

Constituent Machines: Constituent Power, Biopolitics, Democracy

Organised by: Museo Reina Sofía & the Commons Foundation
in collaboration with: Intermediae
Madrid, 14–21 March 2016

The programme **Constituent Machines: Constituent Power, Biopolitics, Democracy** is co-organised by the Commons Foundation and the Museo Reina Sofía, in collaboration with Intermediae. It aims to reflect on, debate and analyse the contents of political constitution in our societies at the present time through the concept of constituent power and the conditions that are required for its development as a major experiment of collective social action and of the general mobilisation of intellectual, social, cultural and political energies in European societies. Thus, it will study and analyse, proceeding from the crisis of political and institutional equilibriums that run through Europe and Spain, the possible constituent processes in different European countries.

This programme also endeavours to touch upon the constituent cycle that is opened in the Spanish State and Europe via an analysis of the major social mobilisations, constituent assemblies and processes of political innovation that have materialised in Latin America over the past twenty years. Their emergence has opened significant channels of action and political innovation in Latin American politics, which could contribute to an understanding of the possible scenarios over the next twenty years in Spain and Europe. Consequently, the new catalogues of rights and new social policies, the concept of plurinationalism or the constitutionalisation of the statute of common property in Ecuador and Bolivia point to original channels of reflection with which to address the dilemmas facing European societies. Equally, the post-neoliberal policies applied to many Latin American countries over the past decade have gone some way to scrutinising and calling into question the unilateralism of the Washington Consensus and the structural adjustment policies applied to Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s, in addition to offering copious amounts of material of reflection on how to consider a way out of the crisis through innovative social policies. This combination of policies and initiatives could be of interest, therefore, to devise other management models for

the different crises experienced, to varying extents, by the majority of European countries that find themselves bound to this economic, institutional, budgetary and monetary sphere, or bound to the movement of people, migrants and refugees.

Furthermore, this programme sets out from the verification that the European Union, due to both the constrictions its institutionalism imposes as well as the neo-liberal governance and the lack of suitable modes of administration for managing the current social complexity, faces the challenge of thinking and organising constituent processes located inside a reference framework that is markedly transnational and post-national.

Within this context, the programme puts forward the concept of *constituent power* to consider the situation of the state of emergency today, brought about by the triple impact of the multi-dimensional social crisis that characterises this time in history; the irreversible truncation of national administrative mechanisms to manage significant regional and global problems; and the serious social and environmental imbalances that modernity and post-modernity have been unable to resolve in terms of a just and equitable democracy.

Carlos Prieto del Campo

Director of the Museo Reina Sofía Study Centre