Mobile Commons in the Pre-Pandemic, Pandemic and Post-Pandemic Era: Drawing from Mobility Experiences in Post-Migrant Times

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Human mobility, whatever its scale, is often controversial. Hence it carries with it the potential for politics. A core feature of mobility politics is the tension between the desire to maximize the social and economic benefits of migration, and pressures to restrict movement. Transnational communities, global instability, advances in transportation and communication, and concepts of 'smart borders' and 'migration management' are just a few of the phenomena transforming the landscape of migration today. The tension between openness and restriction raises important questions about how different types of policies and politics come to life and influence mobility.

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Mobile Commons, Migrant Digitalities and the Right to the City

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To Berkin Elvan and Alexis Grigoropoulos; two 15 year olds deprived of their lives by the Police in two rebel cities in turmoil and crisis; also to Abdulraheem, who is once again on the road (for Europe).

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Series Editors' Foreword

For several decades now a lively debate has unfolded about the place of the commons in liberal as well as radical political economy. In certain versions it is about the possibility of new forms of collective relationship to natural as well as human worlds, and a political vision reaching beyond both the private property of capitalism and the public property of state socialism. Yet interest in the commons among migration scholars, and what this idea might bring to debates about mobility, borders, citizenship and politics has been decidedly minor. While there is no shortage of discussion of communitarian themes within migration politics, the commons, as such, is something of a gap.

It is into this gap, this space of the missing migrant commons, that *Mobile Commons, Migrant Digitalities and the Right to the City* moves forcefully and provocatively. *Mobile Commons* is born out of the cultural ferment and political energies that have gathered strength recently, catalyzed not least by the concatenation of financial, political and cultural crises that came to a head in 2008, and which remain ongoing. It grasps these events through the prism of the urban triangle Istanbul-Athens-Nicosia, three "arrival cities" that offer privileged insights about new forms and patterns of mobility, and new struggles for migrant rights. These struggles traverse a space that is at once digital and material. We are excited to feature *Mobile Commons* as the second publication in our series *Mobility & Politics*. We are convinced that like the precarious but also energetic collectivities it makes visible, it will stimulate new lines of thought for mobilities research. We

are living amidst political experiments that confound the old binaries of public/private, insider/outsider and domestic/foreign. But too often we lack the equipment to see them. *Mobile Commons* offers vital equipment for seeing, thinking and acting.

Acknowledgments

The authors of this book thank the researchers who have worked tirelessly and with commitment in Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia. Our collective work produced the empirical basis from which we conceived and developed our ideas that ended up in the form of this book. The fieldwork was conducted under the project *Transnational digital networks, migration and gender,* work package 9 on Social Movements, funded by the 7th Framework Program, EU DG Research, which explored how migrant individuals and communities participate in the production and transformation of transnational digital networks and the effect of transnational digital networks on migrant mobility and integration. We thank our colleagues from MIG@NET with whom we carried out the fieldwork: Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Carolin Philipp, Eirini Iliopoulou, Petros Siammas and Fatema Islam and Aida Ibrahim.

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The responsibility for what we claim in this book is entirely ours.

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Nicos Trimikliniotis: I would like to thank Corina and my children Stella and Manos during the difficult times of researching and writing away. Also, I would like to express my gratitude to my migrant parents, Andreas and Daphne, as well as my brothers Michalis, Antonis and Marios – our mobile lives made me aware of the meaning of migration and taught me to struggle for a world worth living in.

Dimitris Parsanoglou: I would like to thank my little boy Thanos for his screaming; this was a real incentive to work harder for the completion of this work and have the opportunity to spend more time with him and his mother, Evgenia; to the latter I owe a debt of gratitude for her patience, support and unconditional love during the past ten years. I finally want to thank my parents, both children of refugees from Bursa and Istanbul, for the privilege they endowed me with to know that any home can be temporary.

Vassilis S. Tsianos: I would like to thank Brigitta Kuster for our common work on digital borders and the concept of "embodied identity of migration". I would also like to thank Dimitris Papadopoulos for our common work on autonomy of migration and mobile commons; it was this work that served as the basis for further developing the ideas in the first chapter of this book (see Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). Finally, I would like to thank Mariane Pieper and Brigitta Kuster for the common work on net(h)nographic border regime analysis, which we further develop in the first chapter of this book (see Pieper et al., 2011).

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Prolegomena: In a World Turned Upside Down

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As the final words of this book are written, we are witnessing the consequences of the contestation in Turkey. For the time, Erdoğan managed to emerge as winner: first his party won the Parliamentary elections, and then he became the first ever directly elected President of Turkish Republic with 51%. Yet, the struggle is by no means over as Turkey is as divided as ever: the echo of the Gezi Square slogan, "Everywhere is Taksim, everywhere is resistance" has become the motto President Erdoğan is up against. The toll of 11 protesters killed and 8,000 injured is the legacy of this contestation. The latest clashes occurred when protesters took to the streets to protest against the country's dismal work safety record following the country's worst industrial accident. The previous wave of conflict in Turkey was sparked by the death of Berkin Elvan, a 15-year-old boy, who was in coma for 269 days after being hit on the head by a Police tear-gas. Images of the youth-symbol of the struggle, Berkin were depicted next to the image of Alexis Grigoropoulos, the other youth who was also killed by the Police in Athens in 2008, the event that sparked unprecedented mass rebellion in all major cities of Greece. Football fans from Turkey, Greece and Italy expressed their grief for Berkin Elvan: AEK Athens fans displayed a banner featuring a photograph of Elvan along with Alexis Grigoropoulos.[1] Turkey is still today a mass battleground, initially sparked by the contestation over the nature of the Gezi Park in İstanbul; that was enough to open up a vicious cycle of contestation shaking the stability of what was seen as the model of Islamic neoliberalism, Turkish or AKP-style. Even the much feared-and-admired for his charisma Erdoğan is forced to show teeth to politically survive, as one corruption case after another is eating away his waning hegemony. Erdoğan's banned twitter two weeks after threatening to ban Facebook and YouTube; for him social media constitute "society's worst menace."[2]

The EU Presidency was held during the first semester of 2014 by Greece, an "anomic state" (Mason, 2012), effectively transforming the areas where the Presidency proceedings are held in Athens into a no-demonstration zone; draconian security measures imposed on a society entering its sixth consecutive recession-and-austerity year. Greece is the archetype of a crisis-ridden state in the Eurozone: mass poverty and misery, derelict zones and wastelands with over 25% unemployment and over 50% among the young. Back in 2008, Greece was at the center of mass rebellion with riots and flames everywhere. The murder of Alexis Grigoropoulos by two policemen in December 2008, in Exarchia district of central Athens, caused large protests, demonstrations and rioting. Yet, this produced widespread mobilization well beyond Greece: there were solidarity

demonstrations and riots in more than 70 cities around the world, including London, Paris, Brussels, Rome, Dublin, Berlin, Frankfurt, Madrid, Barcelona, Amsterdam, the Hague, Copenhagen, Bordeaux, Cologne, Seville, Buenos Aires, Sao Paolo, San Francisco as well as Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus, and the western Cypriot city of Paphos.[3]

One year after the mass demonstrations in Nicosia that forced the Eurogroup to reverse the first ever "bail-in", forcing onto small depositors the cost of banking disasters, matters seem bleak from the local ruling classes and power elites. The experimental "bail-in", which tested this "novel" policy-as-stick for "bad bankers" forcing depositors and tax payers to bear the brunt, has left the Cypriot economy in ruins and a society in crisis. In the words of the *Economist* (2014), the economy is "in intensive care", as 53% of the loans of the largest pillar of the country's banking, the Bank of Cyprus, were nonperforming (more than 90 days overdue in payments), up from 36% in June "with the economy and property market still falling, this bad-debt mountain will get even bigger, while the collateral will shrink further". Unemployment has shot up to 18% and almost 50% among the young; after two years of austerity recipes, the national debt has risen from 85% to over 100%.

This is certainly a pernicious crisis in the triangle of the *three cities and states,* which make up the south-eastern border of Europe. The crisis generates a sense of urgency to reflect on the fundamental aspects of economic, social and political life. Undoubtedly, economic, geopolitical and other structural factors are the root causes of what Wallerstein (2010, 2011) has called a "structural crisis in the world-System". There are many different ways through which current societal change may be approached. Some argumentations derive from the (re)reading of social praxis of certain social actors in specific social contexts.

In this book we examine crucial transformations from largely under-explored and under-theorized angles. Our endeavor is to locate migrant struggles and digitalities at the core with broader transformations that are taking place. Through the lenses of migrant mobility, we explore the creation of new forms of commons that reshape the spatio-social context of three "arrival cities". The triangle Istanbul-Athens-Nicosia, this porous urban border line, serves as the specific yet generalizable context where one can feel that "the guarantees that rationality once seemed to offer guarantees to those in power, but guarantees as well, other guarantees, to those who were oppressed all seem to have vanished". We are indeed "faced with the 'cry for freedom'" (Wallerstein, 1999, 154).

Our endeavor, therefore, is to conceive these transformations from vantage points of those so often side-stepped, undervalued or plainly ignored, subaltern migrants. More precisely, in this context migration is largely ignored; often it is seen as a mere side issue or an epiphenomenon. In the instances where migrants are referred to, as rule, this is done so to blame them for the unemployment or the criminality or in general for threatening social cohesion already at risk. Our project can be seen as *pushing decentering in the opposite direction*. We therefore contend that subaltern migrant subjectivities must be brought to the center so as to perceive and connect their will, agency and praxis to both specific and broader social struggles and claims to rights by subaltern and precarious subjects, migrants and nonmigrants alike. This new generation of claims are reconfiguring Lefebvre's "right to the city" as well as the politics of "the production of space" as a new form of commons, which are generated as life itself through mobility and digital materialities.

We examine three distinct moments and very different types of movements in the triangle; they are all however operating in transforming space, spatial politics and the right to city. It is well documented that cities are not only spaces of concentrated diversity reproducing new and old types of inequalities.[4] They are also spaces of precarity-and-resistance which constantly redefine the notion of "rights" through the constant struggles on the character, the meaning and the use of spaces; beautifully painted by Georgiou (2013, 66) "the city is a canvas" for city dwellers who constantly "mark their identities" in their "struggles to find a place in the city and a place in the world". We explore the potentialities for these precarious spaces to be transformed so as to assume the intimacy and become "home", affective spaces; in other words, we explore how the "roughness of street", the kind of micropolitics of encroachment of space is turned into "commons". Subaltern and precarious migrants together with other subaltern and precarious subjects are protagonists in these processes.

This book attempts to locate both the specificities of transformations and contestations under examination, as well as structural connections and barriers to worldly transformations and rebellious events. We are dealing with heterogeneous transformations and events, different types of explosions, from the *Occupy Movement* events to the rebellions and riots in New York, Paris, London and Athens, right through to the revolts in the Arab world. The *Occupy Movement* is as much a global as a local movement responding to the particularities within each society; the *Occupy the Buffer Zone* in Nicosia (OBZ), one of the last divided cities of

the previous order of things, speaks then to a broader audience. Hence, what happens in Istanbul, Athens or Nicosia is becoming more significant to New York, Buenos Aires, Shanghai or London than 10, 20 or 30 years ago. This becomes apparent, once we appreciate how London, a bastion of old capitalism and a global city of finance (Georgiou, 2013, 24) has also become "a riot city" under "the constant threat" that "a new politics and a new place for political action" (Bloom, 2012, 29). We witness similar scenes alternating in different cities, from London, Madrid, Athens or Istanbul as the "days of rage" are spreading causing panic to the authorities.

The responses by the forces of law and order are typical: they produce "appropriate plans" to combat this "new enemy" in post-cold war world. The titles of the two documents produced by the London security authorities, which emphasized the dangers of "multiple potential attacks by 'non-state actors' utilizing cyber technology", are indicative: "Securing Britain in the Age of Uncertainly" and "A strong Britain in an Age of Uncertainly" (Bloom, 2012, 31).

Today it appears rather ironic to claim that the European periphery and core "has changed to the advantage of the periphery", a view shared by numerous critical cosmopolitan scholars before the economic crisis days (Delanty, 2009, 249). Together with the massive attack on labor rights and freedoms, there is talk of a "global revolution [...] kicking off everywhere" (Mason, 2012). Reversing the Eurocentric paradigm that wants Europe to remain "the sovereign theoretical subject of all histories" (Chakrabarty, 2000, 209), we claim that the border triangle of Europe is in many instances becoming the center (Balibar, 2002). It has in fact become one of the centers where history takes place in a breathless and breath-taking vertigo, which unambiguously calls for "forging a sociology from below" (Burawoy, 2005). The border must indeed be seen *as method* (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013) if we are to comprehend what seem to be incomprehensible transformations. We propose a multiple Southern perspective: on the one hand, it is inspired from what can be seen as a Social Science perspective from the South (Connel, 2007), the Sociology of the South[5] and *Subaltern Studies* (Guha and Spivak, 1988) as well as critical race, class, gender and postcolonial studies;[6] on the other hand, it is also a southern/eastern and Mediterranean perspective, which essentially describes a kind of *border reflexivity within Europe*.

Gramsci's "southern question" (1978) has been Europeanized and globalized as Social Science needs to become genuinely global and

universal by recognizing multiplicity and specificity. Or vice versa, the "global question" of mainstream and radical thinkers of our times has been *southernized* in the sense that what has been insistently seen as "deviance" from the axiomatic – yet deeply embodied – norm is becoming the "norm". This goes well beyond "the Brazilianization of the West" (Beck, 2000), as the world is not normalizing (Sitas et al., 2014). It is the revenge of the exception over the tyranny of the norm. The nightmare of contingency destroys consistency, since illegible "monsters" have not only occupied the laboratory,[7] but they are also experimenting with the equipment and, alas, the available matter.

Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia are certainly "rebel cities", as Harvey (2012) designates them. To those who may consider that our empirical basis is somewhat "exceptional", allegedly belonging to some Eastern paradigm or Southern paradigm, that is, that of the "peripheral" and "underdeveloped" state rather than the "core" of the Capitalist modernity, our response is "*De te fabula narratur*". With this much quoted Latin phrase from Horace[8] we claim that the story that must be told is one that requires a paradigm shift, a Kuhnian scientific revolution, so as to develop the necessary scientific tools to read a world of uncertainly from below. This long overdue process has started; not only Europe is "provincialized" (Chakrabarty, 2000) but also sociology itself is being "provincialized" (Goswami, 2013). Therefore, perspectives from the borders of Europe, that is, in and out of Europe, is no replica of what has already happened in Europe that would somehow project the future in the periphery; rather it may well prove to be an advanced glimpse into potentialities. Such perspectives can act as a kind of magnifying lens that brings to the forefront futuristic fears and hopes, which already inhabit our global lives. Without being deluded with assumptions about predicting tomorrow, we can, and indeed ought to attempt read into the potentialities before our eyes.

Notes

1 *Hürryiet Daily News*, March 17, 2014, at http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/football-fans-from-turkey-greece-italy-remember-berkin-elvan-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=63703&NewsCatID=362#
2 Eliana Dockterman, "Turkey Bans Twitter", *Time*, available online at http://time.com/32864/turkey-bans-twitter/

3   For a map of protests in solidarity with the Greek uprising, see http://
    greeksolidaritymap.blogspot.gr/2008/12/blog-post.html, which was created
    during the uprising.

4   See Castells (1973); Touraine (1978); Sassen (2000); Lefebvre (2003); Harvey
    (2012); Butler (2012).

5   Some important contributions include the following: Alatas (2006); Elizaga
    (2006); Patel (2006); Sitas (2006, 2014); Rosa (2014).

6   See Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1983, 1992); Balibar and Wallerstein (1991); Hall
    (1992); Balibar (2002); Kyriakides and Torres (2012).

7   A metaphor used very often to describe the social unrest in Greece as a
    paradigmatic shift in power-resistance continuum: see Douzinas (2013).

8   This is taken from Karl Marx in the *Preface to the First German Edition, Capital*,
    Volume One in 1867, http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/
    p1.htm, who stated with confidence: "If, however, the German reader shrugs
    his shoulders at the condition of the English industrial and agricultural
    labourers, or in optimist fashion comforts himself with the thought that in
    Germany things are not nearly so bad; I must plainly tell him, '*De te fabula
    narratur!*' [It is of you that the story is told! – Horace]".

Introduction: Mobile Commons, Migrant Digitalities and the Right to the City

Abstract: *We live in a digital world undergoing contradictory deep transformations. Digitality, however, can neither be seen as some miraculous transformatory manna from heaven, nor as the prelude of a world of total surveillance. Digitality and the new knowledge forms contained and transmitted are a vital organizing force. This force generates and shapes various* mobile commons *which are an essential acquisition resulting from the collective power to reshape the world of people on the move. In the current austerity-and-crisis times, migrant mobility plays a major role in the reconfiguration of the Social Question. In this sense* mobile commons *are revolutionizing and transforming the world.*

Producing migrant digitalities and mobile commons

We kick off with two instances that undermine the celebratory tone of digitality as somewhat miraculous manna sent from the heaven to change the world. This is often the image depicted by many mainstream scholars and certain quarters in the alternative media, particularly since the risings in Tunisia and Egypt. They seem to project events and social uprisings as mere by-products or automatic outcomes of twitter and Facebook, welcoming us to the revolutionary brave new world which was caused by the Internet. This sort of revamped technological determinism has merely digitalized old arguments, as if the new technologies themselves with no human agency, no sociality and no social struggles are automatically revolutionizing the world. The transformation of the world is seen, more or less as unmediated process. Rifkin (2014, 1) is predicting that "the capitalist era is passing … not quickly but inevitable" heralding "a new economic paradigm – the Collaborative Commons – that will transform our way of life"; he is adamant that "this will be the dominant paradigm by the second half of the twenty-first century." On the opposite side, we find the techno-pessimists announcing the doom and gloom days of the *Big Brother* world of total surveillance: these new technologies are used to subdue, control and check on us, the omnipotent *Panopticon*, everywhere and nowhere constantly gazing at us. There are certain elements, instances and trends that lead to "cities under siege" (see Graham, 2010), but this is only one side of the story; the other is the "rebel city" (Harvey, 2012), which we explore below.

We are hardly ones to refute, or understate in any way the potentialities of the digital world, either in the usage of surveillance, or more importantly as tools for liberation and emancipation in migrant or other subaltern struggles. On the contrary, in this volume we contend that the very concept of *mobile commons*,[1] which we read as an essential acquisition resulting from the collective power to reshape the world of people on the move, has been revolutionizing and transforming the world. It is reshaping and giving flesh and bone to the Lefevbrian *right to the city*, precisely because of the vital organizing force of digitality and new knowledge forms it contains and transmits.

Mobile commons must be located within the broader field of critical mobilities, that is, one must understand these processes in a broader frame; hence the movements, not only of people (groups and individuals), but also objects, capital, information and material things at a

global, national and local level are explored so as to appreciate how their combined movement may engender the economic and social patterning of life; this is a process that Walters (2011, 2012) refers to as "viapolitics," which is "derived from via, the way, or the road, but also a reference to being en route, or in the middle." In this context, Walters (2012) alludes to "a contentious viapolitics," specific vehicles assume great symbolic meaning and significance, "where the ship, the highway or the train become sites and symbols connected to demands for a right to movement." Critical mobilities have emerged as a critique of modernity (e.g., Virilio's concept of *dromology*), paving the way for new insights into mobilities (Papastergiadis, 2012, 37). More particularly, such insights must be located within the "mobilities paradigm," which is a systematic sociology of mobility transformations, as developed in Urry's *Mobilities* (2007). This paradigm examines a wide range of issues such as "displacement and settlement, networking and conviviality, as well as the effects produced by new communication and practices." As Papastergiadis (2012, 52) notes, "this new mobility paradigm is not without methodological limitations", such as "the state-centric views on belonging, and thereby refute the residentialistic claims on social evolution." According to the definition of Elliott and Urry (2010) the mobility paradigm for rethinking the social sciences can address "all social relationships should be seen as involving diverse 'connections' that are more or less 'at-a-distance', more or less fast, more or less intense and more or less involving physical movement…multiple forms of 'imagined presence' occurring through objects, people, information and images traveling, carrying connections across, and into, multiple other social spaces" (Elliot and Urry, 2010, 15). The fascination with mobilities is that they generate socialities:

> these processes stem from five interdependent 'mobilities' that produce social life organized across distance and that form (and re-form) its contours: corporeal travel, physical movement of objects, imaginative travel, virtual travel, communicative travel through person-to-person messages. (Elliot and Urry, 2010, 16)

In the context of this volume, we speak of *critical mobilities* related to *increasing and uneven interconnectivity and digitality*. This means being critical but attentive to the dominant globalist projects, which in their celebratory tone often obscure or underestimate the generation of inequalities, exploitative and oppressive relations. In the context of critical mobilities, migrant digitalities are powerful tools; hence these tools

can act as a prism enabling one to view the order of things in different ways. The digital question is often somewhat subsumed in the securitization of migration debate. The thesis of an increasing securitization of migration, in the course of the Europeanization of migration policies since the 1980s, is largely uncontested within relevant academic literature. Academic debates revolve mostly around the question of how to conceptualize and analyze the processes of securitization (Krasmann, 2011). Many authors in the constructivist and feminist studies tradition claim that the technological context of European border-monitoring and border-control technologies, such as biometrics or information and communication applications, always involves social and discursive aspects situated beyond the literal digital space. It follows, therefore, that they should be examined in relation to other technologies, practices, systems, institutions and conventions, in which they participate.[2] However, different authors opt for using different theoretical approaches in order to study the "complex imbrications of technology and society" (Sassen, 2002, 365). Certain aspects of digital space are constitutive of new social dynamics (Hardt and Negri, 2011; Rifkin, 2014) given that "digital space is embedded in the larger societal, cultural, subjective, economic, imaginary structuration of lived experience and the systems within which we exist and operate" (Sassen 2002, 369). As Elliot and Urry (2010, 40–41) point out:

> Mobile technologies are not only technical objects of adjustment through which people coordinate their activities with others. They are also constitutive of how people go about the production and transformation of their mobile lives. As anxiety, trust and technologies of mobile interaction are intricately interwoven, it is not surprising that miniaturized mobilities should function to some large extent as containing mechanisms.

It is therefore essential to underscore here that digitalities must be fully integrated in the social, not as an "add on" or "external" devices, but as fully interwoven dimensions of existence, praxis and living. Rather than viewing digitality as something exogenous or external to but with profound effects on the social structural transformations and something beyond the realm of social struggles and class relations, this volume aims to integrate social struggles, well beyond the notion of the "digital divide" as merely an additional dimension of social inequality. The social transformations relating to the processes of precariatization are intimately and unevenly connected to digitalization. A particularly important

dimension for the extension and deepening of precariatization, resulting in the increasing numbers of groups of workers designated as *precariat* (Standing, 2011; 2014) is indeed the connection between precariatization to technological/digital transformations since "the rise of network society" (Castells 2001). However, the contradictions this generates make the (re)claiming "the common" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, 300–302; 2011) or "the commons" more powerfully made (Standing, 2011, 308–311; 2014, 350–364). We have the material basis for this as we are witnessing a rise of the social forces who are claiming this as their right. Moreover, scholars who have studied or referred to "the common" (Hardt and Negri, 2000; 2011) or "the commons" (Harvey, 2009; 2012; Standing, 2011, 204; Rifkin, 2014) have only marginally or incidentally referred to migrants and migrant struggles.

Such insights may shed new light into decoding and deciphering lives, praxes and urban potentialities. In this sense, we attempt to read how migrant digitalities contain human/social agency to understand how interconnected struggles and contestations produce and reproduce new socialities. Our study shows that the potential for opening-up new terrains, infinite new plateaux for praxis that reshape the borders, social space, citizenships and living is already happening. From the fieldwork we observe that actors themselves have no illusions about these processes. The following examples demonstrate how *affect* operates in the production of connectivity and how the interplay of media environments with migration counteracts forced territorializations without the hype and noise of media sensationalism, but with the sense of a digital materialism and human irony (Leurs and Ponzanesi, 2014).

The first instance is a tongue-in-cheek note: "Thank You Facebook"[3] has become a famous Tunisian phrase, sprayed all over on walls in Tunis in the winter of 2010. Rather than construing these digital devices as naïve expressions of some techno-utopian vision, a brave new world of happy endings, these must be construed instead as *transnational spaces, heterotopias, which are constantly recreated anew under conditions of fragility, instability and inherent uncertainty*. It is undeniable that they carry, to a great extent, the potential to actualize; a potentiality that corresponds to the power of a heterotopia to incorporate several mutually incompatible spaces and places in a single real place. This phenomenon can also be viewed as the power of *transmediality*, the interlocking of different media such as Facebook, mobile phones, satellite TV, Skype, and so on, in the production of a space for the politics of testimony in transit.[4] Therefore

connectivity, or the fiction of connectivity, not only has the potential, even under asymmetric conditions, to secure mobility but it is simultaneously a form of "affective politics" (Thrift, 2006).

The second is "Guantanamo Italia": a group of young Tunisians arrived in Lampedusa in early March 2011; they were first detained in a camp and later deported to Tunisia via Turin, where they began an unconditional hunger strike when some of them learned that their incarceration there was to last for up to six months. The hunger-strikers demanded their unconditional release. Their praxis only came to public attention when one of them collected the names of all the detainees in Via Santa Maria Mazzarello in Turin and sent them by mobile phone to a friend in Zarzis (Tunisia). This friend then opened a Facebook page called "Guantanamo Italy" and uploaded a video in Arabic, French and Italian that mentioned all the detainees' names in a song. This way the news reached "Al Jazeera" and the French-speaking TV channel "France 24." Through the use of transnational social media, the hunger-strikers and their conditions of detention had managed to attract the attention of the global mainstream media. Videos and news continue to be posted on "Guantanamo Italia" – for example, the protests of family members of drowned migrants from Zarzis. On route to Italy, a fishing boat with 120 migrants on board collided with the corvette "Liberte 302" belonging to the Tunisian Navy. There were 35 people drowned and the protesting families are demanding justice for the victims as well as justice for the detainees in Via Santa Maria Mazzarello.[5]

This volume is an occasion to test empirical material and theoretical agonies shared by the authors; more importantly it is an occasion to respond to what we see as a persisting *aporia* that torments social theory and praxis. We strongly suspect that this aporia is hardly confined to the part of the world we are studying. Drawing from the foundations of an empirical research project,[6] this volume attempts to take a theoretical step forward by thinking beyond the narrow confines of anti-theoretical empiricism without however losing track of its grounding in social reality and social action. Living in these strange but interesting times, which contain revolutionary and reactionary potentialities, we attempt to theorize how the organization, shaping and structuration of praxis, embracing potentialities of a substantially different organization of everyday life. In other words, we interrogate how we could research – theoretically but simultaneously empirically – the germs of *molecular social transformations*, which contain revolutionary potentialities in the production of everyday life and in

the production of memorable events. We attempt to theorize praxis by attempting to read and decipher the meanings that emerge from the flesh and bones of social events of "the everyday" (Lefebvre, 1991). So often *the everyday* is invoked or referred to or even plainly described but rarely is it connected to a broader systemic whole and/or theorized as such. Often, there is an attempt to superimpose a theory on a social event that suits some preconceived theorization; rarely is there an analysis and a conceptualization of what is *contingent* or *accidental*. We often have explanatory factors, which come from the outside as exogenous factors; these are rarely properly grasped, studied and analyzed events. Praxis can only be read in context.

We may take as a starting point the commonplace hypothesis that critical social theory and practice is facing an impasse. This is a time that parallel to the global financial crisis, new forms of resistance emerge (often produced locally but with global impacts and repercussions or as a result of global factors manifested in local contexts), which are connected to numerous, diverse and, in some cases, new types of organizations and social actions. We are beginning to appreciate what seems to define an abundance, which may be reaching a point of culmination, saturation or inexplicability. *Contingency*, *liminality* and therefore *unpredictability* seem to be key characteristics of contemporary grassroots politics. In this short book, we attempt to capture, albeit schematically, some of aspects of the very logics of contingency, hopefully to move across liminal spaces, moments and experiences in a venture to demystify what is often thought of as unpredictable.

In the days of severe austerity, as the dominant recipe-response to the crisis is threatening to erase the historical remnants of long-fought struggles for welfarism in the Global North, we are likely to be witnessing transformations far deeper than what is apparent with the naked eye. We are dealing with a radical shake-up of the foundations of the order of things, as we have known it. A key manifestation and actor in this process of the emergence of new orders of things are subaltern migrants; their very existence, behavior and articulations are defining the mobile commons and transforming citizenship as known so far. Mobility and digitality are deeply ingrained in their praxis to such an extent that the right to the city, this rather nebulous but inspiring notion is currently being reclaimed. In fact, we hope to show in this book how it is already reshaping the *Polis*, the core of city-state, that is democratic polity, capitalism and borders.

Austerity-and-crisis times, migrants and the new social question

We need to place the whole project in its current broader context, the time we live in. Migrant struggles and digitalities must be located in the specific context of the three "arrival cities" under examination; nonetheless the findings speak to wider global processes and concerns. Current austerity-and-crisis context is shaping the context. In this setting, such struggles become increasingly connected to the "social question," which emerges from the crisis in the (south-eastern) European border regime.

   This book however is not concerned with migrants and migration in general; there are many books which nicely deal with migrants as "exceptional people," who are in another sense quite "ordinary" but have "shaped our world and will define our future" (Goldin et al., 2011); nor will it deal with the so-called migration debate as such (Spencer, 2011). This book focuses on subaltern migrants, who are mostly irregular, precarious and often described as undocumented, *sans-papiers* or even "illegal"; we study their passages and traces in the three arrival cities we are examining, their strategies and praxes of social movements and how these define *new* socialities, new spatialities and reshape new citizenship modes. In this sense, the promising but rather nebulous Lefevbrian term, the right to the city acquires a new meaning beyond the notion of an autonomy-based ontology of "escape" (Papadopoulos et al., 2008) or a spatial justice based on a "geography of withdrawal" (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, 2010).

   Our study illustrates that another step is necessary in theorizing what is *already* there but remains under-theorized. It seems that the precarious migratory praxis, which is always in motion, concretizes into a materiality of mobile commons in order to realize something more than the essential act of *escaping*. It becomes inscribed in the sociality it generates while in motion in order to meet social imaginaries enabling the livelihoods of these migrants to become *something much more than "bare lives"* (Agamben, 1998). It is this, so far undefined or better not properly grasped "something" which we have identified as being *present primarily while they are on the move* and which is obviously far less than settlement as such, we attempt to capture. The question is whether these processes speak beyond the context from which they derive to what can be seen as grounded globalities.

   This journey is a frame of enquiry that contains apolitical potentialities due to its very praxes; Isin and Nielsen (2008) coined these praxes as

"acts of citizenship." However, they are better seen as process encapsulated as inscribing "the autonomy of migration, organizational ontology and mobile commons," that is, something that comes "after citizenship" (Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). In simplified terms, we can view these processes as something that goes *beyond citizenship*, as processes that define socialities of mobile commons generating alternative modes of livelihoods that emerge in the days of austerity-and-crisis. In the days of destruction where the very notion of citizenship is undergoing violent and contradictory transformations rendering the old Marshallian citizenship in a state of flux (Isin and Nielsen, 2008), new nodes are being born.

This book can be seen as a sociological snapshot that attempts to capture another angle of Chakrabarty's "provincializing Europe" (2000), as subaltern and precarious migrants bring or bear with them a kind of knowledge via experience of critical postcoloniality back into Europe, the old colonial master. This has been thought through quite convincingly by the pioneering works of Stuart Hall and his associates, the studies theorizing migration in conjunction to class, ethnicity and gender (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1983; 1992) and the autonomy of migration school of thought (Moulier-Boutang, 1998; Papadopoulos et al., 2008; Mezzadra and Nielson, 2013; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013).

What can a postcolonial sociology of the Global South say about this? Any attempt to read these phenomena requires a significant re-ordering and re-referencing that injects the richness of theorizing from the perspective Global South into the Global North. Any effort to properly capture these processes requires a serious re-imaging of socialities; there is considerable thinking of this kind in the South and the East, where most of these migrants come from. For instance, such "re-imagining the social" from the perspective of post-apartheid South Africa (Jacklin and Vale, 2009) can be illuminating. In this sense, debates around citizenship in the post-apartheid are not only inspiring but are much broader and deeper than what they appear on first sight. There is a double paradox here: how can the reconstruction of the social in one country, a country hardly at the imperial center, which has been marked by "the myth of exceptionalism" (Marais, 1998; Alexander, 2002; Lazarus, 2004), inform broader regional or global debates? The sociologist Ari Sitas (2006, 374) aptly points out that "South Africa, for all its socioeconomic perversions, offers an exceptional social laboratory for the entire planet" as "it has to solve locally, in all its complexity the defining legacies that constitute global racism." Moreover, the fact that the post-apartheid regime

contains in Marshallian terms a very advanced framework of citizenship or what is called "fourth generation rights."

The analytical and practical lenses lent by Sitas allow us to see how we are witnessing modes of livelihoods which are kinds of socialities, solidarities and connectivities long experienced in the Global South, the East and what was thought of as "backward Rest" and not in "the West" or the "Global North" (Hall, 1992). How to make sense of the new socialities produced by the "wretched of the earth," as famously referred to by Fanon, in the days of austerity and "structural reform" is made possible by listening in on what Sitas called "voices that reason" (Sitas, 2004) from the perspective of the "ordinary lives" (Sitas, 2010). Contrary to the neo-Schmidtean and neo-Platonist readings of politics as the exception (e.g., Badiou, 2012, etc.), we mount the method of reading "ordinary lives" as resistance: the subaltern can and indeed do speak; they speak back, but most importantly they act and inscribe social struggles. In this sense, "ordinary lives" are perceived as objects for gaze, categorization and classification, no matter how well intended, as machines reproducing the ways "the modern, waged and bureaucratic forms of domination have been thought to 'interpellate' and 'socialize' people as subjects" (Sitas, 2004, ix). Our project is precisely to identify, study and theorize the "contranomic instances of sociality" (Sitas, 2004, ix) shaped by the migrant struggles of passage, which re-define spatially, and mentally the areas, which they have resided in the three arrival cities, we study. Just like South Africa has been "a vicious laboratory of extreme situations," the crisis-ridden cities of Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia have also been vicious laboratories producing new socialities of livelihoods.

In this context, we are witnessing a dramatic collapse of the welfare state, which has been in decline since the late 1970s and early 1980s (Esping-Andersen, 1996). What was called "the new social question" (Rosanvallon, 2000) is re-surfacing violently and with new terms in countries in the EU periphery such as Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece (see Lapavitsas, 2012), as the old structural adjustment programs (SAPs) imposed by the IMF in the poorer countries of the South now are imposed on the debt-suffering periphery of the Eurozone,[7] resulting in the drastic collapse of the late European welfarism and causing poverty, homelessness, mass unemployment, disintegration of the middle classes, closure of small businesses and destruction of the web of social security. Greece is particularly and severely hit by the crisis as it enters its sixth consecutive year of economic recession; this is a country in a state

of "bankruptocracy" (Varoufakis, 2011), or "debtocracy" (Kitidi and Hadjistefanou, 2012) with scholars embarking on a "political economy of debt and destruction" (Fouskas and Dimoulas, 2013). Hence, references to "social crisis" feature regularly in the local media and the term new social question is hardly uncommon over a century since "the social question" was first introduced to Greece by the pioneer socialist G. A. Skliros (1907). It is a country where the crisis is "a state of emergency" (Athanasiou, 2012).

Are these exceptions then? Not quite; yet there is wild social and economic experimentation. This is a systemic crisis, the manifestation of the logic of a system gone astray. Cyprus was often the headline in all major newspapers after the Eurogroup imposed unprecedented bail-in that led to a massive hair-cut on bank deposits, banking melt-down and stringent financial control on banking and financial markets. After the first ever bail-in forcing depositors to pay for bank losses in Cyprus, we have a better picture of this extraordinary event that made the so-called Cyprus template and the Cyprus treatment, prominently feature in international news headlines (see Kitromilides, 2013; Trimikliniotis, 2013). At that time there was an interesting debate whether the template could be used in the future, despite the desperate efforts to claim that the situation in Cyprus was "unique." As Arestis and Sawyer (2013) point out, the 17.5 billion euros requested by Cyprus was a comparatively trivial sum in absolute terms when compared to the previous Southern European bailouts. Cyprus makes up only 0.2% of the Eurozone economy and once cutting off the Cypriot banks from Greece sealed it off, this small economy was suitable for experimentation of ideas about bail-in. In the words of the *Economist* (2014):

> Of the 147 banking crises since 1970 tracked by the IMF, none inflicted losses on all depositors, irrespective of the amounts they held and the banks they were with. Now depositors in weak banks in weak countries have every reason to worry about sudden raids on their savings. Depositors in places like Italy have not panicked yet. But they will if the euro zone tries to "rescue" them too.

There is another twist to the story here that is highly relevant to social movements and struggles and the story of the commons. The initial Eurogroup proposal violated the EU acquis. It premised its banking rescue on the imposition of an unprecedented confiscation of 6.75% on guaranteed deposits (i.e., under 100,000 Euros) and 9.9% for those with over that amount.[8] It is at least odd that the proposal came from

the Cypriot President himself, but it was endorsed by the Eurogroup. The legacy of the mass Cypriot mobilization against the decision of the Eurogroup and the newly elected Cypriot President averted the imposition of hair-cut on guaranteed deposits; this is a legacy that extends beyond Cyprus saving the principle of guaranteed deposits for low-income earners across Europe and beyond.[9] After being tested in Cyprus, the "bail-in" system has become EU law: the directive is to enter into force on January 1, 2015 and the bail-in system is to take effect on January 1, 2016.[10]

Our focus goes beyond the financial turbulence; yet the economic crisis forms the necessary setting for popular mobilization. Turkey is facing its first economic turbulence for over a decade; Turkey's Islamic passive revolution is in question after the Gezi Park contestations (Tuğal 2009; Gökay and Shain, 2013; Bozkurt, 2014). Therefore, we are witnessing now tried and tested recipes of "shock therapy" on the Global South and Eastern Europe which are currently being used to transform the periphery of the EU in the Global North.

There is another crucial dimension, which lays the core of what this book is about. Subaltern/irregular migrants from third countries are bringing in their experiences, while their very route to Europe is opening-up social spaces that generate new socialities. What we attempt to do in this volume is to theorize what emerges from empirical findings with regard to the transformation of spaces and belongings. The shared knowledge, affective cooperation, mutual support and care between migrants, when they are on the move, when they arrive and/or settle, is the main topic of this volume. We attempt to contribute to a reconstruction of the ontology of the moving people; an ontology which we describe as *the mobile commons of migration*. However, there is no happy-ending story; once migrants overcome barriers and manage to enter their destination, their supposed Ithaca, such as the migrants who attempt to cross the borders of the EU, are faced with the *internal borders* which can often be an even more brutally patrolled border regime. This is the regime of European citizenship.

Our focus on the mobile commons does not attempt to question accessing citizenship rights and its possible importance in certain situations but rather to open, as Linebaugh (2008) notes, a chink in the wall and explore the possibilities that lie behind the horizon of today's European discourse and practice of citizenship. For many, citizenship appears as a wall indeed. There is no doubt that citizenship is hard fought for between

those who try to restrict it and those who invest in the efficacy of citizenship as a potential guarantor of rights, justice and liberation. Such critical investments can be found in the idea of citizenship beyond sovereignty and the state or in ideas of local citizenship, citizen labs, transnational citizenship, global citizenship, or acts of citizenship. However if citizenship represents the ultimate horizon of political practice and social analysis, then it operates as a wall-blocking potentiality. In order to respond to the intensifying securitization and abjection through citizenship, one could envisage as a possible solution the invention of another qualifying adjective to the concept of citizenship. But this is not the aim of this book. Rather the methodological principle guiding this volume is to see through the chink in the wall, to cultivate an imaginary and a practical sensibility to what lies *after* or *beyond* citizenship. And what we see through this is the mundane organizational forms, the struggles and their trails of mobile people. Our vantage point is to view the world as far as possible from the migrants on the ground, transmigrants on the road in order to theorize the potentialities in the construction of social imaginaries that generate different kinds of politics. It is the multiplicity of these lives and movements of people that forces a break not with citizenship as such, but a rupture within and beyond citizenship. This approach paves the way to reopening both citizenship borders and the social questions in the context of migration policy, equality struggles as well as in academic research. All this is grounded in social praxis as observed and construed, rather than being the result of abstract or philosophical deduction.

The special relationship between *politics of place* and *neoliberal transformation* via austerity politics is analyzed with rigor by the geographer Jamie Peck, who introduces the term *austerity urbanism*:

> The spoils of financialized economic growth never did trickle own, as the advocates of neoliberal governance always promised, but the pain of austerity certainly has. In the United States, state and local governments, and cities in particular, have been exposed to the full force of austerity's *extreme economy,* exacerbating what have been long-gestating fiscal crises of the urban state. This radical devolution of austerity is calling attention to the essence of the strategy: austerity rather like the ideology of neo-liberalism itself is something that is imposed upon less-powerful others; it is about determining *and enforcing* the rules by which *others* must live. The systematic dumping of risks, responsibilities, debts, and deficits to the local scale has become a hallmark of austerity urbanism, US-style. Neoliberal austerity measures operate

"downwards" in scalar as well as social terms: they offload social and environ-
mental externalities on cities, while at the same time enforcing unflinching
fiscal restraint by way of extralocal disciplines; they further incapacitate the
local state through the outsourcing, marketization, and privatization of public
services; and they concentrate both costs and burdens on those at the bottom
of the social hierarchy, compounding economic marginalization with state
abandonment. Cities, in other words, are the places where austerity bites.
(Peck, 2013; Peck and Brenner, 2010)

The debate over the relationship between *urban citizenship* and *neoliberal
transformations of the city* pivot around the consequences of austerity
politics with particular focus on marginalized groups (Kraus, 2004;
Garsia, 2006) or the redistribution of urban space as a dimension of the
re-bordering of immigration politics and the scale of local territories
and nonborder urban areas (Gilbert, 2009; Lebuhn, 2012;). This book
ventures to connect the two debates via the notion of austerity citizen-
ship, so as to locate the special and spatialized relationship between and
betwixt *urban citizenship* and l*ocal/global austerity politics*. In other words,
it is the urban place that comes to the frontier where citizenship is trans-
formed into *austerity citizenship*.

Migrant integration within austerity citizenship

The question that emerges is whether the processes flowing from the acts
of citizenship have the potential to change politics, that is, whether we
can see mainstream political discourses being affected. For instance, can
we see any traces of these struggles in the discourses produced within
EU-related debates? This is difficult to ascertain. While the foundations
of the EU- and neoliberal state formations appear shakier by the day,
subaltern classes are being subjected more and more attacks on their
welfare and rights; the social and political forces who have led the chal-
lenges to the order of things are also in crisis.

   Nonetheless, recent debates at the *European Integration Forum*[11]
exposed policy-makers to some of the critical aspects in recent radical
debates with regard to citizenship and migrant integration in the EU and
beyond. At least at policy discourse level, some debates are producing
tangible results in placing on the policy-agenda crucial questions relat-
ing to citizenship, such as the following: access to social citizenship and
belonging, civic and political participation; realizing full and substantive

rights of migrants in societies beyond the formal rights; nondiscrimination, particularly against vulnerable groups as well as internal divisions, stratification and social relations within migrants, and so on. The Social and Economic Committee of the European Union seems to be well placed in pushing the agenda forward in ways, which open up spaces for action, paving the way for furthering the cause of rights for migrants. However, there was marginal, if any, influence in actual policy-making. The subsequent Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting adopted conclusions on the integration of third-country nationals legally residing in the European Union which paid lip service to the "common basic principles" for immigrant integration as established ten years before.[12] Not only little concrete steps in recognizing and taking action to address the fundamental issues located by Migrant NGOs and experts, but the EU decided to cooperate with sending countries (i.e., fund) to discourage irregular migration in the form of "voluntary return" and propagate the "risks of irregular migration" decision also reaffirms its commitment to combatting "illegal immigration."[13] Therefore, distinctly absent from the official debates on integration and citizenship are matters which are mostly in issue:

▸ The rights of irregular migrants.
▸ Dismantling rather than erecting new border regimes, including the virulent "deportation regime" (De Genova, 2009).
▸ The above two require opening-up policy-making radical agendas for an ailing and vacuous democracy. This goes to the heart of liberal-democratic regimes debates around capitalist integration in the guise of transnationalism, globalization, and so on, on the one hand, and migrant integration/incorporation on the other.

At a theoretical, policy-making and activistic levels we need to address the immigration-integration agenda by engaging with the debates over sovereignty, territoriality and governance in its globalizing mode (unifying, enlarging and homogenizing) and its fragmenting mode (dividing, subordinating, differentiating and excluding).

Given the current economic crisis, coupled with longer-term historical decline of welfarism as a result of the neoliberal drive in the post-1970s, the politics of austerity are producing what can be thought of as an "austerity citizenship": a notion of citizenship that is increasingly devoid of what was once considered to be the post-World War II consensus in the West; the so-called Marshallian citizenship is no more. The post-crisis

citizenship is not only in a state of flux,[14] but we are dealing with such shifts in the acts of citizenship that the whole liberal capitalistic model of citizenship is shaken. Alternative social imaginaries based on new forms of livelihoods are emerging. We can speak of a rupture, of a fundamental break from the past paradigm, either as a result of the advanced stage of the long-term now erosion of citizenship or of a qualitative transformation brought about abruptly in the current state of multiple crises; or, of course, of a combination of the two.

Migrants are not only suffering from the symptoms of austerity citizenship but are an integral part of the equation: on the one hand, we are witnessing the use and abuse of migrants and migration by various political, economic and social actors for scapegoating them as "deviants" and, on the other, we have groups of migrants as subjects who are playing a constitutive role in the reshaping of citizenship and are producing new social imaginaries. The theme of migration becomes a contentious issue and an object of political disagreement by subjecting migrants to various ideological projects, in other words by submitting them to various disciplining processes. Neoliberal austerity advocates, as well as various anti-immigrant xenophobes of different shades constitute only one factor of this social equation: often the former accuse the latter of populism in their "compassionate" pleas for tolerance, that is, the tolerance of super-exploitation of migrants as class fraction to compress wages and extract greater profits. Yet, it is the very neoliberal policies which generate the conditions for the exclusion, marginalization and victimization of migrants. Moreover, forces of gentrification in inner cities have made extensive use of the issue of migration and anti-migrant ideologies as instruments in their drive to "clean the city" or establish "law and order" by any means to police the city. In Greece the Neo-Nazi Golden Dawn, has taken a further step in what the neoliberal politics in PASOK, New Democracy and LAOS[15] were adopting over the last 20 years. This creates new loci for disagreement as to the meaning and symbols of urban spaces: the contestations over Gezi Park in Istanbul which ignited mass eruptions throughout the country are indicative of this; such contestations are found on different occasions not only in Greece and Cyprus but also all over the world.

The current austerity citizenship debates contain structural elements of a deep and unresolved blame game on subaltern migrants for undermining "our" welfare state, in the classic welfare-chauvinist racism. They also contain various other anti-immigrant scapegoating assumptions, such as

the alleged incapability of some migrant groups to integrate into "our" liberal norms (i.e., those allegedly prone to Islamic Fundamentalism, crime, mafia, terrorism, etc.) or the neo-Malthusian fears of multiplying via breeding (Trimikliniotis, 2007). This has been illustrated as a classic cycle of deviance where moral panics emerge blaming the classes branded as "deviants" for all sorts of reasons (Sitas, 2014; Sitas et al., 2014). This makes more apparent the aporia, or what Balibar (2014, 1–33) has branded as "the antinomy of citizenship."

This book however primarily focuses on the other side of the equation, the other crucial factor, that is, the role of subaltern migrants (as opposed to elite migrants) in the reconstruction through their own agency (praxis/consciousness) of alternative modes of being; hence modes that go beyond citizenship or what Balibar (2014, 259) calls a "nomadic" or a "co-citizenship." Their social imaginaries are constituted by their social actions/struggles their endeavor to escape control utilizing their cross-border praxis in an interplay of digital and nondigital forms of communicating, organizing, acting, re-enacting and restructuring the "order of things"; by giving life to what can be defined as movements of a new kind (Papadopoulos et al., 2008; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013).

Notes

1   The term "mobile commons" was coined and developed by Dimitris Papadopoulos, see Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013.
2   See Tsianos and Kuster (2012); Topak (2010); Van der Ploeg (2005, 1999a) and Amoore et al. (2008); Ceyhan (2008); Haggerty and Ericson (2000).
3   For more see Pieper et al. (2011).
4   For more see Jenkins (2003) on transmedia storytelling, where moving characters from books to films to videogames can make them stronger and more compelling; also see Jenkins (2006a; 2006b; 2007 and Jenkins et al. (2006).
5   Ibid.
6   See MIG@NET project (www.mignetproject.eu/; also see Trimikliniotis et al. (2010).
7   See Arestis (2013); Fouskas and Dimoulas (2013); Milios and Sotiropoulos (2009, 2010); Sotiropoulos et al. (2013).
8   This was a shock-therapy-type of liquidation of the banking and financial services of a small island state economy with a Banking sector was (and is no more) eight times larger than the country's GDP. See Trimikliniotis (2013); Kitromilides (2013).

9   See Trimikliniotis (2013); Kitromilides (2013); also see the paper "Η εξέγερση του Μάρτη του 2013", *Δέφτερη ανάγνωση [Second Reading]*, 103, March 15–22, 2014, at http://2ha-cy.blogspot.com/2014/03/blog-post_1458.html (accessed February 19, 2014).

10 See "Deal reached on bank 'bail-in directive'", at *European Parliament News* http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20131212IPR30702/html/Deal-reached-on-bank-%E2%80%9Cbail-in-directive%E2%80%9D (accessed May 20, 2014).

11 See Summary Report of the 11th meeting of the EUROPEAN INTEGRATION FORUM, "Ten years with the Common Basic Principles on integration – what next?" Brussels, EESC building, April 3, 2014, at http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-european-integration-forum-11 (accessed August 20, 2014).

12 See also Chapter 1 in this book.

13 The JHA Council Conclusions on the integration of third-country nationals "reaffirm the commitment to the Common Basic Principles" and mentions the 11th meeting of the European Integration Forum. See JHA Council meeting (Luxembourg, June 5 and 6, 2014) http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/jha/143109.pdf (accessed August 20, 2014).

14 See Isin and Nielsen (2008); Balibar (2004); Papadopoulos and Tsianos (2013).

15 PASOK ("Panhellenic Socialist Movement") and New Democracy ("Νέα Δημοκρατία") were the parties that ruled Greece since the collapse of the junta in 1974. LAOS, which stands for "Popular Orthodox Alarm" (Λαϊκός Ορθόδοξος Συναγερμός) is the far right political party which entered into coalition with the other two parties after the Troika imposed austerity program in 2011.

1
Theorizing Migration, Praxis and the Crisis of Migration Crisis

Abstract: *The crisis has highlighted an uneasiness of integration policies and politics that stems mostly from the growing irrelevance of generic citizenship. Citizenship in times of crisis and austerity, or what we call austerity citizenship is failing in its basic function the inclusion of noncitizens; even differential inclusion is minimal. Mobile commons as shared knowledge, affective cooperation, mutual support and care between migrants (and other subalterns) extends further the theoretical debates on migration, particularly regarding the autonomy of migration. Moreover, it transcends the limitations of the stale citizenship debates. An net(h)nography of border regimes, as they are deployed around flexible and porous border zones, can elucidate migrant praxis, its repercussions and potentialities.*

Migration within the crisis of migration crisis: from differential inclusion and integration to transcending citizenship

Labor, mobility and security are all directly connected with the machinations of sovereignty through *differential inclusion of mobile populations*.[1] The governing tool of this tripartite relationship is citizenship in general and the specific form it takes in different social formations. This is hardly exclusively confined to modern politics of citizenship; on the contrary, differential inclusion accompanies multiple forms of belonging and multiple forms of the production of difference, which vary immensely in different historical periods and there are numerous examples of these.[2] Differential inclusion is discussed neither to highlight its historical novelty, nor to allude to some historical uniqueness; rather we underscore the specificity of today's differential inclusion functions through citizenship, that is, through a specific form of governance regulating the relation between rights and representation or "the double-R axiom" (Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2007). Rights are crucial for governing migration by differentiating who is subject to rights and who is not, while representation often defines *who* is entitled to have rights and *what* rights.

Cultural identity and collective affects of belonging emerge among mobile and other subaltern populations, generating social subjectivities that in one way or another, explicitly or implicitly, claim rights. In other words, it is representation – and the absence of it – that makes realization of rights possible. Hence generic citizenship is an essential tool of governmentability based on this unstable and dangerous equation of the double-R axiom. What may be termed as "too much representation" of a certain group without rights may potentially generate an explosive social situation, where particularly active groups without any legal, social or political rights can be dangerous for the social order, as the example of the struggles of the *sans papiers* illustrates. Lack or restricted representation of a social group leads to structural racism and exclusion, as the history of riots shows, from the Brixton and Tottenham riots in the 1980s in the UK to the 2005 Banlieues uprising in France. The two extremes of these can be placed on a scale, where full citizenship is placed on one extreme and total illegalization and invisibility on the other. Where the cut is placed, is a political and social question, a result of struggle in a given social formation at a given time.

We have already referred to the current conditions affected by the austerity-and-crisis that is generating "austerity citizenship" in the context of a broader conservative social and political turn that pushes toward illegalization and invisibility. Citizenship is in this context the specific tool of sovereign governance that regulates the balance between rights and representation and renders certain populations as legitimate bearers of rights while other populations are marked as inexistent.[3] But how can we link conceptually migration to citizenship? We draw here from the paradox of the *impossible* citizenship. The paradox in the operation of citizenship as the regulatory mechanism of inclusion and exclusion is manifested as follows: the more a society moves toward citizenship, the more it creates the conditions for its disappearance as a form of governance. If you include everyone and if you assign rights to everyone, citizenship as such becomes irrelevant. "Citizenship for all" is an impossible condition. Hence, citizenship is in fact not failing by default but it is "designed to fail" (Tyler, 2010), it is always "incomplete" (Gunsteren, 1998). As the international system of states is organized, if a state assigns citizenship to everyone, then this citizenship will not be connected to rights or any other legal status but a mere social ritual rendered meaningless as it would not generate binding effects in the world of borders. In other words, the only way possible to have such as citizenship is in a society without borders.[4] Citizenship, as shaped within the world organized today, is a function of borders and is correlated with the exercise of sovereign control (Anderson et al., 2009). The more we talk about security, the more we talk about citizenship; this is the predicament of citizenship. It stems from the power of sovereignty to erect and maintain borders; borders that it cannot ultimately fully control. Citizenship cannot be thought outside of sovereignty and control. And control is always about the re-territorialization and capturing of the lines of flight, which traverse and push societies toward their transformation.

In the name of protecting human rights and liberal citizenship, states invoke sovereign control that promotes a tougher take on freedom of mobility and leads to the introduction of restrictive migration measures as pro-human rights policies, as it happens in trafficking cases (O'Connell Davidson, 2008; 2010). Citizenship is thus a form of governance which performs and reproduces exclusion and not inclusion, as it is often assumed. Whatever qualifying attribute we add to citizenship – accidental, activist, irregular, imperfect, biological, sexual, reversible, unrecognized[5] – it cannot erase a restrictive approach on

peoples' movements; it cannot erase the perspective of control that creates exclusion.

Citizenship is not inherently liberal; nor is there a universal citizenship, despite the aspirations of the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* of 1789. Citizenship exists as a tool deployed to build and solidify national sovereignty. It is limited to the territorial space of the nation-state and stops where the borders of a country stop, while the rest of national activities (e.g., capital movements, trade, circulation of elite populations, war, etc.) can extend beyond its borders. The limits of citizenship are the limits of sovereignty. But liberal citizenship is not only problematic because it excludes by default everyone who is outside its borders, but also because there is a long history of "denationalizing" dangerous or unwelcomed citizens (Panourgia, 2010) and creating categories of citizenship, which can be viewed as accidental (Nyers, 2006) or reversible (Tsianos and Pieper, 2011). From a global perspective, different national citizenships are bound to the strict hierarchy of the global world system, in which certain countries and their citizenships are far more valued and powerful than others (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991).

Liberal citizenship is a fiction that could not be materialized in the post-WWII period. The term "post-liberal" can explain the ambivalences of citizenship, which push liberal democracies to their limits where they deploy even "illiberal" policies and practices in the name of liberalism (Papadopoulos et al., 2008; Buckel, 2013). The example of the denationalization of one of the most prominent Dutch politicians, the Somali-Dutch Hirsi Ali, exemplifies this form of post-liberal politics. Hirsi Ali, a paradigmatic liberal citizen well known for her critical stance toward Islam in the Netherlands, was stripped of her Dutch citizenship (and her seat in the Dutch parliament) when it became public that some narrative elements of her asylum case were fictional. As soon as the Ministry of Interior revoked recognition of her political refugee status, her application for Dutch citizenship was retrospectively revoked too. What appears from a legalist perspective as a correct procedure, demonstrates the paradox and ultimately the impossibility of liberal citizenship. Hirsi Ali lost her citizenship although she was fully embodying and practicing its core values. In post-liberal conditions, citizenship has to be always protected from expanding too much and including somebody who *should not* be included. The post-liberal logic effectively questions liberal citizenship by decoupling the lived, embodied existence and the singular subject of rights that a certain nation can provide, by making citizenship

ex principio reversible (Tsianos and Pieper, 2011). Not even the concrete acts of citizenship that Hirsi Ali engaged in her lived belonging to the Dutch community could undermine the exclusionary logic of citizenship. Hirsi Ali is the typical subject devoted to liberal citizenship and simultaneously is also the paradigmatic example of its failure in today's post-liberal conditions.

Therefore, understanding and theorizing migration in terms of differential inclusion and citizenship is a necessary and important step in analyzing the current configuration of sovereign control. But at the same time, when we perceive migration through the lens of citizenship we always contribute to the creation of its others; its outside. This is because citizenship as a nonexclusionary category, citizenship for all, is a contradiction in terms. Citizenship is an important tool for creating possibilities for certain groups to be included, but it can never respond to the question, which migration poses to capitalist sovereignty: what about all those who are mobile and cannot be included; what about the majority of mobile populations?

This brings us to the EU migrants' integration debates, as to the prescribed path via which, as time goes by, the "third country national," that is, the mobile populations, would acquire rights approximated to those of citizens, that would eventually lead to citizenship. Integration of migrants became an EU policy area since the adoption of the Council Conclusion on Immigrant Integration Policy in European Union,[6] which agreed on the *Common Basic Principles*. The first principles declared that "integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of member states," particularly in the current polarized environment and economic austerity, where the question of integration and citizenship becomes a highly divisive issue, as there are opposing views, interests and agendas. Integration agendas very much reflect distinct and often opposing political agendas; as such, if we were to map integration agendas across the EU countries and at the level of EU institutions, we ought to map contestations about the meanings and priorities of integration. Moreover, in order to understand these debates they need to be located in various dimensions of neoliberal transformations in the EU.

Differential inclusion is precisely the policy logic adopted for the development of integration policies as instruments and specific technologies, in the Foucaultian sense of a broader framework which sees neoliberalism as a "mobile technology" (Ong, 2006). Integration is very

much part of the EU-led "neoliberal regionalism" and "management of mobility" (Pellerin and Overbeek, 2001; Geiger and Pécou, 2010), both based on the principle that "strategies of governing are re-engineering political spaces and populations" (Ong, 2006). Integration is thus the "carrot" and combating illegal migrants is the "stick" of the carrot in the policy for managing mobility. The EU "naturalizes a particular 'imagined world'" (Walters, 2010, 75) by socially constructing as "irregular" certain forms of mobility as well as certain forms of life.

Integration is then an extended toolkit for *citizenship-in-the-waiting*. This can only be understood in its particular context, taking seriously into account issues relating to class, gender, racialization and migration within EU member-states (see Kontos and Slany, 2010; Anthias, 2012). Also one has to consider specific aspects pertaining to labor migration, exclusion and subordination (Neergaard, 2009) and to the (re)production of precariousness as a specific feature of migrant labor (Schierup, 2007; Papadopoulos et al., 2008; Pajnik and Campani, 2009). Integration must be properly located in and perceived as being closely interconnected to its broader socio-economic and ideological context.

The history and pre-history of integration debates cannot be ignored.[7] The integration question needs to be radically re-conceptualized. Integration seems so corrupted by use and abuse that it would make sense to ditch it altogether, had we been able to start afresh to achieve what we aim: "access, participation, parity and belonging" (Anthias, 2012). However, even if it was possible to discredit and reject the concept altogether and introduce a new one at discursive or rhetorical level (e.g., in policy documents), this would mean very little in practice, unless the underlying reasons for producing this policy result would radically shift. This means addressing the underlying social, political, economic, ideological and cultural factors which *define* the policy question to be addressed, which in turn defines the parameters for the direction of the policy entitled to resolve, manage or alleviate the "social question." If we were to radically transform policy, this would have to come at multiple levels. Critiques, limitations and alternatives to the dominant versions of integration need to be brought to centerstage in the various debates at EU, nation-state and local levels with communities of migrants and social activists' voices being heard. Discursively, the critiques of migration policies are being aired at different levels, including high-level EU expert conferences; however, they have little effect in actually shifting policy. It seems that institutionally, at EU and

nation-state levels, the "condensation of social forces," in Poulantzian terms, is such that the critiques leave little imprinting on policies so far.

The answer to this puzzle can only be resolved at the level of practicing politics, in the daily struggles that can tilt the balance of forces, rather at a conceptual level. Resistance and alternatives to the dominant logics often need radical rejection. This is why we propose to move on beyond the integration and citizenship debates, to look at the socialities, subjectivities and politics produced by the migrant movements.

From autonomy of migration to the politics of mobile commons

A fundamental shift in perspective is required in order to understand the molecular transformations occurring at societal level; in order to grasp how migrant mobility literally generates or creates rights that we call *mobile commons*. But what is a common? De Moor and Berge (2007, 1) define "commons" quite broadly: " 'commons' may be a part of the natural world used by humans or it may be a social reality created by humans, such as the internet or an urban space." Similarly, other influential scholars speak of a concept of the commons as "one of a universal, open access": "There's a part of our world, here and now, that we all get to enjoy without the permission of any" (Hess and Ostrom, 2003, 14).

The commons become more or less entrenchments, in the way that E. P. Thompson (1991) has eloquently written when he brilliantly explored the emergence and entrenchment of *customs in common* in the 18th century. What we are trying to do in this book, is to illustrate how similar sorts of processes can be seen, albeit in an entirely different era, with different tools and within a different context. It is neither unprecedented historically, nor is it confined to the North and West, as brilliant works in old colonies demonstrate. From hundreds of studies in India and China to Africa and the Americas, we can witness how, despite the relentless and insatiable thirst of the Capital to expand and conquer, to adapt and take over, different forms of commons emerge; some adapt and survive, others die, while others are resurrected. It is a story of constant struggle, blood and suffering, as common rights may be outlawed and criminalized and those defending such rights are branded as deviants and outlaws. As Sitas (2014) points out:

The legal sanctions and persecution of types of deviants defined as "rogues and vagabonds", i.e. persons considered "idle and disorderly", prostitutes and other unruly persons have a long history. It is no historical accident that vagrancy, migration and mobility, the criminal history of petty offenses are linked to perceptions of poverty and deservingness. The 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries were troubled by vagabonds and vagrants. ... The statute books became all the richer with a growing list of insolences, lewd behavior and related crimes throughout the century: "Common night walkers, common street walkers, both male and female, common railers and brawlers, persons who with offensive and disorderly acts or language accost or annoy persons of the opposite sex, lewd, wanton and lascivious persons in speech or behavior, idle and disorderly persons, disturbers of the peace, keepers of noisy and disorderly houses, and persons guilty of indecent exposure may be punished by imprisonment in a jail or house of correction for not more than six months." (General Laws: 2011, Part IV, Section 53, 2011)

Often the debates over the commons as well as their supposed *tragedy* are connected to land and property, agrarian and urban settings (Hardin, 1968; Angus, 2008). Despite the 40-year-long neoliberal dominance in academia, there has been a process of subverting of the tragedy argument, not only by radicals but also from mainstream scholars. The shift can be seen since the sardonic response by the legal scholar Carol Rose (1986), who insisted that rather than speaking of a "tragedy" we ought to speak of "the comedy of commons." Since then, the *International Journal of the Commons (IJC)* was established[8] and in 2009 Nobel prize in Economics was awarded to Elinor Ostrom (1990; 2002; Hess and Ostrom 2003; Ostrom et al., 2012; Rose 2011), whose work stressed how people collaborated and organized themselves to manage common resources. Indicative of the swing in scholarly debates is Jeremy Rifkin's latest work (2014), drawing this scholarship rather than the radical fringe, who argues that the paradigm collaborative commons is in fact displacing capitalism as "the internet of things" is producing the "zero marginal cost society" we live in. Of course, there are numerous radical alternatives (Hardt and Negri 2000; 2011; Harvey, 2012) most of which are practicing-and-theorizing commons in different aspects of social life. In the radical tradition, Alonso and Arzoz (2011, 65) have a conceptual frame which is close to what this book is proposing in "mobile commons" as they are referring "digital diasporas as activist commons," in the following sense:

The social, economic and cultural fabric of Diasporas can be included under the commons. Now Technology transforms vernacular into trans- or

cyber-vernacular. Digital diasporas are a commons for the exchange of information, dissemination of personal or general news, re-creation of cultural memories, and new cultural activities. An Activist Commons for People.

This fascinating combination of commons with the diaspora approach, as proposed by Alonso and Arzoz (2011, 69) provides the frame whereby a political geography of migrants or minorities without or beyond or against States; hence activist commons of Basques or Palestinians "can connect, unite and re-create diasporas of People without States, such as the Basques."[9]

It is remarkable that rarely, if ever, are these debates connected with issues related to migrants and migration.[10] Although originally the commons debate was framed around land issues it has assumed a radical strand; this relates to urban life, often connected to the Lefevbrian "everyday," revolts and crises. Recently there have been lively debates over digitality, Internet and the virtual world. Harvey's "rebel cities" (2012) are premised on spatial processes, where new political subjects are reclaiming "the right to the city" and open up the potential for "urban revolution," by examining how "urban commons" are being created in the current juncture. In the days of austerity-and-crisis and the downgrading of the middle class as a fatally ironic allusion to the sovereign-debt downgrading, the creation of the commons is often seen as a process that is powerfully emerging on a global scale. It is however more prevalent in the countries that are in deep crisis in the periphery of Europe, such as Greece (De Angelis, 2013), Spain, Portugal and Cyprus. A celebratory statement about urban commons is made by Hardt and Negri (2011, 153–154) in *Commonwealth*:

> One vast reservoir of common wealth is the metropolis itself. The formation of modern cities, as urban and architectural historians explain, was closely linked to the development of industrial [...] Today we are witnessing a shift, however, from the industrial to the biopolitical metropolis.

These are extremely useful initial insights. However, we propose a more grounded approach, rather than one based on a general philosophical and broad-sweep reading. This book attempts to capture the emergence of the mobile commons, somewhere in the triangle of the three arrival cities (Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia), not only in what is fascinating in the postcolonial debate about "fencing, cutting and transgressing" (Sitas, 2004), but in charting how subaltern migrants on their routes to the core of the empire are reshaping a commons quite distinct from previous

eras. Like underground markings or track lands in urban centers and rural areas the mobile subjects *perform* or *act* "rights of way" or "rights of passage" (as opposed to the anthropological "rites of passage"), which can be clandestine, informal and not recognized by law; they are however *de facto* present and operational. It is in "the interface between, on the one hand, law and ruling ideologies, and on the other, common right usages and customary consciousness," in the words of Thompson (1991, 175) that we try to grasp something of these processes (see Chapters 3 and 4). When the West meets "the Rest," as Stuart Hall put it, or when "the Empire strikes back" the mode of thinking is based on sovereignty, governmentability and border control. In this sense, "the right to the city" assumes new meanings.

We propose to shift away from the order of sovereign control toward the primacy of migrants' mobility: rather than reading migration through capitalism, we propose to take a step further by considering reversing this mode, thus restoring the mutuality and reciprocity in the relationship. The aim is to read capitalism through migration and to understand sovereignty through mobility, rather than the other way around (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2013; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). Yann Moulier Boutang (1998) has already offered an impressive historic account of this movement. The *autonomy of migration* approach foregrounds that migration is not primarily a movement that is defined according to institutional power, to which its acts and claims refer. It rather means that the very movement itself becomes a political movement and a social movement. The autonomy of migration thesis highlights the social and subjective aspects of *mobility* before control. It rejects understanding migration as a mere response to economic and social malaise (e.g., Jessop and Sum, 2006). On the contrary, migration is understood as autonomous, in the sense that against a long and oppressive history of thinking social control over mobility migration has been and continues to be a constituent force in the formation and transformation of sovereignty (Transit Migration Forschungsgruppe, 2007). Mobility drives control; not the other way round. This does not mean that mobility operates independently of control. Very often it is subjected to it and succumbs to violent state or private interventions that attempt to tame it; probably the politics of detention and deportation is the best example of such violence that show how migrant mobility can be halted and brutally controlled (see Tyler, 2013; De Genova, 2005).

We are hardly ones to propose any romanticization of nomadism and migration. Migration grapples with the harsh, often deadly, realities of

control. Yet, migration creates new realities which allow for migrants to exercise their own mobility against or beyond existing control. The term migration supposedly homogenizes and effectively erases the diverse lived experiences of migrants vis-à-vis the state. Migration encompasses, of course, a broad spectrum of practices of mobility: humanitarian, forced, war, environmental, cultural, economic, circular, seasonal, internal migration: all these are radically different types of migrant mobility. Additionally, each one of these types includes many different specific cases. Such migrations are hardly neutral definitions of migratory movements. Much of our empirical research, among a myriad of similar studies in the field of transnationalism, shows that whether a young transmigrant, to use just an example here, can be identified under the category of unaccompanied minor refugee or as somebody who circulates between the country of origin and the country of destination or as economic migrant, is less self-evident than it appears in the first instance (O'Connell Davidson, 2011).

The underlying drive behind these migratory movements is usually obscure. One can, for example, understand migration as the exercising of agency from below in the diffuse conditions of globalization (Appadurai, 1996); or as a metaphor for a fluid modernity that is driven by an ever-increasing penetration of the neoliberal doctrine (Bauman, 2000); or even as an approach inspired by complexity theory in which all different forms of mobility – from tourism to transnational terrorism – exist equally among each other (Urry, 2003). Nevertheless, subsuming all these different types, cases and approaches under the concept of migration does not mean flattening out their differences; rather the notion of autonomy of migration attempts to articulate their commonalities which stem from all these different struggles for movement that confront the regimes of mobility control. The supposedly abstract and homogenizing category of migration as it is used in the autonomy of migration approach does not attempt to unify all the existing multiplicity of movements under one single logic, but to signify that all these singularities contribute to an affective and universal gesture of freedom that evades the concrete violence exercised by capitalist control on moving people. Migration in this reading of migration is a political category which entails neither uniformity, nor abstraction. Migration is the empirical reality of struggles for movement that escape and subsequently delegitimize and derail sovereign control. Thus, the first meaning of migration is an empirical one: it implies the real struggles, practices, tactics that escape control. This approach to migration

attempts to respond to the heterogenizing practices of state regulation of mobility: sovereignty breaks the connectivity between multiple migratory subjects in order to make them visible and render them governable subjects and it does this through operationalizing the category of the citizen in order to create different classes of citizens.

This double dimension of autonomy of migration can be exemplified in an emblematic type of migration: *illegalized border crossing*. It is from this perspective that we need to analyze mobility that fails out of citizenship and is excluded from it. When migrants are considered as irregular citizens, they are commonly conceived either as criminals or as being forced to move, but never as active creators of the realities they find themselves in and the realities they create when they move.[11] This constructs them as irregular or unauthorized subjects. It is not primarily the legal context that creates the category of the illegal migrant, it is the political and theoretical view that does not allow for forms of agency not driven by external necessities; often, the legal context only follows to consolidate this perspective and standardize migrants into manageable categories. However, in conditions where illegal migration has become one of the main, or probably *the* main, migration route to the societies of the Global North (see Karakayali, 2008) irregularity can always be perceived in a double perspective: either from the perspective of citizenship, which attempts to disclose how irregularity is produced and maintained through control and through responding acts of migrants, or from the perspective of mobile migrants that use clandestinity in order to facilitate their everyday movements. The difference here is very small but of importance for understanding the autonomy of migration approach: irregularity is *not* a political act in itself.

Irregularity makes sense only as illegalization of migrants through the order of sovereignty and the governance of citizenship and not as an intended (or even unintended) political act of migrants. Research on irregularity and citizenship is necessary but focusing solely on this seems to be superseded not only by the practices of migration itself but also by the current processes of migration control. From the perspective of the current digitalized, porocratic configuration of control,[12] mobility is not the enemy. Mobility is considered a necessary, in fact, a socially and economically indispensable element of current European societies: it only needs to be institutionalized through discourses of citizenship in order to sustain the new flexible configuration of labor that relies on extensified exploitation. This certainly creates a political problem for every approach to migration through citizenship: the more one tries to

support rights and representation through citizenship, the more he/she contributes to the restriction of movement. This is a dilemma which is well known to activist organizations that engage with radical migration and border politics. The dilemma is that migrants do not usually get involved in political mobilizations about migration as such. Migrants tend to become invisible, to disappear, to dis-identify themselves (Broeders and Engbersen, 2007; Papadopoulos et al., 2008). When they mobilize politically, they only do it in a strategic way because they encounter a particular and direct form of discrimination in a concrete situation.

Many of the transmigrants we talked to in the camps of Pagani and Igoumenitsa (Greece) in the past three years used the phrase "I work only for papers."[13] On first encounter it is difficult to understand this phrase. On the one hand, we know that a lot of them work in the worst possible conditions, without being documented and only for money. On the other hand, "papers" is not something "you work for"; "papers" is something to which you are legally entitled to or not. This phrase challenges two of the most widespread assumptions that underlie mainstream political and academic positions regarding what a migrant is: first, the assumption that migrants are laborers whose subjectivities are defined by their capacity to offer their labor force in "foreign" labor markets. Secondly, it challenges the distinction between legality–illegality, by questioning the dualism between those who are recognized as legal subjects, that is, those who have "papers" or as illegal subjects, those who do not have.

The forms of political action that migrants engage to cannot be confused with a mobilization that resembles the action of a collective historical or political subject. The very conditions of current migration defy the possibility of constructing a viable intentional permanent subjectivity; to a large extent it defies the whole subject-form, whether this is related to the liberal governmental subject or the radical subject of social change.

We attempt to break with the dominant integrationist canon of migration studies which maintains the fundamental assumption that migrants' practices become political only if they become integrated into an existing polity, be it in the country of origin or in the country of destination or in one of the countries through which transmigrants pass. The cohesion of this polity is taken for granted and migrants' political practices are political only if they address and operate in it (Glick-Schiller and Çaglar, 2008; Hess et al., 2009). So, what kind of politics do migrants do, if

integrationism is rejected? What are the politics of migration when they cross borders? What kind of politics occurs when people become mobile despite and/or in defiance to the restrictions imposed by migration controls? What kind of politics characterizes such migrant practices, which neither attempts to integrate into an existing polity, nor are they systematically resisting this polity?

Migrants do not "resist" something; they instead create a new situation that allows those who do not partake, following Rancière (2004), to enter and change the conditions of social existence altogether. How else can we understand the silent and mundane transformations which happen when migrants, who clandestinely defy the borders that block their future, expose the limits of liberal citizenship without ever intending it? To extend this question beyond migration, how can we understand the French *banlieues* riots in 2005, the 2008 December insurrection in Athens, or the 2011 London riots and the Arab revolutions? These are politics which transform the political without ever addressing or confronting it in its own codes and practices. Migrants' politics develop their own codes, their own practices, their own logics which are almost imperceptible from the perspective of existing political action. This is because first, we are not trained or socialized to perceive them as "proper" politics and, secondly, because they create an excess that cannot be addressed within the existing system of political representation. But these politics are so powerful that they transform the very conditions of a particular situation as well as the very conditions of existence of the participating actors themselves (Tsianos et al., 2012).

Migrants' politics is, in this sense, *a nonpolitics*, that is, it is nonrepresentable in the dominant existing polity. As per Asef Bayat (2010) we could call them "social non-movements'". In his work on recent social and political change in the Muslim Middle East, Bayat describes such invisible everyday activities that prepared radical transformations as nonmovements, because for years they were sustained and nurtured silently through the everyday and seemingly nonpolitical experiences and actions of people. It is such nonmovements that when confronted with the brutality of the state, they craft a *nonidentitarian collectivity of insurrection*. In a similar vein, Raúl Zibechi (2011) describes the struggles of the urban poor and the indigenous movements in South America as anti-representational politics. Their aim is to appropriate and self-organize social territory in cities or rural areas in the midst of a strict and immovable order of political and social power. These struggles create,

in the words of Zibechi, post-capitalist "societies in movement." Yet, we must not lose sight of the wider picture; we hope precisely to make the necessary connections between the micro to the macro and the local to the global, the particular to the universal.

To return to migration, crossing Calais or from the Green Line dividing Cyprus or the Evros River from Turkey to Greece can be seen as an act of citizenship only to the extent that the very moment of hiding in a truck is an illegalized activity. From the perspective of migrants this is an act of immediate justice for sustaining their everyday life. Putting it in a different way, the extent to which migration, by its very existence, undermines the securitization of sovereignty is the extent to which it undermines liberal as well as radical left political discourses and projects or other social movements of course. It forces both capitalism as well as its opponents to change their strategies and to take seriously the guiding force of migrants' mobility: "freedom of movement for myself, my children, my friends, my relatives, my fellow travelers and the people who deserve it."

Digital networks and migration: toward a net(h)nography of border regimes

The literature on migration networks is booming.[14] Relatively few publications, however, deal specifically with research on digital networks and transnational migration.[15] For a long time, especially within media and communication research, there was an emphasis on a *digital divide*, or more pointedly a *digital gap*: an almost unbridgeable distance from digital media, conditioned by social, cultural and economic inequality. In this research, migrants appear as a disadvantaged group, characterized by a general lack of access to digital networks (Kambouri and Parsanoglou, 2010). Although the popular and avant-garde media affinity of migration projects has long been recognized within the international debate on migration and the media as well as within cultural studies, some prominent German-language research still refers with amazement to "the relatively favorable position of migrant households with regard to media-related technology" (Piga, 2007, 221). Border studies and critical migration research show that transnational migrants use digital media and digital social networks in their border crossings and production of mobility,[16] many

of them with considerable virtuosity. However, the academic debate has yet to catch up with these new everyday worlds.

In the international debates on migration research, "the connected migrant" (Diminescu, 2008) has now become a prominent and widely discussed figure. Georgiou (2006) offers important insights as for the role of media and communication technologies reshaping the everyday lives of diasporic and migrant communities. However, our research focus is not directed toward a so-called digital diaspora (Brinkerhoff, 2009) as a place of consumption of transnational life worlds and identities; nor is it directed toward the issue of media use and the "media environment" (Hepp, 2009). For the assumption of a relatively power-neutral digital migration environment is associated with a widespread media euphoria that overlooks the powerful distortions present at the interface of information and communication technologies, and the power of their territorialization (Sassen, 2002; Röhle, 2010). What we need to question is how these newly established forms of social relationships, linking technical artifacts, embodiments and affects, function as inseparable links for mobility; or indeed as part of a *partial juridification of the transit* (Nyers, 2006). However, the question of how connectivity is established and maintained within mobility and transit remains one of the mysteries of contemporary migration research. What qualities distinguish such connectivities? What role does affect play? How do the *agencements*, consisting of bodies and technological artifacts of control and escape, interact with desire and affect? Our analysis of fieldwork results is informed by this research desideratum that questions how connectivity works *in actu* and is "done," and especially how it can be transcribed and inscribed using the tools of social or communication science.

This book is based on a research approach we refer to as a net(h)nographic analysis of border regimes within the three cities we study. It investigates border crossings, that is, the cross-border mobility tactics and strategies of transnational undocumented migrants. Viewed from this context, border zones are understood as places of contested irregularity: "An approach that examines the constitution of border zones and irregularity through a frame of mobilizing polities thus differs from many Agambenian accounts because it approaches border zones as relational sites of political struggle, rather than simply as sites of biopolitical control" (Squire, 2011, 15). They are places where regulations, control technologies of the European border regime, and technologies and tactics used by transnational migrants – border crossings, evasion

and escape – coalesce to form "assemblages": the locus of transformation of affect, subjectivities and technical artifacts of control as a "surveillance assemblage," which "operates by abstracting human bodies from their territorial settings, and separating them into a series of discrete flows" (Haggerty and Ericson, 2000, 606), and also *social media of escape* – into the embodied experiences of mobility and its control (Papadopoulos et al., 2008).

Existing research on transnational migration can be mapped along a structure–action duality: some emphasize the subversive power of autonomous migrations, while others denote migrants as pawns of national or supranational powers. To escape this dualism, the ethnographic analysis of border regimes was developed (Tsianos and Hess, 2010). On the one hand, it intends to aggregate ethnographic methods that focus on the concrete practices of actors and actants; on the other hand, it intends to aggregate the replicating and transforming structures resulting from such practices into ensembles of practices (Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010). For example, we were interested in exploring what kind of power-relationship structures in the field enable "powerlessness" to act as an agent. By employing the concept of regime, however, we strove toward a post-constructivist understanding of political processes and their everyday practices in the movements of migration.

The making of a border zone is composed of different agents and actors in their conflicting, hierarchical and dynamic interplay; it always already includes both, repressive information and control policies and the anticipation of their effects in the practices of border-crossing migration. In order to develop such complex understanding, Sassen explicitly distinguishes between those aspects of the digital space that are constitutive of new social dynamics and those that reproduce more traditional conditions: "digital space and digitization are not exclusive conditions that stand outside the nondigital. Digital space is embedded in the larger societal, cultural, subjective, economic, imaginary structurations of lived experience and the systems within which we exist and operate" (Sassen, 2002, 369).

The ethnographic analysis of border regimes from the perspective of migration puts a little but crucial discrepancy into practice: the difference between an empirical study of migrants' subjectivity and a situated analysis from the perspective of migration. This means adopting the perspective of border-crossing biographies and actions in the method of knowledge-generation about the border as a power structure, on the

one hand, in order to avoid its reification and, on the other hand, to overcome a purely descriptive approach or a rather naive conception of subjectivities and/or agency.

Contrary to the concept of "migration systems," there is no systemic logic in the concept of a migration regime. In fact, to conceive a European migration regime implies a space of negotiating practices between a multiplicity of actors and agents (e.g., the *Europeanization* of migration policy), who are referring to each other, but are not ordered in the form of a central logic or rationality. Therefore, the concept provides a framework wherein aspects of the autonomy of migration can be articulated, a movement "that possesses knowledge, follows its own rules, and collectively organizes its own praxis" (Moulier Boutang, 2002). Eventhough it recognizes an asymmetric power-relation, a migration regime does not assume a primacy of control over the practices of migration. As it is not targeting the exclusion of migrants, but rather the qualification and the command of migration flows, the European migration regime produces the transformation of mobility into politics. The border and deportation regime and the geography of camps belong to its direct effects.

To give an example, the Schengen border is permeable, diffused and stratified, thus *deterritorialized*. The function of the Schengen border is not sealing-off but rather the element of disfranchisement; in short, it creates border zones. One of their common manifestations is not to be found along a geographical border line, but rather in the records on the laptops of the border police, in the online entries of the Schengen Information System (SIS), where the data and persons denied entry to the Schengen area is administered, in the EURODAC, that data system administrated by the Commission, where the fingerprints of asylum seekers and apprehended illegal migrants are stored. Access to mobility is often materialized through computer screen. The term "flows" denotes the affinity between the fast, flexible multidirectionality of the mobile migrants and the knowledge and network-based technologies of their surveillance. The deterritorialization of border control, with the double function of politics at a distance and virtual data collection, extends the risk of deportability, establishing a permanent condition of *digital deportability* (Tsianos and Kuster, 2012), which we explain below.

To comprehend *digital deportability* we must approach the processes of bordering in ways that transcend standard political images. Walters' (2006) metaphor of the "firewall" which depicts that the nongeographical, nonterritorial character of the border and for its nonlinearity is valuable

here. Border politics generates *a politics at a distance* through data collection which is supported by a general knowledge-based shift to produce a control network of computerized forms of surveillance. Moreover, it generates *a second tier of politics*, the very form of sanction of offences. By extending the risk of deportability within and beyond state boundaries (de Genova 2005, 2009), it creates *a new mode of migration management*, to which we refer as "digital deportability" or "cyber-deportability," in the sense of "the affinity between the fast, flexible multidirectionality of the mobile subjectivities of migrants and the knowledge-based cyber-technologies used for their surveillance" (Papadopoulos et al., 2008, 176). Digital deportability emerges when the risks of illegalized mobility (money, duration and possibly life itself) materialize through the computer screen a kind of "virtual prison" (Diminescu, 2008). Thus the European database systems that aim at the control of mobility provide the infrastructure that member-states "need for the detection and exclusion of irregular migrants 'at home'" (Broeders, 2007). Moreover, exclusion always combines two modalities, namely the exclusion from registration and documentation and the exclusion through documentation and registration (Broeders, 2011, 59), digital deportability therefore encompasses the flexible and movable interplay (or modulation) between both logics of exclusion, which proliferate through the operationalization of information and communication technology.

In ethnographic regime analysis the object of research, in our case the border (not only in its literal geographical sense of boundaries between states but also in the sense of boundaries within) is a construction of elements and actors/agents and their correlation, an arrangement of material traces in a localizable space of representation. Articulating the border requires a kind of *praxeography*, a contextualization and spatialization of its operationality; in other words it requires a radical orientation to current problems in their materiality and their locality, an "anthropology of the actual" (Rabinow, 2003). An ethnographic regime analysis does not stop where the border can be conceptualized on a discursive terrain; it tackles the border as a totality of social relations, as both a practice and a reality congealed by this very practice.

This suggests an empirical ethnographic mode. But instead of the demarcation of a "field" the ethnographic regime analysis points to the social embeddedness and the placing of the research, be it on the World Wide Web, in an office or a camp or in any other relevant place; because only an inductive praxeography is able to detect the multiplicity of actors

who participate in the constitution and negotiation of the border regime and because only in local settings the conflicting genesis, the emergence and the implementation of the border regime becomes visible and analyzable in a multi-actor perspective. In our endeavor, these settings are deployed in the border triangle, shaped by Istanbul, Nicosia and Athens. The praxeography we are seeking evidence for is that of mobile subjects, migrants and others, who evade control, defy negative balance of power, reshape the right to the city, brief reconfigure political praxis in times of crisis and thus reconstitute space in the way Lefebvre (2000) speaks of "the production of space." Migrants in these settings challenge, on the one hand, integrationist models of thought and politics and, on the other, critics and assumptions of an increasingly deepening global migration crisis (Jordan and Düvell, 2002): migrant action with its commoning potential – subversive or not, little matters – manifests that both at the level of policy(-making) and research, we are currently witnessing a crisis of migration crisis.

Georgiou's innovative reading of media and the city (2013, 9) reminds how to extend theories and ultimately operationalize as a methodological tool the notion of *flânerie*. Drawing on the insights from the days of Simmel to the radical rethinking of Walter Benjamin, she nicely narrates "the city as a site of struggle, as an unequal place, but also an unpredictable place, precisely because it has always been a point of meetings of difference." In this sense, Benjamin's words are instructive:

> The crowd was the veil from behind which the familiar city as phantasmagoria beckoned to the *flâneur*. In it, the city was now landscape, now a room.[17]

We are not merely strolling around but observing and noting in the way that Lefebvre's effort to capture all five senses of what is happening in the city: "facts of both nature and culture, at the same time sensible, affective and moral rather than *imaginary*" (Lefebvre, 2004, 23); yet as Lefebvre warns us:

> *No camera, no image or series of images can show these rhythms*. It requires equally attentive eyes and ears, a head and a memory and a heart. A memory? Yes, in order to grasp this present otherwise than in an instantaneous moment. (Lefebvre 2004, 36)

Notes

1   See Balibar (2004; 2014); Mezzadra and Nielson (2013); Papadopoulos and Tsianos (2013); Papadopoulos et al. (2008). For more see Tsianos and Papadopoulos (2012).

2   The different ways of inclusion of the poor in the European medieval city; the temporary enslavement of white laborers in the British colonies; the freed black slave owners in the American South; the thin line between free and unfree as well as between waged and unpaid labor, which varies historically, socially and culturally and produces different forms of social stratification; the different racisms that were mobilized to fragment black peoples and include them variably in polity – all these are just few examples showing the diverse historical configuration of differential inclusion (see, e.g., Lowe, 1996; Brass and Linden, 1997; Lucassen and Lucassen, 1997; Steinfeld, 2001; Glenn, 2004; Papadopoulos et al., 2008; Sitas et al., 2014).

3   For issues relating to the British citizenship, see Tyler (2010). See Trimikliniotis (2009a) for similar practices in the postcolonial context of Cyprus. For Greece, see Christopoulos (2012) and for Turkey, see Kadirbeyoglu (2009).

4   For an innovative approach, see Runfort (2014).

5   See Gunsteren (1998); Bell and Binnie (2004); Sassen (2004); Rose and Novas (2005); Isin and Nielsen (2008); Nyers (2009).

6   Council Dec. 14615/04, November 19, 2004, reaffirmed by the JHA Council meeting (Luxembourg, June 5 and 6, 2014).

7   See Kostakopoulou (2010a; 2010b); Anthias (2012); Trimikliniotis (2012b); Pascouau (2012).

8   See http://www.thecommonsjournal.org/index.php/ijc/index (accessed August 21, 2014).

9   See Oiarzabal (2012), Conversi (2012), Rinnawi (2012).

10   In the journals *On the Commons* (http://onthecommons.org/magazine?page=4, accessed August 22, 2014) and the *IJC* there is hardly an article dealing with migrants and the migration issue, connecting it to a very lively debate over the commons. The rare exceptions that exist are dealing with migrations of tribes in Africa and their livestock.

11   For a typical example, see Jordan and Düvell (2003).

12   Papadopoulos et al. (2008); De Genova (2005); Tsianos and Kuster (2013).

13   Meaning: I work in order to find the means for acquiring residence permit or other legal title, original or not.

14   Just to name a few examples: Hugo (1981); Boyd (1989); Massey et al. (1993); Massey et al. (1998); Collyer (2005); Haug (2000, 2008).

15   For a review on this literature, see Kambouri and Parsanoglou (2010).

16   MIG@NET is one such study.

17   Walter Benjamin (1935) "Paris: The Capital of the Nineteenth Century", in *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*.

2
The South-Eastern Triangle: The Spatio-Historical Context

Abstract: *Athens, Nicosia and Istanbul share a fascinating past of mobility. The study of migrant social movements in the three cities opens up a much broader terrain than an area-specific terrain, regarding social movements, migration and digitality. Beyond the dichotomy between "old" and "new" social movements, we examine the emergence of germinal social movements. Frequently these are accompanied by moral panics, but not necessarily so. The three arrival cities where subaltern migrants, along with other subalterns, deploy their strategies and praxes of social movements; they in turn, chart out new socialities, new spatialities and reshape new citizenship modes.*

Introducing the spatio-historical context

This book draws on the empirical research geographically and geopolitically located in the most southern-eastern Mediterranean basin and the *boundary triangle* connecting Europe, Asia and Africa. We are dealing with a loaded political space, as rubbles of the past are haunting us like ghosts: this is the core of what was once the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire, upon which the Ottoman Empire was built. Constantinople, later Istanbul was the center. For the Hellenic nationalist project to be realized, the *Megali Idea* (Great Idea) where *Megali Ellas* (Great Greece/Hellas) would to be reborn, "restoring" the "Hellas of three continents and five seas," as promised by the Greek Prime Minister, Eleftherios Venizelos in the 1910s and 1920s, Istanbul should be captured as its capital connecting Athens and Nicosia. But that belongs to the world of disasters; the "nation-dream" (Gourgouris, 1996) turned nightmare, which fixed the current boundaries of the modern states. The boundaries of modern Turkey and Greece emerged as a result of the collapse of the Greek nationalist projects. The Ottoman Empire had been in a long process of disintegration, the small Hellenic state, along with other emerging state, expanded at the expense of the empire. The process was halted with what was termed as the "Asia Minor catastrophe" for the Greeks or the "rebirth of the nation" for the Turks in 1922.

The process was completed with the final implosion of two nationalist projects, the disaster of *Enosis* (union with Greece) for Greek-Cypriots and *Taksim* (*de jure* partition) for Turkish-Cypriots, which ended up with a *de facto* divided Cyprus since 1974.[1] Another important contemporary dimension is the extent to which we can locate the three cities in the globalization processes. In one influential project which graphically depicts a map of "global cities,"[2] Istanbul and Athens feature as global cities, classified as "alpha," while Nicosia is marked as global but less so, classified as "gamma."[3] The particular study distinguishes the concepts of "intensive globalization" and "extensive globalization" as a way of disaggregating the complex processes of globalization.[4]

The above studies do not deal with global/local social movements or migration for that matter, which is rather odd, as these are important features of globality. Studies dealing with social movements and transnational interactions are missing and particularly studies on how movements and interactions contribute to regional, national and local transformations. Moreover, questions of migration and migrant praxis

are distinctly absent. In this sense, this book not only attempts to mark new domains, which are innovative in connecting migration and digitality as regards social movements in the Cyprus-Greece-Turkey triangle, but it also attempts to open up the domain to a much broader than an area-specific terrain. We consider that the book speaks to and of the global but this can only be understood in the context of the specificities of the social formation of the borders. Moreover, the study was designed, conducted and mapped as a study from below, which connects to the local, regional, national and global as constructions and as spatial structures and processes of transformation and contestation, rather as fixed and unchangeable entities.

For the purposes of this book it matters little which metaphor of politics one uses, other than noting that the politics of space we explore drawn from the sociologically grounded research we embarked upon, contains a dialectic that is fluid, uncertain and highly contested. In this sense, it can be seen as a Janus-like process between the liberal perspective of politics *as the art of governance* versus the radical alternative of politics *as a social struggle or insurrection;*[5] or the other duality of the conservative logic of social control as police order (i.e., *politics as normality*) versus politics as struggle for equality (i.e., *politics as an exception*), as proposed by Rancière (2004). There is no coincidence that politics in the classical liberal thought is merely a tactical question of allocation of resources via the state and other governance institutions. Whichever metaphor adopted, the central argument for the approach we adopt is that there is a constant social struggle manifested in the form of the institutional powers' use of *normalizing processes of ordering* geared toward suppressing, curtailing, containing the *logics of disruption of the order* (see Sitas et al., 2014). Crises are moments where the normalizing process is not working. In this sense, Max Weber's celebrated and almost universally accepted formulation of the state as the institution with monopoly right to use of force to ensure that *order* is maintained, is the sociological and political foundation of Carl Schmidt's effort to pin down the ultimate source of power of the modern capitalist societies: sovereign is the one who entitled to proclaim a state of emergency or a state of exception (Schmidt, 1994; Agamben, 2004).

When dealing with the so-called dangerous classes within the multitude, migrants are considered to be "a special category of the poor, which embody the ontological conditions not only of resistance but also of productive life itself" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, 133). This applies

to certain categories of migrants, not all migrants of course. One of the keys to understand the current *dissensus* in politics, that is, the sharp disagreement in politics in *migration*, is that it causes "turbulence" (Papastergiades, 2000). Crucial are transformations caused by such mobility of people, which necessitate the examination of migration *as a force of change*; some even go as far as conceiving migration *as a mass social movement* (Mezzadra, 2011) – *a mass mobilization of "deviants"'* (see Papadopoulos et al., 2008; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). In this sense, migration is a constituent force in the reformulation of sovereignty (Papadopoulos et al., 2008, 202). From another perspective, this very same mass mobilization of deviants amounts to a significant event, which we are witnessing now: it was once said that "the empire strikes back", but in the 21st century we are witnessing a qualitative new phase as a kind of third strike, a third encounter in the transformation of social/political movements.

Theorists of social movements have distinguished the "old" social movements from the "new" ones which emerged in the 1960s, emphasizing (1) the structure of opportunities which allow for the emergence, growth and demise of such movements, (2) the networks, structures and resources employed to mobilize support and (3) the ways of defining and framing these movements.[6] It may be questionable whether the movements we are examining fall under the category of the "new social movements." The 2010s are quite different from the 1960s or the 1970s; to treat current movements as a mere continuation of the ones that emerged in the 1960s, the so-called new social movements, is highly problematic. If Tilly (1993–1994, 6) is correct, social movements neither have definite form, nor do "they undergo natural histories" but are merely "historically specific clusters of political performances." Cohen (1972, 120) referred to the emergence of "*germinal social movements*" which are often accompanied by a "moral panic," but not necessarily so. He claims although they may meet a number of the formal criteria contained in the literature they are however rather difficult to classify within the usual typologies.[7]

It follows that what we are searching for are the processes and the structures that create potentialities for subjectivities around transnational, trans-ethnic and migrant-related social movements that transform the very conception of space. Whether one examines young migrants entering Europe in clandestine manner via Istanbul or the migrant struggles and contestations over the center of Athens or, moving the most south-eastern border city of Nicosia, the mental/socio-political

gaps between the transnational/trans-ethnic mobilizations in the buffer zone and migrant struggles, one can locate such processes in their particular shapes and forms. In this book we explore the significance of migrant networks in reshaping social spaces by the usage and sense of digitality within the constitution of group praxis and identity formation. In this sense the study offers a crucial insight into migration(s)-as-a-social movement(s) approach, which deals them as powerful factors in contestations and the reshaping of spaces. Social movements do not exist in a vacuum; they are very much part of a socio-political, economic and cultural dialectic, often depicted as a cultural conflict; whereby the control of a particular space, a kind of quasi-territory, or mere use of spaces for the purposes of passage becomes part of a geo-cultural battle-ground (Wallerstein, 2000).

Focusing on the transnational and migration-related movements themselves, it is important to understand the profile and discourses of the activists. The contestations over the meaning and production of the spaces as *arrival cities* in the three areas under study are nonlinear and not always apparent with the naked eye, even if the imprints are there. Moreover, the movements we examine often transcend ethnic/national exclusivities but the life-worlds of the subjects entail relations of power, economic exploitation, social oppression and alienation. The struggles of what Lefebvre referred to as "the right to the city" are precisely aiming to open up spaces that would allow subjects to survive, counter and build new worlds. Some of the issues we hope to begin to think about are the following:

▸ To what extent can we read the praxis of the social movements we are studying as entailing both *manifestations* of and *resistance* to the "alienated city" where its subjects are "unable to map (in their minds) either their own positions or the urban totality in which the find themselves in?"[8] What evidence do we find of the urban migrant struggles transforming Lefebvre's "right to the city"? How do urban socialities emerge from clandestine "migrants live in grim inner cities neighborhoods" (Georgiou 2013, 10)?

▸ How do we read and connect the struggles to enter the EU (via Istanbul), the daily struggles of subsistence-survival, avoiding being captured and attempting to give meaning and shape by (re)occupying literally and digitally contested or abandoned zones? Are they "acts of citizenship" that transform the very meaning of citizenship?

▸ Should we therefore conceive the resulting inner cities transformations as processes that necessitate the reconstruction of the ideological aspects of the city space? Is the very act of entering, moving, leaving and occupying as acting anew the Althusserian/Lacanian representations of "the subjects *Imaginary* relationship to his or her *Real* conditions of existence" (Jameson, 1991, 51)?

We attempt to bring to light the living struggles, often depicted as underground, marginal or surrogate, or sometimes on the edges or margins of the law. This is because there is often a ghostly element implicated: the notion of *subalternity* as developed in post-colonial contexts may be returning in rather twisted ways, as "the empire is somehow striking back" and "the subaltern" can indeed "speak" (Spivak, 1990) in ways that must be captured. They speak but not necessarily in conventional ways; a kind of *Rhythmanalysis* can record these other means via which we can read the transformations of the city. The vast majority of the so-called third country migrants are crammed (Lefebvre, 2004) *in* and *around* the inner cities, be it Istanbul, Athens, Nicosia or other major cities of the north or south of the globe. For different reasons and thereby by their very presence and movement, literal, symbolic, economic, social or political are *de facto* transforming them. The subaltern migrants, the most precarious, vulnerable, undocumented and irregular, the non-European "Other" reside in the derelict houses next to or together with other "poors."[9] However, right next to them, "gentrifiers" (developers, city planners and others who expect to rip the benefits from the process of investing in development, regeneration and modernization) have a project which they consider as the very antithesis of the existence of subaltern migrants and other "poors." The goal is often to evict the poor and "clear the city" in what they consider to be the norm in a modern European city. But there, other connections and contradictions are nicely painted in a picturesque manner by Georgiou (2013, 11):

> When illegal immigrants build the sleek skyscrapers and their music is over-heard on their mobile telephones on the urban street, when filmic representations of shanty towns premiere in cinemas full of urban socialities being served cocktails by shanty-town dwellers, and when global capitalism sustains the position of certain cities as desirable destinations for migrants, different stories become entangled in a singly urban reality.

Mobile commons in the arrival city

The *mobile commons* as such exist only to the extent that they are commonly produced by all the people in motion who are the only ones who can expand its content and meanings. This content is neither private, nor public, neither state owned, nor part of civil society discourse in the traditional sense of the terms; rather the mobile commons exist to the extent that people use the trails, tracks or rights and continue to generate new ones as they are on the move. The making of the commons, the "commoning" as Linebaugh (2008) calls it, is the continuation of life through commoning the immediate sociality and materiality of everyday existence (Papadopoulos et al., 2012). This is a flight into a world where the primary condition of existence is the immersion into the worlds you inhabit and share with other people as you move. The enclosures of public, private and civil society aggregates that attempt to appropriate the knowledge and practices of the mobile people stand against and beyond the forms of mobile life. Knowledge and practices of mobility exist despite and beyond these enclosures; they are cooperatively produced in and through the commons (Bollier, 2003, Peuter and Dyer-Witheford, 2010). This kind of knowledge and practices of mobility must be understood as the practice of producing alternative everyday forms of existence and alternative *forms of life* (Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). In forms of life (Winner, 1986) we encounter a reweaving of the social and the material through the insertion of new shared exchanges, practices and technologies. The organizational order of these other forms of life depends on the ability to cultivate, generate and regenerate the contents, practices and affects that facilitate the movements of mobile people (Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). We explore this organizational ontology of these forms of life.

Our fieldwork in the arrival cities of Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia provides us with a wealth of examples of how mobile commons are generated, used and extended. The invisible *knowledge of mobility* circulates between the people on the move (knowledge about border crossings, routes, shelters, hubs, escape routes, resting places; knowledge about policing and surveillance, ways to defy control, strategies against bio-surveillance, etc.), but also between transmigrants attempting to settle in a place (knowledge about existing communities, social support, educational resources, access to health, ethnic economies, micro-banks, etc.).

We provide few of the examples of how the notion of *mobile commons* is an actual frame of praxis that operates at the level of informality of everyday existence in the case of migrants living on the fringes. This can act as subverting official and unofficial borders and it is many times essential for daily survival, particularly if one is undocumented or illicit. It is a *common*, based on customary knowledge born out of the socialities of migrants themselves and others who support them. Such *commons* are of different significance, and operational scope; they may last or they may lose their significance as time goes by or as surveillance authorities learn how to extinguish it.

The example of Abdulraheem who fled as a minor from the war in Darfur and the ways in which he organized his journey inside/outside the arrival city of Istanbul is quite telling. It was a friend of his father who took him across the border to Chad; he had a small van with which he transported people from Sudan to Chad. In Chad, Abdulraheem could stay with a relative and work at a gas station cleaning cars. From there, he followed the rumors that it is easier to get a job in Libya than in Chad and that many Sudanese people are already working in Libya and having a better life. Abdulraheem told us:

> I organized with some guys, he is also a transporter, he is working, and he has his own car. He is taking people illegally to Libya, from Chad to Libya. I went with them. I stayed with my mom's sister there like two months. After two months, I see some guys they say that, eh, they are going to Libya, because Libya is good and have job and you can continue your life there. I moved to Libya. I live in Libya like eight months and I was working hard. Any work I find, I work it. I worked many different there and I collect some money.

He was brought to the south of Libya and left with a ticket to Bengasi; from there on, he had to find his way alone. To organize a place to stay and a job in Libya he relied on the connections within the Sudanese community. But first he had to find Sudanese people:

> Just anyone. I asked everyone in the street, they say that, ehm, there is one shop, is called Suk al Jumma, they say. You can get many Sudanese right there. I went there and I talked to someone, maybe his name is Hamid.

It was Hamid who found jobs for him in the beginning. Abdulraheem did several jobs, but he was unsatisfied with what he was doing and the money he was earning was too less. He talked to Hamid and told him that he wanted to find something where he wanted to use his skills:

After that he asked me to draw for him something. I draw flowers, many things for him. He try to get people who want to make draw in his wall. If like someone get a new house, he wants some decors or something like that. I start to work that work and he is have good money. But this was criminal. The people they give him like 1000, he give me just 100, 200. Yeah. And I see, this enough for me and don't want more money.

Through this small business he got to know people outside the Sudanese community and started organizing business by himself without a contact person, because finding work directly without a contact person in between enabled him to earn more money:

After I find that I need more money, I leave his job and in that time I know many people. Because all the people they looking for me, they asking where is the, they calling me bambino, by Libyan (laughing). Everyone is small children, they say for him bambino. Where is bambino, where is bambino. After, some Libyan guy he take me to his house, like I clean and cutting grass and I looking for, they have dogs, animals inside, I care about them.

The contact between Abdulraheem and the facilitators that organized his way to Italy was made by the man he was working for. Abdulraheem heard about a boat that sank on the way to Italy, where about 20 people died and wanted to know more about how to get to Europe:

I ask the owner of my work, I ask him to how this way? He say, this way is very dangerous, but if you want, he say, I can take you. Maybe he lied to me and he take me to Turkiye, I don't know. He say, Okay I will find people. After three week, he say that, I have some of my friend, he is doing this work. I say, Okay take me to him, I want to go. He say, Okay. He take me.

Finally, after eight months in Libya, Abdulraheem had made enough money to set off on a boat towards Italy.

Yes! Tss (laughing), I found myself in Turkey! I asked people there, Where is this? No one can speak Arabic; no one can understand my own language. I see some black people there; I think that is summer time, they work in the … eh, near the sea. I ask them if they know Arabic. Some of them they know Arabic. He is from Sudan also. He is living there; I don't know what he is doing there. Yes, of course I talk to him and he say that, "This is Turkey and you are in Izmir and here is nothing. You have to go to Istanbul. Maybe you can get more Sudanese guys there and they help you." After they take me ticket to Istanbul, I come to Istanbul. When I come Istanbul, I don't know no one, I was in the street like eh, one week and half. Finally, I find myself in Aksaray. I see many black people, I ask, they take me to some Sudanese guys.

After I live with them, they say that "You have to go to Greece or you are recording yourself here in Turkey to UNHCR, but in Turkey there is nothing." I say I don't have that kind of money to go Greece and I go Greece, what I do? They say you can go to Italy and from Italy you can go to France, after France you can go to UK and you continue your life there. I say, no this is long story, I don't want it and I don't have enough money. I go to UNHCR I record my name. In that time I was maybe 17 years or something like that.

Just like Abdulraheem, Adel fled the war in Darfur with the plan to go to Europe:

We have area called Mellit. There they used to bring goods from Libya and they used to take goods from Mellit to Libya because there is a well-known market. We get things from that site. And there are people who have relation with other people, they direct us. And we went with that car. But you cannot bring you to Libya inside. They leave you at the border in the jungle and you cross by another side. Because security turn you back when they see you there. We had to walk about 10 hours. And then later they call and ask you: Where are you? And they tell you don't leave that way and go that way and so on until we reach. After that we pay the money. After that, they took us to the transport to Tripoli. So we travelled to Tripoli and spent 11 month in Tripoli. I was working with someone in Tripoli and saved money for travelling to another country, from Libya to Europe. My friend he was working with Arab people, Tunisian and Algerian people. Because they are working there they know everything. When you ask them they say, "Ah, that one is easy, it just depends on your money. If you have money, it is very easy. We can take you to that place and you can travel no problem. We know the connection." So we went there and they introduced us to those connections. About maybe 28 persons we were. Every boat can carry about let's say 18 person. In our boat we were 28 person; too much. You cannot take a lot of food; just small food, bread and water. They directed us about some minutes and then we returned back. But Tunisians, they are drivers; they told us that this is Italy.

But Adel's plan was diverted too: Like Abdulraheem he found himself in Izmir instead of Lampedusa:

Yeah, we went to the city and we met some Somalians. Because they are African like us, we told them we need this and that and so on. We were really confused. We didn't have any place. We slept over there one day and they said, "No, because here there is no way for you to live here. Because Izmir is very difficult, there is no way for you to work here and nobody will keep you here. You are supposed to go to Istanbul because there is an office, or you can go to Ankara. There is also an office of the UN. Go and apply over there. They will help you." When we came here we applied for refugee.

With the help of the description they got from the Somalis in Izmir, Adel and his companions made their way to Istanbul:

> Those who live in Izmir showed us. We went by bus 9 hours. From the Otogar in Istanbul we took a taxi to Kumkapi. The Somalians in Izmir told us, "go to Kumkapi or Aksaray." In Kumkapi we met many Africans and we asked for the Sudanese. They took us to the Sudanese. After that I told my friend to apply with me for refugee. He said, "no I don't want to stay here, I want to return back to Izmir." When he returned back to Izmir, there were people working in sending people to Greece. So he returned back from there and was gone with the Kurdish people. He applied for refugee with me and after two days he returned back to Izmir because he had little money, not like me. I directly went with my bag to the UN office here; they said, "Okay we know one Sudanese and the Sudanese took us to Kumkapi about 5 days and after that they sent us to the shelter."

Similar stories were told by migrants in Athens and Nicosia, where always there were trails, tracks, customary routes and support that make up the mobile commons. These must be constantly renewed, reviewed and adapted in order to avoid surveillance and control. Once they stop being used they are extinguished, just like any other customary right of use.

Rethinking movements: Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia

From the analysis of the collected data, we can draw on the micro-generated explorations on processes of subjectification, the arrangements of life, networks and gender roles as well as the forms of appropriation with knowledge are bound to a perspective of power and society hierarchy in the concluding step of analysis. The starting point for the research being initially migration movements, in the classic sense of social movements as they have been analyzed within the rich existing literature (see among others Touraine, 1978; Castells, 2001; Melucci, 1996; Tilly, 2004), has turned to a more 'migration-as-a-movement' approach. This approach highlights that migration is

> a social movement in the literal sense of the words, not as a mere response to economic and social malaise. The autonomy of migration approach does not, of course, consider migration in isolation from social, cultural and economic structures. The opposite is true: migration is understood as a creative force within these structures. (Papadopoulos et al., 2008, 202)

Therefore, from an initial interest in formal and informal forms of social movements we quickly moved to the slippery but challenging attempt to explore the imperceptible and impermeable politics of everyday life that oscillate between survival and life, between resistance and transformation. But, in order to avoid hetero-tautological speculations, as Derrida would describe it (1995, 83), we should clarify what we mean by migration as a social movement *in itself*, in particular when it comes to informal, brief nonstandardized, everyday practices. Lefebvre, in his *Critique of Everyday Life* (1991, 173) gives some insights – at least at the theoretical level – on the *virtualities* hidden within the forceful "kingdom of necessity":

> In the realm of necessity, human needs became degraded. They represented "the sad necessities of everyday life." People had to eat, drink, find clothes … and so they had to work. But people whose only reason for working is to keep body and soul together have neither the time nor the inclination for anything else. So they just keep on working, and their lives are spent just staying alive. This, in a nutshell, has been the philosophy of everyday life – and it still is. … And yet, every human need, conceived of as the relation between a human being and the "world," can become a power, in other words a freedom, a source of joy or happiness. But needs have to be rescued from the realm of blind necessity, or at least its ascendancy must be progressively reduced.

From our point of view, transformative practices do not necessarily emanate from specific "necessity-free" time-spaces, where social subjects act upon specific and specifically formulated claims and objectives; neither do they necessarily come across with the various cultural characteristics attributed to the *new social movements* by contemporary sociology and political science. One of the leading scholars in social movement research, Tarrow (2002), has concluded that many case studies on transnational movements of resistance have been shifting from aiming at a broad understanding of globalization to the specific mechanisms of activism. This paves the way toward understanding the real dynamics of transnational contention, rather than perceiving them as a sort of abstraction. They must be understood in the specific context, that is, local and national situation and social formations, despite the global elements they are connected to.

Few studies properly had integrated an analysis of media processes and communication technology uses in social movements studies (Downing, 2008, 246), a number of studies since have attempted to address

this, albeit with limitations. Moreover, while few studies properly link digital networks and migration, there exists a bourgeoning literature on digital diasporas that examines the relationship between digital technology and migrants' transnational political mobilization and other related topics that connect digital technology and migration beyond "digital divides."

From the early 1990s, Tilly (1990) set the basic idea of idea of the digital diasporas approach by noting migrants migrate as subjects but carry with them their networks. In the same logic Appadurai (1996, 189) in "modernity at large" deals with technocultural geographies of "ethnospaces," which emerge in the space open up within the "growing disjunction between territory, subjectivity and collective social movement." The very same dynamic process is located in the so-called new media age (Georgiou 2006, 2010; Diminescu, 2008; Alonso and Oiarzabal, 2011). Some stress more aspects of identity and community rather than the technological embeddedment of digital diasporas and others the opposite. The strongest point of the digital diasporas approach is that they powerfully restate issues that emerge from the interaction with communication technologies with an emphasis on the political implication and the praxis of everydayness. Brinkerhoff (2011, 44) turns her attention to the dual character of digital diasporas underscoring its creative character for migrants themselves, its relationship with the "international development industries," as well as the modes they are involved in the dynamics of modernization and democratization of their countries of origin.

The backbone of all this is the foundations laid down by the cultural studies of Stuart Hall and his associates, and the work on race, ethnicity, migration and identity, particularly since "new ethnicities" (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1983, 1992; Hall 1989/1996; Anthias 1992). Another impressive reformulation occurred with development of the notions of virtual ethnicity and race within "ethnospaces" of digital diasporas (Nakamoura 2002, 2007; Ewerett, 2009). Even more radically, it is claimed that migration as praxis in the digital age are critical to understanding globalization:

> The actual phase of modernity, combined with the acceleration of the technological revolution, reinforces migrants' capacity to develop transnational activities and multiply their experiences of otherness. In this sense the transformation of migrants' everyday life in the digital age has a "mirror function" pointing to a new facet of migratory dynamics. Online migrants represent a quintessence of homo mobilis and homo numericus embodying the social

mutations generated by the two most important features of contemporary social worlds: mobility and technology. (Nedelcu, 2012, 1352)

We have already referred to Alonso and Arzoz (2011) "digital diasporas as activist commons."[10]

This study combines the various elements, which we hope would enrich the literature on the subject. Moreover, we are suggesting that there is a need to find ways to grasp aspects of the complex situation, which may have been thought as ungraspable or at least considered as silent or non-formulated agencies that constitute elementary forms of social movements that cannot be limited in an insightful yet descriptive "invention of everydayness" (de Certeau, 1980). What we mean by migration as a social movement is the concretization of social antagonisms and struggles, in which migrants directly or discretely participate. In an effort to respond to the aporia described in the Introduction of this book in a sufficient even if not efficient way, we transpose the center of analysis from the forms of social action, which is our working hypothesis, to specific spaces. Space here is defined geographically and socially; as a limited area and as a process of/in production; as a stage that contains/bears the signs of human (inter)action,[11] and as the product of social relations and processes. The relations between the local, national, regional and transnational become increasingly important here.

In the case of the arrival city of Istanbul, the focus is different: we investigate the micro-politics of transnational migrants, that is, the urban spatialization of the effects of cross-border mobility tactics and strategies of transnational undocumented migrants. Viewed from this context, it transpires that borders are no longer fixed geographic lines of demarcation, but rather constitute fields of negotiation and disputed border zone territories (Tsianos, 2008; Tsianos and Karakayali, 2010). They are the places where one can find the full deployment of regulations, technologies of control that shape the European border regime, and technologies and tactics used by transnational migrants; they are the loci of transformation of affect, subjectivities and technical artifacts of control and "escape" into the *embodied Identity of migration* (Kuster and Tsianos, 2013).

Notes

1   For the conflict in Cyprus see Attalides, 1979; Papadakis, 2005; Trimikliniotis and Bozkurt, 2012.

2   Globalization and World Cities (GaWC) Research Network (2008) available at http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/group.html

3   See http://www.lboro.ac.uk/gawc/world2010t2.html

4   The research team of GaWC (2008) claim that "intensive globalization" has been created largely by law firms and more specialized financial services. As a process it can be interpreted as indicating globalization's origins in mid-20th century Americanization. As an outcome it can be interpreted as a continuing core of the globalization process. The concept "extensive globalization" is considered as "created largely by accountancy and advertising firms": "as a process it can be interpreted as the diffusion of globalization from its Americanization origins. As an outcome it can be interpreted as the worldwide incorporation of cities into globalization." This is elaborated in Taylor et al. (2010).

5   Durenger, 1964: referred to by Seferiades, 2010.

6   See MacAdam, 1996; Tarrow, 1998; Tilly, 2004; della Porta and Dianni 1999/2010.

7   Of course *Germinal* is the Zola's masterpiece title, a novel about the birth of political ideas and social movement in the French society of the 1860s, during the early stages of the working class rise against the bourgeoisie. The book title refers to the idea of germination in plants: social and political ideas, much like wild seeds in the natural world find fertile soil and favorable conditions to develop stronger than their initial state might suggest.

8   This is taken from Jameson's (1991, 51) reading Kevin Lynch *The Image of the City.*

9   The concept "the poors" is taken from Desai (2002).

10 See also Karatzogianni and Robinson (2010) and Karatzogianni et al. (2013).

11 Even if Lefebvre (1991) insists that the "space is not produced in order to be read" and stands with criticism against semiotics, he cannot finally avoid reading certain aspects of space's representation(s).

3

Migrant Subjectivities, Struggles and Turbulence in Three Arrival Cities

Abstract: *The researchers' encounters with subaltern migrant acts, performances, daily livelihood and struggles in Athens, Nicosia and Istanbul are moments in turbulence which are read as products of ephemeral, contingent and liminal spaces. Yet, these spaces are also co-produced by these very moments of the acts and struggles. In spaces reminiscent of Bob Marely's song Everywhere is War and urban decay is frequently dramatized, migrants ephemerally produce and reproduce not only their survival strategies; their everyday interactions and struggles produces public spaces via the organization of their liminal work and leisure. In some cases, these struggles have the allure of festivity; in others the scent of loss and emptiness; in others a sense of violence. In all of them, commoning, that is creating commons, is a shared process.*

The migrant, the struggle and the subject in the arrival city

In this chapter we hope to link the method of the border regime analysis within an urban locality in reference to the "urban regime approach" (Stone, 2005). The local border regime has to be understood as the effect of down-scaling processes away from the territorial toward the urban level. Hence *arrival* cities located inside as well as outside Europe become important spaces of negotiating Europe's borders. The term arrival city has been introduced by Saunders (2011) in order provide one terminological umbrella for the various transitory spaces of migration, as mainstream academic terminologies, that is, immigrant gateway or community of primary settlement does not capture its dynamic structure and the nature of transit properly. Arrival cities are very often, like in Mike Davis's (2007) popular representations, scandalized as dystopian spaces of a "planet of slums," a homogeneous underworld or open prison for the urban poor. Such perspectives however fail to notice the dynamic nature of such cities: the transnational networks, the relative class mobility, the eradication of rural poverty. Arrival is the central and primary function of these spaces. They are spaces of transitions. The arrival city is continuously and intensely connected to the places of origin of the migrants. The primary function of an arrival city is the creation and maintenance of a network (money transfer, communication technology). Beyond that, an arrival city serves as an access-providing mechanism; not only does it accept through enabling settlement and providing low-paid jobs, but it also enables the process of chain migration, the wave of the coming ones (Saunders, 2011, 37ff.).

We have extensively referred to mobile commons deployed around the European border regime. We have seen how migrants organize their mobility around their – in many cases digital – networks of knowledge, connectivity, economy and everyday politics in ways that transcend and therefore transform control. Nevertheless, the incessant war over the border regime is not taking place in specific geo-political border zones; nor is it confined to specific geo-political border zones; the geo-political border zones are not necessarily limited to specific spots of control-entry-exit, but are often diffused all over what is considered to be a sovereign territory. "Athens is the border," we were told by an Afghan woman, mother of three. Pregnant with her third at the time, she crossed over with her two children on boat via river Evros. Now she is living in Athens

for seven months, she is searching for an atypical gateway to another European country (last desired destination the United Kingdom); the borderline for her is neither Evros, nor Patras or Brindisi, but Athens.[1] This is a common secret among thousands of illicit migrants crossing into Greece through the northern–eastern border zone with Turkey: it is this kind of common knowledge that must be thought of as *a mobile common* transmitted via word of mouth and/or migrant digitalities. Athens is the border, not only in the sense that the whole machine of control is deployed there; it is also the border, in the sense that in certain Athenian districts knowledge on mobility, infrastructure of connectivity, informal economies of temporary survival and – maybe the most important – communities of justice and politics of care are constantly produced. Athens is also the theater, on the stage of which control of mobility and escape through mobility are performed in much more complex ways than in the bare border-li(n/f)e.

In this chapter, therefore, we propose to move into the city drawing from postcolonial and critical race theory and urban studies. We aim to ground our analysis of mobile commons in streets, squares, parks and neighborhoods: the city, often the core of the city, becomes the border. We present only a sample of the innumerable available snapshots that someone can capture just by strolling and drifting in places where migrant subjectivities emerge and materialize their *commoning potential*. Three are the main guides, the *fils conducteurs* in this *flânerie* (in terms of Baudelaire or Benjamin) or *dérive* (in terms of Debord), the constitutive elements of the examined praxeology: *ephemerality*, *contingency* and *liminality*. The acts, the performances, the struggles, all in all the turbulence we came across in different ways in Athens, Nicosia and Istanbul have all in common the three above elements. They all occur, they are all produced within/and produce ephemeral, contingent and liminal spaces.

First we need a contextual macro-perspective on the cities under investigation.

Of Athens, Nicosia and Istanbul

The historic relationship between the three cities is fascinating (see Chapter 2) but if we focus on the issue of the mobility of populations between the three parts of the former Empire, we can see something

of the Ottoman past, which is rarely, if ever appreciated. Historically, subaltern revolts were a drastic form of resistance, put down by the authorities and their local collaborating elites. However, migration was also a powerful and dynamic tool putting pressure on the Ottoman Porte; the subaltern classes have been systematically putting pressure on the Ottoman capital using emigration as their bargaining tool. Recent historical studies have revealed that even poor residents of a small, remote and backward island, as Cyprus was thought of then, yielded some power on the Istanbul authorities:

> Emigration is a well-known peasant lever against onerous taxation or abuse that sent a clear message to the capital. It was a communication tool conveying the urgency of the situation, to which the latter quickly responded to protect its surplus-extraction prospects. It is well known that frequent appeals to emigration constituted a negotiation tool that often did not reflect reality. The details of the present documentation, rather than vague formulaic references, allow us to accept with some certainty that the particular cases were serious enough. For example, these orders were also sent to the localities where Cypriots migrated to. (Hadjikyriacou, 2011, 140)

The frequency of the event is revealing: the dates recorded are 1706, 1721, 1751 and 1761. Emigration-as-resistance is seen by the same historian as part of the "cycles of unsustainability" in the empire, forcing concessions and renegotiation on the Istanbul-based Porte with the locals:

> Ottoman documentation reports population decline or other socio-economic factors (often partly the consequence of natural disasters), the combination of which was serious enough to render the full payment of taxes impossible. Every time, fleeing peasants went to the coasts of Syria and Anatolia. Incentives for the return of migrants ranged from total tax-exemption for some years, significant reductions of several taxes for the whole island, to the decrease of the total number of taxable individuals. (Hadjikyriacou, 2011, 141)

There is a broader argument here that is made on how the Ottoman past is not only a relevant historical antecedent, but opens up spatial geopolitics of the Eastern Mediterranean often missed in migration debates. Historians have made the necessary spatial connections between migration, precarity and the economy. Drawing on Asdrachas (1985), Hadjikyriacou brilliantly points out:

> The various manifestations of this physical proximity echo the intercon-nectedness of the Aegean islands as highlighted by Spyros Asdrachas, who argued that they were tantamount to a "dispersed city". Anatolia and Syria

were accessible enough for impoverished peasants to escape the oppressive conditions of the island until the storm was over, and ready to cross the sea again in a year or two; officials fled to Damascus with their families in terror of the wrath of a revenge-seeking *muḥaṣṣıl*, ...; population mobility was not unilateral, and seasonal labor regularly came to the island during the nineteenth century to work on the grain harvest;[2] following the conquest of Cyprus, "Payas, İskenderun, and Silifke entered upon a new phase in the existence as port towns";[3] ... sizeable troops had no reason to be stationed for the defense of the island: when the need arose, the sea was easily crossed to re-establish order in every single case of revolt. One is tempted to imagine a cross between an island and a peninsula, and the interconnectedness between Cyprus and the surrounding coastlands should be further explored. As far as the conceptualization of the Cypriot insularity is concerned, comparison may offer a clue. If Molly Green has labelled Crete – a difficult island, I am inclined to think of Cyprus as an ambiguous one.

Back to the present, we are faced with additional complexities for all three cities and their respective countries deriving from the operations of border regimes, not to mention the EU border issues. We have already discussed economic and austerity crisis for Greece and Cyprus. In the case of Nicosia, there is an additional crucial and complicating factor: the barbed wire dividing the country and the city. The meaning of space therefore is not neutral but an active force that shapes and is reshaped by the social, economic and political forces in and around the inner city: even the so-called dead zone, the buffer zone handed over to the United Nations is hardly "dead." Space is state-fied and nationalized, but never fully subordinated or colonized.

As we mentioned earlier in the previous chapter, there is certainly a need to rethink social movements. However, this does not only refer to specific organizational structures and modes of collective operation. We need to develop the necessary tools to read into aspects of every-day struggles which are extremely difficult, if not impossible to grasp empirically and theoretically. This requires somehow appreciating how the imperceptible, ungraspable politics of everyday life produce the space and the time of the city.[4] Even if migration has been recognized as a "total social phenomenon" linked to many, if not all, areas of social life (Sayad, 1984), the space that diachronically attracts and condenses much of the interest of migrants and of migration studies is the urban space. Urbanization in the past, metropolization today, all major urban transformations are to a large extent linked to migrant inflows; in addition, most of the "urban questions" (Castells, 1981), such as segregation,

polarization, ghettoization and so on are some, among others, controversial ways of conceptualizing migrants' presence in the cities; especially since urban decay and crisis are mainly linked to migration, as it happens currently in Greece where inner city Athens is recurrently presented as a ghetto[5] and migration is presented as threat to the city's historical and cultural center.

For some time, *urbanistic empiricism* was typical in urban studies examining the relation between migration and the city; either one was observing alarming processes of segregation or one was underlining the positive effects of the urban space *per se* as an immigrant gateway or place where there was a community for primary settlement. Governing migration in the city was done with little analysis of the processes of exploitation, class, gender and other power relations and their respective dominant subjects, namely the urban elites. Of course, the critical sociological thinking on class, gender relations, resistance and power in cities has been prevalent since the 1970s and 1980s.[6] Drawing on this rich tradition, Glick-Schiller and Çağlar (2008) called in the context of urban studies for "rescaling cities and migrants," insisting on shifting perspective that would align an analysis of the strategies of exploitation pursued by urban elites with migration research and politics of urban and regional scaling of uneven spatial development within cities. A similar critique by the queer urbanists Bell and Binnie (2004) analyzes the transformation of politics of citizenship and urban sexual cultures and communities within urban studies.

Our exploration, therefore, begins from a specific space rather than a particular social/ethnic group or type/form of social movement. This space lies on the borders of the so-called ghetto of central Athens, which is considered by many to be in war:

> The situation has been like a ghetto. Everything smells war, and I'm really afraid that if we are not ready to put concrete policies in place, the historic center of Athens will face very difficult moments.[7]

This dramatization of urban decay can be compared to inner Nicosia, the old walled city. Inner Nicosia is a contested digital and geographical space. There are regular media reports distorting/exaggerating and amplifying incidents whereby the inner city is depicted as being "unsafe," "dangerous," a "threat to public order," while other reports claim that Greek-Cypriots are abandoning the area because it is "filthy" and "full of smelly migrants." In fact various mainstream media have referred

to the inner city Nicosia as a "migrant ghetto"[8] as 35% of the capital's population are migrants;[9] this is connected to crime, trouble as the inner city neighborhood "Faneromeni" for instance, largely inhabited and frequented by migrants and local radicals, is thought to be transformed into the "notorious" Athenian neighborhood of "Exarchia."[10]

Snapshot 1: performativity of control or space as a theatrical stage

At the heart of the Greek capital, at the junction between *Zinonos and Geraniou streets* in a pedestrian road, on a Saturday morning to noon we witnessed the following scene: the street was full of people, mostly migrants, who were either walking around or waiting in queue to transfer money to their country of origin in one of the abounding money transfer companies' booths or to book/buy a ticket at the existing (ethnic) travel agencies. For someone who is not familiar with the district, this might be a common lively, multicultural district like all similar districts in any contemporary metropolis around the world; a sort of an Athenian Barbès-Rochechouart. We have to note, however, that Geraniou Street or "Gerani," as it has been branded by relevant stakeholders,[11] is considered to be emblematic of the urban decay that Athens inner city is experiencing during the last decade: "Gerani constitutes the most derelict – as far as natural and human resources are concerned – part of the city" (YPEKA).

Among vendors, clients and passers-by, several women seemingly from Eastern European countries are standing at the pedestrian road, beside the benches, in front of a hotel. Although they do not say something or they do not make any demonstrating movement toward passers-by, one can figure out that they are soliciting. From time to time men are standing by, asking or saying something, sitting for a while and so on. Less than 20 meters inside Zinonos street, people are gathering around three municipal employees (as we were told), who are distributing prepaid mobile phone cards. In order to obtain one, those interested have to provide a piece of identity,[12] mostly residence permits. The municipal employees take a photo of the identity and give the prepaid phone card.

On the other side of the street, two musicians (a clarinet and an accordion player) and a minor singer are basking with passers-by leaving their tips. Everything is noisy, lively and calm; "business as usual," one might say. All at once, people start gathering around the musicians and the young boy, while the girls outside the hotel are also encouraged by some men who were around them to join the others. The accordion player

announces loudly: "And now, a traditional piece from Epirus!"[13] Among exclamations of joy and acceptance, people start to join hands, form a circle and dance. Among the dancers most of the girls who were soliciting outside the hotel, become now part of a small impromptu party, organized in less than a minute. Just an instant later, a pedestrian police patrol passes from the junction watching the people, made up of almost exclusively migrants, who are dancing, asking for a prepaid mobile phone card, transferring money to their country of origin, booking a ticket for an Eastern European country ... After a while, when Police officers moved away, everything goes back to "normal"; the party is over.

We do not know how recurrent such tactics are and whether people performing them are acquainted or not. We also do not know whether police officers are aware of the *coup de théâtre* that is taking place before their eyes. It might be a successful "subtle ruse," as M. de Certeau (1980) would call them, a tactic of resistance through which subaltern subjects divert the objects and the codes of everyday reality and recapture the space and its usage in their way; an *art de faire* shared among people who are for different reasons and *by any means necessary* united for the purpose of evading control. Or, it might be the contingent product of the moment, an instantaneous demonstration of collective intelligence deployed in front of an imminent danger. It matters little.

What matters here and elsewhere is that control and resistance or – maybe better – resistance and control occur in liminal spaces, which constitute real thresholds in urban life (Stevens, 2007). These thresholds are very often seen, not only in public discourse but also in academia, as spots of polarization and/or signs of segregation and decay. There is, however, another possibility: that of approaching these threshold spaces and their ephemeral production as "in-between areas that relate rather than separate" (Stavrides, 2007). According to this approach, contingent production of space is not a deviance from a rigid rule or mode of production; contingency *is* the rule. The antagonisms of class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, values, desires that shape the urban space are manifested in various, dynamic and most importantly *ephemeral* ways.

To give another example from Athens, we move a kilometer to the south-west of Gerani, on a Sunday morning. Between Thission and Gazi, two of the most attractive districts of Athens, the first for its archaeological sites and the second for its nightlife since it is one of the most gentrified areas in the center, which among others hosts the "gay village" of the city, every Sunday, from dawn to late afternoon, the biggest open air bazaar in

the city was taking place. The bazaar is fueled by "illicit" practices. Most of the vendors have no license to sell goods, transactions are not taxed; large parts of the products sold are counterfeit. The bazaar is a space of attraction for migrants both as sellers and buyers of goods. In a way, this bazaar functions as a real multiethnic business center of the area, albeit uncontrollable and impossible to incorporate under the multicultural brand attributed to the broader area by "branding actors," such as newly established middle-class inhabitants of Gazi, Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio, Thission and Pireos street-Petralona, Athenian free press etc.

In this bazaar, migrant vendors usually stand and walk up and down trying to strike up conversations with potential clients. At most times, at least when we visited the bazaar, they sell digital gadgets, mainly mobile phones. They seem to offer all types of gadgets, from new i-phones to used cell phones at very low prices. The goods are usually placed within large plastic bags, while some samples are kept under their clothing for showing to the potential customers. Many buyers of these gadgets are also migrants. We have practically never encountered a migrant in the area without a cell phone, regardless of what his/her economic condition seemed to have been. Every now and then, municipal police officers are passing by, with or without a patrol car. Even if most vendors are seemingly lacking a permit to sell goods, police officers are just nodding to the most obvious cases. There are, for example, Bangladeshi vendors who are selling PC monitors carrying them in plastic bags. When the patrol passes in front of them, they make a gesture and the vendors take their stuff and move some meters away; in less than two minutes, they return and unfold their commodities. This scene is repeated over and over, before the police officers finally leave the area.

It has been for long time deplored by several sides, that the bazaar in Thission is a place of anomie, one of the so many arising here and there in the city center. State and municipal authorities have been repeatedly declaring their willingness to regulate or disperse illegal businesses. However, all these attempts have been repeatedly discarded by the every (Sun)day practices of representatives of both order and disorder. One may search for possible concealed cooperation between police officers and informal vendors, but this is unlikely; neither is the alleged incapacity of authorities – so often attributed to administration – to control an obviously largely illicit activity adequate as an explanation. The outspoken theatricality of the struggle between police officers and vendors (migrant and other "black") is mainly indicative of another fact: it is mainly a reciprocal concession

between forces of order and disorder, in order to maintain a "quasi contract of non-violence," indispensable condition for the "spatial economy" that defines certain relations in certain places (Lefebvre, 2000, 69). In other words, this alleged incapacity of control might demonstrate a high level of tacit consensus, which is far more productive for the maintenance of *spatial order*. Alas, this spatial order maintained despite the antagonism between subalterns and forces of order broke into pieces because of the violence generated between subalterns. In May 2012, the municipal council of Athens decided to close down the bazaar in Thission, after the fight between Roma and migrant vendors which lead to gunshots.[14]

Moving to Nicosia, a very different example of performativity, which is essentially a kind of solidarity-in-action, was revealed by Fe, a Filipino female domestic worker, who managed to remain underground as an irregular migrant for years. Fe persistently avoided downtown Nicosia for fear of getting caught or being reported; she eventually decided to return home. She told us that others have stayed underground for over 15 years without getting caught. She narrated to us a simple practice at bus-stops: when Filipino and other migrant workers are waiting at the bus stop, often the Immigration Police use this opportunity in order to raid and catch the irregular migrants. The *common* here is an understanding between migrants: when there is a police raid, *the first ones to run are not the irregular migrants but the ones who have their papers in order*. In this way, the police would chase after the regular migrants and this will give the opportunity of the irregular migrants to escape. This remarkable but so simple street-practice is in fact a *common*; it is an act of resistance-and-solidarity that has allowed many irregular migrants to avoid getting caught. It is obvious that this common may be short-lived. Immigration authorities and police will eventually catch on as they are also learning from street-wise practices and therefore change or adapt their practices. In recent years, policing in urban centers has become more heavy-handed with the police operations of "sweeping" all migrants they find in front of them in what are coded as "operations broom" [«*Επιχειρήσεις Σκούπα*»]. In this context, at the bus stop they will stop and search *all migrants*, leaving no room for those without papers to escape. However, such sweeping approaches against all migrants leave them open to criticism of racial profiling, something the police and authorities deny as it is an embarrassing violation of the law.

It would be false to assume that such solidarity exist always among migrants; exploitative and oppressive relations exist within migrant communities; also some migrants are used for spying and reporting to

the authorities. Nonetheless, the common described remains a powerful example of solidarity-in-praxis.

Snapshot 2: producing public space or Sundays at municipal parks[15]

On Sundays, the Nicosia Municipal Park (or informally known as "Cyta Park") located next to the CYTA roundabout (named after the old CYTA- Cyprus Telecommunication Authority building) turns into one of the most lively places in the city. Only on Sundays, it becomes the "Sri Lankan Park" for many, mostly to migrant communities who know "who occupies which park" between 8am and 3pm. During this time, the park is crowded by the Sri Lankan migrant community and one can hardly notice a local stepping into this area without a purpose (i.e., work, or other obligatory commitments such as coming to choose a domestic worker or unskilled laborer etc.). In the small context of the park, the range of activities is as wide as the broader society, but the only difference there is the cultural elements that make it distinct from others. Traditional food is cooked and served on spot on low prices. A beautician corner is informally made with a couple of plastic chairs, a kit of accessories and a waiting queue of female customers chatting. A specific place is designated where a group of women sells gold jewelry designed and imported from mainland Sri Lanka. Commercial exchanges are being carried out; this interaction is based mostly on the mutual trust, rather than being bound by state-controlled business process (i.e., usage of receipt, cash-box, guarantee documentation etc.). Also on service is a freelance photographer, a non-Sri Lankan migrant.

Besides these (small) profit-making activities, social networking between the Sri Lankan compatriots, exchanges/swaps of inexpensive goods such as clothing, circulation of Sri Lankan newspapers writing in either Singhalese/Tamil dialect are widely part of migrants' Sunday-life in this park. The migrant women not only with their number but also their active participation in various activities outbalance that of their male counterpart. Most of the users of this park appeared to be unskilled workers working mostly in the domestic sector. Practically, they are permitted only on Sundays to refrain from their employment, thus Sunday becomes the day of social interaction; meet other migrants, chill out, carry out personal tasks. Park-users sit in groups sharing their stories, food and beverages.

A group was celebrating the belated birthday of their friend who turned 23. Generous amount of traditional spicy food on a foldable table

FIGURE 3.1   *Picture of the "Filipino Park"*

sharing with even others, chanting, citing poetry was a great part of the celebration. There is a notion of a strong community feeling that may be invisible from outside. This kind of feeling results not only from the concept of providing each other moral support, but also from practical assistance through advising, provision of information on a wide range of issues, including those of crucial immigration matters, consolation during difficulties, usage of social network to find employers etc. One said:

> We do this because we have no one else. Our Embassy doesn't care for us. We are often cheated and treated unfairly and sometimes violently by our bosses and the agents but we have no one to hear us.

Surrounding the Sunday-occupation of Sri Lankan migrants, some other businesses use their marketing tools to promote their work. Among these, we come across the flyers of money-transfer agents, cheap international phone calls, "jobs in Canada" recruitment agency. Most of these flyers are in Singhalese dialect. Even though one can still come across non-Sri Lankan migrants in this park, there were very few to be noted. From our chatting with few of them, they appeared to be accompanying

their Sri Lankan partner in the park. Nevertheless, they expressed their feeling of having "close connection" with Sri Lankan community.

The park set beneath the walls of Solomos Square, the main hub for public transportation, used mainly by migrants, is referred to by migrants themselves as the "Filipino/Vietnamese park." Walking there, one notices the buzzing of cheers, microphone voice and music scattering by the side of the railing. Looking over, one sees the observers by the railing down into an extended space beneath, where a large number of spectators are gathered facing toward an unseen space beneath the railing. We notice a few people dancing to Western pop music.

During our stroll down at the park we observe many Asian migrants gathered around sitting, relaxing away from the buzzing atmosphere or entering the kiosk by the corner where they buy So-Easy cards having a small chit chat with the cashier. Vietnamese women have set up their products on cloth on the ground; vegetables, medicine, hats and clothes can be seen. Customers stand on top and are browsing through the clothes. When they select something to try on, they go to the back, behind the stall per se and an "assistant" would lift a sheet of white cloth, like a bed

FIGURE 3.2   *Picture of the "Filipino Park"*
Source: We thank Petros Siammas for the pictures in Figures 3.1 and 3.2.

sheet, and surround the customer with it while standing, with another assistant holding the other side. The customer would then be engulfed in an upright tunnel of sheet and then change their clothes in there while her back would face the crowd and passers-by crossing behind.

Most of the people are women, mainly South-East Asian, with the occasional South Asian women passing by. They comfortably sit on the grass; group laughter reverberates across the space. There is a large number of phone use and taking pictures with their cameras. Most of them pose. We also notice a new phone being taken out of its box, as the woman plays around with it. There are men scattered in the area, some are Asian who engage with the women in a familiar set. Yet, other men are further scattered across the space, standing on their own; they seem out of place. One stands by the railing, another by a tree, and another sitting next to us. They take on a more performative mode observing the game and the rest of the space but not engaging with others. It is a usual site to observe men, many times older Cypriot men, trying to buy sexual services and harassing migrant women.

Snapshot 3: organizing ephemerality or being a minor transit migrant in Istanbul

Turkey, and particularly Istanbul, is a major transit place in the map of migration routes from Asia and Africa. Istanbul is "hosting" numerous migrants, adults and minors, who are settling there for a limited period of time until they find the means and networks to move inside the European Union. In this sense Istanbul is a milestone in mobility chain, the link between Europe and non-Europe.

Developments in the Turkish asylum and migration policy are significantly influenced by the EU accession negotiations. During recent years Turkey has become one of the most important transit countries on the way to Europe. Although the 2005 Action Plan on Asylum and Migration keeps bringing out challenging issues in the EU–Turkey relations. The EU requires the lifting of the geographical limitation and that Turkey establishes a functioning national asylum system in order to effect its common asylum policy – that is, to apply the notions of the "safe third country" and "first country of asylum" to Turkey and its neighbors. Out of fear that it could become a "buffer zone" Turkey opposes the suspension of the geographical limitation (Kirişci, 2007, 16). Despite this, the EU signed a readmission agreement with Turkey by the end of 2013 choosing security

issues over human and refugees rights (Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, 2013). Within the accession negotiations the EU has put a focus on the revision of Turkey's border and visa regime. To this end, the so-called integrated border management approach of the European Union is to be applied on Turkey through cooperation between different EU member-states. Using the so-called twinning projects as an EU instrument for close cooperation and monitoring of progress, it is foreseen to establish border guard units as well alter Turkey's visa policy, which has always been criticized by the EU for being too liberal.

During our fieldwork research in Istanbul, we came across several child migrants who were organizing their lives in transit spaces; their only constants were temporality and mobility. We focus on the story of one migrant, Abdulraheem. When we first met him, he was living for a while in Istanbul. He was a member of the Union of Young Refugee in Turkey (UYRT),[16] a self-organized group of unaccompanied minor refugees mainly from Afghanistan, Sudan, Congo and Eritrea living in Turkey. UYRT was founded in 2010 in order to alert the public about their situation and change the precarious living conditions of young refugees in Turkey. During that first visit we attended a conference organized

FIGURE 3.3   *Entrance of the shelter for Kadiköy unaccompanied minors, Istanbul, November 30, 2011*

Source: Photo taken by Aida Ibrahim.

by the Initiative. It was the first time that UYRT was holding a public event to publicize the situation of young refugees in Turkey. During that conference UYRT members described the various issues they deal with. The biggest problem faced by young refugees was the permanent threat of homelessness. Upon arrival underage refugees are usually taken to the main refugee reception center for minors in Kadiköy. Initially an orphanage, this facility used to take orphans from Turkish as well as unaccompanied minors; later it hosted only unaccompanied children refugees. As the facility has no capacity to meet the needs and numbers, minors are distributed to various orphanages all over Istanbul. The sudden rise in numbers of Somali and Afghan unaccompanied minors led to overcrowded facilities. The conditions in these facilities are awful; there is no psychological support specialized to minors; yet most of them fled from areas of war and have been traumatized. Although overall conditions in the orphanages are said to have improved, the acute feeling of isolation has remained. Initially, the minors were not allowed to leave the institution; as a result of their struggles they gained this right.

After their 18th birthday, they have to leave the facility to find a home by themselves and earn their living on their own. There are no follow-up projects; youth support is only available for under-18s. For most young refugees, turning 18 means becoming homeless. After being expelled from the facility, they typically spend their first two weeks in the streets. Most are recognized refugees or asylum-seekers, while others have humanitarian status; in practice however no rights derive from these statuses. Residence permit can be granted for a period of a maximum of six months. However authorities set the period of stay arbitrarily; they never grant six months as this would allow them to apply for a work permit. Young refugees are thus not allowed to work legally, exposing them to super-exploitation. It is extremely hard to find even informal work:

> I go around, I look for people looking for worker, also I look in the newspaper; they advertise that for example they are looking for restaurant or looking for workers. I look there and I ask, but until now I did not get a job and I have nothing. Even sometimes I leave my number in many different places, to call me if they got a job. (Rashid)

If they cannot receive money from their relatives abroad, they cannot even pay for accommodation. They are obliged to pay for issuing and extending their residence permit. Since March 2010 a new regulation allows refugees to apply for exemption fees;[17] however in practice it has not worked. The fines imposed for failure to renew their residence permit

create other serious problems for asylum-seekers and refugees. Without a residence permit they have no access to any kind of social services. The period from submitting an asylum application until the invitation to the first interview by the UNHCR, usually reaches 8–12 months. In the case of recognition by both, the UNHCR and the national authorities, it takes at least another two years until being resettled to a third country. For most the period exceeds two years; some wait up to six years:

> And the UNHCR here, they don't help us. Really! If you are out of the camp they don't help you, nothing. They are just talking, talking, talking without doing nothing. When you go to the office they say, Okay, insha'allah next month, next week, next year, nothing! Until now four years is gone. (Abdulraheem)

One night Abdulraheem took us for a walk. He said he wanted to show us Kumkapi. We walked in the neighborhood for a while; every few minutes he greeted someone he knew, migrants and locals. He told us that for him Kumkapi is a safe place as it means freedom for him.

> Turkish are better than the Kurdish people, but Kurdish want black people here, because that means good business for them. This neighborhood is Kurdish; you don't have many Turkish people here. But for about 20 years black people are living here and they made this also a black area. In the night when I stay at home and watch TV and the time still don't pass I come here and walk around. This is a safe place and I enjoy it. I feel better when it is safe, not like Tarlabasi. Yes they fight, but not with us, just between them. They love us.

We turned into a street with many internet cafés and call shops.

> This is called the "Black Street." Here you see only black people. That's why everyone calls it "Black Street."

He pointed on one of the call shops:

> This internet café, Deniz Internet Café is open 24 hours. Migrants who don't have a place to stay come here for the night and sleep here. They sleep in the chairs.

We checked inside for a friend, but he wasn't there. We continued walking until the main road *Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa Cadessi*. This street leads to the T*ramvay Stasiyonu Aksaray* and then further to a bridge under which the *dolmuş* (shared taxis) leave toward *Taksim*. During daytime it is buzzing with a very noisy street full of cars and people. At the time

we were there, it was calm and street vendors were selling latest fashion sneakers lined out on the side of the street. Abdulraheem informed us that they always start selling very late around midnight, because they do not have permits; they sell goods half the price than those in the closest day-markets in Istanbul.

He and his friends always buy shoes from here. He knew almost all of the vendors and they greeted him warmly:

> In Kumkapi nothing is going legally. Yea, because, even police they know that it is not legal but because they take money they don't say nothing.

Before we went for a walk through Kumkapi, Abdulraheem had already taken us to a club. Outside illuminated letters read: "heaven bar." Steep stairs lead to a basement door. When we entered, we noticed that migrants were sitting at different tables; they seemed divided along ethnic or national origin. We asked Abdulraheem if he knew any of them and where they were from. He explained that it is always mixed and that people who come here are mostly from Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eastern Europe, Maghreb and Turkey – mainly Kurdish. There was very loud Nigerian music played; very few people were talking. Further down, two or three men were sitting at the tables surrounding the dance floor and watching each other and those dancing. Late at night, a group of young Ethiopian women entered to join the table with the Nigerian men; until then the only women were the bar keepers and the researcher. The bar keepers appeared confident in the way they handled that room full of men. Later we learned that one of the barkeepers owns the club together with her Nigerian husband. The other women lived in Istanbul for three months. Abdulraheem surprised us when he said that Turkish people are often denied entrance in clubs, bars and restaurants run by migrants.

> Sometimes they do that and sometimes, because you know, if Turkish people they come inside like just two person, they making trouble there. They fight-ing, they drink without paying and they do things that is not good. And they using stupid words and they want to dance and they need other table, they want to change table, they want to change table where some people are sitting, they say, Get up we want to stay here. This is our country, we are Turkish. This is typical, because that they don't allow them enter inside. (Abdulraheem)

We inquired further about how people deal with such situations: if there are more than ten Turkish/Kurdish people in the club, the owner calls the landlord, who is also a local. His presence in the bar prevents

the locals from picking up fights. That night, as the place was getting more crowded, two men entered, a young and an elderly; the elderly one stayed behind the bar, assisting a little; however his main task seemed to be observing. The young man was sitting at the bar and in-between he went to the nearby shop to get some drinks for the bar. He was mostly observing too; but he joked and chatted with the bar keepers. Abdulraheem informed us that if the strategy with the land lord does not work, the owner calls the police to sit in the bar in uniforms and gear. They are paid by the club to secure the place and not to ask for ID or any other questions concerning the legal status of the guests:

> This is our place. Here we are safe, we are free. When the police is here people start to enjoy even more, because it's safe. They know they don't say anything to them. (Abdulraheem)

Notes

1 Interview with two Afghan women conducted by D. Parsanoglou, N. Kambouri and O. Lafazani, Athens, May 03, 2012.
2 Christodoulou (1959), 51.
3 Faroqhi (1984), 76.
4 In this context, however, we claim that the ungraspable does not only mean *production*, but also *disruption* of the ordinary state of things.
5 See, for example, the unofficial blog spot of municipal policemen on http://athens-municipal-police.blogspot.com/2010/06/blog-post_08.html).
6 See Cohen (1972); Hall (1983 and 1992); Rex and Tomlinson (1979); Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1983 and 1992); Anthias (1992); Phizaclea and Miles (1980); Miles (1980 and 1990); Gilroy (1987).
7 Assessment that belongs to the former deputy of Athens 1st constituency (that covers the municipality of Athens and Minister of Education (2009–2012): see Malcolm Brabant, "Athens inner city racial time bomb warning", correspondence for BBC, uploaded on December 6, 2008 on http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFuEgnRuhD8
8 An establishment paper has the following indicative headline: "The masses of migrants are transforming Nicosia to a ghetto", *Fileleftheros*, September 25, 2009.
9 "In some regions the composition of population has radically changed: One of five inhabitants in Cyprus is foreigner", *Fileleftheros*, October 7, 2012, http://www.philenews.com/el-gr/Eidiseis-Kypros/22/118701/allodapos-enas-stous-pente-katoikous-stin-kypro

10   *Fileleftheros*, April 23, 2010. Exarchia is considered to be the district where radical collectivities and individuals are gathered; it is the place where several upheavals and riots have broken out, one of which is the riots of December 2008.

11   Among which the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (YPEKA), which is still competent for major interventions in the center of Athens: see Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, *The actions of YPEKA for the Centre of Athens*, available online at http://www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=8te3TBouiQ8%3D&

12   According to Law 3783/2009 on "Identification of owners and users of mobile phone equipment and services and other clauses", since November 8, 2009, all users of prepaid mobile phone cards have to submit the following information to their provider: Name, address, proof of VAT number, ID, passport or residence permit.

13   Epirus is situated on the north-west side of Greece in the borderline with Albania. The musicians, probably of Albanian origin, performed pieces from the common musical tradition shared by the people in the Albanian and the Greek side of the border.

14   "Ending title for the open bazaar in Thission", *iI efimerida*, May 25, 2012, available online at http://www.iefimerida.gr/

15   We thank Petros Siammas and Fatema Islam for the fieldwork research in Nicosia.

16   https://www.facebook.com/pages/Union-of-Young-Refugee-in-Turkey/102008639900061

17   "hCa Welcomes MOI Circular on Residence Permit Fees for Refugees" from May 2010, Helsinki Citizens Assembly: http://www.hyd.org.tr/?pid=796&Keyword=residence

4

The Right to the City Revisited: Charting and Envisioning Future Struggles and Politics

Abstract: *We live in rebel cities in riotous times. Everyday struggles in the urban fabric are recast in a terrain woven by the dirty word of gentrification or within ghettoes of no-go areas. Despite the asymmetric power-relations between economic and political elites and subaltern, the subalterns are not mere victims or spectators in the erection of urban frontiers. Their very presence, their ways of inhabiting and transforming the world; in short, they are producing urban space making them vital constitutional elements of the city as an œuvre. The realization of the right to the city is not the concluding paragraph of the history of urban struggles that will inevitably lead to absolute liberation. It is an open process happening now; a disputable and controversial enjeu around which subjectivities build their present and future. And it is happening every day. The subalterns indeed speak; more importantly, they act.*

The right to the (rebel) city

Lefebvre (1996, 172–173) writes:

> Already, to city people the urban center is movement, the unpredictable, the possible and enscounters. For them, it is either "spontaneous theatre" or nothing. ... The ideal city would involve the obsolescence of space: an accelerated change of abode, emplacements and prepared spaces. It would be the *ephemeral city*, the perpetual *oeuvre* of the inhabitants, themselves mobile and mobilized for and by this *oeuvre*.

The *ephemerality* of the city, to which Lefebvre refers as the precondition for its existence, seems to be a constituent element of the three arrival cities under examination. From the perspective of how dominant groups conceive the urban space, "inconsistency," that is, lack of regularity and predominance of informality, precariousness and disorder, is a major shortcoming that hinders these cities of becoming "proper" metropolises. A massive part of Istanbul is characterized by this; inner city Athens and Nicosia "suffer" from the "invasion" of impromptu functions that by and large shape the urban tissue. Far from being part of a formal economy or the formal state of things, various activities and people inhabit streets, squares, pavements, even buildings. People sell and buy things, gather and exchange information, socialize by improvising, by playing cards on pieces of wood or plastic, listen to music from mobile phones, solicit, evade control, use, abuse and occupy. These are but some of the shadow activities quite visible to the naked eye. In some districts the shadowy is much more visible than the formal.

This element of transition is dominant in the new urban spaces formed by the unrelenting waves of in-migration – whether internal and international, it matters little. According to Saunders:

> these transitional spaces – arrival cities – are the places where the next great economic and cultural boom will be born or where the next great explosion of violence will occur. The difference depends on our ability to notice and our willingness to engage. (Saunders, 2011, 3)

Even if Saunders, who coined the term "arrival cities" includes in his global mapping, only the district 1 Mayis Mahallesi, Istanbul (Saunders, 2010, 8), he admits that his mapping is hardly exhaustive; nor it can be – it's all over the world. Athens and Nicosia, in different terms, contain elements that render them arrival cities of extreme significance for the

European border and migration regime. The main actors who map not only these transitional spaces and their institutions, customs, conflicts, but also their frustrations, dreams, social imaginaries and movements are the international transit for the most migrants.

Far from being piled up on hills or in slums in the outskirts of metropolitan spaces, as illustrated in popular, not to mention academic representations (Davis, 2007), the protagonists of our arrival cities are inhabiting their very center. There are of course many other quarters of the cities which are also hubs for migrant and subaltern others. Our fieldwork focused on specific districts, where the character of the arrival city is linked with other forms of ephemerality and transition in what are largely contested spaces. Much of this ephemerality and turbulence over public space is linked to dynamic forms of subalternity and precarity, vectors of which are not only transit migrants, but also to profit-driven interventions in the area.

The city is the space that generates the unexpected; this is what makes it so lively, dangerous and exciting; hence our reference to *precarious space*s and *precarious urbanity*. It is a constant generator of potentialities. Our ethnographic research demonstrates a wide range of accessing, using, inhabiting, in short, producing urban space. It also suggests that liminal spaces are not a fissure in the urban tissue, a rupture in spatio-temporal urban normativity. Rather, in many of these spaces, liminality, contingency and ephemerality are the norm. The city as a *Spontaneous Theatre*, the city as an *œuvre* already exists in specific, real *heterotopias*. It exists neither as the byproduct of crisis, nor as a generous gift or concession of those in power. The *obsolescence of the space* for which Lefebvre speaks of is not taking place in some confined enclaves; it contaminates the urban fabric sowing (moral) panic everywhere. The right to the city is often not declared in some grandeur fashion and claimed by a theoretically informed urban social movement or some enlightened political grouping or local politician; rather, it is *happening* before its appearance as a discourse and it is *shaping* political battlefields. It is reshaping as a matter of fact specific struggles, socialities and politics. By this we do not mean that it is somehow an automatic and unmediated process that leads to some utopian or heterotopian Ithaca; there is no "march to progress" or "laws of history" leading us victorious to our destiny. Rather, we consider that this open and contested space contains the potentialities we have located; when, how and in what shapes and forms these potentialities, a potential politics and citizenships beyond formal citizenship will be

actualized and whether this will lead to victory or defeat or somewhere in between, is the result of a struggle with no guarantees.[1]

The study of the movements under investigation in Istanbul, Nicosia and Athens, in their own distinct ways and their heterogeneity of form, offers insights for understanding of new forms of mobility that emerge seemingly from nowhere in different parts of the world. Political action, social movements and digital mobilities in these precarious spaces are constantly revisited, while the *right to the city* is given new life and meaning. The notion of right to the city is not some vacuous sound bite up for grabs by politicians as a pre-election slogan – even though this is exactly what the Mayor tried to do in Athens (see Tsavdaroglou and Makrygianni, 2013). Rather the constellation of forces and the processes generating the claim to the right to the city become real driving forces for reconfiguring, reshaping and ultimately transforming space, social imaginaries and social relations.

Harvey (2012, 116) argues that we are witnessing a reclaim of the right to the city leading to the urban revolutions throughout the globe, focusing on "mass protests in Tahrir Square in Cairo, in Madison, Wisconsin, in the Plazas del Sol in Madrid and Catalunya in Barcelona, and in Syntagma Square in Athens, as well as revolutionary movements and rebellions in Oaxaca in Mexico, in Cochabamba (2000 and 2007) and El Alto (2003 and 2005) in Bolivia, along with very different but equally important political eruptions in Buenos Aires in 2001–2002, and in Santiago in Chile (2006 and 2011)." Badiou (2012) also reads the situation as a *Rebirth of the History* in our *Times of Riots and Uprisings*, though abstract in his analysis and confined to the Arab spring. Among the initial forms of a change of world or rebirth of History, he distinguishes *intensification*, *contraction* and *localization*.[2] Hardt and Negri in their *Declaration* (2012) are "taking up the baton" from Tunisia to Egypt, to Bahrain and Yemen, to Libya and Syria, and from there to Wisconsin, to Madrid and Barcelona, to Athens, to Tel Aviv, to Tottenham and to New York.

Something foundational is happening. There is something profoundly wrong with state and supranational structures (e.g., the EU) as currently organized; more importantly, their frustration and agitation among the multitude. No wonder radicals consider that current crisis has generated "a series of social struggles shattered that common sense and began to construct a new one" (Hardt and Negri, 2012, 1–2).

Is this new order of meaning produced in so many places a momentary lapse of reason, a historical accident or are we witnessing a historical transcendence? Do these intensified, contracted and localized forms of change emerge from nothing, as Badiou (2012, 62) suggests? Are they just hopeful "cracks of capitalism" so intensely anticipated by Holloway (2010)? Are they signs of an upgrade of the urge for the right to the city to a generalized "urban revolution" (Harvey, 2012)?

It goes without saying that contemporary urban experience, at least in the global North and its periphery, is full of riotous, if not revolutionary omens and events. The cities we examine have also been "contaminated" to a greater or lesser extent not only by global factors, but also from specificities in their social formations and have generated their own spectacular moments of rupture. During the unprecedented crisis years, Athens has become an infamous instance of a revolt, producing a chain of events: since the December 2008 event, we have witnessed continuous upheavals. Nicosia has also experienced its own, albeit lower scale events over the last years producing new forms of mobilizations, until recently unthinkable movements, such as the "Occupy Buffer Zone."[3] Istanbul is of course that center particularly since June 2013, following Gezi Park/ Taksim upheaval with mobilizations in all major Turkish cities, puncturing the world social movements and digitalities.

In this chapter we do not propose to analyze these riotous events, neither do we indulge in a detailed analysis as regards their background or outcomes. Following Badiou's classification, without uncritically adopting its content, we propose to reconstitute the pre-political truth, the form of the inexistent events, before their violent restitution to a historical event in the form of a riot. We conceive the signs, spoken and unspoken, of this "latent riot" (Badiou, 2012, 27–32) occurring in the streets of the cities within everyday antagonisms, within everyday life. Moving in the streets of Athens, Nicosia and Istanbul, one can encounter the conflicting subjectivities that inhabit them; one can scent the struggles taking place and feel the turbulence around goods and between desires. Here we can hardly be exhaustive as to the emerging subjectivities: we insist on the main protagonists in the production of the investigated spaces by shedding light to diverse forms of subalternity. The "good" at stake that we interrogate is *space* itself: both in the sense of inhabiting space as well as the process of producing it. The turbulence, finally, we are referring to is more of a latent nature, more an antagonistic symbiosis than an open and noisy conflict.

The fall of the *Urban Frontier*

There is no city that does not deal with some kind of urban regeneration. There is no city where regeneration processes do not provoke repercussions on its human geography. In brief, there is no city that has never felt in one way or another, the fever of "gentrification." This "dirty" word (Smith, 1996, 28–45) has been analyzed, classified, even modeled within a very rich literature in several contexts. Here, we mostly refer to gentrification pressures than processes, in order to highlight from a specific point of view the *open* character of everyday social antagonisms and struggles. The openness of social struggles, as expressed clearly and recurrently in specific urban spaces, can be enlightening for the comprehension of the ways that the right to the city is negotiated during our times of turbulence.

For most of the literature, things are more or less clear with regard to the outcome of the urban struggles. Urban movements have been studied, praised and served as models for the deployment of subalterns' counter-attack; always with limits however. When it comes to structural adjustments of urban space, particularly when capital-and-state coordinate their efforts for the regeneration and subsequently the redistribution of urban resources, the outcome is foreseen and the winner is announced before the end of the game: sooner or later, capital-and-state will prevail over any obstacle to regeneration, either these obstacles are embodied in local people and their attributes (poverty, dangerous ethno-class, unsanitary habits, such as drug use, etc.) or in local economic activities, formal and informal. Pressure, eviction, regeneration, reshaping and gentrification are considered to be the irreversible and inevitable future of places that attract the interest of capital and/or state. But are they really?

To start with Athens, our research focused on the district of Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio. Even the name of the district has been a contested issue, though in a latent form. For the old inhabitants the area defined to the east by *Omonia* square, and more particularly by *Deligiorgi street*, to the south-west by *Iera Odos* (Sacred road) and to northwest by *Konstantinoupoleos Avenue* is named *Metaxourgeio* (silk factory) after *Metaxourgeio* square, which is placed on the area of the old silk mill factory.[4] Newer inhabitants, more particularly new middle- and upper-class inhabitants, add in the name of the district "Kerameikos," which is the name of the cemetery of classical Athens situated south-west of Metaxourgeio. Therefore, one issue is the history of the district: used as

the cemetery of classic Athens and being an important manufacture and artisan center until the 1970s, the question(s) of who writes this history and what is at stake within this process of memory construction is(are) posed. Another issue, linked to the former, moves to the future of the district: who and how will they "reform" the district by using its entire dynamic in order "to reverse the existing conditions and create a new framework of activities?"

Both these questions are dependent upon or even define the centrality of the specific, contradictory and conflicting *culture* of the specific area. Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio or even KM (as it is abbreviated by certain actors in the area) is a contested signifier within a branding process. In order to comprehend these processes we have to describe the main actors who interplay in the area and compete, implicitly but sometimes also explicitly, over the character of the neighborhood and the production of its (public) spaces.

The *Historical and Urban Planning Development of Kerameikos* (Taxiarchi, 2007),[5] a study commissioned by the most famous real estate investor in the area, ends with a description of the "Problems" and the "New prospects" of the district, as follows:

> The main problems of the district are the lack of greenery, of free common utility spaces, since the only common utility area inside the district is the recently formed square of Leon Avdis. (…) A large part of the buildings of Metaxourgeion are abandoned, as ugly multi-floor buildings of the 60s co-exist side by side with insufficiently maintained and derelict neoclassical buildings, which often become refuge to drug addicts, and which, in turn, give way to humble little homes and empty lots, while the – sometimes abandoned – repair shops, warehouses and small trade shops are a frequent vista. The increased presence of foreigners living together in groups, in combination with the conduct of undesirable activities, the most important of which being the brothels (which are mainly concentrated at *Iassonos Street*), and the co-existence of families with children in the same area, creates a significant problem of quality of life and a sense of insecurity to the residents. (…) The statement of the above problems in no case infers that Metaxourgeion is a degraded district without prospects of re-formation. On the contrary, in a more advanced interpretation of the situation it could be said that the very phenomena of degradation form part of the special nature of Metaxourgeion which, with the necessary interventions, could be limited to a great extent and contribute to the creation of an original, modern and multi-faceted culture. The rich historical background of the area and its special dynamics in the social and financial formation of modern Athens has passed down to

> Metaxourgeion, as it is today, a composite urban environment reflecting both the structures of the past and current day dynamics.

In the above passage, one can find, some of the main actors present in the district: drug-addicts, foreigners, (workers and clients of) brothels co-exist with families with children; one can also find the potential of the district according to those who envisage "with the necessary interventions, … to contribute to the creation of an original, modern and multi-faceted culture." It is true that in the past decade, and particularly around the time of 2004 Olympic Games, held in Athens, State and private capital initiatives invested in Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio. Proximity to sites of historic interest, such as the ancient cemetery, Thission and ancient Athenian Agora, Gazi with its preserved industrial heritage (gas factory which was the main energy provider of the city especially in mid-19th century), and in general its central location served by three metro stations (Metaxourgeio, Kerameikos and Omonoia), were sufficient incentives for the investment in the district. Moreover, a large stock of available buildings,[6] some of particular aesthetic interest, was a factor that rendered investment feasible and profitable.

A typology of the "gentrifiers" who operate in the area would distinguish the following types of actors:

▸ Real estate capital
▸ Middle-class newcomers
▸ Marginal or soft gentrifiers
▸ State and local government

These and others, for example, part of the Athenian press with several articles on the potentialities of the district, participate in a process of branding: "Athens is a beautiful idea!" says a cultural manager and curator in a free-press-style section of a wide-circulation newspaper.[7] For the whole city, and for some particular parts of it, there is a struggle over the production of representation of space. Along with discourses and representations overwhelmingly negative about the abandonment of the inner city and its occupation by "illegal immigrants, drug-addicts, prostitutes, illegal trade and others" – we must remind here that one of the central slogans of Prime Minister Antonis Samaras during the electoral campaign of 2012 was "let's reoccupy our cities" – the opposite kind of representations co-exist, sometimes in the same media.

In Nicosia, our study also focused on strongly contested spaces, situated in and around the walled city of (inner) Nicosia. This is the area

where many migrant communities as well as Cypriots inhabit and frequent. Nicosia is frequently cited as the "last divided city," with the two Cypriot communities living on either side of the barbed wire; even if it is not, as Calame and Charlesworth (2009) illustrate: Belfast, Beirut, Jerusalem and Mostar are but a few. The insistence on Nicosia's division however very often ignores ethnic and racialized divisions as well as conflicts that exist within the respective territories; ethnicity and migration are key factors of cityscapes as a specific and historical variation, very much part and parcel of global phenomena.

Different migrant communities inhabit and frequent the area: South-East Asians (Filipinos, Sri Lankans, Indians, Chinese), Pontiac Greeks and Eastern Europeans. There are also Greek-Cypriots who live in the area as well as trendy Europeans and Brits, who enjoy the multicultural vibrancy of the area. The ethnic demography of Cyprus is subject to a changing population dynamic precipitated by both European Union and Third countries in-migration. The spatial mapping of ethnic groups within the city, but it is not sufficient as an indicator of ethno-urban demarcations.

Inner Nicosia is a contested digital and geographical space. The media have typically distorted the image of inner city as unsafe and dangerous. During 2012 there were numerous reports of racist attacks on migrants by extreme right-wing groups and fights between different groups, particularly around the Faneromeni district. The conflict is also digital –different blogs are in "war." The radical blogs refer to the need to defend the multicultural and libertarian spirit of inner Nicosia, while those on the extreme right speak of "cleansing" the area from migrants and anarchists.

There is no formal mechanism for dialogue, but there are some attempts by the municipal authorities and some locals who want to avoid the polarization to calm matters. The Cypriot Police have pursued radicals as "anarchists" and "trouble-makers"; yet the extreme right groups also complain about the police. So far there has been no arrest of any of the members of these violent extreme right groups or closing down of blogs, despite their inciting racial hatred. The contestation escalated via the Internet among anti-racist groups, small centers and NGOs. There is a new vigor in extreme right-wing blogs and Facebook pages, which have recently appeared online, as well as a number of anti-racist initiatives many of which are online.

There is an active and ambivalent process of transformation which alters the rules of engagement with forces pulling in different directions.

The city-center is a spectacle of transformation replayed also digitally and mentally, reproducing "new" and "old" forms of materiality. The spectacle of space transformation via claims to the city in the forms of urban revolutions and counter-revolutions, evolutions and erosions is the subject of this study: the neoliberal crisis of capitalism is beginning to hit home in contradictory ways. Is the spectacle of the transformed city another "social relation between people that is mediated by images?" Is this particular transformation of the city just another version of "*capital* accumulated to the point that it becomes images?" We reserve judgment as the struggle is hardly finished; in fact it is unending, indeterminate and inchoate. We witness the manifestation of the Althusserian "aleatory materialism" or "the undercurrent materialism of the encounter" (Althusser, 2006): developers, investors and city council professionals are drivers in the "development of the city" – they own and are hungry to own *all of the city*; the Orthodox Church,[8] city councilors, professionals and experts. Yet, there are local resistance pockets to neoliberal gentrification by those re-claiming the commons of the squares and the streets:[9] subaltern and undocumented migrants in the everyday struggles; workers who are organized in the inner city; shop-keepers and dealers of different kinds; children and school pupils; tourists and vagabonds; the police; racists and neo-Nazis re-claiming the city to "revive the old national glory" and so on.

After 2012, there has been a massive gentrification and a take-over by what radicals call "the mainstream," with trendy bars and cafes. Over the weekend there are thousands of people flogging the square. The far right is nowhere to be found; we are told that they usually come in groups at night times or when there are very few people around to check on the area and spy on the radicals and anarchists. Subaltern migrants, mostly youths and other radicals of the alternative scene feel marginalized and pushed out by the privatization of what was *their* public space.[10] However, one of the reasons the middle classes are flogging the city center is perhaps that they are no longer as affluent as they once were. They can still afford a coffee and a sweet but they have seen their incomes shrink, half of the young are unemployed and wildly uncertain about the future. This may explain why they are "reoccupying" the inner city they once abandoned to the poor and the migrants. It is not a clear-cut "victory" of the gentrification forces; wider transformations are occurring.

In both cases we witness the existence and significance of a (new) urban frontier, as Neil Smith (1996) would put it. Only in our cases, it

is the gentrification process that comes up against the frontier raised by different actors who subjectively and/or objectively resist the evicting transformation of (their) space.

Formal resistances to the gentrification processes in Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio have been minimal, although they have managed to gain significant public attention, at times. More significant have been the unrepresented, informal and unmediated forms of resistance to gentrification, which are entangled into the everyday fabric of the city. The "anti-gentrifiers," as such, have been largely disjointed from the everyday contestation of space in the specific area. The strategies adopted by the anti-gentrifiers have largely depended on a discourse intending to "unmask the dark sides" of the gentrification project behind several covered-up projects of the gentrifiers, and on actions that had primarily a symbolic value. In terms of discourse, the anti-gentrifiers have consistently attempted to bring into light the convergences between private real estate capital, state interventions, civil society initiatives, and media attention for the area, pointing to the primacy of private interests behind these convergences. This unmasking has been considered to be critical, since OLIAROS's (the main real estate development company in the area) strategy, up to a particular point in time, was to keep quiet or to deny their involvement in several initiatives in the area. A strategy that was reverted in 2009 after the process of unmasking became too embarrassing to the company. Along these lines, the anti-gentrifiers have been standing in support or are part of the "losers" of the gentrification process – local inhabitants who would be forced to leave the area, mainly migrants and the poor.

Beyond this formal recognition and the politics of solidarity for the "displaced to be," the anti-gentrifiers have not engaged with the really existing practices that the potential victims of evictions have been pursuing in the context of the gentrification process. Gentrification is portrayed as an indomitable force that will radically transform urban space, unless something is done; however, this *something* is never related to how gentrification is actually confronted in the politics of everyday life. This attitude is reflected in the past anti-gentrification mobilizations. Most of these have focused on counter-actions against *ReMap*, an international contemporary art festival, which is held biannually in Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio.[11] After their initial revelation that OLIAROS is actually behind the organization of ReMap, the anti-gentrifiers organized a mobilization/disruption of the exhibition in 2009 with the

distribution of anti-ReMap flyers on the spot to its visitors, and a more radical disruption in 2011 with the throwing of bags full of excrement in three different exhibition places where ReMap was held.

FIGURE 4.1   *Stencil of Antifa X on a doorstep: "Oh modern art, with whom do you walk hand in hand?"*

Source: Photo taken by Carolin Philipp and Dimitris Parsanoglou.

In many ways, the anti-gentrifiers' gaze goes beyond the immediate contestations of urban space. It is as if the anti-gentrifiers have an unwavering faith to the future success of the gentrification project, a faith that exceeds that of the gentrifiers who are becoming more and more skeptical about the feasibility of their project. Anti-gentrifiers portray Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio as a space of urban struggle, but the position of those who struggle against gentrification is left vacant: in no case, have the anti-gentrifiers taken cue from the immediate spatial practices adopted by the inhabitants and users of the space. It is to an analysis of these practices that we will now turn.

Spatial practices that are connected to migration, gender and digitality persistently disrupt the gentrification process; in this context Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio is produced as a stage of spatial antagonisms. Our primary focus here is on spatial bodily practices rather than on the processes of production of subjectivities. We are not, thus, depicting all migrants as activists but as carriers of practices that exceed any efforts to control the transformation of urban space. These spatial practices do not reflect identities of pre-defined subjects, nor are they necessarily embodying the desires of migrant subjects. They are produced, instead, through an adoption of spatial tactics that remain largely nonrepresentable, and nonarticulable in public discourse.

For some migrants from Iraq, Egypt, Morocco or Syria, Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio symbolizes their permanent residential area. An Iraqi refugee, who is for years living with her family in the area, stressed the convenience of the district as it gathers so many Arab-speaking people, hosts tea houses, food places and an Egyptian mosque. For this Iraqi woman,

> there are no Greeks living in the neighborhood. Next to us is a family from Albania, around us there are mainly people from Sri Lanka, Pakistan. Our landlord is from Lebanon.

And she adds jokingly "My husband always says, here is not Greece, it is Kandahar!"

To prevent the impression of uncontrolled crises spaces destroying the image of the area various projects were initiated by the different gentrifiers. In December 2010, one of the civil society organizations that has been active in the area (and is directly connected to OLIAROS), constructed an ephemeral playground in *Sfaktirias street*, in a plot bestowed by the National Organization of School Buildings. The project was funded by international companies such as L'Oreal. The playground intended,

first of all, to embrace the coming transformation of Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio as a child-friendly neighborhood and to also become a site for symbiosis among children of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The playground had an avant-garde design, composed of large cement rings and of nonlining cement stepping stones. After the ceremonial opening of the playground, the space was left to its own devices. The main game invented by the children users (exclusively nonethnic Greek or "Turkish kids and Gypsy kids," as one interviewee put it) was to deconstruct the cement rings and the stepping stones in order to form cement balls that were used as weaponry in battles among them and in occasional attacks against random passers-by. These attacks were, in turn, attributed by the project designers to a "violent ethnic kid culture" and to the lack of parental supervision. After these attacks were reported by some of the "victims," the civil society organization moved to close down the playground and removed all the material from the plot. This event marks an ephemeral re-appropriation on the part of the children of the game space that was designed for them in the context of the gentrification plans and of the games that were freely given to them.

In fact, the space of Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio is mostly produced as a temporary dwelling, a temporary shelter, or a temporary resource, which can enable transit migrants to organize their mobility networks in order to move on. The image of migrants sitting all day in squares and pavements or simply wandering around in the area is thus deceptive: what appears as inertia, or directionless movement and urban concentration is oddly enough a *movement* that connects these spaces within a network of mobilities through various physical arrangements and digital interconnections. But these spaces are more akin to transnational locales, self-configured by the migrants themselves, organized to gather and exchange information among them and to communicate with friends and contacts in other European countries that will enable their planned border crossings. Illicit uses of space, some of which we have described earlier, are currently eluding control and in this capacity they become potent obstacles to the gentrification process.

In Nicosia, the outcome of the struggles around the spaces of inner city at stake seems open-ended. Indicative is the case of Faneromeni district, which we tackle through the story of a specific migrant. L is a 25-year-old female Asian activist, who flew to Cyprus as an unaccompanied minor to study in Cyprus, fleeing from an oppressive family who were trying to forcefully marry her off. She had some problems with her

documents and had remained without a visa for a couple of years. She is fluent in Greek and English and as an activist she knows all of the OBZ people from Faneromeni square. She organized migrant groups in inner Nicosia and has been involved in various migrant activistic initiatives. She feels very comfortable in the inner old quarter of Nicosia:

> I feel more included in this place than any other part because I find people that – ok, it's also probably because of my friends … aaaa … [pause] I have a huge network of friends that most of them are Cypriots and most of whom hang out here. mmmm… plus it's also because it always fascinates me – the structure of old town and I find people more open to – you know – to differences. I feel – I don't feel – if i sit here for 6 hours at *Kalakathoumena* (coffee place name); nobody is going to tell me "move" which I feel in other places. Or you know I can freely access myself that – things that I don't feel free doing in Makarios. I find it shinier and it's meaningless for me. Here it's more meaningful.

Her story illustrates how the inner city around Faneromeni is the area she feels most comfortable with, unlike other parts of Nicosia where she gets racial and sexual harassment on a regular basis:

Q: Have you experienced any racism?

L: Yes I did. Of course [laugh]. But I don't hang out in places that exclude – you know I feel the racial tension. I mean here – no – in "Kala Kathoumena"[12] or Faneromeni or places like that.

Q: But Faneromeni? Never?

L: No!

Q: But different times different….

L: Yes, but I didn't come across this kind of… you know. I will sit down on the bench there – on Manolis for hours, I didn't the tension that someone came or…. But outside – if you just go outside – say Solomos Square – yes, I am called all the time […] the bus stand. If you just go there – out of this circle, this concentrated circle – if you just go to Ledra, say the end – Eleftheria Square, I – most of the time I hear "how much?"

Q: Oh… they think that you are a prostitute!

L: Yes. Or they will smile, they will come closer or they will step in front of you.

Q: Cypriots or Non-Cypriots?

L: It's old Cypriots. I wish it were the young ones [loud laughter].

Q: Old men! What ages?

L: 50. 55. That's the reason that you see me walking on the street – I walk a lot. Even if you say hi to me, I will not hear you. Because I put high volume i-pod because it ruins my day. I – I am very reactive person. If I hear it, I react. aaaaa

I would say shouting at them – you know "aai gamisou malaka" [go fuck your-self] or something like that. So, I don't want. Because it's not him – I ruin my day. So... [pause] I need to protect myself.

Q: So ... so you walk down the street, you lived in this area – in this sheltered multicultural center; does this happen whenever you go? Is it a daily thing when you walk here?

L: Honestly, even in the morning when I used to come to KISA and walk through the road behind, they used to stop the car, they would laugh at you and say "apo pou eisai," "omorfoulla mou" [where are you from pretty one?]

Q: So, it's harassment on constant basis?

L: Of course it's harassment. I mean [pause], it's a racial harassment, it's because ... you know ...

Q: Sexual harassment.

L: Yes, it's based on my gender, based on the perception they have about me as a woman because they can see that I am not Cypriot.

Most persons interviewed agreed that old Nicosia, particularly around Faneromeni, was friendly toward migrants. Not all migrants interviewed were keen on the inner city, however. One 25-year (middle-class) student from India was adamant that inner Nicosia is trouble as the police would pick on young male migrants. Others disagreed. The focus group conducted[13] illustrated the distance in the socio-political priorities of the everydayness of most *subaltern migrants'* life and the youthful transna-tional activism, which during the time pivoted around the Nicosia-based Occupy movement called Occupy Buffer Zone (OBZ). OBZ was based in the buffer zone, very nearby, and proclaimed that it recognized no borders and nations.

Most of the participants accepted the invitation even though some expressed anxiety of being exposed. Three others canceled at the very last moment due to fear of being stopped by police or immigration offi-cials and finally decided to remain low-profiled. One showed his interest to be interviewed, providing that the researchers travel to his town and find a "secure" place. For all three of them, old Nicosia is seen as a zone of intense special police-surveillance; therefore, the risk to be stopped and interrogated is considerably higher than other part of the town/ other towns.[14] Other participants contributed to a similar discussion on the difficulties, on a regular basis, faced by the undocumented migrants from their own experiences and their interaction with other migrants. Interestingly none of them had anything to say about the OBZ. Apart from L, who knows the OBZ people well, as an activist herself mingling

with Cypriots and does not feel confined her co-ethnic/national community, all the others said that they did know or could not relate to what OBZ were up to. In one of the interviews L puts it nicely:

> You can't really expect migrants to get involved ... They work like mad all day, six days a week and their only day to have any sort of social life is Sunday. It is logical to me that they will not spend their time on Sunday to do some political movement, even though it is important; it affects the Cyprus problem and the life of migrants, big time.

At the same time she said that she would have liked to get involved herself, if she had the opportunity:

> It is not just the country needs to be reunited, for the sake of Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots; it affects the life of everyone, every day. The hatred, the racism, the discrimination, xenophobia; it affects society as whole and it is a much bigger problem than that. I believe in the cause, I believe that the movement was worth it and that things must change!

Another activist, P, would pose a crucial question:[15] "if migrants could not reach OBZ, then why did not OBZ reach out for migrants?" The response illustrated some of the limitations of the ways digitality interacted with nondigital materiality:

> L: They could have done more to reach out for migrants. I meant they could not just rely on Facebook and internet but have face-to-face contact with people. How did I find out about the movement? I had friends in the movement, we talked about it. [...] If you want to involve migrants you must focus your activities on the Sunday ... the rest of time is surviving ...
>
> P: On the night of the raid, before the raid, I suggested that we should organize something for migrants; I suggested that we organize a karaoke night so that Filipinos come over. When I said that people laughed; and I said to myself what is the problem?
>
> L: What exactly was their problem, the fact that it was a karaoke or that it was going to be Filipinos in a karaoke?
>
> P: I don't know ... they did not take it seriously ...

Rebel cities or the city as an *oeuvre*

> In the buffer zone it was the first time that we lived together willingly, creating something out of nothing. [S., bufferer][16]

We have highlighted that through the vehicle of mobile commons migrants – and others we could add – with their praxis challenge urban space making it a contested object which is reshaped and transformed according to contingent politics of everyday life. We attempt to deconstruct the certainty that even radical approaches provide, as far as the character and the outcome of social struggles are concerned. We attempt to liberate social praxis of the subaltern from the chains of dominants' omnipotence; we propose to liberate the production of contested spaces from the bondage of linear transformations, within which the subaltern can only be the victims (and evicted). For both, there is empirical evidence, which not only saves us from making risky and empty theoretical generalizations, but also provides us with the kind of "flesh and bones" to the theoretical skeletons which may be insightful but remain barren without the empirical underpinnings. S: There is certainly something subversive is going on, something local and global at the same time.[17] Istanbul, Athens and Nicosia have been also experiencing the turbulence of intensive political struggles during the last years, recurrently occupied TV screens and front-pages around the globe with the implicit or explicit evocation of fear or hope that this might "come to a city near you."[18]

In the post-2008 and in-crisis Greek reality, several tempo-spatial momentums have occurred: May 2010, June 2011, February 2012, with Marfin Bank, Syntagma square and the generalized implosion of the metropolis. The end of consensus that is illustrated in slogans, such as "No more Varkiza – Magic Life," which refer to the treaty signed in February 1945 between the conservative allied government and the communist guerrilla after the 1944 December riots in Athens that signified the (temporary) abandonment of armed struggle by the National Liberation Front, seems to be one of the main characteristics of each momentum.

The rhythm and intensification of the struggles are undoubtedly uneven and interrupted in different conjunctures. Nevertheless, stable appears to remain the organizational form of struggles and the dubious impact of each momentum. There are two main constitutive elements for the former: horizontality and ephemerality. Even if pre-existing social and political organizations are participating in the ad hoc movements each time, in each momentum, they seem to carry the burden of producing the meaning of insurrection, they cannot play any significant role apart from being part of the heterogeneous yet combative multitude; movements are organized horizontally and the quest of any avant-garde is futile. As for the latter, the duration of each momentum and of its

outcomes is quite uncertain. No guarantee can be provided by any kind of mechanism for long-lasting movements and forms of resistance; ephemerality seems to be the rule for the new-born collective subjects and their endeavors.

Similar characteristics are found in the post-Gezi in Turkish politics. The triggering event for the first real challenge to what appeared until spring 2013 as the indisputable domination of the Islamo-neoliberal project of Erdoğan was nothing more than a plan of urban regeneration, (over)loaded of symbolic meanings. Notwithstanding, Turkish society, for the first time after the end of dictatorships' period is in front of its monsters, engendered by the depletion of authoritative regime and the tension-hiding boom of the "Turkish dream." It should not be surprising if Turkey enters a relentless period of crisis: as the Greek experience has shown, resistance comes first! Erdoğan may have won the day as he is inaugurated as the new all-powerful president; but spatial hegemony is no longer there.

Mobilizations in Turkey can be seen as an archetype of an urban movement, where the right to the city is at the core: "What ensued was nothing short of a war over space" (Kuymulu, 2013, 275). As Gökay and Sahin (2013, 59) put it:

> The Taksim-Gezi protests share a common ground with a great many diverse social movements focusing on the urban question, from India and Brazil to China, Spain, Argentina and the US. Just a few months before the Taksim-Gezi protests started, David Harvey spoke about the urban origins of the social movements and referred to Istanbul, saying that "What do we see in Istanbul? Cranes, everywhere."

The events in Turkey are often compared to the event in Egypt, with their respective symbolic squares, Taksim in Istanbul and Tahrir in Cairo being at the center. The importance of these squares as public spaces is highlighted as a common feature not only between the two above-mentioned events, but also with mobilizations in Athens where the Syntagma square was at the core and other major mobilizations from Tunis to Madrid, Lisbon, Rome and so on. We can witness the dialectic between the fusion/capacity to unity versus the contestation/conflict is played out. In Istanbul, for instance, "a number of normally rigorously competing football fans unified in their opposition to their governments' policies leaving aside their historical differences to defend their city" (Gökay and Shain, 2013, 62–63). The same exactly happened in Athens

on February 12, 2012 during one of the most massive and violent mobilizations against the politics of austerity (Hatzopoulos et al., 2012). Other commonalities include the crisis in representation and delegitimization of governments in power, brutal reaction and clampdown by the police.

Lefebvre's *right to the city* is a call for a radical restructuring of social, political, and economic relations; but this goes beyond the city itself (Purcell, 2002). Urban space is a decisive terrain of political identity; the right to the city becomes a crucial marker that deciphers from the inhabitants of the city and the others, *who belongs* and *who does not*. The right to the city in the landscape of conflict-ridden and divided Nicosia acquires the most acute of forms; multiple divides and intersections make matters difficult and uncertain. In his writings on both the "right to the city" and the occupy movement, Peter Marcuse asks: What is the city for? Who gets to live here? Who decides and how? (Marcuse, 2012).

In order to tackle the above questions, we focus next on the "Occupy the Buffer Zone (OBZ)" as an urban social movement seeking "to overcome isolation and reshape the city in a different image" (Harvey, 2008) from that created after Nicosia's division in 1974. In actual fact the division of Nicosia goes further back to 1963–1964 and 1958; but this was sealed and deepened in 1974, with the Greek fascist coup and the Turkish military invasion and occupation of the northern part of the country. In that framework we attempt to define the protagonists, understand the emerged, radicalized, political subjectivity, its characteristics and potentialities through processes of both "inclusion" and "exclusion." The OBZ movement brought actions and discourses from the edge to the center. That did not only occur on the spatial but also on the socio-political level. Former rather marginalized political statements, arguments and practices were brought to the center of the debate forming supporters and opponents. The bufferers' action, or even their lifestyle, their taste, their clothes, the way they behaved could no longer be ignored, since they occupied the heart of the city, contesting at the same time the heart of the city's division. In the buffer zone, where spatial and social separation meets with spatial and social contact, the OBZ movement appeared to redefine people's identity during the redefinition of space.

Responding to the global call for action by the occupy movement, the "bufferers" of the OBZ movement managed to localize the global message expressing with their presence their mutual desire for reunification and to stand in solidarity with the wave of unrest, which has come as a response to the failings of the global systemic paradigm.[19] The linear

gap of the buffer zone turned into an inhabited public place, a "square" where people met, sang, drank, ate, slept, discussed, played, argued and demonstrated. The activists' presence and will were crucial elements for a new spatial perception and therefore for the revival of the dead zone. The new concept that entered the debate affecting both the spatial and socio-political level was the claim of space transforming the buffer or dead zone into a "common place of demand," contesting the dominance of official urban action.

The Nicosia-based "Occupy the Buffer Zone" was a movement that turned urban space into a battlefield of conflicting interests opening the debate regarding urban life and socio-spatial segregation. It was border social movement claiming to defy borders seeking to squat in the abandoned buffer zone dividing Nicosia. In that context, mobilizations managed to localize the global call for action spread by the global occupy movement, translating the demands into the "language" of the local issues. Moreover, the largest number of "bufferers" was drawn from local youngsters around the Faneromeni square, which is another highly contested zone under this study.[20] Although most organizers believed that the OBZ movement constituted a rupture in Cyprus' social movements, the patterns of mobilization and its eventual demise seems to have followed the path of other actions of the past.

The OBZ movement was a consequence of a longer historical trajectory. A genealogy of events and practices that preceded it shaped the field. In the same light, this can explain the limitations of the OBZ movement which brought to an end.[21] Various urban mobilizations and initiatives were the various germinal political traditions that prepared the path for the OBZ: rapprochement activism, anti-racist movement, autonomous and anarchist groups as well as socio- political and cultural initiatives within urban space are the main categories of Nicosia's tradition in contemporary urban activism. After the global call and the other examples worldwide, the idea of "re-claiming the city" was no more an immature and high-flying suggestion.

In the broader context, Peter Marcuse argued that the global occupy movement is part of a long tradition.[22] The occupy movement places itself within the tradition of many early resistance movements, most recently, the movements of 1968, the World Social Forums, the self-consciously civil society (Marcuse, 2012). Following the thread of urban movements in Nicosia and their process of transformation, the current report unfolds the new-born image of Nicosia being a divided city with both visible

and invisible borders. Moreover, the place of the buffer zone functions as a common place of demand, where the new-born "right to the city" attempts to find its place within the broader process of bi-communal cooperation and rapprochement activism. It is important to examine how spatial transformations are produced and perceived by the gamma of people, or else the "inhabitants" in the Lefebvrian sense, involved in a direct or an indirect way. In this context, crucial is their interaction with respect to contradictory perceptions, representations, discourses and attitudes toward the movement's demands, practices and beyond.

What do we make of the legacy of the OBZ movement, which was defeated and reduced to a faded memory of a distant past relegated to the digital world? It is not surprising that the movement was defeated by overwhelming power of the state and conservative forces in the Cypriot Capital city. It was killed off, once the police and anti-terrorists bull-dozed their way in the squat to remove the few teenagers there. What was surprising is *how long the OBZ lasted*. A sober balance-sheet reveals how the structural factors had their way at the end of the day. The opponents of the OBZ were the mighty forces of gentrification: a rich Bishop-businessman (the bishopric owned the squatted house); a right-wing bourgeois mayor keen on "cleaning up" for gentrifying the inner city; a conservative and racist media keen to generate "moral panics," who branded OBZ as "forces of filth and immorality"; hostile UN authorities; hostile police on both sides of the barbed wire. Given that the squat was situated in the Greek-Cypriot/ Republic of Cyprus-controlled area, it was the Republic of Cyprus Police who pulled the plug in the end. They were keen to take on what they saw as "intercommunal filthy, deviants indulging in an immoral life of sex-and-drug culture." In office there was a Left-wing Government, which did not protect the movement: it was a Government out of steam, exhausted by the economic crisis and political blows from the opposition; moreover, the Government had no connection or understanding about this movement via their own affiliated or allied trade unions, youth or other organizations.[23]

The structural reasons for the demise of OBZ are obvious; what is more interesting from the vantage point of this study is that OBZ is examined primarily as a *border movement*, which claimed to transcend the borders, ethnicity and nationality. In this sense, we need to examine whether and to what extent, OBZ, inadvertently, may have contributed to its own eventual demise. It seems that no matter how brave, the organizers' stubborn aloofness verging on isolationism and defiance from the local life

may have starved the movement from those vital connecting ties with the locals, the space and history. The initial ingenuity shown in localizing the global by adapting a global occupy movement to local concerns, hence naming it "Occupy the Buffer Zone" rather than "Occupy Nicosia" appears to have evaporated by the end. This happened once OBZ became more settled, as the youths turned inward and refused to reach out to the local society and other movements (labor, trade union, migrant organizations etc.). This tiny in numbers, but much larger in terms of its digital connectivity and imagination "border movement" proved rather sterile and lost its dynamism by the end. After all, it was made up by heterogeneous youths who connected more like fringe identitarian groups based on alternative lifestyle, which appeared to be stuck in their own ways. It proved unable create the concrete unity that hammers together commitment, ideological and organizational forces in movements. Many had no previous political experience or interest, who claimed to be "living the solution" in the comfort of "no man's land," rebelling for the first time; few others were more political and more experienced in activism, but most were teenagers.[24] Despite the initial success and media sympathy, OBZ was riddled by its contradictions and internal exclusions; cut off from any potential solidarity from other subalterns, local allies, migrants and workers, it became vulnerable and an easy target. It may be argued that the fact third-country migrants could not participate,[25] somewhat "saved" OBZ from additional police harassment in the guise of immigration control; however, this is a no-starter, as the police and immigration authorities could always claim that they needed to check against "illegal immigrants" and settlers from the northern occupied territories.

Where does this leave us after the demise of the movement? The gentrifiers erased all traces of the OBZ: if one visits the house in the buffer zone today which was once a lively squat now, one only sees a revamped and freshly painted building and the iron cage bars preventing access to the side street which hosted the youths form OBZ. The movement OBZ only exists in the digital world and in the memories of those who experienced it or those who study it.[26]

From the point of view of a border movement which proposed a transformation of a specific public sphere, which was a mere passage through a "dead zone/buffer zone" to "living the solution" beyond nations and states, what is then generalizable today? There are many studies of the global occupy movement; the Cypriot experience is but a small part in this bigger jigsaw puzzle. We are not focusing on that however. We are

interested in connecting two crucial aspects: the transformation of city-spaces, digital and nondigital alike, particularly as regard the claims to potential mobile commons and the migrant subjectivities and socialities. In this sense the exclusion/inclusion dialectic is a lesson here and so is the *dissensus* regarding the role of migrants within OBZ but mostly from the point of view of subaltern migrants from the outside. We contend that the fact that there is a disjuncture and an inability of precarious and subaltern activists to speak to each other is indicative of how a so-called *anomic* space, a "no man's land," a buffer, in what is perceived as supposed vacuum of sovereignty, generates its own strange *nomos*: the "real utopia" (Wright) or "heterotopia" (Foucault) of a no-hegemonic space was force-fully "normalized" and transformed overnight into yet another *dystopia* of the Cypriot state of exception.[27] The *autonomy* was transformed into a heteronomy. Yet, despite the defeat, there is an excess generated which is now celebrated digitally and may well inform next struggles to come. History does not repeat itself; but macro-historical issues may well generate the next ones. Most often than not, struggles leave their marks, they punctuate social reality accordingly, even when they end up in defeat. This is shown in recent micro-struggles of youths of Faneromeni: they have set up "the movement claiming the public space of old Nicosia,"[28] complaining against the "take over" of private trendy cafes of the Faneromeni area and the "occupation" by "mainstream people" which has made migrants and other dialects disappear.[29]

We cannot be sure whether this will continue or how successful it will be; what is apparent is that the city is constantly generating new contestations, micro-struggles, subjectivities and socialities. Moreover, the "lessons" or ideas born from the OBZ are relevant to the generation claims to "right to the city." Ideas and experiences, particularly once digitalized migrate elsewhere: Athens, Istanbul, London and other divided and arrival cities may well find these experiences useful for the next struggles.

This might be the most important outcome in the (re)birth of the architecture of a different living and working environments that bridges the micro-scale of the body and the personal experience and the macro-scale of global political economy and politics: it is the unpredictable and multipliable creation of *spaces of hope* (Harvey, 2012), which take the baton from past utopias and heterotopias to project flaming arrows to a future that is already alive. The realization of the right to the city is not the concluding paragraph of the history of urban struggles that will inevitably lead to absolute liberation. It is an open process happening

now; a disputable and controversial *enjeu* around which subjectivities build their present and future. And *it is happening every day*.

Notes

1   This is extending the meaning of "Marxism without guarantees", as Stuart Hall (1983) nicely put it.

2   "If we consider political action, the initial forms of a change of world or rebirth of History – those visible in the event, but whose future is not as yet determined – are as follows: *intensification,* since the mainspring of things is the distribution of different intensities of existence; *contraction* – the situation contracts in a sort of representation of itself, a metonymy of the overall situation; and *localization* – the necessity of constructing symbolically significant sites where people's capacity to dictate their own destiny is visible. It should be noted that visibility as such is not reducible to visibility in the media, or what is called communication" (Badiou, 2012, 68).

3   See *Cyprus Review* 26:1 Spring 2014.

4   "[The district] was renamed from Neapolis to Metaxourgeion, due to the establishment there of Wrampe's silk mill factory since 1852." See Taxiarchi (2007), 11.

5   Written in 2007 and translated in the framework of the Student Housing, International Competition for Architects UPTO35 (http://www.upto35.com/).

6   According to the most important private developer operating in the area, OLIAROS S.A., 46% of buildings in the district are not used: see interview of Iason Tsakonas, president of OLIAROS Stinpraxi.gr, Sky TV, February 19, 2012, available online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=256cu2p66vw

7   Nicos Palaiologos, "Efi Komninou – Cultural Manager & Curator: Athens is a beautiful idea!" *Ethnos*, (Athens – New Generation), February 27, 2011.

8   In Cyprus, the church is the largest land-owner in the country, intends to build a new massive new Cathedral in the city center of the Cypriot Capital, despite the fact the archbishop has claimed that the economic crisis and its investment in Greece has left it with 60% less income.

9   In Nicosia during 2012, the "bufferers" strove to occupy the buffer zone to reunite Greek-Cypriots, Turkish-Cypriots and non-Cypriots in a militarized "dead zone," as πλατεία -πλατιά, until it was crushed by the police. For a critique of the Police brutality, see Trimikliniotis, N. (2012) "Η Αστυνομική Βία και το Ακατονόμαστο Μίσος για τη Νεολαία: Ηθικός Πανικός, Ψέματα και Συμφέροντα" at http://thetrim1.blogspot.com/2012/04/blog-post_12.html For the archive material on OBZ see: http://occupythebufferzone.wordpress.com/2012/10/17/archive-of-occupy-buffer-zone-related-material/

10 See "Το Κίνημα «Διεκδικούμε το δημόσιο χώρο στην Παλιά Λευκωσία»", alternative social media *Δέφτερη Ανάγνωση* [Second Reading], vol. 103, March 15–22, 2014, at http://2ha-cy.blogspot.com/2014/03/blog-post_1458. html (accessed February 19, 2014).

11 For more see http://remapkm.org/4/

12 This is coffee place that has been there for decades; it attracts mainstream students, artists and intellectuals as well as radicals from the alternative scene.

13 For the participation in the first focus group meeting, initially about 10–12 persons from various migrant communities were targeted. They were selected taking into account factors such as age range, gender and the degree of their involvement in their own community. An informal sample list of targeted ethnicity included the representatives of the communities of Sri Lanka, Philippines, Palestine, Iraq, Bangladesh, India, Kurd (Syria), Cameroon. Accordingly, the participants active in these migrant communities were invited. Half were women.

14 Even though the participation of these migrants could have enriched the discussion of meeting and provide us a better in-view of their individual situation, however, the overall structure of the focus group was not significantly affected by this.

15 This was a recording of the conversation between P and L, where they were asked to reflect on the OBZ movement, its legacy, meaning and limitations. The conversation took place on September 26, 2012.

16 A "bufferer" is the label we gave to those in the OBZ in the buffer zone. We thank Eirini Iliopoulou for conducting the field research on the OBZ movement and authoring the relevant section in the Report. See Trimikliniotis et al. (2010).

17 Far from the assumptions of "glocality" (see part of the work of Robertson and Beck (1999), Bauman and others) that serve mostly as a methodological facilitation than a theoretical endeavor for an effective comprehension of the inter-connections between local and global scale.

18 "The chaos after Greece's rescue: Coming to a city near you?" *The Economist*, May 6, 2010. Undoubtedly one of the most successful titles on the struggles emerged during the Greek crisis, available online at http://www.economist.com/node/16059958

19 In "Occupy the buffer zone", manifesto of the October 15 movement, http://occupythebufferzone.wordpress.com/about/obz/

20 See Trimikliniotis et al. (2010).

21 The "Faneromeni crowd" was the "dominant" tendency and the basis for the mobilization drawing on a sort of anarchist/libertarian spirit. Other initiatives such as *t*he Kogulu park movement of "Free Cyprus" was an important antecedent and many of the youths in OBZ were drawn

from this pool took place. In February 2011 before the second mass rally of the Turkish Cypriot trade unions' platform. (See Mig http://falies.com/2011/02/15/isyan-zamani-time-for-uprising-%CF%8E%CF%81%CE%B1-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1 %CE%BE%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%B7%CE%BA%CF%89%CE%BC%CF%8C/).

22 Marcuse, P., Blog #15 – The Right to the City and Occupy: History and Evolution. http://pmarcuse.wordpress.com/2012/08/02/blog-15-the-right-to-the-city-and-occupy-history-and-evolution/

23 Radical bloggers accused the Government of colluding with gentrifiers in the "clean up," in a desperate effort to scoop some political capital from the Cypriot Presidency of the European Union failed to halt the clamp down; not even the Left-wing newspaper offered any sympathy to heavy-handed policing for the anti-terrorism squad during the raids.

24 For more see Trimikliniotis et al. (2010).

25 The only third-country migrant one who did participate was deported!

26 See, for instance, Trimikliniotis et al. (2010); Erdal Illigan (2013) Iliopoulou and Karathanasis (2014) and Internet reference by OBZ buffers themselves.

27 See Constantinou (2008); Trimikliniotis (2009b and 2010).

28 See "Το Κίνημα «Διεκδικούμε το δημόσιο χώρο στην Παλιά Λευκωσία»", alternative social media *Δέφτερη Ανάγνωση* [*Second Reading*], vol. 103, March 15–22, 2014, at http://2ha-cy.blogspot.com/2014/03/blog-post_1458.html (accessed February 19, 2014).

29 See «Η νέα όψη της άλλης πόλης – Parody», https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjL6TSqc8fI&feature=youtu.be (accessed February 19, 2014).

Conclusions: The Future Lasts Forever and It's Happening Now

Abstract: *Digitality, (urban) activism and the generation of mobile commons through migrant mobility have been the fils conducteurs in our flânerie in the three arrival cities of Athens, Nicosia and Istanbul. Empirical findings provide solid evidence that digital forms of representation in the context of migration and transnational activism differ in terms of effect and visibility in the field. The activity of the networks, as it takes place face-to-face, is not reflected in the intensity of its digital representation. In general, the networking between different groups/actors is maintained and deepened. In this sense, we can begin to imagine of a right to the city reloaded. We can begin to imagine future struggles that will emerge by any means necessary. Their character, and more importantly, their outcome, however, is always uncertain and unpredictable.*

In this book we have attempted to think beyond the micro-politics and the micro-social instances, so that we can properly reflect on the study of the kind of molecular social transformations we are trying to capture. Drawing on global reading of a *longue durée* on the "cycles of deviance" (Sitas et al., 2014), this book attempted to extend a similar reading from the concrete to the abstract, from the specific to the general, so that we can somehow attempt to read the future into the present. We thus need to multiply the connections by looking at the larger picture and linking movements, migration and transformation of global cities. The reflection on the empirical findings allows for theoretical insights that hopefully can take us beyond the generalities of radical thinkers from Balibar and Rancière to Harvey, from Arendt to Deleuze and Negri and so on.

We examined three distinct but comparable and historically connected arrival cities in Eastern Mediterranean. A number of factors locate them historically and geographically at the south-east borders of the European Union, forming a kind of frontier triangle between the so-called "Orient" and the "Occident"; simultaneously they are European and global arrival cities. Europe, as well as the EU in particular, makes the triangle Athens–Istanbul–Nicosia a fascinating subject for investigation: this is understood as a triangle consisting with distinct urban laboratories and migratory processes, which are at the same time remarkably interconnected, while the comparison/contrast of the particularities render the comparative study rather interesting. Moreover, as for the research design, we have chosen to focus on two different aspects of migrant-related movement networks: both local and transnational, even though this distinction is becoming increasingly untenable as local initiatives are certainly digitally connected to global and the local are themselves increasingly transnational, intercultural and trans-border. Having recognized this, we cannot ignore the parallel and contradictory processes of ethnicization, racialization and ethno-racial polarizations as well as gender and class processes, which generate a multiple matrix of contestations and social struggles that illustrate the complexity of the broader context and link this work with other crucial debates.[1] We live in a digital world that undergoes deep transformations. Digitality, however, should be seen neither as somewhat miraculous manna sent from the heaven to changes the world nor as the prelude of a world of total surveillance. Digitality and new knowledge forms it contains and transmits are seen as vital organizing forces that shape the very concept of *mobile commons*, which are read as an essential acquisition resulting from the collective

power to reshape the world of people on the move. In the austerity-and-crisis times that we live, migrant mobility makes part of the reconfiguration of the Social Question. In this sense mobile commons have been revolutionizing and transforming the world.

Fernand Braudel (2005) offered a magisterial reading of *The Mediterranean* as specific space which contains the wonders of *mobilities*. This notion underlies our understanding of our study of movements, migrants and commons in the three interconnected arrival cities. *Mediterranean mobilities* is a new interdisciplinary field for study as the treasures, the capital and contradictions of the Mediterranean are recognized:

> If invoking the global at the turn of the 21st century is to draw attention to the speed and intensity of interconnections among people and places, the Mediterranean is paradigmatic of this transnational order increasingly and unevenly traversed by money, people, objects, images and ideas. To name an example in the realm of maritime trade and transport, the Mediterranean Sea accounts for only 0.7% of the world's seas and yet handles 30% of maritime trade traffic and 25% of hydrocarbon traffic. Guarded by the US Sixth Fleet for its geopolitical and geo-economic significance, the most militarized sea in the world is witness to 20% of the world's traffic in leisure cruises and receives 30% of the world's international tourists. In this sea of contrasts, the route from the Bosphorous to Gibraltar stands as a veritable economic rift, a line between the greatest regional wealth differences in the world, and the scenario for tragic migration passages to Europe from the lands of the most dispossessed. As in other moments of its long history, at the turn of the new millennium the Mediterranean continues to be a mobile space, a space in transition that plays a growing strategic role in the gravitational movements of globalization from East to West, from South to North and vice versa.[2]

In this context, the Mediterranean offers the connection and potentiality that transforms Europe from a fortress to what Balibar (2004, 35) called "a Euro-Mediterranean ensemble or alliance," capable of transcending the fault-lines and frontiers of the so-called clash of civilizations. In our empirical work, we have pinned down the specific socialities that chart a politics, making or forcing the Europe-as-border a "vanishing mediator" (Balibar, 2004). It is through these mobilities that the social materiality and the socialities of mobile commons are produced. This process can be translated in terms of the production of the "institutional materiality" (Poulantzas, 2000), the technologies and microphysics of power

and resistance (Foucault, 1975) and the desiring-machine (Deleuze and Guattari, 2000).

The smallest of the three cases that we have examined, the post-colonial setting of the divided Cypriot Capital, Nicosia, can be perceived among others as a violent connecting point, which paradoxically has in its core a default-line; a militarized buffer zone still standing as a ceasefire line since 1974. This is the border/nonborder, that is, the *de facto* operated dividing line, as manifested via through the constitution of a securitized area with both barbed wire and some check-points that allow for crossing over. However, the liminality of this space is hardly confined to a war-related ceasefire line; there are multiple borders and contestations within the urban setting of inner Nicosia, strongly related to the multicultural/multiethnic urbanity and to struggles related to the right to the city. From the north of the city, which under the control of the unrecognized Ankara backed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), Nicosia has resemblances of parts of Istanbul; in fact it is very densely connected via direct flights[3] to Istanbul, perhaps the most celebrated city, following the cliché that wants it located "between East and West."

In fact, Istanbul is *the* European *divided* arrival city par excellence, with the artificial border dividing Europe and Asia, and thus "the West and the Rest" (Hall, 1992), without any controls, as the city contains both the European and Asian part (Papadakis, 2005). Yet, there are commonalities with both Athens and Nicosia, in the shaping of its internal borders, which are best mapped by locating the urban mental and social boundaries as manifested by contestations and struggles connected to migration. What scholars refer as the social erasure of a clear delineation of the Istanbulite-immigrant duality is noteworthy: we can locate new forms of differentiation reflecting local specificities of urban globality that retain segregations, albeit in new forms and modes; hence we can speak of transformations of the material basis of "the division of zoned districts and shantytown districts" and re-shaping of "the cultural segregation between moderns and the others or Istanbulites and Anatolians" (Kayder, 1999, 157). This is where the study of Athens can nicely be compared with Istanbul.

We return here to a kind of reloading of the Lefebvrian *right to the city*. We are dealing with three distinct instances of the metaphor in each city under study. This can be analytically distinguished as the *right to enter*, the *right to inhabit* and to *adapt ones built, cultural and social environment according to one's habitus*, the *right to transform the environment to belong*,

the right to move on to another city and country (Lefebvre, 1996). Central to the realization of these aspects are the *contested spaces* of urbanity. The main concept informing the research was that of contested spaces taken as the social stage where urban social antagonisms are played out. Contested space embodies the conflicts among several individual and collective actors (formal or informal, migrant or nonmigrant, entrepreneurial or voluntary and so on) around differing productions of space. In this sense, contested spaces are not related to a merely geographical point of view, but to a social, sociological if you want, view on antagonistic social processes. In terms of the *right to enter* and *the right to move on* to another city, the social movements are not interested in changing the environment; in fact, they are interested in remaining as *undistinguishable* and *unnoticed as possible* and so as not to attract attention by authorities: how about thinking of *the right to remain informal but safe*?

This brings us to the broader question of the *informal social movements*. The analysis attempted to focus on the unrepresented, the informal, the unmediated and on spatial practices that are entangled into the everyday fabric of the city. It attempted to show how the gentrification process is contested and disrupted primarily by actors who are considered to be problematic and "dirtying" by gentrification planning, such as migrants who inhabit, or ephemerally use, these contested spaces, homeless, squatters, street vendors, collectors of recyclable material for scrap industry, sex workers, street vendors. Most of these actors, along with other informal groups, such as the Nicosia-based OBZ or the Istanbul group we studied, along with numerous equivalent movements of the multitude are mostly interested in retaining the informality so as to allow the *daily survival* of the migrants involved: they cannot afford to make themselves visible as they will risk being arrested by the Police and immigration authorities, as many are irregular and clandestine.

A crucial aspect of the project was the *transnational dimension of locality*. Practices of informal social movements in Athens inner-city and OBZ connect specific areas with networks of transnational mobilities. Kerameikos-Metaxourgeio, for instance, becomes, along these lines, a transnational locale, self-configured by the migrants themselves, organized to gather and exchange information among them and to communicate with friends and contacts in other European countries that will enable their planned border-crossings. In Nicosia this was also particularly important: for one, the buffer zone is a border zone; second, inner Nicosia is the most intensely transnational space in the country.

Drawing from the Lefebvrian methodology of approaching the production of space, we followed his "regressive-progressive" approach (Lefebvre, 2000, 65–67). In our case, however, it was not only a question of starting from the realities of the present and moving through the production of space retroactively upon the past; it was more importantly a question of moving within and through different spatio-temporal scales. Through the lenses of digitality which transcends and radically transforms spatial and temporal constraints, we attempted to comprehend, on the one hand, the material spatiality of the digital and, on the other hand, the digital materiality of the space. This is not some meaningless play of words; the ways digital practices interplay with or are part and parcel of subversive strategies which transform *the right to the city* and *the city itself*, are eloquent for the significance that these digital-spatial nodes carry. We note however that we did our best to avoid certain traps. As Lefebvre (2000, 200) notes we must avoid:

> a narrow and desiccated rationality (that) overlooks the core and foundation of space, the total body, the brain, gestures, and so forth (that) forgets that space does not consist in the projection of an intellectual representation, does not arise from the visible-readable realm, but that it is first of all *heard* (listened to) and *enacted* (through physical gestures and movements).

Connected to the above are issues related to re-constituted acts of citizenship. With migration, particularly undocumented, informal and irregular migration, the very notion of citizenship can no longer be reduced to a mere legal category. In fact, the already bloated Marshalian "social citizenship" is in flux (Balibar, 2004; Isin and Nielsen, 2008; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). One can discern a striking paradox here: the opening-up of citizenship is in fact a result of the struggles of noncitizens, such as the most excluded, the *Sans Papiers* who are *active citizens* claiming rights (Balibar, 2004, 46). However, this is not a new discovery. Radical thinkers from Arendt's "right to have rights" (1951/1968) to Benhabib (2005) and to Rancière's stipulation about the nature of disagreement over the meaning of equality, inclusion and participation of those excluded (2004; 2010), send us back to Aristotle's politics. Drawing on the findings from the moments of struggles in three arrival cities, we are witnessing new openings to the concept of citizenship which are closely interconnected to the reshaping of migrant social movements: they are in this sense "germinal" in Stan Cohen's celebrated formulation (1972); yet, their future remains uncertain, conditional and relational.

Their organizational forms and constitution are ever-changing; they may well be connected to "old" organizations and movements such as labor movements and trade unions, anti-racist and migrant-support NGOs, gender-based and other activist groups. On the other hand, migrant and transnational movements are often unconnected and autonomous of these; they may even view them with suspicion or antagonistically may consider them as irrelevant from their actions and desires, depending on the specificities, the goals and priorities of the groups and individuals involved. In the case of groups organized around transit migration, the social struggles involved are different from the migrants who want to claim their right to settle. The type of *turbulence* caused is quite different from that of settled migrants, even if their status is informal.

We remain intrigued but inspired by the potentiality of new politics emerging out of the paradox that (re)produces *excess of politics* (like a spill-over) when there are subjects who are squeezed or reduced to become carriers of *lesser rights, lesser lives*. We are convinced from our three instances that there is something foundational there, a kind of politics that has not been fully captured as our theoretical and research tools are imperfect to grasp moments of praxis, which many times leave trails or tacks but sometimes they are erased. There is here a kind of theater of the absurd played in social reality enacted in the performativity that defies distinctions between formal and informal, "play" and "real," inside and outside. We are still intrigued about how to read "social movements" which escape but are somehow connected in-between to the traditional distinctions between "the three predominant of contentious political forms" historically developed to realize the goals and embody the collective subjectivities of precarious, that is, party, trade union and micro-political strategies (Papadopoulos et al., 2008, 238–239). The production of excess precarity seems to escape theorization-in-full; it seems quite inconceivable to theoretically capture a kind of "I must go, can't go" in Beckettian terms. We hope that this suspended step into the unknown can be captured. Yet, this difficulty in the process of conception and theorization produces regression: one reaction is to dismiss as irrelevant and bypass the matter as if there is nothing there, in the comfort of feeling at home with what is theoretically and organizationally familiar. This dogmatism, however, is killing off the movements from learning, being inspired and feeding from the energies, the social imaginaries and the potentialities unfolding; it is a slow death of organizations from their very life world.

Another reaction is in the opposite direction. Frustrated by traditional organizations' inability to change, renew and draw from the energies of new and vibrant environments (as it happens with certain parties, trade unions and old-type organizations), or by "new social movements" pivoting either around decadent "identity politics" (e.g., some anti-racist or feminist or gay-liberation movements) or certain individuals who are revered as omnipotent leaders (e.g., certain anti-racist, pro-migrant groups), some resort to cutting the Gordian Knot by bypassing theory altogether. Rejecting theory, history and forms of organization altogether as irrelevant and outdated, they plunge into a sort of celebration of praxis, novelty and the freshness provided by a sort of free-floating revolutionary digitalism. Yet, sometimes such celebration of praxis might deprive movements from the potential of anchoring them to their specific social formation, to specific dynamics and conditions, making them so unbearably light that can render them baseless. Moreover, denying or refusing to connect praxis to theory and strategy makes the potential devoid of memory and political life: erasing the accumulated knowledge, the technologies, organizational forms and memories of resistance, is blinding any potential politics against forces of control, order and discipline, which have immense capacities of learning as cognitive capitalism thrives on knowledge and innovation. Refusing to connect to the past, to other struggles, to draw from solidarities of movements (local and global) and willingly depriving the movement from the socialities that breed a sense of collectivity/interconnectivity within the specific time-and-space is a recipe for failure, disaster even.

This is where we turn to digitality, activism and the generation of *mobile commons*. From our empirical findings we can safely claim that digital forms of representation in the context of migration and transnational activism differ in terms of effect and visibility in the field. The activity of the networks, as it takes place face-to-face, is not reflected in the intensity of its digital representation. In general, the networking between different groups/actors is maintained and deepened. In this sense, we can begin to imagine of *a right to the city reloaded*. *Sans Papiers*' citizenship acts from below are certainly challenging both geopolitical readings of the world, politics of representation of local, national, regional and global governance and they are certainly challenging borders. There is here a *lacuna* of social movement studies as the challenge of migration-as-a-social-movement in general calls for rethinking\urban questions as *urban molecular revolts* and/or *counter-revolts*; and further study along these lines. At least in our study we can locate a disjuncture: what is the

relationship between movements, struggles and times: Hamlet's aporia that "time is out of joint" finds another twist in the context of this study.

Migration, class analysis, ethnicity and gendering must be properly integrated in understanding the *claims to the right to the city*. Transit migration and mobile commons are reloading politics of the local and the global as the everydayness of digital materialities, between exception and normality. Are digital materialities of everydayness transforming the terms of social struggles and movements? The answer from our study is that they certainly do so; the issue is to map and read them properly in order to conceive how the new rights to the city inscribing mobile commons and migrant digitalities are being reloaded; and by doing so they are shaping the social imaginaries of a future world.

More "sociological imagination" (Mills, 1959) therefore is required to capture the potentialities before us in the current conjuncture described as "politics in the age of austerity" (Schafer and Streeck, 2013). As with most (post)social-democrats and other mainstream actors who see the world from an institutionalist perspective, the current situation is perceived as leading to a deepening of the crisis of democracy, representation and legitimization of the institutional forms running in parallel with the welfare crisis. "Politics in the age of austerity" becomes "impossible to imagine," given that what is being produced and reproduced is a "politics-cum-austerity" with a constitutionally imposed balanced budget and institutionally embedded neoliberal austerity, which asphyxiate and squeeze out the remainders of the welfare state (Schafer and Streeck, 2013). Hence, there is expansion of inequality not only at socio-economic level but also at participatory and representational level (Offe, 2013). Such perspectives are not wrong in the current political landscape of official politics: despite the vociferous calls for "ending the depression now", using neo-Keynesian tools from the likes of Krugman (2012) and Stieglitz (2012) right through to Habermas (2012) and Beck (2013), the realization of a social Europe or any particular "social state" seems more distant than ever.

It is not surprising that in mainstream accounts the question of *migrants as political subjects* and the migration issue at large are downgraded to side issues. Migration is often depicted as being merely a partial element in the politics of xenophobic populist parties and the new security/securitization agenda. Mainstream politics is a major problem in reading the existing potentialities that rise around the globe, unless there is of course a radical breakthrough. The point is that they cannot see the potentialities that we see as opening spaces for new politics, materialized by new subjectivities

that emerge. This is not to say that a *revolution* is happening in Europe; on the contrary, we must recognize a systemic and strong trend that could be read as somewhat counter-revolutionary or what Gramsci called "passive revolution" or "reaction-revolution," in an organic crisis that is leading to a reactionary erosion of the post-World War II consensus regarding the welfare state. Yet, we can witness at least sparks or enclaves of something kicking off everywhere, even if some are confident enough to designate them as "the new global revolutions" (Mason, 2012).

Prediction is unsafe; despite the smart and sophisticated technology used for surveillance by the forces of control and order and the desperate revolutionary desire for total transformation from the opposite end of the social contestation, the frustration remains: "we can no longer even see how insurrection might begin" (Mason, 2012, 89). Is there something happening in specific quarters-enclaves generating Wright's "real utopias" and Foucault's "heterotopias"? Is there any evidence of such potentialities emerging from what Holloway (2010) called "cracks of capitalism"? We are not certain, but something is definitely happening.

In this sense it is unwise to make any prediction about the latest violent eruptions in Turkey at the moment; the massive explosion in Greece in 2008 is another instance that was interpreted quite differently by various radical and conservative perspectives. However, the unpredictability continues as street politics seems to be blocked at the moment in Greece; it is a rather strange impasse after six consecutive years of crisis-and-austerity. In Cyprus the austerity straight-jacket imposed by the Government and the Troika has produced mass unemployment and misery; however, new movements are emerging. We safely assume that uncertainty and unpredictability will remain the motto of our times. Since the future seems to last forever,[4] we hope that we have offered some clues in reading this unstable world of ours which is undergoing rapid transformation.

Notes

1   For more on this issues see WP10 of Mig@Net study at http://www. mignetproject.eu/?p=563 (accessed March 8, 2014).
2   See The Centre for Mobilities Research (CeMoRe) University of Lancaster, http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/centres/cemore/
3   This is possible via the unrecognized/illegal airport of Erczan, a few kilometers toward the east from Nicosia.
4   We are alluding here to Althusser's memoir (1993).

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