Special Issue Combining Safety and Equity in the Post-Covid City: New Trends between Local Policies and Bottom-Up Practices

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Guest editors

Gabriele Manella
Madalena Corte-Real

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Summary

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What is a city? This is the question

Erasmo Sossich[1]

Endless Displacement. Migration Governance, Containment Strategies and Segregation in Athens and Turin[2]

Introduction

The paper considers the spatial productivity of migration governance at urban scale, suggesting the appearance of new patterns of residential segregation. New governmental tools of containment, dispersal and concentration are combining and creating new geographies of mobility and immobility (Tazzioli & Garelli, 2018), and reshaping the spaces of the "urban diaspora" (Arbaci, 2018). "Displaceability" redefines the urban condition of the postcolonial citizens (Yiftachel, 2018), and new forms of accumulation through displacement arise. Assuming the theoretical lenses of "border abolitionism" (Tazzioli & De Genova, 2023) and adapting the "analytics of dispersal" (Tazzioli, 2020), we investigate how the transformation of the migration regime and bordering practices after the so-called "migration crisis" of 2015 influenced the previous pattern of displacement and residential segregation, leading to the creation of what has been called a "confinement continuum" (Tazzioli & De Genova, 2023).

I claim that this process, marked in particular by the gradual closure of the legal channels of access to the territory and by the affirmation of asylum as the only possible legitimising principle for a person's presence on the territory, has profoundly altered the trajectories and processes of integration (De Genova, 2002; Cabot, 2014; Sorgoni, 2022), leading to the emergence of complex apparatuses and policies dedicated to the governance of migrations (Tazzioli, 2017; Rozaku, 2019), meaning the complete reinvention of bordering practices, reception systems and urban agendas. To better unpack "the urban character of asylum" and the city as a "site of bordering" (Darlin, 2016), the article moves on to the cases of Turin and Athens.

After adopting a neoliberal agenda in order to overcome the previous development paradigm and embarking on a profound urban renovation, culminating in the event of the Olympics, both Athens and Turin have intensely suffered the effects of the 2007-2008 financial crisis, witnessing intense conflicts, often concentrated in neighbourhoods interested by regeneration policies and international immigration. Despite those similarities Athens, as a harbour and capital, and Turin, as a post-industrial continental city, show very different patterns of immigrants housing segregation and socio-tenurial differentiation. Therefore, I think that a comparison might allow us to identify possible variances and invariances (Cardano, 2020), following a multiscalar, contextual and divergence comparative perspective.

I suggest that the Italian "widespread reception" and the ongoing process of "campization" in Greece (Kourachanis, 2018; Kreichauf, 2018) might support diverging segregation patterns. Mixing dispersal and concentration in different containment strategies appear to be sustaining already existing patterns – namely the tendency to peripheralization – in the Italian case, while in Athens we see a combination of a radicalised pattern of "vertical segregation" (Maloutas, 1993) with an unheard level of residential segregation. Both cases highlight how the spatial productivity of containment strategies must be integrated in a contextual analysis, taking in consideration its combination with already pre-existing urban phenomena, such as abandonment, gentrification or marginalisation (Maloutas & Fujita, 2012).

The second part of the article is dedicated to the eviction of Turin's Ex-Moi housing squat and of the Eleonas refugee camp in Athens, and explores how global displacement links to urban displacement (Roast *et al.,* 2022) and "domicide" (Nowicki, 2014). The article goes on accounting for the claims and the resistances put into action by their residents, as cities shall be considered

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2 Received: 30/09/2023. Revised: 29/12/2022. Accepted: 30/01/2023. Published: 30/09/2024.

as stages of both policing and politicisation of forced migration (Darling, 2016). Furthermore, the article explores how different approaches and technologies of eviction, namely "hard" and "soft" evictions, might shape different displacement trajectories, which, in turn, support the emergence of new geographies of residential segregation, but also abandonment and gentrification (Marcuse, 1985). As new dispersal strategies are implemented, once more we witness the spatial productivity of migration governance at work (Tazzioli, 2020), as in both the cases of the Ex-Moi and Eleonas, migrants appear to have been instrumentalized for justifying new processes of "regeneration, legitimised insofar as they enable the "return of part of the city to "citizens".

1. Methodology

The research adopts a multiscale and comparative methodology (Caglar & Glick Schiller, 2018), and is based on two research fields. In both cases qualitative methods have been employed, such as ethnography and interviews, document analysis, participant observation, research-action and *conricerca* (Collettivo RicercAzione, 2013; Armano, 2020). In the case of Turin, the research mostly took place between 2017 and 2019, when I was active in the housing rights movement and lived in the housing squat Spazio Popolare Neruda. There I met many inhabitants of the Ex-Moi squat, and took part in many activities hosted in its buildings.
In the case of Athens, the research took place between October 2021 and October 2022, when I lived there and visited many refugee camps in the Attica region and other critical locations as Lesvos island. During this period access to the camps grew more and more complicated, to the point where it would have been legally impossible to enter without specific authorizations. Since, at least nominally, the only way was to volunteer with NGOs, I chose to exploit other opportunities to visit the camps at every chance, such as the lack of controls during the residents' many protests and mobilizations or, more often, the disinterest of both camp authorities and the private security guards in charge of surveillance. The last months, between June and November, were strongly influenced by my role in supporting the mobilisation against the displacement of Eleonas Refugee Camp residents to other mainland camps, until its closure in the autumn of 2022.[3]
This access to the field influenced my entire study. Contesting the notion of "dirty anthropology" (Jauregui, 2013), I have chosen to cross a field of research shaped by structural violence, positioning myself on the side of those I understood to be the active subjects of resistance against violence, racist and neo-colonial practices. Instead, I claim that, in certain circumstances «a clear distinction [...] between perpetrators and victims of violence» (Jauregui, 2013, p. 144) is possible. In doing so I have followed a scholarly tradition shared both by those who refer to critical anthropology and critical urban studies (Armano, 2020). Furthermore, through the struggle I was able to develop partially distinct relations from the reifying logic of research and humanitarian ones, often experienced in all its contradictions by the many researchers who gain access to the field by dint of displaying the pass and sleeveless jacket of an NGO, or through restricted authorizations (Rozaku, 2019). I therefore played the role of a "solidarian", interested not so much in the practices of residents but in the study, and sabotage, of migration governance.

2. Italy and Greece Segregation Patterns: Common Background and New Trajectories

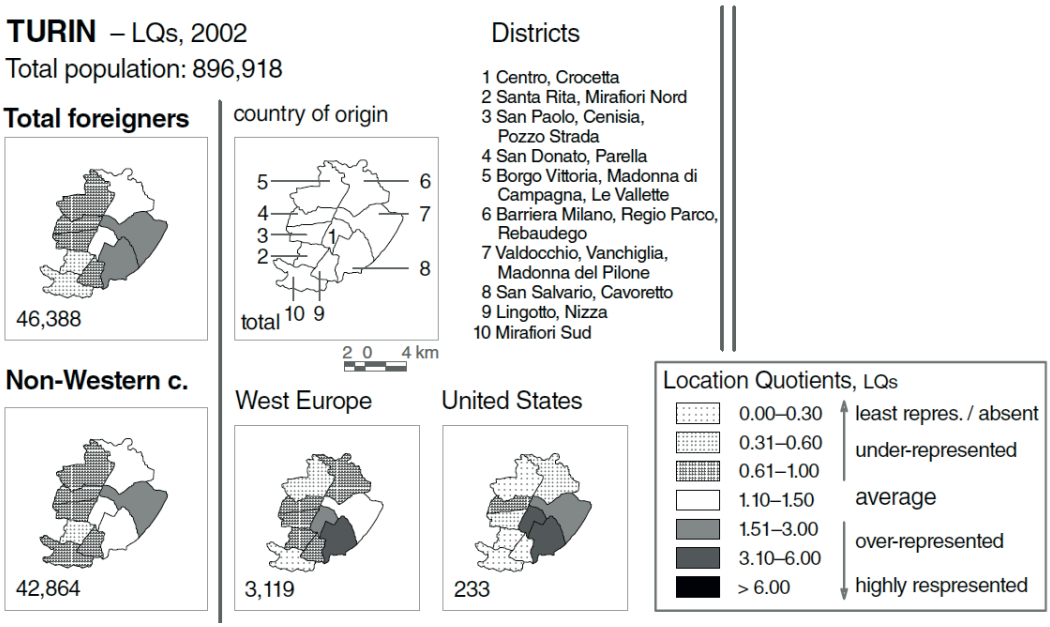
Immigration in Southern Europe started becoming relevant in the Seventies, established in the Nineties, during the so-called "migratory turnaround" (King *et al.,* 1997), and reached its

3 Unfortunately, this approach led to my arrest on the morning of August 19, 2022, while I was filming an attack of the Greek police against a group of Eleonas camp residents during a sit-in.

peak in the first decade of the new century, when arrivals began to outnumber those in traditional settlement regions. Nonetheless, Southern European cities have rarely seen highly segregated areas, while the distribution of their population appear heterogeneous, with a tendency to concentration in peripheral and suburban areas in continental cities, and central areas in port cities centres (Arbaci, 2018).

According to Arbaci, segregation is a process to which various factors contribute, in particular the "State-Market-Family" nexus. This determines the type of relations among four factors: welfare regime, housing system, urban planning, and land system. In particular, Greece and Italy have a residual housing welfare and a housing system dominated by home-ownership combined with low residential mobility. However, they have important differences in planning policies, with a wide heterogeneity of experiences in the Italian case (Barbagli & Pisati, 2012), and a centralist, though not coherent, intervention in the Greek one (Alexandri, 2018). The residual nature of social housing and a housing system dominated by ownership and weak residential mobility, not very sensitive to fluctuations in real estate value, allow us to understand why the population of Italian and Greek origin has only rarely moved *en masse* from devalued neighbourhoods, thus leaving little space for the concentration of the immigrant population. In fact, we must keep in mind that the segregation of the lower classes is largely owed to the movements and segregation, albeit voluntary, of the upper and middle classes (Semi, 2015). Consequently, even in Turin (Figure 1), where 15% of the residents[4] are estimated to be of foreign origin (Comune di Torino, 2021). This rate did not exceed 35% even in the areas of greatest concentration (Comune di Torino, 2011).

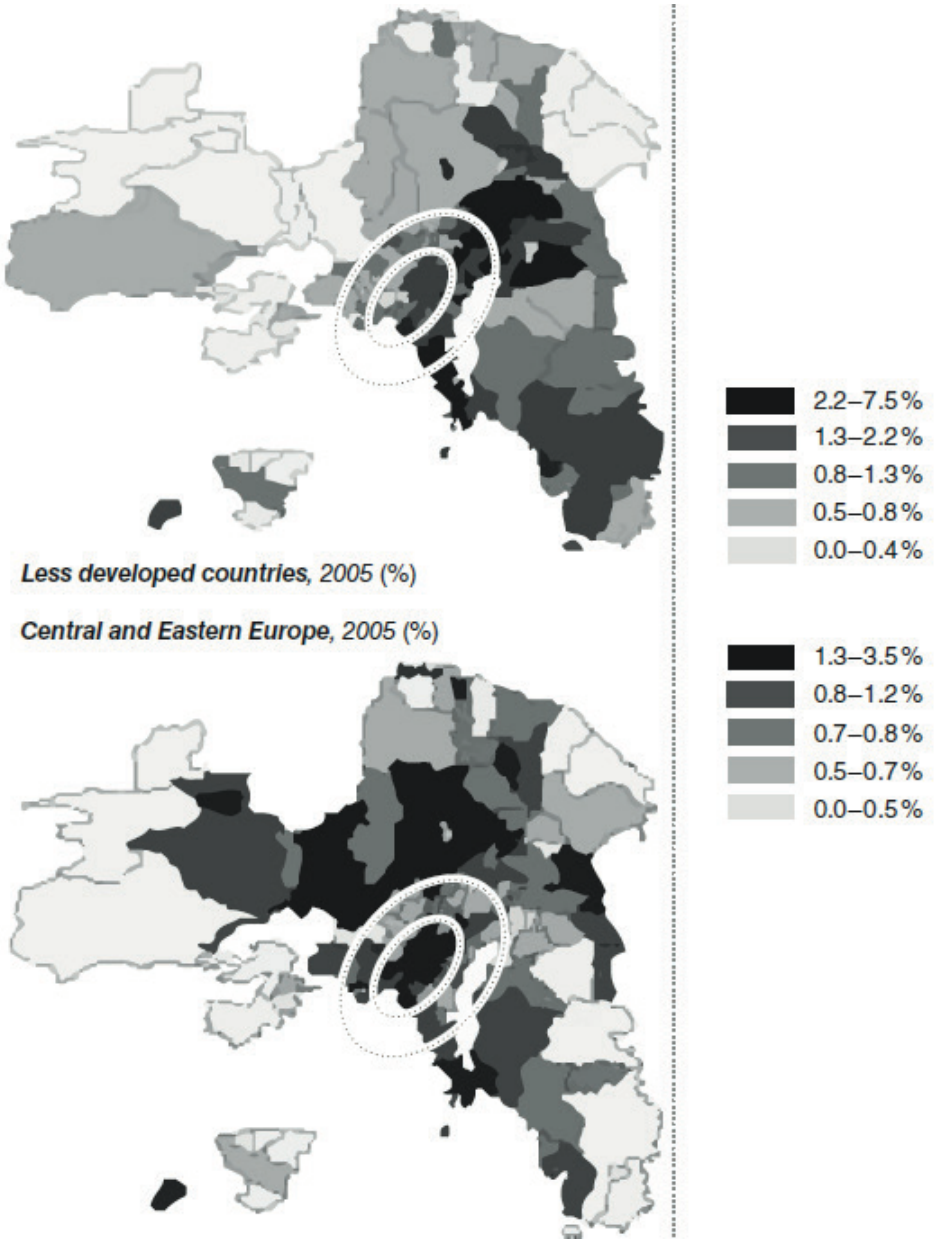
Figure 1. Turin: segregation patterns.



Source: Arbaci, 2019, p. 165

4 It is worth saying that numbers do not account either for the many inhabitants who are not able to be registered as residents, nor for the undocumented immigrants.

Figure 2. Athens: segregation patterns



Source: Arbaci, 2019, p. 218

A different situation is depicted in the literature dedicated to Athens (Figure 2), where residential segregation overlaps with "vertical segregation" in dense multi-storey buildings, the famous *polykatoikia*, long rows of which make up the vast majority of the city (Maloutas, 1993). Challenging the mainstream theoretical approach, strongly influenced by the North American academic tradition following which segregation is substantially synonymous with concentration, Arbaci (2019) describes the ongoing process of dispersal and desegregation with the metaphor of the "urban diaspora". Through the quantitative analysis of eight southern European cities, amongst which Athens and Turin, Arbaci shows how a reduction of the Location Quotients (LQs)

and of the Index of Segregation (IS)[5] can be associated with increasing forms of housing deprivation. In both cases, the presence of highly "classically" segregated areas seems limited, but the immigrant population appears to live in marked socio-economic marginality, marked by other dimensions of segregation (Massey & Denton, 1988), such as micro-segregation (like "interstices", namely small areas with over-representation of different foreign population, or "vertical segregation"), marginalisation (meaning discrimination in the access to the housing market and socio-tenurial segregation) and peripheralization (Bergamaschi *et al.,* 2021).

3. The Evolution of National and European Migration Policies

While throughout the Nineties and the first decade of the following century the countries of Northern and Central Europe enforced a progressive closure of their borders, making it practically impossible to obtain visas and configuring international protection as the only channel of legal access, an "implicit migration regime" consolidated in Greece and Italy (Ambrosini, 2001), characterised by systematic entry through the use of tourist visas and the subsequent transformation of the migrant into an *overstayer* – that is, an irregular immigrant waiting for the next amnesty (Sciortino, 2006). Amnesties were the main policy for regularising flows, an unsystematic policy toward a migration dominated by informal dynamics, which however appeared to be well suited for labour and rental markets of equally widespread informality, able to quickly absorb the new arrivals. This population is distributed in houses characterised by the lowest real estate value, radicalising the geography of class segregation in line with the patterns already discussed.

During the second decade of the century, however, the two countries pursued profoundly different agendas to face the challenge presented by migratory flows, which were also qualitatively different from the previous ones. The Arab Spring of 2011 was followed by long military conflicts which forced millions of people to leave their countries in a short time.[6] Millions of "displaced people" moved to neighbouring countries, increasing the already enormous population of the Jordanian, Lebanese and Turkish refugee camps, but a part of them reached Europe (UNHCR, 2023). Between 2012 and 2013, approximately two hundred thousand people landed on the Italian coasts (OpenPolis, 2018), while in 2015 approximately 800,000 people were estimated to have reached the coasts of Greece (UNHCR, 2015). The "border spectacles" and the "bare life" of migrants paved the way for the affirmation of the humanitarian and the securitarian paradigm as the main interpretative frames for the phenomena in question, transforming the so-called refugee crisis into a European issue and the coasts of Mediterranean countries into the EU frontiers (De Genova, 2002; Van Baar, 2016). Both countries reacted with emergency measures followed by a complete overhaul of their migration policies, with the EU playing a leading role in directing and financing them. From now on migration policies will revolve around the different forms of international protection[7]: a clear separation between economic and forced migrations was affirmed (Sorgoni, 2022), and so was the imposition of humanitarian reason and its moral economy (Fassin, 2005; Beneduce, 2015); the involvement of a plurality of humanitarian and

5 Location Quotients (LQs) quantify the relative concentration of a group in urban sub-units. LQ = xi / xj, where: LQ represents the relative concentration of a social group x in an area; xi represents the percentage of the social group within the i -th area; xj is the percentage of the same group within the wider metropolitan area. LQ < 1 represents relative under-representation of the ethnic group in a zone; LQ > 1 represents relative over-representation of the ethnic group in a zone. The Index of Segregation (IS) gives a measure of the differentiation of one group in relation to the total population. The IS value ranges from 0 to 100, which respectively represent perfect distribution (social or ethnic mix) and maximum segregation of groups analysed (Brown & Chung 2006; Arbaci 2019).

6 Or leave their adopted country, as in the case of the hundreds of thousands of sub-Saharan immigrants residing in Libya until the outbreak of the conflict, when they were forced to leave the country.

7 In the Italian case the number of resident permits for asylum and asylum requests exceeded that of work permits, rising from 3.7% in 2007 to 28.2% in 2015 (Saporiti, 2017).

institutional subjects (among which the European border police, Frontex, emerges for the first time); an unprecedented reconfiguration of sovereignty both in the border areas and within the camps, true spaces of exception (Rozaku, 2019). Furthermore, new bordering practices, both on the "traditional" frontiers and through various practices of border externalisation and internalisation, shaped new channels of forced mobility in the light of the fight against "secondary movements", milestone of the EU's political agenda. As access, permanence and movement within European space become increasingly complex, new forms of containment and displacement lead to new geographies of mobility and immobility (Tazzioli & Garelli, 2018). As the EU turned to the hotspot approach and established the centrality of selecting, grouping and dividing procedures, dispersal strategies have been enacted in simultaneity with measures of spatial segregation.

However, institutional "arrival infrastructures" (Meeus el al. 2020) responsible for the "care, cure and control" (Acocella, 2022) and for the routing of migrants took on very different traits in each country. Although the creation of the hotspot system and of a few massive reception centres, the so-called CARA (*Centro di Accoglienza per Richiedenti Asilo*), demonstrates that the tendency towards the "campization of immigration", i.e. the gradual evaporation of the difference between "reception, housing and detention" (Kourachanis, 2018; Kreichauf, 2018), is not absent in the Italian case, the governments directed their efforts towards a system characterised by the so-called *accoglienza diffusa* (widespread reception).

Greek governments, on the contrary, chose to address the issue by creating, with the help of the EU, international humanitarian organisations such as the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) and the IOM (International Organization for Migration), as well as countless NGOs, a large system of refugee camps, complemented by the ESTIA (Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation) program, a housing project focusing on "vulnerable" cases (Greek Council for Refugees, 2023).

In both countries, a multilevel governance was constructed. As Darling (2016) pointed out, the "re-scaling" of borders at the urban level has two dimensions: a "top-down" devolution of authority to municipal levels and a "bottom-up" assertion of authority by municipalities in the form of local ordinances on migration. In the case of Italy, governments defined the criteria for access to international protection, keeping under their direct control the system of "first reception", and delegating the organisation of "second reception" to the municipalities. However, it is through a third instrument, the so-called CAS (*Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria*, "Extraordinary Reception Centers") that most of the asylum seekers are hosted. Those, in turn, fall under the control of the prefectures, which represent the authority of the central government at the provincial level.

In the Greek case, however, international institutions and organisations, as well as the Ministry of Immigration and Asylum, took on a decisive role. Moreover, since 2015 the governance of the Balkan route, which has Greece as its starting point, has never actually stopped evolving, reflecting the rough dialectic between governments, international institutions, resident populations and people on the move. As the failure of the 2015 sovereign debt negotiations inhibited any attempt by the first Tsipras government to avoid implementing the European agenda, an "archipelago of camps" appeared along the route. On one hand, the systematic pushbacks across the Balkan borders acted as a deterrent, discouraging the less equipped categories from attempting the "game", on the other hand the Greek camp system, offering the hope of asylum, became a privileged site of containment, where tens of thousands ended up spending three, four, and often even more years, captured in the limbo of international protection procedures. To these we must add a perhaps equally large number of those who, because of their undocumented status, or in order to avoid staying in the camps, find a housing solution in the black rental market.

The 2016 EU-Turkey agreements redefined the hotspot system, introducing the "geographical restrictions" *de facto* confining the migrants on the Aegean islands, now transformed into an "enforcement archipelago" (Mountz, 2011), shaping a mechanism of "containment beyond detention" (Tazzioli, 2020) operating in conjunction with a system of transfers to Turkey (Commissione Europea, 2016). If the latter quickly failed, the "geographical restrictions" still apply – and in

2020 the Mitsotakis government announces the construction of new "reception infrastructures" on the island of Lesvos (Papatzani *et al.,* 2022). However, large protest with insurrectional features erupted in Lesvos (Fallon, 2020),[8] to which the government responded by stirring violent clashes on the land border between Turkey and Greece (Panagopoulos, 2020). Finally, in September 2020, the arson of Moria camp in Lesvos, which was known to have hosted up to 20,000 people, put an end to the attempt to exclusively confine migrants to the islands (Smith, 2020). Once more, the government changed its strategy, encouraging pushbacks in the Aegean Sea and transferring the asylum seekers from the islands to the "mainland camps". In the same period the ESTIA program came under the control of the government, which immediately acted to dismantle it and bring it to an end in the last months of 2022 (Ministry of Immigration and Asylum-European Union, 2022), when thousands of families and vulnerable subjects were faced with a "choice" between living on the street and being transferred to a camp.

3.1 Reception Policies in Turin

In Turin, too, the humanitarian emergency presented an opportunity to reorganise the reception system. The prefecture's investment went from 1 million euros in 2012 to 47 in 2016, for a total allocation of 125.43 million between 2012 and 2017. By the end of December 2017, the people hosted in the CAS, plus the regional hub managed by the Red Cross, were 4,520, distributed in 409 centres. To those, we should add approximately another 880 guests in "second reception"[9]. Thus, the State has delegated a large-scale social intervention to the prefectures and through them to the third sector, promoting a model based on hundreds of projects, favouring small-sized solutions such as apartments or small centres (OpenPolis, 2018)[10].
This model does not appear to have changed residential patterns, although it is difficult to draw a complete picture. The available data only highlights that a vast majority of refugees exiting the reception projects has difficulties in finding a new housing solution (67.4% in 2018) (SPRAR/SIPROIMI, 2018). According to the interviews, the projects included support in finding independent housing solutions, activating third sector networks to access various forms of "social housing" and supporting beneficiaries in finding private adverts, also providing a total of 1,500 euros to cover agency expenses or, alternatively, the first months' rent payments. In this way, approximately one in three beneficiaries manages to find an accommodation, often in the same peripheral areas where the "widespread reception" accommodations are located, and in particular in *Barriera di Milano*, a neighbourhood favoured by reception cooperatives as well as refugees due to the low prices, with a high percentage of foreign residents. The rest have to find a solution by relying on their social networks, local and abroad, while a minority is accommodated by the Municipality's *Emergenza Abitativa* (Emergency Housing) service or is forced to live on the streets and in dormitories.

3.2 Camps, Reception and the Urban Governance of Migration in Attica and Athens

In the case of Athens, it must be considered that it is a capital city with approximately 4 million inhabitants, out of approximately 10 million in the whole country (ELSTAT, 2022). This disproportion is reflected in the location of the "mainland camps" in the Attica region, which has hosted at least ten institutional camps, among the most overpopulated in the mainland, from 2015 to date, and by the fact that approximately 70% of the ESTIA program beneficiaries were hosted

8 These mobilizations put together seemingly irreconcilable factions, as island citizens, anarchists, no-borders activists and neo-fascist groups clashed with the police for days.

9 The SPRAR circuit, subsequently known as SIPROIMI and today SAI.

10 Very small centres are estimated to be the vast majority (295 with fewer than 10 guests, 65 with 11-20 guests). Approximately half of the migrants in the province, however, were hosted in structures with more than 20 guests. Four centres host more than 100 people, and the largest one hosts 220 migrants (Openpolis 2018).

in the city. If we then consider that the majority of the rest of the mainland camps are located near Thessaloniki and Ioannina or close to the Turkish border, we realise that we are faced with a completely opposite approach, not only in the choice to favour the camps but also in the geographical concentration of migrants (IOM, 2022).

Many of the Attica camps were opened between 2015 and 2017. These are vast spaces, set up with tents, marquees or container housing modules, but also with masonry fences, barbed wire, sometimes automated gates; always monitored by private guards "to guarantee the residents' safety", often built on lands owned by public institutions, including the army. They also lack health or educational infrastructure, and are often located tens of kilometres away from the nearest urban centres, almost completely cut off from public transport networks, and therefore from the job market. They are nominally open places but so isolated that they derive their containment and confinement function from geography (Papatzani *et al.,* 2022). To date, their management is entrusted to officials of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum, but management is delegated to a vast selection of "humanitarian" organisations, in turn stratified and hierarchized between SMS (Site Management Support) and NGOs.[11]

Estimating the number of people hosted in each camp was the task of the IOM, which until March 2022 published periodic reports. That said, the numbers constantly change and it is impossible to estimate the number of unregistered people in each camp. It could be plausible to estimate that the total number of residents in the Attica camps has fluctuated between 10,000 and 20,000 people, divided into camps ranging from 200 to 3,000 inhabitants. To these we must add, until 2022, the approximately 6,500 beneficiaries of the ESTIA project, and, above all, the thousands of asylum seekers who preferred to find alternative housing solutions.

Interviews carried out with several asylum seekers provide testimony to the fact that a great percentage of people prefer finding their own housing solutions rather than being hosted in the camps. The violence, the recurrent fires, the lack of primary goods, the despair and the isolation described paint a structural condition of "planned shrinkage" (Wallace, 1990), capable of containing a part of the new arrivals, transferred from camps in the Aegean, while pushing others to the point of preferring to risk "the game" or the hardship of living in the central neighbourhoods. Here they will be able to find apartments in dilapidated but reasonably priced conditions, given the process of continued outflow from the middle classes.

The interviews also stressed the role of community networks in the search for accommodation, both in the case of so-called "hostels", i.e. entire buildings intended for short or very short-term informal rent, where migrants find hospitality for a few days or even several months, as well as within the informal rental market, dominated by the practice of subletting. These are precarious solutions, interspersed with constant house moves, always in similar living conditions and around the same areas, i.e. the neighbourhoods of Omonia, Victoria, Agios Panteleimonas and along the Acharnon street and Patission avenue. Those are the same areas where the ESTIA apartments were concentrated by virtue of the low cost of rent, i.e. the same areas that already in 2011 showed the clearest trend towards residential segregation in the entire city, with peaks above 50% (Papatzani & Knappers, 2020). In fact, these are considered the most "difficult" areas of the centre (Papatzani, 2020), that in previous years represented just a first step in the housing process of migrants, followed by movement into less segregated areas (Arbaci, 2018). On the contrary, today these processes draw a map filled with continuous movements inside the same areas. Moreover, those are not incited by an increased economic condition but by precarious housing conditions, evictions and new searches for cheaper rents. Simply put, by a continuous process of displacements.

Despite the efforts of the Municipality of Athens and its collaborators (Stratigaki, 2022), it is the police that took on the leading role in the urban governance of migrations. "Random" checks, raids and arrests, police motorcycles and armoured vehicles patrolling the squares and streets

11 Starting from 2020, only those NGOs that can afford to enter a special "register" can operate within the camps, and only under the conditions of limiting their action to what is established by the government.

are a part of everyday life of "difficult" neighbourhoods. The eviction of Eleonas is only the final part of a long operation started by the Mitsotakis government since the first months of its inauguration. A project made of evictions, transfers, deportations and changes to the reception system, each characterised by the practice of displacement employed as the urban gear of a wider mechanism. This plan aimed at diverting the route and keeping the migrants away from Athens, and was part of a broader strategy of containment, enacted by alternating forced mobility and immobility wielding displacement strategies as tools to disrupt "migrant multiplicities" (Tazzioli, 2020) and any autonomy of migrations (Mezzadra, 2011; Stopani & Pampuro, 2018).
Already in the autumn of 2019 the government proceeded to clear out the dozens of squats where tens of thousands of migrants had found shelter since 2015 (Tsavdaroglou & Lalenis, 2020). Exarchia, the international stronghold of the anarchist movement, where the police had not been able to enter since the Eighties, was from that moment on permanently garrisoned by the police. In the autumn of 2021, once the "pandemic truce" ended, the Skaramagas camp was closed. It was now time for Eleonas.

4. Endless Displacements and Urban Odysseys

The latter section of the article is based on two ethnographies and focuses on the Ex-Moi squat in Turin and Eleonas refugee camp in Athens. These two cases which can be interpret as episodes of a series of "endless displacements", chapters of real "urban odysseys", marking the biographies of "displaced people" par excellence, as asylum seekers and refugees, but also migrants and other minorities. Both cases began with a redevelopment project and ended with another one.

4.1 The origins of Ex-Moi

The four buildings of what became known as the largest housing squat in Europe (Img Press, 2020) had been built to host the 2006 Winter Olympic Games. They were part of a project whose objective was to reshape the area of former wholesale fruit and vegetable market (*Mercato Ortofrutticolo all'Ingrosso*), with the purpose of relaunching the entire Lingotto, a neighbourhood with a strong industrial vocation on the southern Turin outskirts, already subject of an important redevelopment project after the dismissal from FIAT in 1982.
The residential part of the village consisted of 39 buildings arranged in a checkerboard pattern, with 5-8 floors and a cubic shape, each coloured following a monochromatic scheme. Once the event was concluded, the buildings were used partly as social housings and partly as offices, redesigning a city projected towards a post-Fordist development model, capable of welcoming new professionals and different types of city users. However, four buildings remained vacant.
The story of the inhabitants of Moi began in 2012 (Romeo, 2017), when the government introduced the North Africa Emergency, recognizing the right to humanitarian protection to those fleeing Libya (Federici, 2012). This was an emergency measure, and refugees were often hosted in tourist infrastructures and other improvised solutions. Consequently, when the "emergency" ended abruptly in February 2013, thousands of refugees in Turin alone were suddenly deprived of housing. After just a couple of weeks, during which a nucleus of future occupants held meetings with militants connected with the Askatasuna and Gabrio autonomous social centres, the Ex-Moi was born. Soon after four buildings were squatted (Picture 1), hosting around 1,200 people for the following six years, while the Ex-Moi Refugee and Migrant Solidarity Committee became the unofficial voice of the squatters.

Picture 1. The occupied buildings of the Ex-Moi

Source: Tisa, F. (2017).

4.2 Soft eviction

In the Ex-Moi the squatters gave life to a parallel economy, structuring forms of self-organisation similar to those that characterise informal labourer settlements throughout Europe and giving rise to multiple "communing" practices (Stopani & Pampuro, 2018). For many residents, movement between the Ex-Moi and other settlements was a constant, and it was quite ordinary, following the rhythm of seasonal work, to spend the autumn in the ghettos in Calabria, the winter at the Ex-Moi and the summer in Guantanamò, in Saluzzo.[12] Others started working in the markets, selling fruit and vegetables or specialising in the collection and trade of second-hand goods, joining the hundreds of *mercatari* (market traders) who have been giving life to the informal part of the *Balon* flea market before its eviction (Magariello, 2019). Furthermore, various mobilizations were triggered, linked to the issue of the residence permit and administrative residence, which is vital both to be able to renew the permit and to access services.

After an initial eviction proposal, a long period of tolerance followed. The elections were too close and the Democratic Party mayor, Piero Fassino, who was already busy clearing out the *Platz*, one of the largest Roma camps in Europe, preferred to wait. The new 5-Star Movement mayor, Chiara Appendino, therefore initiated a negotiation with the inhabitants, engaging the prefecture, the region, the catholic church and the local *Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo*[13] in the process.

12 Saluzzo, a town at around 60 kilometres from Turin, hosted the informal settlement of Guantanamò for almost ten years. Hundreds of agricultural workers have lived among its self-built shacks, attracted by the demand which has made the Monviso district rich.

13 Compagnia di San Paolo is a banking foundation with a strong participation by the well-known bank Intesa Sanpaolo. It is one of the oldest and largest private foundations in Europe.

Despite this, the "liberation" plan for the MOI buildings was rejected by its residents. It presented itself as «A project that addresses the urgent housing and employment needs of the inhabitants of buildings in the former MOI district, to support their gradual independence and allow the buildings to be handed back for urban and social redevelopment purposes» (Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, 2021a, p. 1). This is labelled by the institutions and the media as *sgombero dolce*, a "soft eviction" similar to Platz's one between 2013 and 2015 (Cencetti *et al*., 2020)[14].
The operation will take almost two years, starting with the census of residents. In December 2017, the project manager, nicknamed *Mappatura* ("map-man") by the inhabitants, was punched by one of the inhabitants, and in the following days four of them were arrested to be held in pre-trial detention for a year (Sossich, 2023a). On August 6, 2018, the police cleared the "brown building". On March 11, 2019, it was the turn of the "blue building". Finally, on July 30, the eviction of the "orange building" and the "grey building" was carried on. It is worth saying that, according to the opinion of some educators and project managers interviewed, approximately 30% of the evicted people had arrived in the building that same night with the aim of taking part in the inclusion projects. One of the facilities where the inhabitants were transferred was the Settimo Torinese Red Cross camp.

> «The camp was divided in two, us from the Ex-Moi, about 50, and those from the Asylum, not even a dozen. We had separate spaces. In the containers we lived two per cell. There was electricity and heating and a "fan". And then there was a Red Cross hut. It was very far from the city, very far, with nothing around: railway, fields, many factories... by bicycle or bus it took us more than an hour to get to the city, only half an hour to Auchan (*a big mall located at the edge of the city*). We didn't do any activities like internships or Italian school. Nothing at all. We played football...better than staying in the room until the evening. Only those in Asylum had something to do. They studied a little. Italian school, internship... instead for those of the Moi...Sorry for them» (Interview with Idrissa, 2020)

Gradually people are placed into apartment groups managed by around thirty third-sector actors. The testimonies of "beneficiaries", operators and representatives of the institutions express irreconcilable points of view on the project. Idrissa,[15] who at the end of a year spent in the Red Cross camp was picked up by the police to be taken to the Turin CPR (*Centri di Permanenza per i Rimpatri*, the Italian detention and expulsion centres) (Sossich 2023a), has a clear-cut judgement.

> «A few days ago I passed by Corso Emilia (*Emilia Avenue*). I know many people from Moi there. We said hi, best wishes. And who knows...only they know where they sleep now. Sometimes we meet at "Oumar's house" in his tent under the *Corso Regina* (Regina Avenue) bridge. Now he is a farm labourer, they told me he went to Spain. Again, I often thought about that project... In all Italy, there has never been a mafia project like this» (Interview with Idrissa, 2020)

The partial results of the project were presented in September 2021 through a Memorandum (Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, 2021b). The document extends the duration of the "third reception" programs and presents the project as a successful model, to be adopted in other crisis contexts. In the data released, it is reported that around 800 people were included in the projects and hosted in various reception facilities, mainly CAS, and that of these, after two years, around 300 people had achieved work autonomy and around 170 housing autonomy. Finally, of around 100 people in precarious legal conditions, around a quarter were "accompanied" to regularisation (Prefettura di Torino, 2021).
According to the operators interviewed, the organisation of an "organic" intervention only started in the summer of 2020 thanks to the effort of the Municipality's *Ufficio Stranieri* (Foreigners Office), while for the first year the beneficiaries were left waiting and without any guaran-

14 Located in the far north of the Turin suburbs, the Platz for 15 years was one of the largest slums in Europe, with an estimated population of between 1800 and 2500 people. In 2013 the City of Turin launched a project called *La città possibile* "The possible city", and in 2015 the camp was razed to the ground (Cencetti *et al.,* 2020).

15 All given names are pseudonyms.

tees. Only afterwards would the remaining beneficiaries have achieved housing independence, thanks to the efforts of the teams created within the various cooperatives for this purpose, and to 1,200 euros to cover agency expenses and deposits or the first months' rent for each beneficiary. They would then find a home in the least expensive areas of the city, in particular in the Barriera di Milano district.
Finally, from July 2022, the beneficiaries moved from the MOI project to the so-called *Emergenza Abitativa* (Housing Emergency), regulated by the *Accordo Quadro* Framework Agreement), a project of four years with an investment of 12 million euros by the Municipality to face urban marginality in its various forms, including families evicted or under eviction and homeless people (Comune di Torino, 2022). During the summer of 2023, the last beneficiaries would also leave the project. The similarity between the project aimed at the evicted, not by chance named as third reception, and the second reception, highlights the condition of "permanent arrival" (Meeus *et al*., 2020) reproduced by various governmental institutions involved in the governance of migration at the urban and international level.
That said, several third sector actors and the housing movements have denounced a perverse effect of such projects, as well as the projects promoted by the second reception actors (Casalegno, 2024): hundreds of people would have been housed in the apartments of a small circle of big owners, the so-called *palazzinari* (a variant of "jerry-builders"). Among them, the best-known turned out to be the notorious Giorgio Molino, an "entrepreneur" who had specialised for decades in renting to immigrants applying disadvantageous contracts, vexatious clauses, and employing intimidating and opaque, if not directly violent, methods of eviction. Moreover, those owners have operated concentrating up to a half a dozen people as well as entire families into tiny apartments, which in turn are concentrated in entire buildings devolved for this purpose, often in terrible structural condition (Migliaccio, 2023; Tumminello, 2024). It thus seems plausible that this strategy of containment and dispersal through welfare tertiarization ended up, at least partially, by reinforcing the segmentation and stratification of Turin's housing market and the ethnic segregation of its neighbourhoods. Eventually, once more, many of them were evicted, sealing one more step in an endless circle of 'un-homing' and displacement (Elliott *et al.,* 2020).
The fate of the Ex-Moi buildings was instead sealed on July 3, 2020, when they were sold by the Municipality to the *Fondo Abitare Sostenibile Piemonte*, a fund managed by various Piedmontese banking foundations, including Compagnia di San Paolo. They were therefore destined for the construction of a complex of social residences «with over 400 beds dedicated to temporary residential accommodation at discounted rates for students, young workers, and city users» managed by Camplus, the leading Italian provider of co-living and housing for university students (Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo, 2020). The student residence was inaugurated on the 10th of May 2023 (Caracciolo, 2023).

4.3 The origins of the Eleonas camp

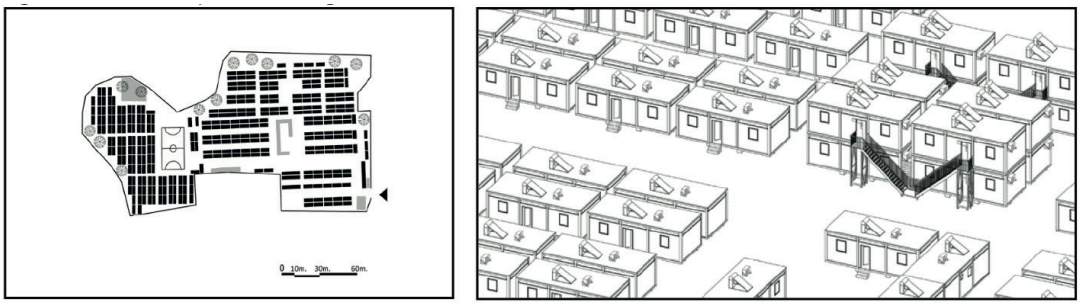
Eleonas camp was built in 2015 in the middle of "the long summer of migration" to accommodate, for a maximum span of three days, some of those thousands who were moving from the islands to continue their journey towards Europe. Only, following the change in migration policies, the structure took on a permanent character, and was expanded to include 297 housing containers (Vyzoviti & Chalvatzoglou, 2020).
Located a couple of kilometres away from the historic centre, the camp took its name from the area where it was located, and was surrounded by a continuous succession of abandoned factories, derelict buildings and urban voids, with the exception of some warehouses, transport companies' depositories and the Sunday waste-picker market, the so called "Bazaar", which I believe to be the biggest flea market in Europe, and in many ways similar to the aforementioned "Balon", in Turin (Soi Gunelas, 2021). Eleonas, literally translated as "olive grove", had long been

labelled as an "urban void", despite being not empty at all and hosting many of the logistic and industrial enterprises active in the city. It extends from the centre for entire kilometres, defined by the now buried Kifissos waterways to the west and Ylissos to the east, by the ancient but still fundamental Piraeus Avenue to the south, and finally by the ancient residential area of Colonus to the north (Panayotopoulos-Tsiros, 2020). From 1983 to 2014, four proposals had been formulated with the aim of revitalising the area: the two presidential decrees of 1991 and 1995, the "double regeneration" proposal of 2006, and the strategic plan for the region of Attica 2014.

> «In 2006, the relocation of the Panathinaikos FC football stadium from central Athens was proposed. The large amounts of space required and the need for accessibility for a stadium, combined with the relatively low land price and strategic location of Eleonas, made the area ideal to receive the new infrastructure, although the binding Presidential Decree of 1995 did not clearly allow for such development. For this project a land swap scheme was proposed in which the former stadium site would be transformed into public green space in exchange for the green space taken from Eleonas – hence the project title, Double Regeneration» (Panayotopoulos-Tsiros, 2020, p. 136)

In 2007 the Roma camp on Polykarpou Street, which had occupied this space for years, was cleared out, despite the protests of the municipal opposition led by a young councillor known as Alexis Tsipras, creating a precedent for the eviction of the refugee camp. Despite accusations of corruption (CCRE, 2009) the construction site began in 2010, only to be interrupted in 2013 due to the state council decision to stop the project and the bankruptcy of Vovos SA, a vital player in the public-private partnership behind the project. As a result, from 2014 part of the lot was occupied by the aforementioned Bazaar, seeking a new location after yet another relocation, just to face another displacement in 2016 (Soi Gunelas, 2021).
The history of the refugee camp began in 2015, when the government led by an older Tsipras decided to use half of the semi-built lot for the construction of the camp, following a well-known, albeit implicit, tradition of containment and convergence of "unwanted" populations in disadvantaged city areas (Cheshire & Zappia, 2015).

Figures 3 and 4. Map and drawing of Eleonas



Source: Vyzoviti, Chalvatzoglou & Emseeh (2020)

It was managed in concert by the Greek government, the IOM and a myriad of minor partners, both humanitarian and private, as the security. It was a camp of housing containers (Figures 3 and 4), and in 2022 it hosted (officially) 500 children, 400 women and 600 men, mainly of Congolese (39%), Afghan (30%) and Syrian origins (12%) (IOM, 2022). As it is often the case with refugee camps in Greece, Eleonas soon grew to be an example of "humanitarian urbanism" (Bram, 2016), namely a space of negotiation between the humanitarian and bureaucratic governmentality and the "silent" and "bold" strategies of "spatial encroachment" of its residents (Gillespie, 2017). Far from being a space transparent to the gaze of the authority, in the camp asylum seekers became dwellers and place-makers (Picture 2), inhabiting between corridors of

housing containers punctuated by self-built huts, cafés, minimarkets and even places of worship (Martin *et al.,* 2019), while out of the gate they could mingle in a urban environment where many others negotiated space, practices and prices on a daily basis (Soi Gunelas, 2021).

Picture 2: Eleonas Camp.

Source: Sossich (2022).

4.4 Hard eviction

In November 2020 the "double regeneration" project was brought back to life, and a new agreement was signed between the mayor of Athens, Kostas Bakoyannis, in concert with the government led by his uncle, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, and the Panathinaikos football club owned by ship-owner and media mogul Giannis Alafouzos. The camp area was intended to host part of the stadium, while the surrounding land will host other sports infrastructures, for an investment of approximately 125 million euros from the Recovery Fund, and a wide series of projects aimed at modernising the city for an investment estimated at around 500 million between public and private funds (Μίχας, 2022).

The closure of the camp was announced in November 2021, and small transfers of its population started in the spring of 2022. In the last days of June, a maxi-transfer of around 300 people was planned, thus triggering the resistance. Although life was not easy in Eleonas camp, the structure was at least located a few hundred metres from the nearest metro station, thus making it possible for its inhabitants to enjoy, at least partially, their right to the city (Darlin, 2016). At the same time, the resistance was also motivated by the fear of being brought to the mainland camps, whose condition of isolation and despair was well-known and often associated with the traumatic experience already lived in the hotspot islands' camps. Slogans such as "Eleonas is our house", and "We want to live together" were repeated so many times through the loud-speakers that eventually they were written down on the many banners hung around the gate, together with "No forced displacement of migrants for tourism and profit! Fight racism!"

Between June 22 and 30, hundreds of residents guarded the gates of the camp day and night. Despite repeated interventions by riot police all transfers were prevented.
The mobilisation was self-organised, relying on the leadership of some of the residents and on the solidarity networks that crossed the camp. It was also supported by the *Solidarity With Migrants* collective and the anti-racist organisation *Keerfa*. The former would play a fundamental role in mediatizing and supporting the struggle by maintaining a constant presence at the gates, the latter would act in the institutional arena, obtaining the support of the left opposition during a city council session and a meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of Immigration. In both cases, Pauline, a woman of Congolese origin, resident in the camp and mother of two minors, would act as spokesperson.
On July 1 a new director took office. From the first day she worked to establish a climate of terror, through a mix of "politics of exhaustion" (Welander & de Vries, 2016) and intimidation, with the precise goal of dealing with the growing autonomy displayed by the camp residents. Moreover, she was already known by many asylum seekers as the "iron fist" director of the Samos camp. A new maxi-transfer was subsequently announced for the night of August 15.
At 4 a.m. the first police contingents arrived. Soon after, the Congolese women took to the street. A couple of them smashed a bundle of pots on the ground, and those who followed up, pushing the waste bins to the middle of the street, created a barricade out of them, without ceasing the rhythmical drumming. The most recurring slogans, "Eleonas don't close", was interjected by "Tout le monde déteste la police", "Solidarité avec les immigrés", «Congo, Congo, Congo! – Afghanistan, Afghanistan, Afghanistan! – Somalia, Somalia, Somalia!". Finally, around 8 a.m. the road was cleared.
On the night of the 17th the police charged but the inhabitants rushed and resisted, and for the first time the Eleonas struggle acquired media visibility. On the morning of the 19th once again the women faced the police, holding their daughters and sons in their arms. The police charged and arrested six solidarians, including me. Once again, the mobilisation of the inhabitants would force the director and the police to take off.
A new phase then began, which was marked by a strategy of intimidation and persuasion of the residents based on their legal vulnerability. The director would summon each inhabitant individually, telling them that should they refuse to cooperate they would be thrown onto the street and that their asylum files would be blocked and removed from the system, but if they cooperate she would be able to speed up their asylum procedures. Although many doubted that either the threats or the proposals could be translated into action, "governing through uncertainty" (Kristen, 2015) is a structural trait of the political technologies employed in the governance of migration, making them neither less effective nor productive.
Morale worsened even more after Wares Ali, of Pakistani origin, died of a heart attack in the hours before yet another transfer attempt, on the night of August 30. Few were surprised when, a few days later, a fire broke out in the camp, starting from the container where the man lived.
From September on the camp was jointly supervised by the previous director and the new one. The strategy changed again: people were moved in small groups, by taxis and minibuses, on random days and hours. Thus, the unity of the inhabitants broke, putting an end to the mobilisation. One year after the first official announcement, a last forced transfer would take place on November 30, when the police finally raided the camp (Sossich, 2022b). Eleonas camp was no more. The domicide was concluded (Nowicki, 2014).
On December 12, the Ministry of Immigration and the Municipality signed the handover protocol of the area, organising a ceremony in the camp (Picture 3). Prime Minister Mitsotakis, the Minister of Immigration and the Mayor gave speeches on stage. They celebrated «the return of a part of the city back to the citizens, the launch of the 'double regeneration' project», said the mayor. The overcoming of old migration policies, said Mitsotakis.

Picture 3: Eleonas camp: Prime Minister Mitsotakis on the stage of Eleonas.

Source: Iefimerida (2022).

It is impossible to obtain official data on the fate of the residents, but their trajectories can be reconstructed on the basis of their testimonies, even if it was possible to keep contact with just a tiny fraction of them. Many boarded planes after buying false documents to arrive in France, Holland or Germany, where they started, once more, an asylum procedure. Others took the Balkan route, paying a high price for it. Some of them never reached their destination.

Many took the route and arrived in France, where they would often be hosted by their relatives for a couple of months while reapplying for asylum, just to be once more dispersed through the French reception system in a rural location, waiting for the acceptance or rejection of their application. Some managed to obtain asylum, and a regular passport. After finding the money for the ticket, they left for Germany, hoping to build a new life there. Some ended up in the Amygdaleza detention centre for illegal immigrants. Many others have sublet a home, almost always in the usual central neighbourhoods, waiting to find an opportunity to leave. Many accepted the transfer, living in the camps of Schisto, beyond the port of Piraeus, and Ritsona, over an hour's drive from Athens. Someone spent a year in Schisto, getting intoxicated to the point of becoming almost unrecognisable, until deciding it was enough. Someone accepted a dangerous job, an illegal and criminalised job, that would allow them to live in the inner city of Athens, but would eventually lead to their arrest, and a new, even more uncertain, future. Others took the reverse route. Someone lost their housing in the city just to find themselves in Ritsona camp more than a year after the eviction of Eleonas, still hoping for an opportunity to leave. Some of them are waiting for the result of their third asylum request, hoping for the opening of a humanitarian corridor, while being hosted by a charitable foundation for homeless people.

All of them embody the "spatial productivity" of the border regime much beyond the frontier, much beyond the camp, living between segregation and dispersal, forced immobility and hypermobility, drawing new geographies of segregations one displacement after the other.

Conclusions

The cases of Turin and Athens can lead to some conclusions. First of all, what emerges is that containment strategies and migration governance affect the settlement trajectories of migrants in the long term, capturing them in the cycle of immobilisation, dispersal and forced movements. In the case of Turin, these policies seem to have favoured a residential dynamic in recent years, marked by a subordinate condition in the absence of evident residential segregation, but also marked by micro-segregation, socio-tenurial differentiation and peripheralization. Very different is the case of Athens, where the policies adopted seem to have produced a stronger segregation and made any attempt at integration more complex, on the one hand promoting the departure of migrants towards other destinations, on the other trapping them in an endless cycle of displacements inside the most segregated neighbourhoods of the city. The research results therefore stress the multi-scale nature of migration governance and its spatial productivity (Lind, 2020), since the increased constraints on the mobility of the migrant population appear to be capable of producing unexpected transformations even at local scale, trapping migrants in segregated districts, initially reconfiguring Greece from a destination of settlement to a land of transit and finally reconfiguring it as a territory of containment.

It also emerges that the mobilisation of new policies of fear and xenophobic and criminalising rhetoric against the migrant population is used as an instrument for legitimising new processes of "accumulation through displacement" and gentrification (Hackworth & Smith, 2001). These measures therefore are aimed not only at attracting capital and rebranding as "global cities", but also at regaining control of what from time to time can be defined as a jungle (Ex-Moi) or an urban void (Eleonas). These narratives are proving to be the tools to carry forward that "urban neoliberalism" which, after the 2008 financial crisis, had encountered growing opposition. An opposition often triggered by the awareness that these crises were largely the result of the debts incurred precisely by these projects of urban redevelopment, as in the case of the Olympic Games infrastructures of Athens 2004 and Turin 2006.

Yet, Idrissa and Pauline's constant movements also seem to be driven by other forces. These forces are an expression of the post-colonial and racist character of displaceability, which translates into the urban realm the spatial productivity of bordering and containment practices (Tazzioli, 2020). A condition of "permanent arrival" (Meeus *el al.*, 2020) and "displaceability", described by Yiftachel (2018) as «the susceptibility of people and groups to being removed, expelled or prevented from exercising their right to the city» characterises both the story of Idrissa, who has returned to live in a squat, and that of Pauline, who lives, always temporarily, in an apartment provided by the reception system of another European country. In fact, I suggest that displacement shall be understood as the urban side of the "war on migrants"[16]. The "endless displacement" is therefore an essential component of the "confinement continuum" (Tazzioli & De Genova, 2023), identifying the endless series of forced movements alternating with just as much forced immobility.

"Deportability" (De Genova, 2002), "evictability" (van Baar, 2016) and "displaceability" therefore combine to define the condition of spatial vulnerability of the migrant subject on different scales. For people like Idrissa, who was included in a third reception project eight years after his arrival in Italy and then taken to an expulsion centre, the threat of forced displacement is constant, a silent foundation of contemporary urban citizenship (Yiftachel, 2018). The classificatory power of the *pensée d'État* (Sayad, 2002), therefore translates into a "migratory governmentality" capable of producing new subaltern subjectivities (Beneduce, 2015).

As dispersal strategies trace their genealogy back to the colonial government of "unruly" populations (Tazzioli, 2020), the condition emerging is thus characterised by a "reverse coloniality", defining a new "regime of urban identities" (Yiftachel, 2018) capable of operating in multiple

16 Through this metaphor the No Border movement denounces the violent character of EU's migration policies.

sites and scales (Lind, 2020), from the border, where one is contained or pushed back, to the renting of a house in a segmented and specialised market. A housing market with no guarantees, subject to the monopoly of specialised actors, where inhabiting means to live under the constant threat of harassment, extortion and eviction.

Finally, it is worth emphasising how the history of both the "soft eviction" of the Ex-Moi and of the "hard eviction" of the Eleonas camp find their own precedent and model in the eviction of two Roma camps, namely the Platz and the Polykarpou evictions, suggesting a genealogy of dispersal and displacement technologies yet to be reconstructed.

Only a complete and radical rethinking of both migration and housing policies could put an end to this cycle of intersecting oppressions, a rethinking that should start on the one hand with the identification of freedom of movement as a fundamental and universal right, and on the other with the de-commodification of housing. Of course, these are not issues on the government agendas. Yet, the "Fortress Europe" is no older than thirty years, and cities have never stopped transforming.

That said, the present study is limited by the absence of quantified data supporting the generalisation of the patterns described, although the difficulty of quantifying and mapping displacement processes, as well as the movements of a population deliberately excluded from the founding institutions of urban citizenship is well known (Easton *at al.,* 2019). While segregation studies could improve their insight by bearing in mind the influence of containment policies, the hypothesis of new emerging patterns of segregation could be further tested through quantitative research, while new qualitative research could shed light on the housing careers following displacements and evictions. The stories of the inhabitants of Eleonas and Ex-Moi are far from being over, as well as their urban odysseys, their search for a home across and beyond the Mediterranean, their struggle for the right to the city.

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