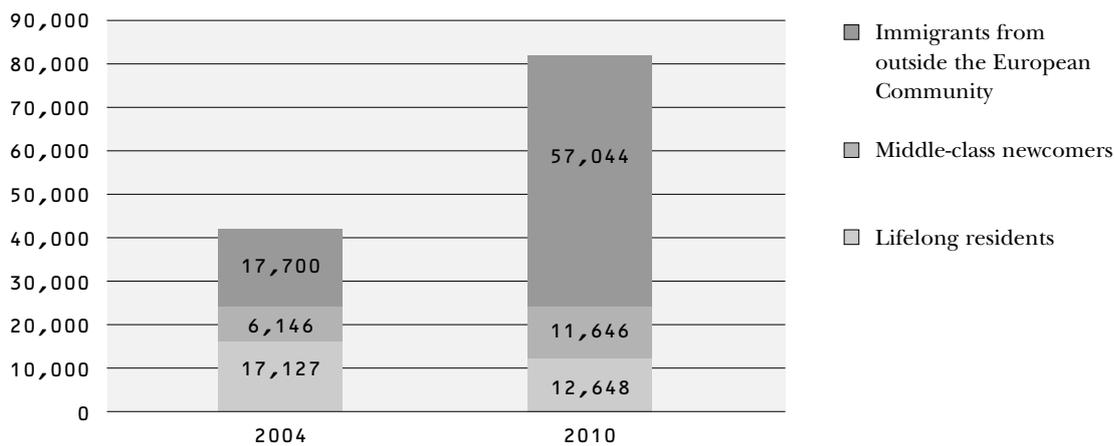
Let us consider the following forecast. In 2004 the local residents and non-European Community residents accounted for 85% of the residents in the Raval in almost equal parts, while the remaining 15% corresponded to the new middle-class residents (both Spanish and *guiris*). But if the present trends of population growth continue, by the year 2010 the balance between the traditional community of residents and the immigrants will no longer exist.

If the trends continue as they have hitherto, in less than six years the Raval will still have about 15% of middle-class residents, while the remainder of its population will be divided between 16% of traditional residents and 69% of non-European Community residents. Even though the drop in numbers of the traditional population has not been excessive and the number of middle class residents is increasing in absolute terms, the growth in the numbers of immigrant residents brings a great number of people into the Raval, so that the immigrant population has become that with the greatest presence, overshadowing the oscillations in numbers of the other groups.

The forecast we make for the year 2010 is one that is based on the demographic reality of the Raval at the start of the twenty-first century. This is the result of a situation in which there has been a great influx of population, both middle-class and immigrants, from outside the European Community, and where the registered departures can be divided into three similar groups, although with slightly higher numbers of middle-class departers. Mortality rates almost totally correspond to the traditional residents, who also represent more than half the birth figures. The remaining 45% is distributed, in descending order, among immigrant and middle-class residents.

Graph 11 / **Forecast for the evolution of the Raval communities (2004-2010)**

Source: compiled by the authors on the basis of data from the Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council



This is a possible scenario based on the trends of recent years, but there are also other possible scenarios that might occur insofar as modifications appear in some of the variables that we have regarded as being stable. This growth also raises the question of the maximum capacity of the neighbourhood, bearing in mind that its physical space is limited and neither is its housing space infinite. The housing factor is essential for being able to imagine possible responses because there is a housing ceiling (after urban planning changes, reformation of dwellings, and the offers that have been appearing on the market), which we would situate as accommodating around seventy thousand residents. Other variables should be considered too, for example the number of inhabitants per flat (higher in the case of immigrant families) and the possible changes in housing prices that could represent incentives for one or other kind of resident.

Besides this more quantitative forecast, we have also tried to discover the more widespread perceptions about the future of the neighbourhood. Imagining the future of the

Raval is the exercise that we proposed in interviews we carried out with a number of people who could be described as the Raval's institutional and social reference points. The points of view as to the future of the neighbourhood are as diverse as the social, cultural and associative backgrounds of the interviewees. We might divide these into pessimistic views (dystopias), which according to their different categories emphasise the risks of the Raval's becoming a kind of theme park, gentrification, ghettoisation and dualisation, and the optimistic views (utopian) that stress the positive potential of the social and ethnic mix, seeing the opportunities for creating a "cultural neighbourhood" and coexistence in diversity through social pacts. The viewpoint, which is to say from the present, is for both groups a moment of deadlock between opposing forces and one of uncertainty as to the future. We shall note below some of the more widespread concerns of our interviewees.

Future utopias as a mélange

The idea of a future that would be a *mélange*, a blend or heterogeneity of social groups is central in many visions of the Raval. This might refer to uses, origins and cultures, social classes and generations. In any case, the most significant differences among these points of view are between those that see a conflict-free coexistence in diversity and those that warn of its potential for conflict.

The idea would be to achieve a well-balanced combination between housing, offices and day-time and night-time businesses [...] And this would have to include from the Pakistanis through to the local people. It's not easy.

Interview with Emili Álvarez, art gallery owner and vice-president of FTR (Fundació Tot Raval – All-Raval Foundation), 28 June 2004.

I think it's good that there's a mix in the neighbourhood [...] Probably you have a lot more to do with your neighbour who's Moroccan than with somebody from two streets over who is from Sant Gervasi and who has another attitude and has come here in a different way. I think this isn't a bad thing, and that the mixing is good and that it's very important that new people should come in and that it's very good to have a balance in the neighbourhood, but it should be in the awareness that there is a social problem that will take much longer to resolve. Washing the face of the neighbourhood doesn't make the problems disappear. And the problems are very big, very subtle and very deep-rooted.

Interview with Macarena, Almazén, 13 May 2004.

I think that this heterogeneity is conflictive but not dramatically so, or overly obsessive, or pathological, or perverse, which is what they have in other places. Here one lives with conflict but it is part of everyday life, without becoming a big deal. And I would like it to go on like this.

Interview with Mikel Aramburu, anthropologist, 22 July 2004.

The utopias of the cultural neighbourhood

The cultural neighbourhood is seen as a possibility of social mixing or of a certain mild bourgeoisification, which is to say, without people being expelled. It is considered that creative people can live with other communities and that their arrival does not necessarily mean a brusque or radical change in the social uses of the neighbourhood. The Raval's becoming a cultural neighbourhood is a desired future, although talk about this is not very clearly defined. There are no plans, measures or campaigns aimed at favouring this outcome beyond awareness of

the fact that there are unused spaces that artists could occupy (ever scarcer and evermore expensive because of price rises in real estate). The Raval as a neighbourhood of artists is thus seen more as an individual expectation than as a phenomenon that is encouraged by private agents or any specific and clearly articulated policy.

To tell the truth, I don't know if this is a period that might be called a transition in historical terms. I mean that as long as other groups with more acquisitive power are not definitively settled here, and so on and so forth, we have this intermediate phase of people who take risks, who are pioneers and then they end up going off to colonise other neighbourhoods that are also undergoing transformation, etcetera, etcetera. I don't know if this is the situation or if we really are being a cultural neighbourhood, or a cultural district in which the identity and the personality of the district will end up being that. I would like to think it could be this second option, in part.

Interview with Carles Martí, councillor for the Ciutat Vella District, 25 March 2004.

It'll turn out all right, you'll see. In the end it'll be a success. And ...a cultural neighbourhood, the Raval ... it should, really should be that! Listen, let's see, there are lots of things that could be done, and they could ...now look here, we have to see to it that, and this is what I've always been saying to the Fundació Tot Raval [All-Raval Foundation], a lot of craftspeople should come to live in the Raval and set up their workshops. If not to live, then to bring their workshops here. With all the ground-floor places that are empty ... because if something isn't done with these ground-floor places – I don't know what, but something has to be done with them – because they can't be used for housing [...] There are some here (designer studios)...just over there ... yes, yes, yes. This would be the key for turning this neighbourhood into a residential-cum-housing area for artists, more or less.

Interview with Lluís Cabrera, Taller de Músics (Musicians' Workshop), 20 April 2004.

The dystopias of the theme park

The risk of the neighbourhood's becoming a theme park aimed at tourists, as well as becoming gentrified so that the old residents are pushed out with upper-middle and upper-class people moving in, predominates among the pessimistic views on the future of the Raval.

I can see that danger that this could all end up as a theme park, well, maybe not quite that, but they were talking about the touristisation of the city and here we do run that risk, not so much because of tourists but because the residents have this same sensation [...] I think that in about ten years this could all turn into a showcase, a nice, shiny, clean neighbourhood, which wouldn't be too bad, but there would still be some corners tucked away. I'm afraid that it could be a neighbourhood designed with business in mind, with an image in mind [...], and perhaps here the risks of this process of dualisation of society can be seen, and this is a risk, the dual society.

Interview with Carmen de Dios, head of Personal Services for the zone, 15 June 2004.

What worries me [...] are the lines the transformation is taking, which I see more and more clearly: a centre-city neighbourhood, quite a lot more of a tourist attraction and habitable and more concerned with the city itself than with its residents.

Interview with Rosa Balaguer, director Casal dels Infants del Raval, 3 June 2004.

The dystopias of the gentrified neighbourhood

Other points of view query the neighbourhood's future starting out from the idea of gentrification, the expulsion of its present residents and replacing them with others who are

better off economically. In any case, they address a gentrifying process that is neither “over the top” nor “aggressive” (in contrast with the Born neighbourhood) but still tempered with the true characteristics of the neighbourhood.

In some aspects there is gentrification, especially in the cultural sense. I can see the positive and negative sides of the gentrification, and if only the City Council had known how to bring about a real gentrification! [...] Then there’s the negative side of gentrification, which means that if I buy a flat you move out.

Interview with Gaspar Maza, social educationalist, CSP South Raval, 19 May 2004.

That’s right, it won’t be like the Born. That’s clear. And it has to do with the neighbourhood’s associative life. For example, there are the choir groups that are never taken into account because people have a rather stereotyped view of the Raval, but there are lots of choir groups here, and this is also associative life. And yet they are there and these are “autochthonous” people too. I think it won’t be like the Born and that’s very clear. It won’t become a super-modern neighbourhood, even though it’s going that way and real-estate speculation being what it is. Nobody’s going to stop that. There’s “mobbing”, all these different scenes and there are lots of real-estate businesses here. You’re not going to stop that. Even if there’s immigration.

Interview with Vladimir Olivella, president of TEB (Youth Association), 11 June 2004.

The differences among the interviewees appear in their greater or lesser confidence in the capacity and continuity of the mobilisations, resistance and pressure exerted by the inhabitants with regard to the process of reform.

I don’t know, but I’m a bit pessimistic because at the level of response there’s not [...] There are moments when there are demonstrations or different kinds of resident action with proposals about participation and getting their decisions respected, but there’s no continuity and ...

Interview with Jesús, *Masala* magazine 11 May 2004.

The future? It doesn’t look good to me, because there are lot of interests there. But yes, I do have the hope that, even if it’s not organised, there’s still a certain resistance and maybe that’s making it harder for them than they anticipated.

Interview with Iñaki García, *El Lokal*, 27 May 2004.

The stalemated present. Notable among the reflections of the interviewees is talk of a kind of “stalemate” between the gentrifying forces and the anti-gentrification people and this is connected with a moment of lack of definition and uncertainty as to how the future will be settled.

I think that while there’s no permanent watch, or permanent follow-up, the idea of the mix or the *mélange*, of non-gentrification, really, can be maintained and made sustainable in the Raval but the gentrification can also appear at any moment and irrupt here because the real-estate market is very powerful, very strong and the big real-estate agents in the Raval are taking a position of being always on the lookout. We’re now in a stalemate situation between the gentrifying forces and those who are trying to maintain the mixtures. Stalemate doesn’t mean that there’s no gentrification, because there is, but there’s not as much as the gentrifying forces would like because there’s public activity that slows them down. But how long can this permanent stalemate situation go on?

Interview with Ricard Gomà, Councillor for Social Welfare, Barcelona City Council, 29 April 2004.

I think we're at a wait-and-see point now and it can go one way or the other.

Interview with Joan Leandre, OVNI collective, 1 June 2004.

The Raval we have now is at a halfway stage [...] and right now it's perhaps in a situation of lack of definition or I'd say transition. [...] I wouldn't hazard a guess at where it's going.

Interview with Octavi Alexandre, Veïns en Defensa de la Barcelona Vella, 25 May 2004.

Yes, the physical change is very big and the population change is impressive too. Now I can see that, with regard to its character, there's a firm base, but the overall change has been radical. It's in process. I think no one really knows what's going to happen and the lines it will take are unpredictable. I love this. I think that in the institutions no one imagined that so many Pakistanis, for example, would come here. They did the reforms looking for another kind of person, and they didn't expect the ones who came.

Interview with Iñaki García, El Lokal, 27 May 2004.

CULTURE AS A REFERENT: THE PRESENCE OF THE CCCB AND THE PLAÇA DELS ÀNGELS CLUSTER

The existence of what has been called the Raval cultural cluster, located around the Plaça dels Àngels, is one of the aspects that is generally seen as most positive and successful of the process of reforming and transforming the neighbourhood. The strange but prestigious element of the MACBA (Contemporary Art Museum of Barcelona) is accompanied by the presence of the CCCB, which, though it began with more generic aims, has become one of the points of reference for the whole city as a place of attractive exhibitions and debates, risky and innovative artistic experiences (in the broad sense) and as a meeting-point space or container for a highly diverse range of civic activities that have highlighted its porosity in contrast with the opacity of some other institutions in the zone.

We can define four dimensions by which to gauge the success of the cultural cluster. The first is the success of the institutions that comprise it (their own success, their collaboration between cultural institutions and other agents in the sector of culture, permeability with regard to their surroundings, and the response of the surroundings to the institutions). Second, is the presence of artistic, cultural and professional initiatives that are somehow linked to the cluster (participation of the private cultural sector, social participation in cultural institutions, the territory as a theme and space of creation). Third, is the change in economic activities and uses in the surroundings and, fourth, are the social and demographic changes that we have analysed above. We shall now turn our attention to the first three dimensions, focusing in particular on the role of the CCCB.

Approximations to the measure of success of the cultural Institutions

We might use different ways to measure the success of the cultural institutions that comprise the cluster. A qualitative approach enables us to see how the CCCB has been able to construct a new, distinctive model of a cultural institution, while a quantitative view permits us to see the impact on the public of the CCCB, the MACBA and other spaces.

A qualitative approach to the CCCB

One of the main features of the CCCB is its singularity as an institution. Let us start from what it is not. It is not a museum because it obviously has no permanent collection, although the Documentation Centre is accumulating the results of its activities so that it is building up

an archive of videos, films, images and urban-focused literary works. It is not a Kunsthalle because such a model of cultural institution bases the major part of its activities on the plastic arts. Even though it is true that many of these include the visual arts in the broad sense of the term (videos, photos, NetArt, etc), they are always cultural productions that are geared to the art market or to the world of cultural institutions. Besides, these are creations by individual artists or art collectives and the Kunsthalle lets them use its walls to make their work known. The CCCB, however, only uses works of art to illustrate an exhibition on a theme that is not about the world of art but, rather, other matters: the city, war, political propaganda and so on. It is not a cultural centre or a civic centre in the sense that it does not propose to offer spaces to neighbourhood collectives, but has local, metropolitan or international aspirations, even though it is also true that it cedes or hires out spaces to entities, neighbourhood collectives or lets associated groups use its spaces. Nonetheless, it avoids becoming a hotel of entities, while its relations with other actors in the cultural world are almost always based on the act of sharing common lines of work in contemporary culture.

What is the CCCB today? On the CCCB website we find a brief and instructive definition of its cultural project in the form of answers to the question “Who are we?” The key concepts of these answers are a multidisciplinary approach to the organisation and presentation of activities; artistic experimentation with new languages and forms of exhibition; urban concerns and urbanity; the fact of being a public institution; and the fact of being located in the Casa de Caritat of the Raval, one of the pieces of the cultural jigsaw of a new urban dimension in Barcelona.

Table 19 / **Collectives associated with the CCCB and the activities they organise**

Source: compiled by the authors

ASSOCIATED COLLECTIVES	ACTIVITIES
Advanced Music	Sónar – Festival of Advanced Music
Orquestra del Caos	Zèppelin – The sound of the other, the cause of the other: sonorous psychogeographies
City Mine (d)	Symbiosis: urban laboratory of advanced communication
Conservas	InMotion
d-i-n-a	The influencers – Festival of Culture Jamming, modified technologies and radical entertainment
La Fàbrica	The Alternative – Barcelona Festival of Independent Cinema
Marató de l’Espectacle (Entertainment Marathon)	Days of Dance – International Dance Festival in Urban Settings Dance Workshop <i>en famille</i>
OVNI (Observatori de Vídeos No Identificats – Observatory of Unidentified Videos)	Video archive Independent video screenings
Platoniq – Platform for the selection and production of projects relating new technologies with culture	Media Space Invaders
Projectes Poètics Sense Títol (Untitled Poetic Projects)	Proposal – International Festival of Poetry + Polypoetry
100.000 Retines	BAAF – Asian Film Festival of Barcelona
Almazén	Xinaxittà – Festival of Animation Cinema Socio-cultural animation activities

One of the distinguishing features of the CCCB is its “associated collectives”, these being groups of creators who have been ceded the use of a space (at present the Old Theatre) in order to work on projects that interest the CCCB. The statute of association is not formulated in closed terms and varies from one collective to another. The groups associated with the CCCB today are shown above. (table 19)

If we had to classify these by artistic sectors, which is not easy, we might say that Sónar and Orquestra de Caos work in the sphere of music, electronic music and sound art; La Fàbrica, OVNI and 100.000 Retines work in the audiovisual, cinema and documentary domain; the Entertainment Marathon is concerned with dance, while Projectes Poètics Sense Títol works with poetry. The remainder, like City Mine(d), Conservas, d-i-n-a and Platoniq are less easy to define and more multidisciplinary, blending performance and media activism in relation to social movements, especially the antiglobalisation movement. This inclination towards collectives and activities that involve critical reflection/action vis-à-vis globalisation is not without significance and, moreover, the relationship with the antiglobalisation movement, in particular with Conservas (and indirectly with Las Agencias) is shared with the MACBA.

As we have noted, these twelve collectives are very diverse but they do have something in common: they work on innovative or reflective aspects of debates on contemporary culture. There are not plastic or visual artists in the sense that they are not making a career in this segment. In many cases these are collectives that work for the most part on the fringes of the sector or in sub-segments that are not part of the establishment or, in any event, they are not seen as being canonical in the discipline concerned (sound art, documentary, Asian cinema, polypoetry, etc.) if they are not clearly pluridisciplinary.

The aim of most of the associated groups at the CCCB is not to hold a festival in whatever year happens to represent the discipline. The CCCB avoids the hackneyed *festivalitis* that has been used for the economic promotion of the city. On the contrary, the philosophy of the associated groups is to have an annual project that may be reflected in some event, festival or show, but the important thing is that the project is in keeping with the lines of work and reflection of the Centre and not just the festival’s capacity for bringing in the crowds.

As we can see, the objective of the CCCB with its associated collectives is not to publicise this or that artistic discipline, although it does so in part. Neither is it to promote the artists, even though it does so indirectly, and nor is it to offer incentives to creativity, even though the spectators’ reflections are sought. Generating activities to promote the zone’s economy is not an aim either, even if some events have this dimension. As we can see, while its activity is not to be defined or understood in terms of the traditional paradigms of cultural policy, it does partially accrue to some of its objectives. What is the aim of this line of cultural work? It is difficult to define it but we could say that it seeks to engage the more advanced sectors in multidisciplinary artistic or reflective lines of work in a kind of public/private or associative (with small cooperative concerns) partnership in order to produce creative and critical activities and atmospheres with regard to contemporary society and its cultural and political debates.

A quantitative approximation

At the level of numbers of visitors, too, the CCCB has established itself as one of the major institutions of reference for the Barcelona public, which comes in great numbers to participate in its activities. The figures on visitors to the CCCB have the great virtue of distinguishing between people who go to exhibitions and those who participate in activities prepared by or hosted in

this cultural centre of the Raval. If, in 1994, exhibitions accounted for more than 80% of its visitors, in 2003 they drew 40% of the total. We can see, thus, that activities have been acquiring prominence within the CCCB's functioning until they have unquestionably become the main reason for going to the Casa de Caritat cultural centre. The numbers of visitors have stabilised at about 400,000 per year since 2001, as can be seen in the table and graph below.

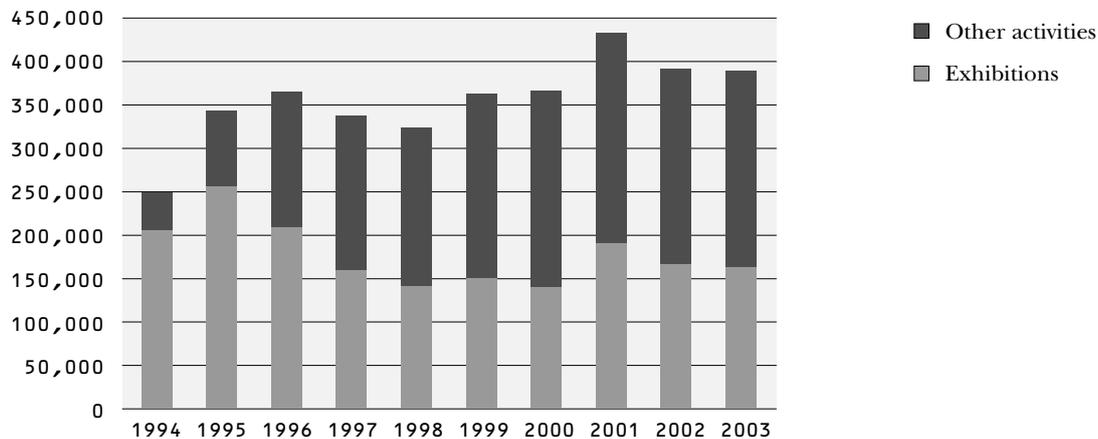
Table 20 / **Visitors to the CCCB per year and by types of activity (1994-2003)**

Source: CCCB Documentation Centre

ACTIVITY	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Total exh.	208,260	258,798	214,851	159,373	135,036	150,876	136,289	188,115	161,742	162,954
Other act.	42,134	81,138	158,357	174,076	188,487	216,504	241,856	238,501	230,575	231,747
TOTAL	250,394	339,936	373,208	333,449	323,523	367,380	378,145	426,616	392,317	376,701

Graph 12 / **Visitors to the CCCB per year and by type of activity (1994-2003)**

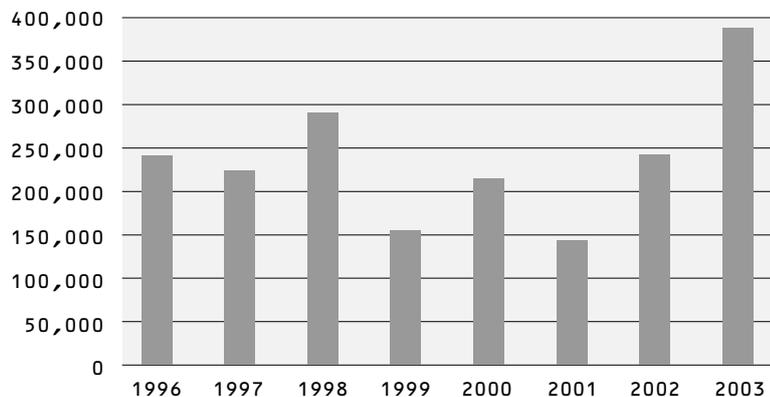
Source: CCCB Documentation Centre



The numbers of people going to the Contemporary Art Museum of Barcelona (MACBA), the other great member of the cluster, have shown similar tendencies. The figures were modest in the beginning and then kept dropping in the years that the MACBA was in crisis, to touch bottom in 1999 with 150,000 visitors. The recovery began in 2000 and, despite a small

Graph 13 / **Evolution in the numbers of visitors to the MACBA (1996-2003)**

Source: MACBA Documentation Centre



drop in 2001 the numbers then rose considerably until they were eventually doubled. The last year for which we have figures, 2003, is a record with around 400,000 people.

In order to have an idea of the importance of these figures, we can group the cultural institutions of the inner Raval (those located strictly in its interior), and the institutions of the Raval as a whole (including those of the Rambla) to see the potential circuit that might exist and, finally, look at those of Barcelona as whole in order to situate the Raval cluster with regard to the dimension and the projection of the city. In the following table we have grouped visitors to the cultural institutions of the inner Raval (CCCB, MACBA, Capella dels Àngels and La Capella), those of the Raval as a whole (the aforementioned ones plus the Virreina and the Santa Mònica Art Centre), and of Barcelona in general (public and private institutions).

Table 21 / **Evolution in numbers of visitors to the Raval's cultural institutions by geographical location (1992-2002)**

Soucre: Barcelona City Council and the authors

	INNER RAVAL	ALL RAVAL	TOTAL BARCELONA
1992	19,026	253,194	-
1993	26,227	355,419	-
1994	280,524	468,001	-
1995	387,936	578,819	-
1996	631,613	794,966	5,349,890
1997	576,550	771,644	5,402,538
1998	637,065	817,798	5,354,628
1999	556,346	830,648	7,058,609
2000	639,520	955,965	7,040,935
2001	672,826	931,445	7,032,189
2002	711,150	996,418	8,931,183

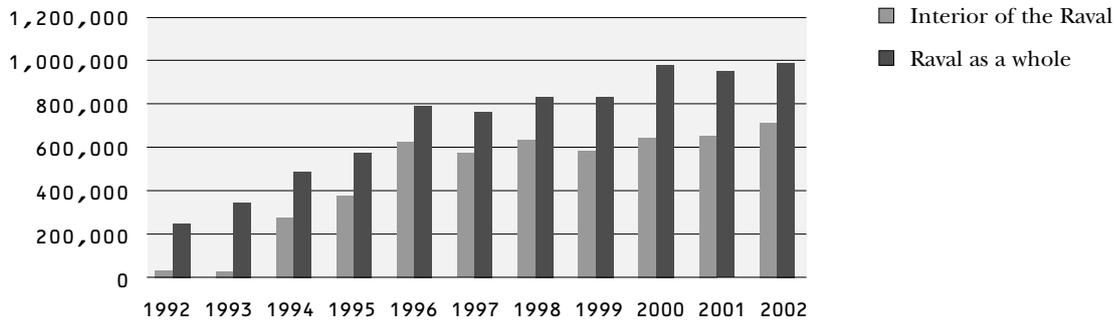
Noteworthy is the fact that, while the Raval had some cultural institutions, they were originally located on the fringes of the neighbourhood and so they had little effect on its social dynamics. However, after 1994 and 1995 there were significant increases in the numbers of people who came to the neighbourhood for cultural reasons, until reaching an average of some 600,000 from 1996 to 1999.

The early years of the twenty-first century have shown how the figures for the interior of the Raval continued to rise to about 700,000 people, which now makes it the neighbourhood's main cultural focus, far more so than the institutions that were originally better situated on the Rambla. All in all, after the Picasso Museum it is the most visited cultural cluster in the city of Barcelona.

A comparison of the figures in general reveals that the increase has occurred for Barcelona as a whole and that, in relation with this, the figures for visitors to the Raval cultural cluster are still not very high. The MACBA and the CCCB, while they have more visitors, have not become part of the mass tourism circuit from which other Barcelona cultural institutions benefit, but neither is it clear that this is their aim.

Graph 14 / Evolution of numbers of visitors to the Raval’s cultural institutions by geographical location (1992-2002)

Source: Barcelona City Council and the authors



Cultural initiatives linked with the cluster

Among the cultural, artistic or professional initiatives linked with the presence of the Raval cluster, or influenced by it, we might mention artists’ workshops, art galleries, the sector of theatre, design and architecture studios, educational institutions and research centres, the mass media, bookshops and publishers.

Artists’ workshops

One indicator of the participation of the world of art in the process of shaping a cultural neighbourhood in the Raval is the presence of artists’ workshops. This, in fact, would be a classical indicator but, given that there is no census of artists in Catalonia or Barcelona and no studies on the matter, in approximating to this reality we shall use the collective exhibitions in the Tallers Oberts (Open Workshops) as our basis. The phenomenon of open workshops is a typical event in neighbourhoods of artists where they organise a show of their work for some days as an exhibition for residents and passersby and also to be able to sell their work directly. At first, this was organised in Barcelona by an association of artists but nowadays it is done by FAD (Decorative Arts Association). Not all the artists in the neighbourhood participate but, since there is a selection committee, it could be said that it is a show for the more professionalised sectors.

Table 22 / Distribution of workshops through the neighbourhood in open workshops (1996, 1999, 2000 and 2003)

Source: Ciutat Vella Open Workshops Organisation, www.tallersoberts.es.org and FAD

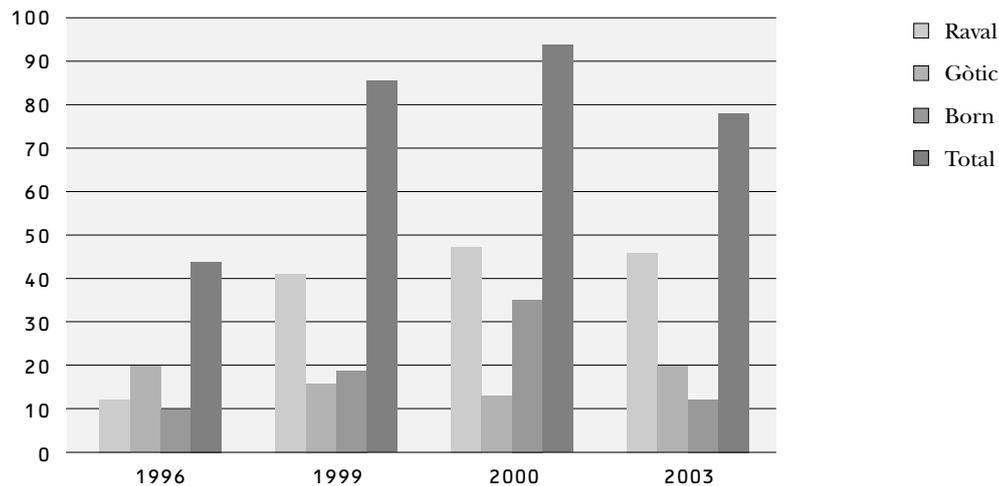
ZONE	1996		1999		2000		2003	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
Raval	15	33	43	50	46	49	45	58.4
Gòtic	20	44	15	17.4	13	13.8	20	26
Born	10	22	28	32.6	35	37.2	12	15.6
Total	45	100.00	86	100.00	94	100.00	77	100.00

The overall figures for the Ciutat Vella district show that the total number of workshops underwent a considerable increase from 1996 to 2000, almost doubling the number in the district. This fact can be explained by the rise in numbers of workshops both in the Raval, which tripled

the initial number of fifteen between 1996 and 1999, and the Born, which also tripled its number of workshops between 1996 and 2000. In the Gothic Quarter the tendency is the reverse. From 1996 to 2000 there was a modest drop in the number of its workshops, going from twenty in 1996 to thirteen in 2000.

Graph 15 / **Distribution of workshops by neighbourhood in the open workshops (1996, 1999, 2000 and 2003)**

Source: *Ciutat Vella Open Workshops Organisation, www.tallersoberts.es.org and FAD*



In the period from 2000 to 2003 there was a drop in the figures for locating workshops in the district, from 94 to 77 in these three years. This can basically be explained by the decreasing numbers in the Born, which broke its ascendent trend for the first time and dropped from 35 to 12 workshops. A further contribution to the overall decline, although less significant, is the drop in the number of workshops in the Raval. However, the Gothic Quarter experienced an increase for the first time, going from thirteen to twenty workshops. The general decline in numbers can also be explained by the change of organisers and the establishment of a stricter selection committee. In fact, in 2003 the selection was made through a jury of experts in which the CCCB participated. Hence, the figures do not necessarily mean that there are less workshops but that the criteria for joining Open Workshops are more demanding.

What we are most concerned to highlight here is the progressive increase of participating workshops in the Raval with regard to the total. In 1996 they represented 33%, which increased to 50% in 1999 and was maintained, with a slight drop to 49%, in 2000. However, at the last count in 2003 the Raval workshops represented almost 60% for the whole district, which placed it well above the other two neighbourhoods. According to these figures the Raval is the most dynamic neighbourhood of Barcelona in terms of artistic creation.

Art galleries

The presence of art galleries is another of the indicators considered when gauging the level of cultural dynamism in a neighbourhood. Hence we shall compare the present situation with what we found in a study completed four years ago (Rius, 2002), situating it in the general context of Barcelona and analysing the location of art galleries within the Raval. In 2000 there were thirteen art galleries in the Raval, a figure that represented 9.3% of the total for

Barcelona. Five of these – Aunkan, BAI, Caligrama, Claramunt and Urània – no longer exist. Needless to say this is a high mortality rate, but not much higher than in the other emerging neighbourhoods of Gràcia and the Born, where galleries have also disappeared. However, seven Raval galleries are well-established, among them being the Galeria dels Àngels, which we assessed as being of medium-high category in the previous study (RIUS, 2002).

Table 23 / **Galleries by neighbourhood in Barcelona (2000)**

Source: Rius (2002)

ZONE		%
Sarrià-Sant Gervasi		14.9
Gràcia		5.2
Eixample		46.3
Ciutat Vella	Barri Gòtic	12.7
	Born	11.2
	Raval	9.3
TOTAL		100.0

In 2004⁷ we repeated the survey and found fifteen galleries in the Raval. If we consider that the population of galleries has remained stable (a hypothesis we have been unable to confirm because of a lack of data) and that our calculation of 140 galleries is still valid, we could say that the Raval galleries represent 10.7% of the Barcelona total today. In other words the gallery presence in the Raval has increased, although very moderately, and the neighbourhood is now established as one of the city's gallery zones, even if to a much lesser extent than central

Table 24 / **Art galleries in the Raval (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

1. Galeria dels Àngels
2. La Xina Art
3. Alter Ego Gallery
4. Nou 3 cafè
5. Cotthem Gallery
6. Ras Gallery Bookstore
7. Galeria Ferran Cano
8. Siesta, Obra y objectos de artistas
9. Article 26 Galeria d'Art
10. Forum Ferlandina, Galeria i taller d'orfebreria
11. AC Sevilla
12. Artnaulas
13. Galeria Cadakés
14. Tinta Invisible
15. Studio Evan Deval

7. This new survey of galleries, and of the other cultural agents in the Raval, was completed in July 2004.

areas like Consell de Cent, which continues to be the centre of Barcelona's art market in terms of the number and importance of its galleries.

Over the last four years the map of galleries has not changed much, while the three main zones have consolidated (Doctor Dou, Plaça dels Àngels and Ferlandina), in keeping with their proximity to the cultural cluster and the fact that they have not risked setting up in areas beyond Carrer Joaquim Costa or Carrer del Carmen.

Theatres

Theatre is one of the cultural sectors that has been historically present in the Raval. However, at the end of the 1980s the theatres were in the neighbourhood in the administrative sense alone and, as we shall see, cannot be considered as among the elements that formed part of its internal dynamics. To begin our analysis, we shall situate the theatres of Barcelona by neighbourhoods, after which we shall define the different zones to refine the analysis and, finally, we shall study the theatres that exist as such in the narrow streets. The aim is to see what contribution they make in the constitution of a cultural district.

The situation of theatre in Barcelona presents a complex overview: of the nine districts into which the city is divided only four have theatres. We might think that theatre is highly concentrated and, in fact, it is but if we recall that in the 1960s the Barcelona theatres were only to be found in the Rambla and Paral·lel, we can see that there has been a process of diffusion to other zones. In Ciutat Vella there are only two theatres (Espai Escènic Joan Brossa and Malic) in the Born, two in the Gòtic (Club Capítol and Principal), and ten to the right-hand side of the Rambla (looking towards the sea) in the Raval (Llantiol, Nou Tantarantana, Goya, Poliorama, Romea, Arnau, Conservas, Riereta, Espai Mer and Almazén).

We could say that the Born is a zone of only alternative theatre, the Gòtic has commercial theatre, while in the Raval the scene is split between commercial and alternative theatre. In the Eixample there are all kinds of theatres but the commercial types predominate. Gràcia is the zone of alternative theatre *par excellence* and, finally, in the Sants-Montjuïc zone there are commercial and public theatres. This is the district with the most public theatres.

Table 25 / **Theatres in Barcelona by district and type (2002)**

Source: compiled by the authors

		PUBLIC *	COMMERCIAL	ALTERNATIVE	TOTAL
Ciutat Vella	Born			2	2
	Gòtic		2		2
	Raval		4	6	10
Eixample		1	5	3	9
Gràcia		1		4	5
Sants-Montjuïc		4	4		8
TOTAL		6	15	15	35

* The Grec Theatre is counted as a public theatre.

However, if we only locate the Barcelona theatres by districts we overlook something of the logic of the distribution of the zones of theatres. Theatres, as happens with other cultural sectors like publishers (Bourdieu, 1977), design studios (Crane, 1997) and, in particular, art

galleries (Moulin, 1983), do not attempt to locate themselves uniformly through the urban territory with the aim of seeking proximity to the potential consumer but, on the contrary, proximity means, on the one hand, facility in attracting the public by creating a theatre-zone framework that, on the other hand, orients the consumer as to what kind of theatre is to be found in that area. Indeed, each zone has a symbolic content that is associated with a certain type of theatre. For example, the Paral·lel area has always been known as the zone of variety shows (not in vain has it been called the Montparnasse of Barcelona), while Gràcia has been symbolically marked since the 1970s as, first, the zone of independent theatre and then, from the late 1980s and early 1990s, of alternative theatre.

Table 26 / **Urban zones and theatres in Barcelona (2002)**

Source: compiled by the authors

URBAN ZONE	THEATRES
Rambla zone	Club Capitol, Poliorama, Principal, Romea,* Victòria
Paral·lel zone	Apolo, Arnau, Condal, Nou Tantarantana**
Montjuïc zone	Barcelona Teatre Musical, Grec (Ciutat del Teatre) Institut del Teatre, Lliure, Mercat de les Flors
Born	Espai Escènic Joan Brossa, Malic
Eixample	Barcelona City Hall, Borràs, Guasch, Novedades, Sala Muntaner, Tívoli, Versus Teatre, Villarroel
Interior of the Raval	Conservas, Llantiol, Goya,*** Riereta, Espai Mer, Almazén
Gràcia	Artenbrut, Jove Teatre Regina, Lliure de Gràcia, Sala Beckett, Teatreneu
Glòries cultural cluster	Teatre Nacional de Catalunya

* The Romea is in Carrer Hospital but very close to the Rambla and hence we have classified it as belonging to this cluster.

** Like the Romea, the Nou Tantarantana is in the Raval but so close to Paral·lel that, in reality, it belongs to the Paral·lel zone.

*** The Teatre Goya is not, in fact, strictly within the Raval neighbourhood but next to the Ronda Sant Antoni, near Plaça Universitat.

The Raval, however, also inherits the myth of the Barri Xino, the space of transgressive works, of cabarets like those that are still held in the Cangrejo and that infuse the atmosphere of the Llantiol or the Riereta. This layer has combined with the renovation being carried out by young creators who have opened spaces that are even more alternative than the original alternative ones, for example Espai Mer, Almazén (a theatre space that is also used for other activities) and Conservas. The latter combines shows with other events and its director is the organiser of an event called In Motion, which has been staged several times at the CCCB.

As we can see, the Raval once again appears in relation with the most contemporary, hybrid (mixture of styles and language) and politicised creative scenes. The most alternative theatres have started to make a name for themselves in the overlooked areas of the neighbourhood and have generated a whole *off* circuit where the young (Catalan and foreign) residents circulate, making known the innermost part of the neighbourhood in this most alternative creative scene. It should be noted that the cultural administration, mainly through the CCCB, has also contributed by giving support to these types of theatres. The Almazén is seen as a space that is associated with the CCCB, while Conservas, as we said, organises the In Motion festival at the same cultural institution and also appears in the programming of the Mercat dels Flors complex.

Other cultural sectors and elements

Other cultural sectors that might give some indication of the dynamics of which the cultural cluster of the Raval is part are those that are known as cultural industries in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, for example design and architecture studios, bookshops, publishing houses and the media. To this we would add institutions offering artistic or cultural training as agents that also participate in the process of creating cultural content. The intention in this case is to show the density of cultural elements in the neighbourhood on the basis of the installation of the Casa de Caritat cultural cluster and to show that the latter has generated the dynamics of a cultural district.

In the case of design and architecture studios, the pattern of localisation is very similar to that of the art galleries, although they are not to be found on the ground floors of commercial premises in the Eixample [outer area] of the Raval, which are now quite expensive, but in the narrow streets around the MACBA-CCCB cluster. The following table presents a synthesis.

Table 27 / **Design and architecture studios in the Raval (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

DESIGN/ARCHITECTURE STUDIOS

Ferlandina vint

Mecanica Design

Diane Gray, Design Management

Mario Corea

José Luis Merino

Pilar Górriz Diseño Gráfico (graphic design)

Lluna 20 architects

Gamn Gràfica mèdia

Emilio López, Mónica Rivera, architects

M. José Carballería Tojo,

Juan Escobedo Abraham

While they do not represent one of the most conspicuous sectors of the neighbourhood, bookshop owners and publishers are present in the form of five bookshops specialising in culture or quality books. Three of them may be found around the Plaça dels Àngels cultural cluster: located in an old baroque church in Carrer Elisabets is La Central, a branch of the famous bookshop in Carrer Mallorca that specialises in poetry, foreign literature and social sciences. The smaller Libro Azul, now closed down, used to be in the same street. Loring and Librería Medios are near Tallers and the university faculties. El Lokal, however, an alternative and political bookshop *par excellence* is in the heart of the Raval, in Carrer de la Cera. Its associated publisher is next to the Rambla del Raval, in Carrer Aurora. Then again, the almost legendary anti-Franco and Catalan nationalist publisher Edicions 62, which is now very well established and recognised, is in a new building in Carrer del Carme, two streets away from the Plaça dels Àngels.

The mass media, like the publishers, does not comprise a long list of examples but the fact that there are recent additions is highly symptomatic of the changes that are taking place or, at least, of existing expectations of change. Although the editorial department of *La*

Table 28 / **Bookshops and publishers in the Raval (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

BOOKSHOPS / PUBLISHERS

Virus

Local

La Central

Edicions 62

Libro Azul

Loring

Librería Medios

Vanguardia has left the area, the Associació Catalana de la Premsa Comarcal (Catalan Regional Press Association) is now installed in Carrer Hospital on the Rambla de Raval corner, and *El Punt*, *Vilaweb* and *El 9* (local Catalan media) are in a new building on a former “bad street” in the southern area of the Raval.

Table 29 / **The media in the Raval (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

MASS MEDIA

El Punt

Vilaweb

El 9

Asociación Catalana de la Prensa Comarcal

The university faculties comprise one of the nuclei in the revitalisation programmes for the Raval. The Blanquerna Faculty of Communication Sciences at the Ramon Llull University and the Geography and History Faculty of the University of Barcelona (as yet to be opened) were envisaged in the original plan of the MACBA-CCCB cultural cluster. Again, in the Plaça dels Àngels, there is the Centre d’Informació i Documentació Internacional a Barcelona (Barcelona Centre for Information and Documentation), generally known as CIDOB and, next to the CCCB, the Centre d’Estudis i Recursos Culturals (Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources – CERC), which is a cultural advisory centre for the Department of Culture of the Provincial Council of Barcelona. Between Carrer del Carme and Carrer Hospital there are several major cultural and scientific institutions like the IEC (Institute for Catalan Studies), which has two offices, the original one in Carrer del Carme and a new one in Carrer Maria Aurèlia Capmany, the Library of Catalonia, and the Barcelona office of the Centre Superior d’Investigació Científica (Council for Scientific Research) with a researchers’ residence in Carrer Hospital. Also to be found in this street is one of Barcelona’s traditional educational/artistic institutions, the Escola Massana, which brings a considerable flow of young students from different artistic fields into the neighbourhood. In the southern sector of the Raval there is a small nucleus of educational institutions in the recently opened-up zone of Avinguda Drassanes with the Escola Oficial d’Idiomes (Official Language School of Barcelona), the Open University of Catalonia and Rosa Sensat, a major teachers’ association and centre of educational services.

Finally, we should like to mention the Documentation, Information and Service Department of the Institut Català de la Dona (Catalan Women's Institute) in Carrer Pintor Fortuny, which comes under the auspices of the Generalitat (Government) of Catalonia, and the Centre d'Informació i Assessorament per a Joves (Information and Advisory Centre for Youth), which, in its former office in Carrer Ferran, attracted considerable numbers of young people and tourists. Having moved now to premises in Carrer Sant Oleguer, it is part of the present effort to regenerate the zone below the Rambla del Raval.

Table 30 / **Educational institutions and research centres in the Raval (2004)**

Source: compiled by the authors

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS / RESEARCH CENTRES

CIDOB

Escola Massana Centre d'Art i Disseny (Massana School of Art and Design)

URL Facultat Ciències de la Comunicació Blanquerna (Ramon Llull University Blanquerna Faculty of Communication Sciences)

University of Barcelona Faculty of History

Rosa Sensat teachers' association

IEC (Institute for Catalan Studies)

Escola Oficial d'Idiomes (Official Language School)

UOC, Centre de suport de Barcelona (Open University Barcelona Support Centre)

Escola de Música Taller de Músics (Musicians' Workshop School)

CERC (Centre for Cultural Studies and Resources)

Centre Superior d'Investigació Científica (Council for Scientific Research)

Biblioteca de Catalunya (Library of Catalonia)

Centre Informació i Assessorament per a Joves (Information and Advisory Centre for Youth)

Institut Català de la Dona. Centre de Documentació, informació i atenció (Documentation, Information and Service Department of the Catalan Women's Institute)

The Taller de Músics (Musicians' Workshop) deserves special mention. *El Taller*, as it is called, is essentially a private music school teaching jazz and other kinds of contemporary music to some 900 students. While it is geographically isolated from other cultural institutions in the neighbourhood, the Taller de Músics has by itself created a musical reference point in a previously run-down zone in the triangle of streets formed by Príncep de Viana, Requesens and Cendra, with its different premises for rehearsal, classrooms and a recording studio. There is also a bar-cum-concert space (JazzSí), a record company and an artistic production centre. It is now 25 years since the Taller de Músics set up in the Raval and it has several premises in the aforementioned triangle of streets, in a zone bounded by the main road of Ronda Sant Antoni and the streets of Riera Alta and Sant Antoni Abat. When it came to the Raval at the end of the 1970s as the result of a series of chance events, cheap rent and an affinity for the clandestine atmosphere of that particular corner of the neighbourhood, there was no cultural precedent. Twenty-five years later, it is clear that the Taller has given great impetus to this area and it represents, thus, a small-scale case of cultural rehabilitation from the bottom up.

Economic changes

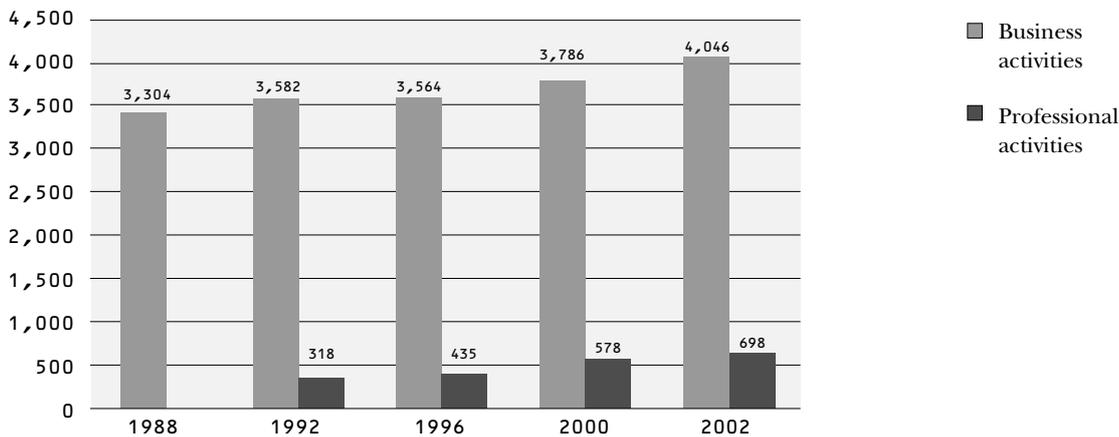
The project of reforming Ciutat Vella also aimed at introducing a new commercial impetus in the neighbourhoods involved. In the case of the Raval, the cultural component of the interventions was to have repercussions in terms of both the economic ventures that would open their doors and the new public uses (also in terms of potential consumers) of the neighbourhood. It was also envisaged that the influx of all these new users would contribute towards the symbolic transformation of the Raval.

Changes in economic activities

In fact, if we refer to the evolution of economic activity in the Raval over the past fourteen years, we shall see that there is increased activity in both business and professional spheres. Among the most prominent business activities in the Raval are retail outlets and the restoration sector and, with regard to relative growth, educational and health services along with real estate and company services have shown the highest levels of increase (see Graph 16).

Graph 16 / **Evolution of economic activities in the Raval (1988-2002)**

Source: Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2002



According to the data for 2002 the most prominent business activities in the Raval were retail concerns (36.6% of the total), restaurants, bars and hotels (16.02%), and other cultural and personal services (11.57%, including lifestyle and leisure, hairdressers, beauty salons, photography, and photocopy and other personal services). The most common professional activities come under the heading of “others” (20.83%, this including lottery and betting establishments, translators, and so on), professionals from the spheres of industry and construction (15.8%), and those from the domain of art and show business (14.8%). Thus, in 2002 a considerable part of the economic activities carried out in the Raval was related with the cultural sector. Moreover, this is a sector that in both business and professional domains has had a steadily increasing presence in the Raval, a fact that has been evident especially since 1996 (Graph 17).

New economic and cultural activities in the territory of the Raval

To what extent is there a correlation between the cultural dynamics of the Raval and its economic activity? In order to show this we have provided a map of the Raval’s cultural sectors (Map 1) and another of new businesses and economic activities (Map 2).⁸

8. These maps were finalised in July 2004.

MAP 1 / Cultural sectors

Source: the authors

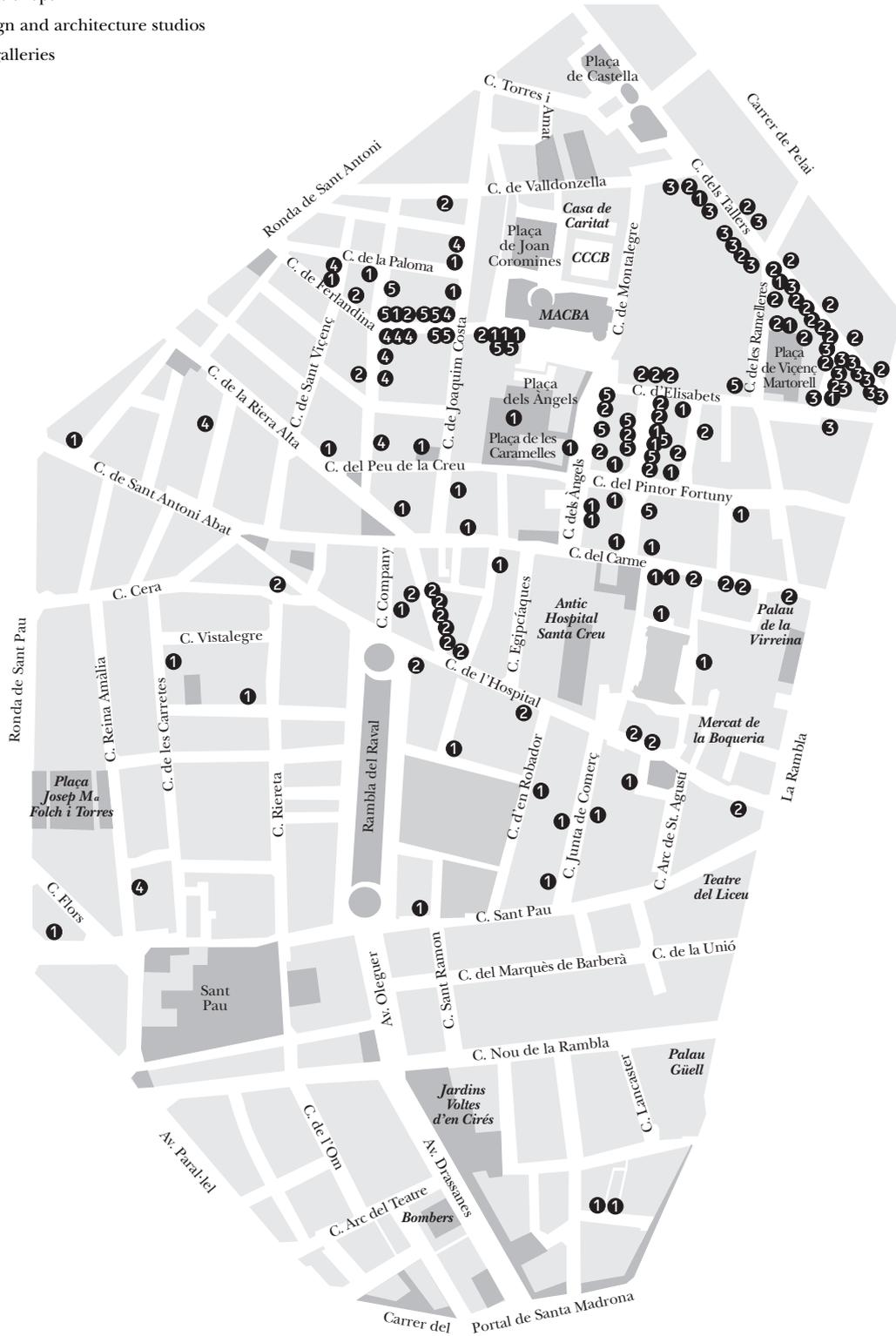
- ① Research and educational centres
- ② Personal services centres
- ③ Design and architecture studios
- ④ Art galleries
- ⑤ Cultural institutions
- ⑥ Bookshops and publishers
- ⑦ The media
- ⑧ Theatres and cabarets



MAP 2 / Sectors of new businesses and economic activities

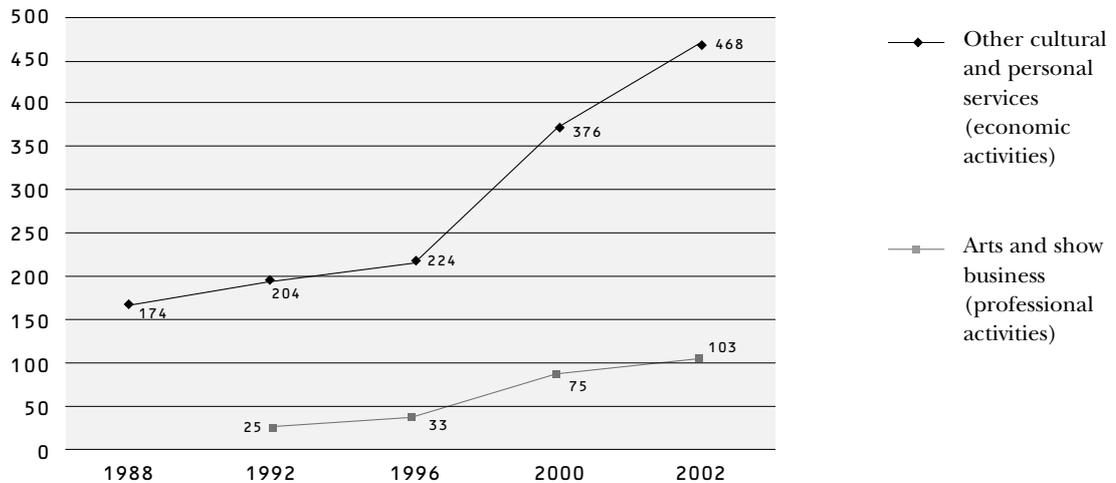
Source: the authors

- 1 Bars and restaurants
- 2 Fashion and design shops
- 3 Music shops
- 4 Design and architecture studios
- 5 Art galleries



Graph 17 / Evolution of culture-related economic activities in the Raval (1988-2002)

Source: Department of Statistics, Barcelona City Council, 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2002



In the Map 1 we have included not only the elements that would come under a limited conception of the word “culture” but also others that would be related with the creation of cultural contents directly (through exhibitions or activities), or indirectly (by creating audiences for such activities). Hence it shows cultural institutions, universities, theatres, bookshops, publishers, art schools, research centres and personal services centres for young people and women, along with nightclubs, concert spaces, art galleries and architecture and design studios.

The other map of new businesses and economic activities shows the whole range of premises that have recently been opened in the Raval, frequently with the label of *trendy* or *fashionable*. The new profile of their clients is that of a young middle-class population, the new kinds of people who come to the Raval (both from Barcelona and tourists). In this map we therefore include music shops, restaurants, bars, fashion and design boutiques, along with art galleries and design and architecture studios.

With regard to the cultural institutions, we find the cultural cluster comprised by the MACBA, FAD (Decorative Arts Association, which also has premises in the Raval’s southern sector) and the CCCB. In the central streets of the neighbourhood are the Espai Mallorca (Mallorca Space) and La Capella, the exhibition space of the ICUB (Culture Institute of Barcelona). In the southern sector is the area’s only heritage building of international relevance, Gaudí’s Güell Palace and, in the Rambla Santa Mònica, the Santa Mònica Art Centre. In brief, though they might give the impression of a certain dispersion despite the Plaça dels Àngels nucleus, these seven cultural institutions are not far from the route marked out on the urban plan *Del Liceu al Seminari* (From the Liceu to the Seminary).

Moreover, there are the educational institutions and research centres, most of them in the northern sector. In the south, around the Avinguda Drassanes, there is a small nucleus of educational institutions consisting of the Escola Oficial d’Idiomes (Official Language School of Barcelona), the Open University of Catalonia and Rosa Sensat, a major teachers’ association and educational services centre. Most of the institutions are to be found in the northern sector, some of them being quite old, for example the Library of Catalonia and the Institute of Catalan Studies with its two offices, the original one in Carrer del Carme and the new one

in Carrer Maria Aurèlia Capmany; the Massana Art School and the Barcelona premises of CSIC (Council for Scientific Research), which, apart from its offices, also has a researchers' residence in Carrer Hospital. At something of a distance is the Taller de Músics (Musicians Workshop) which in itself constitutes a musical reference point in the triangle of streets formed by Príncep de Viana, Requesens and Cendra.

Nonetheless, some of these centres and institutions have been in the neighbourhood for less time. In fact some of them moved in at the time the reform project started to get underway, which is the case of the CERC (Centre of Cultural Studies and Resources) and CIDOB (Barcelona Centre for International Information and Documentation). Others were envisaged as part of the Raval project, for example the Blanquerna Faculty of the Ramon Llull University and the Geography and History Faculty of the Central University of Barcelona.

There are not many places that come under the heading "Personal services centres". One of these is the Documentation, Information and Service Department of the Institut Català de la Dona (Catalan Women's Institute) in the outer Raval. However, it is worth mentioning that the CIAJ (Information and Advisory Centre for Youth) has moved from Carrer Ferran to Carrer Sant Oleguer as part of the present efforts to regenerate the area below the Rambla del Raval.

As for the remaining cultural entities present in the Raval – all of them preeminently non-public – we find that the cultural cluster has brought about a certain, but quite moderate, concentration of particular kinds of premises. The paradigmatic case is that of art galleries. Even though most of them have opened up in the streets around the nucleus of the square, they have done so to a lesser extent than expected and some of them have had to close down because they were not viable. Design and architecture studios have been setting up near the cluster, although closer to the north-western side because of prices.

Among the bookshops and publishing houses, which are not very present in the Raval, we find several that are either highbrow or have specialised in cultural issues. There are three bookshops around the Plaça dels Àngels, while another bookshop and a well-known publisher have their premises in the north-eastern zone. The bookshop Lokal, which is alternative and political in its concerns, is the only one, along with its publishing house, to be found in an area of the Raval that has been least affected by the urban reforms.

There are not many offices of the mass media either, but the fact that there are some new establishments is highly symptomatic of changes now occurring or, in any case, of expectations of change. As we have noted, even though *La Vanguardia* has moved out of Carrer Pelai to new premises on the Diagonal, other branches of the media have come into the Raval. The Associació Catalana de la Premsa Comarcal (Catalan Regional Press Association) is at the start of the Rambla del Raval and *El Punt*, *Vilaweb*, and *El 9* (local Catalan publications) are in a building in Carrer Sant Oleguer, directly opposite the aforementioned CIAJ (Information and Advisory Centre for Youth).

As we have already remarked, the Raval has quite a lot of theatre premises. They represent different levels of professionalism, reputation, artistic segments and are addressed to different types of audiences. In fact there are as many kinds of theatres in the Raval as there are *Ravals*. The difference between them, however, might be determined by the locations of the different kinds. Hence the traditional theatres or concert halls are at the periphery of the neighbourhood, so that four are to be found along the Rambla or nearby (from north to south, the Poliorama, Romea, Liceu, Principal), while there is another next to the Ronda Sant Antoni (the Goya), and two more (Arnau and Tantarantana) which are located in what was one of

the main zones of boulevard theatre in Barcelona, the Paral·lel. In contrast, and significantly so, with the exception of Tantarantana, the theatres that are *off* the commercial circuit are in the interior of the Raval: the Llantiol, the Riereta and the Almazén cultural association, which engages in all kinds of activities and is near the La Paloma nightclub and cabaret. Further to the south are the Espai Mer, El Conservas, which is halfway between a theatre and an activist exhibition-meeting place, and the Kràmpack theatre.

Another aspect of economic change occurring in the Raval that we might relate with the presence of the cultural cluster is the appearance in the neighbourhood of a new type of business, which we have called *trendy*. We are not aware of any previous studies of the phenomenon and have thus done the ground-breaking inquiry into the sector ourselves. Through tourist guides, advertising from the sector and direct observation we have made a list of the businesses that we have thus categorised so as to distinguish them from the more traditional ones, from those of non-European immigrants and chain stores. Out of a total of 150, they can be distributed more or less into the following groups: design and fashion boutiques (54), restaurants and bars (50), music shops (19), galleries and art businesses (16), and design and architecture studios (11).

Table 31 / “Trendy” businesses in the Raval (July 2004)

Source: compiled by the authors

TYPE OF BUSINESS	NUMBER
Restaurants and bars	50
Design and fashion boutiques	54
Design and architecture studios	11
Galleries and art businesses	16
Music shops	19
TOTAL	150

And what is special about these new places? We have previously remarked that these are spaces of precise design, targeting a youthful population with medium to high acquisitive power. Below we shall reproduce some descriptions of these places to be found in tourist guides (Table 32).

As one can see, the restaurants are described as being along cosmopolitan lines, combining singularity and modern orientation and seeking clients that do not seem to coincide with what we would call the long-time local resident or newcomer immigrants. The descriptions of the shops also convey the idea of singularity: one-off pieces, clothing by young designers and exclusive collections, etc. The way of describing these businesses and what they offer suggests that they are establishments targeting clients with a much higher acquisitive power than that of most of the Raval’s population.

These businesses are not uniformly distributed throughout the neighbourhood but, rather, are concentrated in the north-eastern sector, the zone that has always been the most cleaned up for commercial purposes. The map very clearly shows this concentration, in particular with regard to specific kinds of businesses. For example, and as we have already noted, the tendency of art galleries has been to set up close to the nucleus of cultural institutions in the Plaça dels Àngels, while most of the design and architecture studios have moved into this area as well, in particular into the small streets of the north-western sector of the Raval. However, it

Table 32 / **Descriptions of a set of new businesses and economic activities in the Raval**Source: *Compiled by the authors from the guides cited above*

DESCRIPTION	PLACE AND GUIDE FROM WHICH THE QUOTE IS TAKEN
RESTAURANTS AND BARS	
<i>Surprisingly imaginative dishes and a wine list to keep in mind. From an Indian thali to an Arab tabbouleh or Mediterranean fig salad.</i>	Plats! Guia d'establiments singulars (Guide to Singular Establishments)
<i>Restaurant with signature cuisine, with live music and DJs on the ground floor. Sundays, brunch and Mexican cooking. A list of 50 cocktails.</i>	Dostrece point.bcn (FAD)
<i>Fusion of Japanese and Latin-American flavours. Cocktails and sushi bar. Nights only, sushi classes.</i>	Umita point.bcn (FAD)
<i>Indubitably one of the founders of the latest batch of somewhat alternative places. Hybrid clientele of students, guiris, bohemians, local residents and families.</i>	Kasparo Guia Off de Barcelona
DESIGN AND FASHION BOUTIQUES	
<i>Decorative objects and furniture, usually hand-crafted, from Morocco, Turkey, Senegal, Japan, Indonesia and Egypt. Unique and at times spectacular pieces, like pirogue shelves.</i>	Pan con Tomate Guia d'establiments singulars (Guide to Singular Establishments)
<i>Clothing by young designers. Les Mains, Konrad Muhr and Resist for him and her. Juma-Alemaný or the exclusive collection by Carme Morral. Bags by Pequeño Poder and Cyan. Exhibition space for the work of photographers and videoartists.</i>	El Chalet de los Alpes Guia d'establiments singulars (Guide to Singular Establishments)
<i>Good atmosphere with pros who listen and give advice without imposing unsuitable styles however wildly up-to-the-minute they might be. Navigate on internet while you wait.</i>	La Pelu Guia d'establiments singulars (Guide to Singular Establishments)

should also be remarked that these businesses are starting to spread southwards, via the Rambla del Raval into the narrow interior streets to the west of this thoroughfare (Rieretes and Carretes) or through the zone of Padró and Peu de la Creu, etc.. The process, then, is extending and is not just confined to the northern sector.

There are also two specialised commercial areas in the Raval, both relatively distant from the Plaça dels Àngels nucleus. One of these is Carrer Tallers, essentially specialising in music and preceding the establishment of the Raval's cultural institutions. However, this area has undergone regeneration in recent years and new and different establishments, which we have included in our category of new businesses, have been opened up (clothing shops, restaurants, hairdressers). The other area is Riera Baixa, specialising in second-hand and vintage clothing. Indeed it represents one of the city's main commercial outlets for this type of clothing. Despite its being a small and relatively tucked-away street (even though it does connect with Carrer del carne and Carrer Hospital), it has a considerable influx of buyers.

The remaining establishments appearing on the map are shops, or restaurants and bars (in fact, as we have noted at the start of this section, these are the most usual among the Raval's commercial establishments). At first they moved into the north-eastern sector, the nearest to

the nucleus of museums, which is still the most attractive for visitors to the neighbourhood. Nonetheless, at present, and given the Raval's new power of attraction for new types of visitors and users, the bars and restaurants are increasingly spreading further afield. Quite a lot are now opening up in the area between Carrer del Carme and Carrer Hospital and a not inconsiderable number of bars and restaurants are beginning to cross the frontier between the Raval's northern and southern sectors. All these new restaurants and bars located between Sant Pau, Hospital and the two Ramblas seem to be moving along the lines of what is perhaps expected with interventions like the recently installed Rambla del Raval and the future Robadors block project. The sector that will apparently be least affected by the changes in the Raval is the south-western area.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As we have seen, the Raval has been subjected to far-reaching changes over the last twenty years. The balance today is essentially positive, even though there is still considerable uncertainty as to what the final result of this process of transformation will be. There are doubts that have arisen because of variables that were not foreseen at the start or even in the early stages of the process. We can therefore speak at present of desired and successfully attained changes (the establishment of new cultural institutions, a new economic impetus, relocation of residents into refurbished housing) and unwanted changes (very rapid and, to some extent, chaotic social and ethnic diversification in the neighbourhood, reoccupation of interstitial or derelict spaces by immigrants). We can even talk of concluded transformations (the cultural cluster of the Plaça dels Àngels, the incorporation of private enterprise in the north-eastern zone) and pending changes (the southern area of the Raval, the presence of more private investment).

The transformation of the Raval has a core feature that, although linking up with prior attempts, has renovated them and reconsidered them with regard to aims and means. The public sphere is predominant in the process and the way of going about the transformation is top-down. The basic idea was significantly in keeping with that of cleaning up, but the idea was to approach this with the aim of ensuring that the original population remained in the neighbourhood, dignifying and improving their conditions of life and doing this in such a way as to take advantage of and reinforce the Raval's elements of historic value, which were to some extent under-appreciated: its proximity to the centre of the city, its history, its legacy and its cultural potential in different fields. Hence, the plan was to respect the residents and to enhance their conditions of life by means of a considerable injection of public funds that would bring private investment in their wake so as to diversify the population and uses of the neighbourhood. The danger lurking in the background of this operation, which has been repeatedly pointed out over the years, was that the final result would be expulsion of the long-term and less-influential residents with a certain social desertification within a culturally and commercially oriented neighbourhood.

At the fringes of this project, global processes and the great migrations of the end of the twentieth century have meant that the Raval has rediscovered its traditional and recidivist status of being a place of refuge for people with almost no means who come to the city to seek

work and a future. This is a bottom-up process, which is equally as significant as the top-down one, if not more so, but this time it was not taken into account. The Raval has thus recovered its sub-standard, abandoned or derelict housing, has recovered its densely-packed living conditions, and has recovered its lost patches of high population density with the tremendous waves of immigration. This time the immigrants are of all sorts of origins, colours, languages and religions. The newcomers fill the spaces that have not undergone transformation and halt or slow the incorporation of private capital into the dynamics of change. In this case, the danger that has arisen, and one that is invoked by many people, is that the Raval will close in on itself, will generate frontiers between the neighbourhood and its surroundings, will become a ghetto, hence reinforcing its social exclusion and stigmatisation. However, today this is more supposition than reality. Today's Raval is not a ghetto.

In parallel with these two processes, in a way that is less visible but no less significant, is the arrival in the neighbourhood of new residents whom we might describe as modern: artists, professionals, Erasmusstudents, and alternative types. From different backgrounds (many are foreigners), they occupy very different kinds of spaces, generate dynamics that are different from those of the traditional residents, and contribute a range of discourses and cognitive frameworks to the dilemmas that have arisen with regard to the processes of transformation occurring in the Raval. Their views and their actions frequently aim at legitimating, or refusing to legitimate, the changes and alternatives that are appearing in the neighbourhood. In retrospect their presence may be seen as positive because it has meant avoiding a strictly bipolar economic-cultural and immigrant-derived transformation that might have been accentuated. The danger of their presence (very limited in this case because of their small numbers) would be that they would bring with them the theme-park syndrome.

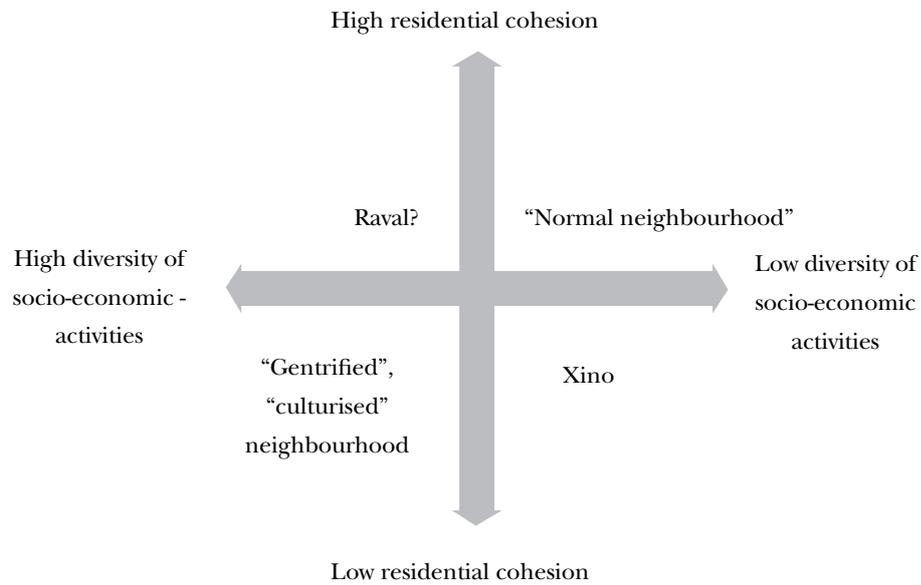
The fact is that today (2005) there are many Ravals underway and overlapping with each other. It is not possible to identify with precision any particular trend towards any one of the hypotheses we have examined or any other we might add. If we look at what is happening in some streets, squares or zones, or at what is starting to happen in some parts of the neighbourhood, we would have different signs and signals. The picture is complex because the reality of the Raval is complex. There are market dynamics (still fairly unclear operations of buying and selling commercial premises and housing) of a high degree of ethnic and social homogeneity in some enclaves coexisting with very intense and tense *mélanges*, with potent displays of high culture in some zones, night-time leisure spaces, a great number of restaurants and bars, along with emergent cultural experiences but without, however, a very significant presence of tourists hitherto (this is much more evident in other parts of the city).

Today the Raval has a present that is clearly better than the one it had in the 1970s, but it has also accumulated a lot of uncertainties that it did not have then. The Raval appears as a big urban question mark. We might even say that the Raval today (as it has been at other times in its history) is a clamorous precedent for the questions facing the city as a whole. If in the 1970s the aim was to make of the Raval a neighbourhood like any other, today it continues to be a different one where the old stigmas, the newcomers from so many places, the artistic interventions and its centrality have been able to maintain it in its tension between the cool, arty neighbourhood and the poor, excluded neighbourhood, but one that is always singular. It is a neighbourhood that can therefore inspire rejection in some people but also support in many others, both locally and around the world, because of the very rich urban experience that is offered in this area between the Rondes and the Rambla.

We could attempt to fit the Raval's present situation into a certain typology in which we mix, first, consistency in its capacity to satisfy the demands of its residents and, second, the variety and diversity of the socio-economic activities taking place there (Graph 18).

Graph 18 / **Raval potential**

Source: compiled by the authors



We might then be able to say that the idea was to shift the Xino situation into evolving towards that of a normal neighbourhood, but evolution towards a culture park-style area without social diversity or any real neighbourhood life was also possible. The option taken at the start of the remodelling process oscillated between the two possibilities. The unforeseen situations that have since arisen have meant that the Raval is now in a situation in which both alternatives continue to be present, but it is also possible that the Raval of the future will achieve the status of a normal neighbourhood because of its ability to provide a coherent response to the needs of its residents, doing so without renouncing its undeniable capacity for diversifying and pluralising its socio-economic activities, taking advantage of its central location but without giving up its singular character.

If we were to try to indicate some possible future trends, we would say that the Raval will have fewer residents in the category of those who lived there traditionally (for demographic reasons and because of personal decisions), more stable immigrant residents (for market and settlement reasons) and will continue to have its trendy and alternative residents as well, although in a more discontinuous and floating fashion (because of prices, central location, cultural dynamism and leisure and connection opportunities). The *mélange* will thus remain. However, the danger is reinforcement of the frontier tendencies that are hinted at today. Everything seems to suggest that it will be necessary to work in a differentiated manner in the different territories and their micro-enclaves, and to insist on frontier and central spaces from the standpoint of bridge-building and creating links that will maintain the neighbourhood's mixtures and the coexistence of its people.

In all this process the role of the cultural cluster around the Plaça dels Àngels has been notable. The strange (a modern museum in the middle of the old city) but prestigious element of the MACBA is accompanied by the presence of the CCCB, which, although it started out with less evident objectives, has now become a key reference in the city as a place of exhibitions and attractive debates, hybrid (from the disciplinary point of view), risky and innovative artistic experiences (in the broad sense), and as a container-cum-meeting place for a wide range of civic activities. The impact of the cluster might be seen in the increased diversity of socio-economic activities around it, the presence of artistic/cultural/professional initiatives that are somehow linked with the cluster, and in certain social changes in the sector of the neighbourhood in which it is located.

A number of concerns about the Raval's futures arise from all the foregoing observations. The neighbourhood has clearly improved the physical conditions of many of its streets and squares. It has gained spaces and noticeably reduced its more insalubrious areas. The north-eastern sector of the Raval is the most conspicuously affected by the rehabilitation with the opening of a set of the city's cultural institutions that, thanks to their good functioning, have meant that many other activities in the zone have prospered. In other sectors of the neighbourhood, the impact of the changes is less or non-existent, although new projects are still to be undertaken and applied and these might bring about similar results, in particular in the south-eastern sector. The neighbourhood has undergone great changes in its social composition in recent years. It is in this regard that the Raval needs more initiatives to assist it in becoming just another neighbourhood of the city, with sufficient services and proper living conditions, especially in the south-western sector, which is least affected by the changes. It is important to maintain the Raval's ability to be a space for the city as a whole, a good neighbourhood for living in with its full complement of services and living conditions, and a neighbourhood that can forge one of its main features from its social mix and diversity of activities and residents. The consolidation of barriers between sectors, areas and collectives should be avoided. In doing so, the elements and opportunities for meeting should be increased, along with improving the quality of the neighbourhood's residential services (in this case the Raval's singularity need not be maintained), while acting prudently with the large-scale projects that are still to be implemented (for example, that envisaged for the Robadors block), starting to act in the south-western sector, which is the most neglected and problematic, and also working at bringing the neighbourhood's different components together, recognising their diversity and specificity but also the common aspects that are enhanced by the territory itself and the sharing of problems.

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