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ABSTRACT

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# A City of Professions

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### General context

- The lack of knowledge of the conceptual and historical reality of the professional fact is surprising, and the opportunity to recognise it is notorious.
- The link of professions and trades with cities, historically relevant, seems to have faded, eclipsed.
- It goes unnoticed that the active and ongoing processes of deprofessionalisation are destroying the spirit of citizenship that has always been associated with the professional fact and trades.

### International context

*A City of Professions* intends to take part in the current international debate on the present and future of the professions, a debate sparked by D&R Susskind (Oxford Press, 2015) with his book *The Future of the Professions*, which was echoed by the American psychologist Howard Gardner from Harvard University. A debate that is really about the future of our society. By moving closer to Howard Gardner and away from the Susskinds, *A City of Professions* proposes a radical regeneration of the whole of the professional world, focusing on its links with cities, and promoting the new social pact currently underway.

### The public

- The text has an informative and pedagogical vocation, in the professional and collegiate sphere, compiling the history and the basic concepts of the professional fact.
- It also addresses the world of municipalism and cities trapped as they are by a chronic lack of material and human resources in their governance.

- It is aimed at all professionals and citizens interested in learning about a veiled and unknown reality that can nevertheless be very inspiring for guiding the immediate future.
- Finally, it also addresses the university and educational world, offering references for the debate on the current educational model.

## The text

Based on the *recovery* of the three key words: *professionalism*, *professionals*, *professions*, the narration is organised in the form of a voyage of reconnaissance in discovery, which attempts to recompose a *puzzle* that is today completely dispersed. A professional is a technician with civic values. Practical knowledge and civic-mindedness are its foundations.

### **Part One (primarily aimed at the professional institutions or college environment)**

With the conviction that “he who loses his origins loses his identity”, the first part recalls the history of the professional fact, from Hippocrates to the present day, passing through Cicero, the Middle Ages, the European University of the 19th century, Max Weber, to Richard Sennett, Victoria Camps and Donald Schön. This is followed by a recognition of the professional fact common to all professions, pointing out its seven non-expendable or structuring elements, among which the six public missions of the professions stand out in particular: *health*, *habitability*, *legal security*, *education*, *communication* and *economic and environmental sustainability*, as well as their link with civic ethics, human rights and global challenges. Next, an interval dedicated to Architecture is proposed, in which, together with Fine Arts and Technology, a plus of professionalism oriented towards people’s habitability is postulated.

### **Second part (aimed primarily at the municipal environment and schools)**

In Spain and in Europe today there are forty regulated professions, which only have six missions (*health*, *education*, *habitability*, *legal security*, *communication* and *economic and environmental sustainability*), which are

substantiated in a single shared city. In other words: *40 professions, 6 missions, 1 city*. The current interdisciplinary and cross-cutting nature of the professions is embodied in specific cities and neighbourhoods. And since cities and professions share missions, the relationship of professions and professionals with the urban fact is analysed in detail: *with the urbs, the civitas and the polis*. The description of this relationship reveals itself to be strategic and with an enormous potential for articulation and improvement: *the public space is a professional space*. In this way, *A City of Professions* appears as an opportunity for social innovation and improvement of cities and professions through processes of mutual enforceability.

### **The third part (addressed to professionals and citizens)**

Art is an essential component of the professional fact. The *difficult and different context* in which the work of professionals is carried out today is described. The analysis of the all-important issue of gender and the digital impact is highlighted here. It then describes and analyses the phenomenon of “*deprofessionalisation*”, through three main and negative processes: *job insecurity, bureaucratised hyper-regulation and inadequate education*, processes that contribute decisively to the destruction of citizenship. Thus, de-professionalising means destroying citizenship.

### **City of professions**

The professional fact today directly affects more than two million professional members in Spain, more than three hundred and fifty million in the world. They represent 4.3% of the total Spanish population and 25% of its active population, much more in the big cities. If we add those professionals who are not members of a professional association to those who are not, the figures double. And if, in addition to them, we also consider those working in so many trades that are considered to be professionals, the whole makes up a very large, decisive majority.

The distribution of this book would have the support of the Spanish Professional Associations (more than nine hundred, with their corresponding boards) and Latin American ones, with a very similar professional culture,

as well as the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (around 8700 municipalities) and the European and international professional and university organisations in which I myself worked for some years (UP, CEPLIS, UMP, CAE, UIA).

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