BORDERING THE CITY:
AN ETHNOGRAPHY
OF EVERYDAY BORDERING PRACTICES
IN ATHENS, GREECE

BY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an ethnographic study of everyday bordering and the people working with migrants in Athens. It looks at the (re)production of the EU border regime in the crisis-ridden city of Athens following the 2015 border crisis. The resulting dislocation of the border into the EU's territorial boundaries carved out a social space in which subjects were labelled, assigned moral value and subjected to differentiated mobility regimes and temporalities. This social space had its own materialities -the detention centre, the asylum service, the camp but also the school for migrant children and the squat housing migrants. The study focuses on three such spaces: the camp, the squat and the school to explore the encounters between the actors inhabiting them, the governance logics driving them, and the resulting practices. The thesis argues that these spatialised encounters fundamentally shape the practices that either reinforce or challenge the border. Building on bordered temporalities, the thesis ultimately claims that these practices and what different actors do with the time spent in these border spaces, are fundamental for the production or subversion of the border, as these negate or relinquish control over migrant time.

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Finally, I wish to acknowledge that short passages of the thesis have been previously published. This is the case of the introductory chapter that includes sections from an article commissioned and published by the Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung (Papoutsi 2019). Finally, some ideas in this thesis have been unavoidably influenced and shaped by parallel work I undertook during these last four years. This includes published work produced along with the research team Transcapes (Christodoulou et al. 2016; Painter et al. 2017; Vradis et al. 2018; Papoutsi et al. 2018; Papada et al. 2019), and the co-authoring of a monograph (Gonzales et al. 2019). These works are properly cited when quoted and used directly but an unintended overlap of ideas and expressions might still be there.

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

1.1. Background

Every aspect of Greece's public sphere has been marked by the politics of crisis for almost a decade. The sovereign debt crisis of 2009 had catastrophic social implications (Matsaganis 2013): the ensuing neo-liberal restructuring of the economy slashed public spending on health and education, shrunk social welfare and protection and curtailed social and labour rights, while unemployment and precariousness skyrocketed (Dalakoglou and Agelopoulos 2017). In this context, already since the spring of 2015, the number of arriving migrants had risen dramatically, resulting by the end of that summer in, what came to be known as, a 'refugee crisis'. What is particularly relevant and important to understand about the Greek context of that period is that these overlapping humanitarian crises created *"an increasing confusion of the boundaries between citizenship and alienage in Greece as diverse populations face various forms of precarity"* (Cabot 2018, p. 749).

The year 2015 marked a paradigm change for Greece with regards to the governance of migration as the country's asylum and migration management system came under extraordinary pressure. Although asylum has always been pretty much the only available route to legality, even temporarily, for many migrants, the 2015 crisis consolidated seeking asylum as a temporary stay of deportation. In 2015 over one million migrants crossed into and through Greece (UNHCR 2018) seeking asylum in Europe. While spontaneous boat arrivals to Greece's Aegean islands peaked in 2015 and early 2016, their impact on the country's social services and reception infrastructure was far from catastrophic in that period because of the quick transiting of these migrating populations. According to the Greek Asylum Service (2018), asylum applications in 2015 reached 13,187, which represents an

increase of about 40 percent in comparison to 2014. However, this number pales in the face of the 187 percent increase in 2016, when 51,053 asylum applications were registered in a single year. This can be explained by looking at the movements of and the possibilities still available to those on the move at the time.

The vast majority of those arriving in Greece during that period aimed at seeking asylum in other EU member-states via the Western Balkan Route. The pace of the transit was exceptionally fast: the migratory journey from the Turkish coast, through the Aegean islands and the Greek territory, the Balkans and all the way up to Northern Europe, was a matter of days. While Greece has traditionally been a transit country, the pace of the transit in 2015 was so fast that the country's borders became almost invisible. In particular the border with Macedonia, which is not an EU member-state, was reduced to just a formality, marked and expedited by administrative deportation orders issued by the Greek Police to those arriving (Franck 2017). This extraordinarily fast transit was facilitated by the actors on the ground, from the police to grassroots activists, obviously in different ways and for different motivations. Eventually, border controls along this route were tightened, even at times within the Schengen area, including the erection of border fences. The border between Greece and Macedonia was closed in March 2016, immobilising tens of thousands of migrants in Greek territory (Kreichauf 2018). It is often argued that Greece, a traditionally transit space, at that point became a receiving country from one day to the next (Kotzamanis and Karkouli 2016). However, it is only the pace of transit that decelerated by the reinstatement of border checks between EU member-states and by the institutionalisation of secondary mobility (Papoutsi et al. 2018). Those grounded in Greece in 2015 had no other recourse but to apply for asylum there. These mass asylum claims soon overwhelmed the country's reception infrastructure. In this sense, asylum management became instrumental for the management of borders during the period in question.

Reflective of the geopolitical developments in the wider geographical area of the Middle East and Turkey, it comes as no surprise that, since 2015 and up to the time of writing, the vast majority of asylum seekers in Greece were Syrian nationals (Asylum Service 2018). These were followed by nationals from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq. Asylum-related migration from Turkey saw a significant increase since 2016, the failed coup d'état and the increasing authoritarianism of President Erdoğan's regime. Asylum claims by Turkish nationals quadrupled in 2016 only to see a tenfold increase in 2017 and an additional threefold increase in 2018, reaching 3,807 asylum claims by October 2018 (Asylum Service 2018).

Of the total number of 51,053 asylum applications in 2016 and the 58,642 in 2017, a significant proportion consists of applications for Family Reunification under the Dublin Regulation and applications for relocation to other EU member-states under the Emergency Relocation Scheme. This amounts to 13,069 applications in 2016 and 20,613 in 2017. This means that these people did not eventually receive asylum in Greece but instead their applications were processed by other EU member-states. Finally, as processing of asylum claims could take up to two years, and even longer if there was an appeal, it was not until late 2018 and 2019 that many of these asylum seekers received final decisions on their application. Therefore, the actual impact of Greece's and EU's policies on asylum seekers, but also on the country, manifested with a time lag of two years. The next section reviews the main policy changes that took place since 2015 in Greece, as these relate to this thesis. These developments grounded thousands of migrants in unwanted places; turned asylum into temporary leave to remain; gave rise to a whole new social space of encounters and bordering practices that took place in specific locales in the city of Athens; and, finally, entangled many unexpected actors in the management of the border, creating geographies of exclusion.

1.1.1. Migration policy in Greece

Located at the South-Eastern EU borderscape, Greece plays an important role in the geographies of externalisation and internalisation of the EU's border regime. On the one side, border control is mostly achieved through push-backs and returns to Turkey (Papadopoulou 2004); on the other, those that make it across the Greek-Turkish border are abandoned in cities, usually without legal status, access to social services and protection, or are detained pending deportation. In particular in the 2000s, the state logic was not so much enforced through invisibilisation as through strategic implementation and performance of 'hostile environment' policies. One of the most common such practices were police raids, 'sweep' operations as they were referred to by the media. These targeted undocumented migrants in public spaces and workplaces and were highly visible. They were widely publicised operations aiming more to portray the cities as unwelcoming to migrants than to do something about the undocumented population of the country. However, the very visibility of these marginalised groups within urban centres also led to increasing public insecurity as socioeconomic tensions increased (Xenaki and Cheliotis 2013).

While the country has experienced mass migration since the late 1980s, especially from Albania, it was not until the late 1990s that it developed a migration policy both in terms of regularising the existing undocumented labour migrant population and managing new arrivals (Gropas and Triandafyllidou 2012). Greece was the last Southern EU member-state to implement regularisation programmes for undocumented labour migrants, mostly from Albania. The numbers are overwhelming as 371,641 people applied in 1998 during the first such programme (Cavounidis 2012). Migration policy in Greece has historically been characterised by abandonment and repression and the tone has been set by police raids and arbitrary detention (Mantanika 2014). In the absence of legal routes, most migrants enter the

country illicitly with the aim to transit to other EU member-states. They either apply for asylum or remain in the country undocumented temporarily until they can move on. "*As a result, state policy has been an oxymoron of providing humanitarian assistance and temporary reception facilities to newcomers, but with the aim of deporting them so as to prevent permanent settlements*" (Papadopoulou 2004, p. 171).

1.1.2. Policy in times of crisis

There are three developments that have marked migration management in Greece since 2015: (1) the mass arrivals of 2015-2016; (2) the introduction of the hotspot approach for the management of border crises, along with the increasing and controversial involvement of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in the country's asylum process; and (3) the EU-Turkey Statement. The peak in arrivals in 2015-2016 signalled a crisis for the borders of Europe. I, therefore, use the term border crisis, instead of refugee or migrant/migration crisis, in order to highlight that the crisis was a product of the then politics and management of the EU's border and it was a crisis of governance. It came to exacerbate the chronic inadequacies and systemic failures of the Greek asylum system that had effectively led to the suspension of the Dublin Regulation for Greece and had halted returns there already since 2011[1]. As asylum claims soared in 2015 and 2016, the then newly elected Greek government, an unlikely coalition between the left-leaning SyRizA and the nationalist populist party of AnEl, implemented the hotspot approach and the EU-Turkey Statement. Ever since, these two interconnected mechanisms have regulated mobility and asylum through fast-track procedures at the border for those arriving in the Aegean islands.

While the first hotspot in Greece (in Moria on the island of Lesbos) was officially inaugurated on paper in October 2015, it was the EU-Turkey Statement (March 2016) that

[1] ECtHR, M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece, Application No. 30696/09, Judgment of 21 January 2011; CJEU, Joined Cases C-411/10 and C-493/10 N.S. v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, Judgment of 21 December 2011

completed its function. The implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement meant that the thousands of arriving migrants instantly became subject to fast-track border procedures in the hotspots. Until then, arriving migrants were registered upon arrival, fingerprinted and received a deportation order, which was largely viewed as a ticket out of Greece. From one day to the next (March 20, 2016), all new arriving migrants were geographically restricted on the islands of arrival, where they were forced to apply for asylum or face immediate return to Turkey. They were subjected to the fast-track border procedure provisioned by the EU-Turkey Statement and the hotspot mechanism. This meant that admissibility criteria were used to determine who would be allowed to move to the mainland. Only if an asylum seeker could demonstrate that they were in considerable danger should they be returned to Turkey, their asylum claim was considered admissible and was thus processed by Greece. In all other cases, Turkey was considered able and willing to process asylum applications while offering asylum seekers temporary protection and respect for their rights. In other words, the Greek Asylum Service considered whether an individual claim was admissible rather than whether an asylum seeker was in need of international protection. Following the admissibility decision, those whose claims were inadmissible awaited their removal and return to Turkey, while those whose claims were admissible were then allowed to move on to the mainland and lodge full asylum applications.

This led to overcrowding and increasingly worsening conditions in the camps and hotspots on the front-line islands, which were effectively turned into containment zones. There, asylum seekers were detained under substandard conditions in camps, and kept in a state of limbo, without being able to fully exercise their rights. Therefore, the EU-Turkey Statement effectively and de facto disentangled the right to protection from territory (Vradis et al. 2019), since arrival on EU territory no longer guaranteed the right of asylum seekers to lodge full asylum claims. Additionally, the EU-Turkey Statement created categories of asylum

seekers based on arbitrary criteria such as someone's arrival date. This meant that an asylum seeker from Syria who arrived on the island of Lesbos on the 19th of March of 2016 (before the EU-Turkey Statement came into effect) would receive a different treatment by the law compared to a Syrian asylum seeker who arrived on (or after) the 20th of March of 2016 (when the EU-Turkey Statement became effective).

In order to implement such an irregular and incongruent with the EU human rights regime, the Greek government had to introduce emergency, and often controversial, legislation, and amendments to existing rules and regulations. The case of returns to Turkey is a case in point. In order for returns to Turkey to become possible, the Independent Appeals Committees were overhauled in June 2016. Up to that point, the Committees had accepted the vast majority of asylum seekers' appeals against the first instance rejection, effectively blocking returns to Turkey. After the restructuring, the Committees rejected 93.63 percent of all cases.

Despite or because of these interventions, the Greek asylum system remained fragile and deficient. Both on the islands and in the mainland, there were significant delays of up to 10 months before someone could lodge their asylum application. In mainland Greece, asylum procedure was fraught with backlogs and systemic failures. One such problem was the process through which asylum seekers needed to go to launch their claim. While it had proven complicated, ineffective and quite often unattainable, the Greek Asylum Service insisted on using Skype as a method to register asylum claims. Additionally, there were major delays in scheduling first asylum interviews (these were usually scheduled for a year after registration) and in the delivery of decisions. Free of charge legal aid at first instance asylum applications was not provided to applicants. It is also worth mentioning that EASO became increasingly entangled in the asylum procedure, conducting interviews and providing

recommendations, which exceeded its competence under relevant EU regulations and the Greek law.

On the other side, the declared emergency also meant large sums of funds being poured into the country's reception and humanitarian infrastructure. The Greek state, in cooperation with international actors, such as the European Commission (EC) and the UNHCR, took steps to improve the housing and living conditions of asylum seekers. Cash cards were provided for asylum seekers: depending on the type of accommodation and the size of their families, recipients received an allowance between €90 and €550 per month. It was only given to those that resided in official accommodation and were in possession of an asylum seeker's card, thus excluding thousands of asylum seekers residing outside of the camps (e.g. in squatted buildings) but also those that did not have documents. A special programme for the education of asylum seeking and refugee children was eventually put in place in 2016. Reception classes for children residing in camps and private accommodation were created in state schools in the evenings. The programme was heavily criticised by civil society organisations and advocacy groups as segregating, but also by the teachers as counterproductive and ineffective.

1.1.3. Between rejection and acceptance

The collective sentiment and reaction of the Greek population to the increasing presence of asylum seekers in the country has fluctuated massively since 2015 and differed significantly from the overt racism and xenophobia of the years before the crisis. Xenophobic and anti-migrant groups had been active for decades at the street-level in many Greek cities (Georgiadou 2008). While at times very violent, these had been marginal until the neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn electoral power skyrocketed in 2012, winning 7% of the national vote and entering for the first time in the Parliament and mainstream politics. This was the culmination

of a decade long of lower intensity street-level work and incitment of racist reflexes in the form of ‘indignated’ citizens and neighbours (Georgiadou 2013). However, the rise of the extreme right was also fostered by the systematic stigmatisation of migrants by subsequent governments and the media as health bombs in the city of Athens (Filippidis 2013) and the intensification of everyday bordering in cities with daily raids and roundups of undocumented migrants (Dalakoglou 2013). The mobilisation of Golden Dawn, inside and outside parliamentary politics, climaxed in 2013 with the two assassinations that sealed the fate of the group: the assassination of the migrant worker Shehzad Luqman[2] and the antifascist rap musician Pavlos Fyssas[3]. Ten days following the latter’s death and under the immense pressure of public opinion, the whole of the party’s leadership was arrested and put on trial as a criminal organisation.

Guided by nativist narratives of the extreme-right and (in)securitising police practices, the rejection of migrants acquired spatial and geographical characteristics, as the mobilisations were centred around the rejection of coexistence between migrants and locals in the same neighbourhoods (Teloni and Mantanika 2015). In this sense, the neighbourhood became the theatre of action for a wider rejection (Kandylis and Kavoulakos 2011). It also signified *“a radicalisation of mainstreaming different forms of ethnic, racial or cultural inequality that are prevalent in daily life in the country, but also across Europe”* (Triandafyllidou and Kouki 2014, p. 433).

During the same period, an antiracist and antifascist movement was also mobilised to resist the state’s anti-immigration policies and the incitement of anti-immigrant sentiment in large sections of the society. This movement had strong local characteristics, especially in the late 2000s, as it organised at the neighbourhood level to counter racism and support

[2] For more details on the case see https://thepressproject.gr/murdered-while-cycling-to-work-golden-dawn-members-on-trial-for-killing-27-year-old-shehzad-luqman/

[3] For more details on the case see https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-murder-of-pavlos-fyssas

migrant struggles. At the same time, a number of anarchist and antiauthoritarian groups and initiatives, such as the squatted social centre Villa Amalia in Victoria Square, contributed to the antiracist and antifascist movement. I will look at these more closely in chapter five, which explores the emergence of the migrant squatting movement in Athens in 2016. These two antagonistic forces set the scene for the ambivalent and contradictory attitudes of the local populations, that will be described below.

In the first months of the crisis on the Aegean islands, Greeks in their majority were moved by the plight of the newcomers and were welcoming. Images of people, young and old, gathering clothes, offering food and opening their homes to the newcomers were very common in social and mainstream media. Some scholars claim that such welcoming practices "*reinforced a powerful Greek national self-narrative, which capitalised on hospitality culture"* (Cabot 2017, p. 142). However, the enforcement of the EU-Turkey Statement as of March 2016 significantly reshaped the public sentiment, as increasing numbers of migrants were no longer able to move on to other EU member-states and were forced to remain within the Greek territory. Especially local communities on the Aegean islands and those neighbouring camps were at times particularly hostile towards asylum seekers, while Golden Dawn and other fascist groups started organising again. Racist attacks once more went on the rise, while covert or openly racist and xenophobic discourse made its way to mainstream media. According to recent studies[4], Greeks joined their Eastern European counterparts in viewing non-EU migration as a threat to the domestic economy, culture, identity and society overall. That said, and taking into account the overwhelming rise of xenophobia and racism in the whole of the continent, it is worth recognising that the Greeks, despite the harsh economic conditions that a large part of the population has been living under for the past ten

[4] For more numbers look at the 2018 Eurobarometer: https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage/news/eurobarometer-2018-results-have-been-published_en and Greece's National Centre for Social Research reports https://www.ekke.gr/index.php?lng=en

years, still show a mostly welcoming face. During all this period since 2015, there has been a huge civic and political mobilisation of solidarity with the newcomers. Additionally, thousands of international activists travelled to Greece between 2015 and 2018 to join the efforts of local organisations and individuals to welcome and practice solidarity to the newcomers.

1.1.4. Gendered solidarity

Solidarity to arriving migrants was born out of and built on a particular socio-political context in Athens and Greece at large, which was marked by the resurgence, transformation and feminisation of the Greek social and political movements throughout the 2000s as a response to the economic crisis. The neo-liberal restructuring of the economy had tremendous social implications: public spending for social welfare was slashed, health and education services shrunk, social rights and social protections were curtailed, while labour precariousness, unemployment and other inequalities skyrocketed. Not only were women called to disproportionately cover this retreat of the state as the burden fell mostly on the household, but they were also more affected. Since the crisis struck unevenly (Daskalaki and Fotaki 2017), women suffered disproportionately by rising unemployment, precariousness, impoverishment as well as an increase in everyday violence (Vaiou, 2014).

In response, a whole range of social, economic and solidarity initiatives emerged in urban and rural areas around the country in order to cushion the retreat of social welfare: collective cooking, social clinics and pharmacies, time banks and barter networks. During this period, women participated more than men in these new and unconventional ways of mobilising, playing a crucial role in creating solidarity networks (Papageorgiou and Petousi 2018). What Greece experienced throughout the 2000s was a feminisation of resistance that came with collectively implementing practices of everyday solidarity, cohabitation and care in the city. What was challenged by these everyday practices was the practice of antagonism to

the state as this moved away from street protests and more militant tactics, and towards practices aimed at social reproduction and the covering of basic needs such as food, health, caring for the elderly and children. As a result, the role and dominance of the figure of anarchist or left-wing young male protester was somewhat displaced by the figure of the female solidarian. Solidarity to newcomers was born out of these networks and in this context as their needs overlapped with those of the impoverished locals. As a result, the groups that eventually emerged were, in their majority, also informed by a similar ethos, principles and practices of care.

1.2. Aims and objectives of the study

Based on ethnographic work conducted in Athens in 2017, in camps, squats and schools, with migrants, volunteers, INGO and camp workers, activists, civil servants, and schoolteachers, this thesis aims to develop a theoretical understanding of the often bureaucratic production and function of the border in the city. I explore everyday bordering in the city in order to understand the implications for local and migrant populations and for the urban landscape. The study's objectives are three: to explore the encounters and practices, rather than solely spaces, that enforce or contest the border; to decouple certain rationales and practices from specific spaces and categories of actors; and to draw attention to the temporal aspects of border management and border resistance. This thesis offers a meticulous account of the actors and their everyday encounters and investigates the impact these had on the city. To achieve this, the thesis explores three different spaces where the border was materialised, often masking as bureaucracy, rational decision-making, administrative language and organisational rationales. Therefore, the mediation of the bureaucratic apparatus enacts the border in everyday life, often concealing it as something

else. The thesis then sets out to understand what the factors, materialities and spatialities are that bring about the enforcement or the contestation of the border.

Athens offers the perspective of an "ordinary city" (Hall 2015) where everyday bordering practices intensified in 2015 engulfing the city in the EU's border regime: its "ordinary" streets, squares and other urban social infrastructure, depleted by austerity but often repurposed by the social and political movements in the 2000s, accommodated a host of bordering and unbordering practices. The thesis offers a thick and contextually rich description of Athens as the border, empirically contributing to the understanding of the embodied effects of urban everyday bordering. But Athens also embodied the subversion of the border in the everyday: its social infrastructure, often built from below, harboured its new residents, giving rise to novel, alternative and inclusive urbanisms.

I draw on a variety of theoretical contributions from different disciplines, literatures and fields: geography of camps, anthropology of bureaucracy, critical border studies, mobilities and temporalities studies, history of squatting and social movements, citizenship studies and urban theories. I employ theoretical and conceptual tools from these fields to analyse the changing meanings and materialisations of borders and the way these have developed as a result of the Greek overlapping crises. These mark a long period of heightened and multi-layered crisis -economic, political, border- that has transformed dramatically the economy, the relations of production, social cohesion, politics and governance there. In relation to migration management, this period has seen frenzied rearrangements in the governance of borders and asylum, as well as an intensified effort to EUropeanise it. These have dramatically slowed down the pace of transit of migrants through Greece, at times almost bringing it to a still, achieved by the border (re)arrangement explored in this thesis. This stretching of the transit time prolonged the stay of thousands of migrants

in the country, turning the country, as many have argued, from a country of transit to a buffer zone, which has had various effects at the local level.

While the EU border regime has been widely addressed at the national or supranational level, there is a lack of empirical work on the impact of bordering practices on the local level and on cities. Relevant work usually predates the 2015 crisis, which was a catalyst for the rearrangements of the EU's border regime. Similarly, while there is a burgeoning literature on the increasing inclusion of and devolution of power to new actors, this is mostly focused on the international level. There is a rich and growing literature dedicated to exploring how transnational agencies and INGOs take on different aspects of border management -from humanitarian relief to security of detention centre- blurring the boundaries between private and public but also between security, control and care. However, there is a lack of attention to similar processes taking place at the local level which equally contributes to the creation and further encroachment of the EU border regime. This thesis aims at contributing to these questions, by bringing the local into the foreground and positioning Athens as the border, on the one side, and the embodiment of its subversion on the other

1.3. Outline of the thesis

The thesis is organised in eight chapters and this section provides an overview of the structure. Chapter two lays out the theoretical foundations and conceptual framework of the thesis. It first unpacks the concept of the border: drawing on critical border studies, geography and sociology of migration, its sets out to explore the changing meanings and functions of borders and their production across time and space. In particular, it reviews the relevant literature on borderscapes, border de- and re- territorialisation, border externalisation and domestication, everyday bordering and borderwork in order to

conceptualise the border as a set of practices, rather than a geographically bounded space, that materialise through encounters and relationships in our most familiar spaces. The focus here is on the city, both as a scale of governance and policy enforcement but also as the space in which the border is enacted and resisted everyday.

Chapter three outlines the epistemology and methodology of the thesis, the methods and research designs used, the ethical considerations of and the challenges associated with such research designs and research objects. Following a brief epistemological discussion on the underpinnings of the research and the methodology, the chapter lays out the ensuing research design and methods employed to investigate the research questions. The chapter subsequently considers ethics as well as the main challenges, risks and limitations of the methodology used. Finally, the themes of research sites, location and scale as well as researcher's positionality and issues of access run through the whole chapter.

Chapters four, five and six lay out the empirical evidence from the three spaces that form part of my ethnography: the camp, the squat and the school respectively. Chapter four focuses on the emergence and proliferation of camps -that is reception and accommodation centres for newly arrived migrants- in the city of Athens following the border crisis of 2015. In particular, it examines the institutional evolution of the camp and its outgrowth as a tool for the management of the presence and the needs of thousands of migrant newcomers in urban spaces. The chapter presents empirical evidence from my ethnography in the camps of Athens in 2017. It additionally draws on the burgeoning literature on camps and aims to contribute to these debates by exploring this camp form, its relation to the city and its role for the wider EU border regime. Even though these camps were meant to be a temporary housing solution for those arriving, many residents still remain there, three years on (at the time of writing). I argue that these camps provide a necessary tool for the temporal, rather than strictly spatial, management of the newcomers.

Chapter five is an ethnography of the squats housing migrants in the city of Athens. These are empty and abandoned buildings, usually owned by the state or under disputed ownership, that were occupied en masse for housing purposes in the past years. These spaces are all located in and around the city centre and were squatted by an assemblage of radical left, communist and anarchist groups, but also homeless migrants following the violent closure of the Greek - Macedonian border in March 2016. The main argument of this chapter is that, as the border becomes entrenched into everyday spaces, it creates new encounters between different actors. These in turn give rise to new contestations of EU's hierarchised mobility and border regimes, on the one side; however, on the other, they often entangle those who try to contest it into border governmentality.

Chapter six uses the school, both as an institution and as a physical space, in order to talk about bureaucracy as a bordering practice. I draw on the experiences of families living in squats and camps, as well as of those that helped them during school enrollments in Athens. My aim here is to explore the ways in which the school reproduces the border. While it is situated at the outskirts of government, the school functions as an everyday space where the state bureaucracy enacts the border in the city. This is manifested in the sustained exclusion of the majority of the newly arrived migrant children from schools since 2015. On the one hand, the state has a legal obligation to provide unhindered access to education to all children within the Greek territory irrespectively of their legal or residential status. On the other, there is a limited capacity within the national education system, while at the same time the number of migrant children in recent years has increased dramatically. This chapter argues that it is bureaucracy that allows the state to seemingly reconcile these two competing realities, by stalling and by creating spaces and temporalities for those children.

Chapter seven provides a discussion of the previous three empirical chapters and presents the overall findings of the thesis. It looks more closely at the spatial arrangement of

the border in the city and at the connections and dependencies between the three spaces. It also interrogates how these relate to and are shaped by each other and the rest of the city. It explores in more detail the everyday urban experiences of the research participants and the way they move in the city. The aim is to determine place-specific practices and what the same actors do (potentially differently) in different spaces; what moving between the different locales entails and means; and, finally, how the border is enacted and infringed in the city. It also provides insights into the temporal aspect of the border, the element of time and the changes that places and bordering practices undergo over time.

Finally, chapter 8 concludes the thesis and summarises the key findings of the research, its contribution to existing knowledge, literature and debates. It additionally discusses the challenges faced during the research and the limitations of the study, as well as the potential for future research.

2. THE BORDER AS PRACTICE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter lays out the theoretical foundations and conceptual framework of the thesis. I first unpack the concept of the border: drawing on critical border studies, geography and sociology of migration, I explore the changing meanings and functions of borders historically and today as well as their construction and reproduction across time and space. In particular, I review the relevant literature on border de- and re-territorialisation (border externalisation, domestication, privatisation and digitalisation), borderscapes and everyday bordering. The main focus is on everyday bordering and the conceptualisation of the border as a set of practices, rather than a geographically bounded space and infrastructure, that aim to govern migrant time. As these practices multiply and proliferate beyond and within state borders, they entrench in our most familiar spaces, our neighbourhoods, squares, schools and workplaces; to such an extent that some scholars have argued that the border is everywhere. Bureaucracy is key in these processes, concealing certain bordering practices as efficient and rational decision-making, and reconciling the state's competing rationales and priorities. The focus here is on the city, as a scale of governance and policy enforcement, but also as the space in which the border is enacted and resisted everyday through particular encounters. In order to do so, and understanding the state as a modulation of different agencies and often competing rationales, the study looks inside the state, its institutions, actors, the spaces and specific locals that they operate in and the practices that they employ.

The chapter is structured as follows: section two introduces the field of critical border studies and the main questions that it addresses. Section three reviews the literature on de- and re- bordering processes as these are driven by the two major opposing forces of

globalisation and securitisation. Section four focuses on the resulting dissociation of the function of the border from its form (deterritorialisation) and the four different but closely interrelated processes that deterritorialise the border today, namely externalisation (2.4.1), internalisation (2.4.2), outsourcing (2.4.3) and digitalisation (2.4.4). Section five introduces the concept of borderwork, everyday bordering and bordering as practice and brings to the foreground the urban as the space where these bordering practices take place. Section six offers a critique of the 'everywhere' of borders and calls for attention to be paid in the particular locales that bordering takes place affecting only certain kinds of people in an intersectional way. Finally, the chapter concludes with section six that delineates my understanding of the border in the city and how it will be implemented in relation to the empirical chapters that follow.

2.2. Border studies: an ever-evolving field of research

Border scholars study the ever-changing meanings, nature and functions of borders, boundaries, frontiers, and their production and reproduction across space and time. It is an evolving and complex area of study and has been closely related to the most salient events and processes of modern social, political and economic history: WWI, WWII, the end of the Cold War, globalisation, 9/11, as well as to most geopolitical developments, wars and disputes, in the last 50 years. In this sense, borders cannot really be studied without addressing issues such as war and its potentially global meaning, the nation-state, nationalism, identity, citizenship and culture. Adding to the intricacies of this area of scholarly research, different disciplines offer interesting and valuable insights, which make up what is today known as border studies. Geography looks at the spatial and temporal dimensions and arrangements of borders and the ways in which territory and sovereignty interrelate with the social, economic, political and cultural conditions of peoples, nations and states (Kolossov

2005; Minghi 1963; Newman and Paasi 1998; Prescott 1987; van Houtum et al. 2005); anthropology and ethnography focus on the everydayness of the border experience by border and transnational people(s) as well as the symbolic aspects of the border (Andersson 2014; Anzaldúa 1987; Donnan and Wilson 1999; Martinez 1994); political scientists and international relations scholars have challenged the seemingly self-evident features of bounded territories and the meanings of mobile identities and shifting boundaries (Campbell 1992; O'Tuathail 1996); finally, history of and research on borderlands have broadened our understanding of border areas as places that unite as much as divide (van Schendel 2005) and have shifted the perspective from the centre of the state to its periphery (Asiwaju and Adenyi 1989; Baud 1993; van Schendel 1993).

In their traditional conceptualisation, both in geography and political science, borders have been largely viewed as static lines, boundaries delimiting the state's territoriality and sovereign power (Anderson and Bort 2001; Donnan and Wilson 1999; Walker, 1993). If the nation-state is a sovereignty power container (Giddens 1985) or a cultural container (Taylor 1994), then its boundaries are there to delimit and enclose that particular homogeneous space. This linear and static approach, "*even if it was appropriate to describe the border regime of the 1990s, it cannot capture the changing nature of the borders today*" (Euskirchen et al. 2007, p. 2). If a new "border theory" (Paasi 2011) is to be attainable it will have to take into account the emergence of new institutions (Wolff 2008), unexpected new actors (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2006), often contradictory policies, and rapidly advancing technologies (Amoore 2006; Broeders 2007). These different elements of the border regime permit and induce both the delocalised and remote surveillance of borders, and their simultaneous permeating in our everyday life. The above mentioned transmutations, on the one hand, severely affect the very essence of borders as a whole, but also, on the other

hand, impact heavily on our sense of home, membership and belonging. Finally, these processes leave their mark on our cities and our neighbourhoods.

Multidisciplinary approaches within border studies have contributed to a shift away from a descriptive analysis of borders as limits and towards the study of the dynamics of bordering processes as these impact society and space. These approaches focus on the importance of bordering processes as a dynamic in its own right at different social and political contexts and spatial scales (Newman 2011). Additionally, with the rise of the political and economic importance of regions -cross-border regions, regional states, city regions- critical border studies no longer consider the border as natural or as having a central stable essence. To the contrary, the border is now viewed as a social and political construct that is subject to change (Agnew 2008; Paasi 1999). Malcolm Anderson (1996) claims that borders are both institutions that delimit state sovereignty and also processes marking identity. According to Paasi (1999), borders turn up and dwell in boundary producing practices and discourses and are reproduced through geography and history textbooks, maps, tourist brochures and so on. O' Tuathail (1996) and other critical geopolitics scholars, drawing on post-structuralist thinkers such as Foucault and Derrida, look at borders as products of social practice at different scales: practices and actors involved at the border, state and regional strategy and policy and finally the very perception of borders. This chapter explores the main literature on borders in relation to migration control in Europe. While borders are about much more than migration control, it is migration that sets the scene for the spectacle of the border. And it is this spectacle that, through the politics of fear and (in)security, drives most of the socio-political developments in this field.

2.3. De- and re- bordering in the age of globalisation and securitisation

Borders have been primarily studied in two major laboratories, namely Europe and the US - Mexico border. This unequivocally has created a Western-centric approach. As a result, less attention has been paid to borders and border zones in other parts of the world and most importantly in the Global South. There are two notable exceptions: Studies of specific disputed areas, such as the long lasting contestation between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir region; and investigations into borders that are of particular interest for the global border regime, such as certain parts of the border between African states, e.g. Mali, Algeria and Mauritania, along the routes that migrants follow in their efforts to reach North Africa and then Europe. In this sense, the condition of borders in the Global South does not necessarily comply with and follow the trends and processes observed in the Global North (securitisation, de- / re- bordering and so on).

Notwithstanding, both in North America and Europe the trend has been similar and somewhat parallel. The reinforcement of the securitisation discourse in the post 9/11 era and the increasing construction of issues as border related security threats, have been re-bordering large parts of those border spaces (Korak 2017). In particular in the case of the EU, border securitisation intensified as several major cities in the continent suffered terrorist attacks in the early 2000s (Cesari 2009), most notably Madrid in March 2004 and London in July 2005. The more recent surge of terrorist attacks by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levante (ISIS) in Europe (e.g. in Paris in November 2015 and in Berlin December 2016) was quickly linked to the mass arrivals of asylum seekers during the 2015 - 2016 Mediterranean border crisis (Bigo et al. 2015). While the attacks were undertaken by homegrown terrorist

cells, the unsubstantiated allegations that Daesh fighters had strategically infiltrated incoming populations, especially those crossing through Greece, in order to deliver attacks on major metropolis persisted. Eventually such narratives led to the further securitisation of the external EU border (Holzberg 2018). The Schengen Treaty and the freedom of movement in the EEA (European Economic Area) came under severe threat as member-states gradually reinstated internal borders, erecting walls even, in their effort to keep out migrants arriving in Greece (Fotiadis 2018; Vradis et al. 2018). For example, in 2015 border checks were reinstated and walls were erected at the heart of Europe, even between Schengen member-states (Minca and Rijke 2017; Koca 2019): between Hungary and Croatia, Slovenia and Croatia, and Austria and Slovenia.

It is especially interesting to look into the ways in which such re-bordering practices appear to come to direct tension with the forces of globalisation and the need for unhindered movement of capital, goods and (certain) people. Because of the expansion and consolidation of economic globalisation and neoliberalism, a large part of the world has been undergoing an apparent de-bordering process. Border controls are lifted and borders appear to be softer, less visible and less relevant. As post-nationalism and transnationalism scholars argue, sovereignty is in the process of diffusing away from the nation-state, weakening in this way the link between political identities, citizenship, participation and the territorial state (Ohmae 1995; Soysal 1994). This ostensibly decreasing importance of the nation-state means that borders as political objects are becoming less relevant because of the need for free circulation of capital, labour, ideas and products. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, this has been termed de-territorialisation of borders (Dittgen 2000; Kolossov and O'Loughlin 1998; Newman 2006; Ohmae 1990; Shapiro and Alker 1996).

Therefore, on the one hand, there is the pressure for a globalised borderless world as has been envisaged in Western liberal democracies following the fall of the Berlin Wall and

the end of the Cold War, and, on the other, the securitisation discourse is pulling towards the exact opposite direction. Within this context of the constant struggle between these two discourses and practices, some borders are opening up or becoming softer, even invisible for most border crossers (de-bordering). However, others are closing down or becoming harder, more visible and more violent (re-bordering). At times, the same border treats different categories of people in very different ways; others travel almost unhindered while others are immobilised inside or outside the gates. Rather than opposing and antagonistic, these two processes, de- and re-bordering, more often than not work at the same time and in tandem.

Therefore, this tension between economic globalisation and security concerns tends to create uneven and tenuous border regimes (Ackleston 2011) in order to govern human mobility. In this sense, mobility –the ability to move across space or to have access to opportunities for movement– becomes a differentiated regime which is predicated upon the construction of specific categories of people as threats (Shamir 2005). Therefore, gradually border management has been moving away from nation-building functions and military purposes (Andreas 2003), which has been their initial and traditional function (Anderson 1996). Today, it is immigration control and the fight against terrorism, rather than nation-building, local border disputes or global wars, which permutate border practices and border studies. In this sense, borders are produced and reproduced at multiple scales in an effort to govern, control and restrict the mobility of large parts of the world's population (Blomey et al. 2001; Sassen 1991; Shamir 2005). As Peter Andreas (2003) argues, it is the effort to police clandestine transnational actors (terrorists, drug traffickers, human smugglers, migrants) that is currently driving the intensification of border control. For this reason, this thesis focuses on bordering practices that aim to control and govern migration.

The resulting regime, according to some scholars, provides an excess mobility or hyper-mobility to some, while immobilising others, the 'exceptions', such as racialised and

marginalised migrants. Governments, states and bureaucracies, increasingly concerned about mobility, create differentiated temporalities (Griffiths et al. 2013; Mountz, 2010; 2013; Simmel 2011) and mobility regimes (Gill 2013; Moran et al. 2013; Shamir 2005) and subject certain categories of people (the vulnerable, the dangerous) to these. Both time and mobility seem to be turning into commodities and resources, of which some have an excess and some a lack and which are bound up in power hierarchies within capitalist societies (Bourdieu, 1997). Accordingly, scholars have looked at the power relations involved in these uneven regimes and stress that it is not mobility that is in excess or scarcity but rather control over it: "[*d]ifferent social groups have distinct relations to this anyway differentiated mobility: some are more in charge of it than others; some initiate flows and movements, others don't; some are more on the receiving end of it than others; some are effectively imprisoned by it*" (Massey 1994, p. 61).

Similarly, Amilhat-Szary and Giraut (2015), drawing on the work of Foucault on the state, developed the concept of borderities to understand and theorise inequalities in mobility and in crossing borders. They define borderity as a technology of control but also as a social quality that "*qualifies the individual and collective relationships that are developed with respect to and at the border, as well as taking into account citizens' modes of appropriation of border spaces and spatialities*" (p. 7). Subsequently, the authors draw and juxtapose two extreme figures: hypermobile global leaders that appear to be perpetually on the move but are in fact hyper-sedentary in the sense that they feel everywhere at home; they are perpetually on the move but their borderity is very low since they hardly meet any obstacles within the spaces they move across. At the other extreme, there is the figure of the global pariah, the migrant, carrying the border on their body, constantly risking retention and removal. Those belonging to the former category freely cross borders while the latter are confined within imposed borders. "*These figures testify to two contrasting crossing regimes*

that determine different individual and collective relations with the borders, i.e. diverging borderities" (p. 9). Therefore, that is an uneven distribution of power over one's possibility to move as well as the choice of where to move to.

As a consequence, the border is experienced differently by different groups and individuals. For some it is a gateway (EU citizens, tourists, business people and academics) while for others it is a barrier (migrants). As Etienne Balibar, one the leading contemporary theorists of borders in Europe today, puts it: *"For a rich person from a rich country, the border has become an embarkation formality, a point of symbolic acknowledgment of his social status to be passed at a jog-trot. For a poor person from a poor country, however, the border tends to be something quite different: not only is it an obstacle which is very difficult to surmount, but it is a place he runs up against repeatedly, passing and repassing through it as and when he is expelled or allowed to re-join his family" (Balibar 2002, p. 82).*

There are various processes that de-territorialise the border, which I will lay out in more detail in relation to the EU's border regime in particular in order to contextualise the thesis. I have grouped them into four main categories, which sometimes overlap, run in parallel and work in tandem. These are externalisation, internalisation, privatisation and bureaucratisation and, finally, digitalisation of border control.

Some of them may appear contradictory to each other but they are in fact concurrent and impossible to disentangle. For example, border externalisation and internalisation transpire at the same time, often facilitating each other, expanding the geographical reach of the state and targeting specific people(s). As internal and external security increasingly collapse into each other in western liberal democracies, the control of the border becomes increasingly "differentiated, detached from the territorial logic and more targeted at specific groups" (Jorry 2007, p. 1). Therefore, not only does control of the border lose its territoriality but, as it does, it is more and more designed so as to target specific groups of people. What

is more, a whole new array of actors, local, international, transnational, and private, that operate outside the formal state apparatus are used to hinder migration at the source by uncover potential illicit border crossers (Lahav and Guiraudon 2000). In other words, the privatisation of the border becomes a vector for its externalisation. Finally, digitalisation and bureaucratisation in turn are processes that run in parallel and facilitate the permeation and normalisation of the border in the most intimate and familiar spaces in our cities. The border appears to be invisible and is to be found everywhere and nowhere (Balibar 2002).

2.4. Border functions and border form: de-territorialisation of the EU's border regime

The above mentioned tensions, transmutations and political events, both regionally and globally, have brought about a dissociation of the function of the border from its form. While border functions, namely division, regulation and control, have not massively changed, the locations, actors and fashions of its enactment have (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut 2015). In the case of Europe, a series of critical investigations (Andrijasevic 2010; Balibar 2002; Lahav and Guiraudon 2006; Rigo 2007; Walters 2002) have developed the notion of the de-territorialisation and displacement of the EU border to describe this disassociation. Spatially, the implication here is that the border may no longer be found at the geographical boundaries of the Schengen area: to trace today's EU borders, we may have to look at the digital and visa records of the border police and FRONTEX instead; at airport checkpoints; at the SIS (Schengen Information System), where the data of persons denied entry to the Schengen area are kept; at the Eurodac database, where fingerprints of asylum seekers and detained migrants are stored (Papastergiadis 2000); at security software (Amoore 2006; Walters 2002) but also at the ledgers of African police and in trucks scanned for bodies

(Andersson 2014). In other words, the EU border has lost its earlier dependence on territory and its control is now located on various geographical scales, dispersing both inside and outside the EU territorial boundaries, but also away from the state, towards new actors and into the digital space. The majority of borderwork (Rumford 2008; Vaughan-Williams 2008; Bialasiewicz 2012) today, targeting and labelling certain bodies as illegal, happens far away from the geographical location of the border, through data surveillance and security software, immigration raids in workplaces and homes, offshore detention and deportations.

The next four subsections will explore in detail each of these processes and will contextualise them in the case of Europe. Even though the focus is on the European Union, these changes are observed also in other parts of the world, and especially in the US and Australia. In fact, much of the re-bordering that is now taking place in Europe has been spearheaded by the US for a while now. Therefore, some examples from those borders will be drawn upon.

2.4.1. Externalisation: beyond the EU border

EU's border regime creates transnational spaces of control (Shamir 2005) or transit spaces that are fluid and constantly reconfigured (Collyer 2007). These transnational spaces are, in their essence, a way to govern migrant mobility not by halting it altogether but by decelerating its speed, keeping migrants in between peripheral nodes (Papadopoulos et al. 2008). But if borders, rather than immobilising migrants, are keeping them on the move, perhaps it would be appropriate to picture borders as a decentralised apparatus that effectively contains migrants in certain places by forcing them to keep moving (Tazzioli and Garelli 2018). There are a number of empirical, mostly ethnographic, studies on these transnational spaces and the actors that inhabit and act in them (Andersson 2014; Collyer 2007; Khosravi 2010; Pedersen 2011; Schapendonk 2012), demonstrating that the reality of

the EU border is not simply that of immobile migrants outside the EU's walls. Instead, this border regime continuously produces flows of migration, transferring migrants between places outside (and inside) the EU territory. In fact, what these studies have illustrated is that the construction of migrants' illegality occurs very far from the physical border of Europe. Subsequently, it is this label that traps migrants in circular worlds of constant mobility both outside (Andersson 2014; Schapendonk 2012) but also increasingly inside (Tazzioli and Garelli 2018; Vradis et al. 2018) the EU's territorial boundaries, and they examine the ways that this transpires.

Individual states shift around migrants between one another, through deportations and returns -voluntary or forced-, sometimes through illegal push backs, in an attempt to avoid responsibility for them. Pedersen (2011) claims that, as a result, migranthood is experienced as a state of "quasi-permanent displacement". Similarly, in his ethnographic study of the Euro-African border and what he calls the "illegality industry", anthropologist Ruben Andersson (2014) illustrates how this border regime produces mobility: Migrants, are detained "on the basis of their supposed intentionality, they are sucked into a circular world of trips cut short, detentions, ignominies, deportations and empty pockets" (p. 108). This intentionality is betrayed by certain signs and behaviours, often racialised, classed and gendered. Therefore, these signs mark certain bodies as illegal before they even cross international borders and then trap them in mobile, transient and unstable worlds. Along the same line of thought, the trajectory ethnography of Joris Schapendonk (2012) analyses the ostensible immobility of transit migrants. Schapendonk claims that even migrants that are considered immobile (stranded, stuck, settled outside the EU border) are actually still on the move inside this in-betweenness; they move from place to place as their migratory project changes, they even cross international borders to follow their strategies or simply to find work

as they raise funds to continue their journey or to avoid problems with local populations and the police.

The above described panorama of border realities and experiences of migrants, while clearly forming part of the European border regime either as a spill over or as strategic policy choices, nevertheless transpires outside EU's territorial limits. This is the reason why scholars have increasingly characterised it as the externalisation of the borders of Europe. According to Casas-Cortes et al. (2015), "*externalisation is an explicit effort to 'stretch the border' in ways that multiply the institutions involved in border management and extend and rework sovereignties in new ways*" (p. 73). This stretch of the border redeploys the border to where the migrant is. In this way, externalisation not only displaces the border but it redefines its form: It's no longer a location but a set of practices aimed at governing people's movements.

This process in Europe today unfolds in largely three ways: (a) through the expansion of the geographical and legal reach of EU's institutions and agencies beyond the territories and the seas of the Union, through for example the joint operations of FRONTEX in the Mediterranean Sea; (b) through intensified and closer cooperation between the EU, or individual member-states, and third countries, promoted by the concepts of Safe Third Countries (STCs) and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); (c) finally, through the devolution of the responsibility of border control -and Search And Rescue (SAR) operations in the case of the Mediterranean Sea- from member-states' authorities and FRONTEX to third countries such as Libya and Turkey. These three instances of border externalisation are increasingly forming "a belt of buffer states around Europe" (Euskirchen et al. 2009, p. 4) whose function is to govern 'undesirable' subjects (Agier 2011), that is prospective migrants in a remote fashion (Guiraudon and Lahav 2000) by policing at a distance (Bigo and Guild 2005) and preemptively (Zolberg 2003).

In particular, the ENP was formed through Action Plans and Association Agreements between the EU and its surrounding countries. One of the key aims of this policy has been to boost the border management capabilities of the countries adjacent to the EU through technology and knowledge transfer (Pedersen 2011). The development - migration nexus follows a rational similar to ENP's and is thought to yield similar results (Sørensen 2012) by hinging development aid onto immigration and policing requirements (Casas-Cortes et al. 2013). For example, the European Commission granted Mali €426 million in development aid over a five year period, in exchange for tighter control of its border (Adepoju et al. 2010).

This has led to questionable and controversial agreements and financial transactions between the EU or individual member-states and authoritarian regimes and failed states. Third country readmission agreements (Andrijasevic 2010), extraterritorial detention centres (Bialasiewicz 2012; Mountz 2011), interdictions (Andrijasevic and Walters 2010), all these operations transpire outside EU territory and often in countries that are not signatories of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. A case in point is the longstanding relationship between the EU, and mainly Italy, on the one hand, and Libya, on the other. This relationship, while incepted and fostered mostly under Muammar Gaddafi's rule, outlasted him and carries on even today, despite Libya having descended into chaos and civil war, effectively becoming a failed state (Lynch 2016). Since as early as 2008 Italy has been providing technology, equipment and border infrastructure to Libya (Pedersen 2011), as part of the Treaty of Friendship, Partnership and Cooperation between the two countries. Successive Italian governments used bilateral agreements with Libya to circumvent European legislation and outsource asylum management and border control to the ex-colony (Bialasiewicz 2012). More recently, in March 2016, the EU, following months of negotiations and political machinations, came to a political agreement with the government of Turkey. Turkey would receive 6 billion euros in exchange for halting migrants trying to leave its shores heading to

the Greek Northe-eastern Aegean islands. This was the political response of the European Commission, a way to tackle the border crisis of 2015 - 2016. Both regimes have had a horrendous track record on human rights (see reports of Amnesty International (2018) and Human Rights Watch (2019) on Turkey and Human Rights Watch (2019) on Libya). In Libya in particular, transiting migrants fall prey to unscrupulous smugglers, gangs and warlords, often under the cooperation of the Libyan authorities (Lynch 2016). Those who manage to get away report extreme violence, kidnapping, sexual violence, extortion (Ehlers and Kuntz 2019), while there have been documented cases of slave trading (Naib 2018).

The case of SAR operations in the central Mediterranean exposes an additional aspect of the externalisation of EU's borders. The burgeoning relevant literature has demonstrated that the recent surge in deaths in the central Mediterranean route is a direct consequence of this externalisation of control. As responsibility for SAR operations lie with the Italian authorities, the government launched in 2013 Operation Mare Nostrum to patrol Italian and international waters as migration gradually increased via that route. The aim was clearly the prevention of shipwrecks in Italian and international waters. Despite saving 150,000 migrants at sea in a year (Ministero della Difesa 2013), the operation was halted in October 2014. It was replaced by the FRONTEX Operation Triton, which had a much smaller geographical reach and operational capacity. According to Migreup (Llewellyn 2015), Triton was limited to operate only 30 miles from the Italian coasts and run on a third of Mare Nostrum's budget. Triton has also been heavily criticised for prioritising border control over saving lives (Patalano 2015) as the death toll in Central Mediterranean quickly surged in 2014 - 2015. Eventually, two massive shipwrecks in April 2015 claimed the lives of 1,200 migrants in less than a week just off the coast of Libya (Bonomolo and Kirchgaessner 2015; Scherer and Jones 2015). The second one is since then recorded by the UNHCR as the deadliest single shipwreck in the Mediterranean (UNHCR 2015). Simon Parker and the

Forensic Oceanography project used GIS, forensic techniques and cartography in their report 'Death by Rescue[5]' in order to document and demonstrate how the EU's policy of retreat from state-led SAR operations shifted the responsibility of saving lives at sea to merchant ships which are ill-fitted and ill-prepared for such a task.

Faced with such tragedies, several activist groups and initiatives, such as Médecins Sans Frontières, Migrant Offshore Aid Station, Sea Watch Greenpeace and Proactiva Open Arms, took on the task of SAR in the Central Mediterranean. Between August 2014 and July 2016, there were six different teams deploying their assets in the Mediterranean to conduct SAR operations (Cusumano 2017). Apart from being crucial for mitigating loss of life at sea, this has been particularly interesting because "[t]hrough their interventions in real time, the activists are able to contest the ways in which the sea is rendered a space of 'nature' or one of 'sovereign prerogative', highly undemocratic and difficult to access for non-state, non-commercial and non-security actors" (Stierl 2016, p. 563). The increasing vilification of these groups by the media, governments and FRONTEX (Cusumano 2017; Fekete 2018; Webber 2017) and their subsequent criminalisation, a process that was facilitated by the portrayal of the border crossers as "illegal" migrants (Sigona 2018), eventually led to their immobilisation.

2.4.2. Internalisation: within the EU border

The idea of a borderless world has been the imaginary of transnationalism and globalisation discourses; at best it has been a privilege for certain categories of people and limited parts of the global population. In particular, the European Schengen space, which is of interest here, has been a privilege enjoyed by citizens from the EEA (European Economic Area) countries only. It is a far cry from the reality experienced by marginalised and racialised migrants in the

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[5] https://deathbyrescue.org/foreword/

continent. In fact, the Schengen Treaty never sought to loosen or abolish immigration and border controls; rather it aimed to displace these away from borders between member-states and towards the edges of the continent (Ozdemir and Ayata 2017). However, the lifting of internal borders inside the Schengen area has also meant that concerns over external threats became an internal security issue. This interpenetration of internal and external security has had a significant impact on the spatiality of border control. As a result, all internal EU spaces have become potentially subject to border control: Migrants, through racialised immigration controls, are targeted by the authorities in public spaces, squares, hospitals, workplaces and are expected to produce their documents at any given time (Bigo and Guild 2005). Bigo and Guild (2005) explain that "*[i]n both law and practice the border for the movement of persons to and within Europe is no longer consistent with the edges of the physical territory of the member-states*" (p. 1). These expansive bordering practices into territories and into cities and neighbourhoods has been described as border internalisation or domestication.

Two examples may offer useful insights into how such processes of internalisation of border control unfold and impact on people and cities: In Greece, between 2012 and 2015, the police operation Xenios Zeus targeted 'migrant-looking' individuals through racial profiling in public spaces across the country's main city centres, leading to the detention of over 80,000 people (Dalakoglou 2013; Pillant 2015). In a similar fashion, and somewhere we would not normally look out for borders, the Swedish REVA project was launched in 2009 by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (Kriminalvården) and the Migration Board (Migrationsverket): The project has been racially profiling commuters in the country's public transport in an attempt to find and deport undocumented migrants (Keshavarz et al. 2013). As Euskirchen et al. (2007, p. 2) explain, "*all intra-European flows of communication and all*

routes of regional infrastructure [...] are now defined as strategic sites of transit and therefore subject to intensified border enforcement".

On top of this stably progressing domestication, the geographical reach of the border is also expanded inward through the governance of emergencies and crises. The policy responses to the border crisis of 2015 - 2016 in the Central and Eastern Mediterranean, at both the EU and national levels, is a case in point. These responses coalesced in the introduction of the hotpot mechanism in member-states that came under extraordinary migratory pressures: "[T]he European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex and Europol will work on the ground with front-line member-states to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants. Those claiming asylum will be immediately channelled into an asylum procedure where EASO support teams will help to process asylum cases as quickly as possible. For those not in need of protection, Frontex will help member-states by coordinating the return of irregular migrants. Europol and Eurojust will assist the host member-state with investigations to dismantle the smuggling and trafficking networks" (European Commission 2015, p. 6). Whereas hotspots were initially imagined and presented as border infrastructure aimed at assisting member-states in governing emergencies through the facilitation of the cooperation of EU agencies, these eventually brought about a spill over of the border into member-state territories. Research on hotspots in Greece and Italy (Martin and Tazzioli 2016, Neville et al. 2016; Vradis et al. 2018, Papoutsi et al. 2018) has shown that the hotspot turned peripheral member-states into additional buffer or waiting zones, where incoming migrants are contained through mobility (Tazzioli and Garelli 2018). The hotspot creates liminal EU territory (Papoutsi et al. 2018), in which migrants are labelled and channelled (Antonakaki et al. 2016) facilitated by humanitarian borderwork (Pallister-Wilkins 2015; 2018).

In this way, the EU border regime seeps into EU territory (Bigo 2001) and creeps into islands, cities and neighbourhoods (Amoore et al. 2008). This is highly problematic because of the racial and class bias of immigration and border controls. These processes have also meant that we can no longer think of borders as solid infrastructure located in border zones. To the contrary, border scholars, as I will discuss more in subsequent sections, have introduced the concept of 'bordering' to stress, on the one hand, the practice based and processual nature of 'borderwork' and, on the other, its everydayness and quasi-presence. This vernacularisation of borders (Perkins & Rumford, 2013) turns subjects into either (untrained) border guards -for example, employers (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017) and supermarket checkout staff (Rumford 2008)- or to potentially illicit border crossers.

2.4.3. Outsourcing and bureaucratisation: blurring the boundaries

The border is also de-territorialised through its de-nationalisation and outsourcing, with the private and third sector swiftly becoming a key player in border management: Airline, shipping and a vast array of other transport as well as security companies, and INGOs gain an ever-increasing foothold in border control. In this way the responsibility is gradually shifted away from the formal state apparatus (Walters 2006) and the boundaries between private and public, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion are blurred. In those blurred boundaries and grey zones, accountability gets lost in the maze of private contracts, public-private partnerships and their bureaucracy. Therefore, these two processes shift responsibility and accountability either entirely away from the state (outsourcing to the private or third sector) or away from traditional state actors (bureaucratisation).

Outsourcing refers to the practice of subcontracting certain aspects of border control to actors that are not part of the state and its institutions (Bloom 2015). These actors can be private but they can also belong to the third sector. The most common case in many liberal

democracies of outsourcing to the private sector is the privatisation of migrant detention facilities. In the US, the encroachment of private companies in the detention of migrants is such that often representatives from the prison industry are involved in drafting immigration legislation (Doty and Wheatley 2013). This "immigration industrial complex" (Golash-Boza 2009) involves the private sector, media, and immigration agencies; these, despite having different ends and motivation, emphasise security and enforcement producing "*a 'convergence of interests' that supports the continued expansion of immigration detention in privatised facilities*" (Martin 2017, p. 37). The EU, following a similar trend, albeit to a far lesser extent so far and in a way that varies greatly between member-states, has expanded the privatisation of migrant detention (Lahav 1998; Flynn 2015). Irregularised migrants, rejected asylum seekers and other deportable bodies are increasingly, sometimes indefinitely as in the case of the UK (Bacon 2005), detained in facilities that are either entirely outsourced to private companies or have various subcontracted services (Flynn and Cannon 2009; Arbogast 2016). According to Migreurop, outsourcing of the management of detention centres "*allows responsibility of public authorities to be diluted with regard to the detention systems they have implemented and the resulting violations of rights they generate*" (Arbogast 2016, p. 59).

The British conglomerate G4S is one of the most important private actors in migrant detention, deportation and even accommodation, particularly in the case of the UK. Until 2010 and the death of the 46-year-old Jimmy Mubenga from Angola during his deportation flight, G4S held an exclusive contract with the UK Border Agency (UKBA) for escorting all deportations from the UK (Gammeltoft-Hansen 2013). Additionally, along with two other major British private security companies, Reliance and Serco, G4S provides accommodation and reception services to asylum seekers across the country (Darling 2016).

A slightly different example is carrier sanctions, which involves airline companies and airports in border control. Already since the 1990s, airline companies and airports have been sanctioned to control who enters the member-states' territorial boundaries (Lahav 2000), serving as immigration officers. Carrier sanctions devolves the state's responsibilities and obligations to control its borders to private entities by making them liable, rather than through subcontracting of certain aspects of management or services. And no other case may manifest private sector outsourcing any bolder than the Finmeccanica consortium: in 2008, Italy, Libya and Finmeccanica formed a twenty year-long joint venture in order to provide technology, equipment and border infrastructure to Libya under Italy's financing (Pedersen 2011).

Additionally, the increasing involvement of humanitarian actors in service provision, and in particular welfare services, is another instance of outsourcing, directly or indirectly. As immigration regimes are becoming more and more stringent in Europe, illegalised migrants are forced to resort to charity for welfare (Bloch and Schuster 2002). In a more direct way, NGOs are subcontracted to provide health, psychological, medical services to asylum seekers (Skleparis and Armakolas 2016), provide housing (Kourachanis 2019), and child protection (Buchanan and Kallinikaki 2018). Therefore, the third sector is increasingly expected to offer such services and obtains large governmental contracts to do so. Indicatively, since 2015, nearly €400 million of EU funds have been directed towards large INGOs to provide such services in Greece, while €500 more have been allocated to the UNHCR, which also eventually often subcontracts NGOs for specific humanitarian projects (European Commission 2018). Finally, the involvement of humanitarian actors in the management of emergencies and crises is also closely linked with the externalisation of border control. In this sense, privatisation and NGOisation of border management shift control and accountability away from the formal state apparatus (Walters 2006) and blur the

distinction between private and public generating circular worlds for migrants and massive gains for both governance and industry.

Increasing bureaucratisation of border management also impacts on the territoriality of the border. Recent ethnographic studies document a multiplication of institutions, actors and agencies involved in immigration management systems in Europe, mostly in the UK, and in the US. These institutional ethnographies (Gill 2016, Feldman 2012; Mountz 2010) claim that it is through bureaucracy that new bordering practices are devised, handed down and enforced (Feldman 2012). The impartial, procedural and *adiaphoric* bureaucrat (Bauman 1989) is able to decide the fate of others because they reside in a distant place, shielded from the direct witnessing of the consequences of their actions (Gill 2016). But it is also through bureaucracy that bordering practices creep into the everyday -the workplace, the hospital, the school. In the UK, immigration control masks as attendance monitoring, as universities are increasingly required to monitor the fulfillment of visa requirements for international students. These practices turn the university into a border space and educators into border guards, redefining eventually the very identity of the 'student': they "*alter the conditions which border-crossers must meet if they are to be considered 'students'*" (Jenkins 2014, p. 266) and disentangle it from academic achievement. Finally, oftentimes bureaucracy cracks into political projects and spaces of solidarity as activists count and label, prioritising the lives of children over the lives of adults during SAR and deciding whether someone is vulnerable. Therefore, the mediation of the bureaucratic apparatus enacts the border, often masking as something else.

In turn, bureaucratisation is tightly linked with outsourcing. In advanced capitalist states, management systems rely on hybrid organisational structures, a mix of public and private, what Sjoberg (1999) calls bureaucratic capitalism. So, bureaucracy, while seemingly a process linked to state managed operations, is also a feature of the corporate world. It is

bureaucratisation that expedites and facilitates the seepage of private companies into the management of borders, further blurring the boundaries between private and public. Hiemstra and Conlon (2017) claim that bureaucratisation is essential to the expansion and proliferation of detention in the US and the world because it normalises it and it conceals it. It creates multi-dimensional webs of interdependence between the different actors, ranging from local government officials to food providers. At the same time, bureaucratisation, the authors claim, flattens these relationships and their social, spatial, ethical and political implications into economic transactions and rational decision making.

2.4.4. Digitalisation: the biometric border

The development and deployment of technologies that permit the remote and pre-emptive surveillance and control of the border render its territoriality irrelevant to a significant extent (Jeandesboz 2017; Leese 2016). ICTs, risk analysis and biometrics are remaking the border. Data driven and biometric systems are increasingly used to surveil, regulate and hierarchise bodies, administer lives and govern mobilities. Far from being benign or even neutral, these technologies are not evenly distributed but are, on the contrary, targeted at specific geopolitical spaces and populations (Pugliese 2010). To name one recent example: launched in 2013, the EUROSUR project is the outcome of the close co-operation of security and arms companies which have used EU financing to develop a series of tools for the remote surveillance and monitoring of the "*common pre-frontier intelligence picture*" of migratory movements (Pedersen 2011). The development of these technologies of control and surveillance not only disperse EU's border regime outwards to the high seas and to neighbouring countries and inwards in member-states' territory (Walters 2002; 2006). Most crucially, these technologies effectively bring about a conceptual shift as to where, when and what the border is.

Therefore, the displacement of the border into the digital space also has repercussions that go beyond the above mentioned expansion inwards and outwards. The biometrisation of borders, in particular, alters the potential, the functions and ultimately the very essence of borders. The body carries the border with it, as the former is broken down into corporeal components (e.g. fingerprints, iris), which are then used to verify identities and non-conforming behaviours and even intentions. As Pugliese (2010) demonstrates, "*biometric systems are inherently biased as the knowledge that informs them is based on predetermined racial, gender, class and disability standards, what he calls infrastructural normativities*". Combined with risk profiling and management, biometric systems become the border that approves or denies access (Amoore 2006) to unruly bodies. In this sense, the border becomes biopolitical, as it has become an instrument of biopower (Walters 2002, p. 571). But it also requires various kinds of labour: now it is engineers, software developers, systems experts (Vukov and Sheller 2012) that put the border together and in place.

Louise Amoore (2011) argues that bordering is no longer aimed at halting mobility, nor even to discipline it, but rather that movement (of goods, people, money) is now at the heart of the way that the border works. "*The circulations of a global economy and the data traces left in their wake are rendered a resource to the state's capacity to draw sovereign lines, as captured in the US Department of Homeland Security's ambition for "secure borders, open doors". No longer strictly a matter of disciplinary practices that stop, prohibit, enclose, delimit or proscribe, the work of the contemporary border is conducted in and through movement itself*" (p. 9). This means that mobility and security may no longer really be at odds; rather it seems that mobility has been placed in the service of security.

States, rather than confining mobility controls at the border, use it as a site of data production (Amoore and De Goede, 2008), where states gather biopolitical knowledge about a population (Walters 2002). For example, Schengen Information System (SIS) holds the

records of 700,000 people that are blacklisted and denied access to the Schengen area (Broeders 2007). Since 2015 and the arrival of over 1,000,000 migrants, who were required to be digitally fingerprinted for EURODAC, this system has had increasing impact on those trying to move to other EU member-states. EURODAC is linked to the Dublin Convention, aimed at combating 'asylum shopping' by determining which member-state is responsible for processing a claim. To this end, the digital fingerprints of asylum seekers are stored in the EU-wide database, along with data such as place and date of asylum application and country of first arrival. In turn, Visa Information System (VIS) is an integrated system which stores the fingerprints and facial images of Schengen visa applicants. The VIS, aims to prevent the lodging of multiple visa applications by "rendering visa applicants' bodies as means of re-identification" (Scheel 2017, p. 2748). It additionally inscribes them with a suspicion by default (Zampagni 2013).

At the other end of the spectrum, registered traveller programmes in various EU member-states increasingly categorise passengers at airports via the use of biometrics in order to either accelerate or restrict their movement. These programmes often combine biometric characteristics with other data-driven information systems (e.g. air miles) to create identities based on pattern (Amoore 2006). Those categorised as 'trusted' are issued with a biometric chip, as is the case of the Netherlands, or are added to a biometric database, as in the UK (Broeders & Hampshire 2013) and are then allowed entry from ABC gates. Additionally, these technologies are symbolic and performative, allowing in this way governments to be seen to have immigration under control (Broeders & Hampshire 2013).

Even lower tech interventions at the border, such as thermal cameras, radars and sensors in the highly militarised border zone between Spain and Morocco in the Spanish enclave of Ceuta (Vukov and Sheller 2012), should be included. These too produce data that are captured, circulated, used in assessing risk and calculating costs, rendering human life a

commodity. What Andersson (2018) calls the bioeconomy of the border “human life as its object of intervention in its “*expellable” and vulnerable form*” (p. 424).

As the digitalisation and biometrisation of the border, along with the use of risk assessment and management systems, aim at the remote and pre-emptive control of mobility, it is closely linked with all other processes of border de-territorialisation. The development and operation of such systems are outsourced to private companies, while their implementation involves highly bureaucratised apparatuses, often located at embassies and consulates in countries of origin. At the same time, they seep into the EU territory as these also target frequent travellers and secondary, intra-EU, migrant mobility (EURODAC). The deployment of risk science techniques and rationales for border control displaces the border both within and beyond territorial borders (Martin 2012). As states increasingly use the tools and language of risk management to govern and talk about borders and migration, unauthorised border crossers are constructed as security and terrorist threats. Therefore, the deployment of risk science, links border control with counter-terrorism and, coupled with processes of externalisation, domestication and outsourcing or the border, creates differentiated temporalities for migrants. In fact, as the next section will discuss, “*the possibilities of anticipation, interception, and deferral opened up by compression and speed have led to precisely the opposite reality for those who are targeted: a world of slowness and stasis”* (Andersson 2014, p. 807)

2.4.5. Border temporalities

Migration is a journey through space but it is also a journey through time. This is because any kind of travelling and movement requires time but, most importantly, migration as a process has certain constitutive temporal aspects. A migratory journey is in itself a process that unfolds in time, even though we cannot necessarily pinpoint a clear beginning and end.

For example, migrants and their families work hard for years in order to fundraise before a family member is able to emigrate, while a possible return even for established migrants is very often somewhere in the near or distant future (Haug 2008). In this sense, migration is stretched in time, it can be an open-ended project and it can last for a lifetime.

Time is also closely linked with processes of (il)llegalisation as time of residence in a host country often defines the legality and illegality threshold: it is both a requirement for citizenship and a limit for visa stays (Hammar 1994). Very often migrants remain stuck in intermediary destinations and transit countries for months, years or even indefinitely (Cwerner 2001). For many undocumented youth, coming of age is marked by their migration (Bloch et al. 2014; Gonzales 2015), while for many young men, migration is part of a life project, even a rite of passage in some countries and cultures (Jónsson 2008). All in all, migratory journeys are inextricably linked with time and time should be studied as a constitutive dimension of the migratory experience. This is important because such temporal uncertainties and expectations, often unknownable, heavily impact on the behaviours and prospects of migrants in host societies (Roberts 1995). Therefore, as Cwerner (2001) explains, focusing on the temporal aspects of migration and the temporal experiences of migrants reveals something about the very nature of migration itself, *"its twists and turns, meanings and ambivalence, and the way that, in a diversity of ways, it displaces and re-embeds people and communities around the world*" (p. 32).

Studies have shown that migrant time involves long periods of waiting around both inside and outside territorial boundaries. Retained at the border, detained for deportation, awaiting their asylum decision, raising funds, waiting for the right moment to cross, queuing in agencies and the police, migrant lives are put on hold through the appropriation of their time. This "*time delay built into their migratory experience*" (Andersson 2014, p. 796) is usually experienced by migrants as wasted time with empty present (Griffiths 2014), nontime

(Lucht 2012). Such an uncertain duration of the waiting often cause shame, anxiety and depression to those subjected to it (Khosravi 2014) and has a negative impact on the migrants' ability to even plan for the future (Griffiths et al. 2013). Migrant time, in this sense, runs at a different pace than industrial or citizen time or, put differently, migrants' ordinary time is suspended until they arrive, settle and build a life again.

As many researchers argue, this suspension of migrant time is not only an accidental byproduct of the border regime but it is the mechanism through which it works. In essence, migrant time *is* the target of and a tool for migration and border control. Borders function exactly through the imposition of waiting and through appropriating migrant time to such an extent that a "strong relationship between power, the state and management of time" (Griffiths et al. 2013, p. 30) is being forged. It is the border that creates buffer spaces and waiting zones in order to govern migrant bodies, by negating their time. Papadopoulos and his colleagues (2008) point to this function of borders as 'speed boxes', as decelerating mechanisms that regulate flows according to labour market needs. Andersson (2014) claims in the context of the highly militarised Euro-African borderscape, that "the authorities engage in an active usurpation of time for the purposes of migration control" (p. 796). What's more, this appropriation, he continues, "plays into a larger economics of illegality, generating unequal gains and distressing human consequences at the Western world's borders" (p. 798).

Detention is a case in point: even though we tend to think of it as a spatial technology, what detention also does is to negate migrants control over their time. "*[D]etention is a long series of medical exams, intake interviews, mental health check-up, and court appearances interspersed with indefinite waiting periods. Showers, meals, head counts, and recreation pace long waits for decisions, appeals, and release dates*" (Martin 2012, p. 326). Focusing on the US immigration detention assemblage in particular, Martin argues that the expansion of

the jurisdiction of immigration and border control has skyrocketed the size of the detainable population in the US, since these now target all noncitizens inside the country and not just at the border. Since detention is increasingly privatised, migrant time is not only appropriated by the border but, in many cases, it is commercialised and turned into a priced and exchangeable good (Martin and Kask 2015).

Therefore, the four intertwined processes de-territorialising and abstracting the border, as reviewed in this section, create landscapes of differentiated temporalities within the border regime and turn migrant time into a target of the border regime, a tool for subjugation, and, ultimately, a commodity in the political economy of migration management.

2.5. The processual and spatial turn of borders

Borders have been historically addressed and understood in the context of nation building processes and war, with social scientists looking at international borders to understand the ever-changing relations between nation, state, territory, identity, belonging and culture. As a result, there has been a strong state-centric view and a common sense understanding and representation of borders: "*state bordering in the traditional sense of the line around sovereign territory has achieved the status of common sense, and as a result rests at a level of general acceptance*" (Perkins and Rumford 2013, p. 273). This naturalised view and taken-for-grantedness of the border creates a heightened sense of impenetrability and an ensuing awe at its face. Furthermore, such views perpetuate and accentuate the binaries of inside and outside, safe and unsafe, legal and illegal, deserving and undeserving and so on.

The concept of Fortress Europe (Geddes 2001; Carr 2015) is an interesting case in point. It is commonly invoked both in academia and in the public visual representations of migration and borders. The term has also been overwhelmingly present in the political discourses that are critical of the EU's border enforcement in relation to migration. However,

it appears to have a number of analytical weaknesses and is no longer suitable to describe the complexities of the EU border regime, which has undergone dramatic transformations as of recent. The metaphor obscures the function of borders as tools to govern, control and shape the lives of migrants, through the management and commercialisation of their time, rather than only to exclude them. Irrespectively of how permeable its walls are, even quite spectacularly at times, this image persists in academic, public and political discourses, alluding to a conceptualisation of the state as a uniform and consistent block exercising power evenly over the territory. There are vast resources dedicated to the impermeabilisation of the EU's external borders in the South and in the East Mediterranean -or its performance thereof. These are directed either towards technologies that permit the remote surveillance and control of the border or towards the financing of increased patrols of the seas. Yet, over one million people challenged the EU's border regime in 2015 and 2016.

In this sense, the constant invocation of the image of a fortress with wall-like borders, of borders that can be completely sealed off, may have a depoliticising effect on issues such as migration; it may create a sort of unchallenged paradigm for border control management and a need for constant technological innovation from the security and military industry; it may obscure migrants' agency and everyday struggles at the border and in cities; it may debilitate the possibility of organising and resistance around the border by creating the image of absolute power of the state; finally, it may create the illusion of a very clear cut distinction between inside and outside, between a safe inside of deserving and equal citizens and a dangerous outside of undeserving people.

However, this notion of borders as impenetrable barriers has been challenged by research on borderlands, mostly from anthropology, ethnography and history. By shifting the perspective away from its core and towards the state's periphery and by closely examining border people and the ways in which bordering is (re)produced there, these studies expose

the above mentioned political and analytical limitations of the notion of Fortress Europe. This view from the border creates new perspectives on the meaning of inside and outside, and inclusion and exclusion, which are of particular importance because they help us critically rethink the very essence of borders. This liminality of borderlands directly challenges the concept of borders as separating a safe inside from a dangerous and threatening outside. It additionally illuminates the ways that borders divide as much as they connect (Perkins and Rumford 2013); they "*divide what is similar and connect what is different*" (van Schendel 2005, p. 44).

In a similar fashion, the notion of borderscapes has been equally instrumental because it allows us to view borders as fluid, shifting and continually traversed by bodies and practices (Brambilla 2015). The notion of borderscapes can be an analytical tool for analysing and understanding the knowledge, practices, everyday ideology, discourses, political institutions, attitudes and agency (Pedersen 2011; van Houtum and van Naerssen 2002) that construct and deconstruct, enact and challenge the border every day. In this sense, the important question is not where the border is, but *how* it is, *what* border practices are and *when* these take place. In other words, borders can be understood as a verb: it is not so much about the border, but about bordering (van Houtum et. al 2005). For this reason, it is necessary to broaden the scope of our analysis, reaching beyond the site of the external EU border and into the broader geographical space that is marked by delocalised control (Andrijasevic 2010).

As I have noted throughout this chapter, critical scholarship on borders has gradually moved away from static and geographically fixed representations and conceptualisation of the border. I have grouped the various processes that the border seems to be undergoing and the corresponding literature into the four categories presented above, namely externationalisation, internalisation, privatisation and biometrisation. At the heart of these

various strands, consciously or not, lies the idea of the border as process rather than infrastructure. This strand of research, which has been gaining increasing traction in border studies in recent years, emerged from the introduction of the notion of ‘bordering’ and ‘borderwork’. These terms have been deployed and are used to bring to the foreground three characteristics of contemporary borders: (a) their processual and practice-based nature (Jones and Johnson 2014; Ozdemir and Ayata 2017); (b) their everydayness (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017; Rumford 2008); and, finally, (c) their constructed nature and their reproduction through discourses (Paasi 2009; Johnson et al. 2011), the media (Jones et al. 2017), the schooling system and school textbooks (Paasi 1996), national symbols and transnationalism (Kolossov and Scott 2013).

2.5.1. Practising the border in the city

This processual turn has also induced a spatial turn whereby the border must now be looked for in new and unexpected or neglected spaces and places in the everyday. In this sense, the de-territorialisation of borders theorised in this chapter has a very real impact on people and on places: on the one hand, it transforms everyday places as it expands into cities, workplaces, schools and hospitals; but also, on the other hand, it extends and is performed by new non-expert, non-state and non-traditional actors (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017; Rumford 2008; Vaughan-Williams 2008). Perkins and Rumford (2013) emphasise the vernacularisation of borders in order to shift the focus away from state bordering and mobility control and towards the role of borders in the politics of everyday life. This domestication of the border raises an additional key issue: as the border creeps into our everyday spaces it creates additional vulnerabilities for some. The border is not experienced in an even fashion by everyone, but it functions in a classed, gendered and racialised way. In other words, along

with this processual and spatial turn in the study of borders, a focus on intersectionality and situatedness (Yuval-Davis 2013) has reinvigorated border studies.

Vaughan-Williams (2008) examines the changing nature and meanings of EU's borders and in particular in the period after and as a response to the terrorist attacks in various EU member-states in the 2000s. He argues that increased and new forms of surveillance as a counter-terrorist strategy should be understood and scrutinised as bordering practices. The linking of the terrorism threat with (illicit) border crossers has meant increasing surveillance on the movement of subjects into and within Europe, and is therefore a form of bordering. What's more, this control does not take place in spaces that can be identified readily as internal or external border in a simplistic sense. Vaughan-Williams examines two distinct types of borderwork: on the one hand, he looks at the reinforced mandate of FRONTEX to monitor migrants' movement in Africa during the 2006 operation HERA II. He claims that "through surveillance operations such as HERA I and II, the activities of FRONTEX contribute to the production of Europe as an 'area of freedom, security, and justice' by working to exclude subjects whose entry to that area is deemed to be illegal" (p. 77). On the other hand, he analyses the emergence of the figure of the 'citizen-detective' as a surveillance strategy to monitor EU subjects within Europe. "*The promotion of this form of surveillance constitutes a form of generalised borderwork whereby, again, the borders of sovereign community are (re)produced not only at the edge of territories but throughout society at large*" (p. 77). In this way, the author helps us challenge conventional notions of Europe, of inside and outside, of internal and external borders and security.

In a similar vein, Ozdemir and Ayata (2017) look at the Schengen visa regime for Turkish nationals as a dynamic bordering practice that is "*experienced, negotiated and (re)constructed by actors dependent upon their social positioning*" (p. 181). The authors examine the construction of the border between Europe and Turkey in consulates and

embassies outside the EU and performed by civil servants and other personnel that are otherwise not involved in border enforcement. They evidence the processual nature of bordering by focusing on the embassies, the intermediary companies and the relevant personnel that handles visa issuance. This is closely linked to Lipsky's concept of street level bureaucrats (1980), all those working in front-line positions, and develop coping mechanisms to do their job in their everyday interactions with citizens. Francesca Zampani (2016), building on that concept, investigates the administrative practices and consular bureaucracy involved in the Schengen visa regime, their everyday routines and the application of discretion in the visa issuance process. She claims that the state's control over mobility is continuously and every day in the making through the everyday practices of consular officials and informal intermediaries.

In the UK in particular, the study of everyday bordering performed by ordinary people has been growing significantly since the introduction of the 'hostile environment' agenda in the 2014 Immigration Act. This legislation weaves the border into a number of everyday spaces and places immigration control responsibilities not only on civil servants but also on private individuals such as landlords. Chris Rumford uses the term "borderwork" (2008) to highlight this last point and the fact that bordering is no longer the purview of nation states and the sole responsibility of immigration authorities and the police. It now befalls on ordinary individuals and is entrenched into their job description or citizen duties. "Citizens are involved in constructing and contesting borders throughout Europe: creating borders which facilitate mobility for some while creating barriers to mobility for others; creating zones which can determine what types of economic activity can be conducted where; contesting the legitimacy of or undermining the borders imposed by others" (p. 3).

Similarly, Yuval-Davis et al. (2017) examine the everyday bordering practices imposed by the UK's hostile environment and the politics of belonging that are at its heart.

Immigration raids in workplaces and homes, right-to-work checks and the coupling of legal status and access to housing and other social services are all enactments of everyday bordering, according to the authors. They are all based on or reinforce assumptions about the citizenship status of minority groups, who constantly need to prove that they belong and deserve to be present. This individualisation and racialisation of citizenship is at odds with its social democratic and civic constitution both in the UK and in other EU member-states in the post WWII era. Everyday bordering is at the same time a technology of control and a political project that relates to the agenda of the extreme right, "*which calls to keep jobs, housing, education, health care and generally being part of 'the community', exclusively to those who 'belong', and construct an exclusionary 'hostile environment' to those who do not*" (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017, p. 13).

De Genova's notion of deportability is particularly important in order to understand how everyday bordering impacts on the experiences and lives of certain people. Migrants, especially but not only those lacking appropriate documentation, experience their condition of illegality through their deportability, that is the threat of detention and removal at any given moment. This identity, through the process of externalisation described above, is constructed far away from the external EU border, it is marked on certain bodies who then carry it with them long after crossing the border. "*[T]he spatialised condition of 'illegality' reproduces the borders of nation-states in the everyday life of innumerable places throughout the interiors of migrant receiving states*" (De Genova 2002, p. 439)". Doing border work (Bialasiewicz 2012) every day, happens through mundane and routinised practices in embassies abroad, in immigration checks at universities and workplaces at home. It is what makes the border and builds from the ground up the state's monopoly over human mobility.

So according to much of the recent critical border studies literature reviewed in this chapter, the EU border regime is better understood as a set of practices (Rumford 2008) that

take place in the everyday (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017), and in particular in urban spaces (Fauser 2017; Lebuhn 2013) aiming to shape the conditions of migrant lives, often through administering their time. Borders define who can inhabit a certain territory, for how long and with what rights (right to work, access to social services, housing, benefits). Ultimately, borders are part of the state's toolkit that maintains order, encloses and protects the national resources by categorising, segregating and vulnerabilising certain segments of the population (De Genova 2002). In other words, the fundamental function of borders is to enclose and protect a state's territory, its sovereignty and resources. In relation to migration, this means that certain mobile people, such as migrants, are constructed as threats and they are heavily policed, targeted, denied entry and excluded. As many border scholars argue, borders do not necessarily and solely aim to stop people from migrating, settling and working in new places. Instead borders aim to significantly shape the conditions of their lives, the job opportunities and labour conditions available to them; ultimately to subordinate labour (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013).

Border control, more often than not, unfolds inside the nation-state (Richardson 2016). This comes in contrast with popular imaginaries, political populist and alarmist discourses and media narratives, and with the often deadly violence that takes place at the physical border of states. But it is in our cities that the border takes the form of multiple and intersectional exclusions and marginalisations, in particular in public spaces and infrastructure. In this sense, a border is not a line that someone can cross once and then, once inside, they can be accepted, settle and live their life. Rather, migrants must constantly prove, depending on class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, age and physical ability, that they have the right to be there, to work, that they are entitled to health care, to housing. Therefore, the border in the city has also meant a spatial turn whereby the border must now

be looked for in new and unexpected or neglected spaces and places in the everyday: workplaces, schools and hospitals, but also squares, streets and public transport.

However, as the border creeps into our everyday spaces it creates additional vulnerabilities for some as border control today produces a very narrow, and often racialised, understanding of who belongs and deserves rights. For example, people of colour, even when they are citizens or possess legal status may also face exclusions or may constantly have to prove that they belong and have the right to be there. On the other side, cities are often the last refuge of migrant people against nationalist and xenophobic discourses and policies that marginalise them or exclude them altogether. The urban offers the togetherness, diversity and anonymity of everyday life. Cities are, therefore, critical sites for the de facto social inclusion of migrant populations but also for the emergence of new alliances, subjectivities, new processes of political subjectivation and solidarities. Everyday bordering has meant a spatial turn whereby the border must now be looked for in new and unexpected or neglected, often urban, spaces and places in the everyday: workplaces, schools and hospitals, but also squares, streets and public transport. On the other side, cities are often the last refuge of migrant people against nationalist and xenophobic discourses and policies that marginalise them or exclude them altogether (Bagelman 2015; Darling 2017). The urban offers the togetherness, diversity and anonymity of everyday life. Cities are, therefore, critical sites for the de facto social inclusion of migrant populations but also for the emergence of new alliances, subjectivities, new processes of political subjectivation and solidarities.

2.5.2. Uneven border geographies

The above described transmutations of space, territory, law and enforcement paint a grim picture of borders lurking and are potentially found everywhere, even though we cannot always see them, at least not all of us, surveilling and recording our every move. The

ubiquitous border scholarship echoes Balibar's claim that the border is everywhere and nowhere (2002). While mostly referring to how the border is experienced by certain people, such metaphors and theorisations have a number of analytical and political shortcomings. More recently scholars, mostly from human and political geography, have attempted a critique and deconstruction of the everywhere of borders, that is the understanding and theorisation of the border as ubiquitous. Alison Mountz (2011) argues that borders are always ephemeral because they are perpetually and constantly in a state of becoming. However, she continues, this does not meant that borders are everywhere but rather, that they have been relocated to strategic locations. It is the study of these particular spaces, locales and places, from offshore detention and embassies to urban camps, schools and hospitals.

Burridge et al. (2017) in their introduction to the Special Issue in Territory, Politics, Governance on polymorphic borders caution us that thinking of and theorising the border as an ubiquitous and generalised institution is productive: it produces "*a diffuse, totalizing, 'everywhere' border*" (p. 241). The authors subsequently introduce the concept of polymorphic borders to capture the multiplicity and the highly fragmented, chaotic and ever evolving nature of bordering today. They challenge the conceptualisation of borders as ubiquitous by pointing out that, while border controls increasingly take place in new places and by numerous new actors, this doesn't mean that the border is everywhere. They urge us to think in terms of networks and nets: while far reaching, nets and networks still have holes and are highly tearable. Drawing on their own and others' empirical studies, the authors claim that borderwork is performed prosaically in everyday and mundane ways and it usually comes down to individuals struggling to make sense of it all and to reconcile contradictory agendas and regulations. Whether a net or an assemblage or a regime, borders cannot be ubiquitous as they are not uniformly enforced throughout a territory. On the contrary, we need to pay close attention to the specific localities and spatialities of border control as these

reveal the uneven geographies of bordering the intersectionality of the border experience and, ultimately, the potential for its infringement. "*[B]orders are highly selective and are only 'everywhere' for certain excluded sections of the population*" (Burridge et al 2017, p. 244) and they are experienced intersectionally (Yuval-Davis 2013).

Fundamental for the deconstruction of the conceptualisation of the border as existing evenly everywhere is the literature on the prosaic and improvised nature of the state (Gupta 1995; Jeffrey 2013; Heyman 1995; Painter 2006). According to these studies, the state is not a uniform block or a coherent set of institutions (Jeffrey 2013) that vigorously, consistently and successfully implemented policies. There is a tendency among activist and radical academics *"to afford the state a level of intentionality and coherence that conceals what is very often a non-event, a deferred decision, a question ignored in the hopes of its disappearance"* (Belcher and Martin 2013, p. 409). Treating the state as a unified actor that rules domestically and pursues its interests overseas through diplomacy and warfare obscures the characteristics of modern forms of power (Rose and Miller 1992). Rather the state is a patchwork of diffuse and heterogeneous -contradictory even- processes and practices (Painter 2006) heavily reliant on individual officers making sense of it all (Heyman 1995). In reality the boundaries between the state and its surrounding society are not so clear-cut as one might think. Micthen (1991) explains that the appearance of a separating line between state and society is a product of the regulation processes and is what maintains social and economic order. Its effectiveness therefore comes from all those provisional and improvised practices (Belcher and Martin 2013) of different state and non-state actors, agencies and institutions.

As a result state power should be approached as a dispersed but *"traceable through situated experiences and institutionally produced texts"* (Hiemstra 2017, p. 331) in order to unveil processes, relationships, and experiences (Mountz 2004) that play it out in everyday

life. It is exercised through ad hoc modulations and alliances between diverse state and non-state actors in governance projects that administer our lives (Rose and Miller 1992). State power is spatialised through mundane practices and prosaic relations that give rise to ‘state effects’, (Painter 2006) permeating in this way everyday life. According to Painter, this prosaic stateness is particularly important because it reveals the complexity and subtlety of the geographies of state power: *“[a]n analysis of the prosaic practices and relations through which state power is constituted shows this doctrine to be precisely that: a doctrine or claim that is never wholly fulfilled*” (p. 755).

Following a similar rationale, the border cannot be a monolith and a coherent set of practices either. The ad hoc and provisional detention strategies for the remote detention of migrants in many countries such as Australia, the US and the EU (Mountz 2010; Loyd and Mountz 2014) do not match with the idea of a centralised state strategy. Rather they reveal the variety and constantly shifting spatial tactics of the state when it comes to managing people and mobility (Martin and Mitchelson 2009). Similarly, the creeping of border controls into our cities and workplaces in the form of immigration checks for accessing a host of social services is not uniform and across the board.

Without questioning the staggering diversification and proliferation of bordering practices and their expansion both inside cities and outside sovereign territory, nor the introduction of new actors, this line of thought aims nonetheless to challenge the monolithic view of the border. In this sense, it is imperative to focus on the bureaucratic “thought-work” (Heyman 2004) and particular dynamics of border practices (Neal 2009; Pratt 2005) and all those other experts that are involved in bordering, such as lawyers, security professionals and advocates (Bigo 2002; Ticktin 2006). Jonathan Inda (2006), looking at the US - Mexico border, is interested in the exact ways in which knowledge, governing authorities, programmes and technical means come together to construct migration as a target of

political intervention. To this end, he looks first at the government rationales that conceptualise migration as a problem to be solved, thus calling for the development and implementation of certain government programmes to deal with that problem. These rationales are predicated upon specific regimes of truth, knowledge and expertise, requiring, thus, the close examination of a whole series of actors: from bureaucrats and policy analysts to social scientists and the public at large. Subsequently, Inda investigates specific government schemes, such as Operation Gatekeeper and Operation Hold the Line, both aiming to secure the US - Mexico border against unauthorised entry, in order to detail how it has been sought to deal with the problem of illicit border crossers. Finally, he looks at the specific technologies of government -mechanisms, devices, calculations, apparatuses etc- that render immigration visible to the authorities and thus make its management possible.

International Relations scholar Mark Salter argues that, until the border is "performed" by border crossers and border personnel, it has very little meaning and so it is critical to look specifically where, when and by whom it is performed (Salter 2007). Human geographer Nick Gill (2016) studied the British Asylum System in order to understand what makes such a complex system function. He looks for and traces the "emergent property of a complex system that governs human mobility - a property of the system that is not reducible or traceable to the actions of any individual or parts within it" (p. 6). He calls this emergent property 'moral distancing' and he investigates the mechanisms that create it, unpacking the various ways in which certain aspects of the British immigration and asylum bureaucracy has grown indifferent to the suffering of others. Drawing on the sociological and philosophical work of Max Weber and Zygmunt Bauman, Nick Gill claims that modern bureaucratic administrations "*seek neither immoral nor moral bureaucrats, but amoral ones, driven by technical considerations that systematically evacuate personal ethical considerations from the business of carrying out bureaucratic work*" (p. 35). This, according to his empirical

account, occurs by insulating bureaucrats and officials from migrants, minimising the instances of possible encounters between them; and, when this has to happen, as in the case of officers working in detention and removal centres, by overexposing them to human suffering. While Gill's stated aim is to understand the way in which bureaucrats and policy enforcers are able to perform their duties, his study also reveals that bordering is accomplished through mundane and routine practices. What's worse is that often it is exactly the routine and banal nature of these tasks that create the moral distancing that is necessary for the enforcement of migration and asylum policy.

Similarly, Gregory Feldman (2012), in his non-local ethnography of EU's migration policy-making mechanisms, goes one step further, claiming that this indifference is essentially foundational of bureaucratic apparatuses. He then seeks to understand exactly how this apparatus is held together and what binds all the disparate policies, processes, agendas and actors encouraging a global and highly differentiated mobility regime. In other words, what are the devices that enable, organise, and effectively integrate many disparate practices, actors and processes to converge into common targets and policies? He argues that these devices are the following: (1) rationales of governance that actors -policymakers, technocrats, analysts, speechwriters, public officials, politicians etc- deploy on a regular basis mostly because of their simplicity and plasticity; (2) “nonce bureaucrats”, that is temporary assemblages of experts that are brought together on specific projects, who subsequently experience a sense of community and fulfillment, even though they are disassembled once the job is done; (3) “shifters”: these are linguistic devices of such generic quality that can be integrated within disparate policy domains; and finally, (4) technical standards: their development and adoption creates a common way for processing information enabling the integration of separate IT systems. These devices work together across the apparatus to create conformity and an interchangeability between the language of “common sense” and

technical administration. In this way, disagreeing is always possible but would make one's life more difficult.

What all these studies illustrate is that the state and its various bureaucracies, departments and agencies involved in border and immigration management, the whole of the bureaucratic apparatus that enforces the border everyday, are far from a finely tuned and synced machine that controls a state's territory. As a particular branch of the state, "*[i]n this sense the border is constantly prosaically performed, staged and improvised in everyday contexts*" (Burridge et al. 2017, p. 244). States have, largely unsuccessfully, struggled for decades to control mobility across their borders (Castles 2004) dedicating immense sums of public money and other resources to border control and surveillance. And still, criminals and smugglers are usually more resourceful and successful in exploiting security gaps or picking holes in it as opposed to border security in locking them down (Naim 2006). Therefore, discourses of the ubiquitous border do not capture the chaos often involved in border management and this ultimately "*bestows the state with more organisational competence, stability and capacity than it deserves*" (Burridge et al. 2017, p. 244).

2.5.3. The ambiguity of borders

Border related research, both empirical investigations of and ensuing attempts at theorising borders, often appear to be yielding contradictory results and may point to processes that are seemingly acrimonious, even at times mutually exclusive (e.g. de- and re- bordering). However, such antagonisms are the forces that effectively drive contemporary border and immigration management, transforming the very essence and functions of borders. Therefore, as I have described earlier in this chapter, the ostensibly truculent forces of globalisation and counter-terrorism, while appearing to be pulling in different directions, work in tandem and securitise the border. An increased need for the free movement of things and

people is as paramount to the border securitisation as is the construction of specific people as border related threats.

In this regime certain people or groups of people are immobilised and contained in specific spaces and waiting zones or are subjected to different temporalities. Others, pay their hyper-mobility or faster mobility with their privacy and the pervasive monitoring of their digital behaviours, patterns, their digital footprint. As hyper-mobile individuals move around and travel the world they leave their traces behind "*reconfiguring themselves as bits of scattered informational traces*" (Sheller and Urry 2004, p. 222): airplane reservations, Oyster records, CCTV images, GPS data, hotel bookings, fingerprints, travel itineraries, bibliometric data are all stored and analysed, sorting and categorising people. In this sense, both time and mobility seem to be turning into commodities and resources, of which some have an excess and some a lack and which are bound up in power hierarchies within capitalist societies: not having enough time and having an excess of mobility are seen as a symbol of power (think of the busy business person constantly flying around the world). However, mobility is not a resource equally available to everyone but rather than "*an instrument of power, which can be used or experienced punitively*" (Moran et al. 2013, p. 4).

In this sense, it is no wonder that those who are daily faced with the border, those that assist them but also those working in border enforcement are most of the time baffled and uncertain. As Perkins and Rumford (2013) argue, "*[it] is not always the case that those responsible for bordering will choose to fix the border in an obvious way. It is possible that political ends can be served through selectively unfixing borders, or by creating the illusion of fixity*" (p. 270). While ambiguity (Maestri 2017, Oesch 2017, Stierl 2016) certainly characterises state institutions involved in the border, it is not necessarily the appropriate way to talk about the nature of the border itself. It is not the border that is ambiguous; the border, while amorphous, seeks to divide, to exclude, to segregate, to subordinate. It is not the

function of the border that vacillates but the way it is enforced. It is those that must enact it that can be indecisive; it is the institutions and the spaces within which they operate that can be blurred; and it is the practices used that can fluctuate. Institutional ambiguity creates uncertainty as to who is in charge in a certain situation (e.g. in a refugee camp) and what the rules are (i.e. in enrolling children to school). These ambiguities and contradictions lie within the state and in the making of the border: the triptych sovereign, citizenship, governmentality is based on the need to know who is there, who is in the country, in the city. The result is the differentiated inclusion or subordinated inclusion (Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas 2014).

Such politics of ambiguity, which blur the distinction between inclusion and exclusion, are the result of how the state itself is organised and functions. We tend to think of the state as a finely tuned and organised apparatus. However, relevant research presented in this chapter illustrates how states and their bureaucracies are far from centrally controlled and harmoniously conducted. It is only qualities like Gill's moral distancing (2016) and Feldman's (2012) bureaucratic devices (nonce bureaucrats, rationales and technical standards) that hold such complex apparatuses together. These devices, along with a vast array of experts, technologies and knowledges (Inda 2006), create a sense of common sense in border management and policy making, and a naturalness about the border itself. Such an assumption about the uniformity of the state arises from the tendency to view the state from the outside. This view creates the misconception and misrepresentation of the state as a uniform block and ignores the working of its insides, its different components. This 'everywhere' of borders comes from such representations, that is from seeing the state as not having an inside. However, there are multiple components at work, often against each other.

2.5.4. Borders and crises

Borders are, therefore, full of holes, gaps, contradictions, even antagonisms between different functions and goals and more often than not they are ad hoc and crisis driven. Williams (2017) looks at the geographical transformations that border enforcement undergoes in times of and due to the deployment of discourses of crisis and chaos. She focuses on the US - Mexico border and the 2014 'immigration crisis' declared by the Obama administration due to the increased arrivals of migrant families from Central America. She draws in feminist insights and literature in order to understand the political unfolding of such crises in the sense that border enforcement is not uniform nor does it impact all members of a population evenly. There were two, seemingly contradictory, developments in the context of the response to the proclaimed crisis: an increase and proliferation of migrant family detention but also a practice of releasing families who then had the obligation to appear in court for their hearings. The author claims that "*[a]dditionally, in looking at the proliferation of family detention alongside the uneven and evolving practices of contingently releasing families, this analysis draws attention to the polymorphous character of contemporary detention practices and challenges narrow understandings of precisely how and where detention can take place*" (p. 271).

Alison Mountz's (2010) ethnography of the Canadian state and its bureaucracy during the refugee crisis of 1999 follows suit and tries to provide an answer to that question. She uses the term 'stateless by geographical design' to describe the ways in which the Canadian state manipulated space and time in order to manage what it conceived as a threat to its social order: the arrival of four boats during a period of six weeks carrying 599 Chinese migrants. Mountz examined the everyday practices of the Canadian bureaucracy and the ways in which images constructed by the media fed into the management of the 'crisis'

leading to shifting geographies of enforcement and the “expansion of national boundaries into ambiguous zones of sovereignty” (p. 123). Her account reveals the panic, crises and power struggles within the state taking place behind the projected facade of coherence and control.

Similarly, Mountz and Hiemstra (2014), examining how discourses of crisis and chaos shift and reshape bordering practices and geographies of sovereignty, focus on the specific locations and the moments that mark the emergence of such alarmist discourses. The authors trace the key moments when this occurs in various geographical locations: the border crossing, detention and deportation. Sea and land border crossings, especially in the media representations, evoke chaos and give rise to narratives of invasion of the border that threatens the national sovereignty, identity and economy. Detention of migrants in turn further exacerbates and affirms those fears through the performative spectacle of detained and confined bodies. Finally, deportation functions as a visible way to put order back into the chaos by removing those foreign bodies. These spatio-temporal logics, while indeed creating exceptional moments which serve to expand the geographical and juridical reach of the state, are rather routine when they are conceptualised within a broader set of practices: “*[...] an exceptionalised event alters practice and immigration policy writ large. Crisis in each site is leveraged into something larger*.” (p. 388).

Drawing on the literature mapped in this chapter and taking the management of the border as a specific branch of the state, this thesis opens up the state, by looking at the specific actors that enforce the border every day, what they do, how, where and when they do it. By looking at specific actors, practices and locations, the thesis talks directly to the imperative of deconstructing the uneven geographies of border enforcement. By dissecting the border architecture, it is possible to grasp and unravel those arrangements and entanglements of actors, practices, spaces, logics, encounters which produce exclusions in

the everyday. These border entanglements, while entrenched in specific spatial arrangements and geographies of control, do not neatly reside in specific spaces such as the camp and the detention centre. Bordering practices often spill over in neutral spaces (the school), or in others that antagonise state power (the squat), while subversion and everyday resistance in turn crop up even in the most abject spaces (camp). This task has the additional value of foregrounding the intersectional experience of bordering and, thus, of locating where, how and when the border can be contested. The thesis also looks at what the language, politics and governance of crisis does to the border. Moments of emergencies and crises (Mountz and Himiestra 2014; Williams 2017), serve to alter bordering practices and expand the geographical and legal reach of the state. While they are exceptional moments, they are also part of the routinised way that state bureaucracies manage borders and immigration. Therefore, the thesis seeks to explore and answer this question in relation to the 2015 border crisis, which re-spatialised border control in Greece and in Europe.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the burgeoning literature on everyday bordering with a focus on the EU and European cities. In particular, it looked at the processes of border de- and re-territorialisation (border externalisation, domestication, privatisation and digitalisation), borderscapes and everyday bordering. The main focus is on everyday bordering and the attempts to conceptualise the border as a set of practices, rather than a geographically bounded space and infrastructure, aiming to govern where, for how long and how migrant time is spent. As these practices multiply and proliferate beyond and within state borders, they entrench in our most familiar spaces, our neighbourhoods, squares, schools and workplaces and create a landscape of differentiated temporalities. This chapter laid the theoretical foundations of my thesis, providing me with the conceptual tools to explore how

and where the EU's border regime territorialised in the city of Athens as a result of the 2015 crisis; which actors, through which encounters materialised it; which are the resulting practices of bordering and contestation and in which spaces.

The next chapter lays out the methodological approach used in this study. I account for the design and implementation of my multi-sited ethnography in the city of Athens, detailing the use of methods such as participant observation and in-depth interviewing. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the epistemological underpinnings of border research and, finally, it discusses the ethical considerations and issues of researcher positionality related to conducting research on borders and migration.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This study is an ethnography of everyday bordering in the city of Athens, Greece. It looks at the changing meanings and instantiations of borders and the ways in which these are produced through everyday mundane encounters between actors in different urban settings. The study is also an exploration of the overlapping humanitarian crises and how they feed into each other to impact on the city and the border. Finally, various geo-political developments, such as the Syrian War and the EU-Turkey Statement, in Greece and the wider region have generated massive fluctuations in the pace of transit of migrants. As the previous chapter laid out, governments, states and bureaucracies, increasingly concerned about mobility, create differentiated temporalities (Griffiths et al. 2013; Mountz 2010 and 2013) and mobility regimes (Gill 2013; Moran et al. 2013; Shamir 2005) and subject certain categories of people (the vulnerable, the dangerous) to these. In the case of Athens, these efforts to govern the pace of migrant mobility has engulfed the city, its institutions and its people in the geographies of internalisation of the EU border regime.

This dislocation of the border into Greek and EU territory created new encounters between migrants, activists and enforcement authorities. These encounters gave rise to a social space which is imbued with legal, political and moral meanings: subjects are labelled (migrant, refugee, vulnerable, illegal), assigned moral value (deserving and undeserving) and subjected to different border and mobility regimes. This social space also had its own materialities -the detention centre, the asylum service, the camp but also the school and the squat that housed migrants- forming the spatial arrangement of the border in the city. As a result, there is a struggle between the government (in its wider sense), on the one hand, and

an ad hoc alliance of migrants and activists, on the other. However, as activists and civil society groups, through their solidarity actions and organising, contest the state's legitimacy in controlling mobility, they often -albeit inadvertently- became entangled in the wider border governmentality. I used a multi-sited ethnographic design because it allows me to explore these dynamics between different actors in an empirically grounded and contextually rich way, prioritising their experiences. It is finally, the most appropriate method to uncover and analyse the ways in which these everyday mundane encounters between different actors in different settings produce this new bordering space.

As research methods are specific to and depend on the questions asked, it is worth briefly recapping them. This study aims to explore everyday bordering in the city of Athens and to understand the implications for both local and migrant populations and the urban landscape. The study's objectives are threefold: to understand how this border space has been constructed, both historically but also socially and politically; to identify the key actors and the relationships and encounters between them that give rise to this border regime; and to document and analyse specific resulting bordering practices and their impact on the city. I understand and conceptualise the border as a set of practices that form a regime: a particular, enduring, all-encompassing and ubiquitous mode of organising and governing a social domain. It is what lies between, and arises from, the interaction of the government and its bureaucratic apparatus; what creates resistance to change; it includes the concept of power as a way of governing everyday life in a diffuse way across the system. The border regime functions in a paradigmatic way in the sense that, while its components are constantly reconfigured, the path cannot be side-tracked. It is also hegemonic in the sense that no major changes are allowed or even imagined, as the language of 'common sense' and public administration become interchangeable (Feldman 2012, p. 17). My multi-sited ethnographic design allowed me to immerse myself in the field and gain those insider's insights through

participant observation and in depth investigations of relationships, practices and rationales. It is those insights that allowed me a deep understanding of my subject of study and helped me contextualise and triangulate my findings.

The chapter, following a brief epistemological discussion on the underpinnings of my research and my methodology, lays out the ensuing research design and methods employed to investigate my research questions. The chapter subsequently considers ethics as well as the main challenges, risks and limitations of the methodology used. Finally, the themes of research sites, location and scale as well as researcher's positionality and issues of access run through the whole chapter.

3.2. Epistemology

3.2.1. Science in a post-truth landscape

One of the most striking aspects of recent political events (such Brexit and the political crisis it led to in the United Kingdom; the election and the first term of Donald Trump's presidency; the collapse of centre-left and centre-right political parties in many EU member-states; and the rise of populism and right-wing politics) has been the near-unanimous incapacity of experts to anticipate their unfolding: from pollsters to politicians, academics to journalists, the vast majority of professionals tasked with sensing out public opinion are repeatedly and spectacularly failing to do so. As the social consensus typical of liberal democratic order fades along with previously assumed endless capital growth and its positive relationship to the state, it is imperative for us as researchers to critically rethink our relationship to knowledge, its foundations and moral standing.

Contemporary global political and economic rearrangements are a far cry from the "global village" (McLuhan 1964) and other early optimistic takes on globalisation. The desire

or need to facilitate the free circulation of goods and certain people while keeping others out creates uneven and tenuous border regimes (Ackleston 2011) in order to govern mobility. In other words, the processes connected with neo-hliberal globalisation create hierarchies and power relations at the border. As a consequence, the border is experienced differently by different groups and individuals. For some it is a gateway (EU citizens, tourists, businesspeople and academics) while for others it is a barrier (migrants) (Balibar 2002).

In our increasingly mobile world such fundamental inequalities heavily impact on the way we -as subjects- and our research objects *are* in the world. This new mobile '*being-in-the-world*' (Heidegger 1962) does not necessarily entail that we are more mobile than we have been in the past: history has been defined by resettlements, colonisations and migrations of people(s) –violent, peaceful, voluntary or forced. It does imply, however, that our world and our societies are ones of increased and amplified interconnectedness: people, places, states, all tied up in a global web of *things* that are on the move. Global processes, transnational networks and translocal connections define and (trans)form our daily lives, routines, desires and needs in ways that we cannot straightforwardly grasp; organised society increasingly depends on daily, regular and timely flows of goods, people, labour, information, knowledge. No one is an island[6]. But most importantly, this increasingly mobile world is transforming our very understanding of notions like presence and absence, proximity and distance, family life and community, belonging and settling. In this sense, studying the social world through the lens of movement and speed rather than that of *stasis* seems imperative. Sedentary lifestyles are favoured as we are all encouraged to stay still. Immobility and stasis have come to be considered as the norm, the 'natural' condition of people and things. Immobility is associated with safety, security and order, while uncontrolled movement becomes a threat to social order and it is treated as such. In this world, migrants are easily

[6] Paraphrasing John Donne's "No man is an island" from the poem Devotions (1624)

constructed as threats by state and media narratives exactly because they are on the move crossing borders. So how are we as researchers to access and know this increasingly interconnected and fragmented social reality? The next section sets out to explore and try to answer this question in relation to my research project.

3.2.2. The epistemological dimensions of studying borders

Our research is always and unavoidably underpinned by some sort of ontology and epistemology even if it is not possible to give a clear account of it. When a researcher sets out to explore their object, a deep-seated understanding of things is already at play at the very core of this exploration, albeit often below the surface of consciousness (Peim 2017). This core relates and depends on our basic assumptions about the very nature of the world around us (our ontology) and the way we know and see this world (our epistemology).

As the literature on borders reviewed in the previous chapter demonstrates, the border as an object-in-itself is elusive, it has nothing substantive, essential or objective about it; it is a social institution, one that is constructed through various social and political processes and reproduced daily. Borders may very well impact on people's lives and on our cities in the most tangible way and they give rise to certain materialities, but they are nonetheless arbitrary, mobile and temporary lines in the sand (Parker et al. 2009). Therefore, my project draws on and embarks from a social constructivist standpoint and the basic premise that our understanding of reality is socially created and it is always mediated by meaning and language.

This approach allows me to look at the processes that construct specific groups of people as threats and specific geographical areas as borders in specific moments in time. Borders are being produced and reproduced by, and are intrinsically intertwined with, the construction and the changing meanings of the nation-state, its territoriality, sovereignty, as

well as notions of national identity and culture. However, increasingly over the past few decades and due to the increasing securitisation of most issues, border enforcement and control has been targeting people(s) rather than other states. Specific groups of people are constructed as border related threats whose movement needs to be controlled and restricted. Finally, a social constructivist approach additionally encourages an understanding of policy-making as a process of contestation over the legitimation of knowledge production about our social world.

3.2.3. The border researcher: a positioned subject

Researching borders then can but be a place and time bound endeavour. It is a quest into the coming together of a particular border assemblage, at a precise social and political moment in history and its instantiation in a specific geographical location. Hence, the border researcher is inescapably a positioned subject in relation to these spatial, social and temporal coordinates. In this sense, the researcher is able to reach out and feel out the border regime that they are faced with only through their own gendered, classed and racialised experiences and knowledges. More fundamentally even, the researcher's ability to know and understand the border is mediated and structured already from the outset by the presuppositions that language permits.

My positionality as a young female researcher, an emigrant myself to the United Kingdom, but also a local activist in the context of Athens, affected my research in at least two ways: firstly, it shaped my access to certain places making it rather easy for me to engage with migrant and activist circles, while it was harder to be accepted in governmental agencies, civil service and NGOs offices; secondly, it affected the way in which I contextualised and made sense of my observations. "*As observers and interpreters of the world, we are inextricably part of it; we cannot step outside our own experience to obtain*

some observer-independent account of what we experience" (Huberman and Miles 2002, p. 41). Finally, as an activist and political subject having lived in Greece and having been the object of social research myself, before becoming a researcher at that, my attention is not on the migrant population itself, as I will further explain in the next section. My ethnographic gaze is rather turned towards the ad hoc relations and interactions, the encounters between different actors, that is migrants, civil servants, activists (local and international), the local population but also the state and its institutions. As the border has nothing fixed about it and has no essence in itself, these encounters give shape to the border in the city and the spaces where these take place mold the sort of possibilities available to the different actors, for control and power or resistance and subversion.

Understanding one's positioned being as a knowing subject is an intricate and complex task, if not intractable (Peim 2017) and, for this reason, such a task is situated at the core of a critical epistemology. In our quest for new knowledge, our position, in terms of space, time, past knowledge but also pre-understanding of our object (Gadamer 1975), is pervasive, elusive and, thus, harder to give an account of. Our experience of, and any attempt at understanding and knowing, our social realities are always mediated by language. More fundamentally, as post-structuralist thinkers have gone to great lengths to show, language is not referential (Saussure): the things named by language do not pre-exist it. To the contrary, language is the source of meaning and ideas, not the other way around. In this sense, as subsequent generations of post-structuralists (Foucault, Lacan, Derrida) argue, "the subject is *subjected* to the meanings and sentence structures that language permits" (Belsey 2002, p. 37).

Edwin Abbott's novel *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* is a ravishing illustration of what it means to be a positioned subject. The novel tells the story of Mr Square, a two-dimensional entity, who discovers the third dimension when his two-dimensional world

is visited by a Sphere. Even though the novel is considered to be a comment on the preposterous hierarchical Victorian society, it is at the same time a captivating illustration of the basic post-structuralist premise of our inability to escape language in our relation to reality. Mr Square's efforts to explain the third dimension to his fellow inhabitants of the two-dimensional world land him in prison as an enemy of the state. More interestingly though, his efforts to convince the Sphere about the theoretical possibility of the existence of a fourth (or of a fifth and so on) dimension is fruitless as it stumbles upon the limits of the Sphere's understanding. As knowing subjects we are similarly trapped in the world that our language allows. As we make claims about the world, it is through thinking that we may be able to access different worlds and dimensions.

3.2.4. Positionality and the importance of not knowing

There is an ongoing debate within critical border, refugee and migration studies, mostly coming from anthropologists and ethnographers, regarding the production of knowledge in the field. This debate problematises the, sometimes hidden, embedded hierarchies and power differentials involved in researching and producing knowledge about migrants. Efforts to include the voices of the voiceless, often lead to an overall co-optation of those marginalised people and their experiences, which result in the construction of certain figures and archetypes. Trying to convey the migrant/refugee experiences and helping their voices be heard often homogenises, stereotypes and essentialises the figure of the 'migrant' and the 'refugee'. No matter what the researchers' intentions are, there will always be a power asymmetry in that knowledge production that seeks to tell the stories of others because "*[e]thnographers' emphasis on intimacy, rapport, depth, and collaborative relationships with research subjects invokes ethnographic authority*" (Cabot 2016, p. 653).

Particularly in times of crisis, the figure of the 'refugee' and the 'migrant', actively constructed by crisis-focused researchers, contributes to the exceptionalisation of the condition of the border crosser. This deepens the cleavages between the 'citizen' and the 'other' and calls for specific interventions. Finally, it is worth considering whether the stories we are expected to tell and the representations of *migranthood* and *refugeedom* we offer as researchers that *were there* (Papataxiarchis 2016) still today fulfil the intended purpose, that is to carve out spaces for the experiences and voices of the voiceless. The reproduction of human suffering caused by displacement, especially since the 2015 border crisis in Europe, has brought about an overall anaesthetisation and normalisation of the condition of mobile people.

During my ethnographic engagement in Athens, I followed what, anthropologist and long term researcher of the Greek Asylum System, Heath Cabot calls a '*playful approach to knowledge production*' (2019), carving out spaces for dialogue without a clear use-value purpose in mind. My aim was to destabilise the figures of citizens and migrants, insiders and outsiders, and soften the cleavages between them. I tried to avoid aestheticising the figure of the refugee by not telling *those* stories and not focusing on the sometimes dire conditions under which they are forced to live in conditions of displacement. This means that certain voices are missing from this study and certain stories are not told in an effort to maintain the migrants' "*right to opacity*' (Khosravi 2018), to avoid co-opting their experiences and voices (Cabot 2016) and to avoid feeding the fascination with the suffering or heroism of the 'migrant'.

Being and conducting research as a scholar-activist, let alone as a researcher-insider in my case, is much more than trying to understand and then conceptualise the social phenomena that we study. It is above all about confronting and disrupting the logics and knowledges that shape these phenomena (Loyd et al. 2012). In the case of borders,

oppositional research should directly engage with the racial, patriarchal, and colonial assumptions that underpin migration law, border enforcement and citizenship regimes (Conlon and Gill 2015), constructing certain spaces as borders and certain people as threats. In this sense, knowledge production is in itself the field of the struggle to challenge the production of migrants as objects of government policies and resist the disciplining of migration arising from its academic and governmental incorporation (Garelli and Tazzioli 2013). Critical cartographers have done this through the production of critical and subversive maps: "*it is a means to create new territories—or at least to articulate new ways of inhabiting and subverting the border; and is a form of continuous inquiry and research into, among other thing, strategies of the powers that be, and forms of resistance to those same structures*" (Cobarrubias and Casas-Cortes 2014, p. 65).

Otherwise, according to De Genova (2013), migration scholarship, even when critical, becomes implicated in a continuous reification of 'migrants' as a separate category of human mobility. For De Genova, what is at stake in a genuinely critical postcolonial migration scholarship is a re-conceptualisation of the relation between the human species and the space of the planet. In sum, oppositional and militant research should aim at blurring those boundaries, closing those cleavages, unsettling categories and binaries that are often deeply ingrained in migration and border control scholarlship. Nick Gill in his book (2016) unsettles the binaries of care and indifference, state and non-state, proximity and distance, in an effort to engage us in the bureaucracy of immigration control. For Gill, what is important is to allow ourselves to become intimately engaged with the subject matter, where "*intimacy includes awareness of the relation of oneself to the conditions that give rise to the phenomenon in question*" (2019, p. 106-107). Similarly, Carastathis and Tsilimpounidi (2020), mobilising queer feminist and anti-colonial perspectives, explore the visual economy of the 2015 border crisis in order to unsettle current normative figurations of the refugee.

My work aims, therefore, to unpack, contest and displace this "*produced distance*" *(*Garelli and Tazzioli 2013*),* the distance produced by the migration regime and by mobility and other power asymmetries that exist at the border and are reproduced everyday day through bordering practices. In this thesis, I did so by looking for borders elsewhere, in an effort to de-essentialise the border, to blur the boundaries between inside and outside and to destabilise the figure of the border crosser in a particularly over-populated field (Rozakou 2019; Cabot 2016). Following a feminist approach that focuses on the everyday and is attentive to the embodied experiences, I turned my ethnographic gaze towards spaces to which I could maintain access on a daily, intimate basis (Hiemstra 2017). At the same time, I critically engaged with embodied practices of resistance and solidarity, highlighting those that actively challenge existing power structures, calling attention to the "*quotidian, quiet, and recuperative forms of resistance*" (Conlon and Gill 2015, p. 443), centred around presence (Lloyd 2012) and autonomy (Papadopoulos and Tsianos 2013). This is because, ultimately, militant research is a tool that intervenes politically in the production of the border. As Cobarrubias & Casas-Cortes (2007) put it, it is a way of producing knowledge for the social movements allowing them to understand and evaluate new contexts and to open up new domains of struggle. "*It seemed particularly pertinent to the post-Genoa, post-September 11th, and post-Iraq moments: how to make sense of it all and move forward; how to explore alternative ways of challenging a complex system of oppressions?*" (p. 114).

3.3. Doing an ethnography of the border

3.3.1. The ethnographic design

Ethnography has been traditionally associated with anthropology and, in particular, with the study of peoples and their cultures (Malinowski, 1922; Mead, 1928) in exotic places of the

planet. However, social researchers from a range of other disciplines have also employed ethnographic designs when interested in the meanings, functions and implications of human actions and institutional practices in everyday spaces. It is particularly useful in such settings and in such investigations because this is a design that simultaneously recognises the importance of both the structure and the actors. In this research tradition, an ethnography is conducted in a particular site, the *field*, where the researcher gets embedded. However, locating the field might turn out to be a more cumbersome task than it appears at first glance, especially with subjects such as bordering, the state and bureaucracy. For this reason, I used three sites for my ethnography, in which, as I argue, the border was enacted in Athens in that particular moment, mostly through encounters between the different actors that inhabit and act in these. These three spaces are: the camp, the migrant squat and the public school. I employed different approaches to each site, varying degrees of immersion and participation and a variety of interviewing techniques to match the participants' comfort and expectations.

3.3.2. Fieldwork sites and encounters: three spaces, their people and the city

These three different spaces shape and are shaped by different governance and bordering logics, they are characterised by varying degrees of government but they also mold different possibilities for the enactment of resistance. I argue that all three sites are potentially places where both control and subversion to take place in daily life, often at the same time and as a response to one another. Their internal spatial arrangements, their connections with one another and their relative geographical position with regards to the city and one another allow and impede certain kinds of bordering, on the one hand, and certain acts of resistance, on the other. I argue that this binary of control and resistance, these two antithetical forces are present in and make up all of these three spaces. I will below expand on the reasons why

each of the three categories of spaces (camps, squats and schools) were chosen, which particular locales were picked and why.

Securing and sustaining access to these sites was a challenge but it was facilitated by my pre-existing contacts in the city, in migrant communities, in political and social movements, and less in the government and NGOs. This is the reason why I used the squat as a basis, a starting point and a point of reference, from which many contacts developed and opportunities arose. It was mostly through contacts I made there that I was able to access the camps and build relationships with key individuals there. The squat as an embarkation site was also crucial for my research on schools: It was by assisting families to enroll their children to the local schools and by following up on their progress that I gained much of the insight into the role of the school.

3.3.2.1. The camp

The migrant camp and the migrant detention centre is rather intuitively part of any border regime and the function of these two sites is directly coupled with those of the border. What is particularly interesting in the case of the camps in Athens is that these are urban and recent. They are recent in the sense that they were all put in place after and because of the 2015 border crisis in the East Mediterranean and as a response to the increasingly permanent presence of previously transiting migrants in the city. They are urban not only in that they administratively and geographically belong to the metropolitan area of Athens. They are additionally organically embedded in the urban fabric in the sense that those living in camps at the same time use the city and expand its horizons; they use the city’s infrastructure, work there, use the hospitals and the schools. This is largely due to their ad hoc purpose and because the rationale behind their set up in particular locales followed, on the one hand, the needs of these populations (for example their need to be close to urban centres in order to

find work), but also, on the other, the state's prerogative (for example, for this population to be close but invisible). In this sense, they are a site of bordering but also of contestation, a place where relations are forged, communities are formed and resistance and politics are being enacted.

Following this rationale, I decided on two camps in Athens, namely the camps of Elaionas and that of Skaramagas, both defined as reception and accommodation centres. The reasoning behind this selection is twofold: first, these two are the most urban camps in the sense that they are situated geographically quite close to the city and are relatively well connected and embedded in the urban fabric, even though the inhabitants experience multiple and intersectional exclusions and segregations. Secondly, these two camps clearly follow and were based on distinct governance and spatial logics: governing through comprehensive control in the case of the camp of Elaionas and governing through abandonment in the case of the Skaramagas camp. These two distinct logics of the state with regards to migrant housing ultimately shaped divergent camp forms, leading to two unalike paradigms of encampment and two incongruous sets of experiences. Naturally these two divergent paradigms also facilitated certain kinds of bordering practices but also molded certain antagonistic practices of politicisation and subversion.

Access, both physical and relational, to the two camps was facilitated by my pre-existing networks and furthered by contacts I made in the squat. Physical access to both camps was relatively easy as these are open, in the sense that residents are free to come and go, and are rarely even guarded. This is the case with many of the camps in Athens and Greece at large. The tacit assumption here is that the only risky element are the camp's residents and, since they are not to be confined, then there is no reason to safeguard them against outside threats. The camp of Elaionas, while it features a proper gate and a checkpoint, it is nothing that the right attitude and purposeful tread can't overcome. I was

advised to always look like I am going somewhere, meeting someone, and I would be fine at the gate. This strategy never failed me. The camp of Skaramagas, on the other side, was even less complicated because the camp was simply never guarded: the remnants of an old checkpoint and gate were no obstacle to anyone who wished to go in. However, what was more laborious to achieve was being accepted by those living and working there, forming relationships and having access to people and their experiences as well as knowing which stories to tell and which to omit. I was only able to work my way in there through being referred to by the appropriate people, gatekeepers and key actors.

3.3.2.2. The squat

The squat housing migrants in turn is a much less obvious site to study the EU border regime and bordering practices as it is less intuitively part of the border arrangement. These squats are deserted buildings, usually publicly owned or of disputed ownership, that were occupied by activists (locals, internationals and migrants) for housing purposes. They proliferated greatly in Athens during the period in question as an alternative to the government's solution of camps and UNHCR-paid apartments that dispersed asylum-seekers in the city. In that sense, squats are beyond the state's reach of government, and their function is antagonistic to that of the state. However, I claim, the migrant squat forms also in a way part of the governance of the emergency and the crisis, and enacts in this way the border at the heart of the city. Not only are the squatters highly governed and bordered subjects themselves -either as citizens or as migrants- but they often utilise bordering and bureaucratic practices and logics in their everyday organisation and running of the space. Additionally, the squat, both as a structure and as a network, very often plays a facilitating role: by providing migrants with housing and catering for their needs, these squats take that responsibility away from the

authorities, while at the same time they become just another site, along with camps and NGO-run facilities, in which this moving population resides.

I picked the building of an abandoned and occupied hotel for my ethnography. Not only is it the largest and most emblematic squatting project of its kind in Athens during the period in question but it is a model of politicisation and claim-making through practices of cohabitation, coexistence and joint struggles between locals, migrants and international activists. The boundaries between these different categories of squatters are at the same time blurred in certain moments and very sharp in others.

Access was not a particular challenge for me as I was acquainted with most of the individuals in the core collective that initiated and largely run the squat. Obviously, as I have explained above, access is much more than access to a physical space; rather it is about being accepted and trusted by those involved and, in this sense, the challenge was greater for me in this respect. My positionality as a researcher who is also at least partly a participant was particularly challenging. The first reason is that I needed to actually become embedded in the structure (often hierarchical) of the collective that run the building. Power relations within the structure of the squat will be examined in detail in chapter five, but what is relevant to this chapter is that, my gender, politics and nationality already shaped the potential roles and responsibilities that I could take on. This in practice meant that, from the outset, I was placed quite high in the (tacit) hierarchies of the squat. This in turn meant that some doors were wide open while others were firmly shut, while at the same time this positionality often shaped and mediated my research. For example, international squatters tend to mistrust, even antagonise, the local squatters exactly because of these implicit hierarchies. On the other hand, migrant squatters tend to be very indulging to the locals again because the latter appear to hold most of the power. A second reason why my positionality was particularly challenging was that the squat, as a political project, was much closer to my own politics. In

this sense, it was easy for me to get carried away and struggle with these two roles, that of the researcher and that of the squatter. Unavoidably, I forged really strong relationships, bonds and friendships with those involved, who were also my research objects, challenging my very own ideas about deservingness, friendship, politics and of course doing research and being a researcher.

3.3.2.3. The school

The school is the third site I investigated for my ethnography. It is also, just like the squat, a less obvious place than the camp to look for borders in the city. While situated at the outskirts of government, the school as an institution is potentially instrumental for the integration of migrants and especially for the integration of migrant families. However, in the case of Greece during the period in question, the school became the main site of political contestation over the migrant issue and the border crisis of 2015. On the one side, the government used the school, and the legally binding and mainly discursive inclusion of migrant children as a kind of left-wing credentials and as a proof of their migrant-friendly politics. On the other side, the conservative major opposition accused the government of miss-management and a lack of planning, while the nationalists and the far-right parties organised through parents associations against the attendance of migrant children to school. Finally, migrant families themselves and their supporters, mainly radical left wing and anarchist groups, civil society organisations, and teachers unions, criticised the government for excluding, segregating and creating ghettos for the migrant children. Therefore, the school was a prime location to study the encounters between all these different actors in order to understand the multiple exclusions that migrant families were faced with.

I focused my research on the schools in central and West Athens which were responsible to take in the children residing in the camps and the squats. In Greece students

are allocated to public schools according to their registered home address. Hence, most of these schools and school complexes were located in inner city neighbourhoods of Athens which were deprived and hard up. This means that they usually were already understaffed and overcrowded with students, lacking in essential resources, ranging from books to computers. These parts of the city were also where migrants had traditionally settled in the past decades, as rents there were more affordable, further pushing them further down in turn. Hence, tensions run high when the schools were expected to take in even more students that would stretch their resources even thinner.

Access to these schools was rather challenging. Once more, my involvement in the squat and in the squatters' relevant working group responsible for school enrollments, was pivotal. By accompanying and helping families that wanted to enroll their children to school, I gained access to and insight into the space of the school but also in the institution that it is. Finally, I was able to research and study the workings of bureaucracy. These encounters between parents, activists, school directors and civil servants were crucial to understanding the multiple exclusions that migrants face in the city.

3.3.3. Methods

In this section I will discuss how I carried out my ethnography, which involved some form of participant observation in the three above mentioned sites, in-depth interviewing of the people inhabiting and acting in these spaces, and analysis of secondary sources and written material, such as relevant legislation, policy directives, politician speeches, political declarations and so on. During my fieldwork, all three methods took place in parallel and, constantly feeding into each other, assisted me to immerse myself in the field and my research questions.

3.3.3.1. Interviewing

During fieldwork, I conducted 23 formal in-depth semi-structured interviews with several actors in camps, squats and schools. Respectively, my participants were: migrants living in camps, NGO staff and front-line bureaucrats working in camps; squatters, both migrants and activists, and other actors supporting the squats; public servants in schools, the relevant ministries and directorates, state officials and policymakers. My objective was to understand the context in which these actors operated; how decision-making flowed within and across these structures and how it was implemented but also what the impact was; how these different actors perceived and made sense of their role in such a highly contradictory legislative and policy environment. As our questions change during the process of research to reflect an increased understanding of the problem (Creswell 2007), the interviews were semi-structured, along the themes in the interview schedule. Access and recruitment of participants was based on my pre-existing contacts in the squatting movement, migrant communities, government and NGOs, while snowballing techniques were also employed to reach more participants and hidden groups such as migrants with irregular status (Jordan and Duvell 2002). Even though my sample is not representative I tried to maintain a balance of age, ethnicity, gender and class of my participants. However, most of my participants were women mainly for two reasons. Firstly, because, as I briefly explained in the introductory chapter, women were overwhelmingly more in these projects of practiced solidarity. In my case, female participants were additionally more engaged and interested in more actively taking part in my research and in critically and reflectively thinking about their involvement. Secondly, in particular in relation to schools, it was usually mothers that were more engaged when it came to registrations, picking children up from school and monitoring their progress.

Most interviews were conducted in Greek and in English. On few occasions, I had the assistance of Arabic and Farsi or Dari speakers as interpreters. As these are crucial to any study and are active producers of meanings in the research process (Edwards 1998), I only worked with trusted individuals with whom I had worked in the past, usually migrants themselves who also worked or volunteered in formal or informal organisations. Interview data, to begin with, should not be treated as a set of objective facts about the social world but rather as products of specific social, cultural and linguistic contexts (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995).

The techniques and the format for the in-depth interviews varied depending on the participant. I used a much more structured approach to interview civil servants, officials and NGO staff. The reason has mainly to do with the fact that they themselves seemed to feel more comfortable with such a structured and official format. While I had informal discussions with them during visits in the camps or during activities, they were more reluctant in engaging with my questions than when we sat down at one of the containers-turned-offices. Some of these participants would even ask me to provide them with the questions I intended to ask them beforehand so as to have an approximate idea of what they would be called to discuss and prepare accordingly. To the contrary, migrants both living in the camps and the squat, were less keen on being recorded and on sitting down for an interview but were more than eager to share and discuss in less formal settings. Additionally, I used a largely unstructured format allowing them to narrate their experiences and guide the discussion rather than answer my questions. Rich, contextual and experiential data were furthermore generated during informal discussions, sometimes in groups, or during dinners and drinking tea, even during nights out. Finally, interviewing squatters was both interesting and challenging mostly due to the formation of personal and political relationships between us. I chose to keep the formal and structured format to interview them to counter the complicity between us. With

regards to the schools, I additionally held short debriefing sessions with those involved in the school enrollments. Unquestionably, the majority of relevant data from these sessions were generated by sharing and discussing collectively those experiences of the enrollments.

Finally, I participated in many assemblies and working groups of the squatters, as well as protests and campaigns; I joined solidarity kitchens cooking in the camps; I attended meetings between different stakeholders, such as meetings between the Ministry of Education and the teachers' unions regarding student enrollments. I held countless informal conversations with people from all three spaces. I was often invited for tea and dinner in camp containers and squatter's rooms. I consider these encounters as forming an integral part of my methodology overall and my interviews in particular, even though certain stories remain untold, informing nonetheless my understanding of the border regime.

3.3.3.2. Observing and participating

One of the most valuable sources of ethnographic data is participant observation: It is "*a complex research method because it often requires the researcher to play a number of roles and to use a number of techniques, including her/his five senses, to collect data*." (Baker 2006, p. 172). While participant observation has been mostly associated with anthropology, other disciplines have made great use of variants of this methodological approach. In my ethnography, I have investigated the spaces of encounter of all the actors mentioned previously. Such spaces range from formal sites, such as refugee camps, and government buildings, such as the school, to informal often squatted migrant accommodation spaces; from formal events, such as press conferences, to informal events, such as squatters' assemblies, talks and workshops.

It has been important for me to assume an appropriate and fluid role that allowed me to observe the everyday lives of the insiders (Baker 2006). My role ranged from

observer-as-participant (Gold 1958) to complete participation (Spradley 1980; Adler and Adler 1994), depending on the degree of interaction and involvement with the insiders. In particular, I was more immersed when conducting research in the migrant squat, where I was treated, seen and felt like an insider, than in the camp. Respectively, the school never became a space in which I immersed myself. However, I grew very attached to certain families through the handling of their enrollment cases and by supporting them through this challenging and complex bureaucratic procedure. I argue that this is also a certain kind of immersion, an emotional immersion, one that generated a different layer of contextual and experiential data assisting me to problematise my research topic. As Shah (2017) explains, the aim of this method is to become closely acquainted with a population through extensive and intensive involvement.

3.3.3.3. Documentary analysis

An important part of my ethnography is the study, understanding and analysis of the written material that shapes dominant narratives within the Greek border regime. This task allowed me to understand how this regime has been constructed both historically and socially. "*Ethnographic research needs to pay close and serious attention to the material and circumstances that are integral to the organisation of everyday life. People do not act in a vacuum. Not only do they do things with words, but also they do things with things*" (Atkinson and Hammersley 2007, p. 137). This written material ranges from policy documents, relevant legislation and politicians' statements and speeches to reports by the media, NGOs -local and international- and other experts and watchdogs. These texts are, of course, cultural products themselves. Their analysis sheds light into the construction and articulation of the dominant discourse on migration in at least three ways: first, by defining the key actors whose experiences to be examined through in-depth interviewing and participant

observation; second, by tracing the knowledges and power relations that produce certain categorisations and labelling; and, third, by historicising and contextualising the emergence and establishment of the current border assemblage.

3.3.4. Analytical framework

The analytical framework, including the categories, themes and instruments for analysis, was built in accordance with the data collected from the interviews, informal discussions, observations and documents reviewed. It was developed and revisited throughout the research process in a recursive and iterative way, drawing at the same time on the relevant literature while responding to the material collected. The themes were initially identified based on the interview guides and were collated per research site and per category of respondent. Subsequently, these themes were elaborated and enriched in the process of the research, as I gained more insight into the field, mostly through observations and informal conversations. Finally, I adjusted and refined the themes during the reviewing and the preliminary analysis of the data. These then formed the basis of my analysis and discussion of the findings in the three different research sites and in combination.

Once the themes were identified and refined through the above mentioned process, they were applied on the transcripts of the interviews and the observation notes from the field visits. I assigned the themes to different segments of the texts (transcripts and notes) manually or with the help of Nvivo. Analysis took place in three phases: I first used the codes to thematically analyse the data separately per site (e.g. bordering practices in the squat, bureaucratic exclusions in the school, governance logics in the camp); I subsequently collated these emergent themes in order to identify themes that cut across the different sites; finally, I constructed aggregate themes that linked the three sites with the city. In the empirical chapters four, five and six that follow this chapter, I draw on data from my interviews, informal

conversations, observations and so on, to illustrate the processes that put in place certain bordering practices or that give rise to acts of resistance and subversion. When participants are quoted, the interviews are identified by an appropriate pseudonym of the interviewee and a contextual description when needed.

3.3.5. Confidentiality and risk management

There are no known risks from engaging in interviews in which all results are anonymous and confidential. While the fieldwork took place overseas, it was still within the context of the European Union. Greece as a member-state has incorporated into its legal framework all EU Directives relating to privacy and data protection. As a result, data protection legislation is similar to the UK's. Finally, social researchers in Greece are subjected to EU's ethical standards. According to the European Commission's Ethics Guidelines (European Commission, 2010), breaking confidentiality is forbidden unless the researcher themself thinks that harm may be caused to the participant or other individuals. However, all participants were advised explicitly that they had the choice of whether to disclose information or not. In the case of participants that are considered to be in vulnerable situations, such as migrants and squatters, additional care was paid not to place them at risk or increase their vulnerability. Questions regarding their legal status or their journeys were avoided as they were also immaterial to the research and participants were never asked to disclose information that would put them at risk. Additionally, I had the necessary practical knowledge and I was in a position to advise participants of where they could get additional support and access to the relevant services in Greece. Finally, all interviews were conducted by me with the help of trusted interpreters, when necessary.

In particular, regarding participants' legal status or other potentially illegal activities witnessed or discovered during fieldwork, my primary obligation has been to protect my

participants as far as possible against potential harmful effects arising from their participation in my research. In particular, I, as a researcher, am under the obligation to actively prevent physical and mental harm and protect the privacy of my participants. That includes all information about their legal status as this has been obtained under conditions of confidentiality. According to the Code Of Conduct of Practice for Research of the University of Birmingham, the Ethical Guidelines of the Social Research Association (SRA, 2003) and the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2002), researchers are permitted and obliged to break confidentiality to avoid personal harm to the participant. Similarly, the ESRC' Framework for Research Ethics (ESRC, 2015) states that the researcher may feel it is necessary to break confidentiality if during an interview it is revealed that the participant or another individual is in a significant risk. So precarious legal status per se is not sufficient grounds for justifying a break of confidentiality. Regarding the involvement in the research of participants that might be or have been involved in criminal activities such as squatters, I informed them at the beginning of the interview (and in the Information Sheet) that were they to disclose incriminating information the researcher may be under obligation to report them to the authorities.

3.4. Ethical considerations

There are a number of ethical implications to consider as my participants were people potentially in vulnerable situations: transiting migrants, people fleeing war, people with disabilities or shipwreck survivors but also squatters. I believe that these considerations should go beyond obtaining informed consent and the standard anonymisation of interview transcripts and notes, both of which I did during this study. What I have been mostly concerned with is my own position within this system: as I am part of the activist political milieu and the local community in Athens, I enjoyed full access to people and places, on the

one hand, but this, on the other, came with an increased obligation to respect people's privacy and ideas and to make sure that they had somehow benefited from my research, while limiting expectations at the same time. While the ethical issues deriving from conducting research with people in positions of power, such as bureaucrats and law enforcers, are negligible, it is not the case when researching populations in vulnerable situations, such as migrants. Based on my previous experience, I was in a position to acknowledge the ethical challenges associated with extracting knowledge from this type of populations. This was remedied in two ways: I ensured the safety of the research participants and minimised the associated risks, as explained above, while maximising their benefits. These included the researcher's assistance to navigate the complex policy and legal framework through practical advice on where and how to obtain additional support and access to relevant services. Finally, the very aim of the research was to present their experiences, the challenges they face, as well as voice their concerns making sure that their input is of equal value to the research that compliments the picture of EU's bordering practices.

Research aims, objectives, and confidentiality were explained to the participants in the first instance and before the commencement of interviews. Written information about the project were given and participants signed a consent form. Respondents took part voluntarily and were free to withdraw their involvement at any time without consequence. I took special care to ensure that respondents were comfortable speaking to me by (a) ensuring confidentiality; (b) using settings where the respondent felt at ease; (c) conducting research only when relations of trust had been developed. Following their participation in the study, participants were debriefed and were given the opportunity to provide their feedback on the process. They were also, eventually, provided with some access to the resulting material and given the opportunity to add anything they wished.

Participation was anonymous and all data were treated confidentially. In order to make their data confidential, participants were allocated a reference number which was then used both in the transcripts and the fieldwork notes. This reference number was included in the consent form, which also contains the participants' identities, but access to this form is restricted only to me and will only be used in the case a participant decides to withdraw. I kept anonymised notes and a fieldwork diary containing the observational data collected. These were eventually used to contextualise and add descriptive and explanatory depth to the data collected during in-depth interviewing. In addition to seeking permission from the organisations involved and orally informing and explaining to participants my research, I also distributed information sheets.

Participants were given three days to opt-out the research. I kept a list of people who had opted out and did not wish to participate in the research; their data were discarded and were not included in the research analysis and findings. While I recognise that people who are not willing to participate most likely wish not to be observed either, it is impossible to remedy this in ethnographic designs. The above mentioned opt-out method is in line with established scholarly practice and there is plenty of precedence in ethnographic designs (AAA 2004; Iphofen 2015). Such ethical pitfalls of participant observation are intrinsic in ethnographic designs and are not limited to matters of whether and how to obtain informed consent. Indeed dealing with ethical dilemmas is a continuous process during fieldwork: As everyday social realities are complex and unpredictable, researchers, and in particular ethnographers, are often required to make moral choices and solve ethical problems on site on a daily basis (Clarke 1975; Li 2008). In reality, any ethnographic design -and most empirical social research at that- is fraught with elements of covert research. This is because observational data are collected all the time when a researcher visits a research site. Even when these data are not explicitly included and drawn upon, they play a part in informing the

researcher's experience and, thus, understanding of the researched object. In this sense, an ethnographic design that problematises relevant ethical pitfalls is a much more honest approach.

In the present study, observational data were collected in spaces that I spent considerable time in order for people to get to know me. In these spaces, I used participant observation in order to understand contextual aspects of the research questions, i.e. to understand how participants move through those spaces, how they interact with one another and with others and so on. In this sense, I was interested in the observational data connected only with people who were indeed willing to participate in my research as I had the opportunity to interview them and have a full picture. Participant observation is an active, mental process that involves much more than seeing and listening; it involves paying attention and making connections between observations and research questions and interests and prior theoretical knowledge. Therefore, while it is impossible to avoid observing people altogether, the behaviour of people who do not wish to fully participate (that is, to be interviewed) were not of interest to me. In this sense, it is almost as if these people were not really being observed.

3.5. Limitations and challenges

There are a number of limitations and challenges regarding my research design and methodology. As generalisation is not the aim in an ethnographic design, sampling is less of an issue than in other designs. However, "*there is usually a constant interplay between the topical and the generic, or the substantive and the formal*" (Atkinson and Hammersley 2007, p. 25). Attention should be paid then in the key informants and the sites chosen, as well as finding counter-narratives and multiple perspectives. In particular, in order to overcome issues of both descriptive and interpretive validity, I used clear criteria for the selection of

participants, multiple observations and I acknowledged various ways of interpretation. Finally, my design is based on a triangulation of methods and evidence from multiple and varied data sources (observations / interviews; multiple participants; interviews / documents).

Most importantly, however, studying borders is prone to methodological nationalism: border control is the prima facie exercise of sovereignty and the migrant becomes the citizen's 'other' (Anderson 2013), the anti-citizen (Inda 2006), the exception to the norm. As borders have been historically addressed in the context of nation-building processes and war, with social scientists looking at international borders to understand the ever-changing relations between nation, state, territory, identity and culture. As a result, there has been a strong state-centric view on borders which creates a sense of taken-for-grantedness. Especially, in sedentarist theories, in which stasis is considered the norm and immobility associated with safety, security and order, while movement becomes a threat to social order (Adey 2004), the migrant is constructed as a security threat.

Wimmer and Schiller's (2002) comprehensive and cross-disciplinary mapping of methodological nationalism in social science trace three intersected and mutually reinforcing variants of methodological nationalism: (a) ignoring nationalism's pivotal role in modernisation processes (grand theory); (b) naturalising the nation-state as an analytical unit (empirical studies); and (c) territorially limiting inquiries within the container of national society (study of nationalism and state-building). These three combined "*subsume society under the nation-state*" (Beck 2007). But as Beck (2002) explains, the human condition can no longer be understood nationally but globally. To overcome methodological nationalism, he proposes a cosmopolitan perspective as "*an alternative imagination, an imagination of alternative ways of life and rationalities, which include the otherness of the other [...]: in the political, the economic, the scientific and the social*" (2002, p. 18).

In my study, as the perspective shifts away from the border and towards the centre and the city, looking at borders as products of social practice at different scales, methodological nationalism can be remedied to some degree by (a) critically rethinking the meaning of inside / outside and inclusion / exclusion; (b) understanding knowledge, practices, everyday ideology, discourses, political institutions, attitudes and agency (Pedersen 2012; van Houtum and van Naerssen 2002) that construct the border; (c) studying borders -and the social world at large- through the lens of movement, speed and temporality rather that of *stasis* and linear time. Without ignoring the concrete geographical locations and the bounded social and political environments within which EU's borders materialise, and without essentialising mobility, EU's border regime can be studied as a diffuse space of interventions, practices and discourses that can take place anywhere and at any given time.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter laid out the methodological approach of this study, as well as the epistemological underpinnings and the ethical implications of studying borders today. The study is a multi-sited ethnography of the border regime in Athens following the 2015 border crisis. It focused on three spaces, the camp, the squat and the school, and the interactions between the actors that inhabit them. In terms of methods, the study heavily relied on observational data and in-depth interviewing while also drawing on countless informal conversations aimed to contextualise the analysis. The chapter also problematised the role and position of the researcher in the knowledge production in the field and the need for and importance of not knowing sometimes. Finally, the themes of site selection, locations and scales as well as researcher's positionality and issues of access run through the whole chapter.

The next four chapters present the empirical findings of the research, respectively the camp (chapter four), the squat (chapter five) and the school (chapter six). In these chapters, I offer an account of the spatialities and the materialities of these sites, accompanied by a contextual and historical description and a preliminary analysis of the themes that emerge in each space and how they relate and engage with the relevant literature. I examine the actors that inhabit them, the practices that classify as borderwork as well as those that contest the EU's border regime and the encounters between them. Finally, in chapter seven, I map and discuss the spatialities of these everyday bordering practices and contestations in relation to the city and explore the impact of the instantiation of the border in the crisis-ridden city of Athens.

4. THE CAMP

4.1. Introduction

Chapter four focuses on the emergence and proliferation of camps -that is reception and accommodation centres for arriving migrants- in the city of Athens during and following the border crisis of 2015 and 2016. In particular, the chapter examines the institutional evolution of the camp and its outgrowth as a tool for the governance of the presence and needs of thousands of migrant newcomers in urban spaces. It presents empirical evidence from my ethnography in the camps of Athens from January to June 2017. It additionally draws on the burgeoning literature on camps and aims to contribute to these debates by exploring this camp form, its relation to the city and its role for the wider EU border regime. It is a novel and peculiar camp form, at least in the case of the European continent, in the sense that it popped up in response to the humanitarian emergency declared by the UNHCR in 2015 and it was embedded in the urban fabric, often in disused infrastructure such as ex-industrial sites or army camps. Even though these camps were meant to be a temporary housing solution for those arriving, many residents still remain there, three years on. I argue that these camps provide a technology of control, a tool for the temporal, rather than only spatial, management of the newcomers. They function as spaces of containment of these populations to govern them separately from the rest of the population. But most importantly, these spaces are created in order to govern this crucial moment between their arrival and the time when the newcomers will either be included in the polity -should they receive a formal status- or permanently excluded through removal from the state's territory or internment -should their asylum applications be rejected. In this condition of semi-permanence and semi-presence, *Europeans in waiting* -to paraphrase Motomura's "Americans in waiting" (2006)- camp

residents, in the very act of living and being present and visible, create their own places and give new meanings to them (Ramadan 2010).

The chapter focuses on two camps, both located at the outskirts of the city of Athens in non-residential areas. The first one is the camp of Skaramagas: while it was the largest camp in Athens with a capacity to accommodate approximately 3,000 people, the state had, since the spring of 2017, largely withdrawn its care, with only a few exceptions. This gap in service provision and oversight, in combination with its remote location, prompted the residents to build and run their own makeshift shops there (restaurants, barber shops, repair shops - to name but a few) reusing and repurposing the materiality of the camp (UNHCR tarp, plexiglas). It also became the place where stolen goods or old and broken products from the city were refurbished and resold.

The second one is the camp of Elaionas: it was the first humanitarian camp set up in Athens and the one located closest to the city centre. It was initially created in August 2015 as a temporary solution for the housing of vulnerable cases and those eligible for relocation under the European Commission's Emergency Relocation Scheme or family reunification under the Dublin Regulation. Three years later, it had expanded to an area threefold its initial size and it had become the public face of the government's immigration policy as all EU officials were brought there for a visit. Contrary to the camp of Skaramagas, the state still maintained and even expanded its control over the lives of the residents, leaving very little space for the creation of a community.

I argue that these two camps exemplify two different logics for the governance of newly arrived and transiting migrants. The first governance logic is characterised by the withdrawal of care (Skaramagas camp): the state, even though still present, withdraws its 'care' and, as a result, residents are left, but also are somehow freer, to constitute themselves the conditions of their lives. The second governance logic is somewhat the

reverse: the state exerts complete control over the lives of residents (Elaionas camp) through intensified humanitarian and care work. In this logic all services are provided directly by or under the close oversight of state agencies, with procedures and practices akin to those followed for the local population. In both cases, residents are governed separately from the rest of the population, either through spatial or temporal segregation, they have access to different schools, as chapter six will detail and to socially separated welfare. However, these exclusions vary and fluctuate in the two cases, either because of the specific camp geographies or because of the residents' own agency and practices of contestation. Both governance logics serve the primordial purpose of the camp: to dehumanise, to desubjectificate, to exclude, and they both produce abandonment. This abandonment was enacted differently in each camp, either through the withdrawal or the intensification of care. The suggestion here is not that these two logics are centrally coordinated by the state but they follow on, they are a consequence of, the way that the state bureaucracy functions.

In the first part of the chapter I briefly contextualise the emergence and proliferation of camps in Athens since 2015 and place the discussion within current scholarly debates on camps. The rest of the chapter discusses the two camps in detail, their spatial arrangement and historical significance, my own fieldwork experience there and the different ways that abandonment is enforced and resisted.

4.2. Camps in the city

Following the conceptualisation of the camp as a biopolitical laboratory by some of the most influential thinkers on camps, Paul Gilroy, Giorgio Agamben and Reviel Netz, Claudio Minca (2015) argues that the camp, not only has it not faded away but, to the contrary, it has become a fundamental spatial technology in governments' attempts to manage populations: *"the camp is thus a true political technology, determining the actual practices of citizenship*

today, and governing motion, governing life in important ways" (p. 81). The author explores the geographies of the camp and the multiplication of its forms today -concentration, detention, transit, identification, reception, accommodation, refugee, military, training. He seeks to understand the role of the camp in contemporary liberal democracies but also to unpack the mechanisms that allow it to be normalised in everyday experience to such an extent that it seems to be the rule rather than the exception. Yet, I argue, the normalisation is not only achieved by the camp but all those institutions through which state govern the lives of migrants. Camps, IOM school buses, special school programmes and curricula and NGOised welfare produce exclusionary and subordinated inclusion in the city (Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas 2012). The camps, "*as states of inexistence that function as reserves in which subjects and their rights are suspended temporarily, in transition from one subjecthood to another*" (Isin and Rygiel 2007, p. 196), make this possible. Isin and Rygiel consider the camp as a new urban space that connects the city to the border. They call this the 'other global city' making reference to Saskia Sassen's concept. These new urban spaces form part of the geographies of externalisation and internalisation of EU's border regime, along with outsourced detention centres and intra-EU spaces of transit and containment.

The year 2015 was characterised by a dramatic surge in the number of people arriving to Europe's shores through Greece, coming mostly from the Middle East and Africa. In particular in the late summer of 2015 and until March 2016, the Northeastern Aegean island of Lesbos came under the spotlight as almost 1,000,000 people reached its shores and crossed its territory. While it was the culmination of a long period of gradual yet steady increase in the numbers of people arriving through that route in the past decade, a humanitarian emergency was declared by the UNHCR and the European Commission. This allowed the UNHCR to deploy its humanitarian arsenal on European territory for the first time, to manage and distribute significant amounts of funds and lead relevant operations.

The declared border crisis and emergency also led to a series of consequential policy changes at both the national and the European level (Crawley et al. 2016) in an effort to tame this new wave of uncontrolled and unauthorised migrant mobility. Relevant recent research on the period in question has argued that, what was coined as a humanitarian emergency and a refugee crisis at the Southeastern border of the EU, proved to be a crisis of governance (Blitz et al. 2017, 2017; D'Angelo and Kofman 2018; Kofman 2018; Parker 2016; Papoutsi et al. 2018). As a result, humanitarian camps were set up across the Greek territory in order to receive and accommodate transiting migrants and provide humanitarian assistance. Since March 2016 when the border between Greece and Macedonia was closed off, the camps hosted the tens of thousands that were trapped in the country. According to the Coordination Centre for the Management of Refugee Crisis in Greece (2016), 57,000 migrants were immobilised in Greece, one third of which in Athens. The camps were set up in a matter of weeks by the Greek Army. The management of most camps still remains with the army while the Ministry of Migration Policy has the oversight of the daily workings of the different state and humanitarian actors.

The city of Athens has always been a transit point in the journeys of migrants but the marks on its urban landscape have been especially visible during this period of recent intensified migrant mobility and presence. The camps of the city, and especially the two on which this research is based, are the most prominent examples of the changes that the city experienced as a result of the 2015 border crisis. Following the closure for transiting migrants of the border between Greece and Macedonia in March 2016, the EU's border regime became increasingly taut and unrelenting. While migrants still arrived in large numbers, leaving the country became ever harder, more costly and dangerous; a Sisyphean-like task doomed to be repeated and to fail. The available legal routes to other EU member-states -that is, family reunification under the Dublin Regulation or Relocation through the

Emergency Relocation Scheme- were scarce. The proliferation of the practice of digital fingerprinting upon arrival led to the criminalisation of any attempt at unauthorised secondary movement between member-states. Tightened controls and racial profiling in ports, airports and internal border crossings, targeting in particular Greek ID card holders as these are easy to forge, further limitted the routes available to migrants that wished to move on. The city of Athens and the camps around it turned into the (forced) home of many of those attempting these journeys but also of those more permanently settled there.

There were five camps in Athens: Elaionas, Skaramagas, Schisto, Elefsina and Eliniko. The first four were located in the West and the last one in the South of the city. Their number fluctuated between 2015 and 2019: some were disused in 2018 only to reopen due to the heightened arrivals of 2019, while others were permanently dismantled, such as the one in Eliniko. They were all urban and easily reached via public transport. Most of these camps, with the exception of Elaionas, lacked legal basis, according to the legal charity Refugee Support Aegean (RSA 2018) in the sense that the ministerial decisions necessary for their operation were never issued. The lack of legal framework also affected the way in which these camps were run, lacking in many cases official site management, and depending on site management support largely tasked to IGOs, NGOs and state agencies.

If we view the 2015 border crisis as a moment in which the EU border regime was breached and EU's hegemony and sovereignty was challenged, then the camps that emerged around the city of Athens can be viewed as an effort to take back this control, by administering the time and lives of the residents. As Irid Katz (2015) explains, "*the camp is both a space and an action when hegemony has not yet been established or when an existing order is being cancelled*" (p. 730). The uncontrolled transit pace of 2015 challenged the hegemony of the state (Greek state and the EU alike), cancelling the established order of who, when and for how long can stay within and move throughout its territorial boundaries.

The camps around Athens were then set up to seize control of that pace and mobility, and re-establish the lost order. They were meant for people not exactly outside the juridical order of the state but for people that were to be semi-included. Their status was not yet settled, as the vast majority of them had applied for asylum, and their status could go either way. The spatial arrangement of the Athens camps also reveals this exclusionary inclusion: according to the Regulatory Urban Plan of Athens Metropolitan Area (2014), the camps in Athens were located in zones whose use was designated as “medium or high disturbance productive activities” and not as residential. The numbers and visibility of those arriving, as well as the proclaimed and performed governance crisis produced them as exceptional. This condition in turn warranted for a specific space to be created for the newcomers, aiming to temporally, rather than solely spatially, contain them. Put differently, the camps were about governing and extending time rather than only spatially excluding these populations from the political body of the city. They were about the governance of that moment in which all of them need to be counted, identified, registered, processed and considered as worthy or not members of the city.

One cannot think and write about camps without referring to Giorgio Agamben, the Italian philosopher who, based on his reading of Carl Schmitt, Michel Foucault and Hannah Arendt, theorised camps and the spatialisation of exception. Agamben provides us with the tools to think about camps. Since then, scholars have theorised the camp and camp-like institutions as spaces of exceptional politics, desubjectivation and depoliticisation; a space that aims to produce ‘abject subjects’ (Isin and Rygiel 2007) and reduce people to bare existence, ‘bare life’ (Edkins 2000; Diken 2004; Redfield 2005; Papastergiadis 2006; Darling 2009). However, as many scholars have pointed out since then (Walters 2008; Rygiel 2012; Ramadan 2013; Katz 2015; Sigona 2015), there cannot be one generalised model for the analysis of camps as Agamben tries to do. Camps are complex structures and may differ

from each other substantially, both in terms of structure and function. Additionally, quite often camps, viewed from below (Papadopoulos et al. 2008), are revealed as meaningful places, where the social and the political are very much part of everyday practices and experiences.

The camps of Athens are a case in point: while they were set up under an exceptional moment in the EU's migration and border management regime, they created lived spaces (Rygiel 2012) in which people, under a semi-permanent and semi-present condition, constituted their lives, formed social relations (Ramadan 2010; 2013) and became political subjects (Sigona 2015). Minca writes in relation to the return of the camp (2005) as this was marked by Guantanamo that:

> *“If biopolitics increasingly penetrates all of our bodies, relegating to a realm of indistinction the threshold between our political being and our bare life, we should not forget that it also needs our bodies for its very reproduction, and very often our consensus. The camp lies neither within nor outside the geographies of exception and that is why we are all potentially subject to it. The camp is not only an extraterritorial space where particular individuals (homines sacri) are banned (messi as bando): It is a constitutive part of the new geographies of terror, which speak directly to all of us, inside and outside of the academy" (p. 411).*

The camps around Athens are a step towards this direction: while obviously less violent and exceptional than Guantanamo, they extended the spaces of indistinction and pushed forward the normalisation of the exception in the everyday. This is also evident in that these urban camps accommodated various governance logics and rationales, such as exceptionality and normalisation, depending on the practices of state and non-state actors when they encountered each other. Just like the archipelago of semi-permanent Palestinian camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the West Bank, the camps in Athens seem to have

been transformed into a permanent feature of the Athenian landscape and politics, embedding the city in the geographies of internalisation of EU's border regime.

For Carl Schmitt (1985) ordering is geographical ('nomos of the earth') and, in this sense, the camp orders the distinction between the inside and the outside in relation to the city. In Athens camps have indeed brought inside the outside. The territorialisation of the outside (of the exception) in the inside: *"[t]he location of unlaw within the law, the transgression of the law by the law itself, its self-suspension"* (Diken and Laustsen 2006, p. 446). Diken and Laustsen (2006), embarking from the myth of the creation of the city of Rome by the twin brothers Romulus and Remus, build an account of the camp. The camp, just like the city of Rome, distinguishes between an inside and an outside but at the same time this distinction is deliberately blurred as the transgression is inherent in the lawmaking: *"[n]o law without transgression, no rule without exception"* (p. 443). In that way, they argue, a biopolitical zone of indistinction emerges between inclusion and exclusion. To this triptych of rule, exception and biopolitics, following Agamben, the authors add a fourth one: the city is organised by the exception. To illustrate this, they use the language of and draw examples from the politics of security and terror. According to Diken and Laustsen, in today's world, this line, this distinction was drawn by the war on terror: the threat coming from outside and the struggle to maintain order on the inside. Most importantly, the inside as a place of law vs the outside (the axis of evil): "*[i]n today's world the 'axis of evil' constitutes a geography through which many real political problems within and between states are displaced on to a war against terrorists, the new 'barbarians'"* (p. 44). Certainly this assumes and requires clear-cut borders (such as those evoked by the image of Fortress Europe) that terror then transgresses. In the West, the inside is considered the realm of citizens and of order while the outside is unruly, dangerous and a place in which violence rules; terror, according to this account, transgresses this distinction and brings the violence inside, it is an exception to

order. The zone of indistinction that these urban camps created in Athens brought these abject bodies in the city's everyday spaces.

4.3.The camp of Skaramagas

4.3.1. Material and people: Assembling the camp

Cement and steel, this was the first impression of anyone approaching the camp of Skaramagas: large cemented open air spaces, surrounded by metal containers; corrugated steel was used for protection from the sun and plexiglas to keep out the sea breeze, especially in the cold winter months; fences surrounded the whole camp but also divided it in different sections; water heaters were lined up all facing the same direction to catch as much of the scorching sun as possible. This was the materiality of the camp. If you were driving into the city from the Northwest, this was the landscape that you faced from the highway: containers lined up in close proximity to each other, each carrying a solar water heater and an air conditioning unit; an odd small town of identical structures that look almost human-like.

Skaramagas is a port town situated 11 kilometers west of the centre of Athens; it is the metropolis's largest shipyard, commercial port and container zone. The camp and the town itself is named after the shipyard because it was formed to service it. In this sense, containers are not an uncommon site in this part of the town; so using them as houses for people somehow didn't seem so outrageous out there. The camp was almost indiscernible from the surrounding landscape, merging into the industrial port landscape as seen from the highway or the surrounding hill tops. It was in fact adjacent to a container warehouse: containers for goods that moved more or less freely and containers for human bodies that were not allowed to move, they were contained there.

I met Sophia, a young, energetic activist from Germany who had been actively involved in various activities in the camp since its early days. I initially met her during my fieldwork in the squats in Athens; like so many others during that period, she dedicated her efforts and energy rotating between camps and squats, wherever there were needs. I met her at the gate. I was worried that the police guarding the entrance would not let me in the camp so I had asked her to meet me there. However, we went in without any problems, no one asked for our ID or for our reason to be there; the remains of an old checkpoint, queuing rails and a gate for cars stood there desolate. We ventured in and Sophia showed me around and introduced me to people. Our visit kept getting interrupted by people she knew mostly through her involvement in political struggles in the camp.

I was particularly eager to discover the shops that residents had set up inside the camp, constructing compact huts out of UNHCR tarp and other scrap material from around the camp. I had heard so much about these miniature makeshift shops. As Sophia explained, in the beginning there had been a struggle over the management of the camp between the Ministry for Migration Policy and the Greek Army. The issue stemmed from the absence of legal framework for the functioning of the camp and the lack of official site oversight by the state. The Ministry somehow prevailed and eventually appointed two people to take over responsibility of the camp management. In January 2017, however, their contracts ended and, for some unknown to her reason, they were never renewed.

> “They both continued coming back and doing their jobs for quite a while”, Sophia said, “despite the fact that their contracts had lapsed and they were no longer paid. Maybe they hoped that eventually they’d get a new job appointment or maybe they could not simply abandon this place”.

However, after a couple of months they eventually gave up and, by April 2017, the camp was left without a camp manager. Since then the Greek Navy took charge, while the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) did the site management support. This was a process of abandonment that lasted three months, and, according to my informants, in the absence of a camp manager or in the face of their diminished authority, services started to flunk. NGOs could no longer get approval to run new activities and programmes, food catering stopped, the school closed and the hours of the clinic became so reduced that it was almost impossible to get help there. Some NGOs, however, remained and were still providing services but only during some of the working hours during the period of my research. But they often did so unofficially and in an uncoordinated manner, which sometimes resulted in misinformation and conflicts.

As there was no official overseeing authority there was no official registration of residents. This meant that, as of April 2017, the distribution of the container houses had been turned into a rather profitable market for some of the residents. An international NGO was keeping an unofficial register of who and how many people lived in the camp. However, many of them were not necessarily officially registered as residing in the camp. This lack of official registration deprived many residents of access to services provided by NGOs in the camp as these were predicated upon having an official place in a camp or an NGO-managed apartment in the city. More importantly, it deprived them of the scarce allowance that they were entitled to through the UNHCR and IRC administered cash cards.

This is, at least partly, the reason why the residents of the camp gradually took charge and set up their own shops. Sourcing and assembling material from the camp, such as plank wood, plexiglass and tarp with the UNHCR logo still on, many residents had constructed small businesses: barber shops, convenience stores, a canteen, a couple of restaurants down at the sea promenade, two shops with pool tables, a couple of falafel and

kebab shops and something that looked a lot like a beach bar, a sweets shop, a laundromat. The materiality of the camp was repurposed into a new everyday infrastructure: objects, materials and spaces were re-assembled into new arrangements reenacting transformative everyday practices. By disregarding and discarding the initial top-down spatial and material arrangement of the camp, and by appropriating it and seizing control, residents created their own infrastructure from below. As I argue in this thesis, these place-making practices should be understood as challenging the everyday bordering aimed to exclude, dehumanise and negate migrants control over their time. They additionally demonstrate that bordering and unbordering practices are not necessarily place-specific and, therefore, the camp is not solely characterised by abjection and exceptionality, a space governed solely by bordering rationales.

Similarly, the equipment inside the shops, from toasters and coffee machines to pool tables and shisas, came mostly from scavenging in the city's underbelly. Most of these shops were situated along the pier that was the geographical boundary of the camp on the one side. In the evenings, the residents went down there to enjoy the night and the sea: tables were set up, a group of young women smoked shishas and drank sweet arab tea, the children even jumped into the sea, some Iranian-Kurdish men played pool, while falafels were served and music played loud from the seafront shops, often different tunes at the same time. A makeshift shanty town that was nonetheless lively, people built a life there for themselves and their families and life simply happened. Most of the shops and restaurants were eventually marked on google maps, making them easy to spot by the residents and adding to the normalisation of the camp. Additionally, they featured to the outside world as places worth visiting, a restaurant on the seafront and a oriental grocery shop. So, while the state used camps to banish populations from sight and exclude them, the residents of Skaramagas built their shops in the camp without permission. This, I argue, is a struggle

against their oppression and appropriation of their time, through 'producing spaces' both physically and politically (Ramadan 2013; Katz 2015). It is a form of politics, imperceptible yet highly political, one that characterises migration at large, as it *"adapts differently to each particular context, changes its faces, links unexpected social actors together, absorbs and reshapes the sovereign dynamics targeting its control*" (Papadopoulos 2018, p.3).

When these shops first appeared in the camp, the INGOs that were then still active there and the UNHCR field office, became increasingly concerned about everyday transactions between their staff and residents. Sofia told me that they came up with strict policies against their employees buying products from these shops:

> "NGO staffers were not allowed to shop or eat from the refugees' restaurants. What the regional officers, mostly of the UNHCR, were concerned about was that this could lead to collusion, that it would create inappropriate and personal relationships between the shop owners and the camp staff", she recounts still amazed at this rationale.

Eventually, and largely due to the disobedience of many of the employees, the policy seemed to have been dropped and NGO staff were often seen drinking their morning coffee or eating lunch there. I never managed to investigate further and corroborate this prohibition nor the reasons behind it as expressed by the NGOs themselves but I will venture an analysis here. Such policy is indicative of the way in which humanitarian organisations view the camp residents and the recipients of their services, as well as of what an appropriate relationship with them looks like. The humanitarian industry enacts these relationships of subjugation in which camp inhabitants are always at the receiving end, eventually being rendered dependent on humanitarian aid: "*[i]nterventions based on charity and humanitarian assistance establish forms of dependency and perform soft modes of disciplining and control*

of migrants' bodies, voices and struggles" (Dadusc et al. 2019). Therefore, when the inhabitants of the Skaramagas camp re-assembled the camp, constituting, and in a way exerting some control over the conditions of their own lives, they became and were seen as acting subjects that denied this imposed condition of dependency. In that sense, (un)bordering practices, and the rationales that inform them, tend to spill over between spaces, largely depending on what happens during the encounters between the different actors.

We went on our way; we were looking for something to buy and bring to the family that Sophia had planned us to visit. I was hoping to get some wafers and biscuits from one of the many tiny grocery shops but Sophia was certain that we could find something better, something freshly made. So we kept on looking. We eventually came across a pastry shop selling homemade baklava and other traditional Arab sweets. The counter was made out of corrugated steel and scrap metal, the walls consisted of plank wood nailed together and against the outside wall of the container in which the shopkeeper and his family lived. The ceiling was made out of tarp tightly adjusted onto the plank wood. We asked for ½ kilo of a mix of Arab syrup sweets. The shopkeeper prepared our order seeming proud of his shop and quite content to be serving outsiders, as he said. As I was wondering how he would actually package the sweets for us to take away, he took out a stack of plastic plates and placed the sweets on one of them. Then he took another one and covered them. Finally, he secured it with elastic bands. He put the package in a plastic bag and gave it to me. It made me reflect on the choices and ingenuity one needs in order to get this going. Skaramagas inhabitants, in the face of their abandonment by the state and the humanitarian organisations, built from scratch in a foreign land a place that (they hoped) was only a temporary home. As Ramadan (2013) explains for Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, it

is the temporariness of their condition that makes it liveable. It was a reminder that they would eventually move on, it's what made it bearable.

The whole camp emanated the same feeling as it lied there, at the outskirts of Athens, a world on its own, a microcosm of social relations and economic exchange. The registered residents withdrew cash from the cards provided by the UNHCR and spent it to buy food, drinks, to play pool and smoke shisha in the camp's shops and restaurants. Ambulant sellers with pick-up tracks, mostly from the nearby Roma camp, went there to sell fresh fruit and vegetables. A barter economy also flourished there, as residents exchanged products and services for food and vice versa. Behrouz, for example, an electrician by profession ran an electronics shops right on the pier, repairing laptops and phones and selling them back. He was also the one that had helped construct most of the makeshift shops there, turning the materiality of the camp into a profitable part of the local economy. Finally, NGO employees, even some visitors from the city, also contributed to the local informal economy of the camp. This unmediated economic activity fostered new social relations, subverted established power relations and offered a certain normality to the camp life.

Sophia and I were invited for tea in a container-turned-home right behind the row of bars and restaurants at the seafront promenade. They offered us the typical sweet Arab tea, crisps, sunflower seeds and fruit. They also served the sweets that we had brought. They spoke in Farsi with Sophia and I tried to understand. I could pick up some parts of the conversation. The couple who had invited us had their story to tell. He was from Uzbekistan but had been living in Saudi Arabia; she was from Afghanistan. This meant that soon after getting married, they no longer felt welcome in Riyadh. They moved to Kabul but one day a car bomb almost killed them both. The wife was pregnant, she lost the baby and they both spent months in the hospital. After recovering they tried to flee to Saudi Arabia but, by then,

entry was no longer allowed to Afghan nationals and so they decided to come to Greece via Turkey. They made it to Lesbos, the wife was pregnant again, she gave birth with many difficulties but could not properly take care of the baby as her mental health had been affected. She received a lot of help from a Greek volunteer at the camp and from Sophia. Then, they finally moved to Skaramagas but the husband got Tuberculosis and spent some more months in and out of hospitals. They had a baby boy, Benjamin, and they seemed content but they still wanted to go to Germany; they still after one year and a half considered their condition temporary and dreamt about Europe.

4.3.2. Skaramagas: A commercial container pier turns into a camp

The camp of Skaramagas was set up in April 2016 to house people arriving from the Aegean islands and were mostly sleeping rough at the port of Piraeus[7]. Part of the metropolitan area of Athens, it belongs administratively to the municipality of Chaidari, a historically working class suburb with a long history of anti-fascist struggles dating back to organised resistance against the Nazi regime. Chaidari, the largest municipality of West Attica, has, due to its history, been governed largely by centre-left mayors, whereas the then mayor was elected with the communist party. It is the west entrance to the city of Athens, an urban semi-mountainous area at the hillside of Mount Egaleo and it is cut in half by the Athens - Corinth highway. During the Nazi occupation, Chaidari was a territory of particularly brutal implementation of the repressive and retaliatory methods of the Nazis. A concentration camp was established there in September 1943 to imprison thousands of communists, resistance fighters, jews and other prisoners that we transferred from the south of Greece. The communist prisoners had been imprisoned by the military dictatorship of Georgios Metaxas in 1936 and had been handed over to the Nazi occupation forces. Approximately 20,000 Jews

[7] The port of Piraeus is the main passenger port for the city of Athens. It lies just 12 km southwest of the city centre and belongs to the metropolitan area of Athens, even though it is administratively independent.

were imprisoned in Chaidari and sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau from September 1943 and until the retreat of the Nazis from Athens in October 1944. For Greece, the concentration camp of Chaidari is considered as a space of torture and historical memory in the same way as Auschwitz and Mauthausen are (Droumpouki 2016).

In this west suburb of Athens, on one of the commercial piers of the port and next to a container warehouse, the Greek Navy and Army, in a matter of weeks, turned the old pier into a small town of containers. The camp was initially built for 1,600 people, mostly for families from Syria: 200 containers turned into houses with electricity, running hot water, sewage system, kitchenette and air-conditioning, each with the capacity to house eight people. It was not long before the camp had expanded and its capacity had risen to 2,500 and eventually to 3,000 people. The camp was delimited on three sides by the sea and only on the East a wall separated it from the adjacent container warehouse. A plexiglas fence was built on the seafront to protect the camp from the waves and the sea wind in the winter months.

The residential parts of the camp were built around a spacious open air cemented area that stood at the centre of the camp. There were always children playing there, kicking footballs, biking or chasing each other. At the centre of this area there was a huge structure which used to be some sort of restaurant. On one side, the children's space was set up by independent volunteers, with a canopy to protect from the sun. The container was painted with lively colours on the outside with drawings aiming to teach English: "what has four wheels, eats grass and gives milk? A cow on a skateboard" read the caption next to a drawing of a cow on a skateboard. There were always North European looking youths there organising activities with the children. A young Austrian woman who had been volunteering in the camp for the past six months once told me:

> "Most of the kids in the camp can't go to school because it is too far. So they have nothing to do all day; they have no structure in their day; they don't learn, which is what kids do in this age. We try to keep them busy in a creative way, otherwise they become aggressive and uncontrollable and the camp becomes a mess; we've had quite a lot of problems with some of them before".

This was the feeling of many of the volunteers I spoke to during my fieldwork there. They felt responsible for the children but at the same time they were frustrated with being left alone to deal with them. The Red Cross, which, until the summer of 2016, organised eight-hour school days for children, was no longer doing so. They were unable to obtain permission to continue as there was no longer official oversight of the camp. Similarly, but for different reasons, the Hope School, set up by a left-wing collective of Piraeus called the 'Sunday Migrants School', could no longer sustain their schooling activities in the camp. As I was told, this was due to internal organisational issues and mostly to the limited resources they had at their disposal. The Hope School, however, managed for almost a year to bring together local, international and migrant activists with experience in teaching.

The Greek Navy still had oversight of the camp but its role was largely limited to keeping the peace. Their offices were set up at the entrance of the camp, ten meters past the abandoned gate, and they consisted of a prefabricated two story structure with a fenced parking lot in front. I had never been allowed in there and rarely had I seen people coming in and out of these offices. Also, navy officers were hardly ever seen around the camp nor did they check who came in and out of the camp. The very few times that I had come in contact with them, they were more concerned with keeping things simple and quiet than anything else. They were not polite nor aggressive, they were the archetypical civil servant, sluggish, arrogant, disinterested. In this sense, the navy officers embodied and in a way enacted the

abandonment that this place forced on its inhabitants. They were there but they were not really present, they were responsible by law, responsible for those inhabiting the camp but no one would hold them accountable nor did anyone seem to expect them to perform this responsibility.

In one of my visits, I had the opportunity to meet and cook with the collective solidarity kitchen 'The Other Human'. The collective was set up in 2011 as practiced solidarity from below in response to the humanitarian and food crisis caused by the impoverishment of a large part of the Athenian population. The crisis became particularly visible in the city as people looked for food and leftovers in the public rubbish bins. The collective was formed around the double phenomenon of food waste and poverty and the idea that their mediation would reconcile the two, while offering dignified food to those who needed it. Initially the members of the collective scavenged themselves the city's farmers markets asking producers for their unsold produce. They would then cook in public spaces around the city and eat along with the beneficiaries. The idea that informed their practices was that cooking and eating together subverts the power relations entangled in charity, creating in this was new urban spaces of solidarity (Arampatzi 2017).

I arrived on time and had to wait for someone from the collective to show up. After half an hour, I saw Konstantinos, a middle aged bearded guy; he was the one that started the initiative and was the face of the collective kitchen. He approached while on the phone. I got up and went to meet him, it turned out that he was looking for me, our contact had already informed him that I was already there. We decided to set up there as there was a bit of shade too. He waved at the van to approach, then we unloaded two foldable tables, two huge cooking pots and two gas canisters, vegetables, rice, and an IKEA blue bag with plates, spoons, napkins and knives. There were also gloves, tablecloths and chopping boards. At that point another car arrived with three more men inside: they were in their 50s, dressed in

black, they were cheerful, cold coffee cups at hand. Another car arrived with a woman that also seemed to be at the core of the group. She seemed to know what she was doing and started giving orders around.

It was only then, as we were about to light the fire, that three Navy officers came to check out what was happening. Konstantinos cheerfully yet firmly went up to deal with them, he seemed to know how this would go and exactly what he was doing. The officers asked him whether he had permission to be there and cook. He said that the Mayor of Chaidari had been informed but the Navy officers wanted to talk to him, so Konstantinos called him. After speaking to the Mayor, the officers left but not before commenting on the fact that we would soon have ‘an uncontrollable mob on our hands’. One of them said that this happened whenever food was distributed in the camp. When Konstantinos told him that he had a lot of experience doing this and that he had done so also in Moria, the infamous hotspot on the islands of Lesbos, the reply by one of the officers was that Skaramagas was nothing like Moria because “the people here don’t really need you or us, they are not grateful; so be careful, they will be aggressive”.

Later that day, as we were debriefing with the team I brought up the incident with the officers and they all laughed and joked around. One of the men, a young anarchist from Athens who had not been present during the incident, said, slightly posturing: “ah, and I always look for them around the camp, such a shame I missed them this one time that they actually appeared”. He then kept commenting on the fact that the camp was never properly guarded and protected: “this is their job, no? They should keep this place safe, there are children and other vulnerable people. What if there is a fascist attack? Anyone can come inside and plant drugs or other illegal things and blame the refugees for it”. His words reveal a state logic regarding risk and security: since the only risky element to be governed were the

residents, but they were not to be confined, then there was no reason to safeguard them against outside threats.

During the cooking, many people from the camp, both residents but also workers, came to check out what we were doing. One of them, an older female Red Cross employee, came up to me and asked what we were doing. I explained and she was impressed. She told me that there was a family she knew of that didn't have money. I went with her to their offices, a container with only desks inside, so that she could tell me which container the family was in. There was a colleague of hers there, she was quite rude to me, she did not even greet me and, when the older woman explained what she was looking for, the other woman thought that she meant me. Anyway, she gave me the number of the container and I went out to find it. It was somewhere at the very back of the camp. I found the family and invited them. The mother was very grateful and I did see them after during the queuing for the food.

The Red Cross employee embodies too the abandonment of the place, she appeared to be well aware of the problems of the residents. Yet she had been rendered unable to do anything about it despite the fact that she worked for an organisation that was still present in the camp. In the face of this presenced abandonment, residents endured for long periods. They encountered the state through the empty presence of front-line enforcers like the navy officers, and low level NGO staff that were de facto rendered inactive. But they rarely interacted with residents, unless boundaries were transgressed, as in the case of the police coming in to break up riots. However, far from a desolate place, the camp of Skaramagas was a space full of meanings and places. Its residents, in their imposed suspension and much desired temporariness, created lived personal, collective and public spaces there, devised livelihood and home-making strategies. Ultimately, they subverted the geographies of abandonment and exclusion by bringing the materiality of the city in the camp and

repurposing that of the camp to create their own infrastructure from below. Critical geographies of home, recognise the relational character of home-making (Blunt and Dowling 2006) and conceptualise "*it as as processes of establishing connections with others and creating a sense of belonging as part of rather than separate from society*" (p. 14). In this sense, the camp of Skaramagas unsettles the dichotomies between spaces of bordering and spaces of resistance and the produced figures, the victim and the rebel, respectively.

4.4. The camps of Elaionas

4.4.1. Entering Elaionas

I met Ali, my contact at the camp, just outside the main entrance, next to the Police cubicle at the gate. The entrance was a heavy sliding door made out of steel; it was usually ajar to allow the unhindered comings and goings of residents, employees and visitors. A sort of inverted racial profiling took place there, excluding local-looking people from entering. A two metre high cement wall surrounded and hid the whole camp. Ali had reassured me on the phone earlier that day that I would not face any problem coming in the camp but still I was not confident and I did not want to risk a face-off with the police guard. So I asked Ali to meet me outside. We walked in without any problems, no one even looked at us.

Ali was a 50 year old Palestinian refugee himself, with long grey hair, a thick mustache and a cheerful face. He had been living in Athens for nearly 30 years when I met him. So much so that I had the feeling that, when he spoke in Arabic, he had an imperceptible Greek accent or tone. He came from a village in the West Bank but his family had fled during the 1948 Nakba; he had grown up in one of Jordan's Palestinian camps. He had come to Greece quite young, he went to university in Athens and also served in the Greek army. He told me his story, which sounded more like a mythical family legend: his

great-grandfather was an adventurer, a 'life-seeker', and had four wives in four different continents. One of his wives was a Greek nun and this was one of the reasons why Ali had ended up in Greece and had easily obtained a Greek passport. The other reason was, he continues, that the men in his family were craftsmen working with stone for decades and had close relationships with many churches and monasteries around Greece. They supplied them with mosaic art. He now mostly worked as a translator in NGOs providing services in the camps around Greece. He had a lot of experience with camps -he was born in one after all- and knew many of the Arab camp residents that came up to greet him and invite him (and me) for tea at their homes (read containers).

Ali worked as a translator and 'cultural mediator' for a newly established NGO called European Expression, working closely with the state's social work agency in the camp, providing mental health services. I asked him what a cultural mediator did.

> "We provide mediation between the two cultures; communication is not simply about translating. You need to have a deep understanding of people's culture, habits and beliefs to avoid insulting them. Many conflicts are avoided by our mediation. But also it is a fancy way to express what we do here, it's not reflected in our salary, let me tell you", he tells me with a sigh.

As of the previous week, they had been recounting and registering the camp's population as ordered by the Ministry for Migration Policy. The registration was almost over: they officially had 1,700 residents but unofficially only 1,130. Apparently, this was a standard practice by many managements in camps and many organisations too, as a larger population meant more funding coming in. The people residing in Elaionas and the other camps were entitled to a scarce allowance through a cash-card paid by the UNHCR through DG ECHO funds, the EU department for humanitarian aid and civil protection. However, there was also

still catering in the camp provided by the army. The food was notoriously bad so most residents preferred to cook their own food. According to Ali:

> "Previously the camps and the NGOs were overcounting the populations in order to get more funding from the government and the UNHCR. Even the residents themselves found ways to register multiple times in different camps to receive more money through cash cards. But the UNHCR no longer relies on these numbers provided by the camp management and has started doing its own head count".

In one of my subsequent visits to the camp, Ali told me that probably the camp management needed more residents because they had not managed to meet the expected quotas, upon which funding is predicated. The instrumentalisation of the numbers of residents by camp managers and NGO coordinators was closely linked to the politics of care and control of the governance logic of Elaionas. Ali told me about the homeless young woman outside the entrance of the camp:

> "I am just really concerned about the way in which they are going about it: the waiting list is not followed nor are they prioritising really needy cases. Did you see the woman at the entrance? She has a newborn baby and they are sleeping rough just next to the camp entrance. She can't get a place here because she has no papers".

She had just come from Chios with a smuggler circumventing the geographical restriction and the fast track border procedure imposed by the EU-Turkey Statement. This meant that she was not officially registered as coming into the country and this deprived her of a spot in a camp or an apartment, despite her vulnerability. In a way she did not exist for the state, as she could not be counted. Therefore, this instrumental use of numbers described above had rendered this woman invisible in the regime's care system despite her vulnerability. This also

hasd implications for those working in camps, as they were often found in a position to ignore such cases. Ali explained that this happened quite often:

> “It is our biggest challenge, I mean ‘we’ the workers here; having to turn away needy people because they don’t have the proper documentation. No official structure will take them; our only option is to advise them to go to one of the squats in the city centre”.

As discussed in section 2.5.2 such competing and mutually dependent state rationales, such as caring and counting, stem from the complexity of the state itself, which, despite the tendency to be viewed as a uniform block, consists of a wide range of agencies with competing priorities and functionalities. Therefore, the efficiency of the state and the exercise of state power often rests on the way that the frontline personnel makes sense of these contradictory imperatives. The resulting perplexion of frontline enforcers sometimes carves out space for the accommodation of unbordering practices: the mother residing in the entrance of the camp, abandoned by the state because she cannot be counted, is advised to seek assistance from the squatters.

Ali introduced me to two more men that first day that would be instrumental for my fieldwork in Elaionas. They both worked for the same NGO: Khojand, an Afghan national that used to work for the American Army in the airport in Kabul and had to flee the Taliban regime threatening to kill him and his whole family unless he helped them in one of their operations; the other man was a Greek-Libyan, his name was Dimitris, he was a tall, muscular man and did not speak to me much. He had the built and the attitude of a military man. His mother was Greek, his father Libyan but he had grown up in Greece and his Greek was impeccable. Many long term migrants, especially those who could speak Greek well, found employment in camps as translators and cultural mediators.

Ali and I went around the camp. I was quite familiar with it because of previous work I had undertaken there. However, the camp had considerably increased its initial size and it was difficult for me to find my way around. Ali took me to the 'Afghan neighbourhood', a section of the camp where most of the residents came from Afghanistan. It was the most appealing and taken care of part of the camp, because those that lived there were aware that they would probably not be able to move on to other EU member-states. The residents explained to me that they had either already received refugee status and subsidiary protection or had actually no hope for a positive decision on their asylum application. In the former case, they would officially be obliged to remain in Greece with very little prospect of finding a job and accommodation of their own. In the latter, they would appeal the first instance decision in order to stretch the time spent in Athens, which meant a couple more years in the camp.

> "Syrians usually don't bother much about their containers because they know they will leave soon. The rest, and especially the Afghans, who have by now understood that they will have to stay in Greece for longer than they thought and probably in the camp for a while, they are more caring of their container homes", Ali explained.

The containers were lined up in rows forming corridors that had house entrances left and right. A meshed cloth originally purposed for olive collection formed the makeshift roof between them and created a corridor of shade, allowing the breeze to cool it down. They were pleasant and meticulously decorated with different kinds of plants and flowers. At the end of one of these corridors, there was a communal garden: courgettes, watermelons and tomatoes were already growing. There was also a barbecue along with some tables and chairs. As Ali showed me around, some of the residents came out and explained to us that they had constructed the roof and the garden themselves, with the help of some Swedish

volunteers. We were invited for tea in one container house. We took off our shoes outside and went in, the place was cosy, one side was turned into a living room with rags and other mantel pieces on the floor which was somehow slightly elevated. It was comfortable while the air conditioning offered a much needed refuge from the summer heat. They offered us tea and some sort of sweet bread. It was a mother with her two young daughters and an infant whose name was Athina because she had been born in Athens (Athina in Greek). They had all just received legal status and a refugee passport and the mother was very eager to move out of the camp and into private accommodation but not too far because the children were enrolled into a local school. The only option for this family was the then newly launched refugee housing programme ESTIA. Introduced by the European Commission in late 2017, the programme was aimed for people with a recognised refugee status or subsidiary protection and provided housing in privately owned flats around Athens. It was the only of its kind as all other EU and government housing schemes were meant only for asylum seekers, leaving people with a recognised status with no other choice but to remain in camps or become homeless.

Despite inhabitants' efforts to create some comfort and a home for them and their children, and to improve their quality of life, the reality of the camp outside the home was still harsh. Spatial exclusion, imposed temporariness, waiting and uncertainty, and a lack of space and privacy were some of the discomforts of the camp. On top of this, Elaionas at that moment seemed empty, abandoned and desolate. Many inhabitants with whom I spoke to told me that this sense of desertion was due to the fact that many of the residents did not really live in the camp anymore. They maintained a place there on paper in order to receive money from the cash card and other provisions but actually they lived in rented apartments or squats in the city centre. As a result, the camp resembled destitute and hollow, the opposite from Skaramagas but also from I had come to know from its first days. The feeling

of a lively community that I remembered from the start of its functioning had evaporated. This was also because of the geographical proximity of the camp to the city centre, which made it easily accessible via public transport, both the underground and the bus. This meant that many of the residents most probably chose to spend their time out of the camp and at the city centre. The camp's location also allowed people to find and maintain jobs, so during the day time, some people were absent because they went to work. Some activities were organised from time to time by volunteers mostly with the children but that did not seem to be enough to create a welcoming feeling and a sense of community any more.

4.4.2. Elaionas: From olive grove to marginalisation

Elaionas is a West Athenian district. In Greek its name means olive grove because, since the ancient times and up until the first half of the 20th century, the whole area was covered with olive trees. Today, however, Elaionas is a declining semi-urban ex-industrial zone and one of the most impoverished and deprived neighbourhoods of Athens. In the 1920s and 1930s, as the Athenian population grew dramatically, the urbanisation of the West semi-urban zones of Athens went quite rapidly. These were the areas where most of the newly arrived refugees from Turkey settled in the years following the defeat of the Greek army in the 1922 war with Turkey. Elaionas in particular, and mostly following the end of the civil war in the 1950s, was where many industrial units were founded. Its geographical proximity to the city of Athens and the port of Piraeus but also its easy access to the two most important highways of Greece -the one that connects Athens with the Peloponnese peninsula and the West of Greece, and the other connecting the capital with the Northeastern part of the country- made it ideal for many industries but also for logistics companies. Today it is mostly the remnants of this buzzing époque that still stand: large abandoned warehouses, junk yards, roads severely run down by decades of heavy usage and poor maintenance, trucks coming and going

raising dust, rusty scrap metals, rubbish and industrial waste set the scene along the 1 km separating the camp of Elaionas from the namesake underground station.

Elaionas was the first reception and accommodation centre to open in Athens in August 2015 as a temporary solution for the housing of vulnerable cases and those eligible for relocation under the European Commission's Emergency Relocation Scheme or family reunification under the Dublin Regulation. During my fieldwork, three years later, it had expanded to an area threefold its initial size and had a capacity of 2,000 people. The whole area was covered with white pebble, which was better than dirt or cement but still created a rather uncomfortable atmosphere: reflecting the sun, it made the whole place painfully bright even for someone wearing shades; then there was the dust from the pebbles, it wafted and clang on your clothes, shoes and on your skin; even hours after leaving the camp, you could still feel it in your mouth and your nose. There was very little vegetation around, the sun was scorching, even in the shadow it was too hot, and the whole place was rather unpleasant and uninviting, just like the surrounding area.

The entrance of the camp was located on its northeastern corner, right opposite a logistics company, heavy duty lorries coming in and out of the warehouse all the time during the day. The campsite was surrounded by this type of industrial buildings, some still running, some disused. Standing in front of the metal sliding entrance door and peeking over the wall, one could easily spot the abandoned warehouse buildings with broken windows standing behind and around the site. Moving passed the police cubicle and on the left-hand side there was a shaded area with two containers that housed the reception of the camp. All those arriving looking for accommodation first had to pass through there to register, get interviewed and assessed in order to then get allocated to a container house. People waiting with their belongings there were not an uncommon site in this area of the camp. Opposite the

reception, there were the offices of the Greek Asylum Service, the UNHCR, as well as other NGOs such as Praxis and the Red Cross. They all used containers as their offices.

The south side of the camp, which was the newest part, featured a brand new football field. This section often featured on TV reports and photo essays from the visits of officials and representatives of the state agencies, other EU member-states and the European Commission. Because of its location and its relatively decent conditions, most official visitors were brought and were toured around in this camp and in particular in this side. Around the football field, containers were lined up neatly. All containers were equipped with bunk beds, toilets with shower, kitchenette, sewage systems, running hot water and air conditioning units. Most of them in this side of the camp had their windows and doorways decorated with flowers and plants, while handmade curtains provided privacy to the inside of the container. This was the Afghan neighbourhood mentioned above, where mostly families resided. On the contrary, in the west side of the camp, which housed mostly single men, the landscape was very different. There were no shaded corridors between the containers and no plants nor communal gardens, while rubbish on the white-pebbled allays was a usual sight. Dirty couches and old armchairs outside the containers were also part of the scene there, loud rap music was often heard from the speakers and one could only see men hang out smoking shishas.

Somewhat centrally in the camp, there were two large, spacious canopies: one was a children's area and the other the communal space. The children's area housed most of the activities that were dedicated to children: puppeteer shows, drawing workshops, classes, and clown theatre among others, were organised there mostly by external to the camp groups, and mostly from Northern Europe, who regularly volunteered in the camp. The other canopy which housed the communal area was filled with plastic tables and chairs. Residents used it regularly to play backgammon and chess, while many nights there was live music by the

residents. Between the two canopies, Project Elea had set up their offices and a charming construction: a couple of makeshift long colourful tables and chairs made out of palettes and a large wooden construction provided shade from the blistering sun. Project Elea was a Cypriot-British volunteer group that aimed at engaging the camp community in creative activities including storytelling, yoga, arts, crafts and dance workshops depending on the skills of the volunteers that were involved at any given time. There were also language courses for adults, mostly German classes for those that had been accepted for family reunification in Germany.

The camp was supervised by the Greek Ministry for Migration Policy, while the camp security and order maintenance was tasked to the Greek police and the army. In the beginning, social, health and educational services were mostly provided by NGOs and volunteer groups but, as of 2017, the state had started to gradually take up these responsibilities: KEELPNO, the state organisation for the prevention of the spreading of diseases, was responsible for health services, children went to the local school by buses provided by the IOM, the Social Work Agency provided residents with mental health and social services.

The camp of Elaionas functioned under a logic of intensified and centralised care, through the provision of interim hospitality. Research on humanitarian spaces at the border has long now demonstrated the different ways in which care and control are intertwined and mutually reinforcing (Pallister-Wilkins 2018; Malkki 1996; Papada et al. 2019). In the case of Elaionas, the provision of care by the state presupposed and depended on the ability to see, count and control the population that inhabited the camp. There, but also in most border spaces, humanitarian actors were increasingly involved in the enforcement of the border (Cuttita 2017; Pallister-Wilkins 2015) as the systematic exclusion of those without the proper documentation illustrates. The residents of Elaionas could be provided with care because

they could be counted. On the contrary, the mother with the newborn child outside Elaionas could not be counted, she eluded the state's control and was, thus, excluded from care. Those that were called to enforce this exclusion were not border guards nor the police but rather it was personnel tasked with providing care work and other humanitarian assistance.

4.5. Governing camp time: Two different state logics

'*The exception confirms the rule':* studying and thinking about camps is in a way evocative of this unscientific and counter-intuitive popular saying. What this phrase alerts us to is that the presence of an exception allows us to infer the existence of a rule. In this sense, it really resonates with the way in which Diken and Laustsen (2006) analyse the myth of the founding of Rome by Romulus and Rome (p. 443):

> *"the myth shows that the constitution of the city (Romulus) and the transgression of its limits (Remus) are bound together they are the twin faces of the same relation: No law without transgression, no rule without exception. This is also to say that the law itself is based on an inherent transgression."*

The camp is an exception in this sense: it is this constitutive exception, the archetypical transgression that founds the rule of law. In the city, the camp territorialises this inherent exception, foundational not so much of the rule of law but rather of governability. In our case, in post-crisis Athens, the camp territorialised and, consequently, came to symbolise the exceptional moment of the multiple crises experienced by the city at the time. As such, it became a proxy for all sorts of politics and conflicts at the urban but also at the national level: if the camp was governed then the city was also governed and it was safe. Otherwise, the disorder of the camp might spill over and overtake the city too.

The two camps described above grounded the 2015 border crisis in the city, made the emergency (appear) governable. Its governance was made possible through the control and administration of the time spent there, which in essence negated residents control over their time. As I discuss in more detail in chapter seven, these camps, representing two distinct governance strategies, instantiated EU's border regime during the period in question. The aim was to govern the emergency by literally grounding it, and by creating new spaces of government that extended time, time needed to process the newly arrived, those that were now trapped within the Greek territory. Usurping and appropriating migrants' time is yet another form of bordering. As extensively discussed in chapter two, most bordering practices are meant to control the time spent crossing a border (Andersson 2014) and to subjugate through the imposition of waiting (Griffiths et al. 2013).

In this sense, the camp geographies in Athens reveal something important about the logic of the state in that particular moment: rather than a way to spatially manage the newcomers in the city with their prospective integration in mind, these camps aimed to temporally manage the processing of these populations by administering time spent there. As transit through Greece became slower, almost coming to a halt at times, camps created the necessary spaces in which people could survive as they waited. As Isin and Rygiel (2007) put it, "*[t]hrough internment, political subjects with legal status are turned into those "who have not the rights that they have", a necessary first step in order to be able to strip away this status, thereby turning these political subjects into abjects"* (p. 189).

While they were situated at the outskirts of the city, the camp of Skaramagas and of Elaionas still lied very much within the urban fabric; children -at least in theory- could go to the same schools as local children; the sick too would be treated in the local hospitals; everyone could commute using the metro and the bus lines to the city centre to work, to go shopping or to visit the Asylum Service for their interview. Both camps were located in areas

without other residential populations and so, on the one hand, the potential for reactions was minimal, and, on the other, the residents reactivated public spaces around the camps. Visiting those camps, one got more a sense of normality than exceptionality; of community rather than of abandonment; of politics of everyday life rather than desubjectification. These camps were strategically placed in areas adjacent to the city, areas that had traditionally or were still *of use* to the city: the port, the warehouse, the shipyard. People were placed there, waiting for their status to be decided upon. Rather than spaces of abandonment, these camps were a biopolitical instrument in that they governed this population separately from the rest; far enough so as not to be entirely visible, but close enough so as to be potentially *of use,* should their status make them worthy of inclusion; decent enough so that people don't revolt but still only with the basic provisions so that residents are pushed to make a living. However, in this condition of suspension, everyday life still happened, subjects were produced, struggles formed and feelings of home and belonging were built.

Ramadan (2010) has shown this all too well. He examines the Palestinian Nahr Al-Barid camp in North Lebanon and the Rashidiyya camp in the South and argues that camps are social, cultural and political spaces for Palestinians in exile. While many scholars, following Agamben, have theorised the camp as an abject space, Ramadan views the camp as a meaningful place which is imbued with material and imaginative importance through years of inhabitation and place-making. He achieves this by viewing them through the prism of loss, that is by examining what was lost for the 35,000 people that lived in Nahr Al-Barid when it was destroyed by the war in 2007. He shows "*how the camps draws meaning from a particular Palestinian time-space, which emphasises displacement and transience, while at the same time becoming meaningful places in themselves*" (p. 50). Interestingly, the residents of the two camps he examines had very different attitudes towards the camps: the residents of Rashidiyya reported negatively on their life there while those from Nahr Al-Barid

the opposite. Ramadan explains this through the destruction of the latter, that "*laid bare the importance of the camps as a refuge for Palestinian existence in Lebanon*" (p. 54). Not only did the camp allow them to keep living collectively in a Palestinian society but also its destruction was experienced as a repetition of the 1948 Nakba, the destruction of their second or temporary homeland.

Similarly, Sigona (2015) introduces the concept of 'campzeship' in order to de-exceptionalise the camp. Drawing on his 10 year old empirical research experience with Roma people residing in camps in Venice and Florence, he, on the one hand, emphasises the importance of the camp for understanding Roma's relation to the state and, on the other, explores the everyday experiences of camp residents by focusing on their processes of adaptation and adjustment. He aims to conceptualise the camp as a space of and for politics. His concept of campzenship captures:

> *"the specific and situated form of membership produced in and by the camps, the complex and ambivalent relationship of its inhabitants with the camps and the ways the camp shapes the relationship of its inhabitants with the state and their capacity and modes of being political" (p. 1).*

The imposed temporariness and proximity as a lived experience for people in camps in terms of their stay in Greece is a product of the camp geographies described in this chapter. Residents in the camps of Elaionas and in Skaramagas always thought of their situation as temporary even after having been stuck there for years. Yet this oftentimes came in stark contrast with their everyday practices. They created a life for themselves and their families in the camps and in the city; they formed social and personal relations with others inside and outside of the camp; they enacted their politics; they reclaimed control over their time despite being forced to spend it there. In this sense, in the very act of living they created

new meanings and places. Camp residents made a home there and this should be understood in opposition to the state's sole concern which is to simply (ware)house. Home-making is a way in which "p*eople try to gain control over their lives and involves negotiating specific understandings of home, particular regimes of control and assistance, and specific locations and material structures*" (Brun and Fábos 2015, p. 14)

The camp of Skaramagas was characterised by an abandonment logic that was enforced through the withdrawal of care and was embodied in those that were left behind, both workers and residents. In the face of this abandonment, however, the residents of the camp devised their own strategies of survival, ways of making a livelihood, creating a temporary home for them, their families and forming communities. This collective and autonomous constitution of their living conditions was a subversion of the power relations that were enforced on them through containment in camps and service provision by charities under the close supervision and control of the state. They contested their exclusion by repurposing the materiality of the camp and by appropriating the (often discarded) materiality of the city and regaining control over their time. Elaionas, in turn, represents an opposite governance logic, in which abandonment was not manifested through the withdrawal of care but through its intensification. Care provision presupposes a population that is known, in its size and needs. Therefore, first the target population needs to be rendered legible. In the case of Elaionas, people existed only when they could be counted. The instrumentalisation of counting rendered certain people invisible. In this sense, abandonment can cohabitate with and can even be accomplished by the intense provision of care work.

This chapter empirically demonstrates how certain decisions, irrespectively of where they spatialise, can enforce or contest the border and that the logics and rationales that inform these (un)bordering practices are not necessarily place-specific. Finally, it draws attention to the border as the attempt to govern through appropriation migrant time and,

subsequently, to subversion as a way to gain back control over time, in particular when there is little control over space.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter examined two camps in Athens, the one in Skaramagas and the one in Elaionas. Both camps were set up in locations that city and state authorities deemed appropriate and suitable for the newcomers. These were semi-urban, non-residential, peripheral zones where residents could be partially included while remaining largely invisible to the rest of the urban population. The chapter argues that these camps are part of the geographies of internalisation of EU's border regime and territorialised the crisis in the city, to make it (look) governable and attempt to govern their residents through administering time spent there. In this sense, the camp becomes a technology of control aimed at the temporal management of newcomers. Through the withdrawal (Skaramagas) or intensification (Elaionas) of care, the camp attempts to abandon and to exclude. But at the same time, everyday politics happens there, so do practices that re-appropriate time and material, subverting power relations and contesting exclusion. Residents carve out spaces of their own inside and around the camps but also make themselves visible by being in and inhabiting the city.

A different kind of response to the above described camp logics was attempted in the city by migrants, local and international solidarity initiatives, who occupied empty and abandoned buildings in and around the city centre. The claim was that social inclusion presupposed and depended on the spatial inclusion of newcomers in the urban fabric and that migrant struggles were part and parcel of the anti-capitalist movement. The next chapter examines such efforts to spatially include the newcomers into the city, looking at the squatted

buildings housing migrants. It argues that the squat is a space of practiced subversion but it also forms, however inadvertently, part of the border regime too.

5. THE SQUAT

5.1. Introduction

Chapter five is an ethnography of the squats housing migrants in the city of Athens. These were empty and abandoned buildings, usually state owned or of disputed ownership, that were occupied for housing purposes between 2016 and 2019. All these buildings, twelve in total, were located in the urban fabric, in and around the city centre and were squatted by an assemblage of radical left, communist and anarchist political groups, but also stranded migrants following the closure of the border between Greece and Macedonia in March 2016. According to Moving Europe (2016), the squats in Athens housed about 1,500 people. The aim of these mass occupations was twofold: on the one hand, to respond to the reception crisis and humanitarian emergency by accommodating trapped migrants; on the other, to provide a discursive and a practical alternative to the state's solution of camps that also cropped up around the city during the same period. The main argument of this chapter is that, as the border becomes domesticated and entrenched into everyday spaces, it creates new encounters between enforcement authorities, migrants and activists. These in turn give rise to new contestations of EU's hierarchised mobility and border regimes, on the one side; however, on the other, they entangle activists into border governmentality. This chapter documents the ways in which bureaucratic rationalities, logics of governance and bordering practices awkwardly and inadvertently resulted from the proclaimed aim of activists in Athens to challenge and resist the state's anti-migrant policies. This is particularly important because, as William Walters explains (2015, p. 6):

> *"if power is not a property of institutions so much as a circulation of practices, techniques and subjectivities that can be captured and put to use in particular*

programmes but never ultimately owned, if this is the case then we need to be attentive to the ways in which practices of governing are often brought into being in the context of campaigns of contestation and dissent. But are they opposing border policies?"

I would, therefore, like to draw attention to such emerging practices and logics and the ways in which these materialised in the squats in Athens. The chapter draws on my fieldwork experience and participation there as part of the reception and education team from March 2017 to April 2018. The first three sections provide an outline of the political project, the physical space, and the history and politics of the neighbourhood. Then the chapter analyses how principles of collective living and politicisation through practice informed the politics of every day of the squatters. Finally, it documents the ways in which bordering practices emerged from within the self-organisation of the squatters, masking as rational decision-making and efficiency and how forms of domination resulted from the will of the squatters to help. I argue that practices, and the rationales that guide them, are not place-specific and, therefore, I draw attention to encountering. However, there are certain practices that are better than others at avoiding the co-option by border logics and these usually emanate from rationales that disrupt power relations from the outset.

5.2. From hospitality to solidarity

The Refugee Accommodation and Solidarity Space was one of the largest and most popular of the twelve squats housing migrants in Athens. Situated just off Victoria Square, a long-standing meeting place for migrants but also a contested urban public space, the seven-story building housed about 400 squatters, migrant, local and international activists. The once three-starred hotel, originally built for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, was

squatted in April 22, 2016 by local communist and anarchist groups and stranded migrants. The project lasted until July 2019, at which point the squatters, following a long process of consultation with collectives and individuals involved, decided to close it down. The hotel management company that had run the hotel before it was occupied, had defaulted on its debts, including the salaries of the 20 plus staff working in the hotel. As a result, the building and its equipment had been caught up in court proceedings for years preventing any commercial use of the property by the owner. Eventually, the court ruled in favour of the hotel's ex-employees: the equipment was to be tendered and the takings would go to them. However, since then, the owner of the building devised various strategies to block the tender that would liquidate the equipment, leaving the hotel disused and the ex-employees unpaid.

The squatters, aware of the dispute over the hotel, occupied the building with the support of the ex-employees. At the time when it was squatted, the building was found in good condition as it had been refurbished recently before the default, but additional maintenance work took place then and throughout the occupation. The material infrastructure and spatiality of the hotel facilitated the reception and decent accommodation of large numbers of people at once: the 126 hotel rooms provided for private housing spaces, each equipped with beds, own toilet, fridge and a small balcony. The infrastructure of hospitality included all the necessary equipment and spaces to meet the immediate needs of such population: a professional kitchen, huge storage spaces and refrigeration units, a restaurant and a bar. The squatters redeployed the infrastructure of conditional and monetised hospitality that is mediated by financial exchange (Fregonese and Ramadan 2015) to offer unconditional solidarity and subvert the relations between guest and host (Raimondi 2019). However, the building was meant for temporary habitation and not for the permanent housing of a stable and large population. The guests were not tourists spending most of their day outside but dwelled in the hotel. Their needs exceeded the possibilities offered by the hotel's

infrastructure, e.g. the preparation of some of their meals by themselves in their rooms. As a result, the electricity grid and the sewage system often fail because of the use of electrical appliances in the rooms, such as cookers and kettles, while the elevator system was never functional.

The reception area was located on the ground floor, a staircase up from the entrance where a security post was set up to monitor the comings and goings on a 24/7 basis. The ground floor was a spacious area, decorated with mirrors and ceiling lights but with very little sunlight coming in. Facing the wide entrance staircase, there was the chest-high reception desk with all the familiar hotel props: room keys neatly organised in numbered pigeon holes on one side, information leaflets thematically ordered on the other: health services, clothes distribution, the programme of classes and activities for children. The difference here was that this material was meant for the stranded and wary migrant instead of the transient and jaunty tourist. From space of leisure to space of refuge, the occupied hotel was a point of reference in the city for its guests.

At the other end of the ground floor, the storage area was located, dark and dump as no sunlight ever made its way in there, and always about 3-4 degrees cooler than the rest of the building. Past the storage room, one flight of stairs led to the first floor which housed all the common areas of the hotel: the restaurant, the bar and the kitchen. This floor was buzzing with activities and commotion most of the day; it was where the squatters, their visitors and supporters passed most of their time and where all sorts of activities took place, from house assemblies to children's entertainment. The remaining six floors of the building were dedicated to the 126 rooms. Outsiders, including journalists, researchers and supporters, were not allowed beyond this first floor; they were always escorted around the building by at least one member of the squatters' collective in an effort to secure the privacy of the residents. However, residents were allowed to have visitors in their rooms; this was

managed by logging them in the logbook of the entrance. All visitors must have left by 23.00 which was when the entrance door was locked.

Three meals were offered every day, prepared and served by the kitchen team, consisting of migrants, locals and internationals in rotating shifts. The building was cleaned three times a day after every meal again by rotating shifts, with general cleaning taking place once every two weeks, usually on Saturdays. A medical clinic providing basic health care operated four hours every day, with the more serious cases channelled to the public healthcare system. The storage provided the residents with the basics (personal hygiene products, cleaning products, baby food, and sometimes treats for the kinds depending on availability) and the kitchen with all the necessary cooking supplies every day. All those residing in the squat worked collectively for free, producing "*hybrid housing spaces and collectively reinvent[ing] a culture of coexistence*" (Tsavdaroglou 2018, p. 378). The subversion of the host - guest relationship was key there as hospitality is entangled with relations of power and control (Raimondi 2019). The whole project depended on donations of products, money and labour locally and from abroad. The squat ran a very successful international fundraising campaign as "The Best Hotel in Europe". These resources were managed by the teams of the reception and the storage, both of which were predominantly made up of local activists. There were also working groups in charge of different aspects of the daily life in the squat, i.e. the Media Centre and Communications working group was responsible for the squat's external communications and media outreach.

The squat was run by an administrative assembly which took place every second week in English with simultaneous translation in Arabic, Farsi and Kurdish. Greek translation was not provided, unless asked for, since Greeks were the least numerous group among the squatters. The assembly was a general meeting which all residents of the building were expected to attend in order to give and receive information and share experiences about the

organisation of their collective life. In addition to this bi-weekly assembly, there were weekly coordination meetings between the different teams and working groups. Finally, open assemblies took place at irregular intervals: these had a clearly political character and very little to do with administering the building. They were open to anyone, non-residents including, and usually addressed wider political issues regarding governmental policies on borders and migration. The place was heavily reliant on social media and digital communications for its daily functioning. On the one hand, the squat's vital communications on a daily basis for the coordination of tasks took place online in various groups (mostly on whatsapp). On the other, the project managed to create a wide network of support and solidarity in Greece and many other European countries, most notably in Germany, but also in the US and Canada, through social media campaigning and fundraising.

5.3. Victoria square: urban blight and contestation

The squat was located just off Victoria Square, 300 metres away from the entrance of the metro station, on the buzzing thoroughfare of Acharnon. The square is a rectangular graduated open space between two thoroughfares; it is circumscribed by benches and larger trees while at its centre there are flower beds and grass lawns. It is surrounded by restaurants and coffee shops. Despite recent contestations over public space in the area and the suffering from urban blight, Victoria Square, the neighbouring quarter of Agios Panteleimonas and the thoroughfare of Acharnon, have always been a lively and diverse urban space. As Greek middle class residents moved away from this part of the centre of Athens in the 1990s, long term residing migrant families moved in purchasing property, apartments, small businesses and shops. Here one can find products and delicacies from all over the world, mostly the Balkans, Middle East, India and Pakistan. Russian mini-markets and Arab coffee shops, Polish, Indian restaurants and falafel stalls, they all seem to have

their own schedule and hours of operation, while different national and religious festivals mark the seasons: Nowruz in the spring, Ramadan in early summer etc.

Victoria Square was named after the queen of Great Britain when she mandated Eptanisa (a complex of seven islands in Northwestern Greece) to the newly established Greek state in 1864 as a gift to her nephew, King George, the then king of Greece. The metro station of the square serves Kipseli, the most densely populated Athenian neighbourhood, but also two of the largest Universities of Athens, the Economic and Business School and the Polytechnic School. The neighbourhood is densely populated and impoverished, and, in the early 2000s and 2010s, it became undesirable through the residential sorting of the 1990s. As long term Greek middle class residents who could afford it left these areas, these inner city neighbourhoods were gradually assigned with negative reputation and high levels of crime, further contributing to feelings of exclusion (Lupton and Power 2002).

Media narratives contributed in painting a grim picture of lawlessness and insecurity for the locals because of the increasing presence of migrants. Extensive pieces on the TV and online media outlets report male prostitution and human trafficking, drug use and thefts drawing mostly on a xenophobic and racialised discourse that portrayed migrants as dangerous elements that have caused the displacement of the locals who can no longer safely enjoy *their* square. As discussed in chapter one, migration policy in Greece has mostly been about highly visible repression, through police raids, targeting migrants in public spaces, rounding them up and checking their papers. Such performances of border control in everyday urban spaces, coupled with exclusionary and racist political discourses and narratives, contributed to the vilification of the area and of migrants. Indicative examples are the main electoral slogan of the conservative party of Nea Dimokratia (ND) ‘We will take back our cities from illegal immigrants” during the 2012 electoral campaign and the

characterisation of migrants as health bombs in the centre by the Ministers of Health and Civil Protection.

These politics (Boukala and Dimitrakopoulou 2016) and geographies (Koutrolikou 2016) of fear, deploying anti-immigrant sentiments to control the population in times of crisis, tainted these areas and mobilised nativist narratives among the residents. On the other side, its proximity to the Athenian neighbourhood of Exarcheia, a notorious and historical hub of autonomous, anti-authoritarian and anarchist politics and struggles (Brekke et al. 2017), turned Victoria Square into a highly contested urban public space and part of the geographies of contention in the city (Vradis 2012). Villa Amalias, one of the city's oldest occupied social centres, stood there for over two decades, until its eviction in December 2012. The eviction followed on the heels of 'Operation Xenios Zeus', a nationwide police operation targeting migrant looking individuals in public spaces that ended with the detention of over 80,000 people (Dalakoglou 2013). This period was marked by the insensification of police repression and crackdown of social movements and heavy-handed policing of the undocumented migrant population of the city.

It was only after the eviction of Villa Amalias that the area, along with the neighbouring borough of Agios Panteleimonas, became briefly a fascist stronghold for some years. Maria, an activist from Athens and member of the local political movement, told me:

> "We abandoned the area, this is how Golden Dawn grew so much and so fast here.
>
> "Of course, the eviction of Villa Amalias played a role but the whole movement withdrew gradually from the wider area, in a particularly critical moment."

She is referring to the events preceding the eviction of the squatted social centre, when a series of pogroms were launched by militant far-right groups against migrants in the area. They were supposed to be the retaliation for the accidental killing of a local resident, a

mugging gone wrong, with which two Afghan youths were charged. The rumour that the perpetrators were "dark-skinned immigrants" became a flagship for far-right groups, who seized the opportunity to unleash their more militant factions: for four consecutive days, they charged from the scene of the crime as ‘indignant citizens’, indiscriminately beating and even stabbing migrants. Despite the mobilisation of anarchists from Villa Amalias and others from the wider political movement to help migrants defend themselves by patrolling and claiming the streets at nights on foot and on motorbikes, the pogroms ended with the life of the 21-year-old Alim Abdul Manan from Bangladesh on May 12, 2011 (Fekete 2011).

With the movement withdrawn, as Maria explained, and weakened through police repression, the wider area of Victoria and Agios Panteleimonas had, by 2014, become synonymous with racism and xenophobia; fascism found the perfect ground for its consolidated and territorialised expression. As a response, in November 2014, the anti-fascist movement, made up of anarchists, communists and autonomous activists, challenged this territorialised expression of fascism by opening a new social centre in Agios Panteleimonas. Distomo, named after a village 160 km Northwest of Athens that was massacred by the Nazi troops in 1944, became the centre of the new anti-fascist struggle in the area aiming to create an anti-fascist zone. In the following years, six migrant squats in the area joined the struggle, actively claiming space in the city and the right of migrants to inhabit it, putting also forward a paradigm of collective living based on the politics of everyday life. These new squats came at the time of the mass arrivals of 2015-2016 and emerged from within the local movement as a response to the housing needs of the newcomers. At that time, Victoria Square was where many of them found temporary refuge, sleeping rough while several NGOs took over the square to provide them with their services (Vradis 2016).

Various local political groups, migrants and international activists assembled to intervene in the crisis and the unfolding humanitarian emergency as mentioned in this

chapter's introduction. Responding initially to the informal and autonomous settlement of about 800 migrants in the nearby park of Pedion Areos in July 2015, the local movement came together to respond to their needs: healthcare, food supplies, clothing and a campaign promoting the visibility of their struggle were run on principles of solidarity, anti-hierarchy and self-organisation. In September 2015, the first abandoned building was occupied in Notara street, in Exarcheia to house transiting migrants. By the spring of 2016, with the increasing number of migrants arriving to Athens and especially following the closing of the border between Greece and Macedonian in March 2016, a series of squats cropped up in the urban landscape: Themistokleous 58 and 96, Hotel Oniro, Kaniggos 22 and the 5th School in Exarcheia; the 2nd School, to name but a few.

The wider area of Exarcheia and Victoria Square, a range of no more than a square kilometre, came alive, following the contestation from below that had dispersed in the city the previous decade as a response to austerity. From survival tactics at the neighbourhood level to viable alternatives to austerity emerging out of solidarity networks (Rakopoulos 2014), social movements in Athens flourished in the period previous to the 2015 crisis. They practised a solidarity from below, contesting top-down practices of charity and countering at the same time the politics of fear that were incited by nativist narratives. In these urban solidarity spaces (Arampatzi 2017) new encounters took place, new bonds were formed giving rise to new forms of collective organising and struggle (Stavrides 2014). It was out of these practices, narratives and spatialities that the migrant squatting movement emerged and dispersed.

5.4. The squatted reception

The reception team consisted of 10 people, mostly local squatters. It was considered as one of the most privileged but also demanding posts in the squat. On top of the bulk of the daily

administrative and coordination tasks and problem-solving that came with running such a massive building on a daily basis, the reception team was in charge of: (a) room intake, distribution and changes; (b) cleaning and kitchen shifts (and their enforcement); and (c) helping resident migrants navigate the Greek bureaucracy (booking appointments in public hospitals, advise on asylum applications procedures etc). One of the most challenging aspects of working in the reception was the lack of a common language among the residents of the building. Many of the residents did not speak or understand English and it was not always possible to find an interpreter -oddly enough this role was very often taken up by children as young as ten years old. The reception was often called to break up fights and resolve stand-offs between the squat's rowdy children, as well as disputes between residents about rooms or shifts, even personal grievances. It was also responsible for all the keys of the hotel, both to the rooms and the common areas.

5.4.1. Room intake, distribution and changes

When new people arrived, the reception team was the first point of contact. Newcomers went through an induction process with a member of the reception team that explained how the building was run and broke down the political principles based on which the squat operated. Following the induction, newcomers were shown around the building and were finally set up in their allocated room; they were given bed linen and towels; a yellow card for the entrance and a food card with which they could get three free meals a day; a file was opened for them by the storage team to log the supply of products for each room.

It was the reception team that decided who was to receive a room in the squat. The subtly agreed policy during the first year had been to prioritise families. This had been based on the assumption that this was the most needy and vulnerable category of migrants. But it was not long before the hotel became overcrowded and bustling with commotion caused by

the numerous restless and unruly children. As there was a significant exodus of families sometime in March and April 2017[8], there was the opportunity to change this informal policy in order to decongest and quiet down the building. Dimitris explains:

> "We talked about it a lot and we decided to change who we'd prioritise. We also made it quite explicit this time; there was a need to somehow make the project more inclusive. So, yeah, more people with skills were needed, so we were on the lookout for who could contribute. For example, people who could help with translations, with technical skills or skills that could be of benefit to the project. Also people with political backgrounds who could from the outset understand what the project is about".

Finally, there was also a strict policy of avoiding to admit new people when they showed up at the squat's door. With very few exceptions, those showing up at the squat's doorstep had to register in the waiting list and wait to be contacted. The rationale behind this, according to the squatters, was to prevent people from using their physical presence to pressure to get accommodation faster. This had resulted in long queues outside the building in the past and had been disruptive for the squat and the neighbourhood. However, the waiting list was also a crucial tool for those that, at any given point, were in charge of the security shift at the entrance. It created a much needed distance between decision-making and these 'front-line enforcers' and it provided an ethical and emotional buffer space and justification for turning people away. Tim, a German medical student, who has come to help out in the squat, once told me about his experience doing security shifts:

> "the only way that helps when you have to turn people away, and there are so many in any given shift, is the waiting list. Somehow, they also are more understanding

[8] This was due to the completion of one year since the closure of the Greek-Macedonian border and the EU-Turkey Statement, which marks the full institutionalisation of mobility in that border space. The resulting regime has meant that everyone now has to register with the authorities and has forced people to claim asylum *en masse*, bottlenecking the country's –already underperforming- asylum system. Subsequently in March 2017 many of these asylum applications had been processed along with applications for reunification and relocation and as a result, many people moved around during that period.

> when they see that it is not in my hands, that there is nothing I can do. It's like I transfer my responsibility to someone else, to a higher authority. I guess there is a contradiction there. I don't believe in leaders and hierarchies but, really, in this case, it's the only thing that helps me get by in these situations".

There was an additional interesting function of the waiting list: while it was meant to ensure that the principle of first-come-first-served was applied, it was often treated like a pool of people in need. For example, I was once asked to compile a shortlist of single mothers but not in order for them to be housed in the squat. It was rather to recommend them to nearby NGO accommodation places where we knew there were vacancies. Finally, whoever made an entry into the waiting list, was expected to add comments, such as the level of urgency in housing someone or any special circumstances that applied in their case, but also any other particular reason that they should be given priority. In this sense, the waiting list categorised and labelled people according to their needs and skills, or their perception thereof. This is also what allowed for changes and adaptations in the policy with regards to who was to be prioritised. Tim again seems to be sceptical about this:

> "I understand that it's important to have people that are qualified, like a doctor, no? Then I wouldn't have to come from Germany to work in the clinic; not that I don't enjoy it but it's always better when people can help themselves. It just makes me uncomfortable having to think about people that are in need of a place to crash in this way. If I spot a doctor that needs a room, I am supposed to log that into the waiting list; it feels odd but I do it; I guess I get it, we need doctors and electricians."

Tim's reluctance towards and problematisation of his role with regards to the waiting list was not uncommon among my participants and is a recurring theme throughout this

chapter as it concerns many different aspects of the daily practices of the squatters. This discomfort was especially true for those coming from anarchist and anti-authoritarian political backgrounds. These concerns, as I argue in more detail in section 5.5, are directly related to the contradictions and challenges emanating from the involvement of activists into the administration of the lives of stranded migrants.

5.4.2. Cleaning and kitchen shifts

A fixed rotation system regulated the shifts of the migrants residing in the building for the preparation of the meals in the kitchen and the cleaning of the common areas of the building after each meal. In this system, different rooms were responsible for different shifts, for example cleaning, preparing meals etc., on different days and times of the week. Regarding the kitchen and food preparation, the shifts were there to assist the chefs. These were usually migrants who had relevant professional experience in the past and offered their services for free as a contribution to the project. The shift schedule could be slightly altered if there were room changes, if new people arrived, and rooms were reshuffled. In turn, international squatters were also expected to also sign up for at least one shift in the kitchen on a voluntary basis. Finally, there was a penalty system in place for those that regularly failed to show up for their shifts: the system eventually led to expulsion from the building if said behaviour continued after several warnings. This was rarely enforced but was the cause of many strifes, infighting and complaints.

Dimitris, a 35 year old local squatter, and one of the most active members of the reception team, told me:

> “I am not sure whether the squat principles are fully comprehended but we try to do this through practice. Everyone must participate in cleaning and preparing food but also to attend the assemblies. We thought that, in this way, we wouldn’t have to

indoctrinate people into our political practices. And there have been cases that we had to ask people to leave for not complying with their duties or for breaking other rules. It always feels aggressive and imposing but there is no alternative, people don't always pull their weight in these situations."

He refers to the squat's politics of everyday life, which informed what the squatters' called participatory organisation of the collective life. This was the foundation upon which were built relations of solidarity and a sense of community among people that had nothing in common apart from being on the move. The collective experience of everyday life enabled meaningful encounters (Allport 1954) in the squat, as people felt that they were working towards common goals. The literature on meaningful encounters reveals that, challenging stereotypes is about much more than throwing people together (Valentine 2008). Thinkers on proximity and morality have tended to equate physical proximity with intimacy and morality, and distance with estrangement, ultimately understanding the moral challenge as a challenge of geography (Massey, 2005; Sennett 2001).

Similarly, contact theorists, drawing mostly on psychology, criminology and sociology, investigate the ways in which contact can improve relations in conflictual situations, mostly between ethnic and social groups (Allport 1954; Askins and Pain 2011). However, physical proximity and daily interaction do not necessarily lead to moral engagement, meaningful proximity and closeness. On the contrary, many encounters, even repeated and sustained ones, might leave values and attitudes "*unmoved and even hardened*" (Valentine 2008, p. 325) and do not necessarily reduce prejudice. In fact, diverse communities physically sharing the same geographical space in mundane everyday urban settings, sharing shops, streets and schools, may very well still foster hostility and prejudice towards minorities (Dwyer and Bressey 2008). As Reader (2003) explains, a meaningful encounter involves *"the*

intertwinement of a bit of life" (p. 372) because this is what generates moral obligations between people.

According to social psychologist Gordon Allport (1954), there are a number of conditions that enable meaningful encounters and reduce prejudice bringing people closer. His 'contact hypothesis' argues that shared space can promote social integration. However, these encounters need to be equal and free from superordinate-subordinate relationships, cooperative, and finally to have an institutional framework. On a renewed take of Allport and contact theory, Askins and Pain (2011) investigate the potential and transformative effect of what Pratt (1992) has called contact zones. In their participatory action research with young people of African and British heritage in North East England, they stress the importance of materiality (art) and participation in order for a space to be transformative. Contact zones are social spaces where different groups come together and interact: in these spaces "*subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other*" (Pratt 1992 p. 7). Torre et al. (2008) further investigate the ways in which contact zones can allow subjects to analyse and work through power inequalities.

Along similar lines of thought, this collective administrative system was put in place in the squat in an effort to ensure the minimum equal participation to the project, challenging power asymmetries and creating a sense of community and common goals. As migrant squatters came from a variety of political, cultural, religious and class backgrounds, this was imagined as a way to implement in practice the political principles of self-organisation and gender equality without having "to indoctrinate people", in the words of Dimitris. It was thought that sharing the reproductive work would subvert the traditional gendered distribution of work among the residents. While this was true for the collective life in the squat, gender norms and roles remained rather unchallenged in the private sphere of the rooms in the squat, as women were still expected to do the bulk of the reproductive work there. Finally, as

I will explain in more detail in the following sections, this system was also the source of discontent among different groups in the squat, who felt overworked and disenfranchised.

5.4.3. Navigating Greek bureaucracy: hospitals and schools

The reception was the place where migrant squatters went to get assistance with regard to Greek bureaucracy. Just like the tourist resorts to the reception in relation to the world outside the hotel, so did the migrant squatters, a different "hosted" and transient body (Minca and Ong 2016). The reception team helped with their asylum claims, interview preparations and other related paperwork; it booked appointments in public services –mostly hospitals when the squat's medical clinic could not help; it took on twice a year the enrollment of the children to local public schools. In Greece everyone is entitled to free health care as long as they have an AMKA (which is the equivalent of the National Insurance Number). Most of the migrants already had this number and were well versed with how hospitals worked. Some had also managed to secure employment as the demand for Farsi and Arabic translators in camps, and they were required to open a bank account. Due to the capital controls that had then been in place since July 2015 banning the opening of new bank accounts in the country, a great deal of paperwork was required in order for someone to open one.

In this sense, the space as a migrant squat was implicated in the broader border regime. The 'hosted' bodies were not tourists but homeless migrants, who needed refuge and care, which were caught up and entangled with control and discipline. Minca and Ong (2016), looking at the repeated repurposing of the Lloyd Hotel in Amsterdam from a transshipment hotel, to emergency refugee camp, to detention centre and finally to a heritage hotel, warn us of these entanglements. They interrogate the relationship between hospitality, power and control that seems to be embedded in the spatialities and materialities of hospitality, making them so amenable to such repurposings. The authors urge us to consider

the "*entanglements with broader networks of power and geography that make those institutions work*" (p. 44).

Around May 2017, with the school year coming to an end, there was an urgent need to enroll the squat's children to school for the following academic year. This was not an easy task for the reception and education team. Chapter six will examine in detail the case of the schools, the experience of enrollments and the bureaucratic borderwork. For the purposes of this chapter I will only document the challenges faced by the squatters during this task. The first challenge, according to those from the reception and education team I spoke to, was to find out how many school-aged children lived in the building, their exact age (which in many cases was not straightforward) and education level. Determining and proving the age and education level of children that are on the move is a cumbersome task as the migratory journey often forces families to move between different countries and education systems while leaving others excluded altogether. For this reason, the education team conducted a survey to document and register all school-aged children residing in the squat. This involved, as Dimitris explains below, going floor by floor, knocking on doors and making lists of children, their age, legal status, and educational level. In a sense, the population of school aged children living in the hotel needed to be counted and accounted for before any further action was to be taken. The population needed to be rendered visible and legible. Dimitris, who was also part of this process, seems to be quite aware of what this operation entailed. :

> "I felt like a public servant conducting a census; some of the information we asked was also quite useless in my eyes. But not until I had to ask these questions, standing there in front of someone's room door, usually a startled woman hastily trying to put on her headscarf while answering our questions. When we prepared the questionnaire it somehow felt quite straightforward to ask -say- for someone's legal status".

The second challenge was informing the parents and countering their hesitations with regards to enrolling their children to the Greek public education system. One of their most stated concerns was that enrolling their children to school would mean that they would be forced to stay in Greece. Another fear had to do with the racism and bullying that other children had endured during the previous academic year, which was widely known among parents. This was a problem often faced by minority children at school: the survey mentioned above conducted by the education team in the squat revealed that one out of three children that were enrolled in the previous academic year had stopped attending school either because they were teased and bullied by their schoolmates or because they were not given the proper and necessary attention by the teachers.

A third challenge had to do with the schools themselves, as I will examine in full detail in the following chapter. There was a lack of willingness on behalf of the schools' administration to accept children from this and from other squats. However, because there was a statutory obligation to enrol lall school-aged children the school directors' strategy was to add bureaucratic hurdles to the process in order to force the families to quit trying. The most common ones were the lack of interpreters during enrollment, lack of the necessary vaccination, lack of a formal residential address (as these children were residing in the squat).

5.5. A bureaucracy in the making?

The reception of a squatted hotel in Athens turned out to be a very bureaucratic place, in the sense that it was often administered through organisational rationales and ordering logics that are usually associated with state, humanitarian and corporate bureaucracy. Resulting bureaucratic practices were informed by logics and discourses of impartiality and

accountability. Yet a closer critical look at these also unravels a certain hierarchisation of knowledges that undergirded them and made them unchallengeable in the eyes of the squatters' collective.

Each shift at the reception logged in the reception diary the most important events that had taken place during their shift and any unresolved tasks that the next shift had to take care of. Usually there was a verbal update too at the time of the shift handover but the diary was one of the first things one had to consult at the start of a shift and one of the last ones before handing it over. The aim here was to accommodate people's needs and solve problems as fast as possible but, most importantly, to foster an environment of trust and respect. If residents needed to come to the reception repeatedly to get their problem resolved, then this would create a habitus of dependence and begging. At the same time, in the absence of such a system, there would be the risk that certain people were helped more quickly than others simply by being insistent by nature. As this clearly shows, the creation of such bureaucratic practice emerges out the need to be impartial, effective and accountable.

The flip side, however, was that this was achieved through depersonalisation. As Bauman (1989) has demonstrated, bureaucracies remove ethical considerations and personal responsibility from its front-line enforcers. As processes become fragmented into smaller -and often meaningless- tasks, no one feels, on the one hand, personally responsible and, on the other, that they can bring about any change as decision making takes places elsewhere. A self-organised squat is no different: as decision making emanates from its assembly and collective procedures, any single individual must subject themselves to these collective decisions. Additionally, contrary to what one might expect, Nick Gill (2016), examining the apparent 'moral indifference' in the British Asylum Management bureaucracy, found that it is not an emotion free environment. Quite to the contrary, care can indeed be an integral part of it: "*moral indifference in bureaucracies often arises as a result of an*

emotionally conflicted state wherein empathetic compassion is overridden by a variety of other concerns" (p. 137). Finally, research has shown how care and control are intertwined and mutually reinforcing in humanitarian and border spaces (Pallister-Wilkins 2018; Malkki 1996; Papada et al. 2019). This tendency to solve organisational problems through bureaucratic means points to a bureaucracy in the making in the squat. Indeed a bureaucracy that did not always emanate from collective decision making anymore but an internalised version of it was very apparent in the reception. The following account is a case in point: in order to resolve the problem of locating the keys to the common spaces such as the kitchen or the bar, a new system of registering who the last person was to get each key and when appeared out of nowhere. Dimitris explains to me how he came up with a solution:

> "Look, there was a very real problem, people request and get the keys to the common spaces from the reception in order to do their shift or plan an activity and whatnot. But they rarely bring it back to reception. Everyone thinks they are responsible enough to keep the keys or they think they'll just do it later when they come down or go out. But they rarely do! So we are constantly missing keys, they are lost or it takes days to locate them. We explained this many times but nothing changed, maybe for some days but then we were back to the same situation. This is really disruptive, frustrating and counterproductive. So I came up with this log book, it seemed like a good way, even though we now have one more thing to log".

Therefore, the idea to add yet another layer of bureaucracy seemed to have emerged in a very straightforward way as a result of common sense and was accepted as such immediately. My example illustrates Gregory Feldman's (2011) argument regarding bureaucracies and their function which is to create conformity and an interchangeability between the language of "common sense" and technical administration. This is the reason

why bureaucracy is so pervasive, to such an extent that it invades collective organising even in anti-hierarchical political projects like the migrant squat. It is the way that citizens and subjects of states are socialised and conditioned to organise themselves, and it easily emerges when faced with complex organisational problems. However, while often bureaucracies are put in place (claiming) to fight arbitrariness and level the ground, they usually conceal, but also create and proliferate, specific power relations: someone has to enforce it and someone is always at the receiving end of it.

Tim, the German medical student (see 5.4.1), felt uneasy with his role as gatekeeper and filter in the squat, when he was required to monitor and register the skills of the people at the door of the squat. His discomfort was quelled by the mediation of the bureaucracy of the waiting list. But the bureaucratisation of the entrance of the squat additionally achieved the defeat of those trying to get housed there, as it constructed the person in front of them denying them entrance as someone that was not in charge. Therefore, as discussed in chapter two, bureaucratisation provides a moral buffer between the enforcer and the receiving person; it also adds power to that enforcer by distancing them from the actual authority. In this way, bureaucracy masks the border as different types of technical and organisational practices, practices that in the looks of them appear innocent. In that way, bureaucracy, in the name of efficiency, neutrality and fairness, removes the politics from certain decision-making processes. As a result it flattens their social, spatial, ethical and political implications into rational decision making (Hiemstra and Conlon 2017).

But these practices, which I call out as bureaucratic, were not neutral and innocent. The squat's bureaucracy was gradually and incrementally built throughout the three years of its existence. They were founded on and further elaborated through an assemblage of individual and collective set of expertise, experiences and knowledges. These were performed and reified everyday through decision-making protocols and were perceived as

such by the collective body of the squatters. As these knowledges and experiences were personified by certain people, they were subsequently placed high up in the squat's hierarchies. The resulting hierarchisation of knowledges solidified the everyday bureaucratic practices discussed here by rendering opposition to them unthinkable. Tim, while feeling deeply uncomfortable with the filtering mediated by the waiting list, could hardly articulate his discomfort and disagreement. His transience not only placed him lower in the squatters' hierarchical structure, but made him feel uncertain of whether there could even be an alternative way. Such is the commonsensical function of the bureaucracy, making one wonder whether it is nonsensical to disagree.

5.6. Collective living, solidarity and politicisation through practice

The main slogan of the squat was 'We live together, we struggle together' and the space was indeed an embodiment of this motto. Photographs of current and previous residents adorned the walls and hallways, the common spaces, the bar and the dinning room generating a sense of a shared and co-constituted space, as well as a sense of continuity and history that went beyond the walls of the hotel. The building was a hub of international solidarity, political encounters and cultural exchange; a lively, inclusionary housing project, with a very strong sense of community, belonging and home.

However, people can belong or feel excluded and oppressed in several ways and, in this sense, belonging is constructed at the intersection of social categorisations and identities, such as gender, ethnicity, class (Yuval-Davis 2007). Belonging is also a dynamic process that can be analysed in many levels and systems of dominations and power (Yuval-Davis 2006). This means that belonging to the squat's community was also mediated by the constructed identities of the residents and the ensuing norms that shaped their everyday lives, and should, therefore, be viewed through an intersectional lens. It is not my

intention here to offer an exhaustive analysis of belonging in the squat but only to reverberate the diversity of migrant experiences in relation to the sense of belonging and home there as these were forged through collective living and politicisation. I will briefly recount and offer an analysis of how three residents, belonging to different categories, experienced and talked about the sense of home that the squat created for them: a young married woman from Afghanistan, Zarlasht, who is a mother of two and was at some point offered an apartment in the city paid by the UNHCR; a young single man from Iran, Farhad, who lived in the squat for 6 months when I first met him and had also become involved in other squats and initiatives in the local political scene; and finally, Ioanna, a local woman from the core collective, who had no previous ties to the social and political movements in Athens before.

Zarlasht, when recently asked to move out of the hotel since she had an UNHCR paid apartment, told me:

> “it’s like a free daycare here in the squat! I am sure that my children are safe, there is always good people around that I trust to take care of them when I am not around. I can even go out and know that someone takes care of them. The UNHCR gave me an apartment but I don’t like it, I feel lonely, there is no internet and it’s always quiet; my husband can go out but me, I am stuck with the children at home all the time. I really want to come back”.

For Zarlasht, living in the squat meant that she experienced more freedom in her daily life than if she lived within the traditional household relationships and dynamics that she associated with the private apartment. Therefore, for her and other married women, collective living created a new sense of belonging: she now belonged to a community that created more avenues and opportunities for socialisation, but also made it easier for her to exit the home. In the feminist scholarship, home is in opposition to patriarchal ideals and norms and

is indeed understood as a space of collective resistance against oppression (Collins 2002; Young 2005). In this sense, for Zarlasht, living in the squat gave a new meaning to the word ‘home’. And so, being asked to leave the squat and live in an apartment meant going back to the confines of the household and back to a traditional understanding of the home. It was almost as if her belonging to the squat was based on her ‘unbelonging’ (Christensen 2009) to her traditional household organisation.

But also single men seemed to find the squat particularly important for their sense of well-being, as Farhad told me:

> “It is my home, I dont have my family with me, so for me this is the closest thing I have to a family and a home. You know, it is very difficult to travel alone, it’s more dangerous also, but mostly I feel lonely. Here in the hotel I always have someone to talk to and everyone has similar problems: the police, our papers and so on. It’s like living with your friends, you share the good and the bad together.”

The border regime produces archetypes of migrants deserving and undeserving of protection, based on perceived age, gender, race, sexual orientation and nationality. Single migrant men are often constructed as less vulnerable, even at times as dangerous (Bhattacharyya 2008), and are consequently excluded from certain types of state and humanitarian aid. This often creates lonely lifestyles for them, both in transit but also when and where they settle, as Farhad describes. Additionally, such exclusions may lead to a confirmation of those archetypes of undeservingness, as, for example, lack of housing forces them into homelessness, even into petty crime, in order to survive. In this sense, the squat for Farhad was not only a place where he could find company and friendship, a family even. It was also a home where he, through collective living, could potentially find a way out of his stereotypical portrayal as non-vulnerable, or even dangerous. This new sense of belonging

was, in this way, associated with and signalled a break with the potentiality of spiralling down into fulfilling that stereotype.

Finally, Ioanna, who had recently moved back to Athens after studying abroad and had never been involved in politics before, felt very strongly about living in the squat:

> "I am not from Athens, so my family is not here. I do have friends of course but being away for so long, they have moved on, they have their lives, children even. So I was a little bit lost when I returned. Then I found out about the squats, I had no job, so I decided to reach out, see if they needed help. They were happy to have me and so I moved in. Seriously, living inside the hotel has changed the way I understand home, work, leisure, it made it all, and me, political. I never thought that this was possible, I mean, to really *live* your politics. Going about my daily routine is politics, eating breakfast is politics, not having a job but surviving together."

For Ioanna, living in a squat was a novel experience that ultimately transformed her very idea and meaning of home. Similarly to Zarlasht, the collectivisation of everyday life politicised the home for Ioanna. She could now live according to certain political principles and she could do that at home. More than that, the home embodied these politics, it was the fact that she lived there with others that made her daily life political. It was political because she shared it with others creating inclusive and egalitarian spaces; she shared problems and solutions with others on the basis of "*the shared experience of precariousness understood both in terms of an ontological and collective condition generally, as well as in terms of a historically-specific practical and material condition that is unevenly distributed*" (Squire 2018, p. 123).

These three examples illustrate a range of different experiences of belonging and home co-produced through the everyday practices and logics of sharing among the

squatters. Collective living, in this way, even though unevenly experienced, gave rise to a community, contributing to its members' well-being. The shared sense of precariousness described above gave rise to relations of support that transcended boundaries and forced categorisations of people. The ensuing sense of community was ultimately a vector for the politicisation of its members too. In the words of Farhad:

> "This [sharing] makes us stronger. When we organise an event or a demonstration for the rights of refugees it is always full of people. Remember the hunger strike, we all helped the Syrians during the hunger strike even though it wasn't our fight".

Farhad refers to the hunger strike that Syrian asylum seekers, mostly residing in the camp of Skaramagas and in squats, organised in November 2017 to demand the speeding up of the process of family reunification with their relatives in Germany. Despite the fact that these families had been separated for up to two years, and their applications for family reunification to Germany had been processed and approved, they were not being relocated. This common sense of struggle was a component of the squat's identity and emerged from the collectivisation of residents' lives. As Tsavdaroglou (2018) explains in relation to all the squatted buildings in Athens:

> *"[...] the squatted buildings acquire the features of common space. The social relations and the commoning practices of the participants have destabilised and altered the boundaries between private and public, personal and political. The occupied buildings combine elements of collective space and personal space. For this reason, the multitude of participants who 'take the buildings in their hands', passionately and consistently take care and defend them, as if they are their personal space, and simultaneously in collective ways protect them both from state power and the varied and constantly reproducing systems of domination" (p. 389).*

Therefore, as described in the quote, the commoning practices of the squatters, protecting these spaces as if they were their own, were based on a feeling of ownership. This feeling of ownership was born by the politicisation through practice and the politics of everyday life that informed the practices of the squatters. It was particularly important in that it fostered principles of mutual aid and respect that went beyond nationality, gender and sexual orientation, and contested the constant reproduction of systems of separation and domination. This was done and manifested in practice, even when these boundaries were not entirely overcome on a discursive and political level.

In Geography and Urban Studies, the city has been celebrated as the vector of *'throwntogetherness'* (Massey, 2005) and "*a place where people can enter into the experiences and interests of unfamiliar lives... to develop a richer, more complex sense of themselves*" (Sennett 2001). Valentine (2008), however, warns on such a romanticisation of the urban encounter and urges us to look closer at this cosmopolitan turn that either already celebrates or calls for the gradual dissolution of prejudice by the mixing and hybridisation of culture (Young 2002). She draws on empirical research with white majority participants in London, the West Midlands and the southwest, in which "*contact with difference leaves attitudes and values unmoved, and even hardened"* (p. 325). She then explores what a meaningful encounter would look like. She calls for "*an urban politics that addresses inequalities (real and perceived) as well as diversity, and recognizes the need to fuse what are often seen as separate debates about prejudice and respect with questions of social-economic inequalities and power*" (p. 334).

In this sense, it is not always enough to throw people together and expect them to challenge stereotypes, There needs to be something more in place to create the conditions for meaningful encounters. This, I argue, is achieved through a shared sense of struggle and

the self-empowerment that comes from contributing to the collective life. When Farhad stood in solidarity with his Syrian peers despite acknowledging that it was not his struggle, he challenged in practice cultural, ethnic and national boundaries that are not uncommon among migrants of different backgrounds. He was able to do this because it was his friends that were on hunger strike:

> "it's people I know and we live together for months; they were camped in Syntagma, outside the Parliament for days, in the cold and in the rain, without eating; they demanded to go and live with their families in Germany as it is their right to do. I had to help them somehow; I did security shifts at night to protect them from the police and the fascists and everything else that was needed. This is the essence of the place, I think, when you know the other person, you feel the need to help and someday it will be the other way around, I guess."

Farhad's solidarity was formed on the basis of friendship but also on the potential for future reciprocity by those that he had helped. It was ultimately forged around an understanding of a shared precariousness both between migrants of different backgrounds but also between citizens and migrants. As Heath Cabot (2018) explains when studying the slippages between the locals' and migrants' struggles in Athens because of the overlapping crises faced by the country in the period in question, there was "*an increasing confusion of the boundaries between citizenship and alienage in Greece as diverse populations face various forms of precarity*" (p. 3). As everyone was potentially a provider and a recipient of assistance, they belonged to "*a shared continuum of precarity*" (p. 7). In this sense, the boundaries between citizen and non-citizen were destabilsed, allowing for these new solidarities to be formed.

While the collectivisation of people's lives there dampened certain ethnic and national based hostilities and antagonisms, it had no, or at times it had even an aggravating, effect on certain power inequalities and oppressions experienced by others. For example, even though collective living brought Farhad and his Syrians peers closer together, the same did not necessarily happen for other categories of squatters. Power inequalities and asymmetries, as will be discussed in the next sections, persisted and were even accentuated. In this sense, the sense of community was not experienced always and uniformly by all of its members. On the contrary, it depended on social identities such as gender, ethnicity, class and age, and their intersection.

In this sense, it is imperative to consider and analyse the squat's collective living from a gendered and intersectional perspective in order to illuminate the interplay between the different categories of squatters and their lived experiences (Christensen and Jensen 2012), and in particular of female squatters. Since experiences of oppression are usually the "*product of intersecting patterns of racism and sexism*" (Crenshaw 1991, p. 1243), the everyday experience of Maria, a white local female squatter, part of the core collective, was qualitatively different than that of Zarlasht. Maria, because of her position as a local, had more responsibilities and power; this, on the one hand, gave her more confidence to deal with sexism in the squat but also shielded her from it. In a way, her being Greek overshadowed her gender by placing her higher in the hierarchy than migrant male squatters. Zarlasht, on the other hand, even though she could live freer inside the squat than in a private apartment, still experienced oppression because of her gender. This oppression was spatialised in the building. When I asked her why she almost never spent much time in the area of the bar, she told me:

> "It's not that they don't let us but it's that I don't feel comfortable to stay in the bar. I am not used to so many men and I feel that they are watching me, I cannot talk freely.

I will go, I will take a coffee, stay for a bit but I don’t like it. So I prefer to be in my room or with the other women.”

So, certain spaces in the building were gendered and were dominated by male bodies, which made them unwelcoming for other squatters. Other female residents had similar experiences but, ultimately, their exclusion depended mostly on their nationality and race and whether they were perceived as migrant or European. In other words, while certain spaces were gendered, this affected different categories of squatters to a different degree and it impacted on the spatialised behaviour of female migrant squatters more than that of female locals or Europeans.

There is much to be said about the positive effects that living in and being part of such a project has had on people that lived there or were involved in one way or another. Politicisation through practice, a common sense of struggle and challenging stereotypes and identities through coexistence are among these, as I have examined so far, even though an intersectional perspective is imperative. However, I would like also to draw attention to some additional critical insights regarding the migrant squat as a political project and a radical claim for the housing of migrants. In critical research it is quite common to idealise such grassroots initiatives. Most narratives take for granted and at face value the political claims and public discourses of these collectives, without looking at the everyday realities of residents, emerging hierarchies, even racism and sexism. I wish to go beyond such idealisations and try to understand how and why the language and practices of bureaucracy and border-making invade these spaces; spaces that are created to antagonise the state and its exclusionary practices in Greece and in Europe at large. My analysis traces the threads that lead from certain well-meaning rationales to exclusionary practices that no longer contest the state but reproduce power relations at the border.

The next two sections look at discourses, logics and practices that, instead of empowering people, further vulnerabilised them. Creating safe spaces for the 'vulnerables' justified certain exclusionary practices and a hierarchisation within the squatters' collective. In this sense, the autonomy of migrants was potentially in tension with and get compromised by the involvement of non-migrants (Makrygianni 2017) as "*the citizenship status and the strength of social networks create structural differences between migrant and native squatters*" (Dadusc et al. 2019, p. 12). Similarly, the increasing bureaucratisation of the squatters' every day organising and administering of the building described above, reveals striking similarities with the state's rationales about migration management and compounds exclusions and bordering practices put in place to protect the space and the project. Ultimately, I argue that, as care and control get ensnared in such spaces of hospitality and regufe, the squats too inevitably and inescapably became part of the border regime. Squatters got entangled in administering the lives of migrants, sometimes inadvertently reproducing systemic categorisations and systems of vulnerabilisation. I am interested to understand whether there are certain practices that are better than others at avoiding their co-option by border logics.

5.7. The squat as a safe space for vulnerable people

Security was one of the most important and intricate tasks in the organisation and management of the squatted building and was taken very seriously. The entrance was guarded on a 24/7 basis; this was managed through a six-hour shift system to which squatters signed up voluntarily. Everyone was expected to do at least one shift per week and every shift consisted of at least one local person, one international and one migrant. There was also a number of local political groups and student organisations that supported the project by maintaining fixed weekly shifts without living in the building. The security of the

building was always quite strict: no one could come in without explaining their reasons for being there; residents had a yellow card in order to be able to prove that they lived there, while any visitor got logged into the log book and had to leave by 11pm. This comes in stark contrast to the conventional openness of hotels (Fregonese and Ramadan 2015), whose entrances are meant to evoke a sense of welcoming. As one of the most important aspects for the project that could only be guaranteed by the specific organisational structure, which in turn was inevitably tied to the specific people, security was at the centre of the squatters' discourse justifying the sacrifice of more political aspects of the project, such as equality, horizontality, transparency in the name of security.

One of the main arguments for the closing of the squat in the summer of 2018[9] was that the squat was, and should be, a safe space for the people that lived there. The text that the collective released in July 2019 explaining the reasons for closing the squat repeated seven times the imperative for the squat to be a safe space for migrants. Indicatively:

> *"We decided that, despite it being a difficult choice, [it] should rightly close the way it began and operated: as a political project, by protecting the central element which turned it into an example, that is organisation from below, safe and dignified living, community of struggle, and addressed to society as a whole."*[10]

While at first glance this might seem as an innocent and straightforward objective, it raises a number of issues. As the safety and security of the squat was discursively produced as a condition for its function, as a *sine qua non* of its existence, and as something that must be secured by any means possible, this meant that, when it could no longer be secured, the closing down of the squat became inevitable, even to some degree desirable. Desirable because, even though the squat would be gone, the idea and the legacy of the squat as a

[9] The squat eventually held up for another year and closed its doors in July 2019.
[10] https://best-hotel-in-europe.eu/

safe space would, in this way, continue in perpetuity. To put it differently, the project would be remembered as safe and flourishing: “*we did not wish to see the project decline*” write the squatters in their text. In this way, it could be the political legacy of those involved. The inevitability of the closing of the squat was produced by the combination of two factors: the inability of anyone else but the existing assemblage of local groups to keep the squat safe; and the responsibility of the current squatters to keep it safe now and in the collective memory in the future, even after the space itself would be no longer in use. In this sense, the safety of the space became more important that the space itself.

The squat as a safe space, almost immaculate -free from smugglers, drugs etc- a space that was clean and protected from the outside, dangerous and disorderly world is interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was a discursive construct. With this I do not mean that the space was not a safe place but that it was not as safe as it was portrayed to be and that these external threats were not as threatening and violent as they were portrayed. For instance, small scale smuggling -in the form of facilitation- is a quite common practice among stranded migrants, while recreational drug use and alcohol consumption is also widespread. Additionally, one has to ask ‘safe for whom?’. Domestic abuse and other forms of violence were admittedly an everyday experience for squatters. Finally, ensuring the safety and security in such absolute terms entailed certain organisational choices that were contradictory to the political nature of a squat. For instance, the space needed to be guarded 24/7, rules had to apply about who could come in and when, and someone had to enforce them. Most notably someone needed to decide when these rules had been transgressed and what the punishment would be. This kind of policing work was justified by this imperative to keep the squat a safe space for migrants.

According to Sparke and Micthell (2019) the squatters’ understanding of safe was antagonistic to the dominant top-down constructs of migrant safety. For the squatters a safe

space was a set of practices that were “*distinguished by their mix of transnational but also personal and embodied modes of social justice-inspired protection*” (p. 21). However, in this case too, migrant safety disrupted and curtailed migrant agency and was ultimately built on notions of vulnerability. This idea that a squat must primarily be a safe space because it housed vulnerable people is powerful and it is not necessarily self-evident. In addition, it justified many interventions, practices and discourses, ultimately even hierarchies. Squats are political projects that disrupt the concept of private ownership and provide counter-examples of living and organising collectively everyday life. They are practiced examples of a reimagined understanding of home as a place of collective empowerment and cooperation (Ward 2002). They are also an effort to carve out spaces in the city for the marginalised and the dispossessed. Ultimately, as Vasudevan (2017) argues, it is a reimagination of the city itself “*as a space of necessity and refuge, experimentation and resistance*” (p. 9). Squats are a housing practice, a social movement and a set of identities (Vasudevan 2017).

The question of securing the squat against external threats is of course of paramount importance and not novel. Squats face a number of existential threats such as eviction from the police and attacks from fascist groups. What is particular and novel about the way that the issue of security was framed and used in this case is that it was based on the vulnerability of migrants, on the one hand, and their inability, on the other, to safeguard the space on their own. As migrants are particularly vulnerable -the discourse goes- they need to be housed in exceptionally safe spaces; since they are transient they cannot possibly maintain such a safe space in a foreign territory; they don’t know the context and cannot follow the relevant social and political developments, and, ultimately they are not there to stay. As a result, even though resident migrants participated in all the menial jobs in the squat, including security shifts in the entrance, they did not participate in the thought work

behind the organisation and management of the building and the overall project. The use of the vulnerability and transience of migrants for their exclusion from the more meaningful tasks and political aspects of the squat produced, perpetuated and justified certain subtle hierarchies. These 'useful' hierarchies, as one female member of the local collective once put it, further vulnerabilise migrant subjects as they robbed them of their agency and gradually rendered them dependent on the provision of such things as a safe space for them by others. The member of the collective referred to above considered these hierarchies 'useful' because they allowed a certain degree of flexibility and agility in the decision making.

The most powerful expression of such vulnerabilisation is their portrayal -but also quite possibly their actual inability exactly because of this process- as unable to manage the squat on their own. Therefore, this space would be provided to them for as long as the squatters were able and willing to provide it. In other words, rather than enabling and empowering people to manage their own affairs, to lead collective lives and make decisions, ultimately becoming speaking and acting subjects through this collective organising, the squat rendered them unable to do so, at times even increasing their dependency on others. In this sense, there are some uneasy similarities between these two different spaces of reception that have been explored so far, the camp and the squat. But, as Turner (1976) argues, "*when dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contribution to the design, construction or management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being*" (p. 17).

5.8. The squatters' everyday bordering practices

The most straightforward bordering practice is refusing people entrance to the building. While at first glance it seems like an understandable practice for a project like that due to obvious limitations of space and other resources, keeping unwanted people out in order to protect

territories and the resources they enclose is surely one of the main discursive functions of state borders. In the case of the squat in question, the people who were excluded were not (necessarily) unwanted and the lack of space was certainly not only discursive. However, a closer look at the everyday practices aimed to safeguard the squat reveals them as bordering. As chapter two has extensively documented, bordering is a term introduced by border studies thinkers to stress, on the one hand, the practice and process base nature of borderwork and, on the other, its everydayness and quasi-presence. This vernacularisation of borders (Perkins and Rumford 2013) turns subjects into either (untrained) border guards, i.e. employers (Yuval-Davis et al. 2017) and supermarket checkout staff (Rumford 2008), or to potentially illicit border crossers, as everyone has to constantly prove that they belong and are entitled to services such as health care and housing. The residents carried with them a yellow card with their name and room number written on it. They needed it mostly to get into the building and obtain supplies from the storage but it certainly functioned in many ways as an ID for the purposes of the building and they had to show it several times per day.

Another illustrative example is decisions over new admissions, initially prioritising vulnerables, such as families, and at a later stage targeting people with skills and political backgrounds, people who could support and offer to the project. While the inclusion of people with skills was a necessity for the survival of the project and was a practice that ultimately fostered inclusion and involvement of the squatters, it was at the same time a par excellence bordering practice. William Walters (2006) juxtaposes borders to a computer firewall as one of its main functions is to intelligently filter migrants excluding the unwanted. Similarly, Hedetoft (2003) calls borders ‘asymmetric membranes’ (p. 152) to denote that borders are designed to allow the free circulation of certain goods and people while restricting the movements of other undesirable subjects. As this desire and need for selective access is what drives border management today, some thinkers claim that we can no longer talk about

'Fortress Europe' as it looks much more like a gated community (van Houtum & Pijpiers, 2003).

The space aimed at, but also depended on, the creation and maintenance of a community. Community building, especially involving people who have nothing in common apart from being on the move, always involves some form of identity building, which is a process that is always exclusionary: it includes some while excluding others. This too is a bordering practice. As Yuval-Davis and her colleagues (2013) point out, bordering should also be read in terms of identity politics and belonging: it is "*closely linked to identity formation and identity politics because it creates socio-cultural, political and geographical distinctions*" (p. 10). Paasi and Prokkola (2008) and Billig (1995) argue that the border is constantly and daily reproduced by otherwise mundane moments and habits such as national flags and national days. Other scholars stress the performative role of bordering practices and the ways in which these can also give rise to new political subjects (Jones et al. 2017).

Therefore, making and enforcing rules was another bordering practice in the squat in at least two ways: firstly, it reinforced the squat's identity as a place of peaceful and collective cohabitation; and, secondly, it was a mechanism of exclusion, as rule breaking could lead to expulsion. Therefore, on the one hand, living and working together to clean the building and provide each other with the basics was part of the space's identity. On the other, when people did not behave according to the stated rules of the squat they could be shown the door. This transpired only in severe cases: when violence had been reported and following an investigation, the person responsible was sent away. It was a peacekeeping strategy. It also happened when people repeatedly did not show up for their shifts which was registered through a penalisation system, even though it was rarely enforced.

Finally, labelling those that lived and were involved in the project created boundaries and perpetuated established power relations at the border. Language here is important:

migrant squatter were referred to as residents or refugees; European squatters that had come to Athens to help were called internationals or solidarians -a word that is a direct translation of the Greek word most commonly used for solidarity activists in the anarchist and anti-authoriatian political milieu; finally, there were the local squatters that were at the core of the project and were referred to as locals. This categorisation created a latent hierarchy and "*distinct, flexible and mutually contested identities*" (Papataxiarchis 2016, p. 7) automatically shaping rights, responsibilities, and spatial behaviours in the building. While the repurposing of the hotel meant an inversion of the usual restrictions of access of guests to certain spaces (for example in service areas, kitchens), this relinquishing of control (Fregonese and Ramadan 2015) was not full: migrant residents were not allowed in the reception team and area as it was thought that this would create an imbalance of power with their peers, while there were only a couple of solidarians that were part of the reception team; security was open to everyone but very few migrant residents took on shifts, while a local always had to be part of a shift; the storage team, a sensitive post as it involved financial control, exclusively consisted of locals; finally the bar, considered legwork but was ultimately very important for the creation of a community, was run by international and migrant residents. Therefore, despite the rejection of the state's categorisation of people by the squatters' discourses and practices, other categorisations emerged out of the need to organise life there and keep the space safe. And these categorisations and identities entailed certain latent hierarchies and differentiated spatial behaviour and access described above.

'Vulnerable' is a concept often deployed to describe people on the move and vulnerability is heavily used in migration and asylum management to categorise and label. When these appear in a squat, it is both interesting and necessary to think critically through the knowledges and assumptions that inform those judgements. Critical scholarship on vulnerability stresses that it is a condition that people come in and out of, not a permanent

state that people exist in simply because they are on the move. This condition also varies significantly in the way different people and groups of people experience it in their everyday lives (Cannon 1994; Stewart 2005). Finally, there are various causes producing and factors aggravating vulnerability most of which are structural (Watts and Bohle 1993). In particular, "*[v]ulnerability is a multilayered and multidimensional social space defined by the determinate political, economic and institutional capacities of people in specific places at specific times*" (ibid, p. 46). In other words, vulnerability should be understood as a process that renders certain people vulnerable and focus should be placed on comprehending the *"dynamics, meanings and power relations underlying actual instances and processes of vulnerability and harm*" (Zarowsky et al. 2013, p. 3). Such processes are often mobilised to govern and control migrant bodies, and are, in particular, crucial for "*governing in the contexts of deportability, childhoods and human rights*" (Lind 2019, p. 338).

The language of vulnerability and care accompanies and underpins the logic of the humanitarian industry. Humanitarianism is built around and informed by the assumption that people on the move are vulnerable and unable to provide for and protect themselves (Pallister-Wilkins 2015; 2018). At the same time, vulnerability is increasingly becoming part of the state's toolkit for the management of migrant populations: from fighting human trafficking in the Mediterranean Sea to drawing arbitrary lines of deservingness based on someone's nationality, vulnerability is the underlying concept that informs state narratives dictating specific policies. Migrants are considered vulnerable and desperate people taken advantage of by international criminal networks and forced to put their lives at risk with the promise of a better future and a safer life. Hence, EU policies target these smuggling and trafficking networks with more policing of the seas in order to detect the smugglers and save migrant lives. This was achieved by "*the appropriation by immigration and border officials of the humanitarian vocabulary, particularly the goal of reducing deaths at sea*" (Sigona 2018). And

while all migrants are seen as precarious and vulnerable, some are particularly vulnerable (for example, refugees fleeing wars, single mothers, pregnant women and unaccompanied minors). These are therefore prioritised in asylum applications and in housing allocation. Often vulnerability is a reason in itself to afford someone humanitarian protection.

While assuming that a single mother or a pregnant woman is more precarious and vulnerable than a single man is often legitimate, it also impacts on migrants in many ways. Firstly, it pushes people on the move to use, emphasise and, ultimately embody their vulnerability; to present themselves as vulnerable bodies, as victims in need of protection and saving (Baines 2004). Secondly, it draws lines between more or less deserving migrants. This hierarchisation of needs results more often than not in the production of certain migrants as more risky than others. For example, the (often racialised) bodies of single men tend to be portrayed not simply as less vulnerable but also as more dangerous (Bhattacharyya 2008). Thirdly, the prioritisation of certain categories of migrants has the additional impact of eventually vulnerabilising others as their avenues to housing or even legal status are constrained. This, in turn, may force them into criminal activities to secure a living or a place to stay. As a result, prostitution and petty theft are not uncommon practices among young male migrants in Athens and elsewhere.

Squire (2018) argues that "*[It] engages refugee residents as contributing to a shared life, rather than requiring assistance to escape abandonment through living as victims with specified vulnerabilities*" (p. 122). This was a generalised ethos among solidarity initiatives at the time, trying to avoid defining people solely according to their vulnerability (Tsavdaroglou 2018). While this is true, a closer look at the practices of the squatters points to the reproduction of such labelling and the ensuing categorisation practices. This often resulted in the vulnerabilisation of certain people, as labelling shapes identities and sense of belonging

(Bailey et al. 2002). The discontent, for example, felt by single men in the squat easily translated into a sense of exclusion. As Farhad told me once:

> “We [single men] do all the work in the building: we clean and we cook, but we have less rights. Nobody listens to us. Women have their own space but we have nothing. You know, we also have needs and we also want to be respected. Why can’t we have a place only for men?”.

The camp, as documented in the previous chapter, does not only and always accommodate exclusionary rationales and bordering practices but is also a place and a home for its residents, often built from below and through imperceptible everyday mundane practices. In a similar way, the squat can perpetuate practices that do not challenge the fundamental racist, sexist and colonial assumptions that inform the migration and humanitarian regimes. Therefore, the thesis argues, practices and logics are not a fixture of specific spaces. We need to pay close attention to what happens during this encountering between different state and non-state actors. What is at stake during these encounters is whether the resulting decisions and actions feed into or challenge the urban landscape of identities, vulnerabilities and temporalities produced by the border.

However, there are certain practices that are better than others in avoiding cooptation by the border regime. These are practices that break with the racialised, colonial and economic hierarchies informing the current border and humanitarian regimes in Europe from the outset. These regimes manage migrant lives and bodies through illegalisation, criminalisation but also through victimisation. Therefore, the squatters, while creating and expanding the sites of contestation of the current politics of borders and immigration regimes, they also need to embody antagonistic politics of citizenship, belonging and inclusion in an intersectional way. Since the roles, identities and categorisations between documented and

undocumented cannot be easily subverted, squatters' relations need to embody new socio-spatial relations and ways of cohabiting in order to "*produce ungovernable resources, alliances and subjectivities that prefigure more livable spaces for everyone*" (Dadusc et al. 2019, p. 4). This can be achieved through the creation of "*hybrid political subjectivity between migrants and non-migrants*" (Raimondi 2019, p. 568), based on a shared sense of precariousness, a questioning of capitalist social reproduction and a quest for transcultural horizontality (Papataxiarchis 2016). Ultimately what these practices need to subvert are the emergency at and the exceptionality of the border: as both borders and humanitarianism frame migration as a problem to be fixed and an emergency to be tackled, de-exceptionalising migration and migrants rest on those lateral relations and egalitarian practices of cohabitation that contest and correct intersectional injustices.

5.9. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the squat housing migrants in Athens, both as a physical space and as a political project with a radical claim about the reception and accommodation of migrants within the urban fabric. While there is much to be said about the different ways that the squat empowered and politicised its residents by promoting principles of autonomy and self-organisation, a more meticulous look at the everyday practices of the squatters and their everyday experiences also reveals some unexpected findings. I have documented the ways in which subtle hierarchies emerged from and were justified by the squatters' discourse over the need to ensure the safety and security of the squat and its vulnerable residents; how everyday bordering practices were implemented in an effort to protect the identity and the physical space of the squat; and finally how collective organising was often fraught with logics of governance and bureaucracy, and how this was experienced intersectionally. Ultimately, this chapter empirically contributed to the argument that the spaces that actors

function in do not unequivocally determine their practices. The blurring of those dichotomies between the camp as an abject space and the squat as a meaningful and free place contribute to the softening of the cleavages between the produced figures: the victim residing in abjection in the camp and the rebel residing in the squat.

I argue that there is a lack of critical investigation into spaces and projects that are antagonistic to the state, especially when these concern the struggles of populations that are considered vulnerable. This chapter went beyond such idealisations in an effort to critically think why and how the language and practices of bureaucracy, the logics of governance and practices of everyday bordering invade these political spaces that are meant as a counter-example to state policies. As the quote by William Walters in the beginning of the chapter suggests, this task is important in that it allows us to understand the workings of power. While these logics and practices emerge out of the very real need to safeguard a political space and project and those that live there and are involved in one way or another, the rationales that inform these practices inadvertently reinforce and perpetuate the unequal power relations of the outside world.

6. THE SCHOOL

6.1. Introduction

This chapter uses the school, both as an institution and as a physical space, in order to talk about everyday bordering practices that are enacted through the state's bureaucratic encounters. I draw on the experiences of migrant families residing in squats and camps in Athens, as well as of activists that helped them enroll in state schools. My aim here is to explore the ways in which the border creeps into the school grounds curtailing membership through bureaucracy and segregation, but also how the school as an institution enacts the border through identity formation, history and textbooks. While it is situated at the outskirts of government, the school can function as an everyday space where the state's bureaucracy grounds the border in the city. This was manifested in the recurrent exclusion of the majority of the newly arrived child migrants from schools since 2015, despite state and non-state efforts to include them. On the one hand, there was a statutory obligation to school all children within the country irrespectively of their legal and residential status. On the other, systemic deficiencies compounded by the economic crisis had crippled the capacity and resources of the education system. At the same time, the number of migrant children in recent years had increased dramatically as a result of the 2015 border crisis.

What we observe during this period is that these children were neither included nor excluded. There was a complex interplay between logics of exceptionality and normalisation that characterised the efforts to school child migrants. Such contradictions are the result of the complexity of the state apparatus itself and of competing priorities and logics between different state agencies and actors. This chapter argues that bureaucratic ambiguities allowed the reconciliation of these two competing rationales and the normalisation of the

abnormality that mobility had forced on these children. It was the mediation of the bureaucratic apparatus that allowed local and national authorities to maintain a caring and inclusionary discourse, while many of these children remained systematically excluded from enrolling or attending school due to bureaucratic obstacles and contradictory and unclear policies.

This chapter is based on my own experiences from the school registrations that took place in May and September 2017 but also on my follow up with and observing of those families and the schools throughout most of the academic year. The whole endeavour of enrolling migrant children residing in squats to nearby schools turned out to be rather onerous and eventful, and took its toll on all those that took part in it. But it also was a collective undertaking in the sense that it constantly required the convergence and cooperation between many different people, both inside and outside of the squats but also alliances from within institutions (for example, the Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Union). Therefore, the chapter also heavily draws on the experiences of other people, all those involved in this enterprise and whom I subsequently interviewed. In essence, it is an assemblage of experiences, thoughts and ideas that is the result of that cooperation and endurance, and the discussions about this collective experience.

This implies that data for this current chapter were collected through participant observation and interviews, but also through a series of other meetings and discussions. These were, on the one hand, regular meetings of the team that took on the registration in order to debrief, assess and replan the following steps. These meetings helped me to systematise and update my field notes on what had transpired but also to sharpen and deepen my understanding of public education in Greece. On the other hand, there were the many informal discussions I held throughout this undertaking, which helped me grasp the policy context and to comprehend more tacit aspects of the issue at hand, such as the ethos

and habitus of public education. These discussions also heavily influenced my thinking around these issues and shaped my ideas about the school as a space where the border is enacted through bureaucratic encounters. The chapter is written as a constant dialogue between those that undertook this task and the migrant families; it is also a dialogue between my observations and the words of my research participants from their interviews or other meetings and discussions. There are eight main participants, whom it is worth briefly introducing for the sake of flow later on in the chapter. These are four educators, four migrant parents from the camps and squats and one high ranking civil servant from the Ministry of Education.

Katerina worked as an English teacher with the Danish Refugee Council in the camp of Schisto, also situated in West Athens. Before this post, she had worked in the same camp with the British charity Save the Children. She was a substitute teacher who had not yet been assigned a permanent position in the public sector and did not have enough points to be hired as a seasonal substitute.

Chloe was a local activist, she lived inside the occupied building, was part of the reception team and she coordinated many of the school and educational activities in the squat.

Sara worked for the Greek NGO Metadrasi giving extra-curriculum English classes to children aged 6-18 years. Most of her students attended regular morning school as well and were residents of squats. She had an academic background in human rights and she had worked in camps as a teacher and as a social worker for migrants with undocumented status.

Sotiria was a primary school teacher working, for the past 14 years, at one of the 13 intercultural primary schools of Athens. Her school was initially a pilot project for the education of the children of the Muslim minority of Thrace. It gradually included students from

Albania and the Balkans, and eventually the Roma children that settled in the area. Since 2015, the school had taken in most of the school aged children of the camp of Elaionas.

Farzane was a single mother of three from Afghanistan and lived in the squat but had spent over six months in the camp of Schisto too. Amer, also from Afghanistan, was the father of a 16-year-old girl whom we tried, but did not succeed, to register to high school. Fatime had arrived in Athens from Lebanon in late 2015 and lived in Elaionas, her children were enrolled in school since 2016. Hasnen, a Pakistani father of five residing in Elaionas too, whose children attended the local school. Finally, a high ranking civil servant from the Ministry of Education helped me document and understand the government logic and rationale in relation to the discussed topics.

The first part of the chapter explores how the inclusion of child migrants to the public school was constructed as a problem, despite there being a long tradition of intercultural education in the country. Subsequently, the chapter documents certain bureaucratic practices that resulted, sometimes unintentionally, in multiple exclusions of migrant children from schools. This section examines the implementation of Reception Facilities for Refugee Education (RFREs) programme and analyses how its complexities and ambiguities allowed for both arbitrary actions and unexpected alliances with institutions. The following section illustrates how the segregation of migrant children was not only spatial but, most importantly, temporal. Finally, the chapter looks at the space of the school and how certain practices turned it into a site of political contestation and how this impacted on the school experiences of migrant families. The chapter concludes with some reflections on the mediation of activists and the intersections with the parents' perspectives and wishes. The main argument of the chapter is that the mediation of the bureaucratic apparatus, with its inconsistencies and contradictions, created a temporal buffer and segregation, much needed for the governance of the schooling of migrant children. The chapter additionally draws attention to the decisions

made and actions taken during the encounters between different state and non-state actors, often giving rise to unexpected alliances. Finally, since multiple logics can inhabit the school grounds at the same time, it is their complex interplay that ultimately governed the schooling of child migrants without fully including them nor excluding them altogether.

6.2. The making of a problem

Following the entrapment of thousands of migrants and their families in Greece (2015-2016), the state was faced with the challenge of schooling these newly arrived children. This was directly derived from the statutory obligation to provide free and unhindered access to education to all school aged children. Education in Greece is compulsory until the age of 15 and includes six years of primary school and three years of lower secondary education. There was a catchment system in cities that allocated children to the school closest to where they resided. There was the realisation by the relevant authorities that some of these children would, one way or another, remain in the country and would eventually need to be incorporated into the education system. In the words of a high ranking official from the Ministry of Education tasked with education policy for migrant children, with whom I spoke during my fieldwork:

> “Our planning was based on the fact that some would stay permanently here. These families don’t want to but they will have to stay. So, it is important to include the children as soon as possible, teach them Greek so that they can follow the rest of the curriculum, Math, Physics etc. But also the children that will move in six months or a year, we have to give them some structure and discipline, some have never been to school and most have been out of school for years. Maybe they don’t need Greek but they need Math, and they need to be able to sit through an entire school day. All this is taught at school”.

His words are revealing of the dual rationale informing governmental action: on the one hand, to get migrant children into the school system as fast as possible in order for them to learn the language and be able to eventually follow the rest of the school's curriculum; and, on the other, to prepare all of them, including the ones who would eventually move on to other EU member-states, to be disciplined into proper students for their own good and future prospects. Ample research attests that education is the most important route out of poverty (Bradford 1991; Lauder and Hughes 1999; Halsey et al. 1997) and that test scores at childhood is in fact a powerful indicator of future social exclusion (Hobcraft 2002). This rationale is what informs public policy on migrant education in most western countries (Warrington 2005) and is largely driven by the need to normalise migrant children's situation. The mobility of those children that arrived in Greece in 2015-2016 placed them in an exceptional condition that was epitomised by their absence from school. As Fresia and Von Känel (2015) put it, child migrants are "*framed in terms of a double abnormality, as at once 'out of place' and 'out of school'*" (p. 257). In this sense, going *back into school,* was a way to at least partly remedy, the children's abnormal situation, according to my Ministry informant.

6.2.1. Staffing the schools

However, Greece's public education system was not prepared for such an increased number of incoming students, as it was crippled by a decade of economic crisis and austerity. In the course of these 10 years, consecutive governments were bound by the freeze of all new hirings in the country's public sector (Spanou 2015). In 2018 the freeze was lifted and was replaced by a 1:3 hiring rate. This meant that for every three civil servants exiting, one new could be hired. This limited statutory capacity to hire according to the needs, also affected state schools: even though there were major and permanent gaps across the country, the

state could only hire seasonal teachers from the pool of substitute teachers. Therefore, teachers destined to staff the reception and integration classes (RFREs) were hired through a point-based system. They were drawn from a pool of substitute teachers rather than the pool of teachers especially trained in intercultural education. The seasonal contracts were short term, often part time, used nonetheless to cover long standing and permanent needs in the public education sector. These teachers, while performing the same tasks as their colleagues, often in adverse conditions as every year they saw themselves potentially having to move to a new place, sometimes remote, were paid less, were not entitled to paid holidays and were under a different insurance and pension scheme.

Additionally, the implementation of the RFREs programme did not build on the notion of intercultural education, which in Greece was introduced in the 1990s. The 2413/96 Law established for the first time intercultural schools primarily aimed at schooling repatriated Greeks and migrants (Paleologou 2000; 2001; Frangoudaki and Dragonas 2000). This initiative followed a long period of inaction in relation to the education of those remigrant children that increasingly returned to Greece with their families in the 1960s and 1970s (Markou 2006). Reception classes were first implemented in the 1980s with the aim "*to integrate into the Greek school and social environment and into the Greek way of thought and behaviour*' (Ministry of Education, 1980). This period was characterised by an assimilationist approach and a lack of understanding of the multidimensional problems faced by those students (Kotsionis 1992). In the 1990's the approach changed to be more intercultural, with new non-ethnocentric textbooks and special teacher training seminars (Markou 2006). According to Sotiria, "this is what saved our educational system in the 1990s with all the migrants arriving then from the Balkans and the ex-USSR countries".

However, despite the availability of already trained personnel in the country, these resources were not tapped to staff these schools (Anagnostou and Nikolova 2017). The

personnel that was hired came from the list of substitute teachers through the usual point-based system. The National Teachers' Union, a powerful stakeholder in public education, put pressure on the government, threatening at times with mass walkouts, to hire teachers from this list in order to staff the reception classes. This meant that personnel trained in intercultural education and teachers that had already taught in camps under NGO-funded schemes were excluded. But it was also due to the bureaucratic stiffness and lack of flexibility that dictated this hiring system to begin with. As Katerina explains drawing from her own experiences, the hirings had to be made through this priority list and a point-based graduation. Each candidate's position in the list was primarily determined by the year of their graduation. Subsequently, there were two ways of accumulating points: either from work experience in the public sector or through additional academic and professional training. However, the experience gained through teaching outside the public education system did not count. Therefore, teaching in camps through NGOs offered no additional points, despite the expertise developed there. Sotiria explains the implications of such a move:

> "The situation could have been very different if different people had staffed the afternoon schools. Now there are colleagues who have never met a migrant before, who don't even speak English, and they are called to teach these children."

6.2.2. The spatial distribution of schools

The authorities, following the recommendations of the relevant Scientific Committee, introduced in the summer of 2016 a new programme (Common Ministerial Act 2016) for the education of migrants for all school aged children between the ages of 4 and 15 years for the following academic year (2016-2017). The programme provided for the gradual integration of migrant children into public education through the formation of special classes, the RFREs.

These were implemented in state schools neighbouring camps and other places of residence of migrants, which were subsequently incorporated into what was called Zones of Educational Priority (ZEPs). In those zones there were 111 RFREs for primary and secondary education. As power is also expressed spatially through the relegation of certain groups into less desirable spaces (Sibley 1995), we should be attentive to how this spatial distribution was applied to education in the case of Athens. The delegation of ZEPs is a case in point as these geographies of schooling further compounded social inequalities within the city and contributed to the construction of inner-city neighbourhoods as unruly places (Reay 2007) and places on the margins (Shields 1991).

The geographical distribution of the population itself posed a significant challenge for the relevant authorities when it came to planning for the education of these child migrants. According to the UNHCR, their geographical distribution was highly uneven, with 61% of the children residing in Athens, 28% in North Greece and 6% on the islands. While most of these migrant children were accommodated in the camps around the city of Athens, a significant number also resided in the city centre, either in apartments and NGO-run facilities or in occupied buildings. The spatiality of these accommodations is also relevant here, as these were concentrated in inner-city areas and the children would have to be enrolled in schools that were already overcrowded and under-resourced. As my informant at the Ministry told me:

> “The main problem is actually not in the camps but in cities. The concentration of the UNHCR's apartments is in specific areas of Athens and Thessaloniki, as there are many available empty apartments in these areas, whose owners rent it out to the UNHCR. This creates many difficulties because the state schools in those areas are not enough for all the refugee children”.

He is referring to schools in areas of central and West Athens. As enrollments were managed through catchment areas, students were allocated to state schools according to their registered home address. This means that "*there is a strong correlation between socio-residential segregation and school segregation*" (Vergou 2019, p. 3). Additionally, upper and middle class parents employ a number of different strategies to avoid certain schools. As a result, most of these schools were located in inner-city neighbourhoods, which were deprived and hard up. This meant that they usually were already understaffed and overcrowded with students, lacking essential resources, from books to computers. These parts of the city were also where migrants had traditionally settled for decades, as rents there were always more affordable, further pushing them down in turn. Hence, tensions ran high when these schools were expected to take in even more students that would stretch their resources even thinner. According to my informant, incorporating new students to the schools in those areas was the main challenge for his Ministry.

However, research has shown that the children from the camps faced many more challenges and exclusions in comparison to the children residing in the city (Vergou 2019). Additionally, significant gaps, deficiencies in and an overall lack of preparation for the schooling of the camps' children have been reported by NGOs (Save the Children 2016), researchers (Anagnostou and Nikolova 2017) and the Ministry of Education itself (2017). There is an overall lack of reliable and accurate statistical data about the number of children attending school during that period. This is due to the transience and mobility of the migrant population which makes very hard to capture the overall number of migrant children at any given time.

The RFREs programme provided to camp students afternoon, outside regular school hours, preparatory classes aimed at preparing them for their eventual integration into the morning system, mostly through the intensified teaching of Greek. Reception or tutorial

classes for minority students was not new in Greece as it had first been implemented in the late 1990s. The amount of tuition received varied depending on the children's linguistic competence and years the student had attended school, but would not exceed 10 hours per week (Paleologou 2008). However, creating a whole new curriculum outside school hours was novel. In this way, the government tried to, on the one hand, prepare the children in a systematic way to be incorporated in a smooth way in the education system, and, on the other, to extend time. According to my informant at the Ministry, the second was the main concern in those days of emergency:

> "I think it's also about having time to prepare schools and the society to receive the children. We had to create the conditions for the schools to be able to deal with such an influx of new students, coming from different cultural and religious backgrounds. And it was fundamental to come up with a long-term plan, secure funds for new teachers and their training. The economic crisis made it worse, the schools are understaffed and under resourced in general, let alone having to integrate several thousand children on top, we needed time".

The rationale behind these preparatory afternoon classes was that they would be a temporary solution, a way to kickstart the newly arrived children's education process with the view to eventually incorporate them into the mainstream system. Similar to the temporariness of the camps as solutions for the reception and accommodation of those arriving, these afternoon classes protracted the period that the state had at its disposal to come up with durable solutions and to turn the issue governable. The main argument on behalf of the Ministry of Education for segregating migrant children into separate classes was language and the need to safeguard the learning process of local children. In other words, the inability of the migrant children to follow classes in Greek would impede the progress of the rest of

the cohort. Therefore, they needed first to be prepared and this would be the purpose of the classes provided in the RFREs and ZEPs system. As a result, a completely different schedule for the migrant children was invented using the same material and spatial infrastructure but on a timetable that foreclosed any coincidence of the two schools by design.

Most educators I met claimed that this timetabling was motivated entirely by a determination by the authorities to keep these schooling activities separate hoping to preempt any reaction from concerned parents. On the other side, my Ministry informant vehemently maintained that this was a choice dictated by the need to fortify the learning process of migrant and local children alike. As Humphris and Sigona (2019) demonstrate, the notion of 'the best interest of the child' is often deployed "*to justify how different children are bureaucratically captured, i.e. which children come into view, how they are "seen" by the state, and which children are pushed in the shadows*" (p. 1500). In this sense, segregated schooling for child migrants was justified by the need to strengthen their language skills and to maintain local children's progress. This is not uncommon as increasingly children's rights are mobilised to restrict, control and govern migrant children. Lind (2019) shows how "*the creation, defining and governing migrant children's vulnerabilities*" (p. 337) are central to categorisations of appropriate and problematic types of childhood and parenthood. These, in turn, mobilise everyday bordering practices, such as the segregated schooling described above. However, despite the imposed temporal buffer between the two cohorts, not only were the reactions by certain parents not quailed, but they were in reality augmented.

According to the Ministry of Education, for the academic year 2016-2017, the number of school aged children living in camps and accommodation centres around the country was estimated between 8,000 and 8,500 (Ministry of Education 2016a). Out of this number, only 2,643 were registered in RFREs in primary and secondary education. These numbers,

however, are based on the IT system MySchool which counted only enrollments and not actual attendance, and was not able to record relocation between school units or to unsubscribe those students that moved to other EU member-states (Ministry of Education 2017). This limited attendance is attributed by many to the condition of isolation experienced by the families residing in camps. The lack of support and the distance from the location of the school made it harder for children to successfully enrol, complete the academic year and move to the next grade (Nagy 2018). On the contrary, children residing in UNHCR apartments received support as their families were assigned a caseworker tasked with assisting children to enroll to and attend school. In this sense, their spatial proximity to the schools and the city made it more likely for them to receive help in dealing with bureaucracy. These children were also more likely to receive remedial assistance as most of the NGOs ran educational programmes in the city centre. Finally, children living in the city had more time and better conditions for studying. Farzane, who lived before in the camp of Schisto, told me once we had completed the enrollment of her children:

> “In the camp it is not possible to do what you did for my children. And it is too far from the school, 45 minutes on the bus and my children cannot go alone and come back at night. It is crazy what they want families to do, the families will not do it.”

And Katerina’s experience also confirms this:

> “The children living in the centre usually go to morning school. The thing is that the Ministry has issued a directive that parents have the right to go and enroll their child to school. But someone from a camp will not do it, they will not dare it, who can get up at 6 in the morning everyday to bring their child to school? It’s very hard to motivate a parent that has 7 children to take care of in a container home, to go and enroll their

child to school who then has to depart everyday at 6 with the public bus and will come back at 4 in the evening. In reality, it fringes on absurdity."

In this sense, the spatiality of camps directly impacted on the ability of those families to access public services and in particular to education for their children. What the camp did was render going to school unthinkable. This means that what for the ministry was an acceptable situation was unbearable for the families and the children. Administering education to camp children was easy to govern and, hence, little thought went into whether this was actually working for the children. The state and the relevant authorities needed the children to *back into school* to de-exceptionalise their condition and to normalise their mobility, despite their potential temporariness: providing "*education for refugee children means a very literal and a metaphorical movement from the zones of crisis, the refugee camps, to the zones of normalcy, the public schools*" (Nagy 2018, p. 387). However, as I will demonstrate in the following sections, these efforts were not always successful, while at times they congealed, rather than dampened, the problem.

6.3. Acts of exclusion through bureaucracy

It was the first floor of a neoclassical building two streets up from the occupied hotel; the dreaded principal's office. The students were on their break and the noise from the schoolyard was in the background throughout the whole meeting with the principal, an austere square faced woman in her late 40s. "Students are not tourists, you know", she threw at us in Greek looking mostly towards Farzane and the three children that we were there to enrol. She was referring to the fact that many migrant children, especially among those that had arrived since 2015, enrolled but did not regularly attend school after that or eventually disappeared. The reasons were various, indifference by the teachers and bullying by other

children, notwithstanding. However, many of these children eventually moved on to other EU member-states and were never un-enrolled as required by the law. “She cannot understand what you are telling her”, Sotiria replied, “we are here to translate”. Then she reassuringly smiled at Farzane, who, as she later told us, was baffled at why the principal seemed so angry with us:

> “You come to help and she screams at you, why? I don’t speak Greek, she doesn’t speak English, how to communicate? I just want my children to go to school and have education.”

The principal, seeing that she was dealing with a colleague, familiar with the process, the obligations of the school and the rights of the children, slightly changed tone but was still intractable. She started listing all the documentation necessary for the children’s registration, certain that we would then be discouraged: the children’s and the parents’ asylum seeker’s card -original and a photocopy- residency certificate and proof of address, and finally an up-to-date vaccination booklet for the children. At our unwavering attitude and seeing that we already had all the necessary documentation, she sulkily started the process of enrollment. Her final play was to ask for an interpreter, someone who could translate directly from Greek to Dari and vice versa. She was obliged to talk to and hear from the mother herself because: “Who are you and who do you represent? I need to be able to talk to the mother directly”. We called for someone from the squat who could translate from Dari to Greek. Hammid arrived after 15 minutes. Then the principal patronisingly explained to the mother that the children had to attend school everyday from 8 am to 1 pm; that they had to learn how to behave and not be wild; that she needed to come and pick them up everyday at 13.00 sharp. Farzane politely and bashfully kept nodding her head, trying to show that she understood and agreed.

> “I laughed inside me, she thinks I am stupid but I am not; my children went to school in Iran, I know what to do. But I am polite in front of her, it’s ok”, Farzane later told us.

The principal without much enthusiasm resumed the registration process. But then she stopped again. She was holding the proof of address prepared by someone at the squat's reception. Visibly pleased with herself, informed us that a squat was not a legal residence that she could accept for the children. That last hurdle was insurmountable for us at that moment, without an intervention from higher up the hierarchy, so we ceded, we left and regrouped at the squat. I felt angry and disappointed but Farzane and the three children, even though bewildered by what had happened, kept our spirits up:

> "Don't worry about her, she is no good. We go to another school. You know how many times people tell me 'no' but I do what I want anyway".

Such experiences were a characteristic of this period of enrollments. Even though not all were as unpleasant and unsuccessful as that first one, families and their supporters had to deal with scepticism, ignorance and arbitrary behaviours from the schools' principals and the Ministry for Education personnel and civil servants. On many occasions, however, friendly civil servants and school directors were willing to help us register the children and would even turn a blind eye to missing documents. These various encounters highlight the arbitrariness of public administration but also the significance of alliances within institutions. These encounters between migrant families and their advocates, on the one side, and various representatives of the state, on the other, is what accentuated or dampened the materialisation and the experience of the border in the city. This chapter argues that this erratic and inconsistent bureaucratic practices that we encountered on the ground were the product of the ambivalence that emanates from the very core of the state and trickles down the bureaucratic hierarchical structure. This resulted in a situation in which the success of an enrollment came down to the individual front-line bureaucrat's discretion. As Vergou (2019)

explains, “*[s]chool authorities, due to their relative autonomy and in order to maintain schools’ reputations, adopted strategies and administrative procedures to prevent or discourage the enrollment of refugees”* (p. 4).

This section will present such bureaucratic encounters and everyday practices that shaped the schooling experiences of migrant children and families. Efforts to include the children often failed due to bureaucratic complexities and ambiguities that allowed frontline administrators to act in an arbitrary way. Equally often, this leeway worked in favour of migrant families and created alliances within institutions, the Ministry, schools, teachers’ unions. Irrespective of whether it had a positive or a negative impact on the schooling experiences of migrant children, the mediation of the bureaucratic apparatus created the conditions for the governance of that moment. This required the reconciliation of two competing governmental priorities: to fulfil its statutory obligation of universal education and to avoid or dampen reactionary anti-immigration voices among the parents, the teachers and the citizenry at large. The main focus of this governance logic was time, a logic that, as described in chapter four, also features in managing the camp.

One of the most common and persistent challenges the families and their supporters faced was the inconsistent and arbitrary way that school principals and other public servants interpreted the relevant regulations, government policies and circulars issued specifically to deal with these inconsistencies. In particular, the country’s legal system presented additional intricacies, ambiguities and contradictions resulting from over-regulation and from the practice of adding amendments to each draft law (Sotiropoulos 1995). Especially in the 2000s and 2010s, the numerous snap elections and successive changes in the legislative and executive branch had augmented the overregulation. During that decade, marked by economic crisis and austerity, the country conducted elections six times and saw five different cabinets from different political parties. This resulted in contradictory regulations and

directives, each cabinet member trying to compete and cancel out their predecessors. This complex assemblage of laws and directives had created an overall and chronic sense of confusion and mistrust in the country's legal system both among the citizenry and the public service.

6.3.1. Proof of address: key or obstacle

This overall sense of confusion caused by the legal system in the country was not always damaging for the efforts to enroll to school the migrant children residing in the squats. As civil servants and administrators had to navigate this contradictory complex of laws, they were also used to ad-hoc solutions, even turning a blind eye. This habitus of makeshift and ad hoc solutions conditioned and mediated their sense of reasonable action (Cui 2017) and was often beneficial during enrollments, for example, when it came to the proof of address. Locality is also important here as schooling, and many other aspects of citizenship, often have a spatial dimension dependent on the proof of address (Fahrmeir and Jones 2008). While clearly an occupied building cannot be considered a place of legal residence, there was a tacit tendency from the administration to turn a blind eye to the improvised certificates and proofs of residency brought by squatters, according to my participants. Farzane found this very funny and seemed fascinated by the informality that characterised many aspects of everyday life and public administration in Greece:

> "I laugh a lot with the address papers; I thought this was the ways of Afghanistan but I see that here in Europe it is the same. I remember Maria writing this paper and signing it and she told me 'don't worry, they will accept it'. And they did! I was very surprised and I laugh in front of them".

Whereas successful registration was not guaranteed by such improvised certificates, the space was gradually carved out for these children to go to school. As more children were enrolled in this way, the more families and their supporters could claim legitimacy for these makeshift certificates. This obviously largely depended on the individual principal and their arbitrary judgment, causing frustration and resentment to those denied access. Chloe grudgingly recalls her experiences when trying to register three of the squat's children to one of the nearby schools:

> "The fact that they lived in a squat made a massive difference. The school principal clearly didn't want these children and she didn't want to deal with me because I wasn't part of an organisation. So, the outcome depends on specific people in specific posts, the law leaves so much room for interpretation that it comes down to who you have to deal with. Some schools were more than decent while others were really nasty".

Chloe's frustration reflects my own and others' experiences during enrollments. On the one hand, a successful enrollment for these children largely depended on this civil service habitus. But, on the other, this very same discretionary power that rested on the front-line administrators put up insurmountable barriers for others. Families and activists soon became aware of this habitus and developed various strategies for different cases. Being upfront about the improvised proof of address sometimes helped gain the trust of administrators, while in other cases, it was only by being casual and aloof about it that we managed to slide it past the more unsuspicious directors.

6.3.2. Disputed war zones

"Afghanistan is not a war zone, there is no unrest there at the moment", said the civil servant after talking to his supervisor and definitively denying access to a 16-year-old girl from Afghanistan due to the missing primary education certificate. This absurd claim stemmed from the way that the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Ministry for Migration Policy, attempted to resolve the issue of children who would have to enroll in Secondary Education. In the first academic year (2016-2017), there was no age limit for enrollment of migrant children in primary state schools. The rationale behind such a decision was that, since the children did not have the language skills to attend high school, ignoring their age was better for their overall educational development. However, the following year the authorities announced that all children above the age of 12 years would be obliged to enroll to high school. This meant that high schools neighbouring camps, squats and apartments inhabited by migrant families were required to accept these students. The problem arose when the school principals required (rightly, according to the law) from parents to provide certificates that their children had successfully completed their primary school education in their country of origin or in the country of previous residence. Katerina describes the resulting absurdity:

> "In the beginning, it took a while before they [the Ministry] understood that it is impossible for migrant parents to provide all these required documents. For example, you cannot require the primary school certificate from a child from Syria or Afghanistan who run away from war."

Faced with complaints by the families and other stakeholders due to the impossibility of fulfilling such requirements, the Ministry of Education was forced to issue a circular

(Ministry of Education 2016b) clarifying that prospective students coming from regions where there is unrest would be exempt from this requirement. However, as we bitterly discovered, 'regions where there is unrest' could also be quite a disputed statement.

In our effort to enroll the 16-year-old girl from Afghanistan to the corresponding high school according to where she and her family were residing, we were faced with the vehement refusal of the principal to accept the girl without the proper and full documentation. This was despite the previously mentioned circulation of the directive, which we had printed and had with us, having foreseen such reactions. Faced with the directors refusal to accept to implement the directive, we took it up to the Directorate General for Secondary Education. The case was taken up by me and Katerina; along with the girl's father, Amer, we headed to their offices, a 10-minutes bus ride north. Our encounter with the middle-aged unimpressed civil servant is telling.

He first phoned, printed directive at hand, the principal of the school that had refused to enroll the Afghan girl, in order to explain to her that, according to directive, she was obliged to enroll the child. That meant that the registration could be completed without a certificate; the only documentation needed was an official declaration by the parents attesting the years of completed education of their daughter. After arguing with the school principal for 15 minutes about who is to accept this paper, and, even though there didn't seem to be an agreement in the end, he hung up the phone and told us to submit the paper directly to the school. Obviously, we were baffled by his advice that we should simply go back and demand from the principal something that he, despite his authority, had not been able to convince her to do. Following our complaints and refusal to leave without an official response to our claim, he decided to consult with his supervisor. He came back 15 minutes later to solemnly announce to us that there was nothing he could do: "Afghanistan is not a war zone, there is no unrest there at the moment". This bureaucratic encounter demonstrates the difficulties

and impasses caused by the contradictory and unclear complex of laws and directives regulating migrant schooling in Greece. In the particular case recounted above, the Ministry's directive was put in place to remedy a common problem faced by migrant families: the impossibility of providing a primary education certification, which was a requirement for attending secondary education. As Amer had told us before the meeting, he and his wife never considered taking such paperwork with them when they left:

> "We did not run away from bombs but we took only the basics, passports, birth certificates for the children, marriage certificate, medical reports, some documents to prove that I am in danger there but not school certificates. And then from Iran we have nothing, my daughter went to school there too."

However, whether deliberate or simply due to amateurism and a lack of knowledge, the circulated directive left much to be imagined. In this sense, even when trying to resolve issues, the language of bureaucracy reflected the logic and organisation of the state. As the state is neither a uniform block, not a homogeneous and well-tuned set of institutions (Jeffrey 2013), its bureaucracies too are oftentimes fraught with such inconsistencies, omissions or apparent contradictions. The registration experiences recounted and analysed in this chapter attest to how the relevant literature understands the state and its bureaucracy as a complex apparatus that is far from a coherent and synched machine administering a given territory and population. As discussed in chapter two, governing is a patchwork of heterogeneous practices (Painter 2006) that are performed every day (Burridge et al. 2017), often in an improvised, mundane and prosaic way (Gupta 1995; Jeffrey 2013; Heyman 1995).

I later asked Katerina what she thought about this encounter with the ministry's low level bureaucrat and whether this was common in her experience in other aspects of the

management of the schooling of child migrants. She told me that there was an overall lack of knowledge and expertise around the migrant issue and in particular around education:

> “Another thing is that at the ministerial level, mind you we are two years in this crisis, there is not a department in charge of this, training the staff, organising new things. It should have been understood by now that this population requires a completely different approach in education, we are basically talking about a whole new field. So this guy had no clue, he was totally ignorant about what it means to be a refugee, what it means to leave your home and under which conditions”.

6.3.3. Arbitrary quota and unrealistic timetables

As I have demonstrated so far, the success or failure of an enrollment would usually depend on the discretionary power of each individual administrator. This section documents two more such instances and stalemates that can be attributed to bureaucratic obstacles and are very much related to the civil service habitus described earlier in the chapter. A common reason to deny migrant student entry to schools were the lack of space and the quota on refugee children per class. Katerina flagged this up to me, letting me know that there is no such thing as a quote per class:

> “What was most shocking, but very common, was the lack of space or the claim from the schools that they had no space for refugee children. How can something quite objective, whether there are places, become such a subjective thing. How is it possible that an individual school has this power, to accept or not new students.”

Finally, the overly complicated bureaucratic procedures required for the completion of an enrollment were often a barrier in themselves, especially when this was paired with unrealistic timetables. Chloe had a lot of resentment for these unattainable timetables:

> “The Ministry circulates an announcement saying that they [parents] can submit their papers by -say- Friday, which is two days away. That’s ridiculous, there is no time to even get informed, let alone actually do it. So they give this opportunity but make it impossible for parents to follow the instructions. In reality they’re not really offering this opportunity.”

Therefore, despite any efforts and well-meaning intentions at a legislative and state level, the proposed timetables, which often, at least the first year, resulted from the emergency, indeed made it impossible for families to enroll their children to school. As Chloe’s resentful quote above shows, many of those involved believed that such impossible deadlines were part of the authorities’ strategy to exclude the children altogether without excluding them by law. Sotiria too told me something similar but she gave a different explanation. She was present at a meeting between the Ministry and the Directors for Primary and Secondary Education:

> “They were at each other’s throat about the responsibility of high school students. The Primary Education Directors didn’t know what to do with 15-year-olds that didn’t even speak Greek, while the Secondary Education Directors countered that no matter the age it was the educational level that counted. So it was a little bit like a landfill, who’d end up being the one to have to take in all the ‘rubbish’. And after this meeting, there was the announcement that students above the age of 12 will have to go to high school.”

In this subsection I documented the most common bureaucratic obstacles that ended up excluding in practice many children from even registering to state schools. A complex legal system, further confounded by ad hoc directives, left most of those involved baffled and

unable to navigate it. Multiple and even contradictory rationales and logics can co-exist at the same time in the same space, which can in turn accommodate a variety of encounters and practices. As a result, school directors used the discretionary power to make arbitrary decisions, which often meant the inclusion of children despite insufficient documentation; civil servants gave up in the face of legal contradictions and vehement refusals from school principals; teachers and activists further mistrusted the government accusing the state of willingly using bureaucracy to exclude these children; parents faced impossible requirements and deadlines and were often not even consulted about the needs of their children. Therefore, even unintentionally and due

to the ad hoc and improvised nature of bureaucracy, many child migrants were left out of school for two consecutive years, despite efforts to include them. Often it came down to individual front-line civil servants' discretionary power and ad hoc alliances within institutions. Sotiria's words are more indicative of the experiences of all those involved:

> "Everyone was struggling: the children to get organised and set up, the teachers to organise the children and the curriculum, the principals because they had a mess in their hands. But the authorities pretended that they had given the solution to the issue of educating refugee children."

Her words point to the confusion that was characteristic of the period both within the administration and among the families and their supporters. Lack of trust in governmental planning and fear of parental reactions made many school directors reluctant to enroll migrant children or made them enforce arbitrary quotas on how many they could enroll. Often administrators were baffled by the contradictory legislation operationalised by national ministerial circulars and were not willing to assume the risks involved in forcing school directors to enroll new students. Policy makers within the Ministry of Education, struggling to make sense of the complex geopolitical developments in the countries of origin of those

children, circulated unclear directives regulating for instance entry to high schools of students who lacked a primary school certificate due to conflict. Families themselves were insecure and reluctant to register their children to school misinterpreting it as an obligation to remain in Greece. The failure to identify the scope of jurisdiction of different administrative departments and to constitute the relevant organisational charts, the lack of vernacular knowledge regarding schools and the lack of coordination between the ministries often led to "*self-improvisation, at times successful and others not*" (Ministry of Education 2017). The Ministry's report further acknowledges that there were cases where enrollments were blocked or obstructed by arbitrary actions of individual principals, going at times even against Ministerial circulars. Finally, the same report concludes that there was a misallocation of students to schools.

6.4. ZEPs and camps: mobile ghettos and conflicting temporalities

> "It's like taking a ghetto, putting it on a bus and bringing it to another ghetto", Katerina very eloquently put it to me once. She referred to the way that the children of the camps were transferred to the neighbouring schools using buses hired by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

She continues:

> "IOM hired buses to get children to school, which is great. But then the children go to school only with other refugee children. The school is not the building and the walls. It is about meeting other children, understanding local customs and codes of conduct and all that. How are these children supposed to learn Greek if they don't meet Greek children."

Therefore, the camp geographies of Athens, when they didn't render going to school unthinkable altogether, required students to commute by bus to school. Migrant students were also required to do that on a timetable opposite that of local children that went to the same schools in the morning. And while the authorities, through IOM, hired buses for their transportation, the migrant students were not *de-ghettoised*; they might as well have stayed to be schooled inside the confines of the camp. As Katerina points out, the isolation imposed on these children by the spatiality of the camps was not severed by attending school since they did not come into contact with new children (Vergou 2019). To the contrary, they remained within their existing web of relations, essentially transporting them with them to the bus and to the classroom. I argue that the isolation imposed on these children was achieved as much via spatial as via temporal segregation. Sotiria puts it nicely:

> "We all knew that a RFRE inside the school isolates students, it takes children from a camp and puts them on a different schedule. What everyone seems to care about is that the students don't meet with each other. As if the camp children are some sort of taint. There are schools that welcomed the refugee children but it's not like they did a lot of things together with them."

This segregation is indeed temporal rather than solely spatial. If spatial segregation refers to the differences in the spaces that specific groups occupy in the city (Harding and Blokland 2014), then a temporal segregation would refer to the differences in the times that these spaces are occupied by specific groups. Migrant children went to the same schools, used the same classrooms and the same playgrounds as the local children, but these spaces were not shared with them. They were put on a different, opposing, schedule from local students. The migrant children were offered free transportation to school as long as their presence did not coincide with the rest of the student population. So much so that:

> "In a school in Perama, where some of the children from my camp go, even when some of the recess times coincide with the morning school, there is no mingling, I mean, they keep them separated", Katerina rants.

However, for most of the parents I spoke to, the different timetable was not a problem. They were happy that their children were going to school. Hasnen, the Pakistani father living in Elaionas, told me:

> "I don't mind when they go to school as long as they go! I want them to learn English and Greek, since we will stay here. They need this support, once they are good in Greek, they will go to the other school and learn Physics. For me it's normal and I am happy they go to school. I wish the school was closer or we were closer to the school but I will do that when I have a job."

So, even though the distance from the school, and the city centre, was seen as a problem, the temporal segregation itself was not. Hasnen even seemed to understand why this system was applied and was willing to wait until his children were good enough to attend morning school with the local children. He also felt strongly the personal responsibility of taking his family out of the camp, of getting a job and finding an apartment close to the school. This would solve the problem of distance and help his children.

Time, its management and its impact is relevant for an additional reason in the case of the schooling of migrant children in the period in question, as the delays on various fronts were significant. In both academic years, that is 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, the RFRE classes for migrant children did not start until December or even January. Hence, for the camps' students waiting time until they could go to morning school was further protracted by the delays in the start of the academic year for them. For the rest of the students, including

children residing in squats and apartments, the year started as usual in September. For the academic year 2016-2017, such delays were easily, and rightfully so, attributed to the emergency conditions, the increased numbers of migrants and the lack of preparations in the school and the public administrations. My Ministry informant explained that:

> "Things ran fast and we ran behind them. We had no time to prepare for 2016. Six months might seem like a long time but in public administration it is not! We had to first see the concentration of refugees and then define the ZEPs and the schools that needed additional resources. And then an integration plan, which came in the summer of 2016. And then its implementation which came late, I think we were able to start the classes in December."

As a result, nevertheless, the children's education, which would eventually allow them to integrate into the mainstream system, was delayed while all other children started the year as usual. What the Ministry staffer, however, alludes to is the different experiences and understanding of time by different actors within the border regime. Despite the frantic pace of political events in that period of emergency, public administration and bureaucratic time still moved at a slow pace; which, nevertheless seemed quite ftantic to those that were subjected to it, as claimed by my informant. At the other end of the spectrum, migrant families and the children that were supposed to start school that year experienced these delays painfully and as an additional layer of immobility and condition of limbo. These different temporalities co-exist within the border regime, they are antagonistic to each other and they speak to the power relations at the border. Fatime, whose son had already been enrolled early in 2016 and was then waiting to be incorporated into the morning school, recounts this parallel temporality:

> “These afternoon schools are preparation, only for one year; the teacher told me, ‘wait and next year your son will go to the morning school if he is good’. And he is good but we still wait. It is now December [2017] and my son is not even going to afternoon class.”

So these delays were perceived and experienced by those that found themselves at the receiving end very differently than the Ministry staffer. The landscape of temporalities in the EU border regime, included a variety of antagonistic temporalities: the bureaucrats' sense of time that was experienced as frenzied, as opposed to that of migrants experienced as suspended. Since for migrant families, getting their children back to school would signal a degree of normality, the stretching of this time felt like a negation. A sense of disappointment and disbelief in the intentions of the authorities echoed in most of the parents’ words that spoke to me about their experiences. As described by Fatime above, the promise was that the children that performed well in the preparatory afternoon classes during the 2016-2017 academic year would eventually be incorporated into the morning school system. However, this did not happen and the camp children were, for a second academic year, left out of school until December. Similarly, teachers with whom I spoke to during my fieldwork, stressed the inhibiting effects of the spatial and temporal segregation imposed on those children. Their language but also social skills were held back by the lack of contact with native speakers and with the social space that the school is:

> “The children, some of them had never been to school before, would never get an example of how to behave at school as they never saw other children. There was not the model of how a school works. In fact, they brought these children to school when the school was effectively not in operation, you might as well hold the class inside the camps, the school is not its walls”, Sotiria told me fiercely.

Space in general is always relational and certainly the school is much more than the building. As an institution, it can be pivotal for the integration and socialisation of children. It is where they tacitly learn norms and values (Apple 2004) and they gradually understand what kind of behaviours are allowed (Cui 2017) from the daily interactions with teachers and other students (Wotherspoon 2009). These norms and sanctioned behaviours are not uniform nor neutral but rather they are gendered, classed and racialised (Kelly 1998; McLaren 2003). The literature resonates with the experiences of my participants. Katerina concurs:

> "These children, apart from having to go to school to learn Greek or Math or whatever, the most fundamental problems they had, due to their life so far, the constant moving, interrupted education, war zones, living in camps, were behavioural ones. Going to RFREs, their behaviour improvement moves much slower than going to the state school. There they meet children that they don't know, they have to learn and accept the rules of the classroom and so on."

All the above testify to the various ways in which education for migrant children departed and was differentiated from mainstream public education. This divergence ultimately gave rise to a two tiered educational system, one for local children and for long term migrant children and one for newcomers. Instead of promoting the integration of the latter into the mainstream system, such a bifurcated system seems to have delayed it. In sum, the migrant students school progress was hindered in at least two ways: either directly, through foot dragging tactics and hold-ups in the process (start date for schools, bureaucratic hurdles), or indirectly, by stonewalling the students' progress through segregation (RFREs) and inadequate learning conditions (untrained substitute teachers). This two tiered education

system had significant class and racial characteristics. For Sara and others, this was clearly a political choice:

> "Reception classes failed. It was a clear political choice, to not open the cities but to open camps and ghettos, to not make new hirings but to put part time people in RFREs. The children were warehoused and they didn't learn because they were late to start and because of the teachers and the problems we already talked about."

The Ministry's own Scientific Committee On Refugee Education (Ministry of Education 2017) identifies similar problems with respect to the RFREs and attributes it to the conflicting regulations and circulars. In fact the RFREs, despite qualifying as school units, were *"neither administratively nor pedagogically connected with the school's morning zone, which created many problems in their operation"* (p. 42).

The branching off of the education available to migrant children is apparent in the way that a cohort of NGOs and charities provided a range of different educational activities both in the camps and in the cities. In some cases, the services they offered were supplementary and auxiliary to the state school (for example, support with learning Greek); these were mostly by NGOs mobilised around the city centre where the children were more likely to be attending morning school and would only need extra support. In other cases, these educational activities were the only education the children would have access to; this was mostly the case in the camps, from where it was not always possible for children to reach their school on a daily basis. While some of the services in both cases provided children with invaluable assistance that they would not otherwise have access to, the mobilisation of NGOs in this field accentuated the segregation and exclusion of these students.

On the one hand, parents themselves, as they reported to me, more often than not, preferred these services. There were various reasons for this but two are interesting for our

purposes here: firstly, the camps' remote location usually made parents opt for NGO-provided educational activities over state schools simply because these took place inside the camp; secondly, even in the city, parents often preferred the curricula of NGOs because these were more oriented to teaching English or German, rather than Greek and Mathematics. As most families considered their presence in Greece temporary, they preferred their children to learn English than Greek. On the other hand, the authorities seemed quite at ease with having this function fulfilled by non-state actors. According to my informant at the Ministry:

> "There are many NGOs and volunteers providing such activities for children in the camps, in squats etc. These organisations and their people often have expertise that we don't and they do a great job. I don't think we should see them competitively. Obviously, there was a massive need to bring it under control and we did that through the registry, but we need all the help we can get when it comes to schooling these children"

These words reveal a certain governance logic as well as the presence of certain debates within its ranks, but ultimately it demonstrates the rapprochement and harmonious coexistence between state and non-state actors in this case. This convergence of strategies between different actors, even antagonistic ones, was problematic for various reasons, as I will analyse in more detail in the following chapter. Finally, my informant, in a seemingly naive way, easily devolves to non-state actors the responsibility of the state to educate children, migrant or local.

An interesting case in point was the high school neighbouring the squat. The freshly painted yellow building, formerly one of the longest standing occupied social centres in the city, Villa Amalia, was adjacent to the occupied hotel. The backyards of the two buildings

were only separated by a two-metre-high stone wall. Basketballs and footballs were among the objects constantly exchanged between the two yards and the children playing on either side of the wall. The high school's principal refused to take any of the squat's children that were eligible and entitled to be enrolled there, as the closest school. She told us that she could not take in any more foreign students, because that would be the end of her school. But, in a bizarre twist of fate, the municipality's programme 'Open Schools' brought almost all the squat's children into her school. The programme of the City of Athens turned the school premises into places and centres of meetings and action for the neighbourhood and local communities. Activities included recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities suitable for people of all ages and could be proposed by anyone in the community. The NGO Metadrasi proposed remedial education for migrant children and one the chosen schools was the high school next to the squat. Sara, who worked there as part of this programme:

> "It's an effort by the municipality to appear to be doing something, to present a more social profile. But it's different opening the schools in the afternoon for additional activities, and allowing other entities to provide basic learning services that the state should be providing. It's whitewashing, no?!"

In sum, the bifurcation of the education system resulted from different state and bureaucratic practices that separated local and migrant children spatially and temporally, when it came to where, when and by whom they would be educated. According to most of my participants, this not only violated basic statutory obligations of the government but also stonewalled the children's progress and education. The multiple exclusions experienced by migrant children with regards to their schooling, as documented and analysed so far in this chapter, ultimately created a system of spatio-temporal segregation and differential treatment.

6.5. The school as spectacle

The politicisation of the schooling of migrant children in the period in question turned the space of the school itself into a spectacle. This had additional detrimental effects on the integration, progress and overall sense of belonging of the children. On the one side, the government used the schooling of migrant children to counter its highly unpopular migration policies of recent years in two ways that my informant from the Ministry explains:

> "Look, we were faced with two major criticisms coming from opposite political sides. The right attacked us for having an open door policy to migrants. The left attacked us for the EU-Turkey Deal and turning the islands into open-air prisons. We tried to include refugee children in the public system with the least possible disruption for existing students. We implemented these RFREs but it didn't always go as planned."

He is referring to the sporadic, but highly publicised by the media, reactionary and racist backlash on behalf of some parents in some schools. For example, Vergou (2019), drawing on two case studies of schools in Greece, documents the strong reactions by parents: "*parents and educational staff claimed insecurity in health issues, due to refugees' lack of vaccination, as well as a lack of information, and refused to accept refugees into schools"* (p. 12). On the one hand, the concentration of the schools that were supposed to enroll new students in lower-middle and working class inner-city areas, created a breeding ground for reactionary forces to coalesce. Parents' associations in those areas mounted demonstrations against the RFREs, blocked school entrances and threatened with removing their children from school. However, on the other hand, it was the very fact of requiring this temporal segregation between the children that made it such a toxic issue for communities. In Sara's words:

> “The government laid the ground for them, gives them cause and room to stir up trouble and gain ground. I mean, this decision to create RFREs, thus acknowledging that they are somehow a problem and need to be separated, and then they bring them in the schools. This is a playground for fascists, a recipe for disaster.”

Therefore, the authorities, by trying to quell in advance potential criticism from the right, for example, that they jeopardise the education of Greek students, created afternoon reception classes for migrant children in order to kick start their education. However, this fed into the fears and anxieties of middle-class parents: “*Threat is perceived at every level: the failings of the state educational system, the interaction with non middle-class children at school, on the journey to school, and in the increasingly brand-dominated youth monoculture”* (Butler and Robson, 2003, p. 4). Therefore, this strategy inadvertently led to more, and more exaggerated, reactions by parts of some communities when these imagined ghettos were to use the same spaces as local children, even on a different schedule. As Reay (2007) points out, “*[g]eographies of urban education have increasingly become political geographies of polarisation and blame”* (p. 1198). These reactionary backlash in certain schools in Athens was often quite spectacular, sometimes involving the blocking of school entrances or interrupting school meetings, escalating at times to the level of scuffles between parents and school staff.

Equally disruptive was sometimes the mobilisations by the opposite side. In order to counter these reactions, some schools organised events for welcoming the new migrant students, actively publicising in this way their migrant friendly position. Events involved welcoming committees of parents, teachers and existing students. But ultimately this too created a different condition for those children, which again set them apart from the local children:

> “I think that these children feel a little bit lost in translation, they have no idea what they’ll find at school. They might find the fascist or they will find people applauding them. All this turns the school into such a *wow* event, which can be detrimental for a child. School for children is everyday life, it cannot have such fluctuations”, Sara explains.

Therefore, on the one side, the authorities used the school, and the inclusion of migrant children as a kind of proof of their migrant friendly politics. On the other side, the conservative opposition party accused the government of miss-management and a lack of planning while fascists organised through parents associations against the attendance of migrant children to school. In turn, migrant families themselves and their supporters criticised the government for excluding, segregating and creating ghettos for the children. In this sense, the school emerged as a spectacle and a prime location to study the encounters between all these different actors. Almost all the parents that I asked were very grateful for their children to be included in the school system and only wanted normality for them, caring little about which teaching schedule their children were on.

6.6. Activists, gendered solidarities and agency

The role of activists during the period in question was pivotal for the enactment of the right of migrant children to register and attend school. If anything, Sotiria claims that it was teachers themselves, coming together from different schools in the area, that reached out to camps to begin with, in order to enroll children to their respective schools:

> “The teachers from the local schools went to the camps and took families that wanted and registered their children. The same had happened with the squat children. The Directors for Primary Education had threatened that they wouldn't validate the

registrations. We created this given fact, the precedence that children from the squats were enrolled in local schools".

By activists I mean all those people that, in one way or another, assisted in the education of migrant children during that period. This includes people from the various squats that organised enrollments from inside the occupied buildings and mediated the registration process between the families and the schools; people from the wider social and political movements in Athens that mobilised, campaigning for the right of migrant children to education; and finally, all those educators, teachers in public schools, teachers in the camps working for NGOs and substitute teachers, who, through their collective organising bodies and institutions, but also as individuals, facilitated the process of registrations and the integration of these children to schools. These three categories of people, overwhelmingly comprising of women, played a pivotal role in this process, substantially altering its course with their mediation. This section brings forward some reflections about these gendered roles, some of which I also had to assume as part of my research, about their impact on the process, on the families but also on the activists themselves.

The people that became involved from the squats were mostly tasked with: tracking down the families with school-aged children; reaching out to neighbouring schools; getting these families organised with their paperwork; and accompanying them to schools and mediating the registration. There were two more tasks, one preceding those mentioned above and one following them, but they were interrelated and gave rise to most of these reflections regarding the roles assumed by activists. The former was convincing parents to allow their children to go to school, and the second one was that, in most cases, those activists that mediated the registrations ended up being responsible for those children vis a vis the schools. This happened because, on the one side, the school principals demanded

that a Greek-speaking person be responsible for each student; someone that could be reached by phone and could respond directly to queries from the schools. On the other side, some of the parents were indifferent towards the schooling and the progress of their children, which, at least partly, was the result of the pressure mounted on them to allow their children to go to school.

These activists found themselves caught up in such mediation and guardianship roles, some of them for an entire school year: attending parent-teacher meetings, picking up children from school, signing authorisation letters for school trips. Chloe told me:

> "I remember this sometimes troubled us and some problems resulted from this mediation. I mean, we motivated the parents to enroll the children but then they wouldn't go to pick them up because we somehow had the responsibility in their eyes. This role of the mediator between a parent, who doesn't speak Greek or even English, and the school principals, who don't or refuse to communicate in English, was however vital, it was needed and it was also quite rewarding".

These roles were taken up almost exclusively by local female activists. This practiced and embodied solidarity was what in many cases enacted the children's right to go to school, as Chloe points out. These women were drawn and entangled into these parental duties by certain requirements of the schools' principals and teachers: children had to be picked up at 1 pm, if one of the parents didn't do it on time; parent-teacher meetings had to be attended; forms had to be signed every time there was a planned school trip. As these requirements aimed mostly at safeguarding the students' safety, responsibility for them were more easily relinquished to women. Therefore, there was an assumed responsibility emanating from being at the registration, speaking Greek and being a woman. Quite often there was the

danger, or even the threat, of the whole process being derailed if this responsibility was not assumed on the spot by someone.

This involvement of activists was, therefore, gendered but it also became a vector of politicisation through embodiments of solidarity and practices of care. Another example is Sara's decision to work for an NGO, despite disliking the system. Her story was not uncommon: since the only way to be in contact with this population and to teach migrant children was by working in NGOs and in camps, many activists resorted to this kind of employment. In Sara's words:

> "Unfortunately, through a system that I oppose, I am able to be in contact with a population that I want to be. I think that people like me should have easier access to these places but they are so ghettoised that the only way to teach refugee children is to either be hired in the public sector as a substitute now with the RFREs or to work in an NGO and do educational work through there."

Assuming parental duties and seeking employment in camps, as described above, should then be understood as a less confrontational way of subverting the border. Sara's practiced solidarity silently infringed the segregation imposed by the border and taught migrant children. This everyday practice of care for the camp children came to her own detriment as she was obliged to work inside a system that she disapproved. Similarly, taking on parental duties was an embodied practice of solidarity: it deployed the (female) body to carve out spaces and possibilities for migrant children to go to school. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that most of the activists willing to assume such responsibilities were women. At the same time, women were also more likely to be trusted by the school authorities to perform such parental duties.

However, sometimes, the parents and the children's preferences were ignored or even dismissed. This further curtailed their agency, which had already been disregarded by the authorities. This is not uncommon when it comes to the treatment of racialised parents who are usually considered as passive and uninformed (Warrington 2005), lacking formal education themselves and have limited cultural capital. They are thus considered unable to make sound choices. For example, parents were often pressured to send their children to school. Some parents living in the squats also talked to me about their hesitations regarding the schooling of their children. They feared that having their children enrolled in Greek schools would affect their migratory journeys. Their fear seemed more imagined than real: enrolling their children to school was for them a normalisation of an undesired condition; temporariness was a refuge for many of these families and children attending school alluded to permanence. It is important here to differentiate between those families living in squats and those living in camps. For the former, sending their children to school meant a normalisation of their condition, which in turn had negative connotations because it was seen as imposing permanence on them. On the contrary, families residing in camps were more eager to see some normality in their and their children's lives and were, hence, more enthused by the prospect of school.

6.7. Conclusion

This chapter focused on the school, both as an institution and as a space where the border is potentially enacted and infringed in the everyday. It drew on my own experiences and on the experiences of others during the arduous and draining undertaking of registering and keeping the children from the squats and the camps in school. The chapter documented the multifarious ways that these children were routinely and systematically included in the school but set apart from the rest of the school age population in the country. This was achieved

through either a spatial (for instance, camp based education) or a temporal segregation (for instance, evening classes on school premises). To these we should add all those exclusions arising from bureaucratic practices, inconsistencies in governmental policies and legislation, incompetencies but also from the involvement of non-state actors without the proper training, oversight and planning. I argue that it was the mediation of the state's extensive and complex bureaucratic apparatus that allowed the authorities to maintain its inclusionary discourse while the majority of migrant children were still excluded from school. The school emerged as a prime site for studying the complex interplay between contradictory state logics in migration governance: exceptionality and normalisation, inclusion and exclusion. The chapter additionally problematised the politicisation of the space of the school by different actors, the gendered mediation of activists in the educational process and how at times this silenced the voices and wishes from parents and families.

The following chapter brings together all the three spaces discussed so far, the camp, the squat and the school, combined and in relation to the city of Athens in the period of interest. Chapter seven provides an analysis of the geographies of internalisation of the EU's border regime and their contestation in the city. The chapter, finally, elaborates the concept of the temporal government of the border.

7. BORDERING THE CITY

7.1. Introduction

This chapter looks more closely at the spatial arrangement of the border in the city and at the connections and dependencies between the three spaces examined so far. It interrogates how the camp, the squat, and the school relate to and are shaped by each other and the rest of the city. I explore the everyday urban experiences of the inhabitants of those spaces, the routes they take between places, the people they meet and, ultimately, how these movements and encounters enforce or subvert the border regime. As the resulting practices and logics are not a fixture of specific spaces, my aim is to document (un)bordering practices and what the same actors do (potentially differently) in different spaces, what moving between the different locales entails, and how the border is enacted and infringed in the city. What is at stake during those encounters is whether the resulting decisions and practices feed into or challenge the urban landscape of temporalities produced by the border.

The study is an ethnographic exploration of the spatio-temporal production of the border in the city of Athens, of how bordering processes unfolded there and how they were resisted in turn. The thesis draws attention to the formal and informal spatialities of those processes forming Athens' urban encampment. As explained in chapter three (section 3.4), my positionality as a researcher-insider permitted an intimate and daily engagement with the object and subjects of research and an in-depth exploration of the embodied effects of urban borders. As a result, my approach is holistic and this thesis is a situated account of the impact that everyday bordering had on the urban landscape, the people(s) and the socio-political movements of the city. Athens has a particular and unique kind of urbanity in the European context, mostly due to its liminality (Noussia and Lyons 2009), both

geographically and historically, between east and west, north and south, centre and periphery. On top of this liminality, over the course of the past ten years, the city experienced a deep economic and political crisis, hugely transforming the city’s materialities and relations and depleting its urban infrastructure. At the same time, social and political movements centred around care and solidarity, were organised through principles of mutual aid, horizontality and shared precariousness.

The conceptual standpoint that informs the analysis in this thesis is the processual, practice-based and everyday nature of the border, which works by way of negating migrants control over how and where they spend their time. This borderwork is conducted by many different, new and unexpected actors, in new and unexpected places and it is through a series of mundane and everyday encounters between them that the border regime is (re)produced and contested in the city. I use the concept of the border regime for two main reasons: not only because it emphasises the important role of actors, as well as the interplay between them, but also because it directs attention to the border production as the result of practices. In particular at the local level, the EU’s border regime is shaped by the borderwork conducted by various local actors, including migrant groups, trade unions, neighbourhood associations, real estate agencies and many more. It is their interests, principles, political programmes and imaginaries, which are often conflicting, that, in one way or another, are channeled to and affect policy-making (Lebuhn 2013) or challenge it.

Bureaucracy is key in this respect because it often masks the border in everyday life and can be concealed as common sense in the small and mundane actions of a range of different actors: school teachers and directors, NGOs, camp residents, families, squatters and administrators. Bordering is all about governing migrant bodies and administering their time. This only sometimes happens through exclusion, inclusion, or even differentiated and subordinated inclusion. However, bordering is not always nor necessarily achieved through

these. For example, as chapter six empirically demonstrated with regards to migrant schooling, the children were neither in nor out of school. Rather there was a complex interplay of logics of exceptionality and normalisation that characterised the efforts to school migrant children. These two competing rationales of the state were reconciled by bureaucracy. I argue that this is the main function of the bureaucratic border: to reconcile and iron out the discrepancies between multiple and competing state logics. Ultimately, this is why and how these different and competing logics so often coexist and spill over in the three spaces studied in this thesis.

Embarking from these conceptual starting points, the case of Athens during the specific period in question reveals much about the nature and function of borders: the border is not only a spatial container for undesirable subjects on the move, but also a way to control their mobility through the administration of their time. Hence, once involved in the administering of migrant people's lives, conducting some kind of *border work*, one becomes potentially entangled into the border regime. As the thesis has empirically shown, bordering practices and the rationales that underpin them can no longer be neatly assigned to specific spaces, such as camps, but they tend to engulf infrastructure that is neutral (the school) or even antagonistic to the state (the squat). Bordering there often masks as bureaucracy, rational decision-making, administrative language and organisational rationales. In turn, alliances are often produced between otherwise hostile actors, between solidarity activists and institutions in order to facilitate migrant children's schooling, while everyday resistance materialises, in the form of home-making strategies, even in the most abject spaces (the camp). I argue that this instantiation of the EU border regime in the city of Athens in that particular moment, along with all the ensuing border entanglements that it brought about, functioned as a way to *temporally* contain those arriving by slowing down the pace of transit. As a result, the tactics developed from below aimed at regaining control over migrant time, by

way of claiming space in the city through squatting, politics of everyday life and collective living, the schooling of migrant children, and place-making in the camp.

This chapter places the city at the centre of the analysis and examines the links and dependencies between the examined spaces. In particular, it interrogates how the spatial arrangement and produced temporalities of camps, squats and schools and the city shape and are shaped by the enforcement and the contestation of the border. The city is increasingly a prime location for the study of migrations and bordering as migrants settle there; cities are the main final or intermediary destination for those on the move (Schiller and Çaglar 2010). It is where migrant people can look for temporary employment in order to raise funds to continue their journey, it is where most opportunities are found, and where they can join and become part of the togetherness, diversity and anonymity of everyday urban life.

Athens is no exception but it has certain interesting peculiarities. As chapter one lays out, migration policy in Greece has historically been characterised by abandonment and performative repression. As a result, since the 1970s migrants have been arriving there with the aim to transit the country. Their transit lasted sometimes for years: in the absence of routes to legality, their strategy has been temporary undocumentedness, until being able to move on. Athens has usually had a high demand for undocumented labour and provided several informal ways of surviving outside the realm of the state. In particular, the resurgence of the social and political movements in the 2000s (Arampatzi 2017) created a parallel flourishing solidarity economy and infrastructure to which migrants could turn to. In this way, migrants have been able to remain in the country, avoiding detention, living as invisibles and working undocumented sometimes for decades.

Cities are, therefore, critical sites for the de facto inclusion of migrant populations but also for the emergence of new alliances, subjectivities, new processes of political subjectivation and new solidarities. In the case of Athens in the past decade, these

solidarities have often been forged around shared vulnerabilities and a shared sense of precariousness. But the city is also where marginalisation and exclusion take shape and materialise. In this sense, the urban is a political space "*where struggles for power, control and ownership are reflected and shaped through the intense (mediated) meetings of people, technologies and places*" (Georgiou 2008, p. 224). It is particularly important to study the urban as a site of bordering because migration control there severely impacts on people's everyday experiences. It therefore is crucial for whether migrants are able to stay, find employment and have health care or be detained and deported (Fauser 2017). Finally, it matters for an additional reason: the invasion of borderwork in everyday urban spaces creates boundaries within the city, polarises and increases tensions locally, while racialising and marginalising large segments of the urban population, often irrespectively of their legal status. Everyday bordering compounds existing vulnerabilities and creates additional ones for some as border control today produces a very narrow, and often racialised, understanding of who belongs and deserves rights. As a result, for example, people of colour, even when they are citizens or possess legal status may also face exclusions or may constantly have to prove that they belong and have the right to be there.

The next section explores these issues in relation to the city of Athens as a result of the 2015 border crisis. I document the spatial arrangement of bordework there, the movements of my participants between these spaces, and, ultimately, the impact that the involvement of new and unexpected actors in borderwork has had on the city. By tracing their movements in the city and between camps, squats and schools as they go about their jobs and daily activities, I highlight how these relate to each other and the city and how this in turn shapes the experiences and the subversion of the border. The rest of the chapter demonstrates how the concept of everyday bordering, as it is also empirically supported by this thesis, does not sit well with the two opposing narratives of our times, that of a

borderless Europe and that of a Fortress Europe. The final section focuses on the more temporal functions of the border, the element of time and pace (of transit), the different temporalities that (co)exist in and are shaped by the three spaces.

7.2. Borderwork and contestation in the city

As Athens swiftly became part of the geographies of internalisation of EU's borders, a new reception infrastructure emerged or was engulfed by the border regime: camps, schools, squats, hotspots, detention centres. Many of those previously involved in facilitating the quick transit were now caught up in administering the lives of those that could not move on yet. Sophia, the German activist who guided me through the camp of Skaramagas, was one of them: she had initially arrived in Greece in 2015 to volunteer in a small local charity on the island of Lesbos, mostly distributing clothes, warm food and giving directions and advice for their next steps to those arriving. Following the political developments and events described in this thesis, she decided to move to Athens in the spring of 2016 to participate in the occupations of buildings that were then taking place en masse. However, eventually, and as the needs grew dramatically, she ended up volunteering in the camps too. Her story was not unusual at the time, as many Europeans 'came to help refugees' (Kantor 2018) by volunteering interchangeably in camps and squats, thus blurring the boundaries between state and non-state actors, philanthropy and solidarity (Theodossopoulos 2016).

In a similar fashion, local people, such as the school teachers I interviewed, Katerina, Sara and Sotiria, spent their time teaching migrant children in schools and camps, which was part of their job, and organising school enrollments and educational activities in the squats, which had to do with their politics. Farhad, a squat resident, spent his time helping out in occupied buildings housing migrants in the city. In particular, he was a core member of the collective that set up a new squat, becoming in this way a new political subject in the city.

Farzane, the Afghan mother of three, while living in the squat when I met her, had spent several months in a camp as well. She still returned there to collect her UNHCR allowance every month, and had to pick up her children from school everyday at 13.00.

The following section tells the stories of these bordered subjectivities, looking at their experiences moving through the city, through and between the spaces that form the field of this study, the border in the city. It also documents the impact these bordered encounters had on the declining Athenian public space and public sphere. These stories draw attention to a host of different urban experiences attempting to juggle the border in the city, either by cushioning its impact on the life of others, running the risk of getting entangled in the border regime, or by claiming back and relinquishing control over migrant time.

7.2.1. Everyday encounters in the city: embodying and resisting the border

When I first met Farhad, he was a squatter, he only recently had his asylum application approved, following two years of waiting in Greece. His new status made him permanently ineligible for the state's benefit allowance that previously, as an asylum seeker, he was entitled to (cash assistance and housing). For the Greek state he was now able to take care of himself, find employment, secure accommodation, pay taxes and so on. Farhad could indeed now work and travel but he chose to stay and help out in the squats in Athens. He joined as a *solidarian* in an anarchist refugee squat in Exarcheia, because it seemed more aligned with his own horizontal politics:

> "I am in the squat since the beginning, the first assembly. We tried to do things differently from the beginning, to be inclusive, to have all genders and sexualities, and to take the decisions together. We had three assemblies to decide how to handle the entrance and security. It's very tiring but it is democratic".

His words indirectly point to a criticism towards certain exclusionary and hierarchical practices that he had encountered in the squat and wanted to avoid replicating. These practices, as discussed in chapter five, did very little to challenge existing power relations and inequalities produced by the border regime, and very often reproduced and reinforced certain vulnerabilities. In this sense, his new role and identity as a solidarian could be considered a subversion of these inequalities, created by the border and reproduced by other actors. If the function of the border is to vulnerabilise, then Farhad's story of self-empowerment directly challenges that function. The border categorised him as a vulnerable subject, which was not fundamentally challenged by his experiences residing in the squat. But he contested this imposed identity of vulnerability by staying in Athens and becoming a solidarian. In this way, by choosing himself now to stay immobile, even though all he wanted before was to move on, and by standing in solidarity with others on the basis of a shared precariousness, he infringed the border and the practices meant to exclude and vulnerabilise him. He became a new political subject, he connected with others, with locals, with other migrants, all those that the regime intends to keep apart, to segregate. He took part, in this way, in the city, its life, its politics, he contested the function of the border through his involvement, his commitment and his deliberate immobility. His choices, decisions and practices came to challenge, on a personal and a collective level, the "empty presents" and "uncertain futures" (Griffiths 2014) produced for him by the border, in this way claiming control over how his time was to be spent.

Using one's involvement to contest the regime is also illustrated in the case of Sara that chose the role of a teacher working in an NGO consciously to break the isolation and "to be in contact with migrants", as she told me. For her it was the only possibility to work in a professional capacity with this population. Many others, who, through working within this

system that aims to segregate and isolate, came in close contact with these populations, often becoming their allies. I examined the entanglement of activists in administering the lives of migrants in chapter five and six pointing to the ways that such involvement often consists in conducting borderwork. However, for some of them it also presented an opportunity to come into close proximity with these non-citizens, creating new spaces of encounters, antagonistic knowledges and channels of communication but also challenging the neat association of certain logics with specific spaces and blurring where certain logics reside.

In this sense, a new social space emerged in Athens during that period that initiated various encounters as many people converged there and, in one way or another, became involved in the management of this border crisis. Some of them formed by default part of the border regime while others were antagonistic to it. Large segments of both categories remained bound to their default position and performed their duties, either constructing or challenging the border in the city. However, there were those that did not perform their assigned and expected role. Solidarians getting entangled in bordering rationales and practices, on the one side, and, on the other, civil servants using their discretionary power to secure the education of child migrants. As I have empirically detailed throughout this thesis and will explore in more detail in this chapter, the spaces that actors function in do not necessarily and unequivocally determine their practices, nor are they homogeneously governed by a unifying rationale. On the contrary, different and even contradictory rationales and logics can co-exist at the same time in spaces, which can in turn accommodate a variety of encounters and practices. As a result, *becoming involved* is not by default in a conforming or subversive relation to the border regime. On the contrary, *becoming involved* is in itself a dynamic and complex process that is productive: it produces new subjectivities and rationalities that are either co-opted by the border or lead to its infringement.

7.2.2. From bordering to contestation: Victoria Square and Exarcheia

The spatiality of the housing of the newcomers is particularly relevant. There was a certain concentration of this population to specific Athenian neighbourhoods. This is closely related to the availability of housing, whether newcomers were allocated to it (camps and NGO apartments) or they found it themselves (squats and private apartments). This spatial arrangement depended on and was generally shaped by many factors: the availability of cheap housing; the availability of empty apartments to rent and empty buildings to occupy and so on. All these necessities were concentrated in certain areas of the city, inner city neighbourhoods that had gradually been abandoned by middle class Greek families in the past two decades (Dalakoglou 2016). As the 'target' population inhabited those urban and semi-urban spaces, a whole range of service providing organisations were set up there too, state and non-state: extra-curriculum support for children, language schools for children and adults, legal services for asylum applications, mental health services. Most of the big INGOs, Médecins Sans Frontiers, International Rescue Committee, Médecins du Monde, and humanitarian actors, such as the UNHCR, set up branch offices in those areas to provide services directly or through subcontracting local NGOs, such as Praxis, Metadrasi, the Greek Refugee Forum. Alongside, an array of less bureaucratised newly founded charities, also popped up there with more social and in a way ground up activities.

The spatial concentration of those actors and activities there created various border entanglements that further introduced the border in the city but also provided the spatial focus for its contestation. As I have documented throughout this study, bordering is a set of practices that categorise, segregate and exclude, often by negating migrants of their time or control over it. This borderwork is conducted everyday by different actors, not necessarily state authorities, police and border guards. Much of this work has to do with administering

the lives of migrants: labelling, assessing vulnerability and making recommendations, providing legal services and advice, prioritising some over others. These tasks are the primary domain of humanitarian actors and are, hence, performed by those on the ground. These are so intrinsically linked and tied up with the function of the border (Pallister-Wilkins 2015) in that they are in a sense bordering themselves. Therefore, the deployment of the border there had a specific impact on these areas and on the city as a whole. In certain respects (e.g. in relation to the schooling of children), urban inequalities in inner Athens were compounded by these new populations. However, these same areas were eventually re-invigorated and public space there was reactivated by new uses and activities brought by the newcomers. Additionally, a space opened up for the contestation of the border through politics of everyday life, through friendship and cultural exchange.

Time is inextricably linked with the crafting of these new urban sociabilities of solidarity and shared precariousness: these stretch over a period in time in the everyday in order to function as an imperceptible act of escape (Papadopoulos et al. 2008) both from accelerated and decelerated time produced by the border. More importantly, these experiences of time ultimately challenge power relations, which are produced by the border and are ingrained in the encounter between host and hosted, local and migrant, service-provider and beneficiary. As explained in chapter two, power is yielded in prosaic ways and through mundane practices in daily life. Therefore, resistance too takes place there and is often subtle, informal and silent. These forms of resistance, according to James Scott (1989) are usually “the most vital means by which lower classes manifest their political interests” (p. 33) and can even be accompanied by public performances of subordination.

Every day, Farhad, after finishing with his lunch shift in the occupied hotel, he made his way to the other squat, on foot or by bike. It was not more than a 15 minute walk but it usually took him longer as he met people along the way. He traversed Victoria Square, then

walked along the Alexandra's park. The actual name of this park is Pedion Areos but had become known among non-Greek speakers as Alexandra park, from the name of the boulevard that delimited it on one side. Passing the park, Farhad eventually crossed the invisible border of Exarcheia. Along the way, he greeted friends, migrants, locals, solidarians, all of whom he had met in Athens through his activities in the migrant squatting movement. He considered the whole area as his home, he felt very confident and safe as fascists and the police avoided crossing into the self-organised neighbourhood. This was how most of my participants also felt moving in those Athenian inner-city neighbourhoods, where public space was co-constituted horizontally and in a way repurposed by its new inhabitants.

Sophia, lived in the centre of Athens when I met her. She also crossed Victoria Square every day either to go to work or to go out and meet friends. By then she commuted to the camp of Skaramagas by car, it was a 30-40 minute drive from the centre, depending on the traffic. But until recently she commuted using public transport, two metro lines and one bus. This was what most camp residents also did if they were to go to the centre. It took about one hour, taking into account walking to and from the station, and many camp residents had to do it on a daily basis. They went down to Omonia Square to sell artefacts that they had made or mended, to find employment, to hustle or simply to kill time.

> "Even though it sounds far it is not really; think about all those that have to commute for one hour or more on a daily basis to go to work in London, in Berlin. It's just that somehow we don't think of those areas, the ones around the camps, as urban or as belonging to the city. But they do and Skaramagas residents are the living proof of that, they refuse to disappear and to be invisible".

She alerts us to the tendency to disregard these semi-urban spaces, where products and excess people are warehoused and kept out of sight. Her own relation to these camps

and the squats, her professional and political involvement there but also the camps' residents own refusal to stay far and become invisible, challenge this spatial segregation. The comparison to commuting is also interesting: while the time spent by many commuting to and from work is of similar length to the time spent between the camp and the city, we would never consider commuters as not belonging to the city. In this sense, the spatial segregation brought about by the border regime is not only achieved through pure distancing. It is rather through the allocation of certain kinds of spaces to certain populations that creates the emotional and moral distancing and segregation between citizens and non-citizens.

As I have previously discussed in chapter four, the camp is a place that simultaneously includes and excludes. The camp is ambiguous and this ambiguity is embodied by the residents too. They go to the city, they meet locals, they meet other migrants residing in squats and apartments in the centre. There their identity as camp residents potentially marks them as foreign bodies while in the camp it homogenises and anonymises them. But they too make up the human geography of those inner-city neighbourhoods and certainly of Victoria Square and Exarcheia. They too are the service users of the NGOs and charities; they too are the owners and the customers of shops in Victoria Square. Victoria Square has been a point of reference for Sophia for a while now and she attests to the changes:

> "I saw the square change. I think that the Greeks, I guess that goes for middle class Greeks, have retreated a little from public space, into the private sphere and into the digital of course. So the migrants gradually settling in those neighbourhoods have truly changed them. They hang out on the streets and squares, I think it's cultural. So Acharnon street looks and feels a little bit like a Little Damascus and a Little Dhaka and a Little Baghdad at the same time [laughs]. I really like it. But you'd have to ask some locals too, not everyone is happy with these changes."

Sophia expresses her delight about the reinvigoration of Victoria Square by its new inhabitants. She also points to a contestation over public space that had been taking place in Athens these past years. Chapter one and chapter five have historicised the contestation over public space and inhabitance in the centre and, in particular, in Victoria Square. In the previous decade, this inner-city square was the theatre of the mobilisation of two antagonistic socio-political rationales regarding who belongs in the city. This has fluctuated in time and has been facilitated or hindered by different governmental rationales. Indicatively, the eviction in December 2012 of the social centre of Villa Amalia, which had spearheaded antifascist struggles in the area, was crucial for the rise of exclusionary and nativist narratives over who has the right to inhabit the square. The capture of this space by racist and fascist groups, inciting violence against non-Greeks, culminated in brutal, and sometimes lethal, attacks against migrants and antifascists. During the same period, the politics of fear of the conservative government, the highly visible police raids targeting migrants and a public discourse portraying them as a threat to public health, legitimised these actions in the eyes of many. As a response, the antifascist and antiracist movement mobilised at the neighbourhood level in local assemblies, in order to counter these exclusionary narratives and practices. The convergence of different local political groups as well as international activists and migrants contributed greatly in the cancelling out of these politics of fear, through everyday politics, encounters and cohabitation.

Maria, the local activist, is one of those that felt very positive about the newcomers. She lived in Exarcheia but had to cross Victoria almost on a daily basis too, on her way to the squat or simply to go out. Victoria was the closest metro station to her apartment.

> "It's such a different place now with the migrants. The square is very lively, multicultural, there are always people, children playing, even women with their families or in groups, they sit on benches and chat, watching the passers by. Before it

was a more transient place, people mostly crossed it to get to the metro. Now it's lived, usually you can barely find a free bench. And there are so many different existences cohabitating that square: older Greek men, Afghani women, young northern European volunteers, also more shady figures -smugglers and dealers".

If bordering is about segregation through specific geographies of exclusion, then the appropriation and repurposing of those spaces is a contestation of that border function. The creation of a social space that reverses the meanings, roles, identities and spatialities that are forced on people, neighbourhoods and cities, is antagonistic to state power. These inner-city neighbourhoods were forced in a way to become part of the geographies of internalisation of EU's border regime and to play a role in the social and spatial segregation of those arriving. However, a space of encounters was created at the same time, transforming these places, bringing to the foreground the experiences of the 'others' and creating a breeding ground for the contestation of the border through the politics of everyday: living together, being friends, sharing spaces and resources, sharing precariousness and mutual aid, cultural exchange, knowledge creation. The common vocabulary (solidarian), the collective renaming of places (Alexandra park) and the vernacular knowledge are telling.

7.3. (Un)bordering Athens

The main conceptual standpoint of this thesis is that the border is a range of practices that take place in the everyday urban spaces, as opposed to the physical geographical space that marks the state's limits. Borders define who can be there, for how long and with what rights (right to work, access to social services, housing, benefits). Ultimately, borders are part of the state's toolkit that maintains order, encloses and protects the national resources by categorising, segregating and vulnerabilising certain segments of the population. In other

words, the fundamental function of borders is the enclosure and protection of spaces, the territories of a state and its sovereignty, its resources. In relation to migration, this means that some mobile people are constructed as threats and are heavily policed, targeted, denied entry and excluded. As many border scholars argue, borders do not necessarily stop people from migrating, settling and working in new places but rather "*significantly shape and frame the conditions of their mobility and their lives through policy, discourse, and practice*" (Fauser 2017, p. 5).

In chapter two, I reviewed the burgeoning literature that maps the geographies of bordering and shows that this function rarely takes place at the edge of a state's territory for various reasons. Despite popular imaginaries, populist and alarmist discourses and media narratives, and despite the often deadly violence that takes place at the physical border of states, border control, more often than not, unfolds inside the nation state. There it takes the form of multiple and intersectional exclusions and marginalisations, in particular, in cities, urban public spaces and infrastructure. In this sense, a border is not a line that someone can cross once and then, once inside, they can be accepted, settle and live their life. On the contrary, migrants must constantly prove, depending on class, gender, sexuality and race, that they have the right to be there, they have the right to work, they are entitled to health care, to housing. This is not even novel, as historians have shown: "*in the early modern period, like today, processes of inclusion and exclusion did not only, or even primarily, take place at the gates"* (Lucassen 2012, p. 238). The border is not experienced in an even fashion by everyone, but it functions in a classed, gendered and racialised way (Yuval-Davis 2013). However, the urban has re-emerged today as an important site for the study of bordering. Urban theories offer insights into how the changing border spatialities in the city may reflect the rescaling of political power and capitalism at large (Varsanyi 2011; Coleman 2012) and the new geographies of urbanisation and capital accumulation (Braudel 1992).

At the urban scale local actors and local institutions have an important and complex role to play in enforcing bordering practices but also in carving out place-specific practices and spaces for migrants. Both of these are place-specific, go hand in hand and, in one or another, form part of the border regime. *"This dual process turns the urban realm into a (conflictive and very place-specific) site of negotiating, shaping and interconnecting local practices of border control and urban citizenship; and in effect renders European cities an uneven landscape of urban borderspaces*" (Lebuhn 2013, p. 38). All the relevant local actors in Athens, from municipal authorities, to solidarians from the anti-authoritarian milieu and even migrants, were crucial for the regime. They were all aware of the other relevant actors in the city and would refer people sometimes back and forth between each other. Many arrived at the doorstep of squats referred to by someone in the camps. Similarly, squats would also make referrals to one another and everyone would know where the MsF office for mental health was or what the process was for asylum seekers who needed the National Insurance Number. This vernacular knowledge and shared vocabularies forged in a sense the border regime, by creating a sort of complicity between all those involved even in capacities that were meant to antagonise the border.

The previous three chapters have explored the emerging border spatialities and temporalities in three specific locations around the city of Athens between 2015 and 2017. The camps were gradually set up in locations that city and state authorities deemed appropriate and suitable for the newcomers. These were semi-urban, peripheral zones where residents could be partially included while remaining largely invisible to the rest of the urban population. Yet residents carved out spaces of their own inside and around the camps but also made themselves visible by being in and inhabiting the city. As these camp geographies extended the border into everyday urban spaces, a number of counter dynamics emerged at the city level. As a response to the attempted marginalisation of the camp residents, many

migrants, along with local and international solidarians, occupied empty and abandoned buildings in and around the city centre. The claim was that social inclusion presupposes and depends on the spatial inclusion of newcomers in the urban fabric and that migrant struggles are part and parcel of the anti-capitalist movement. A new form of ‘urban citizenship’ (Bauböck 2003; García 2006) gradually emerged from the convergence of those disparate actors. Finally, the school emerged as a space of political contestation that embodied the border and the segregation that it brought about. Depending on the actors involved, the school was, on the one hand, often turned into a spectacle for the migrant children, while, on the other, most of them were silently excluded from registering and attending.

Athens is a space of particular and intense precarity, constantly and daily reshaped by subaltern struggles and street-level politics, where precarious migrants, through imperceptible politics (Papadopoulos et al. 2008), were often found at the heart of these processes, molding new socialites and spatialities, as empirically demonstrated in this thesis. Even though ephemeral, these urban spaces, carved out through mundane everyday practices of those living on the fringes, were nonetheless micro-acts of resistance to the border. Athens’ urban landscape offered both formal and informal infrastructure and spaces for its new residents: former industrial areas accommodated camps, abandoned hotels housed stranded migrants. Residents in turn often reconstituted the urban landscape in the areas that they occupied, bringing a bustling street life, creating new places and new sociabilities in opposition to the formal bordering practices.

The empirical chapters have offered a thick and contextually rich description of Athens as the border, empirically contributing to the understanding of the embodied effects of urban everyday bordering. Not only is border control focalised there, particularly but not exclusively in times of crisis, and intensely deployed on its streets, squares and public transport but Athens is quite literally experienced as a border by all those that are stranded

there. This is where the border regime raised an invisible wall to them, allocating them to certain urban spaces, and, therefore this is where their immobility took effect. Finally, as the thesis has demonstrated throughout, the border regime engulfed Athens infrastructure, often co-opted many actors into unwittingly performing crucial border functions, producing new spatial and temporal exclusions.

Therefore, Athens is the border. But it is also its contestation: the city's everyday social infrastructure, molded from below throughout the crisis years, (collective kitchens, time banks, squats) accommodated all those living on its fringes. It allowed them not only to survive under the radar but to create an alternative urban condition and experiences co-constituted by all those that inhabited, in one way or another, those bordered spaces, through this collective presence. There, the politics of migrant resistance was performed in the everyday practices of migrants and their supporters and was based on the "*mundane production of information, tricks for survival, mutual care, social relations, services exchange, solidarity, and sociability, which challenge security policies and controls and establish an alternative form of life*" (Skleparis 2017, p. 113). New subjectivities and spatialities by subaltern migrants in precarious spaces were formed through processes of mobile commoning (Trimikliniotis et al. 2016): those invisible mobile knowledges (e.g. about crossings, shelters, police controls and surveillance but also about social support, ethnic economies and existing communities) circulating among migrants.

As the everyday bordering requires each city to undergo a process of adoption, adaptation and implementation that is place-specific, what different actors do is important as these "*come with plenty of leeway for local actors to modify and soften intended strategies of control*" (Lebuhn 2013, p. 44). For example, as I documented in chapter six, a successful school enrollment came down to the discretionary power of each individual school director. Some directors were willing to accept the makeshift certificate provided by the squatters as a

proof of address for the children while others refused to even let them through the school doors. In that sense, both logics could inhabit the school grounds at the same time and it was their complex interplay that ultimately governed the schooling of child migrants without fully including them nor excluding them altogether. But if the crucial aim is to incorporate the everyday of urban life into the management and inclusion or exclusion of migrants, then all these actors, spaces and practices aiming to counter the state's bordering practices are also relevant. As bordering or subversive practices and rationales are not necessarily bound in certain spaces, all those involved could potentially facilitate the temporal management and the spatial concentration, which is crucial both for the control of this population but also for societal peace. The border domestication in Athens forced certain actors to become involved in order to enforce, counter or at least cushion the negative impact of state policies. These actors then often run the risk of becoming (inadvertently) co-opted by the border regime as they ended up administering other people's lives. In this sense, Athens, certain local institutions and actors came to form part of the EU's border regime, depending on what and how they did it there.

At the same time, migrants and their allies constantly, often in a quiet and mundane way, challenge the state's bordering practices. More often than not, these subversions are silent, at the everyday level, and they might appear insignificant or remain unknown. It is a group of young men successfully crossing the Greek–Macedonian border that nobody finds out about; a family residing in the camp of Skaramagas making a (temporary) home for themselves and sending their children to school; a group of young women running a magazine from a squat in Athens. Recognising such acts and practices as antagonistic to and challenging of the border regime is facilitated by examining the temporal dimensions of borders. If borders negate migrants control over their time, then reappropriating time should be acknowledged as subversion. The next section looks at these border temporalities.

7.4. Temporal containment: governing transit

The processual and everyday nature of the border has a lot to do with managing time, that is other people's time. In the everyday bureaucratic side of things, this entails making people wait. Waiting seems to be fundamental for the way that the border functions, as people faced with the border are made to wait: to get processed; to get food and provisions; to get accommodation; they queue at the asylum service or the immigration police for days, even months; then appointments get cancelled or postponed; and, finally, they await a decision on their applications and permit renewals. The 2015 border crisis ruptured with this imposition of waiting at the border, as people pushed forward to continue their journey and reach their destination. Back then, the migratory journey, from the shores of Turkey, through Greece and all the way to Northern Europe, was a matter of days, as transiting migrants raced against the ever looming closure of borders further north.

In this sense, this study contributes to the literature on the temporal features and functions of borders today: the border as a tool and mechanism to govern time, especially in emergencies. In this section I document the way in which the absorption by the border regime of local, at times even antagonistic, actors took place in Athens and gave rise to this temporal function of the border. In other words, I argue that the instantiation of the border in Athens in that particular moment functioned as a way to temporally contain and manage those arriving and to slow down their transiting. In essence, Greece is still a transit territory but the transit has become stretched in time; it is its speed that has decelerated and been protracted. In this sense, the materialisation of the border in Greece, and in Athens in particular, functions more like a 'speed box' (Papadopoulos et al. 2008), a decelerating mechanism, a buffer zone that indefinitely contains people, rather than just a filter (den Boer 1995) that sorts through and categorises populations. The aim is not necessarily to halt

mobility altogether but mostly to decelerate its speed in order to make it governable, or at least to appear as such. In other words, the buffer is not only spatial but it is also temporal; similarly, what is contested is time and control over it.

As the literature reviewed in chapter two illustrated, the management of borders has always had a temporal aspect and it is as much about managing time as it is about managing space. Vradis et al. (2018, p. 58) explain: *"in immigration and border management in particular, exerting control over time rather than space, is all about governing mobility. This control over time is inextricably tied up with power relations, discipline and bureaucratic domination".* It is the tensions, overlaps and intersections between the distinct temporalities that produce "*seemingly arbitrary landscapes of time in which migrants find themselves marooned, looking for an exit sign*" (Andersson 2014, p. 806).

Already during the peak of the 2015 border crisis, managing time was part of the Greek government's strategy. Research has extensively documented that part of the government's strategy was to let arriving migrants transit through the Greek territory as quickly as possible, even at times actively facilitating their transit (Franck 2017; Fotiadis 2018; Vradis et al. 2018). After going through a registration process upon arrival on the island of Lesbos, or swiftly thereafter, arriving migrants received an administrative deportation order legally expelling them but de facto allowing them to move on to other EU member-states. With transiting migrants racing against the ever looming closure of borders in the north, these deportation orders became a sought after exit strategy, almost a right to free movement (Franck 2017) as they facilitated the quick transit through the country (Fotiadis 2018). They were used as travel rather than deportation documents (Trubeta 2015) by hundreds of thousands of migrants in order to cross Greece towards the Western Balkan Route.

This strategy of facilitated and (seemingly) uncontrolled transit was possible due to an ad hoc convergence of politics and strategies with regards to the governance of migrants'

transit time. First and foremost, it was dictated by the desire of those arriving to move on as quickly as possible as the closure of the border further north lurked. It was further propelled by Greece's inability to properly register, let alone accommodate and process potential asylum applications of all those arriving. Ultimately, it was also dictated by the sheer impossibility of sealing off borders, especially during such moments of heightened pressure. In that moment, the transit was facilitated by all relevant actors on the ground: the police issued deportation orders on arrival so that people could move on (Franck 2017; Trubeta 2015); humanitarian organisations set up shop along the main transit routes on the island offering shelter, food and clothes (Pallister-Wilkins 2015; 2018; Cabot 2018; Dijstelbloem 2019); local and international activists organised or facilitated migrants' transit at various points along the Western Balkan Route (El-Shaarawi and Razsa 2019).

These (un)bordering encounters between migrants, their allies and enforcement authorities, stemming from the cohabitation of possibly antagonistic logics and strategies in the same spaces, formed and spatialised certain alliances. These alliances, resulting from the above mentioned convergence of tactics and practices by such seemingly disparate actors, made the quick transit of those arriving possible, despite the varying and often conflicting motivations behind these practices. However, these also resulted in certain spatialisations that streamlined migrant mobility ultimately turning their transit easy to govern and eventually to suppress.

Eventually the ad hoc, implicit and temporary coalition that had spontaneously emerged from certain governmental, humanitarian and solidarity encounters and practices dwindled. But not before laying the groundwork for the territorialisation of the border in Athens and for the institutionalisation of mobility in the spring of 2016. The strategy of the Greek state of facilitated transit was throughout this period at odds with neighbouring member-states and supranational governing bodies such as the EU. Eventually the

European Commission, through the EU-Turkey Statement and the hotspot approach, imposed a more orderly and managed pace of arrivals and a much slower pace of transit. The closure of the Greek-Macedonian border in March 2016 grounded thousands of transiting migrants in Greece and stretched their transit over a period of months or even years. In that moment, transit through the Greek territory became slower as mobility became institutionally controlled (Martin and Tazzioli 2016).

The exercise of this temporal control over the mobility of transiting migrants signalled a return to normality: now migrant bodies were slowed down again, illegalised, partially and temporarily included in a subordinated way. As migrants became stranded, they de facto got incorporated in local economies and workforces and, in this way, migrant journeys became prolonged and stretched in time, and migrants were again invisibilised and normalised. This spatialised the crisis and the border within Greek territorial boundaries and especially in Athens. As the geographies of internalisation of EU's borders now included the city of Athens, a new reception infrastructure emerged or was engulfed by the border regime: camps, schools, squats, hotspots, detention centres. These spaces were imbued with a variety of different logics and accommodated a wide range of (un)bordering practices and encounters. All those previously involved in facilitating the quick transit were now caught up in the administration of the lives of those that could not move on yet.

But at the same time, it created new spaces of encounters that (potentially) infringed the border. A series of squats housing migrants, as well as countless solidarity initiatives, were set up in Athens as a result of the entrapment of the migrant population there and against the state's solution of camps. Camp residents in turn too, by re-purposing the materiality of the camp to make temporary homes there and by devising livelihood strategies, re-appropriated control over their time and politicised the camp. This gave rise to a new social space, which relied on the convergence of political forces and alliances, both local and

international, as well as between locals and migrants, creating new solidarities and political processes of subjectivation. In this sense, the encounters between different actors within this new social space is what (re)produced or infringed the border regime, (un)bordering the city. Therefore, as this thesis claims, it is imperative to study these interactions and what different actors did in different spaces and whether these contest the function of the border.

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I showed how local solidarity, political and social movements, but also independent non-politically affiliated individuals, mobilised forming different networks in order to respond to the humanitarian emergency. I documented the ways in which these convergences impacted on the city and in particular those inner-city neighbourhoods and urban spaces that were in decline. As migrants settled there, European organisations and grassroots initiatives followed suit; youth from Germany and pensioners from the UK flooded the shores of Lesbos and the streets of Athens to assist arriving migrants. The spatialised convergence of solidarity around the newcomers and the shared vulnerabilities gave rise to new bordered subjectivities, new politics and new citizenship claims, contesting the state's divisive narratives. In this sense, the city and the spaces inhabited by the newcomers and their supporters, or were created for and by them, became the prime sites of contestation over who belongs and has the right to be there and make claims.

Much of the contestation around the more recent configurations of the EU's border regime has been as much about space as about time. Put differently, it has not only been a struggle over where people would settle but also, and maybe most crucially, a contestation over when, for how long and doing what. This chapter discussed these temporal aspects of the EU border regime using a conceptual lens of time and mobility, and considering the border from an urban perspective. Controlling time and how it is spent is tied up in power

relations and is often used to discipline and dominate others. Therefore, looking at the border as an attempt to control time (most crucially, the pace of transit) and to subjugate through the imposition of waiting, allows us to also recognise strategies that contest it in everyday practices and mundane encounters. This presupposes a conceptual turn regarding the nature and the function of borders: instead of fixed geographical demarcating lines, we need to think of borders as everyday practices, usually taking place in urban public spaces, aiming at stretching transit time for migrants.

8. CONCLUSION

This concluding chapter epitomises the main ideas of the thesis and provides a brief overview of the argument presented, and outlines the main empirical and theoretical contributions. Finally, it lays out some ideas for future research and personal plans drawing from existing and future research projects that I am involved in.

8.1. Empirical and theoretical contributions

Based on a multi-sited urban ethnography, this thesis explored the border regime in Athens following the 2015 border crisis. Drawing on an analysis of the complex web of actors that inhabit the border, the thesis documented how certain practices, either enforcing or subverting the border, emerge from everyday, and sometimes mundane, encounters between actors in different spaces in the city of Athens. I argued that the double crisis in Greece produced an instantiation of the border there, which swiftly engulfed the city of Athens in the geographies of internalisation of the EU's border regime. At the same time, antagonistic geographies of contestation of the border emerged, drawing from and building on the resurgence of social and political movements that the city had experienced in the 2000s. The thesis presented a thick description and a rich analysis of the political and social space that emerged, problematising what both bordering and subversion might look like today.

This detailed and situated account of everyday bordering positions Athens within the wider literature around urban borders and calls attention to the local and embodied effects of complex global processes, such as migration and urbanisation. Such a focus on Athens as an 'ordinary city, with 'ordinary streets' (Hall 2015) as opposed to the 'global cities', allows us to rethink migration "*as part of social and political processes of reconfiguration emerging*

within and across connected societies, rather than as an assault on national integrity, which is what she calls 'migrancy problematic'" (p. 855). According to Hall, the perspective offered by ordinary cities nuances our understandings of urban diversity and cosmopolitanism by going beyond the professional creative classes in order to unveil alternative urbanisms. In Hall's words: *"the notation of the street to engage with a public space of overlapping urbanism and loose infrastructure in which a vast variety of ideas and infrastructures from near and far worlds intersect"* (p. 856).

In order to analyse and understand the production of the border and its impact on the everyday urban experiences of those that inhabit those bordered spaces, I drew on a variety of theoretical contributions from different disciplines, literatures, fields and methodologies: geography of camps, institutional ethnographies, critical border studies, mobilities and temporalities studies, history of squatting and social movements, citizenship studies and urban theory. Additionally, I presented a detailed account of the social, political and geopolitical events that form the context of the thesis. These are crucial as they mark a long period of heightened and multi-layered crisis -economic, political, border, humanitarian- that has transformed dramatically the economy, the relations of production, social cohesion, politics and governance in the country.

The main empirical and theoretical contributions of the thesis are the following three: (1) an emphasis on encountering and on (un)bordering practices, rather than solely on border spaces, demonstrating how certain decisions, irrespectively of where they spatialise, enforce or contest the border; (2) the decoupling of certain logics and rationales, which inform (un)bordering practices, from a particular locality, unsettling in this way the dichotomies between spaces of bordering and spaces of resistance and the produced figures, the victim and the rebel, respectively; (3) a focus on borders as the governance and

appropriation of migrant time and, subsequently, a conceptualisation of subversion as a way to gain control over time, in particular when there is little control over space.

Embarking from the conceptualisation of the border as a set of practices that take place in everyday urban spaces by many, and often unexpected, actors, I explored the emergence of this border space in Athens after the 2015 emergency. According to the literature, borderwork can be conducted by anyone who is involved in the administering of the lives of migrants. The thesis argued that it is certain encounters in the spaces that are inhabited by these actors that craft and multiply practices of either bordering (any practice that fulfills the border function) or contestation (any practice that challenges it). As these practices are not an intrinsic fixture of nor can they be neatly assigned to particular spaces, what defines these practices is what actors do when they encounter one another and what kind of logics and rationales inform their decisions: during those moments, actors meet and interact, making critical decisions and choices even in a mundane and everyday way; in this way, they either enforce or challenge the border. These actors include enforcement agents of the state, care workers and other personnel working in camps, municipal authorities and school teachers, but also many others that, by trying to save and to care, inadvertently create forms of domination. Therefore, any involvement in the administration of migrants' lives, produces border entanglements that potentially engulf even unexpected actors and co-opt them into conducting borderwork. This borderwork assigns migrant bodies to certain spaces but it also heavily targets and appropriates their time, by governing the processes involved in service provision, asylum applications, official and unofficial transit. Respectively, it might carve out spaces for practices and embodiments of resistance that give new meanings to the everyday and to the otherwise mundane and often empty presents produced by the border. Finally, equally unexpected alliances are formed between otherwise hostile actors, such as between solidarity activists and bureaucrats.

Challenging the notion of the everywhere of borders, I looked for practices of bordering and contestation in strategic spaces in the city: camps, squats and schools. These are some of the spaces inhabited by migrants and by a variety of other actors whose aim is to either help or control them. These spaces are interconnected with each other and they form part of the wider geographies of internalisation of the EU's border regime, accommodating a variety of, at times even contradictory, logics and practices. Some of them are particularly strategic to the border regime and we are used to thinking of them as spaces of abandonment that enforce the border. The refugee camp is such a space. Yet, as it was empirically supported by this thesis, the camp is a site where multiple rationales coexist. Thus, depending on what the actors do when they encounter each other there, the camp can become a place filled with meaning, social relations and politics. Camp residents create homes, devise livelihood strategies, and in this way, they practice and embody the subversion of the border. These home-making tactics are additionally interesting because they are seemingly at odds with mobility and with the condition of being on the move. But people always try to create conditions of home, even in confinement, precarity, uncertainty and temporariness. What is at the heart of these strategies is solidarity and a shared sense of fate, precariousness and vulnerability produced by the forced proximity of the camp.

Respectively, spaces that are primarily spaces of contestation can become strategic locales for the enforcement of the border in urban spaces. Buildings squatted by activists disrupt the state and the border by giving housing to those that are not supposed to have it. However, sometimes practices that enforce the border, rather than contest it, arise there too. This happens when certain narratives (security against a dangerous outside), vocabularies (vulnerabilities), and logics (exclusion) invade the space and inform the practices of the squatters. Finally, the school, an institution found at the outskirts of government, plays a crucial role in the inclusion or exclusion of child migrants and their families. Arbitrariness and

discretionary power often excluded these children, while in other instances, unexpected alliances within institutions challenged the imposed segregation. Migrant children were neither in nor out of school. There was a complex interplay of logics of exceptionality and normalisation that characterised their schooling. These two competing state rationales were reconciled by bureaucracy.

If bordering is about segregation through specific geographies of exclusion, then the appropriation and repurposing of those spaces through politics of everyday life, social interactions and mundane everyday encounters should be considered and understood as a contestation of that border function. The creation of a social space that reverses the meanings, roles, identities and spatialities that are forced on people, neighbourhoods and cities, is antagonistic to state power. The Athenian inner-city neighbourhoods were forced in a way to become part of the geographies of internalisation of the EU's border regime and to play a role in the social, spatial and temporal segregation of these populations. However, a space of urban (un)bordering encounters and interactions was created at the same time, transforming these places, bringing to the foreground the experiences of the ‘Others’ and creating a breeding ground for contesting the border through politics of everyday: living together, being friends, sharing spaces and resources, through mutual aid, cultural exchange, knowledge creation.

Therefore, the thesis contributed a more nuanced understanding of bordered spaces and people, going beyond dichotomies between the camp as an abject space and the migrant squat as its opposite as well as between victims and rebels. These two bordered spaces are often juxtaposed to one another and are understood by default as antithetical. This study critically examined the squat, interrogating whether the squatters indeed avoided reproducing relations of dependency and domination or they (inadvertently) ended up reinforcing certain vulnerabilities produced by the border regime. Similarly, it examined the

camp as a space where many different logics can coexist, some of which manage to break dependencies and power relations imposed by the border. However insightful and often useful, this dichotomy simplifies and homogenises both spaces, the camp and the squat, neatly assigning a single rationale to each: abandonment and resistance, respectively. By extension, in the camp reside victims and in the squat subversive subjects. Therefore, such dichotomies construct two antagonistic figures depending on where they reside: the migrant as a victim and vulnerable subject and the migrant as a politicised subject. The thesis built an analytical framework using everyday encounters between different actors in different urban settings in order to shed light on the processes that produce practices of bordering or infringement. I argue that, in order for practices to undermine the border, they need to break from the outset with the dependencies and relations of domination produced by it. While there are certain spatial arrangements that facilitate this, such as the squatted buildings in the city centre, this study showed that they can be encountered even in remote and abject spaces, such as the camps.

This thesis has finally argued that there is an often ignored temporal aspect and function of the border, which has a lot to do with governing migrants' time, appropriating their time, negating them control over it, often putting their lives in limbo. Waiting seems to be fundamental for the way that the border operates, as those faced with the border are made to wait: to get processed; to get food and provisions; to get accommodation; they queue at the asylum service or the immigration police for days, even months. Therefore, if the EU's borders are about appropriating time by stranding migrant bodies in buffer zones, in cities, peripheral zones and elsewhere, then its contestation may be found in the politics of everyday life. In this sense, what is significant is what happens during the time spent somewhere rather than solely the spaces where this time is spent.

Ultimately, the arguments presented in this thesis challenge the idea of Fortress Europe. For these reasons, I join others (Tsianos and Karakayali 2010) in arguing that this metaphor is not an accurate way of viewing the borders of Europe today. We tend to think of and depict borders as geographically fixed locations, static lines at the edges of the nation-state's territory. And, while borders do enclose that territory, its resources and people(s), the ways that they go about it are much more convoluted than this static picture alludes. Our political vocabulary here in Europe does not easily allow us to go beyond that image either: Fortress Europe, so commonly invoked both in academia and in politics, perpetuates this image. And while it has certain political and analytical advantages, this metaphor has, on the other side, limited the way we think of borders and, subsequently, the strategies that we identify as subversive. What is problematic here is that the constant evocation of the image of a fortress, with wall-like borders, of borders that can be completely sealed off, has had a detrimental effect on our understanding and imaginaries of resistance. The image of a fortress reinforces the conceptualisation of the state as a uniform and dense block, of its power as solid and unmovable, and its borders as insurmountable and centrally coordinated. And even if the EU borders often resemble a fortress, with the guards outside and inside the gates, its walls and moats, such depictions also create a certain kind of imaginaries of resistance. However, subversion can take many forms and, through practiced and embodied solidarity, can be found in mundane everyday settings, in everyday politics and practices, in cohabitation and in friendship.

8.2. Areas for future research

This final section of the concluding chapter will briefly lay out some ideas and plans for future research. Some of these spring from the current study and are in some ways its natural

continuation, while others are driven by and combine interests from other research projects that I have been involved in.

8.2.1. Cities, bordering and gender

Many European capitals have become sites of contestation over who belongs, with what rights and for how long one is allowed to settle and take part in urban life. On the one side, everyday bordering practices are deployed to govern migrants in the city, increasingly hindering urban inclusion through the policing of the right to housing, the labour market, legal representation. On the other side, cities often act as places of refuge, membership and politics, as well as resistance and new solidarities. Rather than succumbing to a bleak reading of the current socio-political moment, this theme embarks from the premise that our times are crucial for the reimagining of policy and practice at the urban level. Finally, even though nearly half of the world's migrants are women, most policies and legal frameworks are not gender-responsive and therefore compound existing vulnerabilities for women or create new ones. There are important gender dimensions and patterns in the way that the border operates as well as in the ways that it is subverted. For these reasons, a gendered approach to opportunities and experiences of urban social inclusion is imperative.

In the case of the city of Athens in the period in question, these gender dimensions were particularly acute. The city had experienced during the 2000s a feminisation of the social and political movements driven by a renewed focus on everyday practices of care and solidarity. At the same, there had been a significant surge and proliferation of feminist counter-narratives, discourses and groups during the same period. This thesis touched upon such dimensions trying to offer a range of experiences of urban bordering, belonging and subversion. I additionally, attempted to illuminate how these experiences were forged at the intersection of gender with other social categorisations, such as race and class. However, a

more in-depth and nuanced investigation of how state power works at the border through the construction and imposition of gender and sexuality norms is imperative. This would require an intersectional analysis of the interactions between the different actors and the border regime.

8.2.2. Everyday encounters, migrant social inclusion and urban public space

Turning the research gaze away from Greece and towards other EU member-states, where, three years after the 2015 border crisis, migrant populations still struggle to settle and to create any sense of home and belonging. Their social inclusion seems to be hindered by a variety of factors, including hostile policy environments and rising xenophobia in hosting societies, and their intersection with social categorisations such as gender, class, legal status and race. As a result, many experience conditions of uncertainty and limbo and a protracted state of suspension. This theme asks what mechanisms and factors produce this suspension of migrant lives in Europe and seeks to intervene in the mitigation of this condition, by further exploring the concept of everyday urban encounters and by placing them at the heart of the study of migrant social inclusion in the city.

This theme builds on and advances the current study by focusing in particular on the temporal aspects of the border regime. It also brings together ideas from two different research projects that are currently in the funding process. These projects focus on cities at the centre and south periphery of Europe, as well as at its immediate vicinity and interrogate the potential of urban public space to function as an infrastructure for migrants' social inclusion. These projects aim to re-theorise public space through the lens of migration and vice-versa. The theme I am proposing would employ everyday urban encounters, these repeated and mundane interactions that happen during commuting, leisure, livelihood and other daily activities in the city and forge relations between people and the spaces they

traverse. The aim is to develop everyday urban encounters as a qualitative indicators to evaluate urban migrant integration, by focusing on the more affective aspects of inclusion, such as the sense of belonging and community membership. Finally, such a focus on everyday urban encounters is well-suited for intersectional analysis and will allow a reflection and representation of the diversity of migrant populations by analysing how various social categorisations shape spatial behaviours in relation to social inclusion.

8.2.3. Histories and memories of urban migration in Greece

Finally, this theme would contextualise the current study and place the spatio-temporal production of the border in the city of Athens in a wider historical and political context. This in turn, would promote the de-exceptionalisation of the specific borderscape and of the study of borders and migrations, at large. In the past decade, there has been a focus on crisis and emergency research, in particular in migration and border studies and especially in the Greek context. This tendency is also driven and fuelled by the availability of funding. However, this constant chasing of crises contributes to the exceptionalisation of the condition of the unauthorised border crosser. As a response to this tendency, I propose a historical approach to urban migration in the wider metropolitan area of Athens. Again focusing on urban public space, I would explore its use by migrants historically and how successive newcomers have strived for inclusion there. This theme is centred around and particularly interested in the living memories and accounts of older generations of migrants and locals. Such urban narratives, constructed through individual and collective memory will help de-exceptionalise the study of urban migrations in Greece by historicising current developments and contemporary discourses, and by tracing continuities and discontinuities in the border regime production in Greece. It will be based on narrative interviews with long-term urban migrants and other residents, in which participants share own memories, life stories and family

histories in the city. It will also involve extensive archival research in city records and libraries, and discourse analysis of texts and visual representations of key historical moments of migration and settlement.

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