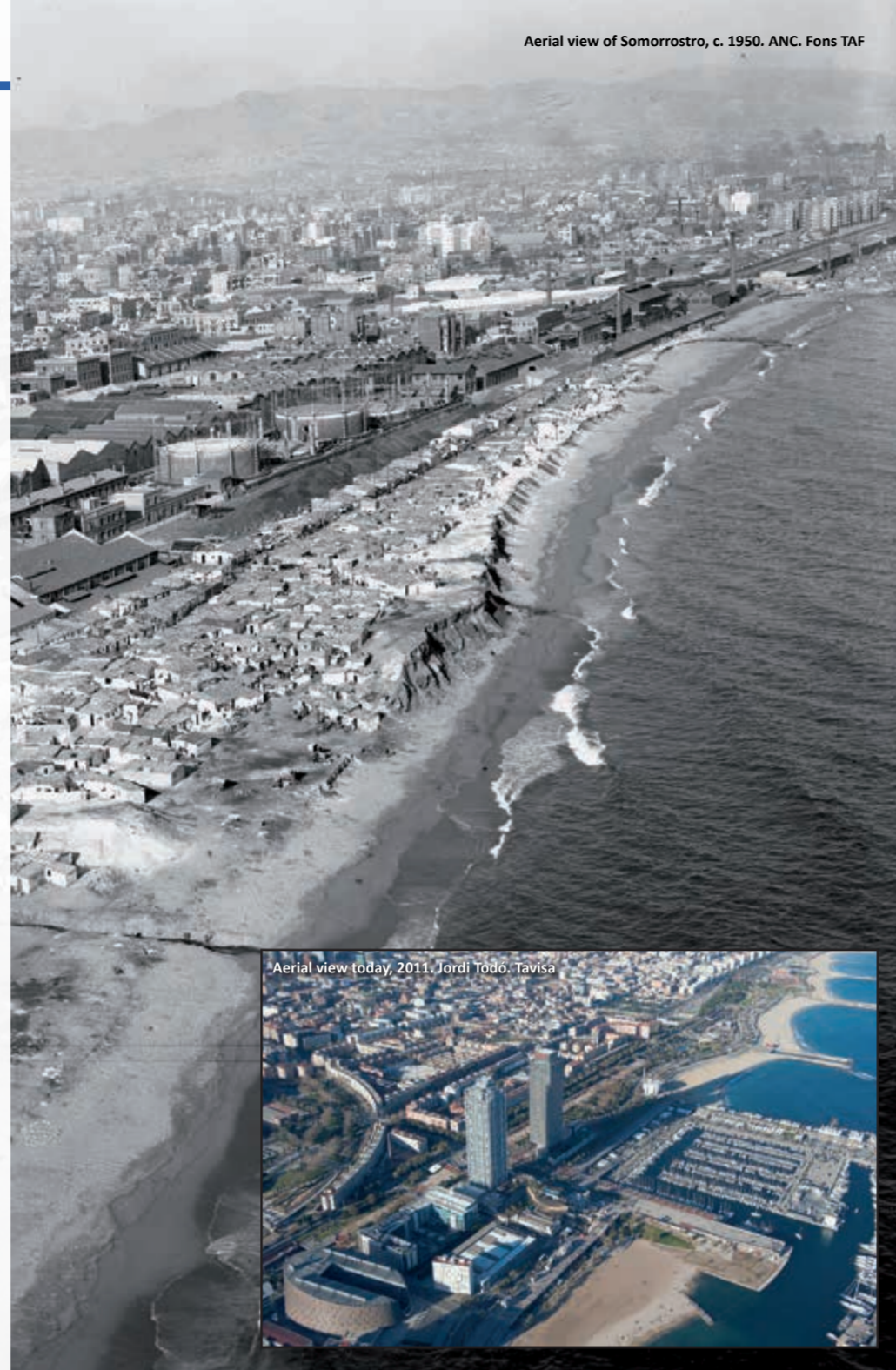


In the 1870s, the Somorrostro and Pequin shanty towns sprang up on the seafront, stretching from La Barceloneta neighbourhood to the Besòs River, although it had previously been the site of fishermen's huts. The ramshackle dwellings were built on state-owned land, amidst factories, the railway and the sea. The arrival of workers for the 1888 Universal Exposition is one of the reasons accounting for the expansion of precarious housing on the beaches. In the 1920s, there were four well-established sites, each with approximately one hundred shanty dwellings: Somorrostro, Bogatell, Mar Bella and Pequin. The shanty settlement of Rere Cementiri, in Poblenou, had also taken shape, and Camp de la Bota spread as of 1925. The population of these informal settlements mostly hailed from Valencia, Murcia, Aragon and Andalusia.

The coastline's shanty towns witnessed tremendous growth in the post-war period and reached the pinnacle of their expansion in the mid-1950s. The dwellings varied greatly, from structures made of wood and material gleaned from the beach to small houses made of brick and cement. There was no running water or any kind of infrastructure. As a result of the narrow alleyways and wastewater discharged directly into the sea, infections were common, and storms often destroyed the dwellings.

Given the neglect of the dictatorship's authorities, the Church, often out of paternalism, provided care services. Under its auspices, various social initiatives were rolled out in the shanty towns until the initiatives were diversified in the 1960s and social workers came into being.

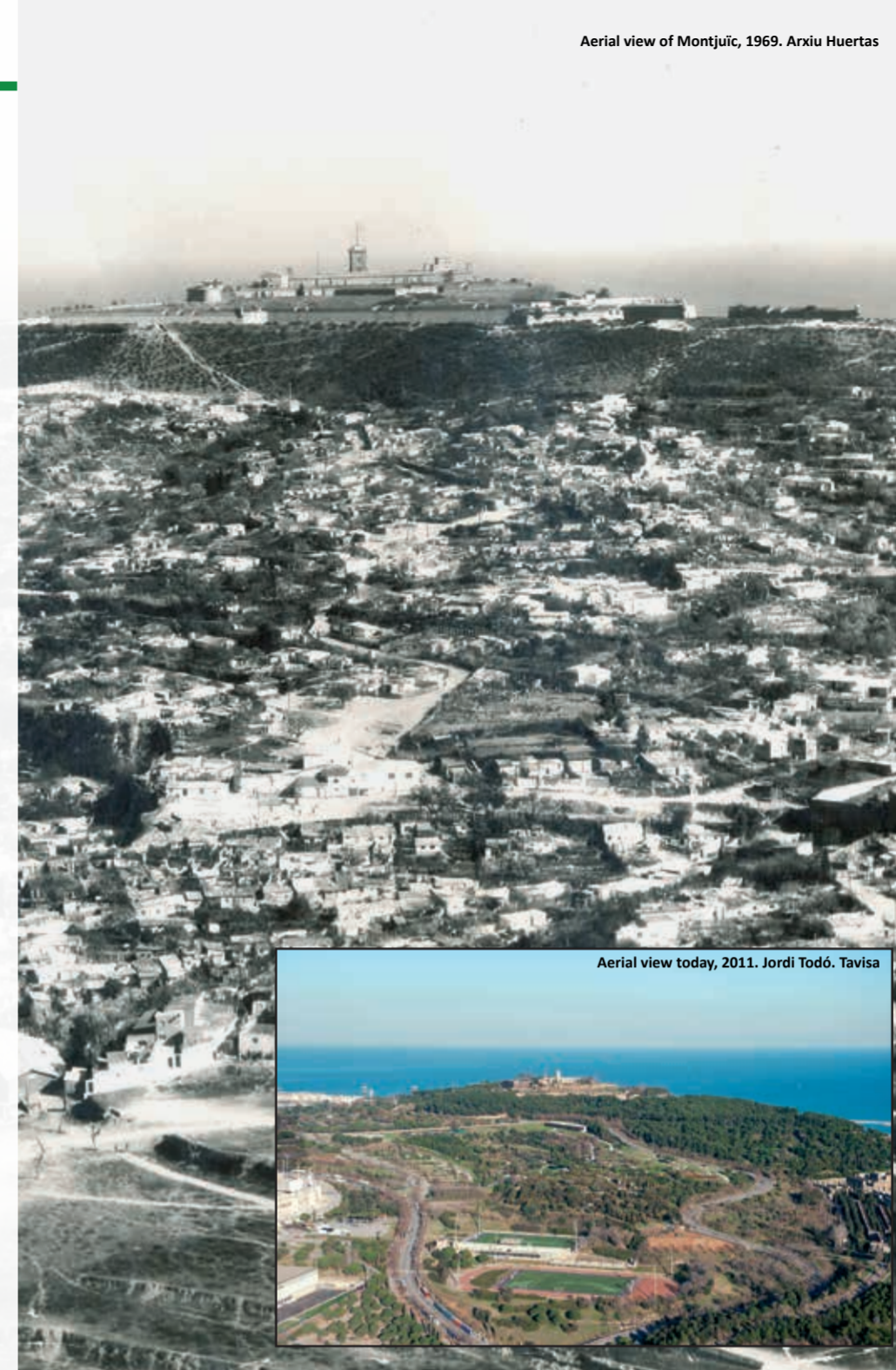
The extension of the Passeig Marítim, seafront promenade, between 1957 and 1964 saw the demolition of some of the shanties, which was permanent with the dramatic transformation of the seafront for the 1992 Olympic Games. A radically different landscape was designed in its place, stretching from the Vila Olímpica to the Fòrum.



The presence of shanties on Montjuïc is documented since 1885, when the order was given to demolish those inhabited by quarry workers. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the subdivision of municipal and private land for the purpose of planting vegetable gardens, whose number reached in excess of two thousand, was a catalyst in the appearance of new shanties. In the 1920s and 30s, the pace of construction burgeoned with the massive influx of workers for major public works owing to the construction of the underground and works for the Universal Exposition finally held in 1929. The number of shanties in this area reached 3,500.

Immigration in the 1950s and 60s turned Montjuïc into the most populous shanty town. In 1957, 6,090 shanties accommodated more than 30,000 people. On the west side of the mountain, the neighbourhoods of Tres Pins, Can Valero, Les Banderes, Damunt la Fossa and other smaller concentrations formed a continuum. On the northern slope of the mountain, noteworthy were the Poble-sec and Maricel shanties and, by the sea, Can Tunis and Morrot.

The neighbouring parishes and some religious orders opened chapels, schools and clinics. Shops, bars, makeshift dance halls and cinemas also emerged, and a social fabric was gradually woven which, in the mid-1960s, allowed the shanty dwellers to come together in a community movement to demand improvements. Under the slogan "one flat per family", their struggle influenced the policy of Francoist authorities, at a time in which the demolition of shanty towns turned into a priority on the political agenda. However, the construction of estates to rehouse the shanty dwellers progressed slowly and had many deficiencies. Most of the shanty towns did not disappear until 1972.



Shantyism in Barcelona was an urban phenomenon, which began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and lasted until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. In a period of rapid growth in Barcelona, the typical housing solutions for the most disadvantaged from the outset of industrialisation, such as the division of flats, sub-let rooms and boarding houses, proved insufficient to offset the housing shortage, in a city where it was more difficult to find accommodation than to find employment.

In 1922, with an official census of 6,000 shanties, shanty towns comprised a scattered informal city, with shanty areas such as Somorrostro, Pequin and Camp de la Bota, along the seafront, and Tres Pins and Can Valero, on Montjuïc, plus a cluster of smaller areas on the hills and at the foot of Collserola. The shanties were also located in interstitial places within the city's formal structure, both in some blocks at the two ends of the Eixample neighbourhood, and in contact areas between Sants, Les Corts and L'Hospitalet.

After the Spanish Civil War, the concentrations of existing shanties resumed their expansion and new ones were formed, as a result of the influx of migrants, both for economic and political reasons, to a city where the chronic housing shortage had been exacerbated by the effect of bombings and the economic and social crisis. In 1949, the Service for Control and Suppression of Shantyism came into being, which, among other tasks, was in charge of returning newcomers to their places of origin: the official city repressed shantyism yet tolerated it at the same time, especially when economic growth picked up and needed a workforce.

In the mid-1950s, Barcelona began to be revived and, some years later, shanty towns reached their peak, amounting to 20,000 shanties that housed between 70,000 and 100,000 people, almost 7% of the city's population at the end of the decade. The shanties therefore became a reserve of informal housing, an urban capital created by the residents themselves, which proved essential for housing a large number of people who had come to work in industry and services.

The shanty towns were located in areas that were often not approved for building and, therefore, beyond the scope of planning. Added to the precariousness of construction was the lack of sewage, water and electricity. The shortage of healthcare services was mitigated at first by the social action of parishes in nearby neighbourhoods, with the provision of pastoral care, and later the activities of religious orders dedicated to education. In the late 1960s, community action was carried out by social workers from Càritas and the Municipal Housing Board, responsible for resolving the shanty town issue. However, the shanty dwellers gradually developed their own community solidarity networks and achieved temporary improvements by means of direct actions and demands vis-à-vis the authorities.

Various urban redevelopment initiatives led to the pulling down of the first shanty towns, and emergency situations, such as floods and landslides, forced the relocation of the victims to temporary accommodation such as the Stadium and Belgian Pavilion, on Montjuïc.

Gradually, the emergence of a more agile housing market and the rolling out of social housing policies promoted the eradication of shanty towns. The 1958 Social Emergency Plan initiated the construction of large-scale council housing estates on the outskirts of the city and other towns in the metropolitan area.

More organised community associations in the shanty towns, which pushed for improvements with greater vigour, put forward alternative solutions to build flats in the same place as the shanties. However, only in some cases, such as El Carmel, did they accomplish their goal. This collective struggle forged organisational ties that were upheld in the new resettlement estates, where often the most basic infrastructure was yet to be built.

The eradication of shanty towns was not completed until the years of the Transition and the first democratic councils. In 1974, an official count registered 1,460 shanties, and in 1980 the Management Committee for the Eradication of Shanty Towns was set up, whose more social-oriented approaches were very much needed in the case of shanty towns where the population who had inhabited them for a long time was being replaced by families with a much more precarious situation, in some cases gypsy communities. In the 1982 census, there were still 1,108 shanties. Finally, on account of the urban planning operations spearheaded in the years prior to the 1992 Olympic Games, the last shanty towns in the municipality of Barcelona were torn down.



EL CARMEL TURÓ DE LA ROVIRA

The shanty town of Turó de la Rovira is a prime example of how the informal city spread. In the 1940s, hundreds of people availed of the anti-aircraft battery, perched on top of the hill, to build the shanties of Els Canons. The surrounding area also saw the emergence of the Raimon Casellas and Francesc Alegre shanty towns: by the 1960s, the area housed some 3,000 inhabitants. In the vicinity, there were also concentrations of shanties at the foot of the hills of El Coll and El Carmel, alongside various types of dwellings built by the residents themselves, typical of the entire Tres Turons area.

The shanties adapted to the relief of the terrain, marked by the steep gradient and quarrying at Can Boró. Both the dwellings, initially built of stones and covered with leather-backed cardboard, and the streets were improved over the years until cohesive quarters were built. The remains of buildings and floors of the shanties, which are now part of the heritage collection belonging to Barcelona City History Museum in Turó de la Rovira, bear testimony to the ingenuity and adaptability of those who lived in these dwellings.

For many years, the shanty dwellers lived without roads or services of any kind. El Carmel Social Centre, which became a community association in 1972, staged a relentless struggle until the institutions provided a solution. The relative isolation of these areas meant they were the last to remain in the city. Their inhabitants demanded the construction of apartments in the same area, and they succeeded in 1984, in one of the few examples of this kind to be brought to fruition in Barcelona. The last shanties were pulled down in 1990 and marked the end of Barcelona's shanty towns.



OTHER SHANTY TOWNS

Apart from the areas with the highest concentration of shanties, over the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many smaller concentrations of varying duration sprang up, which occupied vacant plots where the urban grid was unfinished, even in parts of the Eixample, as well as in peripheral areas in Les Corts, Poblenou and at the foot of the Collserola mountains.

As the expansion of the formal city progressively needed these spaces, their inhabitants were relocated. This was the case of the shanties on Diagonal, demolished just before the Eucharistic Congress was held in 1952, when the area was redeveloped. Its inhabitants were hurriedly rehoused in substandard housing blocks, in Can Clos, Cases del Governador and Via Trajana. Other shanty concentrations lasted longer, such as those behind the Hospital de Sant Pau, torn down in 1974 to build the Ronda de Guinardó ring road.

In many cases, for years, shanty concentrations appeared alongside areas that were being developed. La Perona came into being in an isolated area, but it continued growing when the nearby district of Verneda was being built. This co-existence generated tension, particularly because, as families in La Perona accessed rehousing programmes, the shanties were occupied once again by families that were in a much more precarious social situation, resulting in the area's growing marginalisation until 1989 when the residents' rehousing was completed.

The Santa Engràcia shanty quarter in Nou Barris, was an example of peaceful co-existence, for almost twenty years, of the shanties alongside the surrounding blocks of flats. In this case, the residents played an active role in promoting the rehousing of the shanty dwellers. A ten concentrations persisted in various parts of the city until the 1980s.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: Arxiu Fotogràfic de Barcelona (AFB), Arxiu Històric del Poblenou (AHPN), Arxiu Huertas, Arxiu Municipal Contemporani de Barcelona (AMCB), Museu d'Història de la Immigració de Catalunya (Arxiu MhIC), Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya (ANC), Arxiu del Patronat Municipal de l'Habitatge (APMH), Colecció Custòdia Moreno, Colecció Paco González, Colecció Xavier Vallory March, Institut Cartogràfic de Catalunya (ICC), Tavisca. Photographers: Josep Parer, Tomás Riva, Jordi Todó, Mariano Velasco

DOCUMENTATION: Elisenda Curia

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CERCLE DE MUSEUS D'HISTÒRIA DE BARCELONA

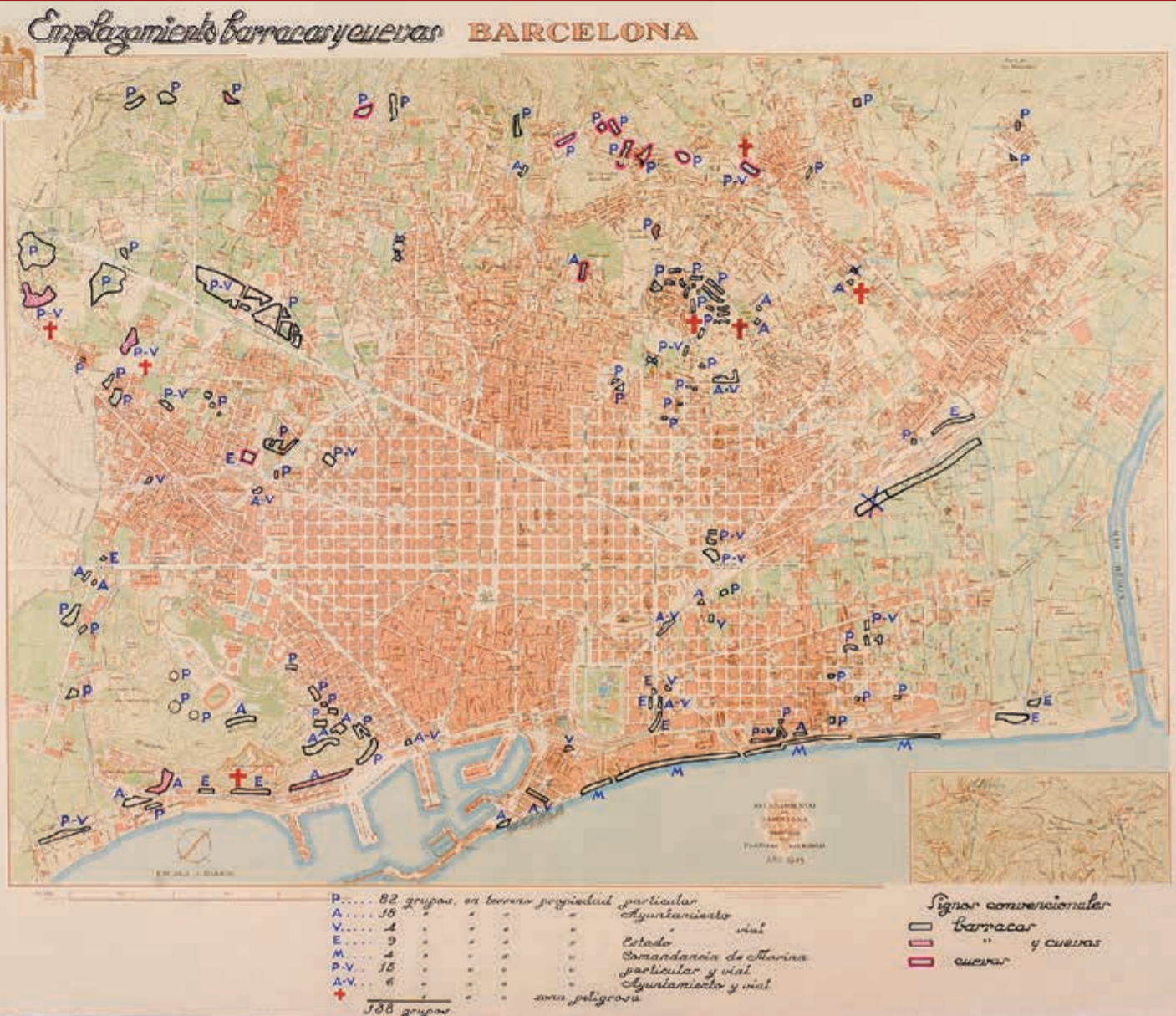
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# SHANTY TOWNS/BCN

The presence and distribution of shanty towns varied widely throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence of concentrations that grew and disappeared on account of the city's expansion, for instance, within the grid of the Eixample district, while in other areas, they survived for many decades. A constant was the presence of areas with a higher concentration and populace on the coastline and Montjuïc. As of the 1940s, new and sizable shanty areas were consolidated on the hills of El Carmel and La Perona. On today's map of Barcelona, some of the most noteworthy shanty towns in the informal city over the century are pinpointed.



Shanties and caves in Barcelona around 1948. Study drawn up by the City Council in which, on a base map dating from 1945, 138 concentrations are shown schematically, particularly on the coast, Montjuïc and the hills of El Carmel. Col·lecció de plànols, R.1339. AMCB

## SANTA ENGRÀCIA SHANTIES (1964-1983)

Plaça d'Àngel Pestaña

Aerial view of Santa Engràcia, c. 1980. APMH

The quarter came into being as a result of a scam, when a builder sold the same flats to different buyers. Those affected occupied the flats and soon after the shanties appeared in the vacant plot known by the name of "pla de Santa Engràcia", partly inhabited by gypsy communities. The affected owners and the resident association, established in the 1970s, spearheaded the demand for flats and the demolition of the shanties. In 1983, the shanty dwellers moved to the new RENFE-Meridiana blocks and the residents demanded a green area in the space formerly occupied by the shanties. The square was opened in 1986.

## ELS CANONS (c. 1944-1990)

End of the Carrer de Marià Labèrnia

Wedding in Els Canons, 1978. Col·lecció Paco González

Following the Spanish Civil War, homeless families settled in abandoned structures of the anti-aircraft battery in Turó de la Rovira, built to defend the city from the bombing by Fascist planes. Shanties were built within the military quarters and their surroundings. The area, known as "Los Cañones" by its residents, came to have almost 110 shanties. Its isolation made the day-to-day life of its 600 inhabitants, who were very much neglected, difficult. Vestiges of the shanties (floors and foundations of walls) remain, which have been consolidated as part of the city's heritage.

## FRANCESC ALEGRE (c. 1945-1990)

End of the Carrer de Francesc Alegre and Guinardó park

Francesc Alegre shanties, 1981. APMH

It was the most populous cluster of Turó de la Rovira, with 300 shanties and 1,680 inhabitants in 1976. El Hoyó shanties were situated in the hollow left by a former quarry and the others almost reached the top of the hill, adapting to the rugged relief, sometimes even to the very edge of the quarry. It was one of the last shanty towns to be demolished in Barcelona, in November 1990. There are still vestiges of shanties along roadsides and inside the parks of Guinardó and Els Tres Turons.

## RAIMON CASELLAS (c. 1945-1984)

El Carmel road and Raimon Casellas cluster of dwellings

Neighbourhood protest, 1976. Col·lecció Custodia Moreno

The quarter, located on a bend on the road to El Carmel, had 135 shanties in 1972, and was one of the scenes of the long struggle led by the El Carmel Resident Association to achieve basic services and access to flats for all the shanty dwellers in the area. In the late 1970s, some of the inhabitants moved to different housing estates, but the rest continued to demand the construction of flats on the site occupied by the shanties. The demand was met in 1984 with the opening of the properties known as "els pissos verds" (green flats).

## DIAGONAL AND SANTA GEMMA SHANTY TOWNS (early 1940s-1952)

Avinguda Diagonal, Plaça de la Reina Maria Cristina and Carrer del Capità Arenas

Shanties on Diagonal, c. 1949. AMCB

In the 1940s, the shanties occupied the "mountain" side of Diagonal avenue, on the plots and vegetable gardens between today's streets of Capità Arenas, Manuel Girona and Numància. There were some 200 shanties and some caves; the densest quarter was near the Church of Santa Gemma. In 1952, during preparations for the 35<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress, the shanties were urgently demolished. A total of 138 people were moved to unfinished flats in the Can Clos neighbourhood and, the rest, to the Cases del Governador in Verdum, to dwellings of tiny dimensions.

## HOSPITAL DE SANT PAU SHANTIES (1920s-1974)

Ronda del Guinardó / Carrer de Cartagena

Aerial view, c. 1970. APMH

Compact cluster of shanties on a plot that coincides with the Ronda del Guinardó ring road today, behind Hospital de Sant Pau. There were inhabited caves from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the 1920s, the shanties formed a cluster around Mas Casanovas, which spread in the post-war period. In 1971, the existence of 255 shanties and two fountains was noted. The shanties disappeared in 1974 in order to build the Ronda del Mig ring road, and the residents were moved to the neighbourhood of La Mina.

## LA PERONA (c. 1945-1989)

Ronda de Sant Martí, between the streets Carrer d'Espronceda and Rambla de Prim

Main street in La Perona, 1982. Mariano Velasco. APMH

The neighbourhood was formed in parallel to the railway line, and it owes its name to the visit paid by Eva Perón, wife of the president of Argentina, in 1947. The population grew during the 1950s and even more as of the 1960s, with the transfer of shanty dwellers to La Perona, especially gypsies, displaced on account of the demolition of Somorrostro and other shanty areas. In 1971, with more than 650 shanties and extending over almost two kilometres, La Perona became the largest settlement in Barcelona. The process of rehousing the inhabitants was long and complex. The last shanty was demolished in 1989.

## LES BANDERES (c. 1930-early 1960s)

Carrer del Foc / Passeig del Migdia

Cal Pagès bar, Montjuïc, c. 1966. ArxIU Huertas

A shanty area that sprang up around a public dining hall. The religious orders gave impetus to various facilities, such as a social centre where, in the 1960s, the shanty dwellers of Montjuïc published the magazine *La Voz de la Montaña*, to demand that every family have access to a flat. Over the 1960s and early 1970s, they managed to be rehoused in estates in Barcelona, Badalona, Sant Boi and El Prat de Llobregat. Near the cemetery were other shanty quarters. In Damunt la Fossa, overlooking the Fossar de la Pedrera cemetery, scenes for the film *Los Torantos*, starring Carmen Amaya, were shot.

## CAN VALERO SHANTY TOWN (c. 1920-1972)

Passeig Olímpic, at the point of access to the Botanical Garden

Entrance to the Can Valero quarter, 1967. Tomàs Riva. MHC

The most extensive shanty area on Montjuïc had some 8,000 inhabitants in 1957 and was divided between the Montjuïc stadium, the castle and the cemetery, a space occupied today by the Botanical Garden and various sports amenities. At one of the main access points, near the stadium, stood the bar Can Valero, which gave its name to a number of scattered shanty concentrations connected by roads where there were public fountains, shops, bars and schools. The Can Valero neighbourhood existed from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and lasted until 1972. The bar was the last building to be demolished in 1987.

## TRES PINS SHANTY TOWN (early 1920s-1972)

Carrer del Doctor Font i Quer / Petra Kelly Garden

Tres Pins Shanty Town, 1967. Tomàs Riva. MHC

Several clusters of shanties were established near Tres Pins, a recreational area with a fountain and a long-standing popular tradition. At the time of the 1929 Universal Exposition, one of the shanty areas was already a very dense cluster that, as of the 1940s, spread to the foot of Montjuïc castle, with an entire grid of streets. The religious order built a school, a church and a social centre. The City Council built huts to accommodate the residents of another shanty quarter on Montjuïc, Maricel, demolished in 1964 to build an amusement park in its place.

## JESÚS I MARIA, CAN TUNIS (c. 1925-1978)

Entrance to the Sudoeste cemetery / Ronda del Litoral coastal ring road

Residents of Jesus i Maria, c. 1950. AMCB

The Jesús i Maria, or La Muntanyeta, shanty town was built as of 1925, when the port's expansion displaced the old fisherman's huts of Can Tunis. In the 1960s, 508 shanties accommodated 588 families in an area earmarked for demolition to make way for the future Ronda del Litoral coastal ring road. The residents set up a housing cooperative in order to be able to build a new neighbourhood in the same area, but the authorities did not lend their support and, in the 1970s, moved them to estates in Barcelona, Sant Boi and Sant Adrià de Besòs. Near there, at the foot of the cliff between the lighthouse and the port, was the shanty town of El Morrot.

## POBLE-SEC (c. 1880-1972)

Mountainside of the Passeig de l'Exposició and La Primavera Park

La Primavera shanty town, Poble-sec. AFB

Between the port, Poble-sec and the Teatre Grec, many shanty areas were established, known as Els Horts because many were built on agricultural land. In 1914, it was estimated that some 5,000 people lived in a thousand shanties. In the 1960s, there were at least 500 shanties, many of which lasted until the demolition of the quarter in 1972. Its residents sought out alternative housing or were rehoused in different estates, particularly in the one in La Mina. In the 1980s, there were still some temporary huts for those that did not have sufficient income to access new homes.

## SOMORROSTRO (c. 1875-1966)

Passeig Marítim seafront promenade along La Barceloneta / Somorrostro beach

Somorrostro, c. 1949. Col·lecció Xavier Vallory March

It was the biggest shanty town on the coastline. It originated near the first gas plant, where the park of La Barceloneta stands today, and spread to the mouth of Bogatell. The living conditions were really harsh. With 63 shanties in 1905, it reached its peak in 1954, with 2,406 shanties and between 10,000 and 15,000 residents. The construction of the seafront promenade gradually eradicated the shanties. In 1966, the last 600 were hurriedly torn down, a few days before naval manoeuvres were carried out with the presence of General Francisco Franco, and many of their residents were moved to the Sant Roc estate in Badalona. In 2011, this stretch of the coastline officially recovered the name of Platja del Somorrostro, in memory of the shanty area.

## RERE CEMENTIRI (c. 1890-1990)

Carrer de Carmen Amaya / Passatge Rere el Cementiri Vell

Rere Cementiri, 1976. AHPN

Neighbourhood that emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century between the wall of the Poblenou cemetery and the coastal railroad. In 1898, there were 37 shanties with 160 inhabitants and, in 1922, 64 shanties. In 1972, most of the 80 small brick houses were the property of the residents, many of whom worked in the nearby factories. The neighbourhood disappeared in 1989 with the construction of the Ronda del Litoral coastal ring road. The residents rallied, with the support of the Poblenou Community Association, to achieve fairer expropriation and new homes.

## CAMP DE LA BOTA (c. 1925-1989)

Plaça Leonardo da Vinci (Fòrum Building)

Floods in Camp de la Bota, 1962. AHPN

Camp de la Bota was a military area until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. There was a castle-shaped barracks and a parapet for target practice, which was the site of executions by firing squad during the Spanish Civil War and between 1939 and 1952. The shanty town had been taking shape since 1925 and was called Pequin, on account of the name of an older shanty town from which most of its inhabitants originated. In 1963, there were 378 shanties with 1,968 people, and in the adjoining shanty area to Parapet, in Sant Adrià de Besòs, there were 289 shanties with 1,447 inhabitants. In 1974, most of the inhabitants were rehoused in La Mina's housing estate, but in 1987 there were still 385 residents, many of whom were gypsies. The last shanties were torn down in 1989. The Fòrum building occupies part of the space that occupied the shanties.