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SOLIDARITY CITIES IN EUROPE

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CHARITY OR PATHWAYS TO CITIZENSHIP: A NEW URBAN POLICY APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION: SOLIDARITY CITIES IN EUROPE

Across Europe, urban solidarity movements are gaining momentum. Under the label of 'Welcoming Cities', 'Cities of Refuge' or 'Solidarity Cities', civil society groups, local politicians and city administrations are defying the growing restrictions of border regimes and migration policies on the European and national level. At the same time, these movements develop specific municipal policies for the protection or social inclusion of people with precarious status. Finally, they act as discursive counterweights to the rise of right-wing parties across Europe who are pushing for the fortification of borders and the criminalisation of migrants.

The 'Sanctuary City' concept has existed in North America since the 1980s, when hundreds of thousands of refugees from the war-torn countries of Central America sought protection from persecution in the USA and Canada. The US government under Ronald Reagan granted asylum to only a handful of these war refugees, leading to increased pressure from religious organisations and migrant initiatives on local politicians and authorities to protect refugees from deportation and to improve their legal status. San Francisco was the first city to pass a 'City of Sanctuary' resolution in 1985, followed by a decree in 1989 which prohibited municipal authorities and police from cooperating with national authorities in the identification, persecution, incarceration and deportation of non-status migrants (Bauder 2016: 176, Lippert/Rehaag 2013). This Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy spread quickly across North America. To date, over 500 American and Canadian cities and municipalities, as well as some US states, have joined the Sanctuary movement.

In the wake of the Lampedusa catastrophe in October 2013, in which over 400 refugees drowned near the coast of the Sicilian island of Lampedusa, the mayor of the Sicilian capital, Leoluca Orlando, was one of the first in Europe to declare his town a 'hospitality town', and to receive all

incoming refugees as "Palermitans" (see Bloch 2018). In 2015, Orlando published the 'Charter of Palermo',[1] which called for the abolition of the residence permit. Instead, citizenship rights should link solely to an individual's place of residence, and should allow each person to freely choose their place of residence.

Strictly speaking, the first Solidarity City in Europe was a village: on 1 June 1998, a boat with 300 refugees from Kurdish territory entered the harbour of Riace, where then mayor Domenico Lucano welcomed them. Until this point, this small town on the Calabrian coast of southern Italy had become something of a ghost town as more and more inhabitants emigrated to the larger Italian cities or abroad. The arrival of these immigrants breathed new life into the town of Riace, and Mayor Lucano decided "to create a place where refugees and locals can live and work together. A global village in one of the poorest regions of Italy" (see Mittelstaedt 2010). In early October 2018, however, the Italian authorities impeached Lucano and placed him under house arrest, accusing him – along with the crews of the civil sea rescue ships – of "abetting illegal migration". Despite his subsequent release, he has since been banned from Riace (see Kron 2018).

While several districts in Germany and the USA have also declared themselves municipalities of solidarity or refuge, the solidarity movement remains a predominantly urban phenomenon in North America and Europe for a number of reasons. Firstly, social struggles and conflicts such as those fought on the issue of migration tend to take place in large cities. Secondly, cities usually represent a more heterogeneous pool of cultures and social strata than rural populations. Thirdly, networks of solidarity organisations and of civil society usually develop in cities rather than in rural communities. Finally, politicians, administrative bodies and civil society groups in cities often already have decades of experience with the coexistence of local communities and immigrants.

SOLIDARITY CITY NETWORKS AND COALITIONS

In the wake of the 2015 crisis of European refugee policy, and following Italy's new right-wing government's repeated blockade of Italian ports for civil sea rescue operations in the Mediterranean, the theory and practice of the Solidarity City movement have gained considerable momentum across Europe. In this context, the aforementioned Charter of Palermo and the Sanctuary movement in North America represent international benchmarks.

Launched in 2016, the 'Solidarity Cities' network was initiated by several European mayors under the

1 International Human Mobility Charter of Palermo 2015, available at: https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/ICP/IDM/2015_CMC/Session-IIIb/Orlando/PDF-CARTA-DI-PALERMO-Statement.pdf

umbrella of the EUROCITIES network in order to promote the reception and integration of refugees. This official alliance is supported by major European cities such as Athens and Thessaloniki, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Ljubljana, Naples, Stockholm and – as of January 2019 – Berlin. 'Solidarity Cities' is pushing for an efficient and coordinated management of what its constitutive document refers to as the "refugee crisis", and calls on the EU Commission to increase funding for the social infrastructure of those cities in Europe where the majority of refugees arrive or are already living.[2]

In 2017, the activist base in German-speaking countries also called for a national alliance of Solidarity Cities. In major cities such as Berlin, Bern, Cologne and Zurich as well as several smaller cities, refugee councils offering assistance to asylum seekers (Flüchtlingsräte), migrant organisations, welcome initiatives, left-wing movements, municipal organisations, church groups and researchers established an alternative city network with the almost identical title 'Solidarity City'.[3] In protest against the blockade of Italian ports and the criminalisation of civil sea rescue operations in the Mediterranean – which is supported by almost all EU governments –, activists from the international sea rescue movement launched the SEEBRÜCKE campaign in the summer of 2018, calling on the mayors of German cities to declare themselves 'safe harbours' for refugees.[4] Today, more than 100 cities and municipalities belong to one or more of these Solidarity Cities networks. A similar campaign entitled 'Call for Safe and Open Harbours' was also launched in Italian and Spanish cities.[5] In Italy, the immigration and security law passed in late 2018 has been met with resolute opposition from numerous municipal and regional politicians. This law, which threatens to strip over 140,000 people of their humanitarian protection status and leave them illegalised and homeless, has been firmly rejected by the city leaders of Naples, Palermo, Milan and Florence, as well as the presidents of the regions of Tuscany, Calabria and Piemont (see Kitzler 2019).

These developments have turned the political sphere of the city into the battlefield and testing ground for redefining the future of European (or even global) refugee, migration and border regimes, as well as for a fundamental democratisation of urban societies. What is noteworthy about the Solidarity City movement in Germany and Europe is that, like the North American Sanctuary movement, it resulted from solidary practices and migrant struggles. These grassroots initiatives and movements' demands for the protection of people with precarious status and for their access to basic rights are increasingly being heard by institutional policy actors.

2 See https://solidaritycities.eu/. **3** See https://solidarity-city.eu/de/. **4** See https://seebruecke.org/en **5** See https://alarmphone.org/en/2018/06/17/call-for-safe-and-open-harbours/.

DISCURSIVE INTERVENTIONS AND SOLIDARY PRACTICES

Here, two levels of political action can be distinguished: first are the discursive interventions into the political and media spaces of EU member states that are led by local mayors, prominent politicians, artists and social movements. These spaces are characterised by a general rightward shift, which goes hand in hand with anti-migration discourses, policies of border lockdowns and the criminalisation of migrants and solidarity initiatives. The public statements by the mayor of Naples, Luigi de Magistris, and the Palermitan mayor, Leoluca Orlando, against the restrictive and racist migration policy of Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini are two examples of such discursive interventions. In their statements, de Magistris and Orlando repeatedly and vehemently demand that Italian ports remain open for civil sea rescue operations and express their commitment (at least on a discursive level) to strengthening solidary urban societies in opposition to the national government and the EU.[6]

The self-declaration of German cities as 'safe harbours' and their professed commitment to receive refugees from sea rescue operations also falls into the category of such discursive interventions. Barcelona's mayor Ada Colau stands as another example, having proclaimed Barcelona a 'City of Refuge'. Finally, the European 'Solidarity Cities' network remains a symbolic intervention at best.

The second level of political action spans the specific ongoing struggles, negotiations and measures in the urban political spaces, which call for protection from deportation and residence security, as well as granting and improving access to social welfare services, rights and resources for asylum seekers and people with precarious status. In some cases, these link to demands for a comprehensive democratisation of urban life in the sense of "a city for all", as advertised on the homepage of the alternative 'Solidarity City' network.[7] This level of action further divides into efforts by municipal administrations and authorities, on the one hand, and those of social movements, migrant groups and associations, NGOs, unions and religious organisations on the other.

Meanwhile, these two levels of political action have begun to influence each other in many ways. By demanding the institutionalisation of solidary practices, civil society actors are challenging municipal politicians. At the same time, the level of discursive action serves as a reference for activist and civil society practices. The resulting discursive paradigm of the Solidarity City also

6 See 'Salvini furious as Italian mayors defy new immigration rules', in: The Local, 3/1/2019, available at: www.thelocal.it/20190103/salvini-furious-as-italian-mayors-defy-new-immigration-rulesitalian-mayors-defy-salvini-over-immigration.

allows existing practices and movements of solidarity and migrant support to be contextualized and reframed. Nevertheless, the Solidarity City movement in Europe still lacks a common language.

SOLIDARITY CITIES AND 'URBAN CITIZENSHIP'

In the past four years, researchers have also begun to shift their attention to the (developmental) political, economic and social potential of cities of refuge, welcoming and solidarity. Legal scholars place particular emphasis on the legal margins and boundaries of municipalities concerning the reception, protection and inclusion of refugees and migrants (see Fried 2017; Heuser 2019), while social scientists examine the Solidarity City in the context of debates on global freedom of movement and 'urban citizenship'.
First coined in T.H. Marshall's 1950 essay Citizenship and Social Class, the concept of urban citizenship provides a differentiated and historically grounded understanding of social, political and economic participation in society (Marshall 1950). In the debate on urban citizenship, this perspective is focused on urban processes at the local level. Against this background, urban or regional forms of citizenship include the introduction of local policy instruments, which ensure and extend social participation to include not only regular citizens, but also all people living in a city. There is an additional focus on the political and social struggles being fought for recognition, rights and access to resources (see García 2006).[8]

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON URBAN SPACES

The Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung (RLS) has been following the development of solidarity cities in Europe since the 'summer of migration' in 2015. The RLS itself represents at least three different perspectives on this policy field: first is an internationalist point of view, which examines the city as a concrete site where global social rights and the right to global freedom of movement can be implemented (see Kron/Lebuhn 2018).[9] The second perspective is one of urban policy, which focuses on the possibilities and challenges of left-wing urban policy (see Drunkenmölle/Schnegg 2018). This perspective also includes the new municipalist movement and the phenomenon of 'rebel cities'. Both concepts aim to democratise and transform politics 'from below', to (re)align institutions with the in-

7 See https://solidarity-city.eu/en/. **8** See also Hess/Lebuhn 2014, Holston 1999, Isin/Nielson 2008, Krenn/Morawek 2017, Kron 2017, Kuge 2017, Lebuhn 2018 and Rodatz 2014. **9** See also the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung dossier on migration and metropoles (in German): www.rosalux.de/dossiers/migration/migration-und-metropolen/.

terests of the public and to create a new relationship between municipal governments and social movements (see Caccia 2016; Harvey 2013; Zelik et al. 2016). A third perspective on the Solidarity City movement is represented by the strategic debates towards a unifying class policy, which consider the diversity of the working class as the starting point for left-wing forms of organisation (see Candeias 2017 and Coppola in this publication).

The prevailing debates in politics and civil society briefly outlined in this text show that left-wing actors in Europe have a growing interest in the experiences and ideas of other 'cities of solidarity'. However, the respective administrative and political premises, as well as the individual actors, priorities and practical approaches differ on a case-by-case basis. In other words, there is no such thing as a uniform Solidarity City concept. These differences start with the heterogeneous nature of migrant communities and refugee groups in individual cities, and continue with the question of responsibilities on the municipal level, such as the role of the police or the competences of city governments. Other questions include: what are the possibilities for municipal influence and decision-making? What are the legal conditions for residence and migration? How is access to welfare services regulated? Within Germany, there is no uniform answer to these questions, and the differences are even greater when we compare the various approaches that exist across Europe. Furthermore, there is a lack of empirical studies that examine these differences (and parallels) on an international level.

This publication aims to contribute to filling this knowledge and research gap. Our first objective is to incorporate the findings and results of this publication into the debates concerning the development of left-wing migration policy strategies in Germany and Europe. Secondly, we aim to gather the existing approaches and experiences of solidarity cities and present them to the public for discussion. Finally, we seek to include the migrant perspective in the ongoing debates on the municipalist movement and 'rebel cities'.

DESIGN AND SELECTION OF CASE STUDIES

For this report, we selected four European cities (Berlin, Barcelona, Naples and Zurich) as well as the Canadian city of Toronto. Each of these cities follows its own individual Sanctuary City approach, each with a different set of actors, practices and discourses. At the same time, it was important to us to include the different framework conditions of urban solidarity practices in this study. Besides examining how migration policy is implemented across individual European nation states, we also studied the different degrees to which cities have

been affected by the aftermath of the European crisis and its austerity policies, which have had a considerable impact on existing resources for urban infrastructures and services. The cities listed here thus represent a whole bandwidth of practices, discourses, practical approaches and framework conditions for solidary urban policy.

Each of the five case studies is based on an analysis of secondary sources and explorative interviews with local actors from civil society and urban policy in each city. The respective authors conducted the interviews between November and December 2018. In collaboration with the authors, we held a one-day workshop in early December 2018 where we developed the following strategic questions: which actors in the respective municipalities are committed to the idea of a Solidarity City? What type of confrontations, exchanges and cooperation take place between different groups of actors – such as activists, parties and administrative bodies? What are the focal points/priorities/main themes? What is the relationship between institutional policy, on the one hand, and non-state actors on the other? What specific projects and solidary measures for and between migrants have been or are being pushed forward by Solidarity City initiatives? Are any efforts taking place to guarantee or improve access to urban social infrastructure and services – such as education, healthcare and housing – for migrants with precarious legal status, in particular for illegalised persons threatened by deportation? Are political and legal measures being taken to prevent or reduce deportations, and if so, what are they? Are there existing measures for improving the residence security of people with precarious status? Are there approaches for bringing refugees directly into the city, and if so, what are they? What is the motivation that drives Solidarity City actors, and what is the nature of these solidary practices? For example, do they follow the school of humanitarianism or anti-racism, or do they understand migration policy as class politics? What significance do discourses on concepts such as 'urban citizenship', 'the right to have rights', and 'global social rights' have in the respective debates and negotiation processes of solidarity cities?

Berlin, a city in the making

In his article, Mario Neumann takes us on a tour of the 'work in progress' that is the German capital. According to estimates, Berlin has received over 100,000 documented refugees since 2015 and the city is home to tens of thousands of illegalised persons. Since then, both Berlin's red-red-green coalition government and civil society organisations – such as the Solidarity City Berlin network – have developed initiatives for improving migrant access to social services, in particular in the field of healthcare and education. This article analyses the existing practices of institutional and civil society actors, discusses their – often con-

flict-prone – interplay in regard to enforcing migrant rights, as well as the strategic outlook and limitations of an urban policy approach.

Creative City Zurich

In her article, Katharina Morawek looks back at the actors and negotiation processes that led to the decision of the Zurich city council to introduce a City Card in October 2018, an initiative that is echoed in the city of Bern. This City Card aims in particular to help the tens of thousands of people living in the city without legal papers (sans-papiers) achieve greater residence security and improved access to social welfare services. Many of the cultural and anti-racist initiatives involved in this process regarded the City Card as just one specific component of a broader 'urban citizenship' campaign in Zurich. However, the growing participation of institutional political actors has overshadowed the overarching goals of these social movements, and technical and legal discussions concerning the implementation of such an urban identification card dominate the current discourse. This article thus focuses on the question of whether and to what degree concepts of (urban) societal transformation are preserved or displaced by the institutionalisation of solidary tools and practices.

Barcelona, a City of Refuge

Bue Rübner Hansen examines the solidary urban policy approaches that have been implemented in Barcelona by actors of the municipal platform Barcelona en Comú and the city council since 2015, which have helped transform the Catalonian capital into a learning and testing ground for alternative urban policies of inclusion. As early as 2015, the city declared itself a Ciutat Refugi (city of refuge) and, in opposition to the national government and EU policy, succeeded in establishing itself as a pillar of solidarity and welcoming. At the same time, within the city itself, the implementation of specific legal and social improvements for the migrant population, as well as public debates on topics such as migrant street vendors, have proved to be difficult and conflict-ridden. Hansen's article also discusses the rationales and possibilities for expanding the field of action of urban solidary practices and policies of inclusion.

Mutualism in Naples

In his case study of the Solidarity City of Naples, Maurizio Coppola examines the city council's – predominantly discursive – interventions, spearheaded by the city's mayor Luigi de Magistris, concerning the much-disputed Italian migration policy. This article also analyses the solidary practices of social movements, such as migrant legal support and healthcare services. This solidary groundwork has developed in the context of mutualistic social and political urban projects, which arose from Italy's profound financial crisis. In this context, Coppola discusses the possibilities for

politicising these solidary practices from a unifying class policy perspective.

Fearless in Toronto?
Based on the North American model, Sarah Schilliger examines the successes and challenges that come with official 'Sanctuary City' status. With half of its 3 million inhabitants born outside of Canada, Toronto became the first Canadian city to commit to a Sanctuary City policy in 2013, and serves as the blueprint for the German Solidarity City network. Toronto's Sanctuary City status was the result of a 10-year struggle fought by a broad alliance of civil society organisations. Under the umbrella of the 'Access without Fear' campaign, these organisations fought to stop deportations and to achieve residence security and fearless access to legal and social services for people with precarious legal status. Sarah Schilliger shows that a Sanctuary City also requires sufficient budget funds, public awareness campaigns and further education measures for officials and employees of public institutions if the security and protection of precarious status migrants are to remain more than just an empty promise.

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WE
REFUGEES'
REVOLUTION

MARIO NEUMANN

A SOLIDARITY CITY IN THE MAKING

BERLIN'S GOVERNMENT AND LEFT MOVEMENTS ARE PUSHING FOR MIGRANTS' SOCIAL RIGHTS

Berlin is and remains a city in the making. This goes for its housing policies and its perpetually unfinished but already world-famous airport. And it also goes for the idea of Berlin as a Solidarity City, an idea that is being discussed, practised and developed throughout the city despite there being neither a clear vision for its future as a Solidarity City nor an urban subject that could enact such a vision. This, however, is far from bad news. On the contrary, it provides a fertile starting point for current and future experiments. After all, no two works in progress are alike.

Ever since its founding, Berlin has attracted migrants, and daily life along the banks of the Spree is impossible to understand without an awareness of how deeply it is permeated by its histories of migration, migrant and contract migrant workers and the most recent migrant movements from within and outside Europe. Berlin is a symbol of the many living together in diversity, and as a city, it is the biggest nightmare haunting German ethno-nationalists. From 2012, Berlin witnessed the emergence of the O-Platz Movement, the almost two-year-long occupation of one of its most prominent inner-city squares – occupied by refugees protesting for their rights and calling on the authorities to shut down refugee camps and abolish mandatory residence (Residenzpflicht). In the context of 'Kotti & Co.' and countless other initiatives, tenants are fighting back against the city government's neoliberal housing policies. Especially since 2015, tens of thousands of Berliners have been actively supporting hundreds of solidarity initiatives. Just a week before the 2017 federal election, some 10,000 people – the majority self-organised refugee groups – joined the 'We'll Come United' parade in the government district to protest for the rights of migrants. Berlin is home to the Seebrücke movement. Berlin is a city-state. And two years ago, Berlin elected a red-green-red government.

This case study is based on half a dozen interviews I conducted in December 2018 with migrant and solidarity initiatives, left-wing politicians and representatives of associations.

1 THE SITUATION SINCE 2015 AND THE CITY'S LEFT-WING GOVERNMENT

The "long summer of migration" (Hess et al. 2016) fundamentally altered the situation in Germany and Berlin, be it for refugee movements, the structural organisation of solidarity initiatives or migration policy. Since early 2015, Germany has taken in more than 1.5 million people who have applied for asylum. In 2015, 55,055 of them came to Berlin, compared to 16,889 in 2016 and 8,285 in 2017. In 2018, some 600 people arrived in Berlin every month through the so-called EASY quota system (Initial Distribution of Asylum-Seekers) implemented by the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). In Berlin there are currently 77,423 recognised refugees holding either a temporary or a permanent residence permit, meaning that they have been granted permission to stay by the BAMF. Some 15,000 are waiting for their application to be processed or are taking court action following the rejection of their claim. More than 12,000 people in Berlin are "obliged to leave the country", yet in 10,744 cases, deportation has been currently suspended (Juretzka 2018: 4).

However, Berlin is not only a focal point of forced migration. According to various sources (the figures quoted here differ from those provided by the Central Register of Foreign Nationals), at least 20 per cent of people living in Berlin are foreign nationals. In June 2018, there were 725,458 people from 193 countries, including 277,002 EU citizens and 193,270 from the rest of Europe. 57,109 were Polish citizens and 98,046 were from Turkey, another 30,000 came from Italy and Bulgaria respectively. 22,395 were Romanian nationals, some 35,000 were from Syria, and around 12,000 were from Afghanistan, while 17,000 were Vietnamese (Statistical Office for Berlin-Brandenburg 2018). Estimates suggest that several tens of thousands of people are living in Berlin as illegalised migrants.

Red-green-red Berlin

The left-wing senate took up work in Berlin in late 2016, at the height of various societal and state-driven efforts to deal with the impacts of the 'long summer of migration'. In its coalition agreement, the new senate promised to exploit all means at the federal level to formulate a progressive migration policy (Regierungsparteien Berlin 2016). It also pledged to revise the outgoing government's 'masterplan' and to involve civil society actors and refugees in the political pro-

cess (Juretzka 2017). This process was concluded in late 2018 with the adoption of a new concept (see below).

German asylum and migration policy is governed by communal, federal and national-level responsibilities. When asylum seekers first enter the country and claim asylum, Berlin's Landesamt für Flüchtlingsangelegenheiten (State Office for Refugee Affairs, LAF) is officially responsible for their reception and registration. Following this process, asylum applications are processed by the BAMF – an authority belonging to the Federal Ministry of the Interior. At the same time, asylum seekers are eligible for benefits including accommodation and benefits in cash or in kind under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act (Asylbewerberleistungsgesetz) while their application is being processed. Ensuring access to these benefits falls within the ambit of the respective state and communal authorities, and the act covers all matters ranging from benefits in cash to the management of accommodation and reception facilities. In Berlin these matters, along with supporting measures and programmes provided during the application procedure (such as language courses), are mainly the responsibility of the Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Affairs under Elke Breitenbach (The Left Party) and its State Office for Refugee Affairs, the LAF.

The authorities responsible for non-German citizens with temporary residence permits are the Foreigners Registration Offices, which in turn are state authorities. In Berlin, it is part of the Senate Department for the Interior. The Foreigners Registration Offices are, for instance, responsible for issuing work permits and various residence permits as well as suspensions on deportation. In tandem with the police, they are responsible for ordering and carrying out deportations.

Municipal leeway

For Berlin's government, in practice this means that decisions regarding asylum applications and entry into the country are outside its ambit. At the same time, it sets the social conditions surrounding the asylum procedure and lays out how refugees are accommodated and how accommodations are managed. In addition, it is also responsible for deporting rejected asylum seekers whose applications have been denied as well as for issuing temporary leave to remain. In other words, while the BAMF decides on the legal status of the refugees living in Berlin, there is no federal authority that is able to carry out deportations without the cooperation of Berlin's Foreigners Registration Office.

Much has changed in the past two years under the city's left-wing government, especially within the authorities headed by Elke Breitenbach. The most notable improvements concern accommodation management for asylum seekers and the reception process. After endless delays, the controversial refugee housing facilities in the

hangars at the former Tempelhof airport were closed in December 2018, along with the majority of emergency shelters. In a first phase, the LAF is currently constructing so-called modular accommodations for refugees at 28 sites that will be able to house up to 450 people each. These bare-bones facilities have been criticised for establishing new substandards on the housing market. At the same time, though, they have improved many people's housing situation. Due to the lack of affordable housing, refugees are not forced out of these accommodations once they have been granted asylum. Some 11,000 people are currently making use of this option and continue living in the community housing centres managed by the LAF.[1]

Work and integration policy

Following the asylum procedure, recognised asylum seekers are usually absorbed by the 'regular' social security system. Unemployed refugees receive support from the Bundesagentur für Arbeit (the Federal Employment Agency), which provides benefits to cover basic necessities as well as access to health care, job training and other measures. Refugees whose deportation has been temporarily suspended or whose application has been rejected remain eligible to receive benefits under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act. Recognised asylum seekers in Germany are thus treated as standard benefit applicants once their application for asylum is approved, which is not the case in most European countries. They are eligible to apply for general income support (Sozialhilfe), the most basic form of welfare support, and receive access to health insurance. The Bundesagentur für Arbeit then decides on most of the subsequent measures (language courses, job training, recognition of diplomas and degrees, etc.). Together with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it seeks to tie long-term residency permits to applicants' successful integration into the labour market.

Of the 1.2 million people who currently hold recognised protection status and thus have been granted a residence permit on humanitarian grounds, almost 500,000 are registered with the Bundesagentur für Arbeit as seeking employment (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2018). For them, the city of Berlin and the Bundesagentur für Arbeit are the two main actors involved in implementing the city's integration policy. This means left-wing migration policies are not exhausted once refugees are granted asylum, which in any case is temporary and inevitably linked to subsequent struggles to secure permanent residence and settlement permits. Nevertheless it can be said that access to general health and social care for asylum seekers brings to the surface the main conflict surrounding policies of solidarity, which is how to treat illegalised

1 Fast 2.000 Abschiebungen 2016 in Berlin, in: neues deutschland, 17 Feb 2017, available at: www.neues-deutschland.de/artikel/1042105.fast-abschiebungen-in-berlin.html.

people as well as refugees whose application is either pending or has been rejected (and who are thus at risk of being deported), or whose deportation has been temporarily suspended.

2 BERLIN – A 'SOLIDARITY CITY'? ASSESSING THE STATUS QUO

Some 100,000 documented refugees have reached Berlin since 2015. In addition, there are tens of thousands of illegalised people in the city, some of whom are unregistered and homeless. The scale of the issue is mirrored in the support efforts organised by a multitude of social and political initiatives. Institutional politics must also contend with a long list of challenges. Even if these figures are not based on reliable sources, Berlin is not only a city of migration, it is also a city of solidarity. A sprawling network of solidarity initiatives comprising both veteran and nascent institutions that have emerged since 2015 has shaped political debates and visions of Berlin as a Solidarity City and determined the contours of left-wing migration policy.

This is reflected in the fact that more than 50 per cent of Germans aged 16 and over have provided assistance to refugees. Last summer, 19 per cent either joined solidarity structures as volunteers or made donations. On average, these volunteers devoted more than five hours of their time per week to such activities (Bundesministerium für Familie et al. 2018). Around 15,000 new projects emerged in 2015 and 2016 (Schiffauer et al. 2017). These figures can probably be projected onto Berlin, where volunteer engagement is likely to be slightly above the national average.

R2G and the Left Party in power

Against this background, the Senate's recent commitment to achieve Solidarity City status hardly comes as a surprise. Berlin officially joined the European Solidarity Cities network, coordinated by the EUROCITIES Initiative, in January 2019. In addition, Berlin's Left Party formulated its own vision of Berlin as a Solidarity City at its Party Congress in December 2018, stating: "We are convinced that the vast majority of people remains willing to embrace an open society as long as we succeed in making the vision of a socially inclusive immigrant society not only visible, but actually tangible. Cities have always been the first to be affected by the challenges brought on by globalization and the devastation triggered by radical free-market neoliberalism. This explains why in many cities across Europe and throughout the world we are seeing the emergence of models that oppose policies aimed at eroding solidarity and increasing precarity and individualization. Traditional party

politics is forging new alliances with grass-roots activism and calls for more democracy" (DIE LINKE/ Landesverband Berlin 2018).

With its decision to make Solidarity City status the focus and narrative guiding its government participation in Berlin – and thus, by implication, the move to adopt an urban policy vision for all framed by migrant perspectives – Berlin's Left Party has taken a decisive step towards embracing issues of migration and hearing solidarity movements, especially in light of the recent inner-party conflicts that have been driven by sovereignist and social nationalist positions. It should not be underestimated that the Party is reconnecting its social and left-wing policies to migrant issues instead of applying standard vocabulary and treating them as distinct issues to be solved by the welfare state and asylum law, on the one hand, and integration policy on the other. Striving to make Berlin a Solidarity City for all comes with the promise that as one of the city-state's ruling parties, the Left will make sure to address all the city's inhabitants and their various issues. At a discursive level at least, this means the Party is connecting socio-political and migrant issues instead of viewing them as conflicting fields.

However, these ideas do not always take on the form of political conflict. Rather, Berlin's Left Party is frequently heard referring to an ideal of good left-wing governance, i.e. a form of left-wing municipal governance that makes best-possible use of its existing legislative powers on the basis of majority interests in society and the conditions determined by federal-level politics. Yet managing the relatively high number of new arrivals remains a challenge, at least for Berlin's political administration, and for this reason, welcoming them has also become an issue of logistical skill – see, for instance, the ongoing chaos at the LAF, or the MUFs, which partly remain empty due to European competition law and delayed tenders to seek providers to manage the facilities. Still it ought to be clear that by merely exploiting the scope of its current political powers Berlin's government would invariably undermine the potency of the Solidarity City project in the long term.

Yet serious attempts to deliver 'good governance' have an eminently political dimension that is often underestimated, especially when it comes to migration policy. The processes of exclusion and disenfranchisement currently taking place are hardly a result of our current legal situation. In fact, there are countless cases where various obstacles have been set up to either limit or block access to social and political rights. Instances range from authorities' repressive legal interpretations to language barriers to illegalised refugees being afraid to claim their rights because they want to stay under the radar of the Foreigners Registration Office. In this sense, some of the measures initiated by the left-wing city government can be seen to be contributing to the struggle for social rights

in that they represent attempts to provide more systematic access to rights. This, for instance, is the mission of the new Welcome Centre established by Berlin's integration commissioner (Benalia 2016). Similarly, many of the solidarity initiatives that emerged in 2015 have shifted their focus and now support refugees in claiming their rights by accompanying them to appointments with authorities, or providing legal counselling, translations and other related services.

The Solidarity movement and the Solidarity City network

Ideally, this more institutionalist concept should stand in opposition to the notion of the Solidarity City that takes root wherever national migration regimes are subjected to systematic and political challenges not only discursively, but also by real social praxes and struggles. Its primary aim is not to effectively explore and extend the scope of migrant policies at the municipal level, but to foster solidarity with all those who are systematically excluded: the illegalised, refugees threatened by deportation or whose deportation has been temporarily suspended, as well as the disenfranchised. This definition of a Solidarity City, which considers municipal politics as one of its potential actors, is centred on conflict and the systematic undermining of national and federal-level policies.

The 'Solidarity City Berlin' network was formed in autumn 2015 and currently consists of five groups: the MediBüro Berlin, a migrant initiative respect!, the Bürgerinnenasyl campaign, the Interventionist Left as well as the Oficina Precaria. This local network is part of the German Solidarity City network. While the network is still in the process of being established, it should also be regarded as a kind of hub and symbol of the extra-institutional actors that make up the solidarity movement. The initiative's programmatic starting point is the idea of a "city for all" and thus, the social and political democratization of the city's population, a city in which every individual has access to a life in dignity regardless of their background. The group especially builds on experiences gleaned from the 'Sanctuary Cities' network in North America, which at the municipal level has, in individual cases, succeeded in protecting illegalised citizens from deportation and repression from federal authorities and enabled them to access urban infrastructure. The repertoire of these experiments in Toronto, New York and other cities includes the introduction of municipal ID cards and the issuing of instructions to prevent municipal authorities from cooperating with federal agencies. (Bauder 2017; Kron/Lebuhn 2018). The crucial point is that these are not just mechanical concepts. Often, it was social initiatives and their tangible pro-solidarity work on the street that paved the way for specific political experiments.

Discussions about introducing a similar ID have now also reached

Berlin.[2] The network in Berlin naturally has a strong focus on illegalised refugees. The initial priority has been on education and health care, building on experiences and long-standing projects in Berlin.

Politics for the illegalised: anonymous health care voucher and school education

In the field of health care, it is worth mentioning the MediBüro. The MediBüro (officially the 'Netzwerk für Gesundheitsversorgung aller Migrant*innen – MediBüro Berlin') was founded in 1996 as a self-organised, non-government project in Berlin with the goal of "improving health care provision for illegalised refugees and migrants in political and pragmatic ways. As illegalised individuals are effectively excluded from access to regular health care, largely on political grounds, our public relations work seeks to promote public awareness of this problem and call for political solutions". However, the office is not primarily a political actor, but a solidarity-based network of volunteers and medical specialists that allows people who have been illegalised or lack health insurance to seek anonymous treatment that is free of charge.

In theory, illegalised people in Germany have a right to health care, which should be provided by social welfare agencies, who are responsible for funding such services. At the same time, however, the German law on residence (Aufenthaltsgesetz) contains a provision that requires social welfare offices to share their data with the Foreigners Registration Office – which means that every illegalised person claiming their right to health care treatment instantly risks being exposed to repression and deportation via the Foreigners Registration Office. As this section is part of a federal law and abolishing it is next to impossible, in 2005 the MediBüro developed the idea of an anonymous health care voucher for illegalised individuals that will help establish health care access equivalent in scope to the services covered by the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (limited access to services; MediBüro Berlin 2009).

The demand is clear: medical treatment as a human right needs to be decoupled from residence and status. This means that those fearing deportation or other forms of agency repression need to be given anonymous and safe access to this human right. This form of access needs to be organised at the state and municipal level to be able to undermine federal legislation. Berlin began experimenting with the concept after 2008 under its then red-red local coalition government, but these trials were soon aborted by the Senate. A round table involving the Senate's health department was set up at the time and continued to convene, and it is thanks to the participants' persistence that the anonymous health care voucher ultimately found its way into the 2016 coalition agreement.

2 Linke: Flüchtlinge sollen Berlin-Ausweis bekommen, dpa-Meldung, in: Berliner Morgenpost, 15 Dec 2018.

However, it has only partly been put into practice. In 2018, the Senate set aside 1.5 million euros to provide health care services to uninsured people including illegalised migrants. A so-called Clearing-Stelle was also established to offer counselling for people without health care insurance, point them to specialists and, if required, organise access to funding. At the same time, the current model is limited due to its financial nature as a fund. So far it remains unclear whether the Clearing-Stelle will be able to maintain its services if the budget dries up or expensive treatments are needed. It also seems that plans to provide comprehensive health care access via an anonymous voucher will be hard to realise under the current administration. Its favoured solution is to issue treatment vouchers, a model that will not guarantee equal health care access and instead requires that costs be funded and paid for on a per-treatment basis. Still, the Clearing-Stelle is an important first step towards a fundamental policy shift, and it has the potential to encourage further discussions and ideas. What is more, the Clearing-Stelle has also become an important contact point for various people without access to health care, not least for EU citizens. Originally a mechanism introduced to fill the health care gap for the illegalised, this programme has been opened up to other marginalised groups and broadened the scope of the services it offers.

There is a further example that documents a similar process. In Berlin, the children of illegalised parents have a right to education and thus the right to attend state school (the obligation for schools and other educational institutions to transmit data was abolished in 2011). Several studies have found that there are countless obstacles preventing them from attending school, and that parents fail to enrol their children for fear of being exposed to repression from authorities or because of too much bureaucratic red tape (Solidarity City Berlin 2018). Nevertheless, there are children of illegalised parents who attend school. The problem, however, is that the relatively high costs of public transport remain a challenge and an obstacle that prevents them from travelling to school. There were a number of reasons against and political objections to the provision of free public transport solely to the children of illegalised parents, which is why the Senate has now decided that buses, trains and trams will be free for all pupils from the start of the next academic year. At least this is how members of the Left who supported the initiative look back on the process.

Homelessness

According to estimates, some 8,000-10,000 people in Berlin are homeless. Many of them are from Eastern Europe, including an estimated 4,000 who have come from Poland (Soos/Rehkopf 2018). This means that in Berlin there are strong

links between homelessness and migration – which is why actors focusing on migrant policy have begun to look at homelessness as well.
According to the Frostschutzengel, a counselling project for the homeless, one of the main challenges is not just the legal situation, but blocked and often complicated access to social rights, for instance for EU citizens, who in many cases are eligible to claim social welfare benefits and housing assistance. Accordingly, social initiatives frequently offer assistance to clients so that they can access these services. Senator Elke Breitenbach, too, has become increasingly active in helping the homeless, among other things by increasing efforts to protect them from the cold (Frank/Kröger 2018). But both social legislation and public order legislation provide for measures to combat homelessness. However, homelessness itself and the high share of homeless migrants still need to be politicised.

Participation and democracy

The red-green-red government has always underlined that it seeks to redefine migration policy by embracing a new style of government and ensuring that migration policy is opened up to participatory processes (Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung 2018). With this in mind, the cornerstones of Berlin's future integration policy have now been defined in a so-called 'Master Plan for the Integration and Participation of Refugees' (Juretzka 2018), a paper for which not only the Senate's various departments were consulted. It is the result of an extended, large-scale participation process in which the government involved civil society actors, migrant associations, self-organised refugees, NGOs and welfare organisations. It defines nine key focus areas and lays the strategic foundations for Berlin's future policies. In dedicated working groups, the Senate's departments, politicians and civil society actors defined specific measures and targets. In addition, there are a number of round-table formats in which Senate staff are able to engage in discussions with civil society actors. While an accompanying study suggests the process had a generally positive impact and encourages actors to engage in more extensive and targeted processes (Schnegg/Drunkenmölle 2018), the verdict on the outcome of most initiatives remained ambivalent. Despite acknowledging some aspects of the process and a number of results, they felt the overall experience was sobering. They especially criticised the fact that the political potential of the actors involved was 'watered down' or simply 'overlooked'. Their statements are emblematic of the 'usual' assessments of political participation processes: the participating actors contribute their expertise, but their key demands are rejected (Flüchtlingsrat Berlin e. V. 2018; Moabit hilft et al. 2018). Nevertheless, they have all welcomed the government's attempt to accommodate the demands drawn up by civil society and migrants. It remains to be seen

whether such participation processes will actually help to democratise the city, or whether they are ultimately little more than pro bono policy advice that helps the government and the Senate departments to justify – and increase the acceptance of – their actions and decisions.

Reception and sea rescue operations

Berlin was the first city-state to offer to take in refugees in June 2018 when debates about sea rescue operations, Italy's harbours and the rescue ship 'Lifeline' began to unfold. In late September, the city reaffirmed this in a joint statement it issued together with Germany's other two city-states, Hamburg and Bremen.[3] However, new refugees cannot be taken in without authorization from the Federal Ministry of the Interior, which is refusing to cooperate with Berlin and 30 other cities. The momentum generated by the Senate's willingness to welcome refugees and this public statement gave rise to the Seebrücke movement, which has since spread from Berlin across Germany and into parts of the EU.

Deportations and Berlin as a Sanctuary City

1,820 people were deported from Berlin in 2016. In 2017, authorities deported 1,638 people, while 3,629 people returned 'voluntarily' in 2017 (see Lenz 2018 for more on the problem of 'voluntary returns'). In the months between January and September 2018, there were 801 deportations and 2,087 voluntary returns (Juretzka 2018: 4). In 2017, around 700 deportees were from Moldavia, 170 were from Albania, while 107 were Serbian and 93 from Iraq. These countries, however, are not necessarily the destinations they were deported to (cf. the Dublin Procedure; Abgeordnetenhaus Berlin 2018).

The number of deportations has slightly dropped, and Berlin intends to avoid deportations by way of so-called Härtefallkommissionen (hardship commissions) and other means. Yet the fact remains that neither the SPD-led Interior Department nor the Foreigners Registration Office seem willing to fundamentally shift their policy. There are no signs that the government coalition is prepared to adopt a no-deportation policy – despite the fact that the actual number of deportations in relation to the population is negligible. The government's rationale is thus clear: it continues to use deportations as a political and symbolic instrument, knowingly accepting that this will leave Berlin's migrant population exposed to permanent turbulence. In every way, the next big question and the litmus test for all efforts to make Berlin a Solidarity City is its role in opposing deportations – although it needs to be said that the movements have not necessarily exerted a great deal of pressure on the government in this respect.

3 Bekenntnis zum sicheren Hafen: Hamburg, Bremen und Berlin united, in: die tageszeitung, 1 Oct 2018, available at: www.taz.de/!5538930/.

3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Having provided this overview of the situation in Berlin, I would like to share several theses – partly to encourage discussions of the concept of Solidarity Cities in general but also to help animate the local incarnation of this concept here in Berlin.

Beyond integration

Even though every attempt to speak of sanctuary cities in the abstract inevitably ignores a city's specific realities and deflects attention away from those standing at the heart of the initial idea (the illegalised), it is still positive that Berlin's government has chosen to adopt this term and redefine it on the basis of its own ideas. At the same time, this widening and redefinition of the term can only be productive as long as it avoids eroding the core of the concept. In this sense it would be a welcome development if the idea were to gain discursive traction in institutional politics and shift the frame of the government's activities. But it remains crucial to make the effective undermining of the state's migration regime and its integration policies the context within which issues of belonging and community are raised and answered anew. Failing to do so could expose us to a threatening form of good municipal governance that limits itself to implementing 'integration policy' in the best-possible way and leaves unquestioned the (again federal) mechanisms of exclusion, disenfranchisement and assimilation. Of course, abandoning these policies is not an option if they give migrants individual opportunities to settle into a new and better life. In other words, left-wing politics will have to systematically undermine integration policy if it wants to politically seize the transformational potential represented by migrant movements. For Berlin's imminent future, this means finally moving forward to develop models of a city that rejects deportations and thus openly embraces sanctuary policies.

Government and movement

The translation of social processes into institutional logic – whether it concerns projects or concepts – inevitably creates friction and always comes with a loss. Institutional politics has its own gravitational centres: bureaucracy, administration, legal obstacles and the challenges arising from being in government. This means that the autonomy of solidarity structures and movements needs to be protected whenever it is exposed to the logic of institutional actors – also on behalf of these institutional actors, in as far as they are interested in the transformative potential emerging from this autonomy. At the same time, this autonomy often tends to be successful only if it has also defined an institutional strategy. Conflictive interaction between the various actors seems to be the adequate model to follow. This is, on the one hand, in order to prevent the logic of

institutional politics from absorbing social processes and limiting political transformation exclusively to the institutional level. On the other, it also helps to develop new forms that allow social transformation processes to translate into politics and help invigorate the Left. The strategic core of these transformational processes, however, lies outside of institutions, and it is only there that it can be kept alive and breathing.

Parallel structures and counselling as intermediate steps

At the same time, the anonymous health care voucher and the provisional outcome of the negotiations surrounding its introduction are a promising blueprint for future projects: instead of directly confronting federal legislation, the voucher establishes a new structure, which helps to avoid, and subsequently disentangle, certain political challenges. Thus, the takeaway is also that sometimes it is not necessary to change the law. Instead, we can set up new structures and create our own institutions. These include counselling structures that challenge political architectures from the inside, so to speak, by helping people to assert their formal rights. I have made this point a number of times: in many cases, people have social rights de jure, but they are de facto prevented from claiming them. Helping migrants and other marginalised social groups to know, understand and assert their rights is a political field full of opportunities – opportunities that among other efforts include politicising the praxes institutionalised by federal agencies (specifically, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, and the Federal Employment Agency) and their structurally similar and often illegal approaches to denying individuals' claims.

'Rebel Cities'

It goes without saying that 'good governance' has its merits. Still, sooner or later the limits of every left-wing policy are limits set by politics. It will be impossible to develop a transformative project without engaging in conflicts with national-level architectures of power and established political procedures. Whether in Italy or North America, whenever cities go into political opposition, they reach the limits of their powers and must challenge their national governments. The question of a rebellion of cities – a kind of institutional rebellion – is an issue that in Germany will increasingly become a strategic task because (as activist Roula Saleh said at a press conference for the 'United Against Racism' parade): "I always wonder: do we really have to accept discriminating and restrictive laws only because they have been codified in legal language?" This rebellion, however, is definitely not a task to be tackled by Berlin's government alone. Like all forces that shape a Solidarity City's policies, this will have to be a rebellion from below.

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INITIATIVES

Seebrücke: https://seebruecke.org/
Frostschutzengel: www.frostschutzengel.de/
MediBüro Berlin: https://medibuero.de/
Solidarity City Network: https://solidarity-city.eu/en/ and http://solidarity-city-berlin.org/en/
Respect!: www.respectberlin.org/wordpress/
Oficina Precaria: http://oficinaprecariaberlin.org/
Interventionist Left: https://interventionistische-linke.org/
The Left Party in Berlin: https://dielinke.berlin/nc/start/
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Kotti & Co: https://kottiundco.net/

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Schweizer Pass
Passeport suisse
Passaporto svizzero
Passaport svizzer
Swiss passport

KATHARINA MORAWEK

URBAN CITIZENSHIP AND MUNICIPAL ID

IN ZURICH, CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS ARE ADVOCATING 'URBAN CITIZENSHIP'

Switzerland is a multilingual immigrant society. Its entire political, social and cultural development, both past and present, has been shaped by migration. According to official figures, more than a third of the Swiss population have an immigration background.[1] Yet this fact is hardly reflected in the country's institutions and cultural identity, despite its four official languages. On the one hand, there are those without a Swiss passport – and thus without a right to vote – who are excluded from formal political representation. This group comprises 25 per cent of the population; in Austria and Germany, it is 15 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively. What is more, the Swiss language generally distinguishes between 'true' Swiss nationals and so-called 'Papierlischwiizer', i.e. citizens who have been naturalised. This distinction is reinforced by the country's many residence permits, which effectively construct a social hierarchy along different forms of non-Swiss citizenship.

Even though Switzerland has never officially identified with its history as an immigrant society, the country has still witnessed a number of debates and projects with a focus on migration, civil rights and belonging in a plural society. Take, for example, the concepts of 'urban citizenship' (García 2006), 'sanctuary cities' and 'Solidarity Cities', which are being discussed throughout Europe. They were taken up in Switzerland in early 2015 and have since reshaped municipal council politics in several cities (Krenn/Morawek 2017). In public debates, security of residence has taken priority over other issues, such as equal participation, access to rights and resources for all or belonging and democratisation.

Discussions have heavily focused on the introduction of a municipal identity card, the so-called City Card, a suggestion that came from civil society groups and has been

1 See Bundesamt für Statistik, Bevölkerung nach Migrationsstatus, available at: www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/de/home/statistiken/bevoelkerung/migration-integration/nach-migrationsstatuts.html.

embraced by municipal politics, especially in Zurich and Bern. The planned Züri City Card will primarily benefit the estimated 14,000 'sans-papiers', i.e. the undocumented migrants living and working in the city of Zurich.

The present study is embedded in the Europe-wide debate on postmigrant societies (Foroutan et al. 2018) and Solidarity Cities, and analyses the debates and actors, the potentials, the challenges as well as the new exclusions linked to the Züri City Card. I will explore which aspects of the planned Züri City Card can be read as successful concrete solidarity practices and why. I will also highlight the forms of solidarity that were practised on Zurich's streets prior to 2015, and point out both those that helped shape the Züri City Card as well as those that did not.

The study's findings are based on published resources, my own experiences as an actor involved in the social, political and cultural processes concerning 'urban citizenship' in Switzerland as well as explorative interviews with five experts from the fields of politics, research and civil society who either were or are involved in the debates surrounding the Züri City Card. These experts are: Ezgi Akyol, member of the Zurich municipal council for the 'Alternative Liste' and board member of the Züri City Card working group; Kijan Espahangizi, historian, co-organiser of the initiative 'Kongress der MigrantInnen und Migranten und Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund' as well as 'Wir alle sind Zürich' (We are all Zurich) and co-founder and co-president of the Institute New Switzerland (INES); Zurich's integration commissioner, Christof Meier; Peter Nideröst, lawyer and board member of the Züri City Card working group, as well as Bea Schwager, head of the 'sans-papiers access point' in Zurich and board member of the Züri City Card working group.[2]

1 GLOBAL CITY ZURICH

Zurich has a modest population of around 430,000 inhabitants. Still, the city is considered a Global City because of its role as the world's largest offshore financial centre (Hitz et al. 1995). Zurich generates 11% of Switzerland's GDP and 2.5 billion Swiss francs (2.22 billion euros) in taxes per year. Of every franc of paid taxes, 30–40% remain in the city. By comparison, in Munich this figure is only 10%. Swiss banks manage national and especially international funds worth between 5,000 and 7,000 billion Swiss francs (see Gross 2018).

This makes Zurich a very international city. While billions of Swiss francs change hands every day on the servers of the large banks located in the

2 All interviews were conducted in December 2018. I would like to thank my interview partners for our extensive and productive conversations.

city centre, and highly skilled expatriate employees (temporarily living in Switzerland with jobs mostly in high-wage sectors) work and live in the glass and concrete high-rises in the city's west or in the wealthy pre-war districts near Lake Zurich, their children are cared for by undocumented domestic workers from Portugal. These children love spaghetti pomodoro, and their parents cherish the espresso served in the many sidewalk cafés. This is a result of the country's 'Mediterraneanisation' that began with the first generation of post-war Italian guest workers. Switzerland began taking in young female seasonal workers from Italy as early as 1946. This model of inviting foreign workers, which relied heavily on the so-called 'Saisonnierstatus', a temporary seasonal workers' status (see Holenstein et al. 2018), marks a phenomenon which, along with the country's colonial entanglements, is referred to as "colonialism without colonies" (Purtschert et al. 2013), and it is a pillar of the country's wealth that continues to define Swiss society.

Today, however, Zurich embraces other concepts, and sees itself primarily as a 'creative city'. According to the orthodoxy behind this concept, creative output leads to innovation and drives a city's economic growth. Creative innovation is seen to take place primarily in knowledge-based sectors that mostly employ highly skilled staff with a critical mindset, such as scientists, artists, entrepreneurs, lawyers, managers, specialised workers or medical experts (Florida 2002). Mercer's Quality of Living City Rankings have seen Zurich top the list (behind Vienna) for almost a decade.[3] The city consequently defines "innovation and its cosmopolitan atmosphere" as the crucial indicators behind its success (see Mauch 2017). Large corporations value the city as an attractive location for their employees. Its favourable ranking stems from its wealth of cultural and educational institutions, its good childcare infrastructure as well as its atmosphere of stability and security. And indeed many young and highly skilled immigrants live in Zurich. 20 per cent of the city's inhabitants are 30 to 39 years old – employed, but excluded from voting.[4]

In fact, Zurich looks back on a history of social change that is also marked by resistances and migrant influences. Structural change and the 1970s oil crisis fundamentally altered the face of the city. Once dominated by industrialisation, during this period the city saw some 60,000 workers lose their jobs. Zurich's population kept dropping well into the mid-1980s.[5] Many factories were abandoned, while in the city centre the service and financial sectors started to boom and attract highly skilled employees from other

3 See https://mobilityexchange.mercer.com/Insights/quality-of-living-rankings. **4** See also the project 'Stadt der Zukunft – ZRH3039' of Zurich's department for urban development, available at: www.stadt-zuerich.ch/prd/de/index/stadtentwicklung/stadt-der-zukunft/zrh3039.html. **5** See www.stadt-zuerich.ch/prd/de/index/statistik/themen/bevoelkerung/bevoelkerungsentwicklung/bisherige-bevoelkerungsentwicklung.html.

parts of Switzerland and abroad. They and their offspring had a significant impact on Swiss society and many of its social struggles.

In the 1980s, social movements such as 'Züri brännt' (Zurich on fire) began to occupy abandoned industrial sites and buildings, while migrant civil society initiatives such as the 'Mitenand-Initiative' (a referendum pushing for a reform of Swiss immigration policy) sought ways to promote participation in and democratic access to Swiss immigrant society and helped to reform integration policy at the federal level (Espahangizi 2018). In 1994, Zurich's city council saw its first red-green government, which has enjoyed a stable majority since. Some of the actors involved in the social movements of the 1980s mentioned here have, in the meantime, entered into municipal politics. One of them is Richard Wolff, member of the city council for the Alternative Liste, an influential local left-wing party. Wolff is a geographer, urban sociologist and co-founder of INURA, the International Network for Urban Research and Action (Hitz et al. 1995). From 2013 to 2018, he was president of Zurich's municipal police, which was why he played a key role in negotiations over the Züri City Card.

2 ZURICH – A SOLIDARITY CITY?

At the European level, Zurich is an official member of the Solidarity Cities network coordinated by the EUROCITIES Initiative, a movement formed in 2016 by the governments of European cities in response to the so-called refugee crisis. Among other things, they are calling on the EU commission to increase its funding for infrastructure and integration projects in those cities that de facto take in or are home to the majority of refugees.[6] At the level of civil society initiatives and grassroots organisations, however, tangible practices of solidarity already emerged several years ago. With respect to undocumented migrants ('sans-papiers'), it is worth mentioning the 'Sans-Papiers Anlaufstelle Zürich' (SPAZ), an access point for undocumented migrants, the 'Colectivo Sin Papeles' as well as 'Meditrina'. The SPAZ, a professional, non-profit organisation, was established in 2005 to provide social and legal counselling, but it also provides legal representation to sans-papiers in their interaction with authorities. The 'Colectivo Sin Papeles' was founded in 2003. The collective's activists offer information and counselling for sans-papiers in tandem with the SPAZ and Zurich's Spanish-speaking Catholic mission. 'Meditrina' has built a network of paediatricians, gynaecologists and psychotherapists that provides medical assistance to undocumented migrants.

6 See https://solidaritycities.eu.

Thanks to the struggles won by these civil society organisations, sans-papiers can today claim a number of basic rights. The first is their children's right to education. Under certain conditions, sans-papiers may also go into vocational training. They can also file for hardship status. Some municipal companies, such as Zurich's transport services, offer training positions to undocumented migrants until their applications for hardship assistance are approved (interview with Bea Schwager, 17 Dec 2018). Should undocumented migrants need in- or outpatient hospital treatment, the hospital's welfare service will contact the SPAZ, which can then retroactively sign health insurance plans with reduced premiums for its clients. In this way, there is no need to involve the canton's responsible social welfare office, which uninsured individuals are usually required to do. Thanks to the SPAZ, sans-papiers can also apply for social security and make social security payments. The 'law against illegal employment' ought to protect undocumented migrants from being reported when workplaces are inspected. However, many of the authority's staff ignore this provision and nevertheless contact the police. By definition, though, the issue affecting undocumented migrants most is a lack of protection and access to rights regarding regular stay and secure residency. This means that they live in constant fear of police controls, and their fear is justified. Zurich is therefore not a 'Sanctuary City' like other municipalities in North America that refuse to cooperate with federal authorities in identifying, persecuting and arresting sans-papiers and thus protect 'illegals' from deportation. According to Peter Nideröst, a lawyer and board member of the Züri City Card, the 'historical' practices of solidarity cultivated by initiatives such as the SPAZ have been a defining influence. But he also says that the city's undocumented migrants lead precarious lives in terms of their status – a situation that the Züri City Card could help to improve:

> "In the past […] we have seen actions to protect refugees; some were politically motivated, some organised by churches. But for sans-papiers there have basically always been two options: to demand generous amnesty, that is legalisation, or […] to push for simple, relatively generous case-by-case decisions granting them secure residency on humanitarian grounds. The biggest political success of this long-standing sans-papiers movement at the national level has been to allow young people to go into vocational training – imagine that! What an incredibly poor record, don't you think? And this has inspired many social movements and access points for undocumented migrants to find informal solutions at the local, that is municipal, level to improve the living conditions of undocumented migrants: access to health care, education, and even to social

rights. I'd say that in Zurich the situation has very much improved thanks to the SPAZ, not only because it has done an excellent job, but also because Zurich's authorities have been immensely cooperative. […] But the bigger challenge – to improve access to secure residency – that's something we can only tackle by building on formal agreements. We need something that's built on proper legal foundations. The Züri City Card isn't the solution to this, but it is a crucial step forward" (interview with Peter Nideröst, 14 Dec 2018).

3 'URBAN CITIZENSHIP' AND 'SANCTUARY CITY'

When New York passed legislation in November 2014 to introduce its municipal ID card, IDNYC, and chose to further narrow cooperation with federal immigration authorities, word immediately spread in Zurich. Bea Schwager, head of the SPAZ, and others immediately suggested introducing a similar City Card in Zurich (see interview with Bea Schwager, 17 Dec 2018).

In mid-2015, then as director of the Shedhalle Zurich, a centre for contemporary critical art, I again championed the idea of the City Card in public. I thought it had the potential to spark a new political praxis in addressing migration at the local level (cp Morawek 2015).[7] Already since mid-2014, we had been planning a project in the Shedhalle titled 'The whole world in Zurich', the aim of which was to highlight Switzerland's democratic deficits. We wanted this project to have an immediate impact on policy-making processes in terms of democratisation and access to rights for all, and the key term that the working group that emerged in the context of the project operated with was "urban citizenship" (see García 2006). There were some subprojects addressing the political and legal as well as cultural and representative aspects of citizenship/citoyenneté, and others that investigated policy-making processes and the actual influence of social movements at the urban, i.e. municipal, level.

A Swiss 'Congress of migrants and people with an immigration background' was held in Bern, the country's capital, in February 2015. The congress was mainly funded by unia, Switzerland's largest trade union, the migrant organisations Second@s Plus and Colonie Libere Italiane as well as individual supporters. Its aim was to criticise – from a migrant perspective – the federal referendum against mass immigration launched by the Swiss People's Party and to tie that protest to demands for a more democratic political regime at the federal level.[8] The historian Kijan Espahangizi, who co-organised the congress and

7 See https://archiv.shedhalle.ch/institution/. **8** See www.unia.ch/de/aktuell/events/detail/a/10528/.

later co-founded the urban initiative 'We are all Zurich', says the congress built up significant momentum that helped broaden the debate on migration, democratisation and 'urban citizenship':

> "The idea was to establish a new platform that would undo the logics of the integration policies pursued in the 1990s and 2000s and so-called 'migrant policies'. There was a feeling that they were outdated. The spaces that we'd fought for in the name of integration were there, but there was no vocabulary, no set of tools for us to take the next step, which would have been to say: let's stop talking about integration, let's talk about democracy. We should have shifted to a different register of political communication, also to prove that the old register wouldn't help us solve the issue" (interview with Kijan Espahangizi, 4 Dec 2018).

The initiative 'We are all Zurich', which emerged from the 'Congress of migrants and people with an immigration background', continued to champion this mission and organised a follow-up congress in Zurich in spring 2016. The event was closely tied to the Shedhalle's 'The whole world in Zurich' project and attracted more than 550 participants from over 30 organisations. The Shedhalle's project, in turn, spawned the 'Züri City Card working group', which became an independent entity in 2017 that has since been in continuous dialogue with political decision makers. The association launched a petition pushing for the introduction of the City Card in July 2018. Its board members include former sans-papiers as well as lawyers, civil society actors and council members. When the candidates for the spring 2018 municipal elections were asked whether they would support the introduction of a municipal ID card in Zurich that would provide undocumented migrants with local ID, 80 per cent of politicians were either definitely or generally in favour.[9]

The Züri City Card working group continued to lobby political and public decision makers, and in July 2018, Zurich's municipal council members were asked to vote on a motion to introduce the Züri City Card. By submitting a motion, a council member can instruct the government to draft an amendment, a decision or a measure in line with federal, cantonal or municipal legislation. Such motions are binding if they are supported by the respective council. This specific motion was adopted by Zurich's municipal council, and in October 2018 said petition was handed in to Zurich's mayor, Corine Mauch, backed by 8,400 signatures. The municipal council finally voted to introduce the City Card for Zurich on 31 Octo-

9 The questionnaire for the municipal council elections held on 4 March 2018 can be accessed online at: smartvote.ch/18_st_zuerich_leg/questionnaire.

ber 2018. Responsibility for implementing the decision lies with the city council, which has until 2022 to complete its task.[10]

Alongside the 'We are all Zurich' initiative there emerged a similar movement in Bern that seeks to introduce a City Card for the country's capital. This suggestion was endorsed by political actors at the municipal level and has become part of Bern's 'Schwerpunkteplan Integration 2018–2021' (integration plan 2018–2021) and the city's political agenda.[11] As in Zurich, though, residents are still waiting for the City Card to be introduced. In the context of the debates over the Züri City Card, the city of Zurich commissioned two legal opinions: one addresses the question of access to the judicial system for undocumented migrants as well as police controls (see Kiener/Breitenbücher 2018), while the second, which has not been published yet, will assess the City Card's compatibility with cantonal and federal legislation.

The legal opinion on access to justice and the role of the police notes the gap between undocumented migrants' "actual exclusion from legal protection" and "the state's obligations derived from basic and human rights, which are binding for all authorities and actors tasked with carrying out state functions" (ibid.). It also maps Zurich's legislative autonomy in ensuring that undocumented migrants' basic rights are respected, for instance during identity checks. According to the opinion, presenting a City Card does not create reasonable suspicion of irregular stay and thus does not oblige the police to pursue further investigations or file a report. The opinion goes on to say that for this reason, the population should ideally use the City Card as frequently as possible. However, it also stresses that this should not prevent legislation on foreign nationals from being enforced (ibid.).

Depending on one's legal outlook, this conclusion can be interpreted in different ways. Reasonable suspicion remains dependent on a police officer's subjective interpretation of a situation. Zurich's police, for instance, use an internal app to document the reasons that prompt police controls. An analysis revealed that one of the most frequent factors is an individual's 'outer appearance' – evidence that 'racial profiling' is a common practice among the police force (see the interview with Ezgi Akyol, 3 Dec 2018). As long as this practice persists, the City Card would hardly effect any change, the report goes on to say.

For Bea Schwager, head of the SPAZ and board member of the Züri City Card working group, the City Card's essential benefit lies in improving undocumented migrants' access to regular stay and justice,

10 Zürcher Gemeinderat will mit Züri City Card Stadtausweis für alle, in: toponline, 3/10/2018, available at: https://www.toponline.ch/news/zuerich/detail/news/zuercher-gemeinderat-will-mit-zueri-city-card-stadtausweis-fuer-alle-0098741/. **11** Schwerpunkteplan Integration Stadt Bern, available at: www.bern.ch/politik-und-verwaltung/stadtverwaltung/bss/kompetenzzentrum-integration/fachbereich-information-und-vernetzung/leitbild-zur-integrationspolitik/schwerpunkte-plan-2018-2021.

while in other areas it could possibly help to simplify processes. She says the Züri City Card would not undermine federal legislation, and that it would merely provide sufficient legal proof of residence in Zurich. As such, its introduction would not ensure a more just society, but it could work as an 'antiseptic' against disenfranchisement in situations where people are denied access to basic rights (see the interview with Bea Schwager, 17 Dec 2018).

4 STRUGGLES OVER THE CITY CARD: HUMAN RIGHTS VERSUS DEMOCRATISATION?

The idea of a municipal ID card that is issued to all citizens irrespective of their legal status has prompted considerable discussion in the media and the political arena. Between the launch of this project in 2015 and the publication of the present study, Swiss media ran at least 27 pieces on the Züri City Card alone.[12] As the project gradually took on institutional form, debates over the Züri City Card began to focus on the technical and legal details of its implementability, pushing aside broader sociopolitical issues related to 'urban citizenship', i.e. questions regarding the general democratisation of urban life for all, which had been addressed early on, especially by the movement's actors.

The Züri City Card movement gradually separated into two distinct groups: on the one hand, the movement-based actors, who also sought to expand and democratise 'urban citizenship', and a group of institutional actors, on the other, who treat the City Card as an attempt to fill the legal vacuum that excludes a specific group of migrants, the sans-papiers. The latter vision of the City Card seems inspired by the policies of the North American 'sanctuary cities', whose primary focus is to provide undocumented migrants with access to secure residency. Facing anti-migrant opposition at the federal level, the legacy of Switzerland's migrant movements, which had paved the way for the Züri City Card, gradually began to fade. And so far, parliamentary debates have failed to reanimate or build on the movement's momentum for urban citizenship. Kijan Espahangizi argues:

> "Firstly, activism builds on resources that are limited, because [such forms of activism] are volunteer work, because they are precarious, because they require enormous individual motivation. In order to minimise their risks, people – not only in Switzerland, I'm sure – have the tendency to say, let's set up a project that's as specific as

12 See www.zuericitycard.ch/news.

possible, with a clearly defined group of victims, with a clearly identifiable authority that is responsible, where we can work towards changing something. Surely there are also certain values at play that shape Swiss political culture in general, where utopian ideas aren't exactly embraced […] And then urban citizenship projects in Switzerland, especially the Züri City Card, were exposed to a larger trend that has been evident for some time now. Over the past decades, efforts increasingly focused on pushing for change at the local level. The Mitenand referendum, which mobilised public support in the 1970s and was rejected in 1981, was the last big project that attempted to change things at a more fundamental level, and from there on, all initiatives turned to the local level – with good reason. The only leverage you have to change the school system, for instance, is at the municipal level. So this shift was reasonable, but it took things in a different direction. The focus turned to municipal voting rights, educational policy at the municipal and cantonal level, it even affected cultural promotion" (interview with Kijan Espahangizi, 4 Dec 2018).

Another reason why the concept of 'urban citizenship' ultimately took on the form of a City Card that primarily seeks to secure safe residency might be that many actors see Switzerland as a humanitarian safe haven. And with respect to the City Card, humanitarian grounds and safeguarding human rights are the lowest common denominators, says Peter Nideröst, board member of the Züri City Card working group:

"My assumption is that the political discourse over the City Card is closely tied to the human rights discourse. And in terms of human rights, the wind has shifted, not only across the political left, where their significance has perhaps already faded, but also in the political centre. The [right-wing liberal] FDP and the [Christian democrat] CVP, for instance, have realised that they need to have their own profile if they don't want to be appropriated by far-right parties such as the [right-wing nationalist] SVP. If I'm right with my assumption and the City Card is seen as a tool to strengthen human rights, then that could be explained by looking at the current majorities. In this context, there aren't any strong arguments against introducing the City Card" (interview with Peter Nideröst, 14 Dec 2018).

Christof Meier, Zurich's integration commissioner, underlines that the Züri City Card has drawn so much support because of its nature as a project and its solution-oriented character:

"One of the masterplans to improve society here in Zurich focuses on the issue of undocumented migrants. The issue simply suggested itself because it's specific, we're talking about real people with real stories, it has to do with human rights, these are tangible issues and there is an idea to solve them that immediately resonates with people. In addition, there's a left-green council in power that has the necessary majority to push through such proposals." (interview with Christof Meier, 18 Dec 2018).

Kijan Espahangizi agrees, adding that he believes that events of the past are being ignored due to a naïve sense of agency:

"The initiative could have learned from the many crucial insights and experiences of the Mitenand movement, for instance, or the experiences gained during the struggle over political rights for foreigners, an initiative in Zurich that had just failed. But perhaps it would also make sense to return to the 1960s and '70s, where so many things were tied to international developments. It's often forgotten that the crucial moments that brought about change both locally and nationally were always connected to the international level, whether it's women's suffrage, the adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights or dual citizenship in the 1990s. They all hinged on specific constellations that created opportunities, because people realised they wouldn't be able to compete, for instance on the EU labour market. It's always this triple momentum when things intersect, the local, the national and the international, that's when things change. But there really isn't a broad awareness of how things are related. Instead there is a tendency to focus on the micro-concrete. And that's exactly what happened" (interview with Kijan Espahangizi, 4 Dec 2018).

What is more, there are a number of issues related to 'urban citizenship' that have not been resolved yet, adds Ezgi Akyol, member of the municipal council and board member of the Züri City Card working group:

"There are a number of issues and contradictions that we haven't actively resolved yet concerning a number of legal aspects, for instance. It would have been important to open up the motion's text to review and win broad public support. Actually, urban citizenship would have been a more than ideal topic to connect different struggles, housing and labour, for instance. But currently these issues are all being crowded into the sans-papiers project" (interview with Ezgi Akyol, 3 Dec 2018).

5 CONCLUSION AND OUTLOOK

In their initial stage, campaigns for a municipal ID card (City Card) in Zurich were primarily characterised by grassroots actors. Debates mainly addressed 'urban citizenship', i.e. issues of social justice and democratisation. Next, they developed various approaches: one is a solution-oriented approach championed by the Züri City Card working group in particular. It sees the Züri City Card as a way to improve access to secure residence for undocumented migrants. The second approach is what I call transformative. It was backed by grassroots initiatives such as 'We are all Zurich' and aims to comprehensively democratise society. There also exists a third approach with a focus on integration. It is endorsed by the city's government and administration, which is somewhat critical of the City Card project due to the difficulties its introduction has raised.

In the coming years, it is these positions that will determine the processes that are set up to negotiate the social future of an immigrant city such as Zurich. So far, however, the initiators have barely endorsed the potential of 'urban citizenship' to democratise society. It would definitely be worth exploring urban citizenship in detail and asking which level in the relationship between city and municipality, canton and state does each project to democratise society have to target in order to be effective?

Although Zurich officially promotes itself as a 'creative city' and views innovation as the major driver of urban development, it lacks the motivation to use 'urban citizenship' as a label to develop a unique municipal profile that would set it apart from other cities in Switzerland or even Europe. After all, Zurich seizes every inch of its autonomy and financial independence when it comes to implementing solidarity policies. But as soon as it faces opposition to urban citizenship at the cantonal level, for instance, it abandons its efforts.

This explains the diverging assessments of the municipal council's 2018 resolution, which marks the status quo concerning the Züri City Card. Peter Nideröst, board member of the Züri City Card working group, hopes that a municipal ID card will refocus the entire discourse on migration on the question of whether there is a 'right to rights' for all, especially for those who have been granted regular status but de facto remain unable to fully claim their rights. In his opinion, the efforts driving the introduction of the City Card can be understood as a model for emancipatory movements that seek to transform the status quo 'from below' and gain momentum thanks to their straightforward accounts of everyday life. Nideröst also believes that once the card is introduced, a certain sense of realism will cause debates to gradually simmer down and make the City Card a successful project (interview with Peter Nideröst, 14 Dec 2018).

While most members of the Züri City Card working group generally view the 2018 municipal council resolution favourably, they are also aware of the challenges it presents. The working group hopes that a municipal ID card will help improve access to secure residency. Its foremost concern is protecting undocumented migrants from deportation. In this respect, the working group has modelled its efforts on the Sanctuary City policies that have emerged in North America. However, this focus also poses a challenge, as legal issues surrounding the card still need to be resolved and the form and scope of its actual implementation will have to be negotiated in the political arena. Peter Nideröst, lawyer and member of the working group, explains:

> "The question whether the City Card is compatible with superordinate legislation is a legal issue. I published a legal commentary addressing this question early on – we were aware that this would become an issue at some stage. I assessed the current legal situation, and as I see it, there is no contradiction. Some people might choose to disagree, but so far no one has challenged my assessment. The other thing is that we need to define whether the City Card will provide access to other rights beyond protection from the police. This is a matter of politics. Which rights and obligations it includes, that's something we can't set down in advance, that's a matter of democratic negotiation. We do want the card to open up access to social rights and even political rights, but that isn't something we can promise. But one thing it will definitely have to provide is protection from the police" (ibid.).

The city's integration commissioner, Christof Meier, by contrast, lists a number of difficulties linked to the issue of secure residency that have shaped the process so far.

> "Everything is focused on this City Card, although we still don't know who it could benefit. It won't help to tackle racial profiling or everyday forms of discrimination. At the moment, it's so charged with the promise of 'security' that it has raised expectations that are unrealistic. I'm convinced that many sans-papiers will not be willing to take this risk […]. Estimates for New York say that around 50 per cent of [City ID] users are undocumented migrants. In Zurich, which is not a Sanctuary City – and cannot act as one due to the current legal situation –, this would mean that one in two card users would be an undocumented migrant. This doesn't create a sense of safety, it creates a reasonable suspicion for police controls. We would need to issue some 30,000–40,000 cards that are actively used by

> citizens in a variety of situations, including interactions with the police, before we could start issuing the City Card to undocumented migrants" (interview with Christof Meier, 18 Dec 2018).

Meier's reasoning corresponds with the observations made by a study commissioned by urban citizenship movements in Bern and Zurich (Brunner 2017):

> "The federal constitution guarantees municipal autonomy in accordance with cantonal legislation. So due to cantonal legislation, the scope of autonomy differs in Bern and Zurich, which represents a challenge for the movements especially when it comes to realising specific demands. Take once more as an example the implementation of the City Card, which has a better chance of being introduced in Zurich than in Bern in light of the territorial responsibilities of the police. The reason is that Zurich's municipal police are tasked with maintaining the city's administrative unity and would be responsible for establishing respective legal practices. In Bern, the situation is more complex, because responsibility rests with the cantonal police, which would have to enforce legislation in Bern that diverges from legal practice in the remaining canton."

The author also wishes to mention García's criticism of the concept of "urban citizenship" (2006). García argues that (legal) claims resulting from local practices of citizenship can rarely be resolved exclusively at the municipal level without seeking agreement from other territorial units (see Brunner 2017).

My aim has been to explore the issues and considerations that framed the movement's break-up into a pragmatic, an integrationist and a transformational approach. Looking back, it emerges that this partition proved to be counterproductive for their efforts to promote a democratic city for all. For the next two years we can expect local debates over the results of the second legal opinion as well as any specific proposals concerning the implementation of the City Card that are submitted by the city council to be framed by these contradictions. It remains to be seen if and how these conflicts over the Züri City Card will evolve over the coming years. What is certain, however, is that immigration and its realities will continue to remake the city.

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REFUGEES WELCOME

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CITY OF REFUGE AND MIGRATION

THE 'BARCELONA EN COMÚ' MOVEMENT: FORMING EUROPEAN NETWORKS OF SOLIDARITY

1 INTRODUCTION

Since 2015, Barcelona has become known as a leading Solidarity City. In the spring of that year, Barcelona en Comú, an electoral platform born out of social movements, won the city's municipal election with a programme that included closure of the local pre-deportation detention centre (Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros, CIE). In September of the same year, Mayor Ada Colau took the initiative and made a now-famous statement on behalf of cities in support of refugees, 'We the Cities of Europe' (Colau/Hidalgo/Galinos 2016). The letter, co-signed by the mayors of Paris, Lesbos and a number of Spanish cities, quickly gained attention across the world and served as a catalyst for a mobilisation of civil society in Barcelona around solidarity initiatives.

What is special about Barcelona is that the city has become a space of experimentation in which the 'politics of welcoming' have been put to the test. The presence of a strong social and political will to act with solidarity has not, however, abolished the contradictions 'Solidarity City' activists and city councillors also face elsewhere. Why, for instance, has the city government that wanted to close the detention centre seen itself pressured to act against migrant street vendors?

Thus, investigating Barcelona as a city of solidarity is important not only in terms of its institutional initiatives and municipal policies, but as an example of the challenges facing the politics of solidarity.

This case study focuses on the conflicts surrounding the meaning and extent of the term 'solidarity' as well as the tactical and strategic considerations shaping, limiting and inspiring concrete policies and practices of solidarity. The study is based on five interviews conducted in late 2018 with leading staff from Barce-

lona City Council, activists from Barcelona en Comú and the migration rights movement, as well as participatory action research taking place within the same contexts between 2015 and 2016.[1]

2 BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

Barcelona has a long history of solidarity, from the workers' cooperatives and anarchist and communist trade unions of the 1930s, to its resistance to Francoism and the flourishing of social movements, cooperatives and neighbourhood associations of the last decade. Spain's movement against the Iraq war in the early 2000s is also worth noting as it did much to limit the space for Islamophobia in the Iberian nation.

While Spanish republicans have a living history of exile, the arrival of refugees and migrants is, however, relatively new, challenging and contested. For centuries, Spain was a country of settler-colonial and post-colonial emigration, and the 20th century was characterised by large internal migrations. However, the country was only faced with large-scale immigration from abroad around 2000, and until 2015, few refugees sought asylum in the country: in the early 1990s, only 1% of the population was foreign-born, rising to 12.2% by 2010. In Barcelona, a large and relatively wealthy city, the current number is twice as high at 26.6%, with some 18.5% of inhabitants without Spanish citizenship. Immigrants come largely from Europe (35.6%), Latin America (32.5%), and Asia (24.9%), with only 6.9% originating in Africa (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona 2018a).

In these figures we find a vast number of personal stories and journeys – some 300,000 to 400,000, depending on estimates of how many inhabitants remain undocumented. But the explicit, and particularly the institutional, politics of solidarity and welcoming refugees only draw on a fraction of those stories, namely those of the most recently arrived, especially asylum seekers and illegalised migrants. The reasons for this are political and institutional. Prior to 2015, the issue of immigration was largely depoliticised by a broad political consensus in the city council to consider immigration as an administrative question with its labour, cultural and humanitarian dimensions. Most migrants in Barcelona came from Latin America or EU member states; in short, many spoke Spanish or already had a type of work permit and easily found work in the booming economy of the 2000s. Meanwhile, the state maintained very high rejection rates in asylum cases, often dismissing above 70% of applications (Sanahuja 2017).

1 The author would like to thank Manuela Zechner for her invaluable support on this piece.

During the pre-crisis years, the municipal capacity of reception and integration was more or less adjusted to the number of arrivals. To prevent a xenophobic response to the increase in migration, the city council launched an anti-rumours network, 'Xarxa Antirumors', in the early 2000s to combat rumours, prejudice and stereotyping. This programme trains 'anti-rumour agents' to dispel rumours and misconceptions about migration in neighbourhoods and schools, and it has been copied by a number of cities across Spain and beyond (Antirumores 2019; Cities of Migration 2018).

In many respects the system in place today is the same as before 2015. The state programmes provide asylum seekers with housing and a stipend in the first six months of the procedure (up to nine months for those deemed to be highly vulnerable). Before and after this period, the city provides some accommodation and financial support, as well as legal aid. Migrants who can prove residency in Barcelona (e.g. utility bills or rental contracts in their name) are able to register with the municipal authorities (empadronamiento) – irrespective of their residency and citizenship status in Spain. They thereby gain access to municipal social services on equal footing with long-term residents – at least in principle. In fact, there are many instances of people not accessing their rights, in some cases due to a lack of information and discrimination. Another continuity is a two-phase approach, operative at all levels of governance, consisting of a first phase of welcoming (acogida) leading into a second phase of autonomy, conceived in terms of integration into the labour and housing markets.

Before the economic crisis, the politics of solidarity were mostly the remit of social movements and NGOs, or underground movements in which migrants self-organised through social and familiar networks. When the crisis hit and many lost their jobs, these networks became increasingly important, not only for migrants but also for millions of Spanish citizens. Housing became an urgent issue for people irrespective of background. Migrants of African origin founded the 'Cal África' squat in an old industrial area in 2011, which became an important space of mutual aid and co-living for hundreds of people, most of whom survived as scrap metal collectors (Geddis 2013). The number of Latin Americans in Barcelona dropped by 50,000 from 2009 to 2016, as many lost their jobs and thus their ability to pay rents and mortgages. Many, especially families whose children had firm roots in Barcelona, became involved with the movement against forced evictions (Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca, PAH). One of the founders of this movement is Ada Colau.

On 15 May 2011, inspired by the Arab Spring, hundreds of thousands of people occupied squares across the Spanish state in protest against austerity and for 'real democracy'. Migrants also played a

prominent role in this movement, and the importance of migrant struggles increased as events unfolded. One of the explicit migration solidarity initiatives was the campaign against the detention centres, 'Tanquem els CIEs', which started in January 2012 after the death of Idrissa Diallo at the Barcelona detention centre. In 2013, the Zapatista-inspired 'Espacio del Inmigrante' (Migrant Space) was set up in a squatted illegal tourist flat in the neighbourhood of Raval, which grew into an important assembly-based space for migrant self-organisation, bringing together people from the now evicted 'Cal África' squat and a growing number of undocumented migrants who were surviving as street vendors, the so-called manteros. The key to the space was a radical critique of the reduction of political agency for non-Spanish citizens. One former participant in the 'Espacio' recounted a slogan that expresses this very well: "[The migrant is] a subject of politics and a political subject, not an object of public policy."

When the new movement-driven minority city council took office in 2015, migration became a key topic of urban politics in Barcelona. Although the city never became a major destination or transit point, the question of refugees and migrants, with the two categories strictly separated in public discourse, became incredibly important. The two central issues were, on the one hand, the non-arrival of Syrian refugees in Barcelona and, on the other, the question of the small but very visible number of informal street sellers, most of whom are sub-Saharan migrants without papers.[2]

In many respects, the two phenomena emerged and developed in opposite ways. The politicisation of the right to asylum and municipal welcoming, owing to the fact that no refugees were arriving in Barcelona, was a product of the new city council's will to mobilise socially and institutionally against the central government's refusal to receive refugees. The city council responded to a powerful wave of solidarity in the population, developing tactics to challenge state policy and the legitimacy of the PP (Partido Popular) government, as well as the closure of borders at the EU level. The struggle of street vendors, on the other hand, was scandalised by the right and mainstream media in an attempt to undermine the city council for being 'too tolerant' of 'illegal migrants squatting public space to sell illegal, counterfeit items'. While the practice and repression of street vending in the city go back at least a century, a migration-friendly, grassroots government was new – and a welcome target. Here, Barcelona en

2 The activist researcher from the 'Espacio del Inmigrante' interviewed for this case study estimated the number of manteros to be between 300 and 400. Meanwhile, the media has suggested the number rose during the Colau-led council from 400 in 2014 to 600 in 2016 (López and Sust, 2016). Based on my own impression from moving through the streets of Barcelona on a regular basis, the latter figure seems exaggerated. The total registered population of West Africans in Barcelona in 2018 was 3,794 – 1.26% of the city's migrant population (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona 2018a).

Comú (BComú) tried to occupy an impossible position between the demands of the refugee rights movement and a concert of media and political opponents calling for law and order.

3 BARCELONA EN COMÚ

To understand the public debate about migration in Barcelona, which has so thoroughly shaped Barcelona's image as a Solidarity City, we need to look at the development of BComú. The organisation's stance on migration policy was developed through a participatory process, shaped by people with expertise as well as experience: regular citizens, activists, researchers, municipal and NGO workers – many of them migrants from Europe or Latin America, some of North African and South Asian origin. Speaking to participants of the 2015 campaign workgroup, a tension between a focus on concrete policies and a broader political reframing of the question of migration emerges. One interviewee, a researcher who came to work in the city council, described an open and often difficult process that only gradually managed to develop concrete and workable policies by analysing the functioning of the city council in the field of migration, its challenges and its mistakes. Another, an activist researcher who had been active with the scrap metal workers and the 'Espacio del Inmigrante', spoke of his discomfort with the framing of migration as a single issue, and his attempts to bring the discourse in line with the demands of the migrants' rights movement. Central to this effort was, as he put it to me, "the basic consideration of migrants as political subjects and people with agency instead of an object or population to be managed", the universalisation of demands ("for all"), and the focus on specific anti-carceral, anti-racist demands.

The migration workgroup's final document speaks about working for social inclusion – especially easing the process of empadronamiento (registering with the municipal authorities) and access to health care – and fighting for mechanisms of inclusion in schooling, housing and the detention centre (Barcelona en Comú 2015a). In the overall 2015 electoral programme, the concerns of both my interviewees are reflected. The programme contains a number of concrete proposals, some posed as aspects of universal demands, others very specific (e.g. closure of the detention centre), and finally, some concern what the city can do to respect and encourage the political agency of migrants (Barcelona en Comú 2015b). This demonstrates the power of participatory policy making as a process of collective knowledge production and political thinking starting from the experiences and knowledge of its participants. The tension between

policy and radical politics had been made productive, at least discursively. During the municipal election campaign of 2015, BComú also engaged in a campaign informing migrants of their right to vote in municipal elections.

From the beginning of its term in office, BComú managed to challenge two presumptions that had governed the existing cross-political consensus on refugee reception and asylum within the city council. Instead of the depoliticised liberal humanitarianism, they set out to politicise the questions of migration, building on the discourse and demands developed in the social movements and progressive NGOs in the field. By setting out on this premise, BComú broke with a second presupposition, namely that the city should simply manage refugee and migration-related issues within its competency without dissenting publicly from the policies of the central government. For instance, the city helped create awareness of the injustices faced by people in the detention centre, even if it was ultimately unable to close it.

When the summer of migration started briefly after Ada Colau was sworn in as mayor, it was thus hardly surprising that Barcelona took on a leading role among European cities in demanding a break with the cruel and deadly border policies of the EU and national governments. It also came as no surprise that the new city council's migration policy caused a stir among the right and in the media. Over recent years, these two opposing struggles over legitimacy and justice have largely overshadowed the city's everyday efforts to increase its reception capacity in the face of large, year-by-year increases in asylum applications. Furthermore, it is the former that has made Barcelona's reputation as a leading city of solidarity, and the latter that has tainted it.

4 CIUTAT REFUGI

As the power and tragedy of the refugee movement swelled in the summer of 2015, social movements and organisations in Barcelona began to prepare. New organisations were formed in the Barcelona metropolitan area, like the citizens' platform for refugee and migrants' rights movement 'Stop Mare Mortum' and the sea rescue NGO 'Proactiva Open Arms'. Ada Colau issued a missive to President Mariano Rajoy announcing that Barcelona would transform itself into a city of refuge (Colau, 2015). Within a day, more than 1,000 messages with offers of help had been sent to the city's newly opened 'Ciutat Refugi' email address. On 12 September 2015, Barcelona joined the European-wide #europesayswelcome protests, and on 15 September Ada Colau published a letter together with the mayors of Lesbos and Paris that was co-signed by many Spanish mayors, stating:

> "We, the cities of Europe, are ready to become places of refuge. We want to welcome these refugees. States grant asylum status but cities provide shelter. […] We have the space, services and, most importantly, the support of our citizens to do so. […] The only thing missing is state support." (Colau/Hidalgo/Galinos 2015)

As the city took a stance of welcoming, more and more of its citizens offered their help in the reception effort. But hardly any refugees arrived. Spain, still in the midst of high unemployment, a severe housing crisis and austerity, was far from the Middle Eastern crisis points and no attractive destination. What is worse, the Spanish government was not acting on its commitments to receive refugees from Italy and Greece within the European Reallocation Scheme; in October 2016, a year into the scheme, Spain had only received 481 of the 17,680 refugees it had promised to take (Suanzes 2016). With few refugees arriving from Syria, the social and municipal readiness to welcome had to be redirected. The city council began to develop strategies for challenging the Spanish state's blockade, and social movements, NGOs and the newly organised neighbourhood groups, such as 'Barris Refugi', began focusing on solidarity work abroad, especially in Greece. Across the Spanish state, other cities governed by progressive citizen platforms took similar measures often inspired by Barcelona.

The city council's Department for Global Justice and Collaboration began investigating other possibilities for helping refugees stuck in Greece and Italy to Barcelona, including the idea of chartering a ship, which was soon discarded because Barcelona port is state territory and the city would not be able to guarantee the safety of people on board. A number of possibilities, including supporting humanitarian visas and cooperation between cities such as Athens, Lesbos and Melilla, were examined (Comas/Hansen/Salvini/Zechner 2016). This fed into an inter-municipal agreement in March 2016 with Athens, according to which Barcelona would receive 100 refugees from the Greek capital (La Vanguardia, 2016). It claimed that by neglecting its own human right commitments, the central state was making all Spanish citizens guilty; if the state was neglecting its responsibility, the city had to act against this collective incrimination. Furthermore, the deal forcefully contradicted the central government's claims that Spain did not have the capacity to receive refugees. Nonetheless, President Rajoy rejected the offer with reference to the central government's prerogative on all matters of asylum and border policy. Even if unsuccessful in practical terms, the deal with Athens made clearer that Spain's non-compliance with the European Reallocation Scheme was a matter of active blockage. The deal was a powerful claim for municipalist politics, ac-

cording to which cities are justified in reclaiming power and competencies from the state where the latter neglects its responsibilities.

Moreover, Barcelona threw itself into a number of city networks. It was central to the initiatives to establish a network of Spanish Refuge Cities, with which 25 cities would soon be affiliated, and the European Solidarity Cities network within the wider EUROCITIES network.[3] According to the head of the 'Ciutat Refugi' programme, Ignasi Calbó, both networks facilitate important technical exchanges and visits, with EUROCITIES being a more resourceful and powerful network, especially in terms of lobbying. The city networks and the bilateral deal with Athens affirm the importance of inter-municipal diplomacy, going beyond the hierarchical nation-state logic which reduces international relations between public bodies to interactions between central states and their local governments.

For the small team in Barcelona City Council's 'Cuitat Refugi' office, the work of receiving newcomers has been overwhelming. Even if few the number of asylum applications in Barcelona has grown massively over recent years and completely out of step with the funding. The number of arrivals attended to by Barcelona's primary service for migrants and refugees, SAIER (Servicio de Atención a Inmigrantes, Emigrantes y Refugiados), rose considerably between 2012 and 2018: from around 300 to 7,500 (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona 2016; 2018d). Mostly, these people have come from Venezuela, Ukraine and Georgia. The number of asylum applications has drastically increased processing times, with most applications resulting in rejections. In absolute numbers, and compared to cities in Italy and Greece, the number of arrivals is moderate, but since the Spanish state has not devoted the necessary resources, the pressure on municipal infrastructures, those responsible for reception and integration, has been significant. What is more, the number of migrants crossing the Strait of Gibraltar has increased almost tenfold since 2015 (UNHCR 2019; Alarm Phone 2018).

In general, the Spanish state's asylum system is highly dysfunctional. It combines an extreme centralisation of planning and regulation with an extreme decentralisation of implementation carried out by NGOs, charities and local authorities, without any coordination or stable channels of information. The central government gives no advance notice to cities when it sends refugees there. At the same time, high rejection rates result in a constant production of homelessness, poverty, and irregularity, and with it forms of exclusion and superexploitation, which feed xenophobia, racism and classism. To face these issues, the city has launched a number of initiatives, of which we can only mention some here.

3 https://solidaritycities.eu/about.

The municipal 'Nausica' programme, which started in April 2016, provides a number of services for asylum seekers or receivers who are excluded from the limited state system of reception and integration, including integrated help with housing, legal aid, job and language training (Barcelona Ciutat Refugi 2018). The programme was developed with the participation of a number of NGOs, civic groups and municipal bodies. A large independent evaluation (Ayuntamiento de Barcelona 2018b) demonstrated that the programme has been successful in improving the social and economic autonomy and the Spanish language skills of participants. The integrated approach means that participants are seen as whole persons with interrelated needs, also allowing the different municipal organisations and NGOs involved in the programme to coordinate their efforts. The programme's focus on social autonomy shows an important shift away from a purely economic conception of autonomy towards an appreciation of the importance of the participation in group and community activities, friendship networks and the ability to access the city's resources (health care, libraries, community centres, etc.) without professional guidance. However, the programme remains underfunded and unable to reach more than a small part of those in need.

Since 2017, the documento de vecindad ('neighbourhood document') can help people with undocumented status prove their level of belonging and integration in Barcelona. This can be used as evidence in cases concerning detention and deportation, and be taken into account by judges and tribunals making decisions on such matters. Based on interviews with professionals from the city council's Immigrant Care and Reception Service (Dirección de Atención y Acogida a Inmigrantes), the city certifies this document, which attests to the individual's belonging in the city (Legal Team 2019; Ayuntamiento de Barcelona 2018c). While carrying the legitimacy of the municipality, the document is, however, not legally binding to the state, so whether immigration authorities accept it remains a matter of discretion (Esbert-Pérez 2017). Furthermore, a number of publicly funded exhibitions in municipal cultural institutions and public spaces have drawn attention to the plight of migrants; one example is the listing of the 35,597 documented deaths in the Mediterranean along a long corridor in the busy Passeig de Gràcia metro station.

Barcelona has thus developed into a city of refuge, even if its symbolic impact is less spectacular than when it was launched. Gloria Rendón, director of SAIER and the 'Nausica' programme, summed up the development in these terms: "When the 'Barcelona Ciutat Refugi' plan was created, the impact in the city was more mediatic than real. Now we have a real impact, but less media attention" (Barcelona Ciutat Refugi, 2017a). Support for social and civic initiatives, how-

ever, has not been deprioritised. In 2017, Ada Colau supported the social movement mobilisations for the 'Our home, your home' (Casa nostra, casa vostra) campaign, which culminated in a demonstration attended by some 160,000 people. Later that year, the city assisted the independent sea rescue missions of 'ProActiva Open Arms' and 'Stop Mare Mortum' by offering funding of € 100,000 and € 60,000 respectively, and promising both organisations political support. As Ada Colau confirmed: "If they attack [these organisations], they are attacking the city of Barcelona and the city will do whatever it takes to defend their work" (Espanyol 2018).

This fearless message has certainly been important both internationally and among Barcelona inhabitants. However, resources and competencies remain insufficient for the concrete city initiatives to be truly effective and universal. City officials complain about insufficient support from the Spanish state, and of EU funds never arriving on the municipal level. Furthermore, the power of the city's main tool to protect undocumented inhabitants against police harassment and deportation – the 'Documento de vecindad' – remains unclear. While the media and opposition have attacked the city for its insufficient policing of migrants, a large part of the migrant, anti-racist and decolonial movement in Barcelona has accused it of hypocrisy as the grand gestures of solidarity with refugees have been dissonant with the continued repression of migrants on the streets of Barcelona.

5 THE POPULAR UNION OF STREET VENDORS (MANTEROS)

When BComú took office, they also took over formal control of the municipal police force (Guardia Urbana). The chief of police immediately tendered his resignation letter, citing the supposed anti-police attitudes of BComú (Navarro 2015). As the city relaxed its policing of the poor, the harassment of the street vendors (manteros) eased and their presence in public space increased. The mainstream media were quick to team up with the shopkeepers' association, stirring up moral panic about the sale of fake Nikes and other illicit goods in the streets of Barcelona. With Ada Colau as mayor, the minor survival strategies of the poor became front-page material, and concerns about intellectual property infringement, unfair competition, public order and Barcelona's global image were raised. One headline in Spanish daily paper La Vanguardia complained that the congested streets were a public safety hazard (the immense crowds of tourists, however, were not seen as an issue). The campaign ran intensively over the summer of 2015. In August, Mor Sylla, a mantero, died following a fall that took place

during a police raid in a town outside Barcelona. No police officer was made responsible, and the death was followed by demonstrations (Rovira 2015).

It was in this tense atmosphere that the manteros met in 'Espacio del Inmigrante' to form a union, the Popular Union of Street Vendors (Sindicato Popular de Vendedores Ambulantes). The idea of the union had come up in conversations with the activists of that space, and the manteros and their union was soon supported by a new initiative, 'Tras la Manta', formed by veterans of the 15M movement and the struggle against the detention centre. One of the participants in the 'Espacio del Inmigrante' described the political effects of the formation of the union in the following terms:

> "In the accurate sense, they [the manteros] were always a political actor and the self-organisation was inherent to the type of antagonism that they practice anyway – in networks of mutual aid and solidarity to get by day to day in a regime that criminalises their very existence. However, this was where they became a public political actor – through the union." (Interview conducted by the author)

The Popular Union of Street Vendors was formed to counter rumours and racist stereotypes that surrounded their work, and to negotiate with local authorities and police. Their key message was "survival is not a crime", and they demanded that human dignity be put above intellectual property rights. Soon, the Union began organising 'rebel flea markets' with the support of 'Tras la Manta' and 'Espacio del Inmigrante' (Espinosa Zepelda 2017). Here, black street sellers were no longer separated from the general population, which made policing them more troublesome. The alliance also organised demonstrations in which manteros would connect their struggles with those of other groups: "We have come here because Spanish and EU trawlers are sweeping up all the fish off the coast of West Africa, depriving us of work and food. We are just trying to make ends meet like you are, and like you we have been fucked over by the rich" (conversation with a mantero 2017, quoted from memory; see also Siberia TV 2015).

Meanwhile, the attacks on BComú were stepped up by the press, the shopkeepers' association and the police union. This strategy is by no means new – it was utilised against the previous left-wing government in 2004, which was bullied into passing the 'civismo code', which criminalises the ways the poor use public space (drinking, loitering, street selling, begging, etc.) (Delclos 2016). In September 2015, as 'Ciutat Refugi' was launched, the opposition (except the left-wing CUP party) brought out a motion of censure due to Ada Colau's "inefficiency in dealing with the manteros" (Blanchar 2015). The immediate response of

Deputy Mayor Gerardo Pisarello – at that time the only person of colour in City Hall – was sharp. He called the approach of the opposition "classist and racist", and their critique "cynical and demagogic" since they themselves had not been able to solve the issue when they were in government (ibid.). An uproar in the media soon forced Pisarello to backtrack on everything, except his implicit admission that there was an issue. BComú had been forced into the defensive.

The city's attempts to recognise the Popular Union in talks with police and business organisations were sabotaged by the latter two, who denied the legitimacy of the union. As the efforts to build 'Ciutat Refugi' were stepped up, City Hall began to bow to the pressure. Faced by the overwhelming might of the media, opposition and associations of plucky shop owners, Bcomú fell back on their own discourse that had been designed as a part of their struggle to establish hegemony. Their aim was to "govern for everyone", not just for special interests, and as always the default meaning of "everyone" refers primarily to citizens and voters.

The city council was walking a thin line. As Pisarello explained to the movement paper Diagonal, the city was still intent on "avoiding the criminalising and policing approach to ambulant street vending and to stand up for the fact that the people who sell in the street are neighbours whose basic rights must be recognised" (Fernández Redondo 2016). However, the city council was also concerned with "decongesting public space to prevent small merchants from being dragged into a right-wing populist coalition against the manteros" (ibid.). This attempt culminated in a city-wide campaign in the summer of 2016 which called for respectful cohabitation and, among other things, encouraged tourists and locals not to buy the goods of manteros, and was accompanied by increased policing of public spaces. The street vendors' union pointed out that these measures effectively criminalised and delegitimised their survival strategies, and thus their existence. The critique from the anti-racist and decolonial movement was uncompromising and full of suspicion of the city's intentions and discourse. 'Ciutat Refugi' was decried as an empty branding exercise and "shitty hypocrisy". In a video attacking the city council, Mohamed, a Syrian Palestinian, described 'Ciutat Refugi' as a "way for the middle classes to feel well, as if they are doing something in this crisis", while Daouda from Senegal said, "They don't understand what we're living through, because they don't know, they don't care to know" (Alsharqawi/Almodóvar 2016). Having a stake in negotiations with the city, and an interest in leveraging the good intentions of Bcomú, the Popular Union adopted a less dismissive approach. The result of these negotiations was eventually the city-supported formation in 2017 of a co-operative of manteros, DiomCoop, and spots for manteros trading in

city fairs and markets (López 2017). However, the cooperative only offers jobs to 40 out of perhaps 300 or 400 street vendors, and only to those with access to work permits, that is to those whose criminalised survival strategies had not resulted in criminal records.

Today, informal street trading persists in Barcelona. It is only policed in the most congested and central areas. Protests against police repression and violence continue, most significantly with the large demonstration after the death of Mame Mbaye in Madrid following a police chase (Faye 2018). The concessions of BComú have ultimately failed to satisfy their political opponents and thereby to depoliticise the issue of the manteros. Arguably, they have weakened their own efforts to produce another discourse, one which recognises the question of street vending as a complex structural issue, and a question of the survival, the labour and the political agency of illegalised migrants. The situation facing those living with precarious and undocumented legal statuses persists, and becomes more challenging year by year, with BComú adopting an approach focused on regularisation (e.g. cooperatives, work permits). However, in the run-up to the 2019 electoral campaign, the organisation is increasingly focusing on the policing of the mantero trade.[4]

The question of the mantero trade continues to be used by the right as a wedge with which they try to divide the inhabitants of the city, sow ethnicised competition and mistrust, and thereby undermine urban co-existence (convivencia), support for universal rights, and the conditions of popular and class solidarity. In this sense, solidarity with migrants is a matter of moral responsibility towards our cities' most vulnerable inhabitants, but also a matter of strategic necessity on all levels.

6 LESSONS AND INVENTIONS TO COME

The experiences and experiments of Barcelona en Comú suggest that progressive cities and parties lose ground when they merely represent the dominant, common sense of citizens as it is – shaped by mass media and mechanisms of exclusion – and gain ground when they amplify and extend the solidary and emancipatory movements in society. BComú has been most powerful where it has been able to build on social forces that are strong enough to reshape subjectivities and trans-

4 Recently, Barcelona en Comú's regular press review has featured two articles on the subject. One deals with the city's security commissioner's calls for police to clear a central metro station permanently of the trade, not ruling out using criminal charges against manteros for the sale of counterfeit goods (Periódico 2019). Another features a headline suggesting City Hall wants to "eradicate top manta trading from the city" (Betevé 2019). While the headline and the hard-line rhetoric of the commissioner do not represent the party's discourse and policy, the digest generally only includes characterisations and mischaracterisations it wants to abet.

form common sense through the knowledge gained through political discussion and struggle.

Currently, much is changing. Barcelona continues to see an increase in arrivals as more cross the Strait of Gibraltar. The Spanish far right now has an independent electoral platform, 'Vox', and although the party is unlikely to win seats in Barcelona, the municipal elections of May 2019 are sure to change the political dynamics of the city. With that in mind, it is worthwhile looking back at the lessons of the past years.

'Ciutat Refugi' has helped few of the Syrian refugees it was launched to welcome, nor has it forced the state to live up to its commitments: by October 2018 Spain had only received 16.7% of the refugees it had promised to reallocate in 2018 – itself a tiny portion of the number of Syrian refugees in Europe, and even less compared to the number of Syrians stuck in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan (La Vanguardia 2018). However, valid demands cannot be judged merely on whether they were won in practice. The city council's forceful and unapologetic welcoming emboldened local activists, and built on a moment of general empathy, which allowed for a public discourse that went beyond the apolitical humanitarianism that has failed in the face of anti-immigration sentiments across Europe. Beyond trying to establish a welcoming common sense in the city and pressuring the state, 'Ciutat Refugi' must crucially be read as a Europe-wide campaign against a climate of fear and isolation. This campaign played a role in developing a European-wide counter-discourse and new networks of solidarity and cooperation across places as well as movements and institutions.

In terms of Spain's central government, it is less clear what direct effects it had: in many ways the city's anti-racist claims were overshadowed by the battle over Catalan independence (Hansen 2017). At the local level, where matters of asylum and migrant lives become more concrete and immediate, the situation is messy and challenging. However, because of the movement for migrants' rights and 'Ciutat Refugi' as well as the general experiences of solidarity characteristic of neighbourhood, cooperative and associational life in Barcelona, the space for xenophobic reaction is relatively smaller than in cities characterised by competition and mistrust. This was also witnessed in the largely composed and non-Islamophobic response to the August 2017 Barcelona attacks.

The symbolic power of Barcelona as a city of refuge is great, but precarious. The launch and international scope of 'Ciutat Refugi' show that cities can also successfully take up the broader ideological struggles over human rights and refugee solidarity, even on questions beyond their official remit and legal competencies. At the same time, the case of the manteros shows how difficult and counterproductive it can be to tactically withdraw from broader struggles over justice. Bor-

ders traverse the city, and the institution of national citizenship divides its inhabitants. The common sense of representative politics is that only citizen-voters are considered political agents and sources of political legitimacy, while migrants have very little agency: they are seen either as good victims or bad intruders, refugees or economic migrants. Meanwhile, this common sense considers 'public order', and thus the repression of irregular survival strategies, one of the administration's core roles.

BComú has struggled to break with this common sense, and gained very little by implicitly adopting it. Migrants without work permits will have to survive, and the repression of one survival strategy, like street vending, will typically force them to survive in other irregular or illegal ways. City councils have limited options to legalise and expand the rights of those who are illegalised, while the pressure to police them remains high. If cities recognise that irregularity will not go away but will be repeatedly reproduced by borders and national citizenship, they are forced to choose: do they accept the state's divisions of its population, or do they work to change national law? Do they try to repress irregularity through police action, or find ways that cities can create space for irregularity?

In terms of street vending, solidarity cities could employ a tried and tested neoliberal strategy: deregulate your friends and regulate your enemies. For neoliberals this has meant the deregulation and the de facto subsidisation of capital through outsourcing and privatisations. At the same time, they increased the regulation of trade unions and the supervision of workers and the unemployed, migrants and non-migrants. Through these means, the influence of capital was increased, which in turn strengthened the hand of neoliberal governments.

The city of Barcelona is already subsidising the poor using irregular means by extending de facto access to many social services where rights cannot be de jure guaranteed. Reversing this strategy and deregulating the poor would thus not mean abandoning them, but giving space to the forms of self-organisation, be they individual or collective, through which people create bases of stability and solidarity. It would mean listening to their demands for deregulation and decriminalisation – for instance, of the use of public space – and thus recognising their political agency and self-organisation no matter their nationality in line with the concept of "urban citizenship" (Isin/Siemiatycki 1999; Hansen/Zechner 2016).

More broadly, we might ask if 'integration' can be reimagined as mutual integration of forms of solidarity and mutual aid. The question then becomes not merely how to help refugees and migrants, but how to connect their forms of mutuality with local forms of solidarity such as trade unions, cooperatives and commons. What, in other words, happens when we stop speaking

about solidarity with refugees and migrants as a merely moral and humanitarian question, and start thinking of it as a question of strategy, organisation and change?

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MAURIZIO COPPOLA

TACKLING THE RIGHTWARD SHIFT WITH SOLIDARITY

IN NAPLES, ACTIVISTS ARE TURNING TO MUTUALISM AND NEW CLASS POLITICS

Studying Naples through the lens of the Solidarity City movement allows us to examine up close the diverse range of social and political urban projects that have arisen from municipal and activist policies during the last decades of the crisis. Falling outside of the Solidarity City framework, these projects are more in line with early French socialist theories of mutualist organisation, which aimed to fulfil common economic and political needs in small groups, thereby rendering the state superfluous as a ruling authority. This concept differs from prevailing mutualist practices, which understand mutualism as a re-appropriation of the social terrain and endeavour to organise class solidarity, resolve political conflicts and thus confront the question of power.

The activities of the Naples-based political collective Ex OPG Je so' pazzo (Ex OPG stands for ex Ospedale Psichiatrico Giudiziario, or former judicial psychiatric hospital; Je so' pazzo translates as 'I am crazy') provide an excellent example of how migrant solidarity can be achieved from a class-political perspective. Responding to Italy's general social, political and financial crisis, on the one hand, the collective engages in solidary groundwork on the other that organises migrants as part of the working class rather than patronising them. This aspect of class politics will be the focus of this article.

After occupying a former psychiatric hospital in 2015, Ex OPG engaged in a wide range of social and political activities: legal advice centres for migrants and workers, volunteer medical clinics, language courses and political interventions in asylum centres have developed into proper self-organised, social infrastructures and services that cater to the immediate social needs of workers, irrespective of their background or legal status. In this context, the mutualist tradition offers a narrative of change as well as a means for self-organisation. After all, Ex OPG is historically linked to mid-19th century workers' self-organi-

sation movements in Italy. These include collective forms of resilience against the dramatic impact of mass proletarianisation as well as instruments of political resistance against the exploitation of workers. While the former was widely accepted by the bourgeois classes due to its reproduction of an exploitable labour force, the latter was antagonised and criminalised (Meriggi 2016). This historical duality inherent in mutualist theory still exists today. In simple terms, mutualist interventions that do not address the bigger picture of social conflict are simple acts of charity. Ecclesiastical relief for the poor, self-organised neighbourhood associations and the like can also be considered grassroot initiatives for mutual aid, which crop up wherever the state is unable to provide for the immediate needs of the population due to bureaucratic burdens, financial weakness, economic crisis or criminal infiltration. However, in order to address these immediate needs from a class perspective, we need to look beyond these self-organised grassroot initiatives, examine the vertical nature of this social conflict and confront public institutions.

The politicisation of mutualist strategies requires a political project that does not remain confined to the level of an individual squat or municipality, but instead challenges larger structural issues. Two conclusions can be drawn from the case study of Naples. On the one hand, we have the physical and political limitations of municipalism – that is, any form of political opposition on the municipal level against national and EU-dictated racist laws and austerity programmes. On the other hand lies the potential of mutualism for developing and organising a social practice by and for the working class. In this context, the case study of Naples not only reflects the social and political conflicts across Italy and Europe, but also confronts us with the dynamics of these conflicts – as well as the modes of self-organisation of the exploited – in a direct and unfiltered manner.

To analyse this political reality, I interviewed five grass-root activists of Ex OPG from different areas within the organisation. As an active member of Ex OPG, I supplemented this empirical material with numerous documents and my own notes from (participatory) observation. Attempts to initiate a dialogue with representatives of the municipal government failed as respective queries were left unanswered.

1 WORK AND MIGRATION IN NAPLES

Naples is a typical southern European city, where social conflicts were part of daily life long before the outbreak of the crisis in 2008 (see historical accounts in Lay 1980). According to official figures, 30.5 per cent of the population – 113,000 people – are unemployed (+3.9 per cent between 2016 and 2017). Among 15- to 24-year-olds, the unemployment rate currently stands at 54.7 per cent. The crisis and the latest labour market reform have increased the precarity of employment. Across the whole region of Campania, for example, open-ended contracts are continuously being replaced with temporary employment.

In addition to the growing precarisation of regular work, irregular working conditions are on the rise. In 2017, national statistics counted 382,900 irregular workers in the Campania region, which represent approximately nine per cent of GDP. This phenomenon particularly affects the agricultural sector in the northern periphery and the Caserta Province, as well as the sectors of household-related services, gastronomy and tourism in the larger urban areas.

This portrait of urban precarity is further supported by the rate of emigration. The weak economic development in the south of Italy has led to a steady population decline over the past few years: between 2002 and 2016, more than 1.8 million young Italians left their homes in the south of Italy in search of work. Campania is one of the regions most severely affected by emigration, and it is predicted the region will lose approximately 1.5 million of its inhabitants to emigration in the next 50 years (Svimez report 2018).

Migration policy and residence status

Passed in 2002, the Bosse-Fini law (legge Bosse-Fini) still largely dictates Italy's migration policy, stipulating that only a valid employment contract guarantees a work permit and thus a residence permit. In a country so strongly affected by irregular working conditions, this type of regulation prevents migrant workers who lack a valid contract from attaining regular legal status. It was only with the governmental regularisations (sanatoria) passed in 2009 and 2012 that this trend could be curbed, albeit to an insufficient degree.[1]

The Italian asylum policy envisages three paths towards attaining regular residence status. The first option is to claim political asylum in order to achieve the internationally recognised refugee status. In 2017, 8.4 per cent of a total of 81,000 asylum claimants were granted this status (ISMU 2017). This residence permit is valid for five years, can be re-

1 In 2009, the government only accepted applications from migrant domestic workers. In 2012, applicants were requested to pay a one-off fee of 1,000 euros as well as a retrospective payment of six months' worth of non-wage labour costs.

newed and provides access to the labour market and social welfare services. After a duration of five years, status holders can apply for Italian citizenship.

The second option is to apply for subsidiary protection (8.4 per cent of applications successful in 2017; ISMU 2017). This is granted if, in the eyes of the authorities, the applicant does not qualify for refugee status according to the Geneva Refugee Convention, but faces the risk of serious harm in their country of origin. This residence permit is also valid for five years, grants access to the employment market and social welfare services, and can be upgraded to a work permit.

The third option is that of humanitarian protection (24.7 per cent of applications successful in 2017; ISMU 2017), which is granted to those persons who fled their country for humanitarian reasons but who do not fulfil the criteria for political asylum. These criteria include health, age, political instability or ecological crises in the country of origin. This type of permit is issued for a maximum of two years and can be prolonged. However, it loses its validity once the reason for humanitarian protection is no longer given.

In addition to the options listed above, there are seven additional ways to obtain a residence permit in Italy, of which the humanitarian permit for victims of work exploitation is of particular interest. According to articles 18 and 22 of the Italian immigration law, residence status can be granted for humanitarian reasons in cases of severe exploitation and violence in the workplace.

One of Interior Minister Matteo Salvini's first acts in office was the abolition of humanitarian protection. In late November 2018, an amendment was approved by the Italian parliament, which came into immediate effect. In Italy, humanitarian protection makes up one fourth of all residence permits. Its abolition, which is in keeping with former Minister of the Interior Marco Minniti's restrictions on the right of appeal against negative asylum decisions (decreto Minniti) imposed in the summer of 2017, will significantly impede access to asylum rights.

The first consequences of this new political practice have already been documented: refugees with humanitarian protection status are being expelled from emergency shelters as these are nearing their expiration date and cannot be transformed into a work permit. In one fell swoop, up to 39,000 refugees will be facing a loss of status and homelessness in the coming months.

First- and second-line reception, countries of origin and the dimensions of migration

The reception system for refugees in Italy can be divided into two main structures with different administrative characteristics: the SPRAR project (Servizi Protezione Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati; Protection System for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) is run by the municipal offices in collaboration with third sector actors (NGOs and charity institutions). Consisting of small housing units, these centres are evenly distributed across the country with the aim of promoting the integration of refugees. Contracts for the operation of the SPRARs are awarded to private actors by the municipalities via public tender. Currently, almost 25,000 people live in facilities financed by the SPRAR project (ISPI 2018).

The other pillar of the Italian reception system is made up of the CAS (Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria; Emergency Reception Centres). These centres are managed by private service providers, while the prefectures, or representatives of the Ministry of the Interior in the respective provinces, are in charge of awarding contracts for the operation of the CAS. The first CAS were established in 2015 at the onset of what is often called the 'refugee crisis'. The refugee sector quickly opened up into a new field of business, as the operation of the CAS is often entrusted to so-called cooperatives of private service providers who have no experience with the reception and accommodation of refugees and who often come from criminal business circles. The state pays these cooperatives a daily allowance of 35 euros per resident to cover reception, accommodation, food and clothing as well as cultural mediation, language courses, legal advice and medical aid. However, the centre operators often use these 35 euros for their own profit, while the living conditions of CAS residents remain poor. As the CAS are scattered across the country and infiltrated by the mafia, the authorities remain unable to adequately monitor these facilities. In Italy, approximately 160,000 refugees are currently living in these centres (ISPI 2018) – a number which is only set to increase following Interior Minister Salvini's legal amendment to replace existing SPRAR facilities with CAS centres.

The Campania region has one of the highest number of refugees in all of Italy, with 1,031 people living in SPRAR-financed facilities and another 4,587 living in CAS centres. The province of Naples counts almost 2,000 refugees, of which 300 live in SPRAR accommodation, and 1,400 refugees are registered in the city of Naples itself. 23 of the controversial CAS centres are located in the city of Naples, with 965 people spread across 13 centres. These are located in the inner-city borough of Garibaldi, a neighbourhood which is characterised by high levels of unemployment, poverty as well as irregular and illegal economy.

According to the Italian Institute for Statistics ISTAT (2018), 58,203 non-citizens were living in Naples as of 1 January 2018, amounting to six per cent of the city's total population. The majority of these people came from the following countries: Sri Lanka (26.1 per cent of Naples' foreign population), Ukraine (14.8 per cent), People's Republic of China (9.3 per cent), Pakistan (4.6 per cent), Romania (4.4 per cent), Nigeria (2.14 per cent), Senegal (1.75 per cent) and Dominican Republic (1.87 per cent). According to estimates by the Fondazione ISMU (ISMU 2017), approximately 491,000 illegalised persons were living in Italy in 2017, although it remains difficult to estimate how many of them are currently in Naples. While the overall proportion of migrants in the city (6 per cent) is lower than the national average (8.2 per cent), the estimated number of illegal immigrants is particularly high in Naples.

2 URBAN PROTAGONISTS OF SOLIDARITY

In May 2011, Luigi de Magistris was first elected mayor of Naples. In his former office, he had been a public prosecutor in the region of Calabria. In 2016, he was re-elected with the broad support of the city's social movements. This civil support was largely a protest against the repressive and conservative policy of his right-wing political opponent, who has been connected to organised crime. Today, de Magistris' government includes activists from the political collective Insurgencia, which is affiliated with the Disobbedienti movement. In early 2017, his citizen platform Democrazia e Autonomia (DemA) reformed as a political organisation aiming to run for elections on the regional, national and European level.

Styling itself as the political opposition to the central government, de Magistris' city council often sides with the city's social movements, openly praising their actions and maintaining an informal dialogue with them. In 2012, de Magistris set up a city-owned company to bring the city's water management back into public hands. During the 2011 waste management crisis, he commissioned environmentally-friendly waste disposal sites and intensified municipal garbage collection. Moreover, he received strong support from civil society for challenging the legitimacy of Naples' historic debt, which dates back to the 1980s. 'We will not pay for your debts' became the slogan of campaigns and movements protesting against the austerity policy propagated by the European Union and the central Italian government.

Initiatives from below

Grass-root initiatives typically include any type of activity that is self-managed and takes place outside of an institutional framework. For example, numerous occupied houses in Naples offer a variety of social and cultural activities free of charge (including a range of sports, artistic and cultural activities and language courses). In several cases, the poor have also occupied vacant apartments. The self-organised social centres, or centri sociali, offer social activities with the aim of strengthening social cohesion in neighbourhoods and communities. These projects step in where public policy fails, and are often frequented by members of the migrant population. In this sense, these grass-root initiatives are an integral part of the solidary city.

The political collective zero81 – laboratorio di muto soccorso (laboratory of mutual aid) follows a more defined political agenda. The collective, which grew out of the university occupations that took place across Italy between 2008 and 2010, has developed into an important access point for migrants and has been offering legal aid and medical care over the past few years. Unfortunately, these activities have recently been stalled or reduced to a minimum.

Another example is the political collective Laboratorio Politico Iskra, which is active in the western periphery of Naples. Over the past two years, the collective has collaborated closely with the grassroot trade union S.I. Cobas, and has been offering legal aid and support to irregular workers in the gastronomy sector since late 2018.

Four years ago, the aforementioned collective Ex OPG Je so' pazzo occupied the premises of a former psychiatric ward. Today, it offers almost 40 different weekly activities and services, including boxing lessons, dance classes, an independently-run theatre group, legal aid and a medical clinic run by volunteers. Here too the basic concept is that all services are to be offered free of charge.

Established in 2010, the grassroot union Unione Sindacale di Base (USB) follows a more traditional union approach. Besides its commitment to developing independent, self-organised structures and representative offices within key sectors of the labour market, the USB also provides social services such as legal advice for migrants. However, its main focus lies on helping migrant workers in the agricultural sector – who work on the fields north of Naples and in the Caserta region under mostly illegal and highly exploitative conditions – attain official residence status.

3 MUNICIPALISM, MUTUALISM, SOLIDARITY CITY

As illustrated in the previous sections, the Solidarity City movement in Naples follows two different approaches: the municipalist approach driven forward by Mayor Luigi de Magistris, on the one hand, and on the other the mutualist approach popular within the progressive left. The latter is represented primarily by the Ex OPG collective and included in the nationwide agenda of the new left-wing organisation Potere al Popolo. In the following section, I will describe these two approaches in further detail.

The municipalism of 'rebel mayors'

In recent months, media reports on the Mediterranean sea rescue missions and European and Italian migration policy have increasingly featured several Italian mayors and their 'rebellion' against the central government in Rome. The first 'rebel mayor' was Riace's mayor, Domenico 'Mimmo' Lucano, who has been pursuing his own alternative refugee policy since the early 1990s and whose concentrated efforts to integrate refugees into the community of Riace have breathed new life into the small Calabrian town. In autumn 2018, Lucano was impeached for abetting illegal immigration and for unlawfully allocating contracts for the town's waste collection service to two social cooperatives without a public tender. Lucano has since been issued a residency ban in Riace. In reality, however, these accusations only serve to mask a targeted attack on a model of refuge.

In late December 2018, Palermo's mayor Leoluca Orlando and Luigi de Magistris generated considerable media attention by publicly advocating the reception of 49 refugees stranded on the civil sea rescue boats Sea Watch and Sea Eye, and declaring their rejection of Italian Interior Minister Salvini's anti-immigration law, or 'security decree' (decreto sicurezza). With this position, the two mayors joined ranks with the ongoing protests and actions of civil disobedience that had spread across the country since the passing of the new law and were supported by the mayors of 20 other Italian cities. However, since the Italian government never issued such a decree that would have actually closed the Italian ports, these announcements of intent remained little more than empty phrases.

When Leoluca Orlando challenged certain points of the security decree, claiming they were unconstitutional, Salvini unleashed a line of attack against Palermo's mayor. This in turn triggered a wave of public solidarity with Orlando, with over 5,000 people rallying in the streets of Palermo in support of the mayor in early January 2019.

As important as such public protest against Salvini's anti-immigration policy may be, it must be seen within the wider political context. After all, as a member of the Democratic Party (Partito Democratico, PD),

Orlando had silently supported and implemented the party's political agenda, including numerous unconstitutional and inhumane anti-migration measures decreed by former Interior Minister Marco Minniti. Some poignant examples include Marco Minniti's criminalisation of – predominantly migrant – street vendors in the name of maintaining public order, and the severe restriction of the right of appeal for rejected asylum claimants (Bleiberecht für alle 2017). Local activists have repeatedly criticised Orlando's eviction of occupied houses and apartments, as well as his compliance with a 2014 decree issued under former Democratic Party Prime Minister Matteo Renzi that prohibited the inhabitants of occupied houses or flats from formally registering at the registry office.

Naples' Mayor de Magistris, on the other hand, extended an official invitation to the Sea Watch crew to enter the harbour of the city, calling on citizens via the municipal web page to be prepared and to lend support if needed. The mayor's public appeal ultimately elicited a broad mobilisation among city society, with over 9,000 people offering their support. On the other hand, relief organisations and social movements had criticised de Magistris for his insufficient migration policy long before these new security measures came into force. For example, the city registry office neither accepts registration applications of, nor issues identity documents to, people without permanent residency, which further bars these persons from accessing basic rights. It is only now, following months of public pressure, that the city council is finally stirring to action.

In the face of Salvini's anti-migrant campaign in the media, it is safe to say that the 'rebel mayors' have initiated a positive change in public discourse. Mimmo Lucano emphasised this point in early 2019, declaring that "this inhumanity is steadily gaining the upper hand, and Salvini is only the tip of the iceberg in a drifting society. The rebel mayors symbolise a moment of honour for those who refuse to be accomplices." However, improving the living conditions of refugees on a local level and building a proper political and cultural opposition requires actions, not words. Here, too, Lucano shows forethought: "[I]t is not enough to focus on confrontation: We must create a political and social opposition and not simply limit ourselves to saying that we disagree."

The municipalist approach led by the rebel mayors has the potential to create a discursive counterweight to the inhumane policy of Italy's right-wing government and to thus push for a decentralised mobilisation across civil society. However, to date this municipalist approach still lacks the strength to dismantle all the obstacles currently complicating the lives of refugees: institutional racism in the immigration offices, as well as inhumane and unlawful forms of accommodation, are still commonplace in Naples and Palermo.

Ex OPG Je so' pazzo: mutualism and social conflicts

The political collective Ex OPG Je so' pazzo opts for a mutualistic strategy. The numerous social activities it provides for refugees and migrant workers are a response to the problems of current migration policy in Italy that even city councils and administrations are unable to fix. As one of its key activities, the collective runs a legal advice drop-in for refugees and migrant workers which is organised and run by political activists and lawyers on a volunteer basis.

Their support is primarily directed at the refugees accommodated in CAS centres, whose lives and schedules are strongly determined by the centre administration. For this reason, Ex OPG activists attempt to provide support in all spheres of life by combining legal support with other activities and services. The legal support team operates on three fundamental levels: firstly, they provide information on the overall political developments and upcoming legislative changes in the field of migration policy. Secondly, the team accompanies refugees throughout the entire process of seeking asylum, conducting individual talks with the applicant in order to address any personal difficulties and preparing the relevant documents and initial meetings with the respective asylum commission. Thirdly, the volunteers take up direct communication with the immigration office if there are any problems with the applicant's documents. To begin with, the number of unprocessed asylum applications accumulated in the first few years of the legal advice centre's existence. By staging public mobilisations and directing specific demands at the immigration office, the volunteers of Ex OPG managed to enforce a monthly round table aimed at speeding up asylum procedures and combating institutional racism.

In addition, the Ex OPG legal support team also works with migrants who have been living and working in Naples for longer periods of time. These migrant workers predominantly come from non-EU countries, have regular employment and hold a two-year work permit. However, the renewal of this work permit requires three criteria to be fulfilled: a regular work contract, a permanent residence – meaning an apartment that is defined as 'suitable' in light of the individual's respective circumstances and familial status, and includes a valid rental contract – and an annual minimum wage of around 8,000 euros.

According to the case studies documented by Ex OPG, the obstacles faced by such migrant workers are diverse in nature. On the one hand, it is very difficult for migrants to obtain a valid rental contract. The housing market in Naples is heavily affected by irregular rental agreements, a phenomenon which is amplified by the displacement of low-income tenants from many neighbourhoods in the city centre (Ascione 2018). This situation has created a black market where fake rental contracts and reg-

istration addresses are sold at high prices. On the other hand, there are numerous bureaucratic obstacles: while a residence permit is valid for two years, on average nine months of this is lost to bureaucratic procedures alone. During this time, applicants receive a form of preliminary approval which can be shown during a police inspection. However, this approval does not allow them to access municipal services, such as registering a change of address.
The legal support team maintains close contact with the public institutions that are in charge of issuing residence permits in order to report the numerous problems and accelerate the processes. However, despite considerable demand, no remedial measures have been initiated. Between September 2017 and June 2018, the legal drop-in centre provided support to over 300 migrants.

Italian language courses. Although adult education centres in Italy offer evening courses for migrants irrespective of legal status, there can be no question that the public (further) education system for migrants is severely lacking. These courses start at A1 level, which presupposes basic literacy skills. However, many migrants cannot read or write due to lack of schooling in their home countries, or are unfamiliar with the Latin alphabet. The language courses offered at Ex OPG span four language levels and are tailored to the individual levels of the participants. Currently, there are six classes of ten students each, with one to two teachers per course. Since 2016, more than 350 migrants from 15 different countries have attended the Ex OPG language courses. Thanks to a cooperation with three language schools in Naples, the courses are officially certified, allowing the students of Ex OPG to take the respective exams for the official language certificate free of charge.

Political control of the CAS. Political control (controllo popolare) of the CAS constitutes another means of solidary intervention. Living conditions in these emergency shelters are precarious, and the legally obligatory minimum standards are seldom enforced. Here, migrants are subjected to marginalisation, infantilisation and harsh disciplining. At the same time, these are places of community, self-organisation and social conflict (Blanc/Coppola 2012). The instrument of political control aims to improve the immediate living conditions of refugees and to create structures for joint organisation.
In the case of Naples, controllo popolare works as follows: together with the lawyers, doctors and interpreters volunteering with Ex OPG, the 'political control' activists approach the emergency shelters as representatives offering free assistance for refugees. All the shelter's residents are then gathered together so that particularly vulnerable individuals can be identified (minors who should not even be housed in such CAS centres in the first place,

pregnant women, people with psychological ailments) and attended to by specialists. During this initial meeting, the activists inform the centre residents about migrant rights and the responsibilities of the reception centre. In addition, the activists also organise political mobilisations for the improvement of living conditions in such emergency shelters.

Taking into account the concrete improvements of CAS living conditions that have been achieved so far, we can say the political control of such emergency shelters has been successful. These improvements include the reclamation of insufficient or missing statutory benefits (such as the payment of daily allowances) and improvements to the living space (access to warm water in the showers, removal of harmful building material such as asbestos, regular cleaning of the facilities). Another positive outcome is the political contacts and friendships that have formed between migrants, refugees and activists of Ex OPG. Some refugees have themselves become important points of contact and political activists within the emergency shelters.

Access point for residence registration. In Italy, being registered at the residential registry office is a prerequisite for gaining access to fundamental social rights, which include medical care and eligibility for state-funded assistance such as unemployment benefit and social welfare. As a general rule, refugees are registered in the reception centre where they have been accommodated. Therefore, refugees who experience discrimination at the hands of the emergency shelter administration, or are even expelled from the centre, lose this automatic right of access. Even if these individuals manage to find a place to live, they usually lack the proof of residence (i.e. a valid rental contract) which is necessary for registration.

The Italian municipalities have partially solved this problem by assigning civil society organisations a type of residential mandate over individuals who lack formal registration. Ex OPG has also registered such a virtual address, which significantly dismantles bureaucratic obstacles: the individuals in question can subsequently access basic social rights and renew their residence permit, which is a prerequisite for regular residency.

Migrants in possession of a work permit face a different set of problems. Besides having to provide a valid proof of residence, the authorities demand an official assessment of the accommodation's suitability. Furthermore, employment contracts can only be signed if the signatory is in possession of valid identity documents. Due to the high bureaucratic hurdles associated with obtaining a valid registration certificate, migrants are often forced to take up employment without any form of contract.

The medical clinic. Over the past few years, the medical clinic has grown

rapidly: today, 30 doctors tend to the medical needs of over 2,500 patients. The clinic cooperates closely with the migrant drop-in centre and hands out the doctor's certificates which, though necessary for completing the asylum application, are often not issued to refugees due to institutional racism and Italy's overstretched healthcare system. In addition, the medical clinic collaborates with psychologists to create a space for persons with refugee trauma, accompanies refugees to special examinations and public institutions, and helps them access specialised documents from public institutions that the medical clinic cannot issue. Although the medical clinic does not maintain formal contacts to public healthcare institutions, it does collaborate closely with individual doctors in such institutions, who in turn act as an important pillar of support within the official healthcare sector.

4 NEW CLASS POLITICS: MUTUALISM AND POTERE AL POPOLO

In Naples, it has become clear that municipal policy is at odds with solidarity-based practices. All too often, grass-root activists encounter political and bureaucratic obstacles in their everyday solidarity work, while the promises made by municipal politicians and the city council go unfulfilled. From a discursive perspective, the progressive statements delivered by the 'rebel mayors' that envisioned open ports and a city of refuge may very well have positive effects. However, these discursive interventions lack specific, strategic perspectives to improve the material situation of migrants and workers on a practical level.

The aforementioned activities offered by Ex OPG, on the other hand, constitute 'popular practices' as the result of everyday, close cooperation with migrants and workers that are based on mutualistic solidary structures (Candeias 2018). This form of mutualism is a tool for connecting the different groups of the working class whose problems and needs are neglected by the welfare state. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for analysing these social classes from a Marxist perspective in order to identify similarities, differences and organisational potential (Clash City Workers 2014). Finally, this mutualism serves as a vehicle for social conflict that does not stall at the construction of autonomous social reproduction, but rather seeks confrontation with the institutions. It is precisely here that a solidary class perspective – one that unites those who are separated by capital on a day-to-day basis – comes into play.

If mutualism is truly the tool for developing a new form of class politics, then mutualistic groundwork with and for migrants is essential. As spaces of encounter for people and groups of different origins who

share a common social reality, the premises of Ex OPG play an important role in developing a class consciousness. In this context, the individual social activities offered by Ex OPG are not seen as self-contained and independent services, but rather as a constant process of reciprocal development, a type of holistic service which centres on the individual's problems and needs.

In a political sense, these mobilisations of migrants can be interpreted as struggles for fundamental democratic rights – that is to say, for humane living conditions in the emergency shelters, for access to basic state-funded services and against institutional racism. These struggles possess a clear class character: firstly, due to their material situation and position at the bottom of the capitalist chain of exploitation, migrants and refugees can play a central role in the class struggle. At the same time, an improvement of their working and living conditions equally signifies the improvement of the working and living conditions of the entire working class. Secondly, the struggles for democratic rights serve as a catalyst for the development of a class consciousness: "In the struggle for democracy, by exercising their rights the proletariat can become conscious of its own class interests" (Luxemburg 1982).

However, this requires migrants to become organised as part of the working class rather than as victims of discrimination and marginalisation. It is therefore essential that these migrant struggles become relevant to the social and political composition of the working class. Mutualism, in its self-perception as an organising force which promotes the self-activity and self-representation of the working class, may well be one answer to these difficulties. However, it is by no means a sufficient condition to guarantee the success of a new class policy as these solidary practices are still lacking an appropriate political form of expression (Candeias 2017).

On this front, too, things are beginning to stir in Italy: in November 2017 the organisation Potere al Popolo was launched, which aims to mould the activist experiences of mutualistic grassroot unions and initiatives into a single political object. It is no coincidence that the stimulus for its creation came from the ranks of Ex OPG in Naples. During the recent elections held on 4 March 2018, Potere al Popolo won 1.1 per cent of votes and is continuously gaining popularity in the polls. However, the organisation's potential lies less in elections and more in its capability to politicise solidary activities and shape them into a new, left-wing form of organisation.

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What restaurants sell besides food
YESTERDAY
Poor Honest Ed's
bathroom with

SARAH SCHILLIGER

EXCURSUS: AMBIVALENCES OF A SANCTUARY CITY

RETHINKING BORDERS: INSIGHTS INTO THE STRUGGLES OF TORONTO'S 'SANCTUARY CITY' POLICY

On 31 January 2017, Toronto mayor John Tory issued an urgent motion to the city council declaring: "Toronto has affirmed itself a Sanctuary City, with a formal policy allowing all residents of Toronto to access city services regardless of immigration status, so that everyone can use our libraries, our parks, and be kept healthy and safe. Now is the moment for us to reaffirm that commitment and to send a clear message that Toronto rejects all division, intolerance and hate. No one should be made to feel afraid because of who they are, where they come from, and what they believe. [...] Now is the time for Toronto to show those impacted by these discriminatory policies that 'you are welcome here.' Now is the time for Toronto to stand together, united across our differences so that we remain strong and hold onto the fundamental rights and values that make our freedom possible." (City of Toronto 2017, Motion MM 24.23)

Just one week after the mosque shooting in Quebec, this motion served as a response to the "hateful and discriminating practices and policies" most poignantly reflected in the travel ban issued by US President Donald Trump for citizens of several predominantly Muslim countries, and further reaffirmed Toronto's self-perception as a Sanctuary City. It also declared that the city council "stands united with cities around the world against Islamophobia, xenophobia and racism" (ibid.).

Although the Sanctuary City movement is not entirely new in Canada, over the past years it has gained fresh impetus and greater media coverage. Reasons for this renewed public interest include Donald Trump's 2016 US presidential election victory, the widely debated border crossings of thousands of asylum seekers from the US to Canada since 2017, and the rise of racist violence in Canadian cities. In 2013, Toronto became Canada's first municipal government to adopt a Sanctuary City policy, thus publicly declaring "its commitment to ensur-

ing access to services without fear to immigrants without full status or without full status documents" (City of Toronto 2013, Motion CD 18.5). In 2014 Hamilton adopted similar measures, followed by Vancouver in 2016, and London (Ontario) and Montreal in 2017.

How did this trend come about? Who are the actors behind this Sanctuary City policy? And finally, five years after the policy's initial adoption and two years after its reaffirmal by Toronto's mayor, what is the current situation regarding its implementation? To answer these questions, it is worth taking a closer look at the history of the Sanctuary City movement in Toronto,[1] whose struggle to achieve and implement rights for illegalised immigrants on the municipal level could undoubtedly inspire and inform European practice.

For over a decade, the network No One is Illegal was a significant initiator of a variety of campaigns to turn Toronto into a Sanctuary City. These campaigns, which are led by activists from anti-racist and anti-colonial initiatives who work directly with immigrant communities, are all united by a common goal: to provide secure and fearless access to welfare services, city life and urban infrastructure for all citizens of Toronto – irrespective of legal status, financial means, skin colour, gender, sexual preferences or religion.

The case study of Toronto also demonstrates that the political struggles for 'urban citizenship' and its institutionalisation are highly polarised and rife with contradictions. The Toronto Sanctuary City movement provides insights into the possibilities and scope of municipal policy on migration and citizenship, as well as its challenges and limitations. The yardstick for gauging the success of Toronto's Sanctuary City policy is greatly dependent on how this policy's goals are defined and against what parameters their success is measured. The concept of a Sanctuary City can be interpreted in numerous ways: as a legal framework, a municipal policy guideline or even as a transformative process – the latter including the political and social struggles for obtaining legal rights, establishing a solidary practice within urban communities, and redefining the concepts of national community and belonging.

At the same time, the Sanctuary City campaign also reveals contradictions between individual municipal policies and the influential role played by provincial governments within a sovereign Canadian state. For example, the province of Ontario (to which Toronto belongs) has been under right-wing conservative rule since Premier Doug Ford took office in the summer of 2018.

1 This article is based on interviews conducted over the summer of 2018 with activists from NOII Toronto, Parkdale Community Legal Services and the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, on exchange with critical researchers from York University and Ryerson University as well as on the analysis of different reports, websites and documentation that have been created within the Sanctuary City movement.

1 BORDER EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANTS WITH PRECARIOUS LEGAL STATUS

In the city of Toronto, approximately 200,000 people hold precarious legal status,[2] while another 200,000 are undocumented or 'illegalised' immigrants who lack any form of legal status (Solidarity City 2013). In the 1990s, Canadian immigration policy shifted radically away from humanitarian solutions and permanent immigration settlement, and towards a markedly neo-liberalist policy that favours temporary legal status (Goldring/Landolt 2013). With a stronger reliance on temporary labour migration programmes such as the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Caregiver Program,[3] a growing proportion of immigrants living in Canada are only granted temporary status. Following 9/11 in particular, the Canadian government tightened asylum laws and entry regulations, restricted family reunification, and made it more difficult to obtain permanent residency. These restrictions particularly affect people who moved to Canada on a work or student visa or as asylum seekers,[4] with the latter often becoming illegalised immigrants once their temporary status expires.

Restrictions on access to a permanent legal status simultaneously went hand in hand with a more stringent system of deportation: in Canada, the number of deportations increased by 50 per cent between 2004 and 2014. Although the number of deportations has since receded, in October 2018 the Canadian Minister of Public Safety set a national goal of 10,000 deportations per year – with a particular focus on rejected asylum claimants. This new quota would mean an increase of 35 per cent compared to the two previous years (Harris 2018).

In addition, state border policies have encroached considerably into the sphere of everyday urban life: "[f]or non-status immigrants the borderline is not just at physical entry points at ports, airports, and land crossings. Rather, the border exists wherever and whenever they try to access social services. The border is therefore widespread and ever-present, emerging in such places as health centres, social housing cooperatives, schools, food banks, welfare offices, po-

2 In Canada, this term is used by critical researchers and activists to conceptualise legal and illegal status as a continuum, and to highlight the fact that many people experience multiple shifts in legal status during their stay in Canada (Goldring/Landolt 2013). **3** Migrants recruited via the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) or the Caregiver Program (formally Live-in Caregiver Program) receive temporary legal status that is bound to their employer. This means that employees have limited opportunities to leave insecure or exploitative jobs. People who protest against exploitation, wage fraud or unsafe working conditions thus run the risk of losing not only their job but also their legal status. **4** For refugees there are two paths towards immigration: those who enter Canada via the Refugee Settlement Program have already attained refugee status before entering Canada and receive permanent status immediately upon arrival. Within the first year of their stay, they receive support as government-assisted refugees or private sponsored refugees. All other refugees are subjected to the Refugee Claim Process and must await an official court hearing. Rejected asylum claimants may appeal against a negative decision but are not granted regular legal status during this transitional period. Many applicants wait several years before a final decision is reached.

lice stations, among others […] For non-status immigrants, simple, everyday activities – working, driving, and going to school – are at risk of being transformed into criminal and illicit acts with dire consequences" (Berinstein et al. 2006: 9). Here, too, the border is reproduced in the simplest of activities: in the workplace, a lack of legal status exposes non-status citizens to higher levels of exploitation, while those who cannot procure the correct documents are denied access to basic welfare services and risk being criminalised. For people whose lack of legal status is discovered during an interaction with the authorities, arrest and deportation are imminent. Therefore, precarious status immigrants live in constant fear of being singled out by the police.

In this manner, social policies can be considered an indirect tool for migration control (see Ataç/Rosenberger 2018). City governments play a central role within this internal border regime as the development and implementation of welfare services depend on the city's interpretation of national regulations. While the restriction of social rights for immigrants with precarious status constitutes a form of (internal) migration control, providing access to welfare services for undocumented immigrants at the local level can also challenge the existing concept of national borders. For instance, the mobilisation for a Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy in Toronto has been challenging national border practices since 2004, seeking ways to dismantle or bypass access barriers to public welfare services such as healthcare, education, emergency accommodation, women's shelters, leisure activities and food aid.

QUICK FACTS: GLOBAL CITY TORONTO

- With an official register of 2.9 million inhabitants, Toronto ranks as the largest Canadian city.
- The cosmopolitan city has a long history of immigration: more than 50% of Toronto's citizens were born outside of Canada, with over half coming from Asian countries (especially the Philippines, China and India).
- About half of Toronto's citizens are considered a visible, i.e. racialised, minority: 13 per cent of the city's population are South Asian, 11 per cent Chinese and 9 per cent are black.
- As a typical Global City, Toronto's population is highly polarised: on the one hand, as Canada's financial and economic capital, Toronto is booming economically with an official unemployment rate of 8.2 per cent. On the other hand, Toronto harbours the greatest social inequalities of all Canadian cities. Many people fall into the category of 'working poor', and an increasing number of people are employed under precarious working conditions (roughly 40 per cent of the total workforce).
- According to official figures, one in five Toronto residents is living in poverty, while the immigrant and indigenous populations are disproportionately affected by income poverty.
- The city's population is strongly segregated by race and income, and gentrification is rampant. In Toronto, housing is one of the most pressing social issues, with 46.8 per cent of the city's population spending over 30 per cent of their income on shelter costs. 98,000 people are currently on the waiting list for the city's 94,000 social housing units, with an average waiting period of 8.5 years.

(Figures taken from the 2016 census, Statistics Canada)

2 MOBILISING FOR A 'DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL' POLICY

In the mid-2000s, a coalition of numerous community organisations, legal clinics, grassroot initiatives, the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty and activists from No One Is Illegal Toronto (NOII) founded the Access Without Fear campaign. This campaign connected state deportation practices to the social exclusion of illegalised immigrants, whose fear of imprisonment and deportation hinders their access to basic social rights, leading to precarious living conditions. The campaign pushing for a Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy demands a double concession from the City of Toronto. Firstly, the city should prohibit its employees from inquiring about an individual's legal status when providing public services ('Don't Ask'), and secondly, should this information nevertheless be revealed, stop them from passing on this information to the police or other government authorities ('Don't Tell'). This would provide access to municipal services for all citizens on the basis of residence and limit legal status discrimination.

The concept of a DADT policy was first introduced into the political debate in July 2004, when a 16-year-old woman without regular legal status was handed over to the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) after reporting a case of sexual abuse to the Toronto Police Services (TPS). Following this incident, a complaint was filed to the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) that people without legal status should be able to access police services and to report or testify as victims or witnesses of criminal offences without fear. However, the respective guideline issued by the TPSB some two years later, in February 2006, only implemented the first component of 'Don't Ask' regarding victims and witnesses of criminal offences, and did not include the second component of 'Don't Tell'.

The Access Without Fear campaign gained further momentum with public protests against the incarceration of two children from a Costa Rican family. On 24 April 2006, the siblings Kimberly and Gerald Lizano-Sossa were arrested in their school classrooms by CBSA immigration authorities and detained for several days. This was an attempt to exert pressure on the children's father – a construction worker with undocumented migration status – to turn himself in to the CBSA.

The activists of the No One Is Illegal network were quick to the scene. They staged rallies in support of the family, publicly condemning the two-class system in Canada which denied children of non-status families access to education (NOII 2006). Teachers spoke out, publicly expressing their chagrin over the culture of fear which hung over their classrooms, effectively preventing a productive learning environment. Parents and students expressed

their solidarity and denounced the harsh treatment of the two children from Costa Rica. Alongside the influence of trade unions and local immigrant communities, intense political pressure was exercised on the CBSA to apologise for the arrests and to issue a directive prohibiting CBSA officials from entering school premises and their immediate vicinities.

The protest, which was continued under the slogan Education Not Deportation,[5] received widespread media attention on the local and national level and kick-started a broad solidarity movement across the city. Although attempts to prevent the family's deportation were ultimately unsuccessful, the continuing lobby work and mobilisation efforts resulted in the Students Without Legal Immigration Status Policy directive, which was issued by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) in May 2007 by unanimous vote. The directive declares that no child should be denied access to public education on the basis of legal status, and schools are prohibited to request, report or pass on information concerning the legal status of its pupils or their family members to the authorities (Villegas 2017: 1184p).

This first concrete implementation of a DADT policy in Canada constituted a huge success for Toronto's non-status citizens. The Education Not Deportation campaign was subsequently launched at universities, where it was able to prevent the deportation of Sarah Leonty, a student at York University, in 2008. Spurred on by these successes, the Access Without Fear campaign was extended to include further urban areas where people with no or precarious legal status lived and worked, giving rise to a number of lively, autonomous spin-off campaigns. The Food For All campaign, for example, demanded universal access to food banks, while Health4All advocated the dismantling of access barriers to healthcare and spotlighted the negative impacts on health brought about by an insecure or non-existent legal status (Villegas 2013). Spanning a broad alliance of women's and human rights organisations, the Shelter/Sanctuary/Status campaign was set up in 2008 and works to ensure that women's shelters are equally safe and accessible for illegalised migrant women, and to demand that victims of gender-based violence are granted asylum (Bhuyan 2013: 253 pp.; Abji 2016).

In their efforts to make visible the specific borders and access barriers encountered by illegalised immigrants in their day-to-day lives in the city, the activists of the Access Without Fear campaign adopted a variety of approaches, which included neighbourhood mobilisations and activities within migrant communities aimed at addressing, contesting and politicising these very borders. This concept of democratising the city landscape, which aims to rid specific institutions and

5 See the documentary on the 'Education Not Deportation' campaign, available at: https://vimeo.com/7698225.

spaces of CBSA control and surveillance and to create safe spaces, is also referred to by activists as 'undoing borders' (see Walia 2013; Nyers 2019: 16). As stated by Mohan Mishra and Faria Kamal of NOII, "[w]e need to take back our community centres, schools, health centres and neighbourhoods by declaring them as sanctuary zones free of immigration controls. We need to take up the fight to demand justice and status for all not just nationally, but locally as well. This is the idea behind the Don't Ask Don't Tell Campaign (DADT) in Toronto." (Mishra/Kamal 2007)

In this context, 'regularization from the ground up' is used to describe how illegalised immigrants can be included into and participate in city life. What is interesting about the concept of undoing borders is how the urban space connects two different political strategies with one another. On the one hand, citizens are called upon to contest the enforcement of restrictive national migration laws within their direct local environment alongside a simultaneous demand to extend existing welfare services to non-status citizens. On the other hand, the national border regime that illegalises migrants in the first place is fundamentally called into question (Fortier 2013: 285).

Moreover, the demand for the introduction of 'Sanctuary Zones' is in itself a direct political act, which, in activist Fariah Chowdhury's words, "allows those in our communities who have been shut out of the traditional venues of power to directly challenge the decisions and policies that impact all of our lives. Sanctuary/Solidarity City delegitimises the role of the state because we do not wait for the government to change, rather we struggle to create a just city for ourselves" (cited in Nail et al. 2010: 155).

The motto "taking not waiting" (see Squire/Bagelman 2012)[6] not only emphasises that political change can be instigated in the here and now, but that those fighting for legal rights can themselves become legal subjects: despite lacking the formal status of citizenship, they nonetheless possess a voice, are involved in the political discourse and do not have to wait for someone to speak for them (Nyers 2019).

6 Squire/Bagelman observed a similar practice in the Sanctuary movement in Sheffield, UK.

3 COMMUNITY ORGANISING, SOLIDARITY AND BELONGING – BEYOND THE NATION CONCEPT

The long-standing struggles and mobilisations by the Solidarity City Network[7] paved the way for Access Without Fear to become the guideline for all municipal services, thereby transforming the hard-won practice of some areas into a broader institutional policy framework. On 21 February 2013, following lengthy debate, the City Council of Toronto passed the motion CD 18.5 in an almost unanimous vote. The motion declared that Toronto residents without regular status should be granted access to municipal services without fear of detention and deportation by the national immigration authorities. The city is also obliged to allocate sufficient resources to specifically train public service employees. The city should also adopt measures to increase public awareness of this policy and the plight of illegalised persons.

The representatives of the Solidarity City Network who had attended this debate in the city council celebrated the motion as both a great victory for the rights of precarious or non-status persons and as proof that joint grassroot organisations can bear fruit. At the same time, the activists were quite aware of the fact that the formal granting of rights on paper does not automatically equate to their practical implementation. As Solidarity City Network activist Tzazna Miranda Leal told the newspaper Toronto Star on 21 February following the council debate, "this is only a policy ... The only way we're going to get changes in our community is if our community is organized and standing strong, and we keep councillors to what they said today" (cited in Toronto Star, 21 February 2013).

In reality, the real work – in the form of the community, at workplaces and in the neighbourhoods, generating awareness for the new policy guidelines and informing the general public – had only just begun. After all, the knowledge of and ability to assert these rights are not automatically instilled upon the city's inhabitants. In the form of multilingual flyers, posters and community workshops, the Solidarity City Network activists spread information about municipal services throughout the city, and a hotline was set up where people could report cases where access was not adequately provided. To evaluate the implementation of the new policy guidelines, the activists performed independent audits and called up hundreds of institutions to test their accessibility (Solidarity City 2013).

7 The network includes: Health for All, Immigration Legal Committee of Toronto, Justice for Migrant Workers, Law Union of Ontario, No One Is Illegal – Toronto, Parkdale Community Legal Services, Roma Community Centre, Social Planning Toronto, South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario, South Asian Women's Rights Organization, Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, The Wellesley Institute and Workers Action Centre. Motion 18.5 was also supported by: Advocacy Centre for Tenants of Ontario, Alliance for South Asian Aids Prevention, AWCCA at George Brown College, Jane Finch Action Against Poverty, GOAL, Migrant Workers Alliance for Change and Ontario Coalition Against Poverty.

Within the Solidarity City Network, activists agree that the struggle against policies of social exclusion towards illegalised immigrants must be combated whenever and wherever they occur in day-to-day life. According to Syed Hussan, a veteran activist and co-organiser of NOII, this is a political struggle which calls for both legislative change and a shift in political culture: "The purpose of the work is to create a culture[...] where undocumentedness or illegalization of human beings is rejected outright." (cited in Trew 2017: 23) After all, in daily practice it is actual people that enforce or resist such policies of exclusion. Local service providers and their employees play a significant role in gatekeeping, as their actions decide whether people without legal status are granted or denied access to social services. It is the ticket inspectors, public school administrators or health sector employees who, acting according to their own values and conscience, either comply with or oppose policy guidelines in their daily work.

This reflects the concept of citizenship not as a status "but as a process which involves negotiation over access to and the exercise of rights" (Basok 2004: 48). This interpretation gives less importance to legal regulations but rather focuses on specific social relationships, norms, solidary practices and the negotiation of belonging. It therefore becomes all the more important to focus on the actual sites where citizenship is negotiated in day-to-day life, and where new forms of solidarity are exercised within urban communities. The cultural transformation of 'community organisation' advocated by the NOII activists should not remain limited to the individual practice of city service providers, but must address all residents of the city if solidary relations are to be built and strengthened holistically at the municipal level.

After all, existing mental borders and mechanisms of exclusion must be dismantled on an individual basis for people to perceive precarious status immigrants as normal citizens – as neighbours, fellow students, work colleagues or friends. This point is emphasised by NOII activist Faria Kamal (cited in Nail et al. 2010): "What I want to highlight most saliently is the fact that there is no such thing as 'the excluded' or 'the marginalized.' We are all excluded on some level. In the Sanctuary/Solidarity City campaigns we have tried to highlight the false separation between those who have status and those who don't. Status is access to good jobs, healthcare, education, housing, childcare, justice, and dignity – and most people at some point in their lives are unable to gain status."

The idea that different forms of social exclusion affect us all makes it possible to form broad political alliances. The struggle for a better life is carried out by different organisations of the network at specific points across the city. Its common basis is an intersectional approach which does not only focus on exclusions due to lack of legal status,

but also includes struggles against capitalist exploitation, marginalisation of the indigenous population, and oppression based on gender and institutional racism. A prominent example is the work of Parkdale Community Legal Services, an organisation based in a district with a high level of poverty and gentrification which focuses particularly on low-income residents. As a self-proclaimed 'law clinic', the organisation offers free legal counselling in various fields (including housing, immigration and labour law), launches political campaigns, engages in community organisation against displacement, homelessness and precarious work, and makes a stand for affordable housing, a minimum wage of 15 dollars, and needs-based healthcare. Like other organisations within the movement, the Parkdale Community Legal Service activists' vision of a solidary city is based on the direct material needs of its inhabitants, thereby shaping a growing awareness of the common sociopolitical interests across all groups and sectors.

4 MUNICIPAL PRACTICE – BETWEEN LIP SERVICE AND AUSTERITY POLICIES

While the Solidarity City movement has done a remarkable job in providing fearless access to welfare services in different neighbourhoods and across individual sectors and institutions for many years, the city government's steps towards implementing the Sanctuary City policy since its adoption in 2013 have been negligible. The introductory quote by Toronto's mayor Tory was thus little more than an empty promise: despite assurances that practical measures would be taken by the city council and government, there is clearly a lack of political will to push for the actual implementation of these measures. In fact, only a few concrete steps have been taken in order to make 'access without fear' a reality.

The promising title of 'Sanctuary City' is therefore somewhat misleading, if not downright irresponsible. For example, in an information leaflet listing all areas that offered 'fearless' access for non-status citizens, the City went as far as to include the police – notwithstanding the fact that the 2015 NOII report Often Asking, Always Telling – citing official statistics – revealed that the Toronto Police Service (TPS) reported over 100 people per week to the national immigration authority, CBSA, between 2014 and 2015. NOII activists criticised the TPS for doing the CBSA's dirty work while simultaneously misusing the city's resources to perform a task for which it has no mandate. The report also draws attention to the daily 'status checks' performed by the TBS, where police stop and ask people for their ID without any specific reason. This action is largely directed at

people of colour (racial profiling) and any lack of legal status is reported to the CBSA.

The report also documents cases where illegalised immigrants contacted the police as witnesses to or victims of a crime, only to have their lack of legal status reported to the CBSA. For example, a young man called the police after witnessing a shooting in his neighbourhood and was subsequently arrested due to his lack of legal status. His conclusion was simple: "I'll never ever ever ever go to the police again [...] if I see someone getting killed on the road, I'm not going to say anything to the police." (NOII 2015: 26)

Although the Sanctuary City policy could greatly facilitate the work of the police – because illegalised immigrants would be more likely to cooperate with the police regarding criminal persecution if they were granted legal status –, police authorities in Toronto have so far acted to their detriment. Current police practice is buttressed by a legal clause stating that the police may inform the CBSA in unavoidable cases. However, the interpretation of this bona fide clause (literally meaning 'in good faith') depends mainly on the judgement of the individual police officer, making it almost impossible for the affected parties to successfully defend themselves against such police practices.

This shows that police officers are strongly inclined to criminalise immigrants due to their lack of legal status. Moreover, the implementation of the 'Access Without Fear' policy appears to depend strongly on the disposition and personal convictions of individual officers. This trend can also be seen in the classroom: in a pilot study conducted by researchers from Ryerson University, co-author Graham Hudson states that "[d]espite major newspaper headlines circulated at the time, City Council never fully committed itself to a sanctuary city policy", and despite several reaffirmations of its commitment to non-status residents "has yet to provide any additional funding of note" (Hudson et al. 2017). The study postulates that the training of city service providers has failed completely: although the city has committed itself to providing sufficient structural resources for providing specific training towards an Access Without Fear policy for its employees, there is a complete lack of funding for the design and delivery of appropriate and effective pedagogical methods.

As activists from the Solidarity City network have been stressing for some time (Solidarity City 2013), a top-down delivery of information is simply not sufficient for a policy of fearless access to truly take effect. The authors therefore call for adequate training measures for city staff, financial support for institutions that actually implement the Access Without Fear policy, as well as the establishment of a complaints protocol where non-compliance with the policy can be reported.

The complex jurisdictional context within which the Sanctuary policy is embedded constitutes a further fun-

damental barrier to the implementation of the policy, as several key services and government transfers remain a matter of the provinces. For example, lacking access to the public healthcare system, illegalised immigrants must instead rely on community health clinics that provide free healthcare for people without health insurance.

To guarantee precarious or non-status immigrants access to non-municipal services, the city would have to actively exert pressure on the provincial and national level to provide persons without legal status access to funds for childcare, social aid, healthcare and housing.

For this reason, activists are advancing the idea of a 'Sanctuary Province' (NOII 2018). This concept, which foresees the adoption of the Sanctuary policy for the whole province of Ontario, was also propagated by progressive left-wing forces in the provincial electoral campaign in spring 2018. However, this vision receded far into the distance when right-wing conservative Doug Ford, following a staunchly anti-migration policy, was elected as Ontario's premier in June of the same year. In view of the upcoming federal elections in autumn 2019, NOII and other migrant rights organisations have, over the past months, begun to concentrate their political efforts more strongly on the national level. For example, the Migrant Rights Network, a cross-Canada alliance founded in December 2018, recently launched the Landed Status Now campaign, which demands permanent legal status for all care workers.[8]

5 CONCLUSION: POLITICAL MOBILISATION – NAVIGATING A SEA OF CONTRADICTIONS

For the Sanctuary City movement in Toronto, the experience of implementing the municipal DADT policy has been both frustrating and instructive. It demonstrates that the adoption of a municipal policy must not be an end in itself, but should rather act as a tool for promoting grassroot organisation from below. The Solidarity City network – and the activists of NOII in particular – challenge the idea that individual political measures can bring about a good and safe life for all citizens. Rather, they cast the Sanctuary policy as a process in which national boundaries are continually challenged from below, in which people support one another through a practice of solidarity and build up a joint force from below. In the words of one activist during a discussion in summer 2018, "We can't just beg politicians for a Sanctuary City, we have to build it ourselves". Decades of mobilisation within this urban laboratory have provided important stimuli in the search for new ways of relating to and caring for one another. For example, the various

8 See http://migrantrights.ca.

DADT campaigns create an awareness of the fact that not only laws, but also the everyday practices of all citizens – in their roles as teachers, social workers, neighbours – have a hand in both the establishment and scrutiny of border demarcations. Moreover, these campaigns hold the potential to overcome the government-defined categories of 'legal' and 'illegal' by replacing the question 'who is the citizen?' with the question 'what makes the citizen?' (Nyers 2019: 9).

The solidary practice of organisations such as NOII Toronto demonstrates that the contradictions between immediately implementable solutions for undocumented immigrants and future visions of a fundamentally different society based on justice are central to the mobilisations for a Sanctuary City. As Syed Hussan of NOII emphasises, "We must show that what we bring is both a vision for the future and a way to make things a little better in the present" (cited in Walia 2013: 283). Based on the specific needs and conditions that exist within urban spaces, the aim is to combine the everyday struggles of different, often isolated social movements to create a new awareness of jointly experienced forms of exploitation, oppression and discrimination within a diverse urban precariat. At the same time, the activists do not stop at the level of community organising: on the contrary, they recognise that the nation state remains an important terrain for political debate and that the politicization of global power relations is indispensable.

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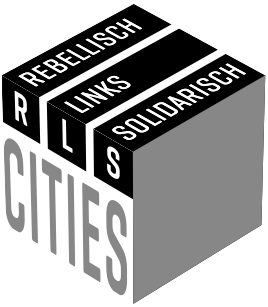

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