Welcome to the Bubble? Crisis and care at the crossroads of the Parisian “migration crisis”

by

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Abstract

In the northern districts of Paris, many thousands of asylum-seekers and other migrants live in provisional encampments, over 75 of which have been dismantled since 2015. These encampments and the violent processes by which they are repeatedly evacuated and destroyed by authorities have become constitutive of a so-called Parisian "migration crisis" widely reported in the local and international press. From November 2016 to March 2018, the municipality operated the Centre de premier accueil Paris-Nord (CPA), nicknamed the "Bulle de Paris" (the "Paris Bubble") in Porte de la Chapelle, a neighbourhood at the northeastern frontier of the city. Conceived as an "experimental" and "temporary" local intervention into a crisis largely caused by failures of the National State, it was at that time France's first and Europe's largest urban migration reception facility. This dissertation tells distinct stories of the Parisian "migration crisis" in this site — built to the standards of an emergent municipal humanitarianism — and in the makeshift encampments that surrounded it and proliferated in Parisian public space. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork conducted over more than three consecutive years in Paris, including in situ at the CPA for the entire duration of its existence, and during follow-up visits in 2021 and 2022, it interrogates the affective, discursive and material politics of this emergent "crisis". I argue that the "unconditional welcome" purportedly offered by the municipal facility was neither welcoming nor unconditional; instead, it jeopardised the presence, mobilities and prospects of migrants in the city. The dissertation consists of eight stand-alone papers separated by brief bridging chapters. After an introduction, a methodologies chapter and a contextual overview chapter, Part 1 contains three chapters that trace the emergent crisis urbanism materialised through the key site of the CPA. Part II consists of two chapters exposing dual processes of urban inhabitation and removal: In the first, I posit processes of *démantèlement* (decampment, or destruction of encampments) as domicidal practices engaged to remove and banish certain people from Parisian public space. The second part traces a Parisian "Black Mediterranean" in which local solidarians and migrants living in encampments enact a "shipwreck ethics" of radical care that challenges the necropolitics of State immigration régimes. The conclusion then maps out some future directions for research engagements stemming from this work.

Keywords: Crisis; Urban politics; Migration; Paris; Encampment

Dedication

For Louis J.C.K. Kennedy: “You take delight not in a city’s seven or seventy wonders, but in the answer it gives to a question of yours” (Calvino, *Invisible Cities*).

And for Z.B., may your memory be a blessing.

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List of Acronyms

AVRR	Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration
BAC	Brigade anti-criminalité
CASVP	Centre d'action sociale de la ville de Paris
CNRS	Comité nationale de recherche scientifique
CPA	Centre de premier accueil Paris-Nord
CRS	Compagnies républicaines de sécurité
DCR	drug consumption room
HR	harm reduction
ISCC	Institut des sciences de la communication
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OFII	Office français de l'immigration et de l'intégration
PO	Participant Observation (research method)
SCMR	Salle de consommation à moindre risque
SDF	sans domicile fixe
UPEC	Université Paris-Est Créteil

Glossary (French terms and other definitions)

accueil digne	worthy reception or welcome
accueil inconditionnel	unconditional welcome, or reception
boulevard périphérique (périph')	ring road
bidonville	shantytown (French term)
Bulle	Bubble (In this context: The nickname of the Centre de premier accueil Paris-Nord)
campement de fortune	makeshift encampment
campement sauvage	wild or savage encampment
colline du crack	crack hill, a previous longstanding encampment inhabited by marginalised crack users
construction sur dalle	slab construction
convention d'accueil	visiting researcher agreement
déboutés de l'asile	a person whose asylum claim has been rejected
démantèlement	dismantlement, see Chapter 13
dispositif	apparatus or facility, see Chapter 6
dispositif de premier accueil	primary reception facility, see Chapter 6
Dublin Regulation or Dublin Procedure	the controversial Dublin regulation stipulates that if any migrant has had their fingerprints taken in a European Union country upon arrival, they must return to the country by which they entered and claim asylum there
dubliné (or Dubliner)	a person subject to the Dublin regulation
hébergeurs citoyens	a network of local residents who host unhoused migrants in their homes, whether temporarily or for the long term
incivilités	incivilities
liberté, égalité, fraternité	liberty, equality, fraternity
mairie de Paris	the Parisian municipality, mayor's office or city hall
mairie d'arrondissements	district mayor's office or city hall
maraudes	outreach

migrant	term used for simplicity and to refuse exclusionary language and bureaucratic categorisation for a migrant; a person on the move
mise à l'abri	emergency sheltering
primo-arrivant	recently arrived, prospective asylum-seekers — not unaccompanied minors or those subject to the Dublin regulation
quartier populaire	working-class neighbourhood
sans-papiers	undocumented migrant (administrative term for someone who has no other administrative status)
Solidarians	nickname for a volunteer in civil society supporting migrants through humanitarian means, e.g. by providing food, shelter, safe passage, legal advocacy etc.
terrains	field (as in, fieldwork)
tranquillité publique	public order or tranquility
Ville de Paris	City of Paris (municipality)
ville refuge	sanctuary city

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. The crisis of encampments

On a chilly Friday night in December 2017, a meeting was convened in the gym of an elementary school located next to the Canal Saint-Martin in the Grange-aux-Belles neighbourhood of the 10th arrondissement of Paris by the Association des parents d'élèves (PTA), of which I was an elected representative. It was so well-attended that the gym overflowed. While one concerned local resident after another took to the microphone, the crowd spilled out on the sidewalk in front of the school and along the footbridge over the Canal Saint-Martin, the school's namesake. This was a cherished waterway that defined the character of this neighbourhood for locals and others, where scenes from the film *Amélie*[1] had been shot on her cobbled promenades that were emblematic of this gentrifying area of Paris that, in the space of a few years, had transformed from a *quartier populaire* (working-class district) into a fetishised urban space that attracted international visitors eager to experience the "real" Paris, outside the usual tourist zones. On lazy afternoons, tour guides blared their narrations from sightseeing barges that glided under her footbridges and stalled at her locks. Schoolchildren scootered along her banks and played tag in the green spaces while their parents picnicked and drank rosé, dangling their bare feet in the water. As perceivably "vacant" and interstitial spaces of the city, these canal banks were also inhabited by people who depended on public spaces to live in and survive. Their tents were clustered along her banks, obscured by bushes or tucked under the footbridges or, in other spots where the terrain was wide enough to accommodate a larger group of people living together, sometimes congregated in encampments that became central social spaces surrounding a fire around which to gather on blustery nights.

Of course, the phenomenon of encampments near Parisian waterways was not new. A recent exhibit by Henri Cartier-Bresson inaugurating the reopening of the Musée Carnavalet, the museum of the history of Paris, showed photographs that depicted tents on the banks of the Seine and under the aerial metro in the 1920s and '30s. More

[1] The "quick facts" sidebar in a Google Map of the area notes: "In the up-and-coming 10th arrondissement, the quaint footbridges and bohemian cafés of the Canal Saint-Martin… The area is also home to Gare du Nord and Gare de l'Est."

recently, camping on the canal had become both a practical solution and a political statement for unhoused people and their advocates, and a movement had even emerged from this practice (Les enfants du canal, see Chapter 12). Since 2015 and the "long summer of migration", large numbers of unhoused migrants in Paris had consistently survived in such encampments that, in the fall of 2016, were perceived to be growing and expanding along the banks of the canals at the level of the Pont Jaurès and under the tracks of the aerial metro at the station that bore the same name. By May of that year, three *démantèlement* (dismantlement) operations had destroyed several migrants' encampments near the canal and had been replaced by even larger ones. These were part of a growing situation of unease in this Parisian neighbourhood, among others: A Canadian journalist, writing a field report for the CBC, called it "France's unimagined and unimaginable migrant crisis" (Gagnon, 2016).

The meeting at the school on Friday night had been organised by the PTA in order to address this "crisis" of encampments that, in the words of speakers that night, was disproportionately affecting the neighbourhood and our school located next to the canal where a burgeoning group of young Afghan boys were living in tents and under tarps clustered trashcan bonfires that burned into the night, and where a small family was living in a clutch of tents directly behind the school, along the pedestrian walkway leading out of the Grange aux belles projects. Our constituents (the parents of the children who attended the school) had demanded this meeting in order to confront local authorities about their management (or, as some had termed it, mis- or non-management) of this "crisis". Representatives from the local *mairie d'arrondissement* (district city hall) who were present listened intently as one speaker after another expressed their frustrated horror:

> Since last summer, life has become very hard in the 10th. We live in a state of constant panic as we encounter the vestiges of misery in this crisis on our front stoops that threatens the cohesiveness of our daily lives. *Au secours*, immediate action is required. What are you going to do about it? (Public speaker at meeting, December 2017).

Figure 1.1 Encampments on the Quai de Valmy in the 10th arrondissement. Taken from the Pont Jaurès, March 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

1.2. Crisis as a public mood

The 10th arrondissement, home to famous landmarks like Place de la République and the Gare du Nord, the largest train station in Europe, was also one of the main locations in the capital that manifested the so-called "Parisian migrant crisis" where newly arrived migrants in Paris slept rough in the northern districts of the city. In fall of 2016, a cluster of tents on the Quai de Jemmapes had burgeoned into one of the largest encampments in recent history, the so-called "*petite jungle de Stalingrad*" (the "little jungle of Stalingrad"), nicknamed after the encampment's proximity to the Stalingrad metro stop and famous "Calais jungle". By autumn, the encampment housed over 4,000 people and had expanded from the canal banks and under the tracks of the aerial metro between Stalingrad and Jaurès stations up along the avenue de Flandre in the 18th arrondissement. In October, when authorities definitively destroyed the "Calais jungle", many who had been camping on the coastal border between France and the U.K. made

their way to Paris and joined this encampment. On November 4th, barely a week later, authorities evacuated over 3,000 people from the Stalingrad camp, loading them onto buses and transporting them to shelters located elsewhere in the Ile-de-France, outside the city centre. However, as was the case during previous “evacuations”, many returned to the street as they struggled to access even their most basic rights within an inefficient and outdated immigration bureaucracy and where authorities interfered with their presence through harassment, decampment and other practices that increased visibility of their destitution while their shelters encampments were framed as the causes, rather than the effects, of this “migrant crisis” that called for a certain impetus of humanitarian interventions (Fassin, 2005; Le Courant, 2016).

Although immigration policy has long been considered the purview of nation-states, the everyday politics and practices of migration reception are increasingly situated in cities and at the local scale. Since 2015, European municipalities have sought to address the pressures and controversies of this so-called migration “crisis” on city streets. Though conventionally thought of in terms of global geopolitics, unauthorised migrants have local, embodied presence within neighbourhood where their everyday become intervoven with those of local residents for whom the “migration crisis” has manifested as a specifically local phenomenon, rendering the abstractions of “Fortress Europe” proximate, intimate and urgent.

A week after the Stalingrad camp was destroyed, Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo fulfilled the promise she had been making for months in the face of this fomenting Parisian “migration crisis”: To invent “new *dispositifs* to overcome the current situation of oversaturation” (Mouillard, 2016). Her government’s first major intervention, the Centre de premier accueil Paris-Nord (CPA, nicknamed “La Bulle” or “the Bubble”) was, at that time, unprecedented — France’s first and Europe’s largest urban migrant reception facility. Opened on November 10th, 2016, it operated for 17 months, until the end of March 2018, in Porte de la Chapelle, a major intersection on the northeastern frontier of the city that was a 30-minute walk from the Canal Saint-Martin. However, though the CPA had been initiated to mitigate this “crisis” of encampments, they persisted and their numbers only increased: Between 2015 and 2020, over 75 migrants’ encampments were destroyed in the increasingly hostile political context where unauthorized migrants arriving in Paris are trapped between welcome and exclusion (Bontemps et al., 2018; Guilbaud et al., 2022; Koepke & Noûs, 2020).

In research conducted between 2016 and 2018, I investigated the Parisian "migrant crisis" — both in the encampments installed in interstitial urban spaces and in the novel municipal intervention of the CPA — in order to better understand this unique (but also, increasingly ordinary) "crisis" as it was felt and lived on the streets of my neighbourhood and in this Paris that casts itself as a "city of Sanctuary" even as it endeavours to create new technologies for displacement and exclusion of certain people. Indeed, in the years since that PTA meeting in 2017, encampments have been further pushed to the peripheries through processes of violent removal that, I argue, are enabled by such affective, material and discursive politics of "crisis". As I write this, the "migrant crisis" in Paris is still constantly evolving as governmental policies harden in step with the increasing surveillance and securitisation of migrants' movements and presence in the city.

Even if the purpose of the meeting that December evening in 2017 was to address this unfolding situation that was said to be disproportionately affecting the 400 families of the children who attended kindergarten at this school, they were definitely not the ones most impacted by the "crisis" of encampments. As the meeting progressed, I thought of Amira, a mother of five who had recently arrived in Paris from Afghanistan and was now living with her extended family in a small cluster of tents directly behind my son's school. I had met her earlier that fall outside the CPA, where she and her family had spent the day undergoing intake procedures (detailed in Part 1 of this dissertation). When the facility closed for the day, they were asked to leave and left to fend for themselves, and I found then outside the gate around 8pm while working with a group of citizen volunteers distributing food, blankets and "ground support" for migrants in the encampments around Porte de La Chapelle. One of my jobs was to meet the families left outside every night at closing time and to try to find temporary shelter for them and, failing that, to show them where they could set up camp away from police patrols (I detail this work more fully in Part 2 of the dissertation).

Amira and her family had decided to install themselves directly above our school in the 10th arrondissement away from the chaos of Porte de la Chapelle and the CPA, and a short distance from the canal where a larger encampment was inhabited mostly by young Afghan men who spent their days queuing for bureaucratic appointments and their evenings huddled around a bonfire bonfires burning late into the night. I later learned that many of them were in fact not *primo-arrivant* (recently arrived asylum-

seekers), but rather were what was called *les deboutés de l'asile* (migrants whose asylum claims had already been rejected); still others were unaccompanied minors or other newly-arrived asylum claimants who were entitled to State protection but remained unhoused and unable to access assistance for a complex variety of reasons. Neither *Dublinés* (those categorised under the Dublin procedure, see Glossary) nor unaccompanied minors were allowed to stay in the CPA, as the facility only accepted *hommes majeurs isolés* (single adult men), and then, only those who were classified as *primo-arrivant*. Others, like Amira and her family, were turned away at the doors of the municipal facility that advertised "unconditional welcome".

The Grange-aux-Belles complex where the school meeting was held were built in the 1970s as part of a massive redesign of public housing in Paris; this prized urbanist project featured *construction sur dalle* (slab design) meant to separate vehicular roads from pedestrian spaces. Mid-rise apartment complexes were clustered around plazas and gardens with benches, walkways and leisure areas featuring a basketball court, ping-pong tables and a public pool. Wide pathways were flanked by vegetation that also functioned to obscure tents from the sightlines of trafficked roads along the routes regularly patrolled by authorities. Amira's children, though school-aged, did not attend our school though they could have, since France offered equal rights to *scolarisation* (schooling) and indeed, institutionalised education was often the pathway through which families accessed social services upon arrival, regardless of their housing or immigration status. However, it soon became clear that these children's non-attendance at our school was not the crisis under discussion at our meeting, as speaker after speaker described their sensorial experiences of daily *incivilités* (incivilities) they and their children encountered as a result of living alongside people living in tents without physical privacy, sanitation, shelter or security. While the speakers' complaints were more than pure NIMBY diatribes, they communicated the shock and panic many Parisians felt when confronted with this "crisis", which was attributable in part to the failures of the State, while primarily referred to the existence of encampments themselves as constitutive of the "crisis". In this local context, residents' complaints about incivilités — a word that in French denotes a rude or inconsiderate material practice such as public urination — referred not only to the fraught politics of immigration, reception, integration, housing or economic "crises", but simply to the presence of bodies that had been left to

live in public, whose physical existence had come to embody the sense of “crisis” (Koepke & Noûs, 2020).

Figure 1.2 Encampment in the Grange-aux-Belles, with kindergarten behind, December 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

That night at the meeting, in response to the many complaints they were hearing, city officials outlined their paradoxical position as municipal actors in the geopolitical context of these mass events of displacement. They pointed out that while the situation that that had manifested as a “crisis” on the streets of Paris was being articulated as a municipal responsibility, the municipality has little control or agency over national immigration policy, though the presence of so many people sleeping rough in local neighbourhoods effectively brought the “crisis” at Europe’s borders (De Genova et al., 2018) into the urban context. The encampments in the 10th and other northern districts were embodied, nearby manifestations of an otherwise-distant “crisis” that had became a hot-button issue in the lead-up to the presidential election in late 2016, and was then taken up by Macron as the failure of his predecessor to craft strong immigration policies that effectively distinguished and categorised asylum-seekers as either worthy “political”

or unworthy “economic” migrants. This rhetoric of an “influx” or “flood” of asylum-seekers dovetailed with the observable everyday problems created by the destitution they lived with in encampments, and was sometimes echoed in the complaints of local residents.

In 2018, I interviewed a local politician who, referring to a local park between the Canal Saint-Martin and the Gare de l’Est, declared that “the Jardin Villemin had become an international destination known as far away as Kabul” (Interview, city official, July 2018). What he meant was that this park, popular with families for after-school picnics and birthday parties, had become home to a number of Afghan migrants over the past few years. Just as Porte de la Chapelle had seen many settlements (notably an installation of shacks built by Roma along disused tram tracks), many neighbourhoods had felt the brunt of a worsening housing crisis that was gendered and racialised as much as it was ultra-visible through the existence of encampments (Bouagga et al., 2017; Gardesse et al., 2022). This long history problematises the perception of migrants’ presence in Paris as a newly spawned “crisis”, though the encampments in the 10th in 2016–2017 were attributed to their proximity to France terre d’asile, a government agency where asylum-seekers queued for administrative appointments (though this procedure changed shortly after the CPA opened, as covered in Part 1 of the dissertation). Nevertheless, this was a particular historical moment: Even as the mayor repeatedly referred to Paris as a “city of refuge” and called out the national government for their non-management of the current “migrant crisis” that led to the unfolding situation on Paris streets, the encampments that continued to proliferate in the northeastern quadrant of the city were and are widely reported in the international press and have continued to bring controversy to city hall, even after Hidalgo was re-elected in 2020.

Since 2015, many meetings like the one in our local school gym have attempted to address the pressures and tensions of this “crisis”: They are calls for action, but what kind of action? Should the municipality pressure the prefecture to order the intensification of camp sweeps, or augment the presence of police patrolling the streets? Need they install more portable toilets and urinals along the banks of the Canal Saint-Martin, thus becoming complicit with encampments and perennialising their presence? Could they more effectively confront the Macron government and/or the Minister of the Interior about their failed reception policies? Hidalgo had repeatedly confronted national leaders about their part in the Parisian “migration crisis”, which had not subsided but had intensified since the era of the CPA, which closed in 2018. However, though the CPA

had not succeeded in mitigating this crisis of unprecedented and unique proportions, it was not exactly a failure, either. Its complexities can be contextualised by other crises of our time — economic, housing and racial crises that all intersect and manifest the conditions of life that parents were complaining about at the meeting that night in December 2017.

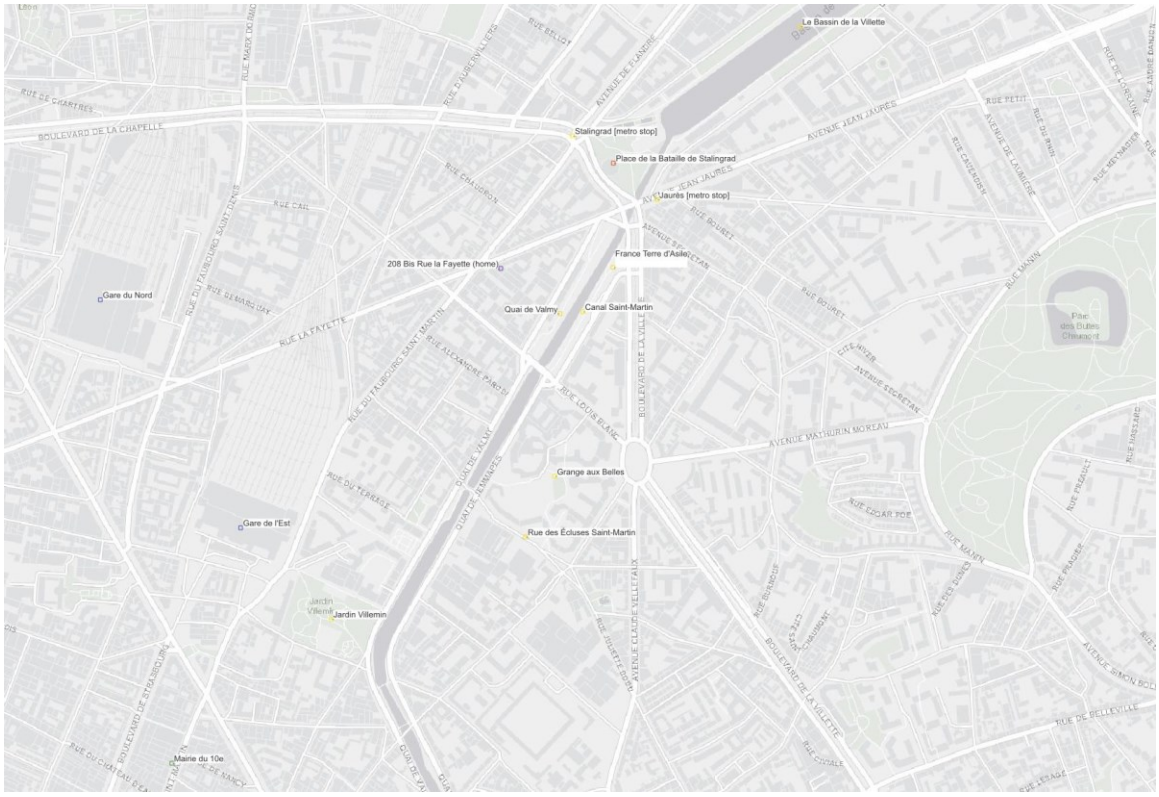

Figure 1.3 Neighbourhood-scale map of sites mentioned in the dissertation.

1.3. Research questions

I conducted doctoral research in the CPA from its opening in November 2016 until it closed on March 31st, 2018. I also conducted fieldwork in another site, the Salle de consommation à moindre risque GAÏA-Paris (SCMR) — France's first supervised drug consumption room (DCR), which opened in October 2016. I mention my extensive (and ongoing) work with the SCMR since they afforded me opportunities to work within the street politics of numerous urban "crises" as they were felt and lived at local scales, as well as with the municipal management schemes to govern and manage them. However, for the dissertation, I have chosen to focus largely on the CPA and on the

“migrant crisis” in Paris. I detail my methodological approach and research design in the next chapter.

As crucial locations of municipal “crisis response”, my main objective in researching these spaces was to understand these facilities created to care for marginalised people’s basic needs as well as to govern, manage and control the disorder their presence — and specifically, their improvised shelters — brought to public space. To this end, my research within two specific facilities — the CPA and the SCMR — focused on them as material and socio-political spaces, as well as their positioning within neighbourhood contexts, to understand how “urban crisis” is articulated through these sites and beyond them. By interrogating the everyday material, affective, spatial and discursive qualities of “urban crisis” in Paris within contested political, economic and social contexts, this dissertation explores the functioning of these sites to better understand how they achieved (or failed to achieve) their objectives.

My research in this dissertation is oriented towards these specific questions and objectives:

> How do municipal spaces actually figure into the social life of the city? What are the practices and politics of care at work in these spaces and beyond them? How do they shape relationships between civil society, beneficiaries, and municipal actors, and conjugate the relational politics of “crisis”?
>
> How did the existence, functioning and design of the CPA co-produce the affective, material, spatial and discursive politics of the so-called “Parisian migration crisis” within and in relation to local, national and transnational political contexts?
>
> What was the genesis of the CPA as a municipal dispositif designed for the governance, management and control of the “migration crisis” in Paris?
>
> In the case of the CPA, what was the character of welcome and care produced by this space? How did the CPA govern and discipline migrants’ presence and mobilities in public spaces of the city?
>
> How did encounters within and beyond the CPA (through citizens’ collectives working in encampments, for example) forge and shape relationships of care between diverse subjects?
>
> How might the detailed study of the CPA as an urban dispositif of crisis management contribute to ongoing inquiry into concepts related to urban crisis and crisis urbanism?

1.4. Urban crisis/crisis urbanism

In contemporary cities, “urban crises” are everywhere and ongoing. In the districts in the north of Paris where I conducted fieldwork for this dissertation between 2016 and 2019, multiple interconnected crises were articulated through encounters between people and the city, shaping their experiences differently depending on the various forms of privilege they possessed — or didn’t. In the neoliberal urban context, crises accrue and are encountered by a variety of State responses intended to mitigate, manage and control them, however imperfect and insufficient these may be, as well as the everyday interventions of individuals and collectives to fill in these gaps in governmental care. As I researched this so-called “Parisian migration crisis”, one specific crisis among multiple simultaneous, intersecting and concurrent crises variously named as displacement, dispossession, inequality, housing, economics and racial capitalism — to name a few — I found that the designation of “crises”, as well as the modes and amplitude of interventions intended to address them, depended greatly on how they were named and framed, and by whom. “Crisis” never occurs in isolation: It is always relational and therefore political in that its conditions depend on differential distributions of power and privilege. Who has the power to designate what constitutes a “crisis”, and what should be done about it? What differentiates a “crisis” from the general conditions of “crisis everydayness” (Berlant, 2011) under which many of us live? In this era, most of us experience endless permutations of multiple pressing hardships to greater or lesser degrees, but some of us presume to live “normal” lives that are only periodically punctuated by moments of duress and instability that we name as “crises” necessitating reparative action, while others are threatened every day by imminent harm, hardship and death.

This dissertation interrogates the affective, material, spatial and discursive politics of one specific crisis among many interconnected ones: The “crisis” of migration

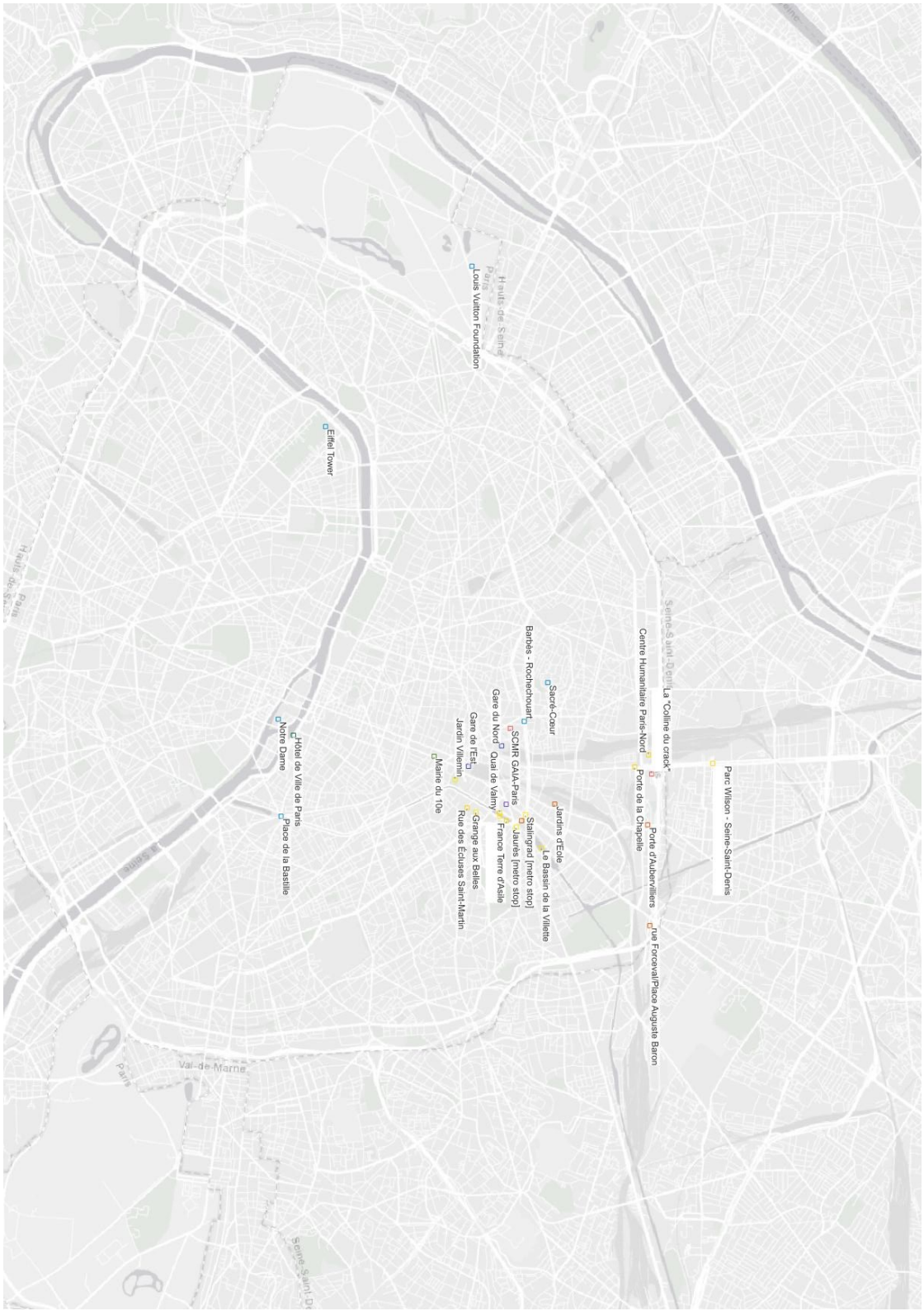

Figure 1.4 Map of sites mentioned in the dissertation.

in Paris. Though the term “crisis” is contested and problematic, I use it throughout the dissertation to describe this situation that is particular to this place and time — Paris, 2016–2019 — and also not, in that it is ongoing and generalised in a global sense. The situation of advanced precarity in the French capital that I discuss in this dissertation is part of a larger global situation of displacement that has come to be known, problematically, as the “European migration crisis” (De Genova et al., 2018). In the years since 2015, large numbers of displaced migrants fleeing from protracted conflicts and climate-based crises in their home countries and along Europe’s increasingly fatal borders have been arriving by the thousands in Paris — the city acting sometimes as a way-stop en route to Calais and the UK border, but also increasingly as an arrival city in its own right, which is becoming a “hotspot” for unauthorised migration despite France’s low approval numbers for asylum claims (Bhagat, 2021). The designation of this situation as a “crisis” speaks both to the historical tendencies to perceive “chaos and crisis” (Mountz & Hiemstra, 2014) in events of human mobility and displacement at the scale of the nation-state, and various formations of “urban crisis”.

In 2017, the year I began to focus my research on the CPA and its embeddedness in its local context, Porte de la Chapelle was the epicentre of a so-called “*chaos migratoire*” [migratory chaos] (Beaulieu, 2017) that was widely reported in the local and international press. As journalists narrated the situation at the gates of Paris as increasingly chaotic, unmanageable and dangerous due to the presence of (young, male, racialised) migrants caught in the “bottleneck” at the CPA and repeatedly aggressed by the authorities (Guilbaud et al., 2022), the desperate migrants whose arrivals were said to exceed the capacities of the State to receive and house asylum-seekers as required by French and international law saw their very existence in the “capital of Modernity” (Harvey, 2003) articulated as an unmanageable crisis in the margins of world’s second most-visited tourist city. This “Parisian migrant crisis” also, of course, produced itself in various ways through everyday encounters between migrants and local residents, whose outspokenness about their experiences living alongside encampments were often contrapuntal to the vision of Paris as a sanctuary city or a space of welcome that was “made for sharing”, as said the English motto of the 2024 Olympics. However, other Parisians worked, individually and collectively, to truly

welcome migrants and build social infrastructures of survival within the encampments, however tenuous.

Etymologically, the word crisis comes from the Greek κρίσις or krísis, what the Oxford dictionary defines as “a separating, power of distinguishing, decision, choice, election, judgment”. It denotes the opportunity or necessity of deciding what to do about a dangerous situation. In late Middle English it was a medical term that referred to the turning point of a disease, a period of sudden change signaling peril, but also possibility. There is always the sense of crisis as a temporary condition that will end, and the expectation that things will return to a state of “normalcy” — in the meantime, the designation of “crisis” is a narrative device that opens some possibilities and forecloses others predicated on the assumption that things may progress and even improve as they exceed the limits of normalcy into exceptionalism: “When crisis is posited as the very condition of contemporary situations, certain questions become possible while others are foreclosed” (Roitman, 2014, p. 14). We can take this to mean that the specificities of a given crisis — its affective, material, spatial and discursive politics — have much to say about what outcomes can be hoped for or feared and, as Roitman notes, ask what possibilities might be opened or foreclosed.

In the local neighbourhoods of world cities where the “good life” is symbolised through cosmopolitan inhabitation of urban spaces, neoliberal turns in State social, economic and health policies that have precipitated crisis conditions for all but the most privileged inhabitants of these cities. Crisis punctuates our everyday lives to varying degrees. Yet as these effects of multiple interconnected crises accrue and are articulated through bodies and their vestiges, they are encountered by a variety of State responses intended to mitigate, manage and control them, however imperfect and insufficient these may be. Our perception of what constitutes a “crisis” from the general conditions of “crisis everydayness” (Berlant, 2011) that affect us all to greater or lesser degrees depends on where we are situated. Specifically named crises that we single out and isolate coexist among multiple simultaneous, intersecting and concurrent crises variously named as displacement, dispossession, inequality, housing, economics and racial capitalism, to name just a few. But the designation “crises”, as well as the modes and amplitude of interventions to respond to them and address them, depend greatly on how they are named and framed, and by whom. “Crises” never occurs in a vacuum: They are always relational and dependent on differential distributions of power and

privilege. Yet we often hear about or observe crises as though they do occur in vacuums, and the proximity of bodies in crisis is what precipitates the affective politics of crisis, from which ideological impetus for new forms of care emerge.

The naming and framing of crisis in these contexts of survivability are also political questions related to care: Whoever has the power to designate what constitutes a “crisis” is usually in charge of deciding what should be done about it — indeed, how we should be called to care, and about what, and about whom. There are political advantages to be won in doing so; indeed, crises are often considered as opportunities to impose new ideas and explore new ways of doing things. Crisis as a multifaceted affect and an explanatory concept shapes the tensions and fractured exertions of differential privilege and power. I argue here that it also incites ideological exertions of care and its various relationalities, from forms of governmental care to autonomous, ad hoc forms of mutual aid that are both constellations of material practices and ethics of relation that emerge from public moods of “crisis”.

The familiar interplay of “crisis” and responsibility bears questions of how these “opportunities” play out, and how are designations — and their responses — contingent on the conditions of “crisis”? Beginning from the assertion that “crisis” is always political, just as “normalcy” is, I contend with crisis by asserting that the way particular “crises” are named and framed defines the terms through which they will be encountered, and what their limits will be. The designation of crisis in the context of migration has been used to describe the “chaotic” presence of unauthorised migrants: “Politicians, bureaucrats, policymakers, journalists, scholars and petty sovereigns all prove fluent in the language of chaos and crisis… in a neoliberal era where bureaucrats must work within frames of risk assessment and the bottom line, this language is first and foremost a discourse of states” (Mountz & Hiemstra, 2014, p. 383).

This dissertation interrogates the so-called “Parisian migrant crisis”, and urban crises more generally, as they shape urban spaces, are differentially felt and lived by individuals in local contexts, and are managed through interventions by municipal governments to control people and political relationships in the crisis. This research interrogates the emergent politics of the “Parisian migration crisis” through the site of the CPA from the point of view of interlocutors, volunteers, salaried employees, municipal actors and employees of the social action branch of city hall, the Centre d’action sociale

de la Ville de Paris (CASVP), as well as my own observations over the course of several years of ethnographic fieldwork. However, this research argues that municipal and other State facilities are sites where the politics of crisis and care are enacted and not just encountered or mitigated. For this reason, I have also considered the work of civil actors to support migrants "in lieu of the state" through everyday enactments of radical care are also part of the variegated naming and framing of this particular crisis (see Chapter 4). As the main objective of this research is to better understand how crisis formations are co-produced and co-constituted by bodies, spaces and encounters, I approach *crisis* as a multifaceted term that is useful both as a concept and a method. I use *urban crisis* as an explanatory concept to designate the tensions and fractures of differential privilege and power in cities, introduce *crisis urbanism* as a mode of city-making that seeks to govern, control and intervene in these conditions, and deploy *crisis as a method* (see Chapter 2) to focus and pursue these research objectives while taking care to always keep the relational aspects of their articulation in the centre of my field of view.

1.5. Crisis and care

This research set out to consider urban spaces of care where ethics and practices of care enacted in the context of "crisis," as it was felt and lived locally, could be addressed. In the context of this work, I find care to be inextricably linked to these notion of crisis and crisis interventions, as a constellation of material practices as well as an ethic that emerges from public moods of "crisis" that are both its progenitors and effects. Notions of "crisis" and "care" are also both methods of discovery and analytics for this research. Lawson has described "care ethics" as those which "focus our attention on the social and how it is constructed through unequal power relationships, but [that] also moves us beyond critique and towards the construction of new forms of relationships, institutions and action that enhance mutuality and well-being" (2007, p. 1). In this spirit, this work aspires to continue the conversation about the "new forms of relationships" that are enacted spatially in certain sites where encounters between diverse actors take place under the auspices of care — sites like the CPA, but also the makeshift encampments that surrounded it, which were both its cause and effect, and where migrants, volunteers, authorities and others engendered relationships of care from within the context of crisis.

This research develops a definition of care that is constituted in the doing: Drawing significantly from recent anthropological interventions, my research is designed to pursue what I term a *site ethnography*, which I detail further in Chapter 2. My ethnographic engagement with everyday acts of care is constituted as "the way someone comes to matter and the corresponding ethics of attending to the other who matters" (Stevenson, 2014, p. 3). In her ethnography of care in the Canadian north, Stevenson juxtaposes this notion of care with population-scale "bureaucratic care" or biopolitical care (following Foucault), as "a form of care and governance that is primarily concerned with the maintenance of life itself and is directed at populations rather than individuals" (Stevenson, 2014, p. 3). Following this line of thinking, Lancione has highlighted the individual, instantiated and relational nature of care ethics and practices, describing how "one can retrieve a *politics of care* and understand it for what it is: A proposition of its own standing, an underground inscription impossible to appropriate and sustainable only in its own refrains, at its own tempo" (Lancione, 2020, p. 34). Lancione describes "underground inscriptions" of care amongst marginalised urbanites in Bucharest as a force of life "that saves itself from its own history, one that refuses institutionalisation, and one that constructs its own way of being into the world — that is, its own way of dwelling, by caring for its own unfolding" (Lancione, 2020, p. 33). My conceptualisation of radical care in this work is inspired by these notion of care as a relation that exists on its own terms, enacted in bodily and material entanglements and encounters between subjects that orient towards the possibilities for lives — and futures — that are "the hope of micropolitics… [that] invites us to learn how to act in the midst of ongoing, unforeclosed situations and ways of being in the world and tending to the 'otherwise'" (Anderson, 2017, p. 534).

Geographical notions of care have frequently been conceptualised as spatial, particularly in the extensive feminist literature. Defined variously and simultaneously as "concept, emotion, practice, politics, moral exhortation" (Atkinson et al., 2011, p. 563), care has been described as "uniquely geographical, as place, scale, distance and space are all inherent, rather than incidental to the formulation of the theories themselves and to the practical application of care-based morality" (Olson et al., 2020, p. 50). However, work on "landscapes" and "spaces" of care (Cloke et al., 2010; Conradson, 2003a, 2003b; Lancione, 2014a, 2014b; Milligan & Wiles, 2010) belie an ambivalence about their political potential — though Darling notes spaces of everyday care provision "might

become sites of political potential and critical openness" (Darling, 2011, p. 416). Herein, I build on care as a spatial relation enacted through proximity and presence. Migrants' encampments and the CPA were both located in neighbourhoods where migrants and locals encountered one another in the "with and for" of mutual inhabitation and vulnerability (Butler, 2016; Butler et al., 2016). The entanglements of care that transpired in these locations were framed by an emergent habitus of decolonial ethics that was shaped by "the implosion of geographical, historical and political distances inside the same space" (English et al., 2019, p. 195).

The literature of care and responsibility in geography has previously conceived of care as a constellation of material practices enacted in everyday life (Lawson, 2007; Massey, 2005), structured by relational ethics and "power geometries" that "suggest… spatially extensive connections of interdependence and mutuality" (Massey, 2004, p. 7) and a "politics of responsibility that think[s] of space as actively and continually practiced social relations — where we make choices that matter and that connect us to the lives of others" (Lawson, 2007, p. 6). Care has thus become inextricably entwined with the politics of responsibility, aligning with a feminist notion of care as simultaneously occurring on multiple scales from the global to the intimate (Pratt & Rosner, 2012). Care is embodied through manifold relations and assemblages of material and ethical practices that, rather than being divergent or chaotic, demonstrate how bodies, ethics and politics are crucially intertwined (Mountz, 2018) across sites, spaces and scales (Robinson, 2013). Engagements of care have been understood as incitements to extended ethical frameworks that may operate at a distance (Popke, 2006) or be brought about by proximity (Raghuram et al., 2009). The perspectives on care put forth by informants in this research demonstrate that everyday acts of material care challenge and exceed the "politics of life" (Fassin, 2007) enacted through governmental-humanitarian scripts that depoliticise and bureaucratise care for migrant populations through legal, juridical and institutional categorisations (Agier, 2011; Fassin, 2012; Malkki, 2015, 2015; Ticktin, 2011).

This minoritarian approach to care is exemplified in this research through work in specific sites that exemplify embodied, situated and messy "spaces of betweenness" (Katz, 1996a). Mitchell and Heynen posit that

> rarely have examinations of legal geography been rubbed directly against questions of survivability. This is perhaps because, as urban geographers, we have grown unused to raising the most fundamental questions — not 'what is the structure of everyday life in the city?' or 'what are the forms of governance of everyday life in the city?' but 'how is it possible for people even to live in the city? What does it take?' (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009, p. 614).

In response to these questions, ethnography emerges as an indispensable tool to highlight the inventiveness and specificity of individual trajectories, and craft narratives that structure analysis from the everyday materialities of the site. This is why my approach is explicitly ethnographic. This research is site-focused because my objective was to situate them as nodes within wider contexts that offer a geography of survival in the city, or highlight the geographies of survivability that are forged in the urban margins. As Miewald and McCann (2014) explain, analysis of marginalised peoples' geographies of survival as "socially produced arrangements of public and private spaces and social services that define how, and even if, people can live in a particular place… offer potential to deepen our analyses of the lived realities of low-income people's lives" (Miewald & McCann, 2014, p. 539).

Though each of the chapters in this dissertation is structured around its own framework of concepts, these are centred around the testimonies and lived experiences interlocutors have shared with me. I began by approaching the CPA in terms of the research questions listed above, in which I considered its potential to provide broader social benefits such as inclusion and access to rights, to discern how the CPA (and its exclusions) shaped and was shaped by different notions of care, governmental and otherwise. I was also interested in exploring its role as an emergent space within a neighbourhood and an urban context whose encounters were not fixed in advance but immanent and emergent within the encounters that took place within and through them, constituted by the everyday practices of the people who use and run them, are contingent on relationships forged through encounters. My analysis bears out the truth that everything about this so-called "Parisian migration crisis" — from the origins of displacement and the geographies of migration and mobility, to the street politics of inhabitation and the coalitional aspects of care as enacted in encampment support, to the necropolitics of camp-sweeps themselves — *everything* about the crisis is relational. This research was shaped by an understanding that spaces of care were material structures that were produced and constituted through relationships forged within

themselves and across scales and networks that conjoined various objectives (political, humanitarian, socio-economic) but were also emergent and themselves "the result of practices, trajectories, interrelations [that are made] through interactions at all levels, [forged relationally] and internally complex, essentially unboundable… and inevitably historically changing" (Massey, 2004b, p. 2).

This focus on relationality was predicated on the idea that as a researcher, my analytical position was contingent on my presence and involvement in sites and processes as I studied them. Personal commitments to social justice and autonomous politics inform my interest in urban sites as research locations, and I developed an approach I called "site ethnography" (detailed in the next chapter) that was both a foundational concept and a research methodology. As a resident in the neighbourhood where I conducted research, I engaged in solidarity work through volunteering in local collectives to support migrants, and through harm reduction (HR) work as I have done in the past, which helped me to understand the emergent pragmatics of "what works" (McCormack, 2009). As my relationship to activist work is necessarily place-based, I was privileged to be able to conduct volunteer work alongside others in my research sites. By considering the CPA as a site first and situating it within porous, shifting and multiple scalar contexts, I elucidate its potential as a "new space from which new political processes can start" (Harvey, 2011, p. 23).

1.6. The migration “crisis” in Paris and the CPA

Figure 1.5 **The Centre de premier accueil Paris-Nord (“La Bulle”) in Porte de la Chapelle. (In background: Montmartre and the Sacré-Coeur Basilica). Photo: Melora Koepke.**

The persistent cycles of encampment and démantèlement (see Chapter 12) that have become constitutive of the Parisian “migrant crisis” brought the crisis at Europe’s borders to bear on local politics in visceral ways. In 2016, the *mairie de Paris* (city hall) estimated that an average of 500 unauthorised migrants were arriving in Paris each week, an “influx” into the city that had saturated the State bureaucracies where asylum claims were deposited and processed (Bhagat, 2021). However, the numbers of arrivals in Paris could be viewed as insignificant in the context of the statistics on international displacement, especially considering Paris welcomed 36.5 million tourists in 2016, while fewer than 100,000 people filed asylum claims in all of France the same year — a number that didn’t represent a marked increase from previous years. Nevertheless, the insufficiency of State housing provisions for asylum-seekers and other vulnerable migrants meant that encampments were becoming perennial. This situation spurred the municipality to begin discussing a specifically local, Parisian response that began with the CPA that they developed through a combination of exceptional and ephemeral urban

planning initiatives and an impetus towards grounding and establishing a “municipal humanitarianism” that elevated the local politics of crisis as an intervention to the incapacities of the National State. The CPA was variously described as an exceptional, innovative, humanist and humanitarian intervention that was expressly *municipal*. The CPA and its spectacular centrepiece, the Bulle, which Chapters 6, 8 and 10 of this dissertation explore in depth. The CPA’s major architectural component and budget expenditure was the Bulle, a yellow-and-white striped, 900-square-metre inflatable structure that relentlessly called attention to itself and was meant, according to a project manager for the site who worked for the municipality, who I interviewed in June 2018, to act as “a beacon” to draw migrants towards the edge of the city and out of central neighbourhoods (Guilbaud et al., 2022). Initially, the public and political discourse surrounding the opening of the CPA centred on *accueil inconditionnel* (unconditional welcome), furthering the city’s self-declaration as a *ville refuge* (sanctuary city), which was emphasised by the Centre’s architectural and design features (see Chapters 6, 8,10).

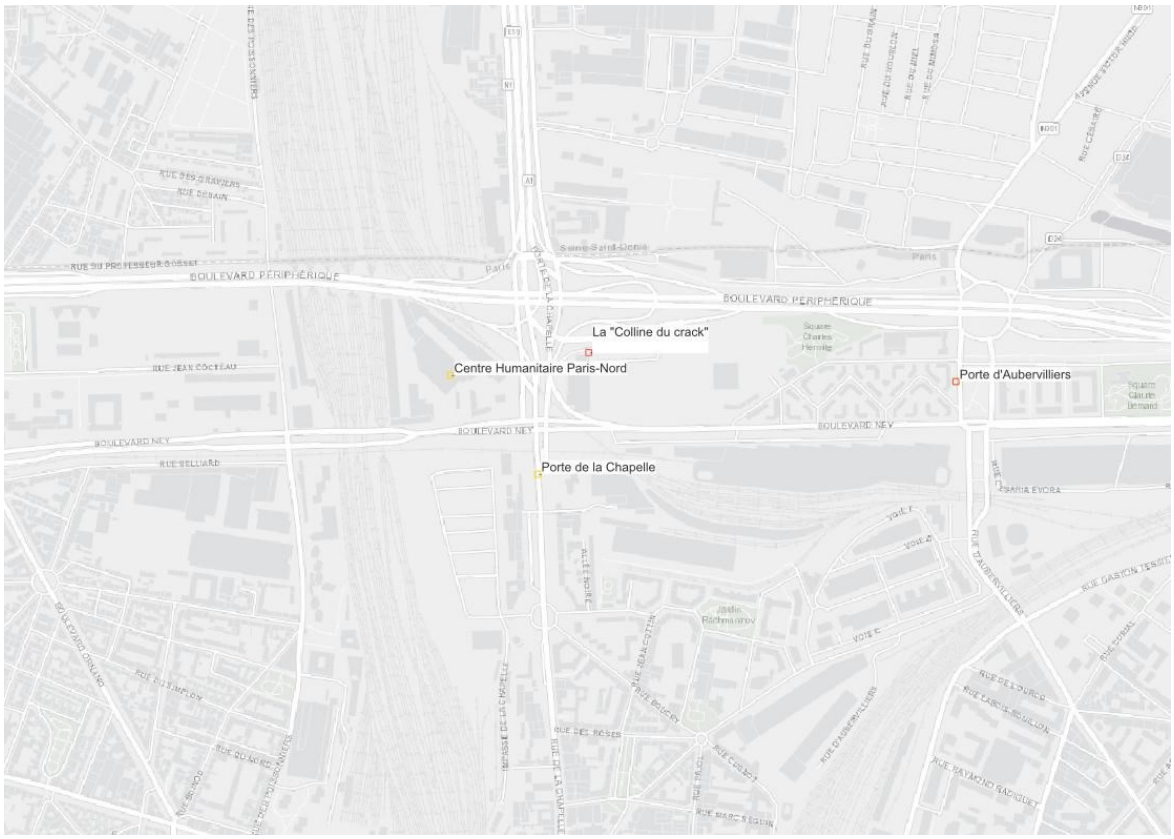

Figure 1.6 Map of the intersection of Porte de La Chapelle; emplacement of the Centre Humanitaire Paris-nord.

Figure 1.7 **Satellite view: The CPA in Porte de la Chapelle, located between the boulevard Ney, the boulevard périphérique, and the train tracks in an abandoned hangar belonging to the national railway. Source: Google Earth.**

1.7. Structure of the dissertation

After this introduction (Chapter 1), a subsequent chapter on methodology (Chapter 2) and a contextual chapter, five main chapters are organised into two parts. Three chapters in Part I (6, 8, 10) explore multiple vantage points of the CPA through the firsthand experiences of multiple interlocutors including migrants, local volunteers and municipal actors whose conceptual insights shape the work as well as offering empirical data through which to better understand the “crisis” as it evolved. Chapter 6 traces the genesis of the CPA as a political as well as pragmatic dispositif, building on accounts from municipal actors involved with the creation of the facility. Chapter 8 highlights migrants’ accounts of their encounters with the CPA and its functioning as a threshold

that controlled their presence and mobilities through three distinct modalities: Shelter, triage and exception. Chapter 10 is an ethnographic rendering of the CPA's sorting procedures to critique the exceptionalism of the CPA and its place in the archipelago of State reception facilities. Section 2 draws from my experience as a volunteer providing ground support to migrants in informal encampments around and in excess of the CPA. In Chapter 12, I offer a speculative account of encampments and their destruction as processes that constitute the parameters and possibilities of the so-called "Parisian migration crisis". In Chapter 14, I use the example of radical care forged by alliances between migrants and local volunteers to conceptualise a "shipwreck ethics" of radical care that extends recent notions of the "Black Mediterranean" (Proglio et al., 2021; Smythe, 2018) into the urban spaces of northern Paris. Between the chapters, which were written as stand-alone publications, are inserted brief chapters that provide context, background and linkages to the individual works. I conclude with a conclusion (Chapter 15) that expands on the speculative orientations and offers some directions for further research to be engaged by myself and others.

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Chapter 2. Towards “minor” methodologies: Crisis as method

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> The “minor” is not a theory of the margins, but a different way of working with material (Katz, 1996b, p. 489).
>
> Once we investigate the multifarious practices with which migrants challenge borders on a daily basis, it becomes clear that border struggles are all too often matters of life and death… we never forget this materiality (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 33).
>
> We must be careful not to situate politics in the realm of those very categories that exclude us, the “we” we are becoming (Manning, 2019, p. 10).

The purpose of this chapter is to outline my research design for this dissertation, specifically in terms of my approach of “crisis as method” as it was enabled by extensive volunteer labour in and around urban spaces of care. Drawing on examples from field notes and research experiences, I demonstrate the value of care labour as a “minor” method engaged through embodied forms of care work, by outlining how this “minor” methodology 1) necessarily integrated field*work* with field *life*, making ethnographic engagement part of everyday life for researchers such as myself who have care responsibilities and obligations that would otherwise prevent them from engaging in long-term ethnographic research projects in faraway “fields” and 2) enabled researchers to access sites and integrate with their long-term functioning, and therefore to develop intersubjectivities that enrich their capacity to foreground the voices and lived experiences of interlocutors through detailed, granular observation and analysis. Finally, I propose that, as an approach to researching crisis, this “minor” method has major appeal for feminist scholars and research: That such an approach, which centres intimate and embodied involvement and relationships with research subjects and fields, unsettles extractive models of academic knowledge production that situate the researcher as an apolitical and objective observer separate from or outside her field(s).

First, I outline my research methodology for this dissertation in terms of an approach I call “crisis as method”, where I pursued the “inside-outsider” positionality

through everyday involvement in the grounds of “crisis” – or multiple intersecting crises — that were the focus of this research through volunteer work, local activist involvement, and as an elected official and resident of the neighbourhood where I also conducted research. I argue that these methods of activist-ethnography, what I call “minor” methodologies, have expanded my analytical capacity and helped me to understand the emergent material, affective and discursive politics of these crises that are the focus of my research. Finally, I propose that “minor” methodologies have mega appeal for the objectives of feminist research as they “unthink” (Singh, 2018) and “refuse” mastery (Katz, 1996a) by unsettling extractive models of academic knowledge production in which a researcher would be necessarily separate from or outside her field(s), instead allowing me to engage in emergent fields of relation which I have thought of as becoming-minor or “becoming-imperceptible” or *devenir tout le monde* (becoming like everyone else) in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari conceptualise it (1988) — a proposition whose methodological, conceptual and practical implications and potentials I will develop further in future work and that, I argue, has relational and political potential.

[Excerpt from field notes, June 2017] As I was walking Lou to kindergarten this morning he wanted to ride his scooter along the bank of the canal instead of the sidewalk because he likes the bumpy texture of the cobblestones. After I dropped him off, I stopped in my usual spot near the Pont Jaurès to take my usual photograph. I’ve been taking a photograph of the canal each morning when the light is just right pretty much every day since we moved in, something like a morphological record of the way the encampments grew and proliferated through the neighbourhood, up and down the canal banks, along the sidewalks and under the tracks of the aerial metro before the camp was destroyed last fall. My photos have been helping me trace the processes of démantèlements, and how when encampments are removed they are almost immediately reinstalled — a continuous process since we moved in last summer. As soon as they are torn down they are built up again, people return almost immediately and build their shelters back up around and between the fences, boulders and other installations intended to keep people out. Even as they decamp, people come right back. The canal in the morning light is beautiful, serene. Everyone thinks so, even the encampment residents. The other day we dropped off coffees and croissants, and they were describing it [tongue in cheek, maybe a little] as “scenic”. People here say that they come right back after they get expulsed from the CPA, because police don’t teargas around here like in front of the Bulle! Sometimes, encampments are left alone by authorities long enough that their structures become ingenious and elaborate, as people add to them day after day, drag furniture down into the quai and try to make it feel a bit more comfortable. On my way back from school drop-off with the empty scooter, I stopped again to take another picture because the light had already changed. A kid I haven’t seen before walked out of a tent. He said, “Hey! This is my home! Why are you taking a picture?” I said, “Me too!” I realise to him I’m just a stranger with a camera, but he sees me every day. I stopped to explain what I was doing and why. Later that afternoon, when we were walking back home just before dusk, some youths camping on the canal were breaking their Ramadan fast. Same kid was sitting in front of the tent,

boiling potatoes in a pot over a burner by the side of the canal. He asked Lou and me if we wanted some. We said no, we had to go make dinner ourselves, but that invitation was an opening. After that, I was able to visit their encampment a bit more, bring food, and find out more about how they were living down here. Their encampment was at the end of the block where we lived.

In the preceding excerpt from fieldwork notes, I depict a typical scene from my everyday movements around the neighbourhood — where research tasks such as photographing and observing were imbricated with the obligations of parenting, running errands and the everyday work of living. These multiple positionalities were never fixed, and as much as I was a passerby or a local resident, I was always also a "person with a camera", drawing analytical material and observing the daily lives of those much more entrenched in the grounds of multiple interconnected crises than I would ever be.

I began fieldwork in Paris, France, in the fall of 2016 in two sites designated as experimental, municipal spaces of care created by local governments in order to intervene in crises experienced at street-level in local neighbourhoods, specifically encampments. The neighbourhood where I lived with my family for two years (2016–2018) was located in the 10th arrondissement, in the northeastern quadrant of the city between Stalingrad and Jaurès metro stations and a few blocks from the Canal Saint-Martin, which was where many encampments were located between 2015 and 2017. Home was located a short walk from both of my major research sites: The CPA, a humanitarian "welcome and orientation" facility for unauthorised migrants, and the SCMR, France's first supervised DCR. For both practical and methodological reasons, I had intended to live close to where I worked, where local neighbourhoods were said to be in the throes of multiple, interconnected "urban crises" affecting housing, schooling and social interactions. The most discernible vestiges of these multiple crises — and therefore, the visceral politics of the street — were the encampments that proliferated through certain public spaces in our neighbourhood and others. I had chosen to study two of these facilities or dispositifs (see Chapter 6) for my dissertation research.

From late 2016 to the summer of 2018, I conducted over 2,000 hours of participant observation (PO) through working volunteer shifts in both the SCMR and the CPA. I also became involved in solidarity work with local collectives that mostly provided ground support and food distributions for people living in encampments, as well as political organising and protest. I recruited participants from within the sites where I was working, and also met prospective interlocutors during my routine circulations through

my neighbourhood — as I ran errands, chatted with my neighbours and developed friendships. In my second year in the field, I was an elected representative of the school parents' association, which are historically quite militant and somewhat politically influential. These entanglements of field*work* and field *life* enabled me to engage crisis both as a research method and an analytical object that was enacted through emergent encounters that traversed bodies and shaped the relational, material, affective and discursive politics of urban space.

Both my research sites opened in fall of 2016, shortly after I arrived in Paris. The SCMR was run by the Association GAÏA-Paris, a local offshoot of Medecins du monde, founded by activists who managed and administered State-funded HR services for people who use drugs. It was a particularly French version of the type of facility that already existed in many other countries. What was notable about the SCMR for the purposes of my research was that it was explicitly supported economically and politically by the Ville de Paris (the municipality of Paris), which had financed its construction and renovation within the Hôpital Lariboisière, a hospital directly adjacent to the Gare du Nord, Europe's largest train station. As the SCMR was, in part, sponsored by the city, it was mandated to provide health and socio-medical services to marginalised people who inject drugs, but was also charged with maintaining the *tranquillité publique* (public tranquility) by attempting to manage and control their presence and actions in public space. In important ways, the SCMR was publicly perceived as a response to this long-standing open drug scene. In the wider context of "crisis" among drug users in Parisian public space, the SCMR opened on the cresting wave of growing public awareness of the "crack problem" reported in 2018 by *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*. Though this dissertation sparsely discusses the SCMR, I have included it in this methodological essay because my approach to research was informed by my work in this site. In Chapter 5, I discuss the spatial politics of informal encampments and authorities' evolving strategies for managing drug users' presence in public space, perspectives that I developed while working in HR and outreach around the *colline du crack* (crack hill) in Porte de la Chapelle with GAÏA's team.

The seven main chapters that comprise this dissertation investigate the so-called "Parisian migrant crisis" (Gagnon, 2016) through research in the CPA as a facility that was designed by the municipality to manage and control the "crisis", as well as informal encampments surrounding it. The CPA, first announced by Mayor Hidalgo in May 2016,

opened on November 10th, 2016. As with the SCMR, the opening was highly mediatised and there were extensive opportunities for reporters and others to visit the site. My first visit was on a sort of press junket where we toured the complex with some of its creators — an event that was eerily familiar from my days as a city reporter covering municipal events, festivals, projects and various other innovations designed to augment the city's brand and international profile. Near the end of the fall of 2016, after I had been in Paris for just under three months, I had extensively scoped and accessed both research sites according to official channels. I had attended public events related to their openings, such as press conferences and information sessions, and toured them extensively. I had also attended local meetings related to both sites, including volunteer sessions, planning meetings, and protests. I had attended many of the SCMR's bi-weekly open houses and listened as staff patiently and repeatedly explained HR principles and supervised injection to members of the general public who showed up to tour the facility. I attended a public information session before the opening of the CPA, to which the district mayor and Paris Mayor Hidalgo had invited local residents and would-be humanitarians to be matched with volunteer roles overseen by Emmaüs Solidarité, the NGO tasked by the city with running the Centre (see Chapter 6, 8 and 10). I had begun interviewing actors — city planners, politicians, designers, NGO staffers and local authorities — who were involved with designing and managing the sites. Nevertheless, I felt I had reached an impasse in the execution of my research design.

2.1. Research questions and project design

In this section, I restate my research questions while indicating the specific methods that I applied to each.

From August to November 2016, the preliminary fieldwork phase, I drafted my research ethics protocols and had them approved. During this time, I conducted archival research and documentary/media analysis as well as engaging in media and public tours of the sites, through which I determined certain aspects of Research Question 1: The **debates and spatial politics** around the genesis of the sites. This helped me to identify important actors and key issues within the sites, as well as connections with other "crisis formations" in the city. In this phase, I also identified Research Question 2: How the CPA was **shaped by and constitutive of the politics around the migration "crisis" in Paris, France, at the local and national scales**, through archival research and

document and media analysis, which included monitoring social media for discussions related to my topics and physical sites. I used metadata-analysis software tools to investigate social media discussions that were useful in identifying online resources, and also helped me to identify key voices and opinion leaders as potential interlocutors.

Despite having engaged customary qualitative methods — interviews, site visits and documentary analysis — by the fall of 2016, I was feeling the limitations of these preliminary methods for scoping and research design that did not allow me to get close enough to the "action" by accessing the daily operations of my sites. From December 2016 to July 2018, and during three follow-up visits in 2019, I mostly accessed my sites by volunteering and conducting PO. These qualitative ethnographic methods were used to determine Research Question 3: The character of **"welcome" (care, health and social services, orientation for administrative procedures)** conveyed through the CPA's governance and operation, and Research Question 4: **The ways that these spaces of care were shaped by and constitutive of contexts and scales that extend further than their boundaries**. This meant that through interviews and the scoping work described above, I was able to identify key interlocutors and interview them, as well as to conduct extensive observation in the sites. Finally, by analysing the emergent themes and specific examples from interviews and notes taken from 2,000 hours of PO, I have been able to answer Research Question 5: **How the detailed study of these emerging spaces of care inform ongoing conceptual discussions around urban politics of migration, crisis, care and dispositifs as spatial modes of urban governance and politics**.

My volunteer engagement with the CPA, both inside the facility and in the surrounding areas where encampments were (and still are) the primary mode of shelter for arriving asylum-seekers and other migrants, lasted for the full duration of its existence form November 2016 to March 2018. I volunteered at the SCMR and as an outreach worker with GAÏA for over two years, from fall 2016 to summer 2018, and continue to work in a research partnership with people I met over the course of this research. In both cases, I supplemented my extensive PO with other methods; significantly, semi-structured interviews with 58 interlocutors, 28 of whom were actors directly involved with the "migration crisis" in Paris — NGO staff, volunteers, local residents and politicians, municipal staffers and migrants themselves. The rest were

interlocutors met through the SCMR. Some of my interviews with politicians and municipal actors covered their involvement with both sites.

The sustained timeframe of my presence in the field as well as my extensive ongoing involvement have enabled me to trace various aspects of the “crisis” in Paris as they have evolved over time. My intimate involvement with each site allowed me develop familiarity with the processes and practices of their operations, and to deepen this understanding through ongoing relationships with multiple interlocutors. My integration within both sites as a volunteer who circulated freely during my shifts allowed me to spend over 2,000 hours engaged in unscripted interactions, which became crucial aspects of an ethnographic method I conceived to exceed the mode of participant interviews, which are the most common use of “ethnography” in Geography (Hitchings & Latham, 2020a, 2020b). This work, in which my everyday labour was enacted “for and with” interlocutors inestimably informed my analysis and benefitted me as a researcher. In a subsequent section, I elaborate on these “minor” methodologies through which I was able to understand what might have otherwise evaded verbal capture.

My work in the SCMR was directly supported by the site’s coordinator, who scheduled me for multiple weekly shifts both in the facility and on outreach teams that worked in various locations in the city — in the neighborhood around the site, in the Gare du Nord and, notably, on outreach in Porte de la Chapelle, where I worked in GAÏA’s mobile HR unit that serviced a community of precariously housed drug users that frequented a perennial installation known as the colline du crack, located in a runoff of the *periph’* (ring road). Unlike my volunteer work at the SCMR, which was undertaken in close collaboration with the staff, my shifts at the CPA were largely unsupervised. Initially, I simply signed up for volunteer shifts with two NGOs. There were few barriers to accessing volunteer shifts nor did they provide extensive training, as the work was very much in the nature of humanitarian ground support providing food distribution, clothes, blankets and information. Volunteers were desperately needed in Porte de la Chapelle to support migrants sleeping rough in encampments as they attempted to navigate the extremely difficult and dangerous conditions of life on the streets as well as the chaotic and labyrinthine bureaucratic procedures for seeking asylum in France. Volunteers also organised neighbourhood events to recruit for our *hébergeurs citoyens* (a network of local residents who hosted migrants in their homes), and we escorted migrants around the city to administrative appointments, medical visits and citizen host’s apartments, as

well as showing them where they were likely to be able to camp unmolested when left to the streets, as they frequently were (I elaborate on this in the opening vignette of the conclusion). Working inside the CPA, we supported humanitarian workers in the laundry, food distribution and “free store”, but most of our work took place outside the CPA, where we attempted to manage the queue, assist the many people who were left outside and provide them with tents and other necessities for survival, and counsel them on how to avoid the destruction of these items by police whenever possible (I detail the spatial politics of encampments and our work in Chapter 14). As a volunteer, I also organised and led outings and cultural activities, such as visits to monuments, museums and public spaces, for those who were accepted for temporary shelter in the CPA — understanding the importance of leaving Porte de la Chapelle and exploring other parts of the city. In October of 2017, one of the NGOs withdrew their cooperation from the CPA as they saw their objectives — to assist and support migrants — as divergent from the evolving goals of the CPA (I detail this further in Chapter 6 and 10). I continued to work with them outside the CPA until I left Paris in the summer of 2018.

2.2. Crisis as method

My approach to research design in terms of “crisis as method” was partially inspired by Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Nielson’s *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labour*. In this book, the authors describe how they approached “the border” not only as a research object but also — and most importantly — as an epistemic framework. I found their ideas of “method” as an activist engagement particularly relevant for my project:

> Just as we want to question the vision of the border as a neutral line, then, we also question the notion that method is a set of pregiven, neutral techniques that can be applied to diverse objects without fundamentally altering the ways in which they are constructed and understood. At stake in border as method is something more than the ‘‘performativity of method’’… while we accept that methods tend to produce (often in contradictory and unexpected ways) the worlds they claim to describe, for us the question of border as method is something more than methodological. *It is above all a question of politics, about the kinds of social worlds and subjectivities produced at the border and the ways that thought and knowledge can intervene in these processes of production.* To put this differently, we can say that method for us is as much about acting on the world as it is about knowing it. More accurately, it is about the relation of action to knowledge in a situation where many different

> knowledge regimes and practices come into conflict… For all of these reasons, the border is for us not so much a research object as an epistemological viewpoint that allows an acute critical analysis not only of how relations of domination, dispossession, and exploitation are being redefined presently but also of the struggles that take shape around these changing relations. *The border can be a method precisely insofar as it is conceived of as a site of struggle* (2013, p. 17–18, italics mine).

Mezzadra and Nielson's conceptualisation of what a method can be ("the border can be a method precisely insofar as it is conceived as a site of struggle") informed my notion of "crisis as method", in which method is not only a "thing" to follow or a fixed object or event occurring between equally fixed subjects, but is an event of relation, a friction that emerges from the encounters between bodies and subjects with conflicting and differing claims on public space, *as a site of struggle*. More than anything, the approach of crisis as method as I have conceived it traces multiple corporeal and visceral ways of inhabiting urban space, as well as ideas about who and what the city is for. Later in the writing of this dissertation, other scholars published work that employed the "as method" formulation, such as Picozza's "solidarity as method" (Picozza, 2021), which echoes my own approach to "solidarian" work as a research method, or anthropologist Julie Kleinman's book-length study of migrant men at the Gare du Nord, in which she conceptualises a "Gare du Nord method" in her subjects' ways of living and structuring their lives in Paris (Kleinman, 2019).

As is the case with multiple urban crises, this dissertation has demonstrated that the politics of the "Parisian migrant crisis" are shaped by politics that are affective, material and discursive. They are also sites where different subjects relate to one another and to the city in diverse ways: The very "crisis" conditions generated by the encampments are represented in their shocking conditions, but these same representations of abjection also materialise relations of radical care as evidenced by the collective organising as ad hoc citizens' collectives of "solidarians" (solidarity volunteers) supporting migrants' survival in excess of — and against — the State. Indeed, these affective facts of crisis and their attendant and emergent relations of care are so mutually constitutive and constituted that they almost become one another as they inscribe themselves on bodies in relation, emerging from the impetus that "something must be done" about this immanent and unfolding crisis. But what? Part of the task of this research has been, therefore, to trace ideas and experiences of the "crisis" from multiple perspectives, both in how this particular crisis is named and framed,

and in terms of the political actions that emerge (or don't) based on ideas about what is to be done.

2.3. Ethnographic attunements and methodologies of care labour

[Excerpt from field journal, February 2017] Last Thursday I had emailed [the coordinator of the SCMR] to ask if we could meet to discuss how I would proceed with fieldwork, since I would need to begin recruiting interviewees soon. I was feeling awkward about this ask because they were still understaffed, and because I know how outside researchers are often regarded as extraneous to the urgent work of HR. She has been super tolerant and welcoming, but I don't want to push it. When I arrived, she was running an open house tour, as she often did before working all day while the site was actually open. Today, while she was in the middle of giving her speech explaining the site to a new group of visitors, she was called away for a phone call. The assembled crowd [neighbours of the site, a few HR workers and a couple of cops], started asking me questions since I guess I seemed familiar with the place. Later [the coordinator] jokingly said that I could just give the tour next time. I started to tell her about what I'd need to pursue my research, and we both kind of realised we'd both be more comfortable if I just worked there — as a volunteer, since I don't have papers to work in France. I have some experience in HR work and GAÏA has a volunteer training program. Besides, most of the work doesn't require much training — handing out HR supplies and hanging out with people, mostly. Per GAÏA's policies, I need to complete the training course that goes over the principles of HR, its history in France and practical training in accompagnement à l'injection *[accompanying injectors]. Seems like a good idea.*

*[March 3, 2017] Today I worked a full shift in the reception area of the SCMR. I worked at the sign-in desk checking drugs and registering people, as well as at the window where we distributed HR materials. A lot of my time was spent chatting with the people who came by the little window asking for crack kits, syringes and other supplies... I learned so much today! One major detail that had eluded me is that unlike in other DCRs I've visited, the vast majority of the people who use this site are injecting prescription products like "*skénan" *[morphine sulphate] in pharmacy blister packs or also opioid agonist therapies, which I never knew was a thing. Though the GAÏA people mentioned this when I interviewed them in 2015, I didn't really understand why it was so significant. There is very little risk of overdose when you know exactly what you are injecting, therefore overdose prevention is not really the first line here. Is this even an overdose prevention site? I like that I've been told that in a few weeks, when they get more budget for staff, I can start working on the outreach team.*

[March 17, 2017] I'm always relieved to have something to do with my hands instead of just hovering around taking notes [or not taking notes and just looking/listening/asking questions]. My instinct is not to just sit there while others work. It is natural to want to do things that need doing, and I understand how things work much better when I'm thinking "in the act", not just observing. It's much more interesting to be part of the team in some way. I always tell everyone I'm a researcher and a few people [mostly users] ask me about it, but I don't have to be the centre of attention and interrogate people the same way when I'm working alongside them.

In the case of the SCMR — an experimental site funded by the State— a multi-year mega-study was already in place shortly after the opening, and other visits from practitioners and a duo of documentary filmmakers were planned. My recruitment of participants would therefore be extraneous to what was already happening in terms of research. Besides, since the effectiveness of DCRs had already been established (though not in France), this was not the purpose of my research. From another perspective, drug users accessing DCRs are frequently solicited as research subjects, and having worked in HR previously, and having conducted site visits and interviews at other DCRs in international contexts, I was loath to spend too much time being simply "observational". Finally, the mode of "intake interviews" is a disciplinary technology used by all socio-medical services as a screening mechanism. Users at the SCMR were asked to elaborate their drug consumption histories and practices, and share their medical histories and personal details to access the site — which sometimes resulted in them being excluded from it. The CPA also conducted intake interviews as conditions for accessing the site and, in a larger sense, for achieving the status of *demandeur d'asile* (a person seeking asylum, as detailed in Chapters 6, 8 and 10). Interviews are used to sort asylum-seekers on the move at multiple locations and instances. It would be exceedingly inappropriate to recruit informants within this site, even if I had permission to do so. As a volunteer working in the site, however, I had unlimited opportunities to engage and build relationships through PO or *participation observante* — a term that, at least in the French context, "seems to be increasingly preferred to that of participant observation… a mobilization [that] underline[s] a particularly prolonged investment in the field [and] on the ground, and suggest[s] the preponderance of participation over observation" (Bastien, 2007, p. 127). I always disclosed my role as a researcher and explained my project, even as I enacted other roles within the site.

As I logged more than 2,000 hours of volunteer work at the SCMR and the CPA, I became fluent in the micropolitics that traversed bodies and spaces as the effects of the “crisis” on certain bodies unfolded over time. These encounters that were sparked through my ongoing presence and embodied labour of care work also enabled me to foreground the voices of interlocutors, who are often absent from research. Each of the chapters in this dissertation is structured around events that occurred through the encounters made possible through care work that in turn enabled me to better to understand the ways that “crisis” is conjugated through bodies, sites and encounters. Certainly, my ground-support in Porte de la Chapelle drew me into the midst of the “crisis”, where démantèlements and other violent means of pursuit, displacement and dispossession — but also the embodied labour of care to counter them — were entwined in the fabric of ordinary life. They were also the provocations that drove my research narratives (see Chapters 6, 8 and 10) since my understanding of “crisis” and its interventions that shaped users’ lives and trajectories was directly related to this intimate mode of being present in the field. However, it was not the everydayness of care work but its imperceptibility and accessibility that benefited my methodology.

As Crang and Cook point out in their user-friendly guide to ethnographic research in geography, it is desirable to access community or context from which to conduct PO as participatory subjects: “Much of the discussion on participant observation focuses around how researchers can, where possible, take on already existing subject positions in the communities which they study or, where it is not, to construct new ones” (Crang & Cook, 2007, p. 33). However, a drawback to this method is that most researchers lack the resources and time to develop expertise that would allow them to work within or participate in professional communities. By its very nature, the care work that I performed as a volunteer was low-barrier, unremarkable and undervalued — qualities that also made it easy to access and engage with, and that allowed me to circulate freely within my sites.

My instinct and desire to become imperceptible within the daily operations of my sites were also vestiges of my previous professional practice as a journalist. Having spent two decades conducting innumerable interviews with all sorts of interlocutors, I was acutely aware of the limitations of the subject-positioning of interviewees and of this form of communication that excludes the many interactions, processes and perspectives that evade capture. This theme — the limitations of interviewing as a method — has

been taken up by anthropologists (Briggs, 1997); however, in geography, qualitative methods are often synonymous with interviews (Hitchings & Latham, 2020a). These authors, in a series of surveys of qualitative research in geography, found that time spent in the field in ethnographic research varied widely and that two years (my research period) was “impressive” (Hitchings & Latham, 2020b). Nevertheless, qualitative methods in geography usually foreground interviewing as a method rather than PO, though discussion of volunteering as method in migrant drop-in spaces (Darling, 2014) and Lancione’s useful work on activist engagement as a form of activist political engagement that “is about contextual commitments” (Lancione, 2017). Later in my doctoral training, I discovered work on “solidarity as method” (Picozza, 2021) and pursued the work of anthropologists who had written extensively on the paradoxes and pitfalls of volunteering as a method of PO. However, I thought of this work as being intersubjectively “with and for” the others whose bodies and lives were shot through by the crises I was studying; this phrasing, a refrain from *The Undercommons*, refers to what Moten and Harney (2013) call “study” — modes of “thinking with others separate from the thinking that the institution requires of you” (Halberstam, 2013, p. 3). I thought of the “with and for” of volunteering as a style of scholar-activism that situated me in the midst of ongoing action, the work of everyday social reproduction in the “third space” espoused by Routledge and others (Routledge, 1996).

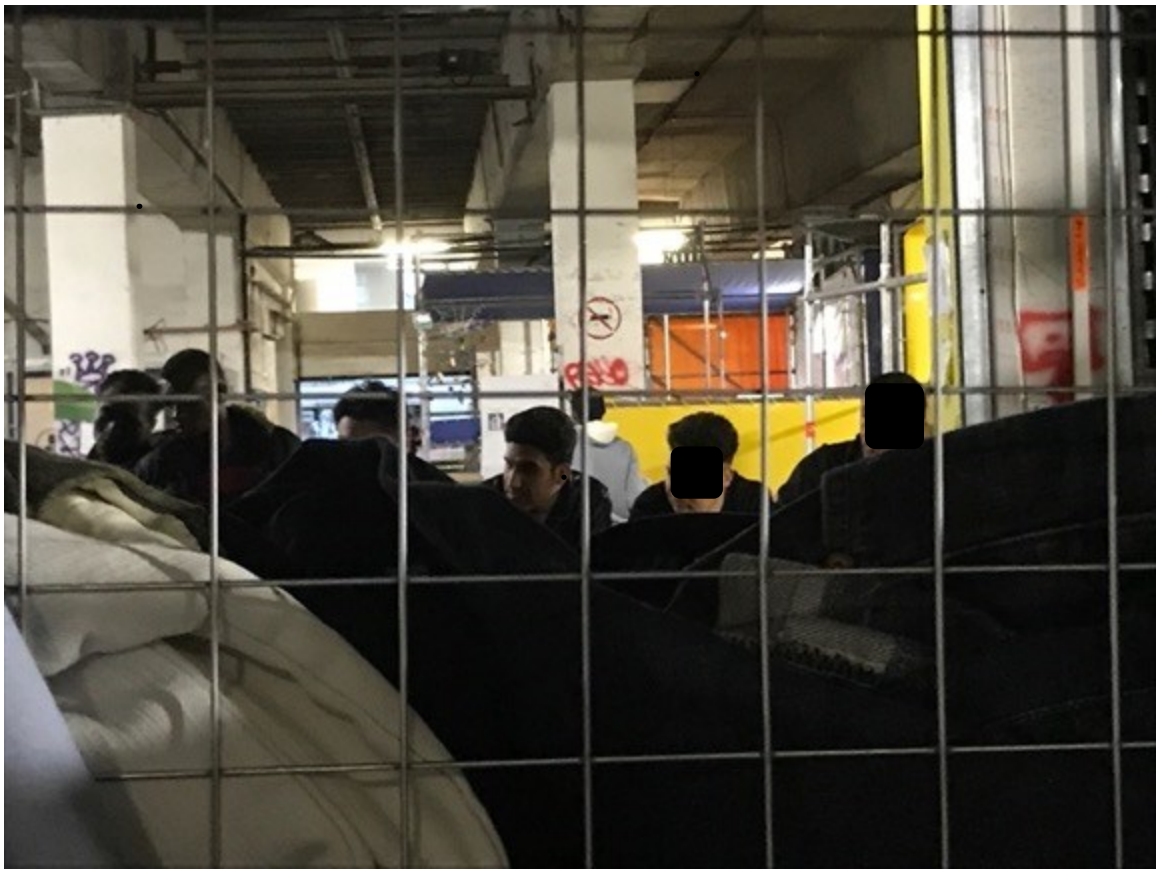

Figure 2.1 Queuing for clothes at the "free store". Photo: Melora Koepke.

2.4. "With and for": Academic research as mode of solidarity and scholar-activism

[Excerpt from field notes, April 2017] Since I started volunteering for shifts at the CPA, I've been able to better understand it as a complete system. The Bulle is the point of first reception where the OFII [the Office française d'immigration et d'integration, the French immigration authority] conducts their intake interviews, and they keep changing our access. I've been there twice to deliver meals to families and they have conscripted me for translation work. Other shifts, I work outreach in the encampments. However, I am trying to do as much work inside the CPA as possible. I try to sign up for the afternoon/early evening shifts because they are always available. What is most useful to me — where I learn the most — is working in the "free store", giving out donated clothes that are collected and sorted by volunteers. The "store" is secured with a heavy metal gate and when I come to do a shift, I lift the gate and it rattles, indicating that I'm open. People are also bored in the afternoons and once everyone sees I'm open, they all come and queue up. They all want to chat. Sometimes they draw maps so I can understand their stories, and their English or French isn't always that good. There is a whole bureaucracy in place to make sure nobody gets too many T-shirts or pairs of socks. Very

French. It feels super depressing to enact this system on men who are telling me their stories of violence and abuse, so I usually just give them the socks when they ask for them. Sometimes they ask for new shoes and show me their old ones — trashed sneakers [or flip-flops!] that have crossed the desert, treaded water in the Mediterranean Sea, walked across France from the border at Ventimiglia. There are never enough donated shoes, especially not in the small sizes they need. In the back, in the NGO staff area, someone posted an essay about how to be nice to migrants and how we are supporting them by helping them to feel good. [Excerpt from field notes, June 12th, 2017]

There are politics going on and our volunteers aren't allowed in the Bulle anymore. Lately, I've been working in the laundromat in the evenings — where no one else likes to work — so I'm usually alone. Most of the other volunteers are young travellers, and sometimes I have to show them how to do laundry in a systematic way. The men bring their clothes [usually the ones on their backs and one or two changes] when they get their notice that they are being transferred to a shelter for asylum-seekers run by the State. They show me their forms, which aren't very informative, and ask me if I know where they are going. The CPA does not always tell them. I've also spoken to lots of men who, after a week or ten days are told they have to leave immediately, as they have been determined to be hors dispositif *[excluded from the dispositif] and aren't being transferred. These men are expelled back to the street. They definitely want to make sure they have the right clothes. Sometimes I try to give them extras from the "free store", but we are backed up in the sorting warehouses. Also, because of chiggers outbreaks, all the clothes and blankets etc. that we collect in black garbage bags after the cops do street sweeps have to be decontaminated before we can give them out again. Three months ago it was all about needing more coats, but now we are in the* canicules *[heatwave season], so we need shorts and T-shirts, but it's also muddy and rainy, which doesn't help with the bugs.*

By foregrounding interlocutors' experiences in the CPA, as well as my own observations, I was able to present an account of the site that diverged from the "official" versions of its successful outcomes and metrics. However, there were other reasons that I used accounts of events and material situations in the field to structure the chapters — namely, to demonstrate their importance and unsettle the disciplinary conventions of article-writing that separate and privilege "theory" (our performance of expertise) from the empirical evidence we gather from our sites and interlocutors. As scholars, we tend to draw distinctions between the value of data — especially that gathered from native subjects — and our subsequent analyses in order to valorise our own proficiencies and/or to establish "mastery" over our fields by "refusing 'high theory' at the expense of contextual, in-depth understanding of what actually goes on in cities… and emphasiz[ing] the importance of the everyday, seemingly mundane occurrences and the nitty-gritty of how people in differing positions of power interact with the urban spheres they depict" (Hancock, 2021, p. 2). My goal was to base my analysis on interlocutors'

intimate knowledge of the field and to highlight accounts that complexified and contradicted official narratives. This actualised a crucial objective of my research, which was to

> bring non-elite knowledge and experience to the foreground… by examining the diverse grounded perspectives of those on the move who are arguably the key dramatis personae in the so-called "crisis" and yet whose voices are often absent in dominant representations of it (Vaughan-Williams & Pisani, 2020, p. 651).

During the course of fieldwork, my positionality as an educated white Canadian woman privileged with professional affiliations and networks, a regularised immigration status and numerous social and professional advantages (however precarious and "junior" by academic standards!) also enabled my intersubjective participation in various local networks. I was differentially and minimally exposed to vulnerability and risk as I enmeshed myself within the social and political life of my neighbourhood. While I consistently identified myself as a researcher and explained the focus of my research, I also embodied multiple roles in order to more fulsomely understand the diverse aspects of my research subjects. Even as a local resident integrated into daily activities, I also retained my identity as an "outsider" (a Canadian, a newcomer to the neighbourhood, and a social scientist who was scrutinising the very activities I participated in on a daily basis). I constantly worked to negotiate the positionality of insider/outsider in my work as well as in daily life.

The multiple modes of engagement with my research sites enabled my ongoing and continuous access to them, which was freely given to citizen volunteers such as myself, and also shaped my methodology through relational modes that are, as Lancione and Rosa point out, "foundational for any ethnographic encounter":

> Going in, out and through different stages of a continuous positioning and (re)positioning related to an entanglement of expectations, trust, political and intellectual commitment to a group, a process or a "cause"… For us, ethnography is more: it's the way we do things and the approach we have towards the field; it is how we negotiate access and how we live; it is about writing about the other but also about ourselves (2017, p. 137).

This research design provided me with a way to intimately engage with the sites' daily operations. The sustained timeframe of my physical presence enabled a mode of scholar activist research "with and for" participants where I was able to engage in

unscripted interactions that belonged to the ethnography as conceived outside the mode of participant interviews (Hitchings & Latham, 2020a, 2020b).

By building this dissertation around the lived experiences and first-person accounts from interlocutors, as well as my own observations and impressions, I intended to work towards unsettling hierarchical notions of whose experiences are to be believed and whose critiques are taken to account when conducting ethnographic research. For example, by structuring Chapter 8 around Zabi's corporeal encounter with the CPA's fence and foregrounding his analysis of this event, I wanted to disrupt the convention of relegating interlocutors' own words and experiences to the realm of "empirical" data and introductory vignettes. Zabi's experience is related in an introductory vignette, yes — but it is also the backbone of the analysis that is fleshed out through the chapter. However, I am attached to the practice of privileging subjects' experiences for their analytic value and not just as "data". My goal was to base my analysis on my interlocutors' intimate knowledge of the CPA and to highlight their accounts, which complexified and contradicted the official narratives. Kleinman's call for "new models for understanding migrants' lives and the structures that constrain them" that she proposes come "not from academic and policy debates but from the migrants themselves" (Kleinman, 2019, pp. 8–9) follows this ethnographic approach and augments the interviews and site visits that are currently standard for qualitative research in geography (Hitchings & Latham, 2020a). This is also an attempt to highlight the material realities of "crises" on the ground and to enact their potential to move analysis from the "molecular" to the "molar", in the Deleuzean conceptualisation, something other geographers have engaged in work on micropolitics (Anderson, 2017; Dadusc, 2019; Jellis & Gerlach, 2017; Lancione, 2017) and that is derived from Deleuze and Guattari's formulation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). Of course, there is the hope that the vignettes pulled from the field can have political consequences — however, as I have argued here, there is also value and purpose in minoritarian engagements that remain within the realm of social reproduction. Mutual aid is its own, very powerful, form of radical politics that I explore in detail in Chapter 14.

Figure 2.2 Encampments on the Canal Saint-Martin near the locks. Photo: Melora Koepke.

2.5. Towards “minor” methodologies: Inextricable modes of fieldwork and field life

While my ethnographic approach was oriented around the set of research questions elaborated above, I also consider both crisis and care as immanent and mutable processes that emerge through relational encounters. Throughout this research process, engagement with field*work* as an inextricable part of field *life* constitutes both a politics of knowledge and an intentional orientation towards “minor” methodologies that recognises “subjectivities, spatialities, [and] temporalities [that are] embodied, situated and fluid, their productions of knowledge inseparable from — if not completely absorbed in — the mess of everyday life” (Katz, 2017, p. 598). Rather than pursuing a conceptual framework that was fixed in advance, I sought to engage with fields that emerged and generated possibilities and limitations over the course of my involvement with them. By

residing in a neighbourhood whose politics and regular encounters were shaped by particular crises, I was able to better understand interlocutors' geographies of survival (Miewald & McCann, 2014; Mitchell & Heynen, 2009) as a politics of presence in shared urban public spaces. I contend that longitudinal and intimate engagements with sites and interlocutors are essential to both ethnography and storytelling research and writing: As poverty scholar Michael Harrington has cautioned: "To be impoverished is to be an internal alien, to grow up in a culture that is radically different from the one that dominates the society. The poor can be described statistically; they can be analyzed as a group. But they need a novelist as well as a sociologist if we are to see them" (1962, p. 17).

In Chapter 14, I explicitly establish these practices of care as a "minor" politics in which these embodied practices of care work also provide the ruptures that cause "something else" to happen politically: Namely, for relations of radical care to forge their own politics and orient towards new futurities (see Chapters 12 and 14). But research itself is also a political project that needs to be designed around the capacities and limitations of the humans who are differentially included and able to access research as an occupation. When I began this research, I had a multitude of complex care obligations that could have been perceived as obstacles to the work. However, I have illustrated in this essay how my multiple positionalities and roles allowed me to perform fieldwork through care work that engaged with the "major" and was

> interstitial with empirical research and social location; of scholarship that self-reflexively interpolates the theories and practices of everyday historical subjects — including, but not restricted to, scholars; and of work that reworks marginality by decomposing the major (Katz, 1996, p. 487).

The necessity of intertwining my research and writing practices into routines of care sometimes felt like code-switching, or using fugitive modes of being to refract "crisis" and care through the prisms and rhythms of everyday life. In this chapter I propose care work as one of many "minor" methodologies that allow for a situated, sustained presence in research fields and sites that unsettles the positionality of the researcher as "outside" or separate from her field. Indeed, these modes of durational scholarship have been long advanced by feminist, queer and Indigenous scholars who also propose the way of working "with and for" (Halberstam, 2013; Haraway, 2016; Simpson, 2014).

My pursuit of “minor” methodologies through solidarity work grounded in labour and mutual aid aligns with a commitment to “unthink mastery” (Katz, n.d.; Singh, 2018) by the delinking of research practices from the colonial institutions that have historically produced and reproduced these unequal power dynamics. I propose that the value of what I have called “minor” methodologies is their potential to engage with field sites as multiverses that produce research within multiple relational fields where we may engage in “situated solidarities” (Routledge & Derickson, 2015). A “minor” methodology means eschewing arm’s-length observation in favour of long-term engagement in the field, but also attunes to “lines of flight” (Katz, 1996b) that offer possibilities for rupture and transformation through which “minor” modes of action in the everyday may infiltrate hegemonic power politics by shifting the field of relation (Manning, 2016). In this chapter, I have outlined both the “minor” methodologies employed for this dissertation project and their potential for my own participation in engaged research that can be understood “as a way of reconfiguring the production of knowledge in geography” (Katz, 1996b, p. 1).

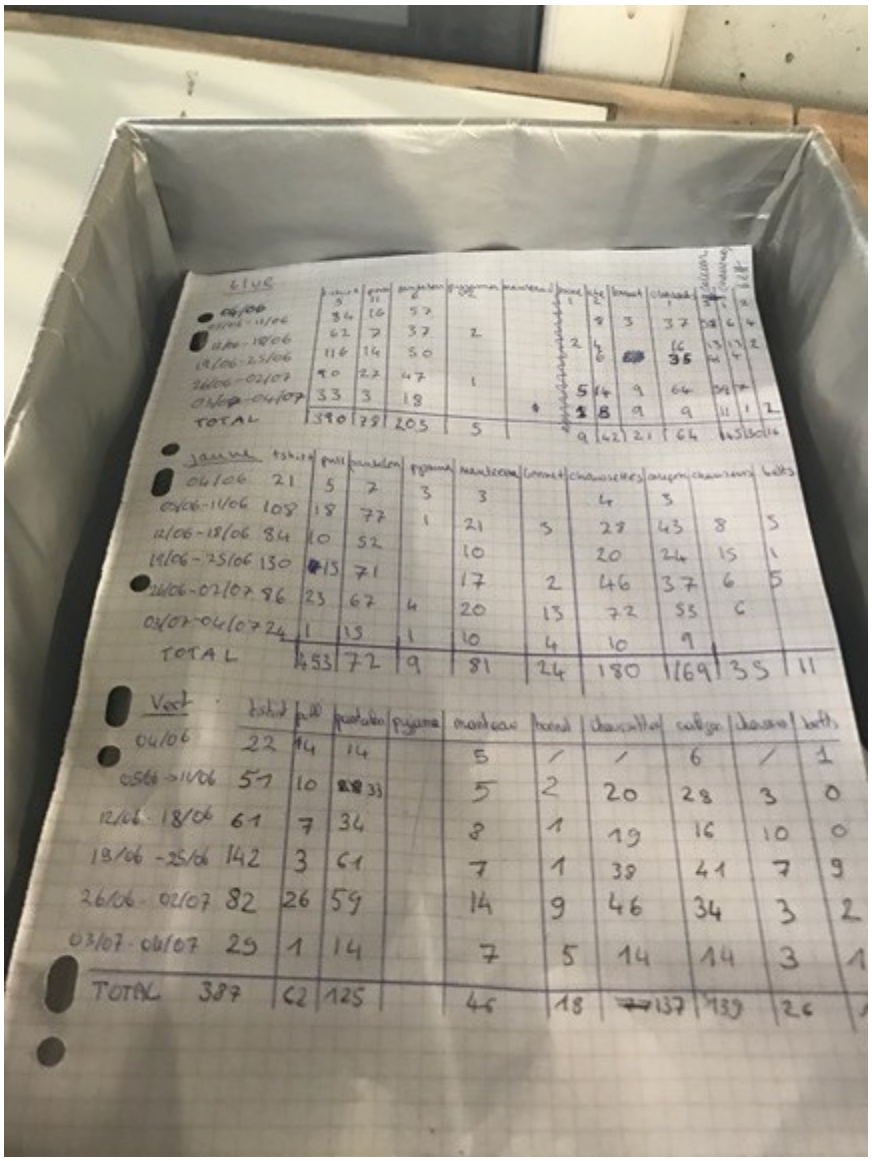

Figure 2.3 The “free store” bureaucracy. Photo: Melora Koepke.

The promises of the “minor” — that it is imbued with political potential and opportunities for insight — are at once conceptual and methodological. The forms of care labour I have described here are not only means of solidarity that contribute to the intersubjective positionality of a researcher, but are also types of thought in the act (Manning & Massumi, 2014) that make of research an “enactive ethnography” that “eschews the spectatorial posture to grasp action-in-the-making” (Wacquant, 2015, p. 5). I hoped to avoid working with the notion of a “field” as a place to be entered and left depending on professional distance and location. This speaks to the capacity of scholar-

activist work to produce “renegade cartographies of change” (Katz, 1996b, p. 494) that I am developing in future research and publications.

In this essay, I have described how my life experience and previous career as a journalist leave me intimately acquainted with — and acutely aware of — the limitations of interviewing as a method. In my mind, interviews should be part of an ongoing co-creative research process. I engaged volunteering as a “minor” methodology to overcome the paucity of language and nurture an immanent relationality that informs the analysis that centres on the perspectives of research participants. Drawing from and engaging with diverse literatures, including feminist and decolonial approaches to “minor” theory and politics (Katz 1996, 2016; Lancione 2017; Secor & Linz, 2017; Temenos, 2017), I take inspiration from non-representational geography and process philosophy by attuning to the “lines of flight” (after Deleuze) through which “minor” modes may shift the field of relation (Manning, 2016) to escape the confines of “major” hegemonic discourse, politics and power formations. In this way, modes of “deep hanging out” also contribute positively to spaces and supports people in useful and life-sustaining ways while allowing for intimate relational research that gives insight to the way “crisis” is enacted in the politics and everyday lives of cities.

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Chapter 3. Spatial politics of “undesirability”: Rights to the city and inhabiting financialised urban space

SFU Geography’s guidelines for writing “by paper” dissertations suggest including “bridging chapters” that link each substantive chapter to the others, thus maintaining a unitary quality in the dissertation, even as its main chapters are written as stand-alone papers. This is the first of these brief “bridging chapters”.

To round out this introductory section and to establish context for the chapters in Part I and Part II of the dissertation, Chapter 4 is an English-language translation of a book chapter co-written in French with an anonymous collaborator in 2019. The chapter is an extended entry to an encyclopedia on urban capitalism. The book was originally entitled *L’Encyclopédie du capitalisme urbain* (the Encyclopedia of Urban Capitalism), a collection compiled and edited by Emeline Comby and Mathieu Adam. It was eventually published as *Le Capital dans la cité*, published by Editions Amsterdam as a companion piece to the French publication of David Harvey’s *The Limits to Capital* (Harvey, 2020).

While Chapter 4 may seem to be a more conventional and familiar approach to the idea of “undesirability” as it pertains to certain bodies in urban public space, it is useful because it establishes the Parisian context and also provides a taxonomy of who might be considered “undesirable” and in which Parisian spaces. Some of the examples — namely the encampments installed by the unauthorised migrants in Porte de la Chapelle, as well as the historical colline du crack that existed there for many years before being destroyed by authorities in 2019 — describe recent histories of encampments and their politics and governance that I refer to in subsequent chapters of the dissertation. I was specifically invited to collaborate on this piece because of my fieldwork engagements and my expertise with subjects who depend on public space and thus whose bodies are considered “undesirable”, and their corporeal engagements with urban politics at multiple scales.

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Chapter 4. Undesirables: Between capital and the "right to the city" — ordering urban spaces

By Melora Koepke, Anonyme* and Camille Noûs**

*A co-author who remains anonymous because they were involved in labour action in 2020, when this chapter was published; a teacher at the Open University.

**A fictitious co-author, Camille Noûs is the pseudonym of an allegorical, polymathic French researcher of undefined gender, coined in 2020 by the research advocacy group RogueESR to represent collective efforts in academic fields, to protest French research funding policy and to symbolically denounce the shortcomings of the evaluation of research by the number of publications. The use of this name is meant to be a public statement of the values of research, in particular the collegial nature of the work (Larousserie, 2021).

Publication note: This chapter was published in 2020 by Éditions Amsterdam in the volume *Le Capital dans la cité: Une encyclopédie critique de la ville*, edited by Mathieu Adam and Emeline Comby.

4.1. Introduction

On January 13, 2020, Mayor Hidalgo launched her re-election campaign in an unexpected location: Porte de la Chapelle, one of the most stigmatised neighborhoods in Paris. That morning, the mayor spoke to local residents and journalists in a local café, stating that "this neighborhood deserves, as much as the surroundings of the Eiffel Tower, a majestic development". In particular, she announced the transformation of two ring road ramps into a hanging garden, and the renovation and augmentation of the network of bike lanes passing through the area. She explained that the improvements she was announcing that day would respond to the expectations and hopes of locals, in order to convey a message of confidence to the residents, "to tell them that their neighborhood deserves to live in a peaceful way", she said. The quality of life for "deserving" urban citizens, according to Hidalgo's distinction, had therefore been previously threatened by the remarkable presence in urban spaces of certain *other* urbanites designated as "undesirable".

For several years, at the northern edge of Paris in the 18th arrondissement, two specific populations experiencing what in French is called *la grande exclusion*

(generalised social exclusion and marginality) have been voiceless in the development of municipal policy, despite their omnipresence in certain public spaces — especially in Porte de la Chapelle, where encampment has been the condition of life for at least two distinct populations. On the one hand, a longstanding community of several hundred people who use drugs had historically occupied a liminal space between two highway lanes next to the ring road known as the colline du crack. Nearby, a succession of migrants had been living in provisional dwellings around the municipal reception centre — what the media has called *campements sauvages* (wild camps). About 75 of these encampments have been built, destroyed and rebuilt since 2015 in northern Parisian districts around Porte de la Chapelle and in the close banlieue of Seine-Saint-Denis.

On that day, the main thrust of Hidalgo's speech inaugurating her electoral campaign was to announce her intention to make this neighborhood a bulwark of the new "Grand Paris" (greater Paris), just in time for the 2024 Olympic Games. Indeed, artists' renderings of the new La Chapelle neighborhood showed a green and largely pedestrianised area, featuring new additions including a real estate development project called Chapelle International, as well as the Arena 2 for the Olympic Badminton competitions. These structures are to be built near the interchange of the *boulevard périphérique* or *périph'* (ring road) where the colline du crack and a number of migrants' encampments had previously been located. In this chapter we argue that this speech by Hidalgo represented a strong symbolic act announcing the removal and invisibilisation of some so-called "undesirables" in the name of urban improvements that would spectacularise certain urban spaces through special events such as the Olympics. These plans signified attempts to sanitise and pacify the city in the name of special events (Paul 2004; Prouse 2019), but also to replace "undesirables" with those whose presence is "desired" in the city; in other words, those who participate in urban life in ways that are qualified as acceptable.

4.2. Who qualifies as "undesirable"?

The term "undesirable" is frequently used as an adjective to designate certain uses of urban spaces and sometimes even as a noun to define certain groups (Agier 2008; Bernardot 2005; Blanchard 2013). It also allows us to understand the treatment reserved for certain people in the ordering of urban spaces. The individuals or groups thus categorised are varied and have in common the fact that they contravene the

dominant norms of contemporary urban capitalism. They are people whose visibility and corporeal presence in public space pose problems for actors with established economic interests in the city: In other words, homeowners and other economic actors whose voices are prominent; or elected public authorities, who may be called upon by the former to act in their interests. Those designated as “undesirable” are in fact subject to multiple forms of formal or informal social control.

Figure 4.1 Fences installed under the aerial metro between the Stalingrad and Jaurès metro stations in the 10th arrondissement of Paris to prevent migrants’ encampments, November 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke

The use of the term “undesirable” is therefore not intended to refute the relevance of other notions (“marginalisation”, “precariousness”), but to show how the dogma of the attractivity of public spaces contributes to defining, redefining or maintaining the categorisation of certain individuals or groups as “deviants”, and legitimising restrictions on their uses of public space. This discourse and its attendant actions (by authorities and their agents) have important consequences for people who are thus categorised as “undesirable”.

4.2.1. Joint processes of legitimisation and delegitimisation

Certain public spaces are “desired” as places for consumption, leisure, relaxation and sociability that contribute to the living environment and the image of the contemporary city. Their presence and/or use by certain individuals or groups leads to perceptions and representations of these spaces. Certain practices will be constructed as incompatible with the “legitimate” desires for use of public space and for the city to be “beautiful, clean, festive and safe” (Gravari-Barbas, 1998). Applying this argument, public spaces should not be occupied by individuals seen to be “threatening”, “loitering” or “begging”. However, their valuation is accompanied by discourses that put forward an ideal of sharing and mixing and “living together”. In its poster campaign for the renovation of the Place de la République in 2011, the municipality of Paris was promising a “friendly and popular” square, “a new place for everyone”. These speeches insist on the production of urban space, better living together, cohesion and harmony. But the production of attractive public spaces also leads to processes of exclusion or othering. Redevelopment must also make it possible to “give back” to local residents a square that had previously been confiscated by car traffic, or public spaces that had been “diverted from their [best] use” by homeless people or undocumented migrants (Interview, SAGP chief architect, June 2012).

These discourses on the quality of the living environment or living together contradict political measures aimed at ensuring the proper use of public spaces. At the same time, those involved in the production and management of spaces seek to promote certain uses defined as legitimate and to prevent those that are deemed illegitimate (Fleury & Froment-Meurice, 2014). Event planning is one of the key tools for staging (and ordering) public spaces on a global scale. In Paris, a series of events have become important to locals’ enjoyment of urban space: Gay Pride, Fête de la Musique, Techno Parade, Paris Plage, Nuits Blanches, etc. Almost identically reproduced in different urban and national contexts, these events are now part of the public authorities’ toolbox for producing lively and convivial public spaces (Garnier, 2008). According to the municipality of Paris website, in 2015, Paris Plage “will enable all Parisians to take full advantage of their vacations and live differently in the capital during the summer”. But according to a 2012 report from the Bassin de la Villette neighborhood council in the 19th arrondissement, the “zone is closed from 12:00 am to 8:00 am and secured by security guards” to “avoid inappropriate occupation at night”.

Political measures must ensure the removal and invisibilisation of those designated as “undesirable” in order to “create public and private spaces… that are safer and conducive to positive social uses” (Parisian Security Contract, 2013, p. 52). The eviction of “undesirable” people seems to be a shared phenomenon in the revaluation of public spaces in different national contexts (Blot & Spire 2014; Capron, 2006; Staeheli & Mitchell, 2007, 2008a). It can therefore result in displacement at different scales. Traffic circulation (Rousseau, 2008) is often one of the preferred solutions. It reveals a certain relationship between the nature of “problematic” uses of public space — namely its occupation by individuals or groups designated as “undesirable” — and the measures taken to put these spaces in order and restore them to their “best uses”. However, the logic of circulation is complex and can be the means of repression as well as an adaptation tactic implemented by individuals or groups characterised as “undesirable” to ensure the sustainability of their activities. For example, non-accredited musicians in the Paris metro are less likely to be controlled when they are on the move rather than stationary. In contrast to the effects of movement, the ordering of public spaces can also result in the invisibilisation of “undesirable” activities. The invisibility of individuals or groups defined as undesirable is a particularly important modality in a context of managing appearances within valued public spaces. These people can thus become part of the landscape, in a kind of “invisible visibility” — seen but unnoticed (Sanselme, 2004) — that makes them “integrated deviants” (Goffman, 1975).

4.2.2. Bodily and intimate inhabitations of public space

The majority of states have adopted legal and judicial equality frameworks. Every individual therefore theoretically has the same “rights of presence” in the public space. Discrimination based on gender, race, religion or culture is illegal in European countries as in other countries of the Global North. Designations of certain subjects as “undesirable” can be enacted on intimate scales, which can also be understood to be politicised and political. What makes these subjects and bodies undesirable is linked to conditions of “advanced marginality” (Wacquant, 2013) in which they are often forced to carry out their private lives in public, and under the scrutiny of all. It corresponds to social exclusion, which spatialises the divisions between “desired” and “undesirable” bodies, and leads to strategies for excluding the latter.

The “intimate economies” (Wilson, 2004) of undesirability appear as a condition that manifests itself through certain bodies, and it is therefore useful to consider the corporealities of these bodies: Their activities, needs and desires, which are exposed in public space because they are unable to access private space or to remove themselves from public view due to homelessness or other forms of carceralised precarity. In Paris, in the Porte de la Chapelle neighborhood that we previously introduced as an example, two groups of “undesirables” inhabited the interstitial public spaces of the neighbourhood and in the margins of public space around the time of this research, from 2015 to 2018. This common spatialisation materialised their exclusion. Firstly, a population of several hundred precariously housed or homeless drug users have been living for several years in a recurring encampment called the colline du crack between two exchanges of the boulevard périphérique (Note: The colline du crack was dismantled in 2019). The second population included several groups of unauthorised migrants who, due to their abandonment by the State, have been living in encampments while awaiting the results of their asylum claims, or are there because their claim has been rejected, or because they are “Dubliners” and therefore subject to detention and deportation. These groups have coexisted in separate encampments on the peripheries of Paris due to the lack of places in the reception facilities for migrants, lack of genuine housing and health care, as well as for other complex reasons. Some of them have already gone through the accommodation systems, but are excluded for various reasons. The co-presence of these two groups at the Porte de la Chapelle is partly caused by State policies and failures: The inadequacy of existent social and health services, and the spatial policies of destruction, evacuation and invisibility that serve to create a frontier location within the “ramparts” of Paris (delimited by the bridges of the boulevard périphérique). This neighborhood is marked by the processes of post-industrial redevelopment and gentrification, a situation exacerbated in view of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

The presence of informal living spaces in the interstices of the public space inspires diverse reactions: On the one hand, the humanitarian involvement of citizen-led “solidarity” collectives for newcomers, and on the other hand, angry residents faced with conditions that they consider to be marked by insalubrity, insecurity and inhospitality in the streets of their neighborhoods (Figure 2). The poor hygiene and destitution of encampment life forces residents to carry out their daily bodily functions in public spaces. Fights, rapes and other forms of violence between people living in

encampments, or directed at residents and humanitarian volunteers, can generate a sense of insecurity and forms of inhospitality in a so-called “sanctuary city”. Therefore, this situation has been designated by different forms of “urban crisis” and is regularly documented by the international press, which describes the city of Paris and its public spaces as a frontier zone where tensions are manifested by the bodies of “undesirables” and the gates of Paris, where encampments persist, as the “gates of hell”. Thus, the valued and symbolic capital of Paris can be seen to be jeopardised in the face of the State’s inability to respond to these multiple crises.

Figure 4.2 Demonstration organised by a residents’ collective in the 10th arrondissement, November 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

4.3. Different types of control devices that designate undesirables

Multiple political measures for governing public spaces make it possible to identify those designated as “undesirable”. At first glance, it is tempting to distinguish between the isolated, one-off practices of certain populations (watering one’s plants above an undesirable person, or putting oil on a bench) and recurrent, institutionalised forms (dissuasive street furniture, or anti-loitering orders). However, this opposition must be qualified. For example, more or less structured groups of resident populations publicly oppose the presence of certain people in “their” neighborhoods. They call on the

public authorities in neighborhood council meetings, in street rallies and demonstrations, and on social networks to assert their claims on the legitimate uses of public spaces. These denunciations are generally not explicitly directed at groups, but are rather formulated in terms of “nuisances” (“noise” or “smell”), hygiene (“unhealthy conditions” in encampments, syringes or condoms littering the ground) or public safety (from sidewalk congestion to terrorist threats).

Broadly speaking, there are three main types of devices for managing undesirability: Legal or regulatory measures (such as municipal bylaws, regulations specific to types of spaces, legislative provisions, etc.), formal control measures by institutional agents (such as national or municipal police officers, security guards, the military, etc.) and spatial control through objects such as dissuasive street furniture. This photograph (Figure 4.3) taken in front of the 18th arrondissement town hall in Paris shows two types of seating, including the bus shelter with a handle on the bench to prevent homeless people from sleeping there. As early as the 1980s, the RATP (transit) and the SNCF (national railway) enforced a ban on lying prone on street furniture (Bouché, 2000). In strictly public spaces, in this case sidewalks, the movement towards individualised seating is more recent and no doubt encouraged by the existence of this furniture in transport spaces and in the catalogs of street furniture companies.

Measures to manage undesirables, which have a dissuasive function and which are often taken prior to the production of spaces (the absence of benches and seating in public spaces to avoid any form of prolonged occupation), can also be distinguished from strictly repressive measures (removing a bench because an undesirable person occupies it). This distinction also leads to a distinction between “forgotten” groups in urban development, whose needs are not anticipated, and “undesirable” groups, whose uses are deliberately limited. In fact, these three control measures are closely linked and recurrent in the ways that they target “undesirables”.

4.3.1. Hierarchical locations

These variations in definitions of undesirability of course have a spatial dimension. Intra-urban hierarchies are reflected in control devices. Certain places are particularly important for the development of urban capitalism and concentrate multiple devices for managing undesirables: Spaces with symbolic (and economic) value in the

era of globalised tourism such as Notre-Dame or Montmartre or commercial centralities. In 2011, anti-loitering orders were issued at the Champs-Élysées, the Louvre-Tuileries and the department stores in Paris. Specialised Field Brigades (BST) have been created to patrol the Champs-Élysées, Les Halles, Belleville and the North and East train stations. In addition, transportation spaces, also places with rampant “undesirability”, are themselves hierarchical. The network nodes and stations crystallise particularly crucial issues, such as the patrols and outreach activities undertaken by the police around the Gare du Nord. Gentrifiying spaces are also characterised by the multiplicity of devices deployed there. The Parisian districts of Belleville and Barbès-Goutte d’Or are both ZSP — Priority Security Zones where special night operators patrol — and locations where multiple redevelopment operations are being planned to refine and encourage the acceptable and optimal uses of these spaces. Paradoxically, this concentration of resources favors certain activities defined as undesirable and at the same time increases the need to curb them. This leads some spaces to stand out for their value, both to those engaged in undesirable activities and to the managers of spaces that produce multiple local but recurring conflicts.

Figure 4.3 Dissuasive “urban design”. Photo: Anonyme.

4.3.2. A “rights framework” in urban space?

The constitution of a “framework of rights” in urban space combines two contradictory meanings. If the existence of the “right to the city” in the Lefebvrian sense (1986) can be affirmed as being tacit and universal, the monetisation of public space carries just as much the implicit “right to profit” of ownership to these spaces. These contradictory “rights” produce diverse publics: Those who can exclude and those who can be excluded. Cities can thus be understood not only as “growth machines” (Molotch, 1976) but also as desiring machines where the will to exclude certain bodies is materialised by virtue of their designation as “undesirable”.

To conceptualise the exclusion of certain “undesirables”, we can rely on the "framework of rights” that combines the right to the city of Lefebvre with the concept of capitalist property rights that trigger the “privatisation” of public space. This approach has been usefully taken up by Mitchell (2003b), who continues the conceptualisation of Lefebvre’s “right to the city” (1986) by demonstrating how these rights have been eroded

by the governance of “undesirable” bodies in contemporary cities. Mitchell posits that the governance of the homeless in the public space has led to the constitution of diverse “publics” around the control of these spaces and bodies. This notion of the “right of presence” in the public space overlaps with a hegemonic ideal of which bodies are “desirable” and therefore which are “undesirable” in public spaces. This designation of certain “undesirable” bodies is thus not only linked to their presence in public space, but also to the practices through which their presence is controlled, framed, and managed by coercive or violent means. As pioneering American urban planner William Whyte, who promoted the use of the term, put it, “the biggest obstacle to producing better spaces is the problem of ‘undesirables’. It is in fact not so much the undesirables that are the problem, but the actions taken to combat them that are a problem” (1988).

The “right to profit” and the “right to exclude” manifest undesirability. The monetisation of public space implies increasing the importance of the economic dimension within the framework of rights to urban spaces. Ownership of the city’s common spaces emphasises an inherent “right to exclude” (Blomley, 2003) to maximise profit. This right is most important for understanding the category of “undesirables”. If rights to public space can in fact be understood as a kind of “property right”, it follows that these rights to space must have a monetary value. The advent of widespread “city branding” (McCann, 2020) shows that the image of the city and its attractiveness to capital has become a central concern of municipal governance and policy and is negotiated in the symbolic value of some cities.

4.3.3. Elastic management of undesirability

The ordering of public spaces is not uniformly applied to all places, nor to all groups defined as undesirable. Multiple hierarchies of both spaces and groups lead to the identification of differentiated treatmenť according to socio-spatial contexts. This elastic management of undesirability results in complex effects that correspond to three main types: The logics of release, of displacement, or of invisibilisation. The consequences for the groups thus categorised are multiple and can range from increased precariousness (gaps in school attendance for children who live in shantytowns, when they are destroyed) to endangerment (the confiscation of migrants’ tents and sleeping bags in the middle of winter) and even death.

The production of undesirability is today closely linked to the valorisation of certain spaces and to the development of urban capitalism, which leads to the hierarchisation of inhabitants' rights to the city according to social relations of class, gender, race or age. The notion of "undesirables" makes it possible to highlight how the production and management of urban spaces leads to the reproduction of multiple forms of social inequality on a daily basis. It highlights, beyond particular situations, recurrences in the categorisation of legitimate and illegitimate uses that reveal more structural processes linked to the diffusion of certain political and economic ideologies.

Neo-liberal hegemonies constantly invent new and more insidious ways to designate, manage and ratify undesirability for those bodies whose inhabitations of public space are not linked to "desirable" — i.e., economically viable — uses of public space. This trend, already well established, tends to spread insidiously to new spaces and to be constantly targeting and developing new audiences. We can dream of other forms of more inclusive cities where the most precarious people would no longer be categorised as undesirable, and we can mobilise these dreams in our everyday solidarity actions. But the margins of maneuverability seem to become narrower by the day.

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Part I: The CPA

Chapter 5. From urban politics to urban borders: The CPA as a "camp within the city"

Following the objectives of this research project to consider the politics of "experimental" spaces of care instigated by the municipality of Paris in response to crisis, I identified the CPA as a key site of municipal management into the Parisian migrant "crisis", and of municipal intervention into crisis more generally. The opportunity to research this facility first presented itself in May of 2016, when Mayor Hidalgo announced plans to open what she called a "humanitarian centre for refugees in the heart of the French capital" — a municipal facility that would respond to encampments and further position Paris as a sanctuary city within the European migrant "crisis". On November 10th, 2016, the facility opened in Porte de la Chapelle, a district in transition in the northeastern quadrant of Paris. Part 1 of this dissertation is comprised of three chapters specifically about the CPA: Two are written as research articles for submission to academic research journals, and one is a chapter commissioned for publication in an edited volume, *L'Exil à Paris*, that emerged from Michel Agier's research project on migrants in cities. This chapter was co-authored, in French, with two anthropology master's students who also conducted research in the CPA. It is followed by a short piece written by me for inclusion in that volume. Three bridging chapters link the main chapters, beginning with this one. The works in Part I are based on ethnographic research conducted over 17 month in situ at the CPA for the entire duration of its existence, from November 10th, 2016 to March 31st, 2018. It was, at that time, France's first and Europe's largest urban migration reception facility.

Drawing from ethnographic research with local volunteers or solidarians, municipal actors and migrants themselves, these chapters explore the practices and politics of "crisis" and care as they were conjugated through the experimental, temporary municipal facility created to address the situation of migrants' encampments on the streets of northern Paris. Chapter 4 explores the CPA as a dispositif invented to govern the crisis of migration in Paris that also shaped the emergent "crisis" at the local scale, and indeed constituted an evolving form of what I call crisis urbanism; i.e., municipally designed interventions to manage "crises" in public spaces. I begin by elaborating on the urban politics of "crisis" as they evolved and became the context that precipitated the creation of the CPA, a facility designed as a temporary, modular dispositif to purportedly

offer emergency shelter and accueil inconditionnel to precarious migrants arriving in the French capital. This chapter advances the argument that the CPA's purpose extended beyond the provision of welcome or reception and functioned as a performance of Parisian "sanctuary" as advanced by the mayor and her cabinet, and was therefore a political apparatus designed to shape the "Parisian migration crisis" by 1) framing the crisis firstly as a "humanitarian" emergency rather than a failure of the State, 2) positioning the municipality vis-à-vis the National State as a humanitarian actor and 3) working to position the municipality as an arbiter of political subjectivities between migrants, Parisians and the government at various scales. Thinking with the Foucauldian concept of the dispositif understood as a governmental apparatus that is also generative, this chapter thus engages with the urban politics of "crisis" by considering not only what the CPA *was*, but what it *did:* Simultaneously governed the crisis and generated a "crisis urbanism" within and beyond the city itself.

Chapter 6. Welcome to the Bubble: Governing the "migration crisis" from the street to the CPA

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6.1. Introduction

Since 2015, over 75 encampments have been installed, removed and reinstalled in the north of Paris. Provisional clusters of tents and tarps have proliferating through certain marginal and interstitial "vacancies" in public spaces of the northeastern arrondissements, burgeoning along the medians of the boulevards, along sidewalks and in local parks and squares, on the quais and walkways, and tucked beneath the bridges of the canals as well as under the flyovers of the *boulevard péripherique* (ring road). Their inhabitants live for weeks, months or years without running water, sanitation or cooking facilities, sleep on the ground and are exposed to multiple health hazards and threats to security of their person and possessions. These scenes of extreme marginality and destitution — often photographed for reports in the local and international press — constitute visceral evidence of a so-called "Parisian migrant crisis" (Gagnon, 2016) that generates controversy because of the sheer number of people abandoned by the State to the streets. The repeated spectacles of street sweeps, or démantèlements, have helped to name and frame the "crisis"[2] as an emergency to be managed rather than a violation of rights, justice and international law. In response to this perceived crisis, in 2016, Hidalgo called on her city's "duty of humanism" (Ville de Paris press release, June 26th, 2016) that would be actualised by inventing "new dispositifs to overcome the current situation, which is one of saturation of the facilities of the national State and our collective will" (Ville de Paris press conference, Sept 6th, 2016).

On November 10th, 2016, exactly six days after the largest démantèlement to that date where over 2,000 people were removed from an encampment under and around the northern aerial metro near the Stalingrad and Jaurès stops, the CPA opened its

[2] The designation of migration "crisis" in Europe, in France and in Paris is a topic worthy of sustained discussion, and yet is outside the scope of this chapter. For a journalistic account of the migration "crisis" in Paris, see Gagnon, 2016. For a sustained critical study of the naming and framing of the European migration "crisis" see New Keywords Collective, 2016.

gates in Porte de la Chapelle, a neighbourhood in the northeastern corner of the 18th arrondissement bordering the near-northern banlieue of Seine-Saint-Denis. Though Hidalgo had previously anticipated housing and shelter in a facility that would be built to UN standards and norms, as she had announced repeatedly, nothing about the CPA or the Bulle suggested the workaday structure of a conventional United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-style transit camp.

While much recent work explores the practices and politics of municipal governance of migration in cities, less attention has been paid to the materialisation of this politics of "crisis" or its interventions. This chapter considers one a municipal intervention into a so-called "migration crisis" on the local scale. The CPA was a unique municipal dispositif created to manage the "crises" perceived by the proliferation of migrants' encampments in the city since 2016. In the national and European context of restrictive border régimes that is also marked by a saturation of accommodation facilities for migrants arriving in France, I argue that the CPA was created not only as a welcoming humanitarian structure but also as a form of urban politics meant to position the Parisian municipality as an actor that manages the "crisis" by creating innovative solutions to problems caused by the incapacities of the National State and its immigration régime. The CPA was a camp-like structure within the city limits of Europe's most-visited city, rather than on the peripheries. Therefore, I argue, the CPA constituted a form of crisis urbanism by responding to the material, discursive and affective conditions of "crisis" with a purpose-built facility that itself created new political opportunities. Thinking with Foucault's concept of the dispositif as more than an apparatus of governance, I consider not only what a dispositif *is*, but what it can *do*: Namely, that it produces and shapes the politics of "crisis" from within.

Though situated within wide-ranging work on urban crisis and municipalism, this chapter takes both a practical and conceptual engagement with Foucauldian notions of the dispositif and explores how its architectural form, bureaucratic functioning and the discourse around its political positioning worked strategically to mediate and shape the "crisis" by 1) framing the situation of migrants' encampments firstly as a "humanitarian" crisis rather than a failure of the State, 2) positioning the municipality vis-à-vis the National State as a humanitarian actor intervening in this crisis and 3) working to position the municipality as an arbiter of the emergent relations between migrants, Parisians and the State. This analysis is drawn from ethnographic research in situ at the

CPA and its surroundings for the entire duration of its existence. As a volunteer with a citizen-run humanitarian organisation that participated, within the first year, in the centre's day-to-day operations while also doing outreach and ground support in surrounding encampments, I spent over a thousand hours in and around the site as an "inside-outsider" accessing the CPA through the sustained presence of my labour and participation. I also conducted 58 interviews with various stakeholders including municipal actors, employees, volunteers and migrants. Fieldwork took place in in Paris from August 2016 until July 2018, with multiple subsequent follow-up visits from 2019 to 2022.

Figure 6.1 The Bulle, with perimeter fence and welcome sign. Photo: Melora Koepke.

6.2. CPA as crisis urbanism

6.2.1. What is the dispositif?

Though the cycle of encampments, their installation and démantlèments seemed to indicate governmental ambivalence towards migrants' encampments in Paris, in the announcements leading up to opening day the CPA purported to offer accueil inconditionnel to new arrivals and indeed, a sign mounted to the fence directly in front of the Bulle proclaimed *bienvenue* (welcome) in eight languages. The same signage identified the facility as the "Centre humanitaire Paris-Nord/dispositif de premier accueil"

— dispositif being the term that, more than *espace* (space) or even *lieu* (place), is commonly used in French to refer to a physical but also medico-social facility. It is a very common term: In the course of living and working in France I have heard it used to refer to everything from State-run services for the homeless to new parking meters. However, critical theory has also long engaged with the dispositif as a concept (Agamben, 2009; Bussolini, 2010; Deleuze, 1992; Legg, 2011) that was initially described by Foucault as a "formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an urgent need" (1980, p. 184) and

> a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions — in short, the said as much as the unsaid… The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements" (1980, p. 194).

In his subsequent commentary on Foucault's initial conceptualisation, Deleuze laments that the previous focus of thinking around the dispositif was on its governmental function rather than its generative capacity (1992). My use of this term, alongside my French interlocutors (who use it liberally) assume that the word refers as much to a "system of relations" as to a physical facility — and that the purpose of the dispositif is always political as well as pragmatic (Foucault, 1980). My analysis echoes Deleuze in demonstrating that this particular dispositif did more than manage a set of already-existent relations; it also shaped an emergent relational politics within and around this particular "crisis".

If a dispositif "always has a concrete strategic function and is always located in a power relation" (Agamben, 2009, p. 3), the CPA's strategic function evolved over time. While it was created to govern the "crisis" of encampments by (supposedly) providing a worthy alternative, it also generated a "system of relations" through which the crisis was perceived as a result of migrants' bodily, corporeal presence (and that of their material possessions and shelters, etc.) rather than the incapacities and insufficiencies of the State. This, I argue, was actually intentional: The dispositif existed as a way of naming and framing the crisis and to define it in a certain way, while also laying out certain possibilities for intervention. Similarly to the way Le Courant describes the border as a "dispositif that articulates [certain discourses] through which irregular foreigners are treated through a set of coercive practices as well as administrative and judicial

procedures" (2016, p. 216, translation mine), I argue that the dispositif of the CPA functions as a disciplinary apparatus that operates through "coercive practices" but that also is inherently *generative*, i.e., "belong[ing] to the process of 'becoming'"(Deleuze, 1992, p. 164). In my account of the CPA, I attend not only to what the dispositif is, but what it *does* — namely, its capacity to simultaneously shape and govern the crisis by conjugating relations between diverse subjects and between individuals and the State. I emphasise that it is a socio-spatial structure that governs the existing crisis, but also generates new political possibilities from within; it affirms its improvisatory, emergent nature as one of "diverse sites and practices in a piecemeal and contingent way in response to a dynamic and changing world" (Braun, 2014, p. 51). I also build on recent work that "clarifies the usefulness of the Foucauldian notion of dispositif for analyzing institutional improvisation" in the "permanent temporary" of urbanising space (Oesch, 2020, p. 351).

As an ultra-visible, experimental municipal intervention into the crisis posed by burgeoning encampments in the city, the CPA extended "welcome" to many migrants abandoned by the State. By initiating her "new dispositif to encounter the current situation", Mayor Hidalgo also significantly leaned into an intensifying *bras-de-fer* (impasse) between herself and the National government (Ravinel, 2018). Throughout 2017, as the "migrant crisis" intensified in Paris, Hidalgo repeatedly challenged the French government about their unwillingness to increase capacity or to adequately manage the situation that was fomenting around the CPA. After having proposed that the CPA was an experiment that, if successful, could be taken over by the National State and expanded to meet the increased numbers of asylum-seekers arriving in France, in 2017 she very publicly proposed a new law for the reception and integration of migrants to the French Minister of the Interior, Gerard Collomb (Fouteau, 2017). In the meantime, the OFII had integrated operations inside the CPA, which denied any possibility that the centre would really be offering unconditional welcome.

6.2.2. Migration crisis as urban crisis

Although immigration policy has long been considered the purview of nation-states, the everyday politics and practices of migration reception are increasingly felt and lived locally (European Commission, 2017). Municipal governments, especially since 2015, have sought innovative solutions to address the pressures and controversies of

the so-called “European migration crisis” at the urban scale. Though conventionally thought of in terms of global geopolitics, the pressures and tensions of unauthorised migration are often manifested in encounters between people brought into close proximity in the public spaces of local neighbourhoods where the abstractions of “Fortress Europe” become everyday realities for residents and migrants alike. In Paris, this “crisis of migration” is largely constituted as an urban “crisis” through the material presence of tents and bodies of unhoused migrants inhabiting public space. Since 2015, over 70 migrants’ encampments have been destroyed and reinstalled in northern Paris, while their inhabitants often remain abandoned by the State and subject to the abjection of encampment life for days, weeks, months and even years while they simultaneously endure the slow violence of an inefficient and outdated immigration bureaucracy (Fassin, 2005; Le Courant, 2016). Reports of increased “flows” and “influxes” of migrants through porous borders and into cities as first points of arrival, transit hubs and destinations for migrants highlight everyday local migration “crises” that are governed at the municipal level, despite the methodological nationalism of the most conventional political understandings of migration (Maillet et al., 2017). Thus, migration becomes an issue through which “the nation-state is entwined with the city, relationally constituted through the city, but not necessarily above or before it” (Darling, 2016, p. 16). Consequently, in cities, municipal governments are responding to pressures of forced migration as they are manifested on the local scale through urban “crisis conditions” that must be addressed through policy and governance solutions. Recent work on cities and migration highlight processes through which certain “quick fixes” meant to address what are perceived to be the *urban* issues of mass displacement are “downloaded” or transferred from the nation-state to the municipal level, causing cities to become involved in shaping migration policies along with, and in some cases *in lieu of*, the State. This has been the case in many European cities, and in Paris — where encampments are a persistent controversy — the municipal government has put migration squarely on their agenda (Bonn, 2022). Even before the “migration crisis” had heightened the visibility of precarious migrants in Paris as in other European cities, a growing literature on the urban geopolitics of migration has emphasised the role of cities as first points of arrival, transit hubs and destinations for migrants. By considering how the “migration crisis” manifests in urban space, a paradoxical question of scale emerges: In Paris, the local framing of the “Parisian migration crisis” as a municipal issue deflects from the fact that immigration remains within the competencies of the National State. The municipality

manages hygiene, security and other facets of street life and public space, but doesn't manage migration reception, process asylum claims or provide housing. Nevertheless, municipal governments have been called to respond to local manifestations of the European "migration crisis" through urban policy and governance solutions, and have also become interlocutors of the nation-state's immigration politics, policies and practices.

In the past several years, the increased numbers of unauthorised migrants arriving in Europe — and specifically, in Paris — have saturated reception mechanisms, exceeding the capacities of nation-states to expand service provision to accommodate them (Bhagat, 2021). Migrants arrive, and are immediately confronted with chaotic and labyrinthine administrative procedures and insufficient services, are sorted for ineligibility based on the Dublin regulation (Picozza, 2017), and are then denied protections and abandoned by the National State and otherwise excluded through systems of retention and circulation that constitute new and ongoing forms of bordering (De Genova, 2017; Makaremi & Kobelinsky, 2008; Tazzioli & Garelli, 2018). In Paris, the presence and proliferation of encampments in urban space are constitutive of this broader "crisis", but also of the démantlèments and evacuations that produce and perpetuate it. For the 17 months of its existence, the CPA materialised a municipal version of migration reception that, while deceptive and insufficient, attempted a new approach that was in many ways contrapuntal to the French State's inability — or unwillingness — to manage the crisis with a sure hand. In the following sections, I consider how the CPA worked beyond its purported purpose as a dispositif de premier accueil. Far from being a straightforward intervention of an emergent municipal humanitarism, I argue that it shaped the affective, material and discursive politics of the Parisian migration crisis by mediating relationships between migrants, Parisians and other volunteer humanitarians, the municipality, and the State. I begin by documenting the genesis of the CPA, through data gathered from documentary research and through interviews with municipal actors.

6.2.3. "Experimental, ephemeral and inclusive": The genesis of the CPA

> So there we had a real brainstorming period… because there was no other model in France and it was a "pilot" project. At the same time, we still wanted to convey the exceptionalism of the crisis in Paris and lend

> prominence to our municipal interventions (Interview, project engineer from the Ville de Paris, March 2017).

The CPA opened on November 10th, 2016 and operated until March 31st, 2018 in Porte de la Chapelle, a neighbourhood in transition where multiple urban-renewal projects including construction for the 2024 Olympics are underway. The dispositif was spearheaded, designed and executed by the municipality of Paris, and 80% of its funding was also municipal, while the National State provided 20% of funds for the Bulle's everyday operations, and financed 100% of the overnight shelter provided in the Halle (the Hall). The CPA was, at that time, France's first and Europe's largest urban migration reception facility and was also unique and remarkable by design, as if to amplify the municipal government's efforts to intervene in the unfolding "crisis" of migration in Paris. From its earliest planning stages, the facility was intended to be "temporary, modular, flexible and… inclusive", according to a city project manager interviewed for this research — a specifically *municipal* intervention into a crisis that manifested locally even as it affected all of Europe. As a municipal intervention created as a "new dispositif" to encounter the crisis, it also served to highlight the French State's incapacity — or unwillingness — to provide solutions to this crisis among many.

The CPA's most prominent purpose-built architectural component (and most lavish budget expenditure) was the Bulle. Conceived by German art star Hans-Walter Müller, the incontrovertible Bulle was inflated in an empty lot in front of a disused hangar of the national railway. Its design was intentionally conceived as a "beacon" to draw newly arriving migrants towards the facility (and, presumably, away from other neighbourhoods of the city), while also conveying the CPA's objectives of "humanitarianism and inclusion". While architect Julien Beller, interviewed by *The New Yorker* just before opening day, described its vibe as "a bit like camping, or a little vacation village" (Collins, 2016), a local onlooker remarked that "it reeked of "propaganda" and resembled a "maternal stomach, or, of course, a giant bubble" (Interview, local volunteer, February 2018).

The CPA was architecturally remarkable by design. Located in a vacant former railyard in the highly trafficked northern intersection of Porte de la Chapelle, it was less than 30 minutes' walk from Montmartre, one of the most popular tourist attractions in the city. With its brightly coloured fences, whimsical murals and especially its eye-catching Bulle, the site was less reminiscent of the ordered simplicity of a UNHCR transit camp

than of the ephemeral architectures of outdoor music festivals that the architect, Julien Beller, claimed as an inspiration (Darrieus, 2017). Indeed, the CPA's playful design features and modular, upbeat appearance enhanced its working relationship with Utopia 56, an NGO founded by an event producer in Brittany who previously specialised in producing music festivals — until it didn't. Utopia brokered volunteers to work in the CPA (including this author) as a form of friendly voluntourism that starkly differentiated the CPA from the violent border régimes of "Fortress Europe" and, eventually, also set it apart from the then-new French President Emmanuel Macron's increasingly draconian discourse on immigration restrictions. Instead, the Bulle's form of municipal humanitarianism seemed to propose a flexible, innovative version of the city of lights that was "made for sharing"[3] — and where encounters between migrants arriving in the city, local volunteers and young voluntourists could be mutually beneficial. The uncanny design of the Bulle, according to designers and project managers interviewed for this research, was meant to convey its "experimental, ephemeral" exceptionality that was said to be inspired by the tactical-urbanism popularised by former Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë; it furthered Hidalgo's "esprit start-up" (start-up ethos) (Interview, Ville de Paris project manager, June 2018). The design and conception of the CPA — and most visibly, the Bulle — exemplified this innovative, experimental and identifiably *Parisian* approach to municipal humanitarianism, following the Hidalgo brand of proposing innovative solutions to entrenched problems. It also staged the crisis of encampments as singular *events* of crisis rather than as the systemically entrenched result of necropolitical border régimes.

Behind the Bulle was the Halle: A disused railway hangar from which all the windows had been removed, its crumbling concrete exterior adorned with colourful and festive murals. The hollow, cavernous space, retrofitted with canvas-walled "cabins" with electrical outlets, cots and rudimentary bedding, housed 400 hommes majeurs isolés for up to 10 days each. The Halle also had laundromat facilities and a "free store", which were largely operated by volunteers. Emmaüs Solidarité was the NGO commissioned by the municipality to run the Centre's everyday operations, and they were supported by Utopia 56, who also ran missions outside the CPA in the encampments. Medical consultations were provided by Médecins du monde and by Samu social, the "Service

[3] Motto adopted by the city of Paris, in English, for the 2024 Olympics.

d’aide médicale urgente”, the State’s organisation for social assistance. With these facilities, the CPA effectively conveyed a Parisian “duty of humanism” as cited by the mayor, while also producing and refracting the politics of crisis.

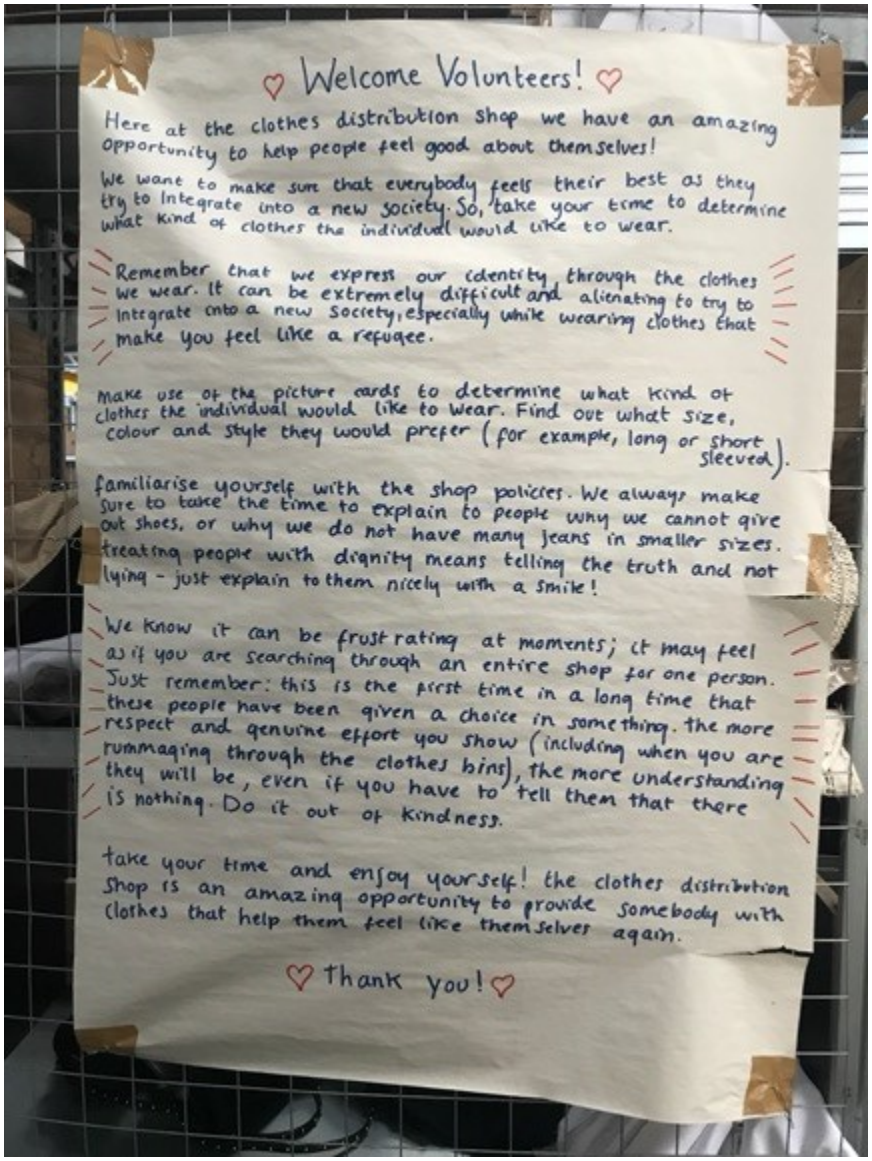

Figure 6.2 Guidelines for the “free store”. Photo: Melora Koepke.

Although the CPA’s primary stated goal was to intervene in the crisis in Paris by creating an accueil inconditionnel in response to encampments, it also performed a brand of municipal humanitarianism that differentiated the Ville de Paris from the nation-state and positioned the city as a humanitarian actor, while naming and framing the Parisian “migration crisis” as one of shelter rather than the insufficiencies of the State. Initially proposed as a temporary and provisional solution to the persistent crisis of

encampments in the north of the French capital, the CPA actually focalised the conditions of "crisis" around the Bulle and in Porte de la Chapelle. When the facility opened on November 10th, 2016, its stated purpose was to offer "welcome and orientation" as well as emergency shelter, but these functions were contingent on the National State meeting its responsibilities to protect and provide for asylum-seekers as required under French and international refugee law. But the CPA was overcapacity on the day it opened, and as the months wore on, the facility played an augmenting role in the crisis fomenting in Porte de la Chapelle. Though Hidalgo had initially presented the CPA as the "new dispositif" proposing a worthy alternative to encampments, its existence also served to legitimise and justify the démantèlements of the encampments and the pursuit and harassment of their inhabitants — actions that both produced and constituted the "crisis" itself.

6.3. The CPA as dispositif

6.3.1. A "modular, replicable" crisis response

> From the beginning the idea was to create a pilot project that was modular and replicable, a kind of experimentation or laboratory. One point that was very strongly supported by the Ville de Paris was that the project be as close as possible to the values of the city in terms of the motto of *ville refuge, ville inclusive* [sanctuary city, inclusive city] — envisioning an accueil inconditionnel for everyone. But afterwards, we had to live with the reality. If the National State won't meet its responsibilities by [providing more housing for asylum-seekers], we can't let new people in (Interview, project manager from the Ville de Paris, June 2018).

According to the descriptions of the city manager quoted above, the CPA was initially conceived to "be as close as possible to the values of the city in terms of reception, inclusivity etc." — an accueil inconditionnel was envisioned that would solve the problem of encampments. The second part of this quote refers to the practical impossibility of this objective since it was contingent on the National State increasing its reception capacities. The CPA necessarily refined its admission criteria, offering temporary shelter in the Halle only to a certain category of migrant — the homme majeur isolé. This practice of categorising migrants based their gender, age or countries of origin follows the French civil code that designates certain people (women, children, families) as "vulnerable" and others — i.e., hommes majeurs isolés — as the responsibility of the National State. Therefore, the CPA housed single men only — and

media coverage narrated the Parisian migration “crisis” as increasingly unmanageable and hazardous due to the presence of (young, male, racialised) migrants whose unmanageable numbers necessarily exceeded the capacities and goodwill of the French State. This process of bureaucratic categorisation produced a certain optics based on the fact that women, children and other “vulnerable” categories people were more readily offered shelter while many more single men and especially unaccompanied minors were left living in encampments. This gave the impression that “migrants” were overwhelmingly young, single men who were less likely to elicit sympathy and be considered “humanitarian” causes in the media.

However ironic the idea of the CPA as a “vacation village” might seem to migrants arriving from arduous and treacherous migration trajectories, in 2017, camping remained the only mode of shelter for many who arrived — or were still waiting — in Paris. Just as the CPA had been created to respond to the “crisis” of encampments, the overflow from the CPA created even larger encampments that were now mostly located directly in front of and adjacent to the facility created to manage it. By late 2016, the district became the visible epicentre of a “chaos migratoire” (Beaulieu, 2017) that was synonymous with the camp-queue had formed directly in front of the Bulle. Journalists called Porte de la Chapelle “*les portes de l’enfer*” (the gates of hell) and their photos framed the périph’ with tents scattered underneath as an “elsewhere” reminiscent of Lesbos or Lampedusa, except with the familiar domes of the Sacré-Coeur Basilica in the near distance. Meanwhile, the everyday survival needs of migrants were largely met by individuals. Civil volunteers did outreach, food distribution and even provided emergency shelter to migrants in encampments. Some were working with Utopia 56 or other NGOs — such as MSF (Médecins sans frontières), the Red Cross or the Salvation Army — while others had formed ad hoc collectives named after their local neighbourhoods: Petit déjs à Flandre (Breakfasts on Avenue de Flandre), La Chapelle en lutte! (La Chapelle’s Struggle), or Collectif solidarité migrants Wilson (Wilson Avenue Migrants’ Solidarity Collective). Utopia 56 still conscripted volunteers to work within the CPA, but also did outreach in the encampments. They brokered volunteer labour and organised a growing a network of local hébergeurs citoyens willing to host migrants in their private homes and businesses and even their vehicles parked in the street. Utopia volunteers (myself included) met people as they crowded the sidewalks every night at 8:00 pm, outside the locked gates of the CPA where they waited with their belongings after being asked to

leave at the end of the day, and tried to find shelter for unaccompanied minors, women, families, and others who were ineligible for overnight accommodation in the CPA. (I explore the care engagements and practices of citizens' solidarity networks with migrants in Porte de la Chapelle in Chapters 12 and 14).

6.3.2. "Supporting the inhabitants of our city": CPA as municipal solidarity mechanism

> The central question in all our [municipal planning] meetings was really our desire and political will for the CPA to respond to the basic needs of Parisians as well as for migrants by ensuring a dignified reception for all. At this point, it was mostly civil society responding to this crisis, and we needed to take responsibility and care about the fact that Parisians are the ones doing the work that State should be doing. And we, as a city, must support the inhabitants of our city (Interview, Ville de Paris project manager, June 2018).

The summer of 2017 was particularly punishing for migrants in Porte de la Chapelle: As the rolling *canicules d'été* (summer heatwaves) drove temperatures to the high 30s in the heat islands of the inner city, police continued to harass people as they slept in line while waiting for admission to the Bulle and teargassed volunteers distributing croissants. City workers dismantled shelters made of tarps, raincoats, plastic sheets and hoodies strung up along the fences and confiscated belongings in a form of démantèlement particular to this camp-queue, and erected fences that were drilled into the ground so they couldn't be adjusted to accommodate sleeping. The medians and green spaces where migrants previously camped were fenced in, and a public works project of *désamiantage* (asbestos removal) was begun, with city workers drilling into the cement directly in front of the Centre where the camp-queue was located.

Those who lived in the encampments endured without access to durable shelter, running water and regular food, amidst rat infestations, scabies outbreaks and other epidemiological threats, with the constant threat of police violence as their only engagement with the State. Although the primary function of the CPA had been to offer accueil inconditionnel to unhoused migrants, it soon became representative of the failures of the State, but also the supposedly unmanageable nature of the crisis. While the aesthetics as well as the functioning of the dispositif had been designed to meet the city's "duty of humanism", it had also been designed to call attention to the project and to invite the goodwill and participation of Parisian volunteers. By opening the CPA, the

municipality was responding to the concerns and efforts of *citoyens solidaires* — "solidarians" already mobilised to support migrants in their neighbourhoods — as well as local residents who complained publicly about the encampments (see introduction). The CPA also worked to recruit its own volunteer force of local solidarians and to draw out public support for the project. To this end, in fall of 2016, a letter addressed to the *concitoyens* (fellow citizens) of the 18th arrondissement and signed by Anne Hidalgo and by Eric Lejoindre, the mayor of the arrondissement, appeared in local mailboxes. It explained the proliferation of encampments as a "situation [that] is acceptable neither for migrants nor for the inhabitants", described the urgent, temporary, ephemeral, experimental character of the CPA and extended this invitation:

> Anyone who wishes will be able to get involved to ensure the success of this project. There will be no shortage of volunteers — supervised by Emmaüs — and everyone can already sign up to participate via the https://jemengage.paris.fr// platform. We would also like to take this opportunity to once again pay tribute to the civic-mindedness and solidarity shown by local residents over the last few months (Letter from Anne Hildalgo and Eric Lejoindre, September 7th, 2016).

This letter confirmed the double purpose of the CPA: To simultaneously intervene in the crisis and to mediate Parisians' goodwill and solidarity efforts. It also attempted to subsume, appropriate and amplify the goodwill of solidarity volunteers and give them a place to focus their energies by aligning with them. Under the aegis of the Bulle, the Ville de Paris could demonstrated its "humanism" and at the same time disavow responsibility for the ongoing crisis. However, in October 2017, Utopia 56 — a main broker of volunteer labour in the CPA — withdrew its support for and participation with the CPA, taking a large part of the CPA's workforce along with it. Utopia's departure also amplified the critiques by NGOs who had denounced the repressive practices that were instrumentalised through the CPA's operations (see Chapters 6 and 8). Utopia continued (and still continues) to support migrants in the encampments and to organise their platform for citizens' host networks, and has become a major voice advocating for unauthorised migrants' rights and the amelioration of reception conditions in France.

6.3.3. "Shitty welcomes": Volunteers and paradoxical humanitarianism in the CPA

In late 2017, an anonymous citizens' collective calling themselves the Collectif accueil de merde (the Shitty Welcomes Collective) began to speak out against the

burgeoning crisis around the CPA. One of their first actions was to smear the façade of the Assemblée nationale (the National Assembly) in Paris with the message "*accueil de merde*" written in what appeared to be feces (but was in fact Nutella). This fecal terminology was taken up by citizen activists engaged in helping migrants in Porte de la Chapelle, refracting the State's and the municipality's discourses about their obligations of accueil towards asylum-seekers. During this time, Utopia 56 had become increasingly outspoken in their critique of the CPA's practices, claiming that since the OFII had moved their operations inside the CPA, the facility no longer offered accueil inconditionnel, but had become a sorting mechanism that produced migrants' exclusion from the dispositif (a process I detail extensively in Chapter 8). In order to materialise and publicise their critique of the CPA, they vociferously disseminated their invitation to volunteers:

> There is only one way to understand how the politics of this accueil de merde really plays out here in France… and that is to come and work on the ground with us in Porte de la Chapelle! There's a public discourse about "welcome" and accueil in France but make no mistake, as they are making speeches they're also revamping policies of exclusion that play out right in front of our eyes, on the streets of Paris. This is France, this is Europe, in the year 2017. I encourage you to join us for an hour, three hours, a day so you can see for yourself (Recruitment speech at the Protestant Students' Centre, Yann Manzi, founding director of Utopia 56, September 2017).

Many volunteers who came to work in the CPA did indeed experience their participation in its institutional mechanisms as paradoxical humanitarian engagements that made them question State policies and practices. This ambivalence caused many volunteers to opt instead to join ad hoc citizens' collectives or established NGOs providing ground support to migrants in the encampments by distributing water, food and blankets, as well as shelter, orientation and advocacy. Working in encampments, volunteers also witnessed repeated démantèlements and risked getting arrested or subjected to police violence themselves.

If the CPA represented an unprecedented innovation in "municipal humanitarianism" as advanced by Hidalgo's cabinet, the Ville de Paris has, since 2018, rolled out a continuum of other such initiatives. Since the closure of the Centre*,* several projects have been developed to respond to the solidarian reflexes of Parisians wishing to support migrants by working within a municipal framework for volunteerism. Originating in the CASVP, the Bulle was significant but was only one of the municipality's many

humanitarian engagements. In 2018, after the closing of the CPA, the city initiated the first Nuit de la solidarité (Solidarity Night) that involved a homeless count, among other projects. They also developed the Bulle solidaire (Solidarity Bubble), which was initially a project to reuse the structure of the Bulle (which proved — after significant investment — not to be "modular" after all). Then came the Fabrique de la solidarité (the Solidarity Factory), followed by the Halte humanitaire (Humanitarian Stopover) opened in May 2019; managed by the Salvation Army, it was first located at Porte de la Chapelle and then moved to the former city hall of the 1st arrondissement to fulfil the mayor's cabinet's stated invective of *répartition territoriale* (territorial redistribution) of the city's humanitarian projects involving emergency sheltering and other services for unhoused people.

6.3.4. Conclusion: What can a city do?

> In discussions with the authorities at OFII and OFPRA [the Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons], we knew we needed an exit towards the Halle for single men, and that the "day centre" needed spaces for families to rest and for children to play… [however] at the beginning the city of Paris was very determined to say, we do not want to amalgamate with the [immigration régime] of the National State. We only wanted the Bulle to be a space for unconditional reception. But at some point, looking at the models developed in Sweden and Germany, we thought we should develop an integrated route. In Germany when a person is greeted in a centre she has all the steps right away, she does not have to search and run everywhere. We ended up realising we wanted a "one stop shop" (Interview, Alice, Ville de Paris employee, May 2018).

While the CPA's primary stated objective was migrant reception and emergency shelter for single men in response to the "crisis" of encampment, I argue herein that the form and functioning of the dispositif worked to shape and produce the very conditions of "crisis" it had been created to manage and govern. While the initial plan was to offer accueil inconditionnel, the bureaucratic processes embedded within the CPA evolved in such a way that it became a "one stop shop" to welcome, but also to sort and redistribute migrants (through modalities of "inclusive exclusion" that I detail in Chapter 8). By shaping a crisis intervention based on emergency shelter, the dispositif defined the material, affective and discursive politics of "crisis" as caused by encampments, rather than the failures of the State. Through this lens, the situation was perceived as an unruly and surprising "humanitarian emergency" that could be resolved by the municipality's

form of crisis urbanism: An ephemeral, experimental, innovative structure that obscured the necropolitics of the State beneath a festive, friendly countenance.

The CPA, and especially the incontrovertible Bulle, offered an inclusive, coherent version of accueil inconditionnel that furthered the municipality's utopian vison of a city that is "made for sharing"[4] in which the municipality facilitated and focused the efforts of concerned local citizens (Ville de Paris, n.d.) and young international "voluntourists"[5] (Bouagga, 2017) alike who helped to position the municipality as an interlocutor in the European migrant crisis and exacerbated this oppositional relationship with the National State (Benabent, 2017). Alongside its political uses as a way to demonstrate the French State's inadequate handling of the migration crisis in Paris, the CPA also positioned Mayor Hidalgo as a problem-solver, proposing solutions to the national government (Morgat, 2017) while attempting to commandeer the efforts of civil actors — both Parisians and voluntourists — who were already self-organising their support for migrants in their local neighbourhoods. Therefore, the opening of the dispositif positioned Paris (and its mayor) as an important humanitarian actor and supported the city's own idea of itself as a ville refuge, while also legitimising and justifying démantèlements and the control and invisibilisation of migrants themselves.

If "the task that emerges from discussions of urban forced migration is to examine the city as a *situated and contested* interlocutor for State discourses and practices" (Darling, 2016, p. 16, my italics), the CPA provided an opportunity for the municipality to not only manage the challenges of the "Parisian migration crisis" through the multiple functions and strategic innovations of the dispositif, but also to affirm and elevate the symbolic capital of Paris as a sanctuary city. It also ratified certain claims of the municipality about what the city could become — a flexible, expansive entity capable of responding to unforeseen situations through innovative forms of "crisis urbanism" like the CPA: In other words, the city could be everything the National State was not. In Paris, the intensified and highly visible crisis of migration threatened to undermine the "humanistic" ethos of its socialist government and Hidalgo's reputation for crafting innovative solutions to encounter perennial urban issues (e.g., pollution, traffic, municipal

[4] Motto for the 2024 Paris Olympics (in English).

[5] Volunteers either worked with Emmaüs Solidarité, the NGO contracted to operate the CPA, or with Utopia 56, a citizen-led Breton NGO that worked with migrants in the CPA and in the informal encampments surrounding it. Utopia 56 withdrew from working with the CPA in October 2017.

budgeting), but it also undermined the city's economic reliance on tourist dollars and the travel industry. At issue is not only the ability of Paris's municipal powers to manage migration reception at the local level, but also to ensure that the current crisis didn't affect the city's symbolic capital as the "city of lights" — a nickname that refers not to the Eiffel Tower's light show on summer nights, but rather the city's Enlightenment values[6] and lucrative charisma as a living museum. As a Homeaway.com ad ubiquitous in the Paris metro in spring of 2017 put it, "Parce que Paris est toujours Paris" (Because Paris will always be Paris). A crossroads since Antiquity, the recent and current crisis of encampments highlights the fact that Paris is and always has been a mutable intersection of differential human mobilities (Sheller, 2016) that are manifest in urban spaces and constitutive of the crises that transform them.

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Chapter 7. Orientations towards the site: From urban politics of migration to urban practices of bordering

> The site is a formulation that recognises social life as a realm of infinite singularity and variability, where matter is immanently self-organising and pure difference unfolds (Woodward et al., 2010, p. 271).

While volunteering in the CPA, I experienced firsthand the difference between the facility's purported functions — reception and "welcome" — and its carcerality. In the previous chapter, I argued that the conditions of the migration "crisis" in Porte de la Chapelle were in large part produced by the Centre's own policies and procedures, and in the next one I will focus on these policies and procedures as constitutive of the site itself, as a "realm of infinite singularity and variability, with its own emergent systems and politics" (Woodward et al., 2010, p. 271). This close reading of the site is structured through the perceptions of migrants themselves, as I encountered them through my work in the Centre, and their analyses expose the multiple modalities through which the CPA worked as a liminal urban border zone within the urban frontier, disciplining migrants' movements and mobilities even as it supposedly "welcomed" them. This chapter therefore provides an alternate account of the CPA and its operation that contradicts the public narrative of unmitigated success advanced by those in charge of its creation and operation.

This chapter investigates this key site of the so-called Parisian "migration crisis" through close attention to the day-to-day operations of this "experimental" facility created as a symbolic representation of municipal humanitarianism and welcome and a crisis response and intervention. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in situ for the entire duration of the CPA's existence, I trace the evolution of the CPA's operating procedures from the perspectives of migrants passing through the Centre, as well as my own observations to demonstrate how the Bulle, and the CPA more generally, evolved as a novel border spectacle embedded within the city that produced forms of "inclusive exclusion" enacted through modalities of shelter, triage and exception. I argue that while the CPA purported to offer to an accueil inconditionnel, the actual reception experienced by many admitted to the CPA was neither welcoming nor unconditional. My analysis builds on recent conversations about urban borders and exposes the paradoxes of a

municipal-governmental humanitarianism through which migrants' movements, mobilities and presences are disciplined, governed and controlled.

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Chapter 8. Bulle as border spectacle: Shelter, triage and exception in a Parisian migration reception centre

8.1. Introduction: "A humanitarian centre for refugees" in the "heart of the French capital"

In mid-2016, Mayor Hidalgo announced plans to open "a humanitarian centre for refugees in the heart of the French capital" — a facility that would respond to the mayor's self-professed "duty of humanism" towards the thousands of migrants sleeping rough in the city by guaranteeing them emergency shelter, medical care and meals. Conceived by the municipality in response to the so-called Parisian "migration crisis" that echoed the widely reported "crisis" at Europe's borders (Bouagga et al., 2017; De Genova et al., 2018; Gagnon, 2016), it was opened by Hidalgo herself on November 10th, 2016 — six days after an encampment housing over 4,000 migrants was evacuated from the area around Jaurès metro, in the 10th arrondissement. The facility consisted of the Bulle, a notorious inflatable structure that functioned as the reception and processing centre, and the Halle, a converted railway hangar that contained emergency barracks for up to 450 hommes majeurs isolés, according to the bureaucratic categorisations used by the French immigration authority. While the sign mounted on the perimeter fence announced the Centre humanitaire Paris-Nord (the Humanitarian Centre of the North of Paris), these initial appellations of "humanitarian" and "camp" were soon abandoned in favour of the Centre de premier accueil (the First Reception Centre, or CPA). When the CPA was permanently closed 17 months later, on March 31st, 2018, it signaled the end of a significant chapter in the Parisian municipality's engagement with the "migration crisis" in the French capital, in which the city endeavoured to interpellate the National State's management (or non-management) of the large numbers of asylum-seekers that had arrived in Paris or more generally in France.

Figure 8.1 **La Bulle in Porte de la Chapelle, view from the northeast looking towards Montmartre and the Sacré-Coeur basilica. Photo: Melora Koepke.**

Interviewed by *Le Parisien* on the eve of the CPA's closure, Bruno Morel, the director of Emmaüs Solidarité, the NGO that managed the CPA's day-to-day operations, described it as a "unique adventure" and proclaimed that "the balance sheet is very positive" and that he was "proud to have enabled 25,305 migrants to be welcomed unconditionally, in accordance with our values" (Beaulieu, 2018). Official accounts reported that the facility had welcomed 66,000 migrants at a total cost of approximately 8 million euros, a cost shared by the municipal and national governments: The design and construction of the facility was financed at 80% by the city and 20% by the French national government, while the operating budget was split 50/50 between them. This official version contradicts the experiences of many individuals whose trajectories were shaped by the CPA in ways that altered their journeys and life chances — as well as by my own experiences and observations as a volunteer working in the centre over the course of 17 months. Despite the symbolic approach to welcome and reception that its architecture so meticulously — and expensively — attempted to convey, the CPA's purported accueil inconditionnel was neither welcoming nor unconditional. This chapter

offers an ethnographic rendering of the Bulle's everyday operations and its function to inclusively exclude migrants from the spaces of the city.

Figure 8.2 The fence, the Bulle and the "welcome" sign. Photo: Sourced from Gouvernement.fr (French National government website)

The most prominent (and expensive) architectural feature of the CPA was its centrepiece, a yellow-and-white striped, 900-square-metre structure nicknamed La Bulle (the Bubble) that was conceived as a "beacon" to draw newly arriving migrants towards the facility while also affectively and aesthetically conveying the CPA's purported function of humanitarian aid and "welcome". The entire perimeter of the compound was delineated by an antipersonnel fence festooned with colourful ribbons; however, that same fence was topped with barbed wire to prevent occupants from scaling it and leaping, Indiana Jones-style, onto the high-speed Eurostar train speeding through Porte de la Chapelle on its way to the UK. The entrance was secured by a security gate monitored by guards, and there was a curfew and a rule that residents needed to carry a card with their photo and bunk number at all times. The CPA's colourful architectural follies conveyed affective atmospheres of "welcome" that further conveyed and augmented the city's self-styled image as a "city of sanctuary". However, these same physical features — festooned fence, bulbous Bulle and the chaos of humanitarian

assistance around securitised admissions procedures at a fence that in reality constituted no legal border or constitutive rights-bearing function — enacted a spectacle of the border that produced “inclusive exclusions” (De Genova, 2013) that consisted of an initial offer of emergency shelter or “welcome” backed by processes of triage and eventual exception that produced the terms of certain individuals’ exclusion.

Figure 8.3 La Bulle at dusk; side view with security booth and entrance for “residents”. Photo: Melora Koepke.

These processes crystallised for me one afternoon in June 2017 while, as part of my volunteer work at the CPA, I was leading a group of volunteers on an orientation tour of the compound, showing them the Bulle, the Halle and the various duties they could perform as “volunteer humanitarians” inside and outside the CPA. The quiet mid-afternoon lull was shattered by shouting as a young Afghan man who had been waiting on the sidewalk in the long admissions queue outside the compound suddenly broke from the line and tried to scale the perimeter fence. Passerby startled by the noise and the aggressive barking of the Centre’s resident guard dog (a German shepherd) stopped to peer beyond the fence as I glanced nervously over to the nearby intersection of Rue

de la Chapelle at the clutch of police vans parked in the median. These agents were known to employ teargas and truncheons to disperse crowds in front of the gate (Violences Porte de La Chapelle : Le « Camp Humanitaire » de Paris : Un Accueil à Coups de Lacrymo · GISTI, n.d.). However, the van doors didn't open this time. Instead, three of the CPA's private security guards jogged over and sternly admonished the fence-scaler, who jumped back down onto the sidewalk side of the fence.

Figure 8.4 The securitised entrance gate to the CPA with barbed-wire fence surrounding it, view from inside the compound. Photo: Melora Koepke.

The young Afghan's corporeal encounter with the perimeter fence as he attempted to cross the border between the city and the CPA stuck with me long after the commotion had faded back into the regular hum of rush hour in Porte de la Chapelle. With one spontaneous physical act, he had exposed the carceral nature of the CPA,

muted as it was beneath its eye-catching architecture and symbolic grammar of "welcome". Later that afternoon, still wearing the vest and armband that identified me as a humanitarian volunteer, I grabbed an industrial garbage bin and some thin latex gloves and began clearing trash near the camp-queue, which was one of our daily tasks. The man was still there, sipping from a can of beer in the late-afternoon sun, surrounded by his belongings and leaning up against the same fence he had tried to climb earlier. Like other young migrants I'd lately encountered around the CPA, he was curious about why anyone — especially a foreign white woman — would "volunteer" to pick up trash in Porte de la Chapelle where, he said, people were "scattered on the asphalt like garbage". I explained that I was a researcher interested in the CPA's functioning and the day-to-day experiences of migrants passing through it, and that volunteering was a way to become intimately conversant with the facility and how it worked. Zabi (not his real name) joined me in my trash-picking, and our initial casual conversation led to a series of encounters through which he exposed and expanded on the complexities of the CPA's supposed unconditional welcome, that I argue here — alongside Zabi and other interlocutors — was neither welcoming nor unconditional.

During our first conversation, Zabi quickly disabused my assumption that his earlier attempt at fence-scaling was a spontaneous desperate act or a genuine attempt to break into the CPA. He explained that it was neither:

> My whole life here is desperation — so how can it be an act? I guess if I'm honest, I wanted to climb the fence because of you. All of you. The group of volunteers looking around at us and at the camp… I knew you were watching, and I thought it was my chance [to show] what the Bulle is really like. It is not only for humanitarianism. It's about taking care of people, yes, but also making sure of people not crossing certain fences (Interview, June 2017).

Taking Zabi's analysis as a starting point, this chapter investigates the key site of the CPA within the context of the so-called Parisian migration crisis through analysis of the day-to-day operations in this symbolic materialisation of Parisian humanitarianism and welcome. Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork conducted in situ for the entire 17-month duration of the CPA's existence, I trace the evolution of the CPA's operating procedures to demonstrate how it evolved as a novel border spectacle embedded within the city that produced forms of "inclusive exclusion" enacted through modalities of *shelter*, *triage* and *exception*. My analysis builds on recent conversations about urban

borders and exposes the paradoxes of a municipal-governmental humanitarianism through which migrants' movements, mobilities and presences are disciplined, governed and controlled (Collins, 2016; Darling, 2017; Darling & Bauder, 2019; De Genova, 2015; Jirón, 2019; Maestri & Hughes, 2017; Varsanyi, 2006). The chapter continues below with a discussion of the stakes laid out in this analysis for such an urban facility in terms of the bodies and borders it governs, as well as a detailed description of the methodology used for research and analysis. Then, three empirical sections discuss the CPA's operations through three modalities of shelter, triage and exception. I conclude with a discussion that maps out further pathways for this research.

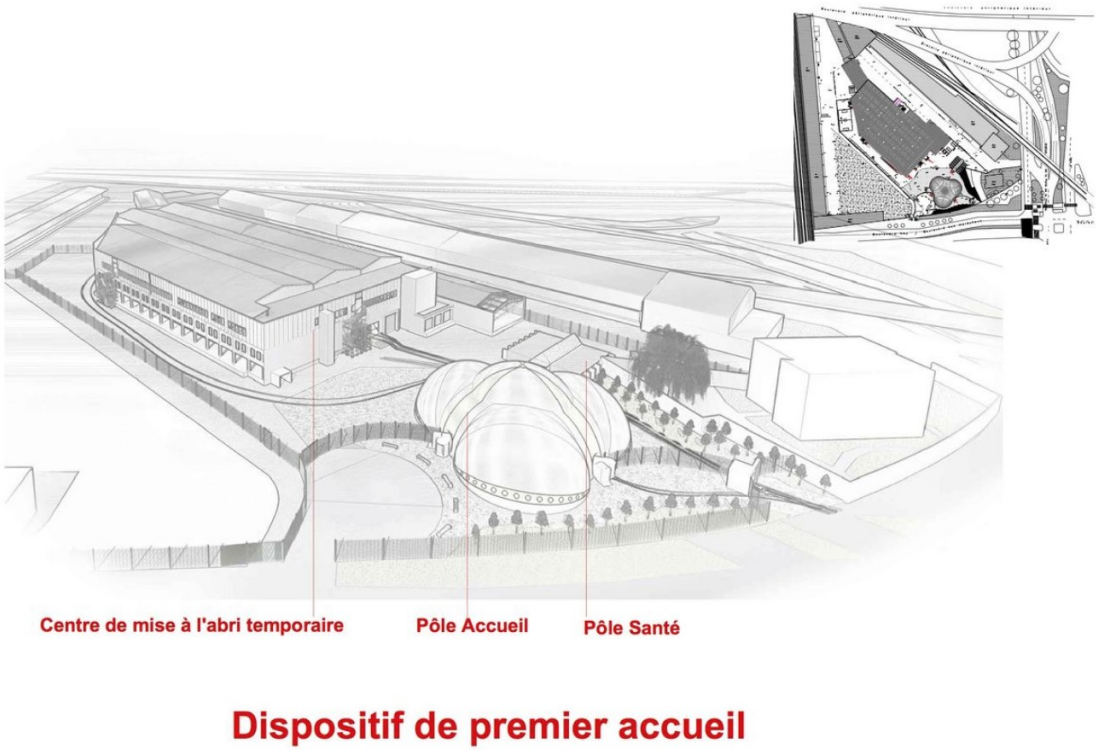

Figure 8.5 **Dispositif de premier accueil: Architectural rendering of the Bulle, Halle and the CPA compound. Copyright: Julien Beller, courtesy of the Ville de Paris.**

8.2. Conceptualising the CPA: Bodies, borders and the Bulle

> The camp, which is now securely lodged within the city's interior, is the new biopolitical nomos of the planet (Agamben, 1998, p. 176).

8.2.1. Intimate spaces of exception and the "camp within the city"

This chapter develops a working term — inclusive exclusion — to describe how the CPA worked and specifically to contrast the official version with the everyday realities of its functioning through its socio-spatial control of migrants' bodies. In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben warned that "we must expect not only new camps but also always new and more lunatic regulative definitions of the inscription of life in the city" (1998, p. 176). The creation and existence of the CPA refracts Agamben's point that "camps" are no longer peripheral spaces located externally to cities or poleis. Rather, the CPA's temporariness or camp-like appearance denotes a provisional border embedded within the regular legal and jurisdictional spaces of the city. Since immigration policy is a competency of the national government and not the municipality, just as emergency sheltering of "vulnerable populations" and others in France are distributed across several scales of government (municipality, department, region, State), the inherent politics and processes of the CPA's ambiguous "welcome" makes it an unlikely example of municipal humanitarianism. I demonstrate the CPA's modalities of shelter, triage and exception that worked to govern migrants' bodily presences, movements and mobilities in and through the city and to exclude them through the constitutive spectacle of the border through which their "inclusion" or welcome was performed.

Geographers have previously highlighted bodies as crucial sites where violence is enacted (Mountz, 2018), especially at borders and in sites of migration detention (Conlon et al., 2017; Martin, 2015). They have demonstrated how intimate scales of analysis can expose the multifarious violence of "polymorphic" borders (Burridge et al., 2017) and how bordering processes manifest beyond the territorial frontiers of nation-states and especially in cities (Johnson et al., 2011; Maestri & Hughes, 2017; Pallister-Wilkins, 2017). These interventions have demonstrated that "rather than neutral lines, borders are often pools of emotions, fears and memories that can be mobilized apace for both progressive and regressive purposes" (Johnson et al., 2011, p. 62). In this chapter, I build on a growing body of work that understands unauthorised migrants in cities as "marginal" but autonomous subjects (Lancione, 2016) whose politics of presence (Darling, 2017) situates them precariously within the "growingly intricate assemblage of public and private actors implicated in their management" (Maestri & Hughes, 2017, p. 634). Through close attention to the CPA's specific architecture and functioning, I take up Lafazani's invitation to "reflect on how borders proliferate in

everyday life, how they form and deform subjectivities, bodies, relations and places in the most mundane and insignificant moments in the city" (2021, p. 1). This research generally speaks to the conditions of "crisis" through which the border spectacle is constituted, and how it exerts power over migrants' presence, movement and mobilities in the emergent "migrant metropolis" (De Genova, 2015).

8.2.2. Border spectacles and socio-spatial control

This work expands on recent research that explores how cities are "central to the diversification of borders in everyday life" (Darling, 2017, p. 183) by demonstrating how the CPA enacted migrants' "inclusive exclusion" by welcoming them with an initial offer of shelter, then constituted a border zone with enforced administrative governance of their presence and mobilities. In conversation with the recent and emergent literature of urban migration that designates cities as crucial spaces "in which the extension of borders deep into the putative 'interior' of nation-state space through immigration law enforcement that increasingly saturate the spaces of everyday life" (De Genova, 2015, p. 2), this analysis also investigates how the CPA functioned as a border, though it was located nowhere near the "borders of 'Europe'" (De Genova, 2017) or the national border, but rather within the city limits and in centralised urban space. If borders are tools of spatial control with the capacity to include, exclude or inclusively exclude, then the CPA's fence and gate were also "instruments of bordering as well as movable physical barriers in the sense that "mobile borders… haunt the daily life of *sans-papiers* [undocumented migrants]… [that are] at the same time geographical, legal and administrative and… no longer just the object of control, but also its instrument" (Le Courant, 2016, p. 222). Close consideration of the CPA's material characteristics and disciplinary processes reveal how various liminal points at the CPA (camp-queue, perimeter fence, compound, Bulle, Halle) produced this spectacle of supposed "welcome" that produced migrants' exclusion even as it "included" them.

De Genova conceptualises the "border spectacle" as a space where migrant "illegality" is rendered visible (2002, 2013, 2017; Desage, 2017), thereby producing both the "scene" of migrant illegality and the "obscene" of their inclusion (2013, 2017; also see Agier, 2016). This double identification of mise-en-scène, where the border-crosser embodies the "crisis" of his presence, aligns with Zabi's analysis of the CPA as a dual space of care/control through its modalities of corporeal governance. It also suggests the

CPA has features of an “exceptional” camp-space (Agier, 2016) within Parisian city limits where migrants were included through their own exclusion (Agamben, 1998). The material and juridical politics of this paradoxical welcome became crucial to the bureaucratic violence that was obscured beneath the anodyne curve of the Bubble. For 17 months, the CPA extended this municipal version of accueil that pretended to the French State’s exclusionary or insufficient reception policies, even as the Minister of the Interior operated from within the facility and shaped future trajectories for migrants processed while it produced “humanitarian” welcome through connections and encounters between individuals, the city, and the State. Though the “welcome” purportedly offered by the CPA sanctified Hidalgo’s humanitarian aspirations and those of local Parisians, I argue that this was a form of “inclusive exclusion” that sometimes produced the conditions by which Zabi, among others, could eventually be removed from the CPA, the city, and eventually even from the French territory itself. It is worth noting that these results were not only side-effects of the CPA’s functioning, but ingrained features of its design or at least features integrated into its progressive evolution. I have elaborated on the complex functioning of the CPA as a neo-Foucauldian dispositif in other publications, but it bears repeating that a dispositif by its very definition “always has a concrete strategic function and is always located in a power relation” (Agamben, 2009, p. 3): Therefore, the CPA’s strategic role should be understood as a crucial aspect of its function as a material and symbolic border space within the city limits, where its disciplinary purpose was to manage migrants’ bodily presence and mobilities but also to shape a “system of relations” that located the “crisis” of migration in migrants’ bodies rather than the incapacities and insufficiencies of the State.

In the next sections, I first situate the CPA in its historical context and explain my methodology for researching it. Then, in three empirical sections, I detail three of the modalities of socio-spatial control through which the CPA enacted migrants’ inclusive exclusion: Shelter, triage and exception.

8.3. Researching the CPA: Context and methods

Although the CPA’s stated purpose was to offer unconditional welcome in response to crisis, by early 2017 the facility was at the centre of the fomenting “crisis” in Porte de la Chapelle, where a camp-queue had formed directly in front of the admissions gate to the Bulle. Authorities regularly harassed both migrants and volunteers outside of

the Centre, adding to the disjuncture between the “welcome” the CPA purported to offer and the carcerality of its evolving operations. The CPA’s paradoxical humanitarianism and the relationships between material, discursive and affective politics of crisis and care have been the focus of research conducted between 2016 and 2019. The vignette about Zabi’s corporeal encounter with the site led off this chapter in order to foreground his analysis and those of other interlocutors and to trouble hierarchical notions of whose experiences are believed and whose critiques are taken into account when conducting ethnographic and qualitative research. To this end, I also wished to unsettle a mode of organising data and producing knowledge that conventionally separates researchers’ conceptual analyses from the empirical data gathered from native subjects in order to valorise the author’s own — or certain stakeholders’ — interpretations. In this way I am “refusing ‘high theory’ at the expense of contextual, in-depth understanding of what actually goes on in cities… and “emphasiz[ing] the importance of the everyday, seemingly mundane occurrences of and the nitty-gritty of how people in differing positions of power interact with the urban spheres they depict” (Hancock, 2021, p. 2). By basing my analysis on interlocutors’ intimate knowledge of the CPA and highlighting their accounts that complexified and contradicted official narratives, I intend to “bring non-elite knowledge and experience to the foreground… by examining the diverse grounded perspectives of those on the move who are arguably the key dramatis personae in the so-called ‘crisis’ and yet whose voices are often absent in dominant representations of it” (Vaughan-Williams & Pisani, 2020, p. 651).

By positioning Zabi’s analysis both at the beginning and end of this chapter, I wish to consider the individualised and intimate relationships between migrant subjects and complex sites of care and control, and to heed Kleinman’s call for “new models for understanding migrants’ lives and the structures that constrain them”, which she proposes come “not from academic and policy debates but from the migrants themselves” (2019, pp. 8–9). An ethnographic approach that depicts a primary interlocutor’s interactions with a site also owes much to an anthropological approach (Kleinman, 2019), since interviewing and site-visiting are the current disciplinary standard for qualitative methodologies in geography (Hitchings & Latham, 2020a). However, I maintain that some complex and layered sites like the CPA can best be apprehended through researchers’ situated, durational ethnographic presence rather

than detailed and lengthy interviewing that may reproduce some of the qualities of governmental surveillance that some interlocutors may have experienced ad infinitum.

In the CPA, where operations largely depended on citizen participation and volunteer labour, my methodology consisted primarily of PO. My extensive access to the site over a sustained timeframe allowed me to participate intimately in the CPA's daily operations as they evolved and to engage in unscripted ethnographic interactions outside the mode of participant interviews (Hitchings & Latham, 2020a, 2020b). In a context where intake interviews were a source of exclusion and trauma for many, I considered this method appropriate, considering complex positionalities and power differentials. Over the course of three years of fieldwork, I also interviewed 58 key informants, including migrants, volunteers, local activists, politicians and municipal actors — several of whom I spoke with multiple times. I also analysed policy documents and media coverage and used software to scrape data from social-media conversations. My positionality as a local resident and an educated white cis female, a Canadian scholar with professional and academic affiliations and networks as well as a regularised immigration status, informed various roles I occupied in the community. Throughout my research, I consistently identified myself as a researcher and maintained transparency about my role. As a local resident, albeit a newcomer, I also negotiated my identity as an "inside outsider" with a differential exposure to vulnerability and risk.

8.4. Modalities of the CPA: Shelter, triage, exception

> There is always this talk about "unconditional welcome", but there were conditions on everything, from our paperwork to our eating and sleeping habits, in Paris. It is offensive to hear the mayor talking about Paris as a ville refuge while at the same time evacuations and decampments are happening all the time. We have traveled far and risked much to be here. What we often want is to make the point that we are here and we're not leaving (Interview, Idriss, Ethiopian migrant in Porte de la Chapelle, June 2017).

8.4.1. Shelter: CPA as emergency response

In the initial messaging regarding the CPA, Bruno Morel, director of Emmaüs Solidarité, had indicated that "first and foremost, *mise à l'abri* [emergency sheltering] is the primary urgent objective of the CPA" (Henry et al, 2016). A Ville de Paris project manager interviewed for this project confirmed that the call for proposals had stipulated

that “that the space be made so that migrants would be welcomed unconditionally, and that they would have a place to go that could be easily located” (Interview, Alice, project manager for the city, May 2018). The CPA’s form and function furthered its primary objective, which was to provide an alternative to encampments: Essentially, it was a large tent whose function was to eliminate smaller tents. The topology of the Bulle announced this objective of encompassing and enveloping the proliferation of encampments. However, it also produced exclusions that began with the “inclusive” aspect of emergency-shelter operations:

> I was sent directly to the Bulle as soon as I arrived in Paris… It seemed to be all about getting us off the streets. I mean, none of us wanted to be camping, but we had arrived in Paris with an expectation that we would find more than emergency shelter, yet all the help we were offered ended up being all about getting a roof over our heads, even temporarily (Interview, Zabi, June 2017).

Zabi’s description highlights one of the inherent paradoxes of the CPA: The emphasis on shelter that also defined the crisis as a *lack* of shelter and therefore helped shape the public perception that the “crisis” of their presence could and should be mitigated by the provision of “emergency shelter”.

> What this system of allowing us to have temporary accommodation accomplished in the short term doesn’t really solve any of our problems. We don’t just need shelter. We need rights and we need a path forward. And it does seem like they want us to trade this future for the chance to sleep on a cot for a week. It doesn’t even make sense, and it feels like a trick. Many people, once they are admitted to the Bulle, are not sure if they should stay or go. But they are tired, and they want to rest. I guess that is the point (Interview, Michael, asylum-seeker, May 2017).

Though Hidalgo had initially presented the CPA as a worthy solution to the problem of encampments, the facility was overcapacity as of opening day and therefore barely mitigated the crisis, let alone solved it. Instead, it helped to frame the situation as a lack of “shelter” based on an overburdened system crumbling under the sheer magnitude of the crisis, with the city estimating 500 migrants arriving every week. The CPA soon abandoned its initial mission of providing “emergency shelter” to migrants regardless of their legal status. When government agents of the OFII began to work within the CPA in the first few months, the facility became part of the archipelago of existing immigration State dispositifs.

By positioning itself as the most appropriate — and effective — intervention into this crisis through “emergency sheltering”, the CPA also supported Hidalgo’s claim that the proliferation of informal encampments in Paris was the national government’s fault — an ongoing result of their incapacity or unwillingness to ensure the rights of asylum-seekers. However, the French State wasn’t absent from the CPA at all: Within a few months of opening, the Ministry of the Interior had installed their OFII in the “modular” office space inside the Bulle.

> These new structures for the reception of migrants [such as the CPA] don’t overcome the State’s inability to shelter — which has been consistent for more than 20 years. These new dispositifs are basically airlocks — their purpose is to accommodate primo-arrivants, sure, but also their underlying motive is to disperse, isolate and make less visible State immigration policy and its problems (Interview, James, NGO advocate, March 2018).

By June 2017, the role of the CPA as provider of emergency shelter and accueil was further compromised by the fact that the French State had continuously failed to increase the number of beds in State facilities. The CPA was now only accessible to those who were deemed to be primo-arrivant, meaning not subject to categorisations that would exclude them. The bottleneck at the admissions gate was causing the camp-queue in front of the Bulle, as well as encampments in and around Porte de la Chapelle, to burgeon. Well-documented evacuations and decampments in June and July 2017 evacuated almost 2,800 rough sleepers and contributed to the impression of “migratory chaos” in Porte de la Chapelle (Beaulieu, 2017).

8.4.2. Triage: Biometrics and bodies

As Zabi explained in the introductory vignette, his attempt at fence-scaling was a performance for the benefit of humanitarian volunteers as much as anything. Even if he managed to endure the camp-queue without being brutalised or detained by the authorities, he would never have been readmitted to the Bulle. Having already spent time in the CPA, he was no longer considered a primo-arrivant.

> Once I was admitted to the Bulle I became part of the system right away — you have no choice, as they first take your name, your picture, your life story, then your fingerprints. You have to register everything or else you cannot stay, so by entering you make the choice to enter and then you are subject to whatever happens. At the end of the week, they told me I wasn’t eligible to be part of their system (Interview, Zabi, September 2017).

Once admitted to the Bulle, each individual was assigned an administrative status — a process referred to by migrants themselves, as well as by staff in the CPA, as triage. This term, used in English and French as both verb and noun, evokes a medical meaning (i.e., prioritising patients in need of urgent care). In French, however, the word does not always have a medical usage — you can "triage" your closet or household tasks, for example — but it does connote an urgent sense of "sorting". In this case, it refers to sorting those who may or may not be entitled to the care of the State, as they may or may not be eligible to claim asylum in France, be minors, be from an approved country of origin, etc. However, the modality of triage described here, as that of shelter in the previous section, can be understood as one of administrative functioning, but also as a kind of soft border that produced both inclusions and exclusions — or inclusive exclusions — depending on each person's administrative status. Upon entering, people were immediately required to submit to specific and mandatory intake procedures. First, Emmaüs employees conducted interviews to collect biographical information. They asked new arrivals the date of their first entry into France, their migration routes, countries of origin, future travel plans and other details that were then used to determine each person's status (e.g., to determine if they were *dubliné* — subject to the Dublin procedure[7] — and/or their eligibility to claim asylum in France). Though these interviews were not official hearings, they were used to build each person's preliminary dossier, the contents of which could be used to generate reasons to eventually exclude them. Then, those who were not hommes majeurs isolés — namely women, families and unaccompanied minors — were transferred to other facilities, or immediately excluded (often with no specific reason given) and returned to the street. Those accepted were then escorted by a volunteer across a gravel lot to the Halle (Guilbaud et al., 2022). Before being assigned a bed, they were instructed to proceed directly to the nearby Centre d'examen de situation administrative (the Centre for Examining Administrative Statuses, or CESA), a purpose-built office of the police prefecture that acts as the agent of the French government's Ministry of the Interior. The CESA became an ancillary part of the CPA several months after the centre opened; its

[7] The controversial Dublin regulation stipulates that if any migrant has had their fingerprints taken in a European Union country upon arrival, they must return to and claim asylum in the country by which they entered Europe.

role was highly criticised for directly contradicting the CPA's stated objective of accueil inconditionnel (Guilbaud et al., 2022).

> After eight days, I was called to a meeting with the manager of my section of the Halle, where I had been sleeping for a week. She told me that my file had been examined and that I was determined to be hors dispositif, meaning they had decided I was likely ineligible to claim asylum. She said that I had to leave right then, that night, and that I could not sleep another night in the Centre. I asked her where I should go, she shrugged. I was actually more homeless than I was before, because before I was a primo-arrivant and now I had a file (Interview, Abdel, October 2017).

In addition to the requirement to submit biometrics, each individual was photographed, issued an ID card that was required at the gate and instructed to respect Centre's 11:00 pm curfew and a host of other rules and regulations that governed its daily operations. People typically stayed at the CPA for 5–10 days. As beneficiaries of the CPA they did not have the same rights of movement and circulation as others. And once they had given their information, their status was changed — no longer primo-arrivant, they had now registered their presence with the OFII, and each now had an administrative dossier.

> When we refugees arrive in Porte de la Chapelle, we are exhausted, desperate, and some of us are even sick and we really need help. It sometimes takes us awhile before we can understand that what is being offered in the Centre is not exactly unconditional, as advertised. It is actually a way to make us register our identities, when some of us have avoided it for so long since entering the [European Union]. Once we enter the Bulle, everything changes and our options are narrowed down (Interview, Mohamed, October 2017).

Though one of the CPA's stated objectives was to offer an accueil inconditionnel that also oriented migrants towards State provisions appropriate to their status, one of the defining features of this "welcome" was mandatory information-gathering in order to render each person legible and accountable to the State. Indeed, it became clear through this process that inclusion also produced the possible terms of exclusion.

8.4.3. Exception: Producing exclusions through inclusions

At the laundromat in the Halle where I worked many shifts, men dropped off their clothing once they had received their transfer orders as they prepared to leave the CPA. The details of the next steps in their ongoing journeys were often received with

trepidation, as they were not advised of their routes and destinations. At this juncture, while some received transfer orders, others would be unceremoniously notified that they were not going to be transferred at all, and that in fact for various reasons (not always disclosed) they had been determined to be hors dispositif and were required to leave the Halle immediately.

> At the end of my stay they just called me to a meeting and said, “That’s it, please leave”. I never really got an explanation, but I understood that they did not consider me a refugee even though I was from Afghanistan (Interview, Zabi, June 2017).

Once they had left the CPA, residents were no longer considered primo-arrivant and were therefore faced with limited options. Having been admitted to the Bulle and then processed out of it, they were now *sans-papiers* — ineligible for State assistance and with no support available to them other than what was provided by solidarity collectives. Back on the streets, they were subject to arrest, detention and deportation, and under constant threat of harassment by police who issued *obligation de quitter le territoire français* notices (orders to leave French territory, or OQTF) on the spot, like parking tickets. Faced with this renewed destitution of life on the street, many — like Zabi, the fence-scaler — chose to join France’s programme of Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR).

Though the production of migrant “illegality” is often associated with the exertion of power and control at national borders (De Genova, 2013; Jones, 2016) this account of the CPA demonstrates the modalities of shelter and triage through which the dispositif enacted migrants’ “inclusive exclusion” by alienating people from their rights through opaque and questionable administrative processing — therefore also becoming a space of exception in which asylum-seekers’ rights were not always respected. The control of the camp-queue, the bottlenecks at the admission gate and even the exclusions fabricated by “chapter borders” (Zeveleva, 2017) in the bureaucratic space of the dispositif further contributed to the “migratory chaos” in Porte de la Chapelle (Beaulieu, 2017) that in turn produced the Bulle’s border spectacle:

> We have come a long way and traveled so far only to be in France and yet, we have not yet really arrived. Now we sit outside the fence all day long in a line that never moves, waiting for them to let us in. Our only experience of being in Paris is waiting outside this fence at the Bulle, since we are *here* but not really here until they let us in. We know we need a rendezvous

> [bureaucratic appointment] but we have no means of getting them unless they let us through that gate (Interview, Walid, CPA resident, July 2017).

The CPA's version of "welcome" in many cases lessened people's prospects over the long term since the price of admission or "inclusion" in the dispositif required them to provide the very biographical and biometric data used to eventually exclude them. The fact that the OFII conducted administrative intake within the Bulle situated the CPA at a nexus where the multiple and sometimes conflictual motives of the municipal and national governments could be exerted on migrants' presence and mobilities. The CPA's capacity to inclusively exclude certain individuals also evolved as it refined its modalities of shelter, triage and exception, which established it as a space of exception where the State's obligations to asylum claimants could be inconsistently applied. The OFII's procedures operationalised a delineation between "legitimate refugees" and "economic migrants" (Akoka, 2018; De Genova, 2017) that is becoming crucial to the public politics of immigration and asylum in France, as in other European countries.

Figure 8.6 The Bulle at night in Porte de la Chapelle, view from the northeast. Photo: Melora Koepke.

8.5. Discussion

Late in the summer of 2017, I met with Zabi for a follow-up interview. At his request, after meeting in front of the Bulle, we walked west, away from the noise and chaos of Porte de la Chapelle. After a 30-minute walk we reached the top of the Butte Montmartre and climbed the stairs to sit at the foot of Sacré-Coeur Basilica, Paris's second-most-famous tourist attraction, and later, looking towards the east, viewed the swollen curve of the Bulle protruding up from the concrete tangle of Porte de la Chapelle. From here, lit by powerful interior floodlights from within, it did indeed look like a beacon or something special, imbued with mystique and possibility. As we watched the sunset over Paris alongside dozens of young backpacker tourists, Zabi noted that many of them had crossed oceans and travelled far to pursue Parisian futures, just like he and I had both done. He said that one of his biggest regrets about his time in Paris was that he spent most of his time in Porte de la Chapelle. He would have liked to visit more of the city's famous museums and tourist attractions.

A few weeks later, Zabi revisited the options presented to him by OFII and decided to accept help from France's AVRR programme, through which humanitarian counsel and assistance is offered to unauthorised migrants who have exhausted their recourses to remain (Crane & Lawson, 2020). As he awaited his flight back to Afghanistan, he spent several weeks in a State-funded hotel room away from the threat of police truncheons, detention, or worse. Later, in a Whatsapp message sent to me after his departure from France, he characterised his admission to the Bulle — the moment he passed from the street to the CPA — as the beginning of the end of his French "future that led nowhere" (Personal communication, Zabi, October 2017). A few weeks later, he disappeared from my social-media channels.

The following year, the CPA closed to make way for the construction of the Sorbonne University's new Campus Condorcet. After the Bulle was deflated and the site cleared, the fact that the CPA's temporariness had always been planned into its design was emphasised as part of its "ephemeral, temporary and flexible" design (Interview, Alice, city project manager, June 2018). This fine-grained account of the CPA contributes an ethnographic perspective on this unique camp-like dispositif located within the city limits of Paris. The Minister of the Interior announced that the CPA would be replaced by five other State-run shelters for primo-arrivant migrants. They would be

called the Centres d'accueil et d'examen de situation (CAES) and the Centres d'accueil et d'orientation (CAO), and they were all to be located elsewhere in the Île-de-France and not within the centre of Paris. Though not technically a retention or detention centre (dispositifs that are also part of the French archipelago of immigration reception), the CPA's carceral aspects served their purpose by producing a spectacle of the border that segregated (Darling, 2016), categorised and absorbed migrants into an exceptional space (Agamben, 1998) where the juridical order either did not apply, or was unevenly applied. As cities continue to interrogate their roles in terms of migration reception in relation to State immigration policies and pressures, this research both proposes what can be new within the aspects of an announced "new municipalism" (Thompson, 2020) and illustrates new forms of what I call *crisis urbanism* in which material and symbolic interventions into "urban crises" are invented, some of which can be said to produce Agamben's "new and ever more lunatic" forms of governmentality (Agamben, 1998).

If "the task that emerges from discussions of urban forced migration is to examine the city as a situated and contested interlocutor for State discourses and practices" (Darling, 2017, p. 192), this research demonstrates how the CPA became enmeshed with the immigration management régime of the French State through the intimate and corporeal governance of migrants' bodies through modalities of shelter, triage and exception. As this research is based on firsthand accounts from individuals whose trajectories were shaped by their encounters with and passages through the CPA, it also underlines the importance of ethnographic accounts that present different realities than those conveyed through "official" channels, and indeed demonstrates how such an apparatus may actually serve political functions by intimately governing the presences, movements and mobilities of migrants' bodies. As Pratt and Rosner remind us, "intimacy does not reside solely in the private sphere and does not work within the same territorial and juridical logics that demarcate privacy. Nor is it purely personal: intimacy takes on specific political, social, and cultural meanings in different contexts" (2012, p. 20).

In addition to the value of intimate accounts of politicised spaces, I maintain the significance of ethnographic research as a methodology that is uniquely oriented towards embodied research that may "link aspects of the personal or private dimensions of life with overarching structural relations that set parameters around singular identities and experiences" (Moss & Donovan, 2017, p. 6). My writing-up of this research includes

the unconventional strategy of following a single interlocutor, whose account is supported by others as well as by my own ethnographic observations. By highlighting the embodied experiences of those whose trajectories were shaped by their passages through and encounters with the CPA, I have also shown how the soft power of the State can be exercised through the provision of ostensible “welcome”. Finally, this work opens up several generative avenues of inquiry: As the CPA was a unique example of a municipal apparatus developed in response to a crisis of “undesirable” bodies in public space (Koepke & Noûs, 2020), further research on the role of such structures may highlight their potential to become generative spaces of encounter (Wilson, 2016) as cities endeavor to become more socially sustainable and equitable. As this research has examined the capacities of municipal administrations to develop spaces of care through which to govern migrants’ presence and mobilities, it also explores how control of migrant bodies is also enmeshed with the politics of “crises”. This case study of a border spectacle located in centralised urban space contributes to our political understanding of spatial politics of urban space, but it also exemplifies the forms of city-making or *faire-ville* (Agier, 2016; Gardesse et al., 2022; Lancione, 2016) from the urban margins by migrants and other marginalised people. By building on their accounts of their lived experiences of continuous violence and abandonment, this work interrogates the city’s identity as a ville refuge and foregrounds their continuously and necessarily inventive tactics for resisting and exceeding the violence of borders both in cities and elsewhere.

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Chapter 9. Transversal *terrains*: Coauthorship as a feminist practice

In French, the word for field (as in fieldwork) is *terrain*, which also means "ground" or "land". These are lands that we do not own but merely travel across, and while they may become familiar to us through our long engagements with them, our journeys also contain the possibility that we will get lost as we traverse them. When I began fieldwork in Porte de la Chapelle, it was a solitary undertaking and over the course of two years I met many people and became familiar with most aspects of the unfolding scene, I never quite shook the feeling of deterritorialisation, of disorientation, confusion and disquiet. The process of writing this chapter with two co-authors offered me an important chance to reflect on and analyse my experiences, and I am grateful for the opportunity for intellectual and emotional connections in the context of this difficult *terrain*.

I met my co-authors Zelda Guilbaud and Léo Manac'h, both French master's students in anthropology, in 2018. We were introduced during a seminar organised around the idea for a volume of collected essays on the recent history of migration in Paris from 2015 to 2020, where most of the invited contributors were French scholars and experts in this local field. The book's editors are Camille Gardesse, Stefan Le Courant and Evangéline Masson Diez. The project emerged from collaborations that began within the BABELS research network (tagline: What migrants do to cities, what cities do to migrants) that was headed by anthropologist Michel Agier (Ecole des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales). BABELS — funded by the Agence nationale de la recherche (ANR) — was a multi-year transdisciplinary research project that produced a series of volumes as well as several conferences and seminars in French on topics related to migration and French and European urban centres that

> questions the present "refugee crisis" in Europe by exploring the diverse forms of public hospitality and rejection towards migrants in different cities. Based on ethnographic material collected in Europe and the Mediterranean, this programme aims to analyze contemporary border situations. Borders are here both geographical — with the increasing walls and fences, and the strengthening of controls — political and social — through multiple mechanisms of migrant containment. In each urban context, the borders take a particular form and temporality. Three kinds of cities can be distinguished: Crossroads-cities, border-cities and refuge-cities (From the BABELS website, https://anrbabels.hypotheses.org/).

When they contacted me about this project, the editors initially proposed that I write a single-authored chapter about my research on the municipal planning of the CPA. However, after meeting Léo and Zelda, we decided to co-author a chapter from our combined experiences of the facility since we saw the potential for it to be a mutually enriching experience to develop a feminist practice of co-writing.

We described our process thus:

> This chapter is the result of research carried out simultaneously in two different disciplines (one of us is a geographer and the other two were master's students in anthropology at the time when we authored this article). Our decision to co-author and to collectively articulate our different methodological and theoretical approaches with one voice was intended as the enactment of a feminist approach to research that decentres the individualised researcher. Although we became acquainted and collaborated on this writing only after our fieldwork was completed, our research and analysis brought us to similar conclusions and led to our decision to coauthor this chapter in one voice as we found that our research questions, which converged towards similar conclusions, resonated well together. We also wish to convey that our three individual engagements with fieldwork were similarly painful and disturbing, as we were simultaneously confronted both by situations of great and lasting physical and psychological violence and with our powerlessness to affect change in their stead and/or greatly assist our research participants to survive the dangerous and difficult conditions in which they lived. We contend that the ways in which this research site and our experiences within it affected us, each in a subjective way, are an integral part of our analytical material.

As we mentioned in the above passage, it was significant that we co-authors met and that this collaboration cohered only after we had wrapped up our in-person fieldwork at the CPA. Our analyses triangulated through three differential perspectives results and our discussions reinforced and enhanced the conclusions that we had each already arrived at independently. This collaboration was the second time I co-wrote and published an article in French, the first one being an entry on "Indésirables" [undesirables] (Koepke & Noûs, 2020) that is included in the dissertation as Chapter 3.

As a researcher engaged in long-term work in France, it is crucial that I work in the language of my interlocutors, but also that I contribute to scholarly debates in French and not only work within anglophone milieux and traditions. Therefore, it was an enormous privilege to be invited to contribute to a book about migration in Paris that was conceived, written and edited by scholars based in Paris and in a scholarly context where most of my colleagues were French. Anyone who has ever worked and written in a second language knows that it changes the way you think, and my practice was

sharpened and improved by an immersion in French ways of thinking, conceptualising problems, and crafting language to express them. Since language is also always relational, I owe a debt of gratitude to French colleagues and co-authors for their patience, collaboration and support which has been extremely beneficial for my work. The two co-authors of this chapter, my fellow contributors and the editors of this book have been extremely generous in their remarks and assistance.

I have chosen to include this co-written chapter in the dissertation because it represents an integral part of my research and moves the argumentation forward, and also because it contains some crucial passages that don't appear elsewhere. While the format of this text is a bit different from the other chapters in this dissertation that are necessarily structured as research articles, and some of the content replicates themes and data that show up some of my other chapters in the dissertation, other material — such as the fine-grained ethnographic descriptions we use to demonstrate some of the claims made in the chapter — provide an important insight into my (our) modes of working and the ways that we used embodied experiences in the field to inform our analysis. At the end of this chapter, I also include the single-authored short chapter I wrote for the book based on my ethnography of citizen engagement in the CPA.

Note: If the English version of this chapter reads very much as a translation, this is because I wanted to translate this work with the lightest hand possible as I wished for it to stay close to the form in which it was written and published.

References

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Chapter 10. A humanitarian camp in Porte de la Chapelle: “Emergency sheltering” from the public gaze

Publication note: This chapter was co-authored by Zelda Guilbaud, myself and Léo Manac’h (authors listed in alphabetical order). The following one, which appeared in the same volume, was sole-authored by me. Both of these chapters were published in *Paris et les exilés*, a volume edited by Camille Gardesse, Stefan Le Courant and Évangeline Masson Diez and published by Éditions l’Oeuil d’Or in 2022.

10.1. Introduction

A “humanitarian camp” in the heart of Paris: This was the formula that Mayor Hidalgo officially presented for the CPA at a press conference on May 31st, 2016. This facility’s main goal, according to Hidalgo, would be to welcome “with dignity” the many unauthorised migrants who had been living in the north of Paris in provisional encampments that had been continually installed, evacuated, destroyed and reconstituted since Europe’s “crisis of migration” began in 2015. Initiated by the Parisian municipal government and presented as an experimental temporary urban reception facility, the CPA operated in the north of Paris between November 10th, 2016 and March 31st, 2018. Its humanitarian status seemed to refer to an emergency situation that exceeded the National government’s capacity to receive asylum-seekers in France. This chapter looks at the CPA as a manifestation of humanitarian and experimental forms of municipal reception policies in a National and European context of border closures and restrictions on the conditions for granting asylum that are also defined by the saturation of accommodation facilities for newcomers.

Located on the border of Paris and Seine-Saint-Denis, in the Porte de la Chapelle district, the CPA was defined as an emergency shelter whose function was to provide rest and orientation for a certain category of migrants — hommes majeurs isolés — who were newly arrived or primo-arrivant and who had not yet initiated their asylum application process. The duration of the “emergency shelter” offered in the CPA ranged from 5 to 10 days, before residents were offered transfers to other types of State accommodation depending on the assessment of the legal situation of each person. The latter was carried out by agents of the police prefecture, whose premises were located 600 metres from the CPA, on Boulevard Ney. In the Centre itself, a floor was specifically

dedicated to fingerprinting residents to determine whether they were subject to the Dublin regulation, which dictates in which country in the EU an applicant can file their application for asylum — or determine whether they had already been refused asylum in another European country, in which case they would be ineligible to apply in France. The Centre's everyday operations were run by Emmaüs Solidarité, an association commissioned by the municipal government to run the facility. They were supported by Utopia 56, a civil association that managed a large labour force of volunteers, both Parisians and "voluntourists" from abroad. Inside the CPA, medical and psychological consultations were provided by Médecins du monde and the Samu social, the municipal humanitarian agency. The investments on the site were financed by the City of Paris (80%) and the State (20%) while the operation of the day reception facility, known as the Bulle, was paid for in equal parts by the municipality and the National government, while the overnight accommodation facilities (the Halle) and medical services were entirely financed by the National government. With a capacity of 400 places, the Halle was made up of modules installed in a former SNCF site. Before people could stay in the Halle, they were admitted to the Bulle so that their administrative situation could first assessed by Emmaüs Solidarité social workers.

The Bulle, an inflatable structure of 900 square metres that served as a day centre where migrants were welcomed, processed and offered accommodation according to their situation, became an instantly recognisable feature of north-eastern Paris. At night, powerful spotlights illuminated it from the inside and made it stand out like a glowing beacon in the post-industrial urban landscape of Porte de la Chapelle. Its bubble-like form suggested the promise of a gentle welcome for undesirable bodies previously confined to the capital's street encampments, while its spectacular nature and unconventional appearance visually and symbolically established its character as an experimental solution attesting to the municipality's humanistic and inclusive approach. Although it functioned essentially as a waiting area and temporary shelter for migrants, its shape deliberately avoided referring to the imaginary of tents or camps, unlike, for example, the Centre humanitaire d'accueil d'urgence de Sangatte and its "camp with minimalist hospitality" (Fassin, 2010, p. 191).

In this chapter, we emphasise the strategic function of this State dispositif, based on a critical reading of its exceptionalism. Indeed, the humanistic character of the Centre and the communication surrounding it presented the facility as an emergency solution to

put an end to the informal encampments that had appeared in the north of Paris since 2015. However, there was nothing natural about the disappearance of the latter: After their evacuations, hundreds of metres of fencing quickly occupied vacant spaces previously occupied by the encampments and an increased police presence ensured that migrants were prevented from regrouping or resettling in these places. In this contribution we initially argue that the opening of the CPA masked and legitimised these practices of evicting unhoused migrants from urban spaces and invisibilised their presence. Furthermore, the CPA's mandate was to allocate services only to newly arrived migrants according to their legal status in the archipelago of existing facilities for migration reception. Therefore, primo-arrivants and others wanting to enter the facility were subject to an assessment that took place even before their asylum application procedures could begin. This process of prior identification, categorisation and sorting of migrants by the State runs counter to French and international laws governing treatment of asylum-seekers. Therefore, we demonstrate herein how the exceptional dimension of the CPA has served as grounds for experimenting with these illegal practices.

This chapter is the result of research carried out simultaneously in two different disciplines (one of us is a Ph.D. candidate in geography and the other two were master's students in anthropology at the time we authored this article). Our decision to co-author and to collectively articulate our different methodological and theoretical approaches with one voice was intended as the enactment of a feminist approach to research that decentres the individualised researcher. Although we became acquainted and collaborated on this writing only after our fieldwork was completed, our research and analysis brought us to similar conclusions and led to our decision to coauthor this chapter in one voice as we found that our research questions, which converged towards similar conclusions, resonated well together. We also wish to convey that our three individual engagements with fieldwork were similarly painful and disturbing, as we were simultaneously confronted by situations of great and lasting physical and psychological violence, and with our powerlessness to affect change in their stead, and/or to significantly assist our research participants to survive the dangerous and difficult conditions in which they lived. We contend that the ways in which this research site and our experiences within it affected us, each in a subjective way, are an integral part of our analytical material. Based on its effects, the aim is to investigate the tension between the staging of the reception and the practices of sorting and police harassment (Babels et

al., 2019), between what is said about the Centre by the municipality and the discretionary practices of identity control that were practised there. A term frequently used by the municipality and the prefecture was “shelter”: In this case, we argue that the CPA’s undertaking to “shelter” migrants in the capital largely served to obscure them from the public gaze and from the control practices aimed at categorising and excluding them.

Located on the border of Paris and Seine-Saint-Denis, in the Porte de la Chapelle district, the CPA was defined as a point of transit that was intended to provide shelter, rest and orientation for recently arrived migrants who had not begun their asylum application processes. Each person admitted to the CPA was offered residence there for a duration of between 5 and 10 days, before being transferred to another type of accommodation depending on the assessment of the person’s legal situation. The latter was carried out by agents of the police prefecture in an office that was located 600 metres from the CPA, on Boulevard Ney. In the centre itself, a floor was specifically dedicated to taking the residents’ fingerprints to establish whether they were dubliné. The Emmaüs Solidarité association was commissioned by the municipality to manage the facility, supported by another, citizen-run association called Utopia 56 that ran largely on volunteer labour from civil society actors. Inside, medical and psychological consultations are provided by Médecins du monde and Samu social. While this facility was reserved for hommes majeurs isolés, another centre for families and women had opened its doors in Ivry-sur-Seine on January 19th, 2017. With a capacity of 400 places, the Porte de la Chapelle centre was made up of canvas-walled modules installed in an abandoned lot that previously housed a hangar for the national railway. Before people could stay in the Halle, their administrative situation was first assessed by social workers and Emmaüs Solidarité.

During the Centre’s 17 months of existence, the Bulle became an instantly recognisable symbol of the municipality’s commitment to “welcoming” destitute migrants previously confined to the capital’s street encampments. Its spectacular nature and unconventional appearance visually and symbolically established its character as an experimental solution attesting to the municipality’s humanistic and inclusive approach. Although it functioned essentially as a waiting area and temporary shelter for migrants, it deliberately avoided referring to the imaginary of tents or camps, unlike, for example, the

Centre humanitaire d'accueil d'urgence de Sangatte and its "camp with minimalist hospitality" (Fassin, 2018, p. 191).

10.2. Between visibility and invisibility: Encampment as a strategic response to encampments

Since 2015, there have been successive encampments on the pavements of Paris, mainly in the 18th and 19th arrondissements. On November 4th, 2016, the Stalingrad and Jaurès camps were evacuated in the thirtieth démantlement of its type since 2015[8]. Six days later, the CPA opened its doors. Presented as a solution to the problem of the camps, it was constructed in the media as the showcase of a municipal reception policy defined as unconditional at the time of its inauguration[9]. The opening of the Centre does not, however, put an end to the autoconstructed encampments, but rather marks a turning point in the police management of these camps. In the following, we examine the way in which the over-visibilisation of the CPA, which was set up in the media as a symbol of a Parisian reception policy, is linked to policies of invisibilisation of migrants in public space.

10.2.1. "Supporting the people of our city": The city's "humanistic values" through the CPA

Although the CPA's primary objective was to intervene in the Parisian crisis by creating a first reception facility for primo-arrivants, it also advanced many of the municipality's other priorities. The aesthetics as well as the function of the project were designed to be noticed, and they were meant to "live up to the humanist values of the City". In addition to being a "humanitarian" project that attained the standards set by the UNHCR, it also needed to appeal to local Parisians and visitors alike. According to a City of Paris project manager responsible for phrasing the call for proposals, the Centre was designed to meet the needs of both Parisians and migrants:

[8] Press release from the Préfecture de police de Paris, "3,852 migrants sheltered this morning. This is the largest operation carried out in Paris", November 4th, 2016 [online] http://www.prefectures-regions.gouv.fr/ile-de-france/ile-de-france/content/download/27250/187328/file/04-11-2016%20-%20Mise%20%C3%A0%20l'abri%20du%20041116.pdf (accessed March 1st, 2020).

[9] Delphine de Mallevoüe, "Migrants: Europe's largest transit centre opens in Paris", Le Figaro, November 10th, 2016 [online] https://www.lefigaro.fr/actualite-france/2016/11/10/01016-20161110ARTFIG00009-migrants-le-plus-gros-centre-de-transit-europeen-ouvre-a-paris.php (accessed May 1st, 2020).

> The central question in all our meetings in the city was really the will to ensure a dignified reception and the response to basic needs — for Parisians as well as for local residents. Since at this point, civil society is responding, and we have to take responsibility because average Parisians are the ones doing the jobs of the State. And we, as a municipality, must support the inhabitants of our city (Interview, project manager at the Ville de Paris, June 2018).

A letter addressed to the "fellow citizens" of the 18th arrondissement and signed by Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris, and Éric Lejoindre, mayor of the arrondissement, invited the inhabitants of the neighbourhoods near the CPA to come and help out at the Centre, while presenting its opening as a response to the "migratory crisis" facing Paris: A "situation [that] is not acceptable either for the migrants or for the inhabitants". Thus, the CPA was seen to be taking on the role of a municipal structure that responded to the concerns and efforts of the citizens already mobilised to support migrants in their neighbourhoods, while at the same time attracting new volunteers. However, the structure also worked to subsume and appropriate the efforts and actions of citizens while amplifying their goodwill and hospitality, while attributing it to the City of Paris's humanistic character as a sanctuary city.

Throughout its existence, hundreds of volunteers, Parisians and "voluntourists" from elsewhere, worked in the CPA alongside Emmaüs Solidarité and Utopia 56. However, in October 2017, Utopia 56, whose work to support migrants took place both inside and outside the CPA, announced they would be leaving the CPA. In doing so, they removed a large volunteer workforce. This departure also amplified the critiques from local solidarity volunteers and NGOs who had denounced repressive municipal policies towards primo-arrivants and the CPA's role in furthering them.

10.2.2. The Centre as a showcase for a municipal reception policy

Through the choice of an aesthetic of welcome, the municipality made the CPA an emblem of its "innovative" migration policy: "It can be said that Paris claims to be a welcoming city for refugees. The architecture of the Centre embodied this statement. When arriving on Boulevard Ney from the south of the Porte de la Chapelle district, a large yellow-and-white inflatable bubble-shaped tent that was the Centre's most prominent feature comes into view. Freshly planted shrubs grew on both sides of the fences to delimit the spaces of the facility. The eye was immediately drawn to the yellow-

grey and white-striped markings of the Bulle, and to the vividly coloured red, orange, yellow and green scotch tape forming geometric patterns on the 3.5-metre high fences that run along the southern and western sides of the CPA. These fences were topped in several places with barbed wire, installed at the request of the SNCF. Indeed, according to the Centre's architect, during consultations on the development of the site, the railway company had expressed its fears that migrants would try to get through these fences to board Eurostar trains bound for England[10]. The colourful décor was therefore intended to distract from the symbolic violence of the fence and the barbed wire, and the other conflictual codes of an architecture that was meant to denote "welcome" but also served to camouflage the coercive dimensions of the site. This architecture is complemented by the official descriptions of the Centre which, through a "warm" lexicon, aim to give the CPA the image of a place of rest. This discourse is also repeated inside the Centre, where employees and volunteers regularly spoke of the "welcome bubble", the "welcome interview", etc. During our fieldwork, we sought to ethnographically render the ways in which this discourse of welcome was relayed within the Centre: "I accompany a person to his accommodation. He tells me about the nights spent on the street, the police violence. We climb the steps of the *'halle'*. He describes the unbearable wait at the entrance to the camp, the cold nights. An employee interrupts us: 'Hi, welcome!' We look at him without answering"[11].

This scene expresses a disjunction between the "welcoming discourse" and the real situation of the people who enter the CPA after having spent varying amounts of time on the streets and in the camps. Although the Emmaüs staff we met in the field were heard to occasionally criticise certain operations, this criticism is rarer when it comes to the concept of reception. The concept seems to be accepted because it reflects their desire to help and be useful. An Emmaüs employee we met after the CPA closed for good described the "pressure" she felt on a daily basis and the paradox of the tasks required: "Our work consisted of both welcoming people into the Centre and managing its 'fluidity' by putting a certain number of people back outside... These people found themselves on the street again as soon as they left the CPA, there was no

[10] Interview with Julien Beller, architect of the Centre, April 5th, 2018.
[11] Excerpt from field notes, November 2016, in the hall, discussion with a resident.

recourse”[12]. Just as the “welcoming” architectural aesthetic concealed the coercive dimension of the place, the lexicon of reception conceals its paradoxical practices. In fact, this gap between discourse and practice allows the public authorities to accept that the opening of a first reception centre can coexist with the violent management of the surrounding street encampments.

10.2.3. Preventing relocation to visible spaces: Anti-encampment strategies around the CPA and police harassment practices

Just before the opening of the CPA in early November 2016, about 50 stone boulders were placed in front of the building. On February 6th, 2017, they were moved under an overhead railway track, onto a median where people used to gather to shelter from the rain and spend the night. The medians and green spaces where migrants could previously sit and wait were by this point blocked off by construction barriers and there was a public works project of *désamiantage* (asbestos removal) taking place directly in front of the camp-queue where people slept in front of the Centre. The increase in the number of these devices can be understood as “eviction strategies” where undesirable bodies are forcibly or coercively removed from public space (Koepke & Noûs, 2020).

Another way of removing rough sleepers was the daily police presence around the Centre and in Paris, whose orders were to prevent the formation of encampments in the first place. Since the evacuation of the Stalingrad and Jaurès encampments on November 4th, 2016, police patrols have been dislodging migrants from any visible space. These policies push migrants to the margins of Paris — notably under the boulevard périphérique and along its access ramps. Expelled from busy neighbourhoods, they installed themselves in the interstices of the city, with encampments and police interventions targeting inhabitants who were becoming increasingly invisibilised. Faced with increasingly extreme conditions of survival, most people living on the margins of Paris seemed more isolated, less identified in the city, less aware of their rights, and out of touch with the associations that could guide them and offer advice and services.

[12] Interview with Suzanne, Emmaüs Solidarité employee, May 2018.

10.2.4. Under-sizing and waiting: Traces of the impasse around the Centre

Initially, the CPA was designed to accommodate 40 new people each day. However, as the admission queue grew longer and more people waited for admission, the facility was saturated by mid-December 2016. About 50 people, then 100 in January, 300 in March and nearly 800 at the end of April were living in encampments near the Centre in Porte de la Chapelle. During a morning evacuation on July 7th, 2017, around 2,700 people boarded the buses. In the camp-queue that had formed in front of the Centre, delimited by crowd-control barriers, men waited all day for admission to the Bulle. They stretched blankets and tarpaulins over their heads to keep warm and to shelter themselves from the sun and rain. Walking away to relieve oneself or stretch one's cramped limbs paralysed from sitting for too long in one position was a risky bet: Any prolonged absence became a final one, said Amad, who lost his place and had his bag stolen in the queue while he was buying a sandwich at the supermarket opposite the metro station in early January 2017. Shortly after this episode, we were able to observe the intervention of municipal employees who came to bring the two lines of barriers closer together and fix them to the ground by perforating the pavement. The placement of these metal obstacles exerted control over the bodies of the people in the queue, who could no longer stretch their limbs out across the width of the queue. The queue was also a place of daily police repression aimed at pushing back crowds of people who rushed to enter the CPA during morning admissions amidst frequent tear-gassings and truncheon blows. These daily confrontations increased as the queues got longer and admissions decreased over time.

Although the presence of the CPA meant that encampments should no longer exist in Parisian urban space, traces of rough sleeping in the Porte de la Chapelle district had been nevertheless consistently multiplying since the autumn of 2016. The remains of meals, individual trays and plastic cutlery littered the ground. Blankets were rolled into a ball under the bridge and the motorway interchange. These "traces of immobility" were mainly located around the places where outreach services were organised several times a day by associations, groups or individuals. These signs of waiting were becoming more and more visible as time passed and encampments grew despite police attempts to disperse them. Although the authorities tried to make the rough sleepers invisible through repeated evacuation measures, the traces of their immobility and the memory of

their waiting remained even though their bodies have disappeared, melted into the interstices of the built environment.

The opening of the CPA was therefore linked to ongoing attempts to evict migrants from the margins of Paris, cutting them off from the networks that the city offered them. This occurred according to a logic of double invisibilisation: That of the migrants themselves, and that of these eviction practices. At the same time, from the moment the centre opened, the architecture and the language of the place formed a "discourse of welcome", as if to throw a veil over the violence of these practices. This articulation between what is visible and what is hidden from view is specific to the CPA. Following on from this analysis of the policies that link over-visibilisation and invisibilisation, we now need to see how, within the CPA, the discourses of reception are articulated with the practices of administrative control, based on what is said and what is seen of the sorting carried out.

10.3. Hidden sorting practices

The administrative intake procedures at the Bulle were carried out in two stages: The first check was carried out by Emmaüs employees during an interview with the people received in the Bulle, and the second was carried out by police prefecture officers when the fingerprints of those accommodated in the CPA were taken. Transfers from the CPA to accommodation facilities across France were decided by the prefecture and were opportunities to continue these controls. An ethnographic study of the circulation of information during these controls allows us to understand how the discourse of reception and the proposal of accommodation in the CPA make the practices of control and sorting difficult to name.

10.3.1. Sorting in the Bulle: The fabrication of expulsions

> The number 69 is called from the offices in the containers in the centre of the Bulle[13]. The man I'm talking to stands up, ticket in hand, he's been waiting for four hours. It is his turn for what is called in the Bulle "the reception interview". As there is no interpreter, I am asked to attend the interview and translate what is said into English. The employee is sitting behind a desk, filling in a form by hand, as well as a form on his computer.

[13] This excerpt from the field notebook describes the process of an arrival interview in the bubble and the emotions felt during the participation of one of the authors as an Emmaüs volunteer.

I feel uncomfortable. I have the impression that through my presence, I am participating in the filing of this person. He asks mechanically:

"Name?"

"Mohamed Amin."

"I said name, just the name?"

After several erasures, he finally writes them down, looking puzzled. The questions follow one another:

"Date, place of birth? When did you leave Somalia? When did you arrive in France?" The employee turns his computer screen.

"How did you get here?"

The employee uses his pen to follow a Google map that appears on his screen. He stops at the Mediterranean Sea.

"The plane? Oh no, the boat? Okay, by boat!" (He gestures across the Mediterranean Sea with his pen.) "And then?"

The questions continue: "The countries crossed in Europe? The date of arrival in Paris? Do you want to apply for asylum in France? Have you ever been sheltered by someone here?"

The questionnaire is completed. The employee writes some things on the computer, for an internal file. He takes a webcam in his hand and places it in front of the young man's face.

"I'm taking a picture, look carefully. It's to be able to enter and leave the Centre. So here's this paper, you have to sign it, here it is, the accommodation conditions. You mustn't miss your appointment at the prefecture, then there's a transfer, maximum 10 days. Room number 14. *Don't forget fingerprints*[14]."

This extract shows the role of the so-called "intake" interview, carried out by the Emmaüs staff in the Bulle. The questions asked are systematic and follow a pre-established questionnaire. The aim is to gather information about the identity of the person seeking accommodation and their migration and asylum history. This interview is not, as the name suggests, a reception practice; it is designed to classify the persons received according to predefined criteria. It determines whether they are categorized as minors, women, men, couples or individuals, and therefore whether they meet the

[14] Extract from field notes, November 2016, in the Bubble, reception interview with A. and an Emmaüs employee.

admission criteria for the CPA: Wanting to apply for asylum in France, not being in transit, not having had their asylum application rejected and being from certain countries. It is implicitly understood that the reception interview is used to decide whether the person will be offered accommodation, but this is never stated in this way by the Emmaüs staff and volunteers. With regard to the last criterion, country of origin, the CPA has drawn up a list — about which it is difficult to obtain information — that sets out the countries from which people are not eligible for accommodation. This list appears to be similar to the list of so-called safe countries[15] drawn up by the board of the French OFPRA. The excerpt from the conversation below shows how the criterion of the person's origin is used to determine access to accommodation.

> "No, but actually for this woman it's a definite no. She's not part of the mandate, so she needs to call 115 [the homelessness services line operated by the National State]. She is not part of the mandate, so she calls 115."
>
> "What does 'the mandate' mean?"
>
> "Well, she comes from Senegal! It's not one of the countries we take care of, it's not on the list of countries we take in at the CPA, we can't take in everyone, there are countries where there are no problems like Albania. You see, they are Albanians, they have to leave, we don't take care of these people[16]".

An initial sorting of people is therefore carried out in the Bulle; this leads to the selection of people according to pre-established criteria in order to grant them accommodation or not. The questions can be compared to those asked by the prefecture when the asylum application is registered (questions about the migratory route, dates of arrival in France and Europe, country of origin). Behind the choice of the term "reception" to describe these interviews, there are in fact sorting practices linked to this discourse of reception.

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[15] The asylum application of a person from a country classified as safe by OFPRA is registered by the prefecture as a priority, which deprives the person of some of the rights usually granted by a so-called normal asylum procedure.
OFPRA safe countries list [online]
https://ofpra.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/atoms/files/151017_jorf_decision_ca_ofpra_du_9_octobre_2015.pdf
(accessed April 29th, 2020).

[16] Extract from field notes, January 2017, in the Bubble, informal discussion with an Emmaüs employee.

10.3.2. Identity checks at the CESA: A move away from asylum

Hommes majeurs isolés who met the criteria for admission were escorted to the Halle, which was located behind the Bulle. Inside the building, the architect has designed eight rapidly assembled modules, called *îlots* (islands), differentiated by their colour (orange, blue, green, etc.). Each *îlot* has 50 beds (organised in "cabins" of four), sanitary facilities, a refectory and rooms for the Emmaüs staff. Every day, a list of annotated names was posted in the refectory of each different section — these indicated whether a person was to present himself at the prefecture for an appointment, whether they were being transferred to another facility, or whether they had been determined to be hors dispositif without being offered a further transfer or accommodation. Appointments at the prefecture were compulsory; missing one meant the end of care and exclusion from the dispositif. During the appointment, prefecture officials would take fingerprints and carry out further interviews, asking migrants about their country of origin, migration trajectory, etc. The fingerprints were then recorded by the CESA; they facilitated the cross-referencing of each person and their entry into the Eurodac system, which indicated whether the person had filed an asylum application in another country and was thus subject to the Dublin regulation, or whether they had been refused asylum elsewhere.

Usually, in other administrative contexts, these verifications and processes were coupled with the registration of the asylum application by the prefecture. In the case of fingerprinting at the CESA, this was not the case — therefore, submitting to these intake procedures didn't allow people to access the rights to which they would usually be entitled after submitting an asylum application under the normal circumstances. The CESA thus made it possible to determine the administrative situation of each person and, depending on this, to allocate accommodation to them or not without having recognised the rights linked to this procedure. This system discriminates above all against people who are "Dublined"[17]. In such cases, the prefecture, via the CESA, requests a pass from the European country where the first fingerprints were taken, thereby enabling their expulsion without being offered the right to register an asylum application in France. These people are thus excluded from the usual rights. In September 2017, eleven months after the opening of the Centre, and in the face of

[17] Gisti, "Recours contre les modalités d'accueil des migrants à Paris (CHUM et CESA)", March 23rd, 2017 [online] https://www.gisti.org/spip.php?article5670 (accessed August 19th, 2019).

repeated criticism from associations, the CESA was transformed into the Guichet unique de demande d'asile (GUDA, the unique service counter for depositing asylum claims). This change occurred at the same time as the association Utopia 56 left the CPA, its departure being publicly presented as a denunciation of the sorting that was carried out there. From this date onwards, the taking of fingerprints was considered to be the submission of an asylum application. The complexity of these procedures, which changed over time, was part of a mechanism that rendered the system difficult for primo-arrivants, and obscured for them the consequences of providing their fingerprints during a stay at the CPA. The following is an excerpt from fieldwork notes:

> About 50 people are gathered around two OFII agents wearing red bibs. They try to make their voices heard, which resound under the Bulle and intermingle with the everyday noises (a fan, a door turning, footsteps, a voice breaking through).
>
> We listen carefully, a certain anxiety is palpable, a silence hangs around these two voices, which hardly reach us. The agents address their audience in French. I am in the last row with a man who does not understand this language. They talk about the fact that people have to give their fingerprints to the prefecture in order to be able to stay in the centre and obtain accommodation afterwards. The OFII informs about the sanctions that will occur if fingerprints are not given. "What is he saying?" whispers my neighbour. An Emmaüs employee, speaking Moroccan, translates what has just been said. The translation seems short and the Moroccan little understood by the Arabic speakers in the group. A statutory refugee, of Afghan origin, employed by Emmaüs, then translated into Farsi. After the OFII announcement, the person next to me seems to spot me as someone who can give him information and explains his situation with concern. "I gave my fingerprints in Italy, should I stay or leave?" [18]

The OFII provided "collective information" every morning, but in reality provided little information relating to asylum application procedures, the results of Eurodac checks or next steps to be carried out by the prefecture that were to result from the provision of biometrics data. The administrative control function of this fingerprinting was never clearly explained: The only information given was the obligation to give one's fingerprints in order to gain access to the "emergency shelter" of the CPA, which then led to offers of accommodation in the longer term. In the CPA, no legal information was available to primo-arrivants concerning this fingerprinting and the asylum application procedures.

[18] The French Office for Immigration and Integration is part of the Ministry of the Interior: OFII website: http://www.ofii.fr/ (accessed May 28th, 2019).

The “withholding of information” that Nicolas Fischer refers to in relation to administrative detention centres (Fischer, 2005) applies here to the discourse of the OFII, which can be understood as part of an organisation of ignorance and through ignorance. However, migrants often know how to identify those who can provide them with different information, a counter-information that will enable them to decide whether to stay or leave the CPA. Staying or leaving is a pervasive question among migrants, who systematically suspect that something is at stake in the fingerprinting story and want to know what is being kept quiet.

In addition to this organisation of ignorance, there was the random and irregular way in which the prefecture treated people subject to the Dublin procedure, who were the majority of people accommodated at the CPA: Firstly, by not allowing them to file an application, then by authorising it; secondly, by detaining some of them and expelling others. This non-systematic way of proceeding made it difficult for primo-arrivants to predict the consequences of providing their fingerprints at intake. Documenting the way in which control practices are concealed in this way makes it possible to understand the interweaving of reception and control. Fingerprinting is disguised by the offer of accommodation, which blurs the primary function of screening. This confusion in the CPA is symbolised in the Bulle by a panel showing a stylised fingerprint followed by the “equal” sign and the drawing of a bed. This blurring confuses the people who enter the Bulle and make them hesitate to accept the accommodation offered.

10.3.3. Unknown destinations: Transfers and re-circulation of migrants.

After a few days, the prefecture transfers people to accommodation facilities across France. Buses leave the CPA every day, without the destination being specified in advance to those who board. An Emmaüs employee, to whom we pass on the question of a man worried about his destination, replies:

> Ah, I don’t know, it’s the prefecture that decides, anyway we don’t give this information. It’s always like that with transfers. I think it’s because if we tell everyone where they’re going to go, it’s going to cause problems, there will be those who say I don’t want to go there, I want to go here, we’re not out of the woods yet[19].

[19] Extract from field notes, December 2016, in the Halle, discussion with an employee.

Once again, the information is not passed on to residents, as Emmaüs employees are instructed not to reveal the destination of the buses until the day of departure. However, people are assigned accommodation throughout France and are sometimes even placed under house arrest in these places, which they will not be allowed to leave on pain of no longer receiving financial aid and not being able to access other accommodation for the duration of their asylum application. By keeping migrants on hold, locking them up, controlling them, sorting them out and deporting them, the CPA is part of an archipelago of places in France and Europe that practice “circulation and confinement” (Makaremi & Kobelinsky, 2008).

10.4. Conclusion

The CPA’s limited lifespan, its temporary and ephemeral aesthetics and its position outside the national accommodation system for asylum seekers gave it a character that was both experimental and exceptional. These elements tended to be highlighted by the Parisian municipality, for whom the establishment of the CPA fulfilled two strategic functions: As an affirmation that, by virtue of its humanism, it was experimenting with a form of shelter and unconditional reception of precarious migrants, and to justify practices of evicting migrants from urban public space in order to push them to the margins of Paris. When the OFII integrated some of its functioning within the CPA, it also became an opportunity for the nation-state to experiment with a form of derogation from the right to asylum through the implementation of an administrative “triaging” that sorted people according to their real or represented possibilities of claiming asylum. This sorting procedure that was enacted before the fact of their admission to the dispositif — at the entry gate, even before they were admitted to the Bulle (sorting by nationality, carried out by the Emmaüs association), and then during their stay (sorting by administrative status, carried out by the prefecture). Therefore, they were categorised before even being allowed to apply properly for asylum, and in doing so, were disseminated throughout the national archipelago of accommodation facilities without proper juridical status being conferred or undertaken.

On the model of the Greek hotspots that lock up tens of thousands of people at the borders of Europe (Tassin, 2016), the CPA represented a supposed form of reception that organised control of migrants’ bodies even before they were able to exercise their rights to asylum, thus constituting a new border for migrants to cross and

marked contempt for the right to claim asylum — a right on which on which this organisation of migration is based. However, these rights were largely ignored through these functionalities of the CPA, such as (in the institutional vocabulary of reception) its "sheltering" function that contributed to the distancing and "derealisation" of the violence towards asylum-seekers as it was represented through the media and in the public sphere. This questioning of the visible and the invisible, the shown and the hidden, highlights the fact that, in fact, "sheltering" should be seen as an attempt to shield these trivialised and muted institutional forms of violence from the eyes of the public and of the migrants who are subjected to them in a system that trivialises institutional violence and renders it muffled and difficult to translate (Graeber, 2015). Situating ourselves as witnesses to the various forms of violence in this system and refusing "the sophistication of commentary that goes hand in hand with the anaesthesia of sensations" (Davoine & Gaudillière, 2006, p. 22) will have guided our work of documenting the accounts of interlocutors encountered in the field: Of being woken with teargas and truncheons, of repeated humiliations and violence at the hands of the police, and of the State's production of the disorientation of migrants through an elaborate and incomprehensible system of non-accommodation.

10.5. Volunteers vis-à-vis the Bulle: Working within and beyond the CPA

Note: This sole-authored chapter was also published in *Paris et les exilés*.

While a large number of local residents had questioned the authorities (notably on social media) about their management of the very visible "insecurity and insalubrity" of the camps around the CPA, local citizens had also committed themselves to supporting migrants in the Centre. For the Parisian solidarians as well as for voluntourists arriving from elsewhere who became involved in the CPA, participation in this institutional mechanism involved many ambiguities. Many spoke of the "paradoxical humanitarianism" (Fassin, 2011) they experienced in the day-to-day functioning of the CPA (Koepke, 2022a).

Séverine is a French woman in her sixties who came to volunteer at Porte de la Chapelle, as soon as the CPA opened.

> I understood that there was a possibility to bring humanitarian aid, but I immediately thought that it stank. I said there was something wrong with that image. There's nothing wrong with feeding people and sheltering them, of course, and I let some of the boys stay at my house for a while and I still do that. But... I saw that this Bulle was a distraction... I knew right away that it was politics. A way to exclude people presented under the guise of helping them (Interview, June 2018).

The primary objective of the CPA was to intervene in the "migration crisis" in Paris, particularly to provide a welcome to precaritised migrants living in the informal encampments that had been multiplying in the neighborhoods of northeast Paris since 2015. It also aimed to show citizens, often shocked by this unprecedented situation, that the city took its responsibilities seriously to respond to the situation. On September 7th, 2016, one month before the opening of the CPA, Mayor Hidalgo and Eric Lejoindre, mayor of the 18th arrondissement, sent a letter to "fellow citizens" living in the arrondissement in which they explained the creation of this device by the need to respond to the "migration crisis" in Paris: A "situation [that] is not acceptable either for the migrants or for the inhabitants". The letter also invited the residents of the district to get involved in the project. "All citizens who want to get involved can do so to ensure the success of this project. There will be no shortage of volunteers — supervised by Emmaüs — and everyone can already sign up to participate via the platform".

The CPA was therefore conceived as a municipal structure capable of responding to the concerns and supervising the efforts of the "citizens in solidarity" already mobilised to support migrants in their neighborhoods, while at the same time attracting new volunteers. However, like Séverine, not all the volunteers saw it that way.

> I came when the city put out a call for citizens to come and help out with the opening [of the CPA]... I found the Bulle very shocking when I first saw it. I said, "What kind of propaganda is this? A geodesic dome maybe... or a circus tent?" It made me think of a womb and of course, a bubble (Interview, June 2018).

This interlocutor states that she quickly understood that this "crisis of welcome", as could be observed in 2017 and 2018 around the CPA, was actually produced — even organised — by the device itself and its operating procedures. As Séverine explains, this "humanitarian" initiative of the city was, in many ways, in contradiction with the solidarity and militant work of the citizens involved in supporting migrants. Rather than working within the CPA, she decided that she wanted to get involved in a collective of local

residents who distribute meals to migrants living in the vicinity of the Centre. She therefore works in the street camps, with unaccompanied minors and Dublinés, among others.

> I was looking for a place where I could put my ideas into practice to support [migrants], and also to stand up against the policies of the state. I went to Porte de la Chapelle, but I quickly found that I was more comfortable doing outreach and visiting people in the encampments around the CPA, rather than working in the CPA itself... In June last year [2017], it was very hot. I was there a lot, when there were a lot of people in line in front of the CPA... we were doing outreach and food distribution, handing people information packets about their rights, in Arabic, English and French. After the end of 2017, I was freezing to death after evenings spent in the camps with people who lived there. After that, I could never go back [to the encampments] again because I didn't have the strength to face that misery (Interview, 2018).

In 2018, Séverine joined the Anti-Deportation Brigade (an activist group that disrupted deportations at the airport and on flights) to prevent deportations from Paris airports. In addition, she became involved in outreach and accompaniment activities where she escorted migrants to rendezvous at the prefecture and visited them in administrative detention centres.

The CPA was a novel episode in the ongoing development of "municipal humanitarianism" (Koepke, 2022b). These municipal mechanisms for organising solidarity continue to evolve through several initiatives and structures designed by the city to accommodate the reflexes of Parisian citoyens solidaires. In 2018, after the closing of the CPA, and during the first city-sponsored Nuit de la solidarité (Solidarity Night), a project nicknamed La Bulle solidaire (the Solidarity Bubble), then La Fabrique de la solidarité (the Solidarity Factory), began to see the light of day in co-creation with citizens. The Halte humanitaire (Humanitarian Stopover), opened in May 2019 and managed by the Salvation Army, was first located at Porte de la Chapelle and then, in early 2020, moved to the former city hall of the 1st arrondissement, is also part of the continuum of "citizen solidarity" developed by Hidalgo's administration.

Many of the volunteers who were involved with Emmaüs in the day-to-day management of the CPA have found themselves in these new arrangements with municipal humanitarianism. But for some like Séverine, whose involvement with migrants around the CPA and in the streets of their neighborhoods has led them to

become activists, it is no longer possible to consider getting involved in the schemes initiated by the Ville de Paris. Séverine continues her work and testifies regularly, on social media, about the plights of migrants in Paris and their everyday of inhospitality, violence, hazard and fear. She says that her observations and experiences of the CPA's operating procedures have clarified her point of view on the responsibility and obligation towards migrants incumbent on citizens of host countries.

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Part II: Encampment and Démantèlement

Chapter 11. Destruction and creation: The spatial politics of inhabitation

Once the beginning (or end) of the ancient gallo-roman route from the banks of Lutetia's great river to the Northern regions, Porte de la Chapelle is a major point of ingress and egress for the city of Paris. In the 19th century it was one of the 17 portals pierced into the walls of the *enceinte de Thiers* (enclosure of Thiers). Now, it is one of the busiest intersections in Paris, a cacophonous point of ingress and egress where the beginning points of the route nationale 1 and the autoroute A1 tangle with the boulevard péripherique. An off-ramp that becomes Rue de la Chapelle and then Boulevard Marx Dormoy leads to the heart of Paris through the 18th arrondissement and into the 10th, snaking around the Gare du Nord where trains from and to Lille, Dunkirk and Calais pull in alongside the Eurostar to London and the TGV [high-speed train] from Brussels and the Netherlands and where SNCF [national] railways connect with RER [commuter train], the metro, and pedestrian walkways that in turn lead, via a pedestrian tunnel, to the Gare de l'Est (points East).

Porte de la Chapelle is a concatenation of mobilities at all hours of the day and night, made up of ramps and overpasses and no less than 16 lanes of vehicular traffic, a metro stop, several bus lines, a tramline, and a constant flow of dodging and weaving pedestrians. On the other side of the highway, accessible by vehicular and pedestrian underpasses, the Stade de France and the banlieue of Seine-Saint-Denis stretch to the north. Historically, these have been quartiers populaires inhabited by working-class and new immigrants, and where extremely marginalised populations also survive in the interstices of crumbling urban infrastructures. Until they were evacuated in 2016, a community of Roma occupied a shantytown along disused tram tracks. In an adjacent incline between two highways, not a hundred feet from encampments inhabited by migrants, stood another resurgent (though oft-evacuated) informal encampment known as the colline du crack, populated by a group of extremely marginalised crack users that was definitively removed by authorities in 2019.

I begin this section above with a description of Porte de la Chapelle in order to contextualise the material in the following two chapters, where I explore migrants' politics of presence through which those who depend on public space inhabit encampments, as

well as their supports and the actions of authorities to remove them. In the first chapter, I consider the practice of démantèlement, a French term akin to “camp sweeps” in English, which describes the destruction and removal of unhoused peoples’ shelters from public space and that has become common in the midst of this Parisian “migrant crisis” in the context of provisional encampments. It is enacted, in Paris, through specific processes so named: The sheltering operations that are organised by authorities to physically “evacuate” inhabitants and materially destroy encampments through tent-breaking and seizure and confiscation of personal property. These processes are often framed and justified as necessary humanitarian response to the crisis of encampments and justified by authorities through discourses of care, protection and urban governance. This chapter, based on ethnographic fieldwork in the north of Paris from 2016 to 2019, argues that démantèlements are more than merely technocratic process of socio-spatial control, but rather materially dispossessive actions that ratify the banishment of certain bodies designated as “undesirable” from the public spaces they depend on to survive.

A few notes on Chapter 12: As indicated earlier in the dissertation, working in encampments was not part of my initial project, which was to research urban spaces of care. However, as indicated in the narrative progress of the dissertation, my ethnographic and participatory volunteer work as well as my presence as a local resident of a certain neighbourhood led me to an interest in encampments, which I then pursued through research as well as solidarian work. The conclusion also details how I envision pursuing this evolving topic through future work.

Chapter 12. Démantèlement as domicide: Dispossession and dwelling at the margins of Parisian public space

12.1. Introduction

On October 24th, 2016, the world watched as the “Calais jungle” burned to the ground, covered by major international news outlets. Its more than 10,000 people — illegalised migrants already driven to the margins of continental Europe, who were living on its fringe while getting ready to cross the English Channel or simply because they had no other options — were definitively evacuated by authorities who then cleared the area by setting fires to destroy the sprawling and continuous encampment that had sheltered so many for so long. After the destruction of their provisional dwelling, many inhabitants of the Calais encampments travelled to Paris and joined another encampment: The “petite jungle de Stalingrad”, a sprawling encampment located underneath the aerial metro tracks between the Stalingrad and Jaurès metro stations, that had also, over the previous months, proliferated down the banks of the Canal Saint-Martin. It had grown into a sprawling settlement of tents, tarps and other provisional shelters, where people lived in the medians of the boulevards and the Avenue de Flandre and down along the quays of the Canal Saint-Martin, filling up interstitial “vacancies” in public spaces of this neighbourhood towards the northern quadrant of central Paris. Most of this encampment’s inhabitants were Afghan, while West Africans and others who could not find no room in the State’s temporary shelters for asylum-seekers also slept rough in nearby spots. They queued all day, every day, at the nearby offices of France terre d’asile, the nationally mandated agency charged with processing claims, while sleeping around the centre in order to better secure a spot in the queue for the spare appointment slots provided for this purpose.

In the early morning of November 4th, 2016, residents of the neighbourhood around the Stalingrad and Jaurès metro stations (myself included) awoke to the roar of vehicular machinery and the scream of sirens: The definitive démantèlement of the “petite jungle de Stalingrad” was underway. The encampment spanned this area where four arrondissements meet near the Place de la Bataille de Stalingrad, and though the encampment had been evacuated at least three previous times, this was the final

procedure. Over 4,000 people were now living in this encampment that had grown perceptibly since the “Calais jungle” was destroyed a week earlier — the media’s nickname of “petite jungle”, with all its racialised connotations, had been a direct reference to the links between this mid-city encampment and that one at the borders of Europe.

Figure 12.1 The “petite jungle de Stalingrad”: Encampment under the aerial metro, October 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

Démantèlement has been adopted in public discourse to describe the destruction and removal of encampments from urban public space. Since 2015, at least 75 démantèlements have been enacted to remove migrants’ encampments, mostly in the northern neighbourhoods of Paris (Gardesse et al., 2022). Other encampments and provisional dwellings — such as those inhabited by marginalised drug users abandoned by the State who live in the north of Paris and depend on public space, have been subject to evolving practices of démantèlement. In this chapter, I explore the recent phenomenon of démantèlement as a political technology of control. Drawing empirical material from fieldwork in northeastern Paris between 2016 and 2019, I argue that démantèlement is more than a merely technocratic way to manage and govern public space, but rather an evolving and politically performative strategy that ratifies the banishment of certain bodies designated as “undesirable” through carceral modes of removal: Forced police evacuations followed by city workers breaking and shredding

tents while seizing, confiscating and destroying their personal property and possessions. While démantèlement is frequently justified by authorities through discourses of governmental humanitarianism and care, I argue that démantèlement is also evolving modes of carceral urbanism enacted through practices of mise à l'abri. This serves to both control and remove "undesirable" bodies and their vestiges from public space and, ultimately, to displace and alienate people from their "right to the city". Therefore, we may understand encampments as more than attempts to survive amidst multiple forms of violence enacted against their mere existence (though they are surely those as well), but also fugitive social infrastructures of emplacement and endurance, where migrants can assert their rights to remain in public space and the city itself can become the grounds for self-defined futures.

Figure 12.2 Démantèlement in progress at Stalingrad metro, October 2017. Photo: Michelle Gagnon/CBC (Used with permission).

Figure 12.3 Démantèlement of the "petite jungle de Stalingrad", November 2016. Masks were worn by authorities and police during démantèlements, long before the pandemic. Photo: Michelle Gagnon/CBC.

My argument proceeds as follows: First, I ask, "What is an encampment"? I answer this question within the context both of recent work on encampments in other cities and through the recent history of migrants' encampments in Paris. I then briefly discuss various examples of encampments in the north of Paris, as they and their violent processes of removal have been widely covered in media. I also elaborate on how recently-evolved practices of démantèlement link to a longer history of removal of "undesirables" from Parisian public space. Then, I consider the role of démantèlement as a political technology bearing on the affective and material politics of démantèlement that inscribe crisis on certain (racialised, gendered) bodies and their vestiges, framing their presence as the cause of crisis rather than its effects. I therefore explicitly consider démantèlement as a political technology — both as a means of endurance and of emplacement in the form of protest in the "space of appearance" — then expose the legal framework for removing both types of encampments as performative and political, enacting modes of anti-encampment carceral urbanism against those who rely on public space and frame their removal as a form of dispossession that is as performative as it is politically pragmatic. Finally, I expose three entwined aspects of démantèlement that highlight my argument that these processes constitute forms of dispossession and banishment that imperil unhoused peoples' rights to the city and prospects for depending

on and benefiting from their access to public space. First, I establish the role of encampments themselves as domesticised *lieux de vie* (living spaces) outside of State provisions of care and control; second, démantèlement as a form of domicide (destruction of home); and third, that these rolling processes of destruction and reinstallation expose both the paucity of State provisions for vulnerable people and the incorrigibility of encampment-dwellers' modes of inhabiting the interstices of urban space through errancy, emplacement and endurance. My conclusion affirms the value of supporting provisional encampments "at city's end" (Roy, 2017) alongside recent radical housing scholarships highlighting encampments as provisional forms of inhabitation confronting the violence of the permanent temporary through provisional futurities of home, housing and more durable solutions for dwelling in the margins of urban space.

12.2. What is an encampment? Recent Parisian histories of provisional dwelling

First, I ask, "What is an encampment"? After briefly conceptualising encampment as forms of provisional inhabitation in the broader context of Western cities, I situate the recent history of Parisian cases of encampment and démantèlement as unique within a context that echoes what is happening and has happened in other cities. Among unhoused people, certain populations are particularly affected by practices in which authorities may destroy their shelters and confiscate possessions in the course of démantèlement or decampment (Graziani et al., 2022; Roy et al., 2020). Systematic policies of confiscation and destruction of migrants' belongings have become standard procedure, according to associations that support migrants. The current phenomenon of improvised encampments in Parisian public space can be traced back to 2015, when migrants arriving mostly from West Africa and the Middle East (Bouagga et al., 2017; Gardesse et al., 2022) were said to have overwhelmed the French system for processing asylum claims, and, in the dearth of temporary housing for asylum claimants, began an encampment under the metro tracks of the Line 2, Paris's northern aerial metro line. This encampment in the historically immigrant neighbourhood of Barbès-Rochechouart lasted several months, and was finally evacuated amidst public consternation over hygiene conditions and threats to both safety and the tranquillité publique. This démantèlement was done with full media scrutiny, and public consternation was expressed that the rights of inhabitants should be respected. This first

evacuation was characterised as an *opération de mise à l'abri* (emergency shelter), and emphasis was on the evacuation of people rather than the destruction of shelters. When the encampment had been removed, a scaffold was installed that interrupted foot traffic into the metro stop and changed the character of this busy intersection.

As I have noted elsewhere in the dissertation (see Chapter 10), the evolution of practices of démantèlement have not mitigated the cycles of encampment in Paris. Rather, those who are unhoused have been caught in a cycle of imprisonment through circulation that echoes the violence at Europe's borders (Makaremi & Kobelinsky, 2008). In 2016, the destruction of the encampment under the aerial metro tracks and in the median of the Avenue de Flandre brought into close proximity several urban "crises" experienced by local residents; embodied, proximal manifestations of an exclusionary border régime that were being heavily debated in the lead-up to the presidential election in late 2016, parsed as, alternatively, humanitarian emergencies, failures of State authorities to control the border, or an inability to craft effective immigration policies to distinguish between "political" and "economic" refugees. As of 2016, the mairie de Paris estimated that an average of 500 primo-arrivants entered the city each week, saturating the local branches of the bureaucracy in charge of processing asylum claims (OFPRA), and quickly exceeding the capacity of the State to provide emergency shelter and services. The first of the recent migrants' encampments under the aerial metro tracks at La Chapelle metro, less than two kilometres south of Porte de la Chapelle, was followed by over 75 other such encampments, called *campements sauvages* (wild camps) or *camps de fortune* (makeshift or temporary camps) or even *campements indignes* (unworthy camps). The shocking sight of recurring migrants' encampments in the northern areas of the city has been widely reported in the international press and designated as a "crisis" of migration (Guilbaud et al., 2022), though the numbers of unauthorised migrants in Paris is statistically relatively insignificant in the global context of human movement: Paris welcomed 36.5 million tourists in 2016, while fewer than 100,000 people filed asylum claims in all of France the same year. Still, for Parisians witnessing repeated démantèlements in their neighbourhoods, the visibility of encampments served to concretise the realities of the migration "crisis" at Europe's borders (De Genova et al., 2018). The hyper-visibility of informal encampments in northern Paris simultaneously served to highlight the precariousness of life for migrants and others and produced public spaces that were perceived to be at once unhygienic,

insecure and disordered. This proliferation of informal dwellings appearing regularly in the interstices of public spaces, such as the medians of tram tracks, along the canals and under highway overpasses, had become as familiar as the mediatised spectacles of démantlèments.

12.3. Démantèlement as a political technology

I maintain that démantèlement is more than a technocratic practice in the governance of public space: Rather, it is political technology bearing on the politics of presence by which "crisis" is inscribed on certain (racialised, gendered) bodies and their vestiges, and by which particular forms of inhabitation of public space are problematised, spectacularised and governed. When public spaces cleared of unhoused peoples' tents and their possessions by forces of order as well as by city sanitation workers and their municipal maintenance tools and vehicles, the performativity of such démantèlements produces the terms of "crisis" as being caused by encampments and their inhabitants' presences. This is instead of an alternative view where a lack of shelter, and prevalence of street destitution, would be understood as *effects* of the same crises. The following vignettes relate various practices of démantèlement and briefly consider their political and discursive functions in the context of such "crises". I contrast the "everyday" nature of the destruction of the Stalingrad camp in November, 2016 with the events of protest and removal that took place in November, 2020 in order to explicitly link various instances of démantèlement to demonstrate how the practices have evolved to become ever more performative, both in terms of encampment as protest in "spaces of appearance" (Butler, 2016) and removals of encampments as performatively violent acts of repression.

I describe the démantèlement in Place de la Bataille de Stalingrad in October 2016 in detail, as it demonstrates certain orders and procedures that are now common practice during some events. I consider it emblematic because 1) it was among the largest in the recent history of encampment and 2) it took place in a very central neighbourhood of Paris, neither margin nor plaza, but rather within the local spaces of a residential neighbourhood. On the morning of November 4th, 2016, the removal process began with an "evacuation": Uniformed police officers arrived on the scene before dawn, informed inhabitants of their intentions and began to drive people from their tents and corral them into queues to eventually board buses chartered for the occasion, women

and children first. Passengers were never informed of where the buses were going or the location of their shelter spots where they would be sleeping that night, since temporary shelters for asylum-seekers operated by the State, which were located outside of metropolitan Paris, elsewhere in the Île-de-France and throughout the entire country, were part of an ever-expanding archipelago of institutional facilities for managing migrant arrivals in France. “Evacuees” assigned destinations were seldom disclosed to them in advance. Local residents watched from their windows or skirted the operation on their way to the metro, as agents of the Securité nationale (national police) continued their operation throughout the morning. That day, the French national police force, outfitted in full riot gear and armed with truncheons and shields, evacuated 3,694 unhoused asylum-seekers and other migrants — women, men and children — and loaded them onto buses. Despite the evacuation and the destruction of their provisional shelters, or however faraway their new temporary location turned out to be, many people immediately returned to these neighbourhoods in Northern Paris within days or even hours and sought to reinstall their shelters. In the words of a city manager in charge of sanitation and public security, the encampments “persisted despite efforts, despite all of our efforts to prevent them” (Interview, June 2018).

That morning, after the “evacuation” was complete and the buses full of people had finally pulled away, municipal vehicles belonging to the sanitation department (Département de la sécurité, de la population et de la santé, or DSPS) unloaded workers in white hazmat suits and masks to begin the material process of démantèlement. Tarps and tent-flies were crumpled and shredded, tent poles snapped, furniture torn apart and luggage, mattresses, blankets and other belongings tossed into the bed of a city dump truck while forklifts were used to unmoor the provisional items that had been gathered over weeks and months as people sought to build up and inhabit these spaces of “the uninhabitable” (Simone, 2016). Meanwhile, police remaining on the scene prevented local solidarians from salvaging tents, heaters, other survival gear and left-behind belongings. For many local volunteers, observing and witnessing these actions by local authorities was one of their crucial tasks, as were our attempts to gain information from authorities about where certain people were being taken in order to continue working with and advocating for them. I myself, working with a local citizens’ collective as part of research from 2016 to 2019 (and during follow-up visits in 2020 and 2022) have witnessed over two dozen démantèlements. It took city workers several days to clear the

plazas and sidewalks of all traces of inhabitation: After the long and arduous work of tearing apart and disposing of physical materials, city crews brought in and erected what I have elsewhere described as “installations to prevent re-installation” (Guilbaud et al., 2022): Semi-improvised antipersonnel fencing, or boulders and other objects that prevented fixation points, but also actually blocked access to the metro and the shared-bike stand and caused pedestrians to detour most hazardously through vehicular traffic on the busy roadway - reminders that the English translation of the French word *revanche* is “revenge”.

Another instance of démantèlement demonstrates the way that this practice can be used as a form of performative political violence. On the evening of November 23rd, 2020, riot police charged and destroyed an encampment in Place de la République, the symbolic heart of France, where 500 tents had been installed at the foot of the Marianne statue in the symbolic and geographical heart of the French capital. This protest action had been coordinated by volunteers from Utopia 56 and migrants who had been evacuated in a particularly violent démantèlement a week before in the Parisian suburb of Saint-Denis. The concerted actions of authorities that night as they destroyed encampments installed only hours before in the symbolic heart of the city was as performative as the encampment itself. They actualised the State politics of removal by literally shaking bodies out into the open, challenging migrants’ struggles for emplacement and presence by which they sought to secure the protection afforded to asylum-seekers (and children) under French and international laws. Their presence that night was also an ultra-visible and politicised version of a politics of presence that asserts their right to remain in increasingly inhospitable and “uninhabitable” urban spaces (Simone, 2016).

These pragmatic and performative actions served to draw public attention to the situation of asylum-seekers who depend on and live in public space. However, the tent-breaking and démantlèment that sent human bodies tumbling into public view in Place de la République wasn’t even the most egregious or shocking tactic used by police to brutalise protestors that night: According to eyewitnesses, riot police repeatedly advanced on the crowd, kettling and corralling people with truncheons out before launching teargas canisters into their midst, pursuing protestors through the streets of Paris in what was described by one eyewitness as “*une véritable chasse à l’homme*” (a real manhunt). The images that blazed across social media during and directly after this

démantèlement showed a group of suited-up riot cops beating campers back with their batons as they strode through the installations, and at one point physically picking a tent up off the ground and shaking it vigorously so that its occupant tumbled out head-first onto the pavement. While the events of this night were in one sense an accrued result of the recent brutal history of violence perpetrated by the French police state against asylum-seekers and their supporters, this moment in particular demonstrated a large number of French citizens — not to mention journalists and municipally elected officials — who conjoined their forces and bodies with those of precarious migrants in "their" city, where the latter have long struggled to occupy and inhabit the spaces of their own physical and psychic survival amidst a tense backdrop of austerity politics, neoliberalism, nationalism and now pandemic isolationism.

Said an activist, interviewed the next day, "The thing is, we've witnessed these acts before: Those of us who have worked in Calais, in Grande-Synthe, in Lesbos, in Athens have witnessed the violence of the State as regards to asylum-seekers. But these events are particularly striking happening in Place de la République, in Paris. They are not destroying weapons or protest signs, after all. These are shelters we're talking about. Tents. The material objects that represent the bare minimum of what a person needs to survive, provided to desperate people by French citizens with a moral intent to assist them. These tents are what is being torn apart and destroyed by agents of the State."

This particular instance of police violence, while of course not novel or even particularly surprising, signalled a new intensity in the ongoing history of démantèlement in Paris, perpetuating a theatre of struggle where mediatised crisis fuelled the necropolitics of the State immigration régime that constantly refines its strategies for violent removal. The protests and performative démantèlement in December 2020 also highlighted migrants' spatial tactics of inhabitation and resistance, where the thin protection of tent settlements tucked into interstitial zones of the city were not only a mode of survival but a political tactic of occupation and inhabitation at the symbolic heart of public life. One of the objectives of that instance of encampment was to actualise a certain political momentum of encampment as a politics of resistance that enacted itself where tactical struggle from the grassroots was met with State strategies of performative démantèlement; the past, present and future struggles of peripheral subjects out in the open, in the public and political space of the city. It exemplified both the place-based

struggles of precarious migrants and their citizen allies to obtain what is guaranteed to all asylum-seekers under French law, but also articulated the transnational and multi-sited struggles for survival undertaken by the most vulnerable people in increasingly inhospitable and “uninhabitable” urban spaces.

The scene of concerted public violence during the course of the démantèlement on the night of November 23rd, 2020 marked a turning point in the State’s instrumentalisation of “crisis” politics in regards to public encampment, specifically migrants’ encampments. Within hours, the riot police had charged not once but three times on the crowd, kettling and teargassing them while beating not only migrants but also their French allies with bludgeons and dispersal grenades. Those driven from Place de la République wandered all night, chased by the police, who pushed them out of Paris, as far as Aubervilliers and Saint-Denis. This violence and these manhunting methods are unprecedented in their intensity in Paris, though they have been in operation for several years now in Calais, Grande-Synthe and the north of France. “Last night, we started distributing our last tents and sleeping bags again. We continue to denounce this situation. And above all: We don’t give up anything”, an organiser of citizens’ advocate group Utopia 56 told me in an interview. This particular event resulted in these campers being granted a shelter, but it is important to highlight that the winning of a “solution” at city hall did not ensure the same for subsequent people who still live in encampments in 2022.

12.4. Démantèlement as dispossession: Domestication, domicide, dwelling

Alongside other work on undesirability, the title of this section refers to Agier’s work on refugee camps on national peripheries as transnational forms of “managing undesirables” (Agier, 2014). However, as the proliferation of encampments inside municipal boundaries of cities such as Paris attest, manifestations of undesirability are not relegated to marginal spaces: The margins are no longer relegated to the peripheries. Parisian encampments testify to the presence in public space of subjects deemed as “undesirable” (Bernardot, 2005; Blanchard, 2013; Froment-Meurice, 2016; Koepke & Noûs, 2020), including people who use drugs and unauthorised migrants among other unhoused people who rely on public space. The violent practices of démantèlement executed on these material vestiges of peoples’ attempts to seek shelter

are powered by discourses of State care and control about the necessity of intervening into the “crises” of their presence and more specifically providing forms of emergency sheltering operations (Guilbaud et al., 2022) that better control their presence in the city. In this section, I illustrate how these operations are more than technocratic functions of municipal government, enacted to clear the streets and sidewalks and ensure free circulation. Rather, they enact processes of violent dispossession at multiple scales; on bodies designated as “undesirable” and deemed as incommensurate burdens for the State, but also as part of globalised processes of displacement and disappearances of certain people in favour of others.

The vignettes about démantèlements included in preceding sections have provided several examples of the intentional violence and destruction of property as unifying features of démantèlement, which are frequently carried out in atmospheres of maximum terror by security forces in full riot gear with shields and weapons at the ready — but also by city sanitation workers and security workers. Police frequently disrupted sleeping bodies multiple times during the night, and often evacuated inhabitants with varying degrees of warning, herding them onto buses clutching hand luggage while denying them information about their destination. As a researcher conducting fieldwork in the north of Paris with unauthorised migrants and precaritised drug users from 2016 to 2019, I witnessed over two dozen démantèlements. Encampments were prevalent in certain northern districts of the city, including in Porte de la Chapelle where two groups of people designated as of “undesirables” (Koepke & Noûs, 2020) encamped in various areas around the boulevard péripherique in an evolving arc of displacement that continues today and that has become constitutive of various interconnected “urban crises”. Of course, a longer history of encampment has been present in this neighbourhood, which is now the site of a significant urban renewal project in advance of the 2024 Olympics. In the sections of the chapter that follows, we fulsomely expose the stakes of this process of démantlèment *as domicide* through a series of ethnographic vignettes that demonstrate the continuum of tent-breaking, physical removal and repossession, as well as the revanchist installations and the cordoning off of urban space to prevent reinstallation. We reckon with the spatial politics of démantèlement as a domicidal process in order to better understand its political usage but also, conversely, the importance of as encampment as an infrastructure of survival that orients towards futurities of “dwelling-otherwise”.

12.4.1. Domestication: “Homing” public spaces of the city

Figure 12.4 “We want home”: Signage and an encampment in Porte de la Chapelle, July 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke

Encampments in cities are primarily built for reasons of survival above all, but through their installation and ongoing presence in public space, they also become infrastructures that allow for provisional forms of rights-claiming. I therefore propose that we think of them also as enacting a radical form of housing politics that opposes forces of displacement and removal, and claims space in the city for those who otherwise are not able to access much of what the city has to offer, namely endurance, emplacement and the assurance of and right to remain in urban space. The process of perennialising a location or what is often in the vocabulary of urban governance in Paris is called a *point de fixation* (fixation point or point of attachment), is a form of “homing” public space that I have come to think of as a “domestication” of urban public space. This term carries the implications of “homing” or making homes for people in public space, who live in public because no privacy is available to them (see Chapter 4). It helps us to understand

démantèlement as a political technology, because the destruction of “home”, or encampments that are domesticated public spaces, signifies the violent removal of “undesirable” bodies and their vestiges from urban space. If autoconstructed encampments signify modes of survival in excess of State provisions, or where participation in State shelters can be deemed to be dangerous, they also work as modes of radical everyday political intervention where those who are excluded render themselves visible to the categorisations, interventions and provisions of the State. Therefore, encampments constitute the material politics of assembly present in the space of appearance (Butler, 2016), and as instigators of new encounters and relationships that are their own forms of politics, such as in the case of migrants in European cities (Dadusc, 2019; Koepke & Noûs, 2020; Picozza, 2021; Tazzioli, 2018).

Figure 12.5 Démantèlement on the Canal Saint-Martin, April 2018. Photo: Melora Koepke.

As discussed elsewhere (Koepke, Anonyme et Noûs, 2019), the conditions of encampment life in the city exacerbate the conditions of “undesirability” that are materialised in the physical presence of certain bodies and their vestiges, which are linked to conditions of “advanced marginality” (Wacquant, 2013) when people are forced to live in public, under the scrutiny of all. If undesirability manifests itself through certain bodies, we must consider the corporealities of these bodies as the reasons that encampments precipitate violent opposition and moral panics that are widely circulated: Physical bodies, their daily needs and functions are exposed in public space because they are unable to access private space or to remove themselves from public view due to homelessness or other forms of carceral precarity. The presence of informal living spaces in the interstices of the public space inspires diverse reactions: On the one hand, the humanitarian involvement of citizen-led “solidarity” collectives for newcomers, and on the other hand, angry residents faced with conditions that they consider to be marked by insalubrity, insecurity and inhospitality in the streets of their neighborhoods. The poor hygiene and destitution of encampment life forces residents to carry out their daily bodily functions in public spaces. Fights, rapes and other forms of violence between people living in encampments, or directed at residents and humanitarian volunteers, can generate a sense of insecurity and forms of inhospitality in a so-called “sanctuary city”. This situation has been designated as “crises” that are regularly documented in the international press, where the gates of Paris are depicted as ungovernable border zones where chaos, violence and destitution rule. Thus, the value and symbolic capital of Paris can be seen to be jeopardised in the face of the state’s inability to respond to these multiple crises.

The encampments in the north of Paris can be understood as everyday vestiges of multiple intersecting “urban crises” that are, in a larger sense, produced by the exclusion of marginalised urban residents who, as subjects of *la grande exclusion* (generalised social exclusion and marginality), exist outside of the social contracts that govern acceptable uses of urban public space. Their inhabitation of public space therefore signifies their unauthorised use of the city as a living space, where they undertake acts conventionally considered private — resting, sleeping, eating, congregating. These activities undertaken by some designated as “undesirables” may, for other local residents, materially manifest their perception of “crisis” as manifested in local neighbourhoods through lively indexes of migration, housing, economic and other

policy failures in which the abstractions of material destitution and exclusion that adversely affect certain urban residents are rendered proximate on the streets of their local neighbourhoods.

12.4.2. Domicide: The destruction of home

It is important to understand encampments as “domestications” of public space, because in the customary forms of governance of these spaces, as demonstrated above in the sections on démantèlement, these shelters can often be treated as nuisances or even as mere occupations of or obstructions in public space, rather than infrastructures of survival. Recent work on the destruction of the “Calais jungle” in 2016 refers to “domicidal practices against illegalised border crossers in Calais, France as a technology of citizenship and migration governance” (Van Isacker, 2019) and this formulation can be applied to similar practices in Parisian neighbourhoods, especially since these practices are carried out against many of the same people.

If domicide is “the deliberate destruction of home by human agency in pursuit of specified goals, which causes suffering to the victims… human agency is usually external to the home area… some form of planning is often involved, and that the rhetoric of public interest or common good is frequently used by the perpetrators” (Porteous & Smith, 2001, p. 12), the destruction of Parisian encampments can signify direct spatial manifestations of certain policy failures such as the undersized reaction to migrant arrivals in Europe. However, they are also enactments of certain intentional policies, such as to destroy shelters while mediatizing encampments as manifestations of generalized conditions of “chaos and crisis” (Mountz & Hiemstra, 2014) to which authorities respond with “crisis responses” that are highly performative. The physical fact of encampments and other infrastructures of domestication built into the interstices of the city also highlight failures — the failure to contain or adequately respond to crises, not to mention intimate relationships between human corporeality and the State (see Chapter 4). Encampments, whether punctual or enduring, as demonstrated in the examples shared previously, are provocations to “politics as usual” and therefore, can be understood both symbolic and material vestiges of struggle and survival of various necropolitical régimes — or drug policies, or border régimes, not to mention the financialization of urban space and neoliberal policies of the State.

If encampments constitute a form of resistance through domestication of urban public space, their destruction constitutes a form of domicide that attempts to extinguish livability and the provisional possibilities of inhabitation, survival and various forms of flourishing outside of State structures. We can therefore argue that démantlèment itself is a political technology in that it removes vestiges of life and inhabitation while denying unhoused peoples' rights to corporeal presence and dispossessing them of their capacities both to bear rights (Martin et al., 2020) and to enact their "right to the city" (Lefebvre, 1986). If the violence of tent-breaking and the destruction of property are strategies for removing and invisibilizing bodies designated as "undesirable", the destruction of provisional shelters and their removal from public space are intertwined with economic and political interests that reinforce the commodification of urban space and the protection of private property rights over the rights of (certain) individuals. This inscribes démantèlement as an evolving and ever-more normalized practice that is worse than abandonment — it can actually, and has increasingly, been characterized as banishment. Démantèlement as an evolving technology of urban governance centred around the "crisis" of encampments defines what is acceptable and what is threatening to dominant ideas of and uses of urban space. These observed domicidal processes clearly enshrine the rights of some to establish and maintain control of public spaces to the exclusion of others, and facilitates the ordering of public space by public authorities that serve some and not others. Scrutiny of démantèlement as a domicidal technique therefore foregrounds evolving practices of démantèlement as strategic initiative that carry particular political goals. By removing encampments performatively as though they were individual hazards, this process establishes the presence of shelters as public nuisances rather than as survival infrastructures that show the effects of progressive State abandonment as effects of crisis for unhoused people who depend on public space. While démantèlements are technocratic processes enacted by authorities under specific orders of the police, they are also strategic initiatives that have political ends - the imperative of domicide, undertaken specifically as the violent and deliberate destruction of home, is undertaken in order to remove encampment-dwellers from the category of the human and as rights-bearing urban subjects.

12.4.3. Dwelling: Beyond domestication

The importance of domesticating public space for people who depend on it is also a process of rights-claiming for those who have no other political power. Public authorities may claim that possessions or shelters of unhoused people as garbage, waste or other unsanitary and hazardous materials left in public spaces in order to confiscate belongings and destroy shelters. However, after 48 hours, legal provisions dictate that these shelters constitute residences, and therefore authorities may not remove them unless by special order, though the mayor or the prefect also have the option of issuing an evacuation order for threatening public health or safety. The police can seize the belongings of unhoused people if they are considered waste, and therefore unsanitary, but without a court order it is illegal to evict a resident from a tent, which is considered a home.

Article R632-1 of the French Penal Code stipulates that it is “forbidden to deposit or abandon, in a public or private place, except in places designated for this purpose by the competent administrative authority, garbage, waste or unhealthy materials” [all civil code translations are by author]. However, the DSPS may not legally confiscate a tent or shelter with someone living in it. French jurisprudence defines the place of residence as “the place where, whether the person concerned lives there or not, has the right to call himself at home, regardless of the legal title of his occupation and the use made of the premises”. The provisions of article L411-1 of the Code of Civil Enforcement Procedures states that: “Unless there is a special provision, eviction from a building or inhabited place can only be carried out by virtue of a court decision or an enforceable conciliation report and after service of a summons to vacate the premises”. In order to legally evict a person living in a provisional shelter or tent, the owner of the structure (the municipality, if the tent is installed in public space) must send a bailiff to the premises to constitute the facts. A legal decision is rendered, and if eviction procedures are initiated, a bailiff delivers the signed court decision to the resident, giving them 30 days to leave the premises. If the municipality orders the eviction, they are obliged to offer alternative accommodation to inhabitants of the tent. Thus, a process of provisional shelter or mise à l’abri is initiated and the inhabitants of encampments have engendered a process of rights-claiming that they were otherwise unable to access from their occupancy of a provisional dwelling.

The mise à l'abri is, of course, frequently disingenuous when the offer of shelter may consist of a hotel for a few nights or a spot in a gym or community centre — then after a few days, back to the street. In recent years, it has been determined that unhoused migrants are particularly vulnerable to the confiscation and destruction of their possessions — in Calais, when the "jungle" was standing, démantèlements and harassment occurred daily for several years. Civil groups such as L'Auberge des migrants and Utopia 56 have evolved a strategy to hold authorities accountable, which is to claim ownership of camping gear and tents by sticking their logos on them, and lending them to occupants via a loan contract; this way, they can reclaim their value from authorities if these items are disposed of. In this way, encampment-dwellers can claim property when they have none, and spatially inscribe their rights through their corporeal inhabitations of urban public space.

12.5. Discussion: Socio-spatial politics of removal and remaining

In the preceding sections, I've demonstrated the ways that démantèlement is more than merely a governmental technology through which to manage and govern public space, but rather an evolving and politically performative strategy that ratifies the banishment of certain bodies designated as "undesirable" through carceral modes of removal. While démantèlement is frequently justified by authorities through discourses of governmental humanitarianism and care, I argue that it has also become an evolving mode of carceral urbanism enacted through practices of evacuation, "emergency sheltering", removal and destruction. This serves to both control and remove "undesirable" bodies and their vestiges from public space and, ultimately, to displace and alienate people from their "right to the city". Therefore, we may understand encampments as more than attempts to survive amidst multiple forms of violence enacted against their mere existence (though they are surely those as well) but also fugitive social infrastructures of emplacement and endurance, where inhabitants assert their rights to remain in public space and for the city itself to become grounds for their flourishing or at least self-defined and directed lives and futures.

As I write this, in mid-July 2022, the canicule d'été in Paris is peaking at 44 degrees in the shade. Survival for people who depend on public space in the sweltering streets is imperilled daily by the elements and the constant harassment from authorities.

Nevertheless, on July 9th of this year, more than 300 unhoused migrants joined an occupation organised by the Collectif La Chapelle debout! (see Chapters 10 and 14) in the temporary asylum reception centre in Porte de Versailles that had been opened by the French government for Ukrainians arriving during the recent conflict (Personal communication, Utopia 56). It is clear that the history of encampments in Paris is not over. This summer, Utopia 56 reports that they are currently supporting over 100 unaccompanied minors who have been camping for more than 60 days in Place de la Bastille, waiting for recognition of their minority by the French State. This is a tactic that has worked in the past, most recently when more than a dozen of the minor children that Utopia was supporting were recognised by the State in May 2022 (Personal communication, Utopia 56). At another of Paris's gates, the Porte de Bagnolet, over 260 people, many of them West African migrant women who are pregnant and/or accompanied by young children, decided they were tired of being driven from encampments every night by authorities and anchored their tents in a city park, Parc Jean-Moulin—Les Guilands. Historically, actions like these — driven by desperation but also a desire to exert forms of political agency otherwise unavailable to them — have brought results. In June of this year, an encampment of mostly women and children installed right on the piazza of Paris's Hotel de Ville after an evacuation saw its inhabitants instantly offered shelter by the municipal government (Personal communication, Utopia 56).

These most recent developments in the history of encampments in this city point to the reality that the practice of provisional dwelling is more than survival (although survival is also a worthy pursuit). Encampments also constitute, as I have argued elsewhere, an insurgent tactic of inhabitation and planning for rights-claiming, exerted by those who have few other options. If the previous sections of this chapter and other chapters in which I talk about encampments have exposed the material necessity of encampments for people who depend on public space, they also show how encampment itself becomes a form of politics — not only of protest, but for remaining and even claiming rights to the city and beyond as routes towards more permanent modes of being and belonging for many denied their most basic right to support from governments. In other chapters of this dissertation, I have closely examined the consequences of migrants' exclusion in terms of their mobilities in cities and across territories. In this broader context of migrants' spatial and social struggles, provisional

encampments emerge not as a mere effect or fact of crisis, but as a crucial survival and political tactic to mitigate the various forms of violence (fast and slow, institutional and carceral) that are inherent in the permanent temporary of migrants' displacements and the EU's immigration régimes. Situating these instances of encampment within broader literatures of provisional dwelling and considering the examples presented here reveals how these modes of sheltering are more than survival; their presence signifies material architectures of endurance and emplacement (see conclusion of the dissertation) and crucial forms of inhabiting the "migrant metropolis" where individuals may simultaneously contend with their asylum applications or other lengthy administrative procedures while remaining on the territory, and by remaining envision their concurrent futures outside of France's immigration régime (especially for the many that have already been excluded, through the Dublin procedure or other reasons). To understand encampments as more than happenstance or random occurrence is to trace migrants' practices of temporary dwelling as fugitive architectures of movement and flight, through which to inhabit futures at city's end.

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Chapter 13. Provisional dwelling: Radical politics “at city’s end”

I began writing the chapter that appears here as Chapter 14 when I was in the midst of my first year of fieldwork. It was the first piece of analytical writing I tried to produce out of what was then ongoing research, which eventually expanded to fit a larger frame than I ever could have expected. I began the research interested in the politics of care, especially as they are enacted in provisional dwellings that inhabit urban public space. I ended with the question of how the radical politics of care might be activated and what their potential might be. Based on my experiences of working with citizen volunteers in encampments, this chapter engages with feminist concepts of relationality and care. Inspired by the ways that my interlocutors themselves formulated their relationships I have conceptualised a “shipwreck ethics” of radical care that extends the framing of the Black Mediterranean as a site of struggle, encounter and relationship-forging into Parisian space. Drawing from my two years of fieldwork in the northeastern quartiers of Paris, where informal migrants’ encampments burgeoned around the overcapacity and undersized CPA, I consider how migrants’ presence and the work of survival in encampments engender the everyday coalitions of care forged between locals and migrants, and how these extend the emergent connections and histories of the Black Mediterranean into the local spaces of Paris.

While the so-called “Parisian migrant crisis” since 2015 has brought the embodied necropolitics of European border régimes in proximity to the intimacies of everyday life for local Parisians, many have responded with ad hoc initiatives to support precaritised migrants abandoned by the State to remain and survive in Paris. I ask how these everyday interventions into this “crisis” and ongoing socially reproductive care “in lieu of” the State can be understood as tactics for the “unthinkable”: As radical political acts that oppose and disrupt the “thinkable” politics of the State that determine which lives matter, how much, where and to whom. I then offer examples of how these local and everyday entanglements of care foster new relationalities that resist State violence and orient towards new futurities: A shipwreck ethics of radical care with the capacity to not only sustain individual lives in the present, but also transform the politics of life itself. In conclusion to Chapter 14, I offer an example of how encampments transformed urban politics and governance in this specific context.

Chapter 14. Tactics for the "unthinkable": Shipwreck ethics of radical care at the crossroads of the Parisian "migrant crisis"

Our boats are open, and we sail them for everyone (Glissant, 1997, p. 9).

14.1. Introduction: "Crisis" and encampment

Saturday, July 1st, 2017: "La distrib' de ce soir sera aussi une manif" (Tonight's food distribution will also be a demonstration). This message, circulated via group text among members of local citizens' collectives providing ground support to migrants in the encampments that burgeoned around Porte de la Chapelle, a neighbourhood in the north of Paris, was meant for planning purposes but also as a warning. In our little neighborhood organisation, volunteers were routinely harassed by authorities who regularly framed migrants' encampments as threats to public security, hygiene and order (Koepke & Noûs, 2020). But, of course, their inhabitants— migrants who had arrived to find no capacity in the State's apparatus for asylum-seekers — had few alternatives. Just as European "solidarians" supporting migrants geographies of survival (Mitchell & Heynen, 2009) through simple acts of social reproduction had been increasingly illegalised from Calais to Ventimiglia, the forms of everyday minoritarian care that exist in excess of or in lieu of the State constitute a "minor" politics that has long been crucial to supporting precarious peoples' rights to remain in and inhabit the city — from Black Panther breakfasts to Food Not Bombs (Heynen, 2010). In this case, our organisation viewed the logistics of supporting unauthorised migrants' continued presence in Paris as inextricably entwined with the necessities of facilitating their survival, and their rights to presence and mobility across States and urban space.

That Saturday when I emerged from the metro at Porte de la Chapelle with a backpack full of sandwiches, I walked straight into a full-scale French-style *manifestation* (demonstration) in progress: Demonstrators with bullhorns and banners weaved in and out of the traffic-choked intersection. Meanwhile, I counted 857 young men, women and children from nearby encampments in the queue that snaked along the sidewalk. They waited patiently while volunteers with fluorescent yellow traffic vests and armbands — *gilets jaunes* — unpacked pots of stew and baguettes from the open boots of cars parked askew in the wide median of the boulevard onto camp tables installed in a furtive

hodgepodge in the intersection. Later that evening, as the soft light of dusk mellowed the headlights flooding the intersection, journalists and photographers from prominent media outlets followed people back towards their tents to photograph encampments in the luminescence of “magic hour” despite their destitution. The reportages that appeared in the local international press more often than not depicted squalor in the *campements sauvages* (wild camps) — furthering narratives of “urban crisis” rather than the State abandonment that illegalised asylum-seekers’ presence in Paris, and the insurgent mobilities that had brought them here to sleep among the recently installed “anti-migrant boulders”, or huddled under tarps, hoodies and other makeshift shelters knotted along the fences and under the overpasses, in the interstices of this self-professed ville refuge.

Figure 14.1 “La distrib’ de ce soir sera aussi une manif”: Food distribution in Porte de la Chapelle, July 1st, 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke

The afternoon of the protest and food distribution, I had seen a group of young men raising a banner in the middle of the intersection, as sailors might hoist a sail. Its strident message was painted on a white bedsheet that had been mounted onto two lampposts, strangely softened by smiley faces drawn into each of the Os: “Vos guerres

font nos naufrages" (Your wars make our shipwrecks). Though this particular banner disappeared overnight, I was reminded of its message later, when Sékou, the young Guinéan I had met that day at the demo, referenced it during a subsequent interview:

> Mostly you see us as homeless with our tents interrupting traffic in this intersection. Our camp is growing every day and maybe it's a shock to see us here, but France is the country of human rights and we know this. We want to show that we are not a [nuisance] or dangerous. We have risked everything to come here to Paris because otherwise our futures are impossible. Some of us already speak French! Many of us have already died in the sea, but we are like shipwrecked all over again because we will survive only if we are rescued. People need to see us, and they need to care (Interview, July 2017).

In the preceding quote, Sékou describes himself and his compatriots as being "shipwrecked" in the city, and describes their continued survival in the encampments of Porte de la Chapelle as being contingent on the "*care*" provided by local supporters. But his use of the "shipwreck" metaphor also alludes to the political and geopolitical contexts through which migrants' "incorrigible" presences and mobilities (De Genova, 2016) enable them to pursue futures that are "otherwise impossible" (as Sékou described them, above) in Paris. Their ongoing corporeal inhabitations of the city mobilised an oppositional politics of crisis while also instigating a relationship of care with others that assured their survival and continued mobility: *People need to see us, and they need to care*.

Figure 14.2 "Your wars make our shipwrecks": Protest in Porte de la Chapelle, July 1st, 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

This chapter is, in a sense, an investigation into the capacities of maritime metaphors and materialities as generative for the politics of radical care. I argue that these encounters, such as the food distribution in Porte de la Chapelle and countless other acts of everyday care and humanitarian social reproduction, which constitute what I call the *shipwreck ethics* of radical care — beginning with but not limited to ad hoc intervention within this and other "urban crises" — may instigate or reanimate the politics of "*with and for*" (Harney & Moten, 2013) that "destabilize normative subject positions, loosen (some) limits of thinkability, and invite actions in support of unthinkable politics and those who do them" (Lawson & Elwood, 2018, p. 231). Sékou's own analysis from the vignette in this introduction demonstrates these shipwreck ethics of radical care in which caring subjects enact an unthinkable politics that rearranges the thinkable politics of the State through which migrants are sorted, categorised and excluded according to racial and colonial registers reproduced through the necropolitics of State border régimes (Davies et al., 2017; Mayblin et al., 2020; Mbembe, 2019). Alongside volunteers from civil society and migrants themselves working together for a liberatory politics of care, I ask whether these demonstrable commitments of material care can be

understood to constitute “tactics” (de Certeau, 1984) that can “undo the oppressive grid of power and discipline” (Roy, 2015, p. 819) constituted by oppressive State border régimes.

In this chapter, I argue that the alliances that emerged between locals and migrants during humanitarian care work in encampments signified a refusal of the violence of State abandonment: Instead, they enacted a shipwreck ethics of radical care that open up new fields of political possibilities that intervened to transform the abjection that characterises the everyday materialities of the Parisian “migrant crisis” (Gagnon, 2016). If migrant death in the Mediterranean is a constitutive fact of European borders (De Genova et al., 2018), the same logics of abandonment — but also their refusal — are refracted through the presence of encampments and the caring relations enacted within them. The chapter proceeds as follows: By extending the metaphoric and material realities of shipwrecks and of the “Black Mediterranean” (Proglio, 2021) into the Parisian context, I build on the notions of *presence* and *care* evoked by Sékou‘s analysis of the shipwreck metaphor. I then invoke recent interventions on care, responsibility, relationality and the “minor” to develop these concepts in the context of my case study by proposing that everyday acts of material care as evoked empirically in this research offer situated, ethnographic and material answers to the questions of how the politics of radical care may be activated, and what their potential might be. Three empirical sections then demonstrate some of these commitments of radical care: Enacted between migrants and volunteers acting “in lieu of” the State, I show how the commitments of care in encampments *with and for* their inhabitants exceed and oppose the “thinkable” politics of the State through simple acts of material support that, I argue, orient towards hopeful futurities of radical care that have the capacity to not only sustain individual lives, but also transform the politics of life itself.

14.2. Ground support as grounded research: Context and methodology

Migrants’ encampments have been proliferating in the north of the French capital since the so-called “summer of migration” in 2015. With large numbers of unhoused asylum-seekers and other migrants left to survive on the streets, authorities have been (and still are) refining strategies of removal and banishment even as they advance discourses of sanctuary and humanitarian care. Police frequently destroy tents and

pursue migrants, but also disrupt and prevent food distributions and other actions mounted by local volunteers, who witness repeated evacuations and démantèlements. In 2016, the city administration opened the CPA in Porte de la Chapelle, with Mayor Hidalgo directly citing the "migrant crisis" in the Mediterranean and frustration with the inadequacies of the State's immigration régime as her reasons for initiating this facility, intended to encounter a crisis of migration that was, strictly speaking, outside municipal competencies.

Local volunteers and foreign "voluntourists" worked with civil organisations to support migrants, both in the encampments that proliferated around Porte de la Chapelle and in the CPA, which offered several opportunities for would-be humanitarians. These volunteers, alongside migrants themselves, witnessed and experienced multivarious forms of violence *au quotidian* (daily): Amidst makeshift shelters comprised of tarps, raincoats, plastic sheets and hoodies and the tents installed between the Vauban barriers (access fences) in front of the CPA, along the tram tracks and under the off-ramps of the périph' where migrants lived for days, weeks and months at a time without access to durable shelter, running water and regular food, the constant threats and realities of police violence were their only engagement with the State. Encampment-dwellers faced very real hazards and epidemiological threats: Rats, mud, scabies, cholera, tuberculosis, murders, drownings, suicides and mental breakdowns, as well as environmental poisonings and the elements (rising temperatures in summer, weird snowstorms in winter), not to mention the realities of sleeping and waking in the midst of weeks and months' worth of accumulated human waste. Encampments were experienced as sites of destitution and danger, but also survival and endurance, in a place that calls itself a sanctuary city but hesitated to install water points, urinals or bathrooms in the areas where encampments prevailed, as if to highlight that this "crisis" was about individual bodies, not humanitarian borders or State abandonment. Volunteers and migrants were also privy to repeated evacuations and démantèlements that only exacerbated the cycles of despair for the inhabitants of encampments and their supporters (Guilbaud et al., 2022).

By early 2017, a few months after the CPA opened and following a peak of migrant arrivals in Paris, the facility was well overcapacity and a burgeoning encampment-queue had formed directly in front of it. As the oncoming summer brought rolling canicules that drove temperatures to the high 30s, Porte de la Chapelle became

the focal point of the “migration crisis” and its mediatisation: With frequent depictions of the encampments around the CPA and Porte de la Chapelle as focal points for “chaos migratoire” (Beaulieu, 2017), police actions to disperse them became more concerted and brutal (GISTI, 2017). Many of those who waited and slept in rough encampments were entitled to the protection of the State, but were unable to access it.

In this context, this chapter explores an aspect of care amidst crisis — the shipwreck ethics of radical care that emerges from research conceived as a “site ethnography”, by which I mean durational geographic-ethnographic research that attends to the spatialities, materialities and functioning of specific sites and their role in shaping ongoing debates and struggles around intersecting conditions of “urban crisis”. The empirical sections are based on fieldwork conducted between 2016 and 2018 in Paris, with subsequent follow-up visits in 2019, 2020 and 2022. Research methodology included volunteer work within the municipal “humanitarian reception centre” or CPA for the duration of its 17-month existence, as well as with several citizens’ collectives and organisations in in Porte de la Chapelle and adjacent districts. These multiple roles as a local resident and ethnographer scholar-activist carried the goal of “contribut[ing] practices that are aimed at social transformation rather than merely the production of knowledge” (Routledge & Derickson, 2015, p. 6). Additionally, I conducted interviews with 58 interlocutors, among them migrants, citizen volunteers and municipal political actors — several of whom I spoke with multiple times during the course of fieldwork. I also analysed policy documents and media coverage and used social data analysis software to evaluate social-media conversations. My positionality as a local resident and an educated white cis female, a Canadian scholar with professional and academic affiliations and networks as well as a regularised immigration status, also informed various roles I occupied in the community. I therefore negotiated my identity as an “inside outsider” with a differential exposure to vulnerability and risk, while consistently identifying myself as a researcher.

14.3. Shipwreck ethics: Radical care at the crossroads

14.3.1. The Parisian “Black Mediterranean”

> The Black Mediterranean is not only a physical place which excesses the geographical space of the sea and concerns the act of being in diaspora;

> it is a practice of decentralization of the gaze and the production of knowledge from representation to resistance in opposition to a canonized and uniformized geography of power; it is a practice of investigation through which the chronological continuity of history is interrupted by unwritten and unsaid personal and collective stories about struggles against colonial, national, European, patriarchal and white powers; it is a practice of scrutinizing archives beyond their organization and modes of operation, starting from the historical source in order to pay attention to supposed silence or what is yet unsaid (Proglio, 2021, p. 13).

In January 2017, a trompe l'oeil appeared on the banks of the Seine: *Le Radeau de Lampeduse* (*The Raft of Lampedusa*), by artist Pierre Delavie. It depicted an overcrowded inflatable boat listing violently as it crashed against the bank of the river below a row of Haussmanian buildings. This image, widely shared on social media, dovetailed with the sense that Paris was at the nexus of an ongoing "migration crisis" that extended from the rising body count in the Mediterranean Sea to the encampments in the north of the city. This idea of a Parisian "migrant crisis" was evoked by Mayor Hidalgo in 2016, when she described her administration's efforts to offer "accueil inconditionnel" as an expression of municipal humanitarianism; in 2019 she also sought to award a Parisian medal of valour to Carola Rackete and Pia Klemp, young German captains of humanitarian NGO vessels such as the *Sea-Watch 3*, from which Rackete rescued 40 shipwrecked Africans off the coast of Libya in 2019.

Figure 14.3 ***Le Radeau de Lampeduse*** **(*The Raft of Lampedusa*) by Pierre Delavie. Photo: openaccess.com**

The image of shipwrecks is a powerful metaphor, even as aquatic terminology about “flows”, “waves” and “currents and counter-currents” of migration (Kainz, n.d.) gloss over the humanity of individual fatalities and trajectories and present the European “migration crisis” as an unfolding ahistorical event akin to a natural disaster[20] poised to overwhelm the geographically and historically bounded space of Europe (De Genova, 2017), rather than as a result of ongoing colonial violence. In contrast, the concept of the shipwreck as conveyed by the protest banner in Porte de la Chapelle extends the metaphoric “Black Mediterranean” into the spaces of Parisian neighbourhoods, where encampments, like maritime landscapes, become crucial loci of encounter between newcomers and residents.

> Of the fatal “mathematics of Black life in the Mediterranean”, SA Smythe writes:
>
> > Across centuries and continents, narratives of the arrival of Black people are often bound to the water. Blackness and the fear of Blackness seem to be below the surface, permeating through everywhere and every when… This ubiquity of the water is part of what ties us, binds us in time and spirit to the ontological depths of Black presences in historical and material relation to the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean — the routes of African enslavement and genocide and to the Mediterranean Sea. (Smythe, 2018, p. 5).

A fulsome consideration of the geopolitical and historical contexts of the Black Mediterranean “demands that we acknowledge the connection between the present and the past, between histories of colonialism and present-day migration” (Mainwaring & DeBono, 2021, p. 5). In the context of unauthorised migrants abandoned by the State in Paris just as they are in the Mediterranean, where border humanitarians in oceanic spaces intervene by necessity just as they do in city neighbourhoods, everyday acts of solidarity can be understood as a politics of radical care that speak to a shipwreck ethics of rescue in the face of urgent crisis. The maritime metaphors of shipwrecks haunt the “crisis” and even “delink” stories of Black death and evidence of violence against Black bodies “from their material underpinnings and histories, which means racial violence risks being cast and/or read as figurative” (McKittrick, 2021, p. 11).

[20] As Neil Smith has reminded us, referring to the aquatic event that became Hurricane Katrina, “there is no such thing as a natural disaster” (n.d.).

However, recent histories of migrants' encampments and their removal can be understood in a continuum of provisional shelters that have been used for survival as well as for political ends — such as the publicity campaign mounted by Médecins du monde in 2005, where red tents distributed to unhoused people in Paris signified *balise de détresse* (distress beacons) to interpolate government officials about their failure to develop adequate housing solutions (Gouaillard, 2005). Besides, the risk of drowning, among other aquatic hazards, is more than metaphorical for migrants sleeping rough in Paris: It is an incontrovertible and often fatal hazard. In recent years, several young migrants have drowned in canals near encampments (Bréson, 2018) — a fact that has been seized on by authorities as justification for encampments to be evacuated and destroyed for ostensible safety reasons. Street life for unauthorised migrants — especially young, racialised men — also bears other fatal risks, not the least of which are the authorities themselves.

14.3.2. Radical care as a spatial relation

In 2019, two German sea captains made headlines for humanitarian actions performed in the Mediterranean. When Carola Rackete brought her boat with 40 shipwrecked and rescued African migrants aboard to dock at the Italian port of Lampedusa, she invoked the urgent nature of care to explain why she had defied the Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini's interdictions: "To be honest I haven't read [his] comments, I really don't have time. I have 40 people to *take care of*… Mr. Salvini might just get in line" (*Sea-Watch Stand Off*, n.d.). Rackete's invocation of care describes the Mediterranean as a crucial locus of life-saving interventions — one that can, I argue, be extended to Parisian space where, because of proliferating encampments, many citizens alongside migrants themselves experience this "crisis" of migration locally, in landlocked urban neighbourhoods. As Sékou described it in the introductory quote, these shipwreck rescues enacted in local neighbourhoods are explicitly spatial and contingent on migrants' presences: "Many of us have already died in the sea, but we are like shipwrecked all over again because we will survive only if we are rescued. *People need to see us, and they need to care*" (Interview, July 2017).

Indeed, shortly after the *Sea-Watch 3* rescue made headlines in 2019, Paris Mayor Hidalgo declared that she would award the city's highest honour, the Médaille Grand Vermeil, to the two captains. In response, Ms. Klemp publicly refused the medal:

> Madame Hidalgo, you want to award me a medal for my solidarian action in the Mediterranean Sea, because our crews "work to rescue migrants from difficult conditions on a daily basis". At the same time your police are stealing blankets from people that you force to live on the streets, while you raid protests and criminalize people that are standing up for rights of migrants and asylum seekers. You want to give me a medal for actions that you fight in your own ramparts. I am sure you won't be surprised that I decline the Médaille Grand Vermeil.
>
> Paris, I'm not a humanitarian. I am not there to "aid". I stand with you in solidarity. We do not need medals. We do not need authorities deciding about who is a "hero" and who is "illegal". In fact they are in no position to make this call, because we are all equal. What we need are freedom and rights. It is time we call out hypocrite honorings and fill the void with social justice. It is time we cast all medals into spearheads of revolution! Documents and housing for all! Freedom of movement and residence! (Pia Klemp on Facebook, July 15th, 2019).

With her words, Klemp speaks to an ethical relation pertaining to shipwrecks that exceeds the victim-rescuer dialectic, speaking instead of a maritime obligation of care that unfolds on multiple terrains and registers, from the waters of the Mediterranean to the streets of Paris. Where disenfranchised subjects — both precarious migrants and volunteers who themselves are marginalised by class, gender and race inequities — may enact a politics "from the margins" (Lancione, 2016) that transcends the inaccessible confines of a "politics" that they perceive as inaccessible to them and unrepresentative of their beliefs, ethics and political orientations.

The emancipatory potential of the "unthinkable" (Cacho, 2012; McKittrick & Woods, 2007) have been extensively conceptualised in the emergent literature of "relational poverty politics" (Lawson & Elwood, 2018), where relational capacities emerge from encounters across difference:

> Attending to the realms of unthinkability makes visible a range of transgressive and creative poverty politics that refuse existing structures of social (de)valuation and that struggle to make life meaningful outside of hegemonic norms, identities, and practices that secure liberal democracies. Unthinkable poverty politics are a way of seeking other possible worlds, even as they always also take shape in the shadow of thinkable worlds. And this raises vital questions: How do other worlds, other politics come to be enacted out of these alternative imaginings and practices? (Lawson & Elwood, 2018, p. 228).

In this way and through this work, Elwood and Lawson and others have conceptualised the “unthinkable” as a politics of hope and world-building that exceeds hegemonic norms and orients towards previously unimaginable futures. By focusing on relationships of radical care enacted between migrants and local volunteers, the speculative possibilities of “unthinkable” politics emerge through the notion of a shipwreck ethics that gestures towards an unmaking of the “colonial present” (Gregory, 2004) through a politics of presence that inhabits and endures in the “capital of modernity” (Harvey, 2003). Still, the notion of “rescue” might also invoke humanitarian positionalities that reproduce “thinkable” politics of racist colonial and geographical histories enacted through French immigration policy. Nevertheless, my interlocutors consistently cited their participation in modest activities such as food distribution, sheltering, orientation and other “minor” acts of care that refuse the border necropolitics they saw reproduced in encampments that proliferated on their doorsteps.

Radical care has been “[t]heorized as an affective connective tissue between an inner self and an outer world, care that constitutes a feeling-with, rather than a feeling for, others. When mobilized, it offers visceral, material and emotional heft to acts of preservation that span a breadth of localities: Selves, communities, and social worlds” (Hobart & Kneese, 2020, p. 2). My account builds on this definition by proposing that material care — what Hobart and Kneese term “acts of preservation” in the preceding quote — can be understood as the tactics that constitute a crucial *political* force that shapes and transforms relations across situations, scales and contexts by rupturing the positional relations that constitute “thinkable” politics and imbuing them with the power and possibility of the “unthinkable”.

Radical care are as a notion has also been recently conceptualised as singular and instantiated, but with the capacity to transcend individual encounters through relation that “that saves itself from its own history, one that refuses institutionalization, and one that constructs its own way of being into the world — that is, its own way of dwelling, by caring for its own unfolding” (Lancione, 2020, p. 33). My conceptualisation of radical care is care that exists on its own terms, enacted in the bodily and material entanglements of diverse actors brought together through encounters that orient towards the possibilities for life — and futures — of an “otherwise” that Anderson alludes to in his description of what he calls “the hope of micropolitics”, which “invites us to learn how to

act in the midst of ongoing, unforeclosed situations and experiment with ways of discerning and tending to the 'otherwise'" (Anderson, 2017, p. 534).

This research develops this notion of radical care as emergent from micropolitical entanglements by revealing the everyday nature of care as a "minor" politics that "tears at the confines of major theory; pushing its limits to provoke a line of escape, a rupture — a tension out of which something else might happen" (Katz, 1996). Feminist conceptualisations of embodied, scaled and gendered care have complicated the historical notion of care as belonging to the category of social reproduction that includes "the production, provision and preparation of the means of existence" (Katz, 1996, p. 94) — therefore, not overtly political. Instead, I argue, ground support as detailed in the empirical sections that follow constitutes a politics "from the margins" (Lancione, 2016) in which political subjectivity takes counter-hegemonic and "minor" forms for disenfranchised actors against various forms of power, hegemony and governmentality — notions of care that have been nuanced by recent interventions exploring its explicitly *radical* potential.

Spatially, locations of everyday care provision "might become sites of political potential and critical openness" (Darling, 2011), a proposition that has been upheld by my own research in encampments where migrants and locals engaged in mutual care practices enacted the "with and for" of mutual inhabitation and vulnerability (Butler, 2016; Butler et al., 2016) that were framed by an emergent habitus of decolonial ethics shaped by "the implosion of geographical, historical and political distances inside the same space" (English et al., 2019, p. 195). As evoked by Sékou in the introductory quote, presence and care in these scenarios exist by virtue of migrants' autonomous and "incorrigible" movements and mobilities (Picozza, 2021), as well as by the life-sustaining actions that support them.

The literature of care and responsibility in geography has previously conceived of care as a constellation of material practices enacted in everyday life (Lawson, 2007), structured by relational ethics and power geometries that are interdependent and mutual (Massey, 2004) towards a "politics of responsibility that think[s] of space as actively and continually practiced social relations — where we make choices that matter and that connect us to the lives of others" (Lawson, 2007, p. 6). Care has thus become inextricably entwined with the politics of responsibility, aligning with a feminist notion of

care as simultaneously occurring on multiple scales from the “global to the intimate” (Pratt & Rosner, 2012). Care is embodied through manifold relations and assemblages of material and ethical practices that, rather than being divergent or chaotic, demonstrate how bodies, ethics and politics are crucially intertwined (Mountz, 2018) across sites, spaces and scales (Robinson, 2013). Though engagements of care have been understood as incitements to extended ethical frameworks that may operate at a distance (Popke, 2006) or thought to be brought about by proximity (Raghuram et al., 2009), this research extends this line of reasoning. The perspectives on care brought forth by informants demonstrate that everyday acts of material care enacted through proximity have the “unthinkable” potential (Lawson & Elwood, 2018) to challenge and exceed the “thinkable” “politics of life” (Fassin, 2007) enacted through governmental-humanitarian scripts that depoliticise and bureaucratise care for migrant populations through legal, juridical and institutional categorisations (Agier, 2011; Fassin, 2012; Malkki, 2015; Ticktin, 2011). Thus, the shipwreck ethics of radical care refuses these categories, exceeds the necropolitics of the State and also has the potential to orient towards futurities that are, as Sékou explained, “otherwise impossible”.

14.4. Crisis and care

14.4.1. “Intervening into the heart of the crisis”: Spatial politics of material care

While local citizens’ collectives had long supported migrants’ survival struggles in Paris as in other European cities, the proliferation of encampments in the northeast of the city localised the crisis and incited neighbourhood collectives to action (Bouagga, 2018; Dadusc, 2019; Dadusc & Mudu, 2020). Established French and international NGOs and humanitarian organisations such as Doctors Without Borders, the Red Cross and Doctors of the World provided some outreach and humanitarian assistance in encampments around the CPA in Porte de la Chapelle; however, most ground support during this period was provided by local collectives of citizens for whom the abstractions of the “migration crisis” were brought into proximity by encampments that were cropping up in their neighbourhoods, whose material conditions spurred them to action:

> I’ve never been a person who was very interested in international politics, and I don’t even really like to travel. I even have mixed feelings about what I have seen in the news unfolding on the European borders. But one day

> when I was walking home with my groceries, it struck me that there was a stroller parked on the grass and that children were sleeping inside. There is no question of letting a family starve right in front of the stoop of my building. That's not politics. That is humanity (Interview, Adèle, citizen volunteer, April 2017).

As conditions of life in the informal encampments continued to degrade, local collectives providing ad hoc forms of ground support formed the majority of assistance available to migrants in encampments (Bouagga, 2018; Dadusc & Mudu, 2020; Masson Diez, 2018). These local support networks activated by volunteers often named themselves after the neighbourhoods where they originated, which were also locations of encampments, as with Petit déjs à Flandre (Breakfast on Avenue de Flandre) and La Chapelle en lutte! (La Chapelle in Struggle!). The Collectif solidarité migrants Wilson (Wilson Avenue Migrants' Solidarity Collective) has become one of the major support groups for migrants' advocacy in recent years, as has citizen-founded NGO Utopia 56, named in reference to the département of Morbihan in Brittany (Département #56), where the group was founded. As volunteering with Utopia was extremely low-barrier and required only a webform and a five-euro membership fee, the organisation hosted many volunteers who were encountering the migrant "crisis":

> The first time I [volunteered to distribute meals near Porte de la Chapelle] I thought I was coming to simply feed people and talk to them, help out however I could, whatever. There's also a shyness when you get to somewhere you've never been before… it really didn't take long before I felt that I really needed my activities to have meaning. It's one thing to sort and distribute donated clothes and what have you, but I very quickly felt I wanted to intervene into the heart of the crisis (Interview, Sharif, Omani volunteer, January 2018).

Many locals and other volunteers who initially intended to provide material support such as food and shelter, which they considered apolitical forms of humanitarian care, often traced an emergent awareness of the complexities of the crisis based on their experiences on the ground, shifting their consciousness from the "thinkable" politics of governmental humanitarianism towards expanding notions of care, responsibility and radical political action.

While many asylum-seekers and other migrants were unable to access State protections, those who failed to secure provisions upon arrival were essentially personae non gratae — entangled in shifting and opaque bureaucratic processes that seemed never-ending, while forced to sleep outside without material support. They remained

entirely dependent on local citizens' collectives for survival while their encampments were further relegated into the interstices of urban space by authorities who endeavoured to remove and invisibilise them. In mid-2017, President Macron announced his intention that by years' end there would be no one living outside in France. Perhaps in response to this, police intensified patrols to securitise public space through their evolving strategies for destruction of encampments, which rendered the city ever more inhospitable and unlivable while driving encampment-dwellers to the margins of urban space and the edges of the city. Advocates and migrants who questioned the legality of these practices were themselves harassed, while "solidarian" activities such as meal distributions, outreach and ad hoc sheltering operations were further interrupted and illegalised by order of the local authorities.

> Of course, we wouldn't be able to survive without the blankets and food and even the friendship of [volunteers]. But I see their role also as witnesses — we are invisible enough in the city and we are always worried that our invisibility can lead to further violence. It is very important that French citizens should show their government not only their opposition but also their presence. We are here, they need to be here with us (Interview, Mahmoud, July 2017).

These spatial strategies, enacted to dissuade and control migrants' presence in Paris and surrounding areas, exposed migrants and solidarians to various forms of State violence. As encampments around the CPA were repeatedly destroyed, evacuated and reinstalled (Guilbaud et al., 2022), local citizens and migrants witnessed the paradoxical and ambivalent nature of governmental humanitarianism. Care work by migrants and citizen volunteers was enacted not only "in lieu of" the State, but actually against the necropolitics of urban borders.

14.4.2. Caring "in lieu of" the State: Coalitions for everyday survival

In Parisian neighbourhoods as elsewhere in Europe, coalitions of citizen volunteers supporting migrants in the streets and working to mitigate their progressive State abandonment are increasingly illegalised, as are their solidarity practices (Dadusc & Mudu, 2020). Many volunteers who joined ground support actions with "humanitarian" rather than politicised intentions came to question their positionalities due to their witnessing of the State's treatments of migrants, as well as their own encounters with authorities while participating in humanitarian commitments and caring for precaritised

migrants “in lieu of” the State. Sometimes, in fact, they expressed concern that their solidarity work made them complicit with the State’s inaction and underscored the State’s lack of accountability, and drew distinctions between their “solidarian” positionality and actions and the roles of governmental humanitarianism:

> It’s not with humanitarian actions that we solve the political inequities of the planet. Power lies elsewhere, *n’est-ce pas*? I cannot stand charity… It’s very much a tool to relieve ourselves of guilt, and to take the politics out of the crisis. It’s a tool for de-politicisation… for me it’s not possible to just go and give blankets and coffee. It positions me as their superior when they should have the same rights as I do. They should not be cast as victims. They have a right to receive this care and it should be the State who is providing it. Instead, it is us who are doing it in lieu of the State (Interview, Christine, volunteer, June 2018).

As the material conditions of life in the encampments worsened and the crisis on the streets fomented in the northern districts of the city, solidarians expressed to me the sense that their work on behalf of migrants deflected the State’s obligations — feelings that increased as authorities evolved their tactics of harassment and removal. The daily requirements of ground support effectively became inextricably entwined with militant actions to advocate for migrants’ rights, to the point where nearly all solidarians considered themselves militants and insisted that material aid care had become a form of radical politics enacted in the everyday. Nevertheless, even as they showed up regularly to provide ground support amidst teargas and police violence, they tended to simultaneously characterise their humanitarian ground support in Porte de la Chapelle as “a distraction” from the politics of exclusion and abandonment:

> There’s of course nothing wrong with feeding people and sheltering them, and I’ve let some of those boys stay at my house for a while. But right away I could see that it was a distraction. How can we call it “humanitarianism” when there is a political aspect to it? I feel that I have an obligation to participate: There are historical reasons that these boys are coming to France with dreams of a French education and French citizenship, and when they speak French? As a French person… I want to take responsibility for this because these are children of our country as well, at least this is their claim (Interview, Christine, June 2018).

Whether explicitly referencing France’s colonial afterlives or not, many informants cited migrants’ unequal rights to mobility and presence and their differential inclusion on the French territory despite the Republican ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity as unjust conditions that must be opposed with their actions and political subjectivities.

They also characterised their supportive actions as forms of anti-racist and/or political militancy. Some citizen volunteers described their desire to construct alternative narratives of the unfolding "crisis" with their actions to support migrants, as well as their need to bear witness to the inaction and abuse of the authorities and various forms of government.

> Sure it's important to provide blankets and food, since without them those boys and girls would freeze [and starve]. But we know it's just some way for us to feel implicated in caring for people when actually they will be removed, or they will disappear into the system, and we will have nothing to say about it. There is a politics to the municipal policies of reception and welcome, and we can either choose to be part of it or to be [outside of it] (Interview, Alison, volunteer, January 2017).

14.4.3. Material care and insurgent politics

In June of 2018, a citizens collective placed 348 lifejackets — one for every sitting senator — in front of the Senate, along with panels sporting direct messages: "Morts en Méditerranée vous assumez" (You're responsible for deaths in the Mediterranean) and "L'État noie le droit d'asile" (The State is drowning the right to asylum). This protest, and several others held by migrants' advocacy groups during this period, explicitly linked State inaction in the Mediterranean with migrant abandonment and death in Paris. These protests were often mounted by neighbourhood-based collectives that publicly questioned politicians about the worsening conditions for migrants in the city, while also working to improve those conditions themselves through food distributions and other material care actions. In interviews, they sometimes described their efforts as attempts to link the border necropolitics of "elsewhere" to what was happening on the streets of their neighbourhoods, even while intervening in these politics themselves.

As police pressure increased on local solidarians, many of my informants — both migrants and Parisians — articulated the sense that their care work was being enacted not only in lieu of, but in direct opposition to the State. Volunteers inside the CPA and in encampments saw their work as crisis intervention, emergency rescue and political opposition, often referencing the criminalisation of humanitarian solidarity in Calais, or the news reports of olive farmer/immigration activist Cédric Hérrou's repeated arrests in the Alpes-Maritimes. As across Europe, the work of solidarians was increasingly

illegalised and punished by authorities (Dadusc, 2019; Mudu & Chattopadhyay, 2017); many also linked the State's disregard for the rights of asylum-seekers to their own rights as citizens as they experienced the illegalisation of their everyday acts of social reproduction:

> I started to feel like my presence in Porte de la Chapelle was illegalised. Like I did not have the right to enact my humanitarianism even as I saw that this help was entirely necessary, because the State isn't taking care of people, you know? Especially since these kids — and don't get me wrong, most of them are kids! Teenagers not much younger than me — didn't have the right to food, shelter, primary care. Except that under French law, as asylum-seekers, they did have those rights. And so if their rights can be violated so easily what meaning do my rights have? (Interview, Julie, volunteer, October 2017).

This informant went on to paraphrase Audre Lorde's characterisation of self-care as an act of political warfare (Interview, November 2017). This quote and its sentiment reinforced her individual political orientations, but also highlighted volunteers' generalised experiences of their work as both politically and socially reproductive.

In 2017 and 2018, as "crisis" tactics of spatial control intensified around the encampments, many volunteers experienced police violence alongside the migrants they were helping. Many spoke of their presence at police *rafles* (raids) in encampments as jarring initiations into State violence and abandonment. During démantèlements, while authorities evacuated migrants and destroyed shelters, volunteers were often forbidden from retrieving blankets, tents and other possessions left by migrants and experienced blows and teargas alongside them, learning that their material acts of solidarity were considered illegal and that they, too, were subject to police violence. One key informant who became known to me as a regular at raids would position herself between police and migrants, challenging them to physically violate her body as a white-skinned, French bourgeoise of a certain age:

> [When I came to Porte de la Chapelle] I was looking for some sort of justice. I found the attitude of the State to be completely unacceptable and scandalous. Not only the violence, which is bad enough, but even worse is the abandonment and neglect. I can't stand that in this country we would have this lack of respect as to let people live in these conditions right here in Porte de la Chapelle. So, I was looking for ways to be able to put my ideas into practice to support [migrants], by opposing the government and their exercise of power. And then I realised the best weapon I had was my body (Interview, Christine, volunteer, June 2018).

In the preceding quote, Christine also voices a sentiment that became prevalent amidst increasing police violence against migrants' encampments: That while ground support was important to migrants' survival in encampments, defending their right to presence in Parisian space was also crucial; some solidarians came to describe their actions as forms of resistance to border imperialism. While some solidarians still referred to their "humanitarianism", the majority described themselves as part of a resistance movement, alongside the Noborder Movement (Gauditz, 2017), the We Are Here migrant squatters' movement in Amsterdam (Dadusc, 2019; Mudu & Chattopadhyay, 2016) and "citizen humanitarians" in Greek hotspots such as Moria on the island of Lesbos. Many came to question the idea that humanitarian work was politically neutral (Malkki, 1996), and expressed doubt about governmental-humanitarian projects such as the CPA.

In an interview near the end of my fieldwork, one informant traced her solidarian trajectory from food distribution to encampment raids to anti-deportation actions. She explained that though she was still involved with local ground support initiatives, she had found satisfaction and purpose in her recent visits to the *centres de retention* (detention centres), which had inspired her to join a militant squad that attempted to prevent deportations at the airport:

> I'm eager to participate in activities like food provision, the humanitarian stuff, as long as I can also support migrants during the raids and the démantèlements on the camps under the périph'. I think it is really important that white people, French people, French women especially, put themselves in the way of these [police activities] (Interview, Christine, volunteer, October 2017).

14.5. Discussion: "Tending to the otherwise"

This research has approached the idea of shipwreck ethics as a mode of solidarity with no small measure of caution. I was wary of generalising connections between violence towards racialised subjects, heeding McKittrick and Woods's assertion that "black geographies are not simply oceanic… nor are they always already catastrophic, storm-torn, and demarcating sites in which black communities are abandoned and left for themselves" (2007, p. 5). I did not want this account to be a victim/rescuer narrative, which is why I have emphasised the coalitional nature of solidarian encounters and engagements, especially their mutuality: Migrants and locals

working together in mutual purpose and operationalising this knowledge in everyday care actions to assure the survival, presence, mobilities and "otherwise impossible" futures of those who would be excluded and removed from Parisian public space. Migrants' survival in encampments as "cross-cultural encounters of the 'Black Mediterranean'" (Raeymakers, n.d.) raise the connections and histories that connect them to the symbolic and material Parisian spaces where Sékou and his compatriots continue their struggles to survive and remain. These entanglements of care, I have argued, are not only pragmatically necessary but have the potential to enact futurities of "world-repair" (Thompson, 2018) and reimagine Paris as decolonised and open, a city that refuses the divisions of State necropolitics stemming from race-based differential inclusion (Mbembe, 2017) by accounting for the experiences of precarious migrants who are its protagonists.

News reports about shipwrecks in the Mediterranean feature prominently in public narratives about the migration crisis in Europe, while lives continue to be lost at sea due to States' inaction and the increasingly necropolitical nature of the EU's régimes at its frontiers and beyond. Often, these body counts are portrayed as unfortunate natural disasters, or as the results of neutral and abstract events unrelated to geopolitics and outside of time and history. In Paris, State abandonment of thousands of migrants who subsist at the margins of the city outside of State protections contradicts both France's idea of itself as the "country of human rights" and the city's persistent and cherished symbolic identity as a ville refuge. This idea of Paris as a space of resilience and constancy is reflected in its motto: "Fluctuat nec mergitur" ([She] is rocked by the waves, but does not sink) — an expression dating back to medieval times that has been in use since Haussman's renovation of the city in the 1850s, and that returned to public discourse after the terrorist attacks in 2015. Conversations over the course of fieldwork with Parisians — including solidarians, politicians, planners and residents — highlighted the dissonance between the foundational French ideal of universal human rights and the ideal of Paris as a *ville lumière* (city of lights) where these Enlightenment subjects are always within view. Locals found it especially distressing that their neighbourhoods were often places where those ideals were imperiled, and sought to address this disconnect by reimagining their connections with others through a material politics of mutual vulnerability where they stood "a chance of grasping the difficult and shifting global

connections in ways that let us know the transport and the constraint of what we might still call ethics" (Butler, 2016, p. 122).

This chapter has therefore endeavoured to trace the spatial, relational, material and metaphorical commitments of radical care enacted by local solidarians in Paris, supporting migrants' tenuous presence and illegalised mobilities where the "crisis" of migration becomes proximate and visible in their neighbourhoods. I have argued that the forms of everyday care enacted by migrants and their supporters constitute forms of radical care enacted as a shipwreck ethics of intervention that challenges the "thinkable" politics of governmental humanitarianism and the "politics of life" (Fassin, 2007) evidenced by the State's management of the Parisian "migrant crisis". This research may contribute to work on militancy in migrants' autonomous resistance in the postcolonial present in disciplines such as critical border studies, citizenship studies (English et al., 2019) and geography. By tracing ways that urban migration politics "from the ground" resist and exceed these, we might understand the phenomenon of encampments as form of inhabitation that build on ideas of "global urban politics" (Boudreau, 2017), where the State becomes informalised through affective, immanent action between individuals and collectives, along with the propositional politics of a fragmented urbanism where urban frontiers and interstitial spaces are seen to be the source of politics "from the margins" (Lancione, 2016; Lancione & McFarlane, 2016).

By understanding material practices of everyday care as "minor" forms of politics with the capacity to rupture the "thinkable" State politics of removal and abandonment (Crane & Lawson, 2020), my aim has been to foreground relationships between diverse subjects where care exceeds its own limits and histories (Lancione, 2020) as a micropolitics that "invit(es) us to learn how to act in the midst of ongoing, unforeclosed situations and experiment with ways of discerning and tending to the 'otherwise'" (Anderson, 2017, p. 534). These entanglements of care that assert and support migrants' rights to pursue "impossible futures" in Paris, as Sékou described them in the opening vignette, highlight the ways that "minor" forms of care that have been enacted through everyday care actions can become significant political forms in opposition to the "thinkable" politics of governmental humanitarianism. These shipwreck ethics of necessary intervention orient towards an immanent politics that reveals these politics and actions as a shipwreck ethics of relational and radical care — in the Mediterranean,

and in Paris — that orient towards hopeful futurities of radical care that have the capacity to not only sustain individual lives, but also transform the politics of life itself.

Figure 14.4 "Just keep dreaming": Protest sign in Porte de la Chapelle, July 1st, 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

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Chapter 15. Encampment and inhabitation: Liberatory futures, carceral cities

15.1. Across the city limits

On a blustery winter night in January 2018, I carried a toddler named Asmarina over the city limit line between Paris and the suburb of Seine-Saint-Denis. As I progressed slowly along the narrow sidewalk that flanked the curve of the overpass spanning the boulevard périphérique, I repeatedly hoisted Asmarina's immobile body over my shoulder as she kept slipping out of my grip, her body becoming almost unbearably heavy as I struggled to carry her. Despite the roar of the city, my jerky movements and the muddy grit from passing cars that stung our eyes and legs, she never woke or even stirred. Her exhaustion was more complete than that of any other child I had held. Who could imagine a whole day of carrying her, let alone days, weeks and months?

Asmarina's heart beating against my chest reassured me that she was still very much alive despite her dead weight, and I was relieved that I'd be keeping her warm (if not dry) with the heat of my body. The irrationality of these feelings was compounded when I caught sight of this night's ultimate "safe" destination: A patch of soaking-wet lawn in the greenbelt median of the Boulevard Wilson between six lanes of constant traffic among the rats and the rain. As a volunteer with a local organisation that tried to support newcomers in the north of Paris, I was leading Asmarina and her family — mother, father, three siblings, a young pregnant aunt and an elderly grandfather with mobility challenges and a deep, rumbling cough, all carrying what remained of their salvaged belongings — out of Paris and into the suburbs where they could camp in the park next to a set of locked public bathrooms and hopefully sleep through the night. The local police repeatedly rousted encampment-dwellers and told them to move along while destroying their shelters and confiscating their belongings. The night before, a squad had confiscated the family's tent and broken the donated stroller they were using to perambulate Asmarina from one camping spot to the next. The palpable sense that I had accomplished something was familiar, yet absurd: An embodiment of the perverse and paradoxical politics of "welcome" in Porte de la Chapelle that I was involved in, where

“reception” meant helping people hide from police and carrying their toddler across city limits lines.

In this dissertation I have dealt broadly with the conjunction of crisis and care in the city, which has been shaped by my emergent corporeal, practical, conceptual and political engagements with notions and practices of care and what they might mean (Koepke, 2022). In this conclusion, I wish to re-situate these concepts within the long process of researching and writing this work, but also to map out some of the future directions for collaborative work that have emerged from this research. Research participants, interlocutors and collaborators have helped me to understand that their (our, my) bodily engagements with crisis forge the practices of care than can intervene in and shape relationships — whether generative and care-full, or violent and carceral. Abolitionist geographers have posited “freedom as a place” (Gilmore, 2007), but also as a process. In this conclusion, I wish to ground these broad and hopeful conceptualisations of what freedom might be like in a conversation about how bodies designated as “undesirable” (Agier, 2008; Koepke & Noûs, 2020) are able to not only survive in the city but exceed their material realities by forging new relationships of radical care that constitute the work of city-building and shaping their urban future through makeshift modes of inhabitation and struggle.

In the vignette that opens this section, Asmarina’s family had recently arrived at the CPA after their journey from Afghanistan to Paris. They had been offered an afternoon’s respite in the Bulle, but they were excluded from the CPA and not entered in the National State’s dispositif of provision for asylum claimants, presumably since in 2018, Afghanistan was still part of the AVRR program and considered a “safe third country” (but one can never know for sure). Despite being clearly vulnerable, the family was turned away at the gates of the facility, which is where we volunteers found them as dark descended on the city, as we found families every night since newly minted President Emmanuel Macron had stated his intention for there to be no more unhoused migrants sleeping outside in France. While politicians hinted that the Dublin regulation might soon be altered and further temporary housing options would be provided for asylum-seekers, families like Asmarina’s were caught in the cracks of the impossibly administrative bureaucracy of the French State (Guilbaud et al., 2022) that begin with the rhetoric of “welcome” (see Chapters 3 and 6) at the CPA, and were driven farther towards the edges of the city through ever-increasingly violent processes of removal.

Utopia 56, the citizens' solidarity collective I worked with, had sometimes managed to find ad hoc shelters for the families (or single young women) who were left to wait outside the gates of the CPA at closing time. We worked with local business owners — a boulangerie and a bookstore, among others — who opened the doors of their businesses overnight to large families like Asmarina's to find shelter. For smaller groups or couples, we fostered a growing network of hébergeurs citoyens, local hosts willing to let people stay in their houses for a night, a week, or longer. Lately, however, there were only tents, and as we had recently observed, the progressive strategies of démantèlements had intensified as provisional "solutions" failed to mitigate or manage, let alone solve, the multiple interconnected forms of transcalar violence (see Chapters 1, 2 and 4) that shape the "crises" of encampments on the local scale. These tensions and paradoxes of urban migration are enacted across scales and locations, extending from the globalised spaces of elite mobility to the destitution of city encampments that manifest everyday corporeal struggles to survive and remain in cities that are increasingly becoming exemplars of "the migrant metropolis [that] becomes the premier spatial formation in which we witness the extension of borders deep into the putative 'interior' of nation-state space through immigration law enforcement that increasingly saturates the spaces of everyday life" (De Genova, 2015). Simultaneously, the migrant metropolis also epitomises the disruptive and incorrigible force of migrants' presence as resistance to the violence of decampment and racial capitalism as it manifests in the spaces of global cities.

Though expulsion and removal are usually associated with the enactment of power and control at national borders, the CPA created a border zone within the space of the city. Though the National government operated in the CPA through the presence of OFII agents, the CPA hardly exemplified a seamless partnership between the municipality and the National State. Rather, it spoke to a growing *bras-de-fer* (literally: arm-wrestle, impasse) between the new French President Emmanuel Macron and Mayor Hidalgo's municipal cabinet. Though the municipality had spearheaded the fiscal and managerial responsibility for the CPA, the burgeoning camp-queue and other vestiges of the "migration crisis" as observed in Porte de la Chapelle became municipal concerns at the level of public security and sanitation. Hidalgo repeatedly confronted the French government for their failure to manage the "migration crisis" in France, emphasising that the CPA was responding to the encampments, which were themselves a result of the

délit d'hospitalité (illegalisation of all material assistance given to migrants) perceived on the part of the State. Though the French State and the municipality had co-operated on some aspects of the creation of the CPA, and the State had contributed 20% of its budget, she pointed to the State's unwillingness and incapacity to manage the crisis, leading to a figurative redrawing of national borders at the urban and local scales.

When the CPA closed in March of 2018, the mayor of the 19th arrondissement, François Dagnaud, sounded the alarm as encampments burgeoned in adjacent locations along the Quai de l'Ourcq and on the sidewalks fronting the Millénaire shopping mall. As the closure of the CPA quickened the crisis of encampment, Hidalgo reiterated her assertion that the Bulle was a successful model that should be adopted by the State as a permanent fixture, and went so far as suggesting that 100 mini-Bulles should be installed in Paris to care for those whose encampments would be removed from the streets. The evolving processes of démantèlement that I have argued are actualisations of a dispossessive form of humanitarian bordering (Pallister-Wilkins, 2022) are conveyed by the architectural form of the CPA (Chapter 5) and the bureaucracies of State-humanitarianism contained within it (Chapter 7 and Chapter 9). In Chapter 11, I consider the politics of "undesirability" that manifests in the governance of public space, and specifically in the management of encampments, by focusing on the processes of démantèlements, arguing that they are more than merely technocratic forms of socio-spatial control, but rather materially dispossessive actions that ratify the banishment of certain bodies designated as "undesirable" from the public spaces they depend on to survive. Chapter 13 extends the oceanic metaphors of the transcontinental connections to the "Black Mediterranean", considering citizen engagement with and support of migrant encampments as a "shipwreck ethics" conveyed through corporeal and embodied relationships that constitute an everyday politics of radical care. These bodily engagements, encounters and entanglements at the frontiers of urban space speak to both the carceral and the emancipatory potentialities of urban space: Asmarina's small body removed from Paris, as her corporeal presence in the marginal space of appearance was untenable. But also Zabi's irreverent attempt to scale the fence of the CPA (Chapter 6), Sékou's shipwrecks sign (Chapter 10) in the midst of a food distribution that was also a political protest, and the people whose stubborn inhabitations of public space persist despite repeated attempts to remove not only them but their vestiges. These are merely a few examples from the dissertation drawn out to illustrate

how corporeal presence and inhabitation become politics taught through lessons of the body, a logic I wish to extend in this conclusion to the past, present and future work on encampment as a significant form of inhabitation and resistance to carceral and dispossessive urbanism in various forms.

15.2. Lessons of the body: Encampment as dwelling

In the years since 2015, over 75 démantèlement operations have been executed in the northern neighbourhoods of Paris (Gardesse et al., 2022) against encampments built by unauthorised migrants, while provisional shelters for drug users who depend on public space are routinely destroyed by city workers and their inhabitants displaced and removed to still further and more marginal locations. Driven up against, and sometimes over, the literal ramparts of the city, dispersed and then kettled into the interstices of disused public space, the inhabitants of encampments that constitute “undesirables” (Chapter 3) — unauthorised migrants, marginalised drug users and others — are trapped between illegalisation and the shifting priorities, practices and performances of municipal humanitarianism. The circuitous and paradoxical treatment of unhoused people is the result of asylum bureaucracy in France that has become notoriously labyrinthine and chaotic — the asylum reception system belies the “incorrigiblity” (De Genova, 2016) of migrants who persist and endure “at city’s end” (Roy, 2017), while the public discourse of “emergency sheltering” for many who rely on public space perpetuates cycles of displacement and entrenched abandonment. Démantèlement practices in Paris as elsewhere — powered as they are by practices of State care and control, and the ongoing spectacles and discourses of “crises” that visibilise encampments but fail to address their root causes — do little to address the gaping void of protective service obligations on the part of the State. Instead, they foreground support crisis responses that emphasise the provision of “shelter” as a solution to the crisis of encampments (as detailed in Chapters 7 and 9) that routinely offer versions of State housing that are actually worse than life in encampments and constitute a carceral approach to care that retraumatises many. This remains true in the Parisian context, as I have detailed extensively in the dissertation, and it is also true elsewhere.

To consider the current prevalence of provisional encampments in cities that think of themselves as “global” and “livable” is to draw attention to the ways those same places and their authorities insistently expose the insufficiencies and failures of the

State, and indeed the way they exclude many from their ongoing colonial and capitalist projects. In the introduction to my dissertation, I invoked Berlant's concept of crisis everydayness "as an impasse shaped by crisis in which people find themselves developing skills for adjusting to newly proliferating pressures to scramble for modes of living on" (2011, p. 8). These "modes of living on" outside of State provisions are more than just survival projects, they are also novel forms of resistance to violence and removal. Encampments must therefore — provisionally — be understood as forms of endurance and emplacement that mitigate the violence of exclusion, displacement and banishment, and therefore crucial projects of city building that work to imagine other urban futures.

I initially conceived my doctoral research with the objective of working across several urban contexts in order to draw connections by linking different places to demonstrate counter-topographical processes of crisis and care across spaces, places and contexts. Instead, when opportunities presented themselves to entrench myself deeply and durationally in Paris, I chose to focus dissertation research on that one place for a multitude of practical and philosophical reasons. However, the necessity of broadening the scope of work and developing knowledge across contexts has remained clear to me, and in the past year, while I have continued to research and write about these events and issues in Paris, I have also been developing new projects both individually and as part of a research collective (based in Paris and Vancouver) that will be working on questions related to repression of and resistance by marginalised drug users who depend on public space in both contexts. Our first project has been to create a series of handwoven counter-mapping renderings that compare spatial practices of encampment and decampment. These counter-maps are co-produced by members of drug users' groups in the north of Paris and the Downtown Eastside (DTES) of Vancouver, and will be published in an edited volume entitled *Drug (Counter) Mapping* in 2022. The goal of this work is not only to better understand inhabitants' experiences of repression and banishment in public space as they have been recently produced in both cities and demonstrate the commonalities between these processes in different places, but also to explore the work that encampment as a form of inhabitation can do and already does to create alternative networks of care and sociality (see Collectif SoCS Collective, forthcoming). This work is being developed with community-based research

partners including members of GAIA and local solidarity collectives in Paris and Vancouver.

I have also been developing my own future program of work for a postdoc that begins in the fall, where I will also be developing a project specifically related to the phenomenon of encampment, by exploring a long-overlooked question in housing and social research on urban encampments in cities of the Global North: Why do they persist despite and beyond State “emergency shelter” services? Drawing from abolitionist geographies that posit “freedom as a place” (Gilmore, 2007), I will explore how encampments installed in the urban interstices by those designated as “undesirable” (Agier, 2008; Koepke & Noûs, 2020) exceed their function as provisional dwellings to become spaces of movement, inhabitation and possibility for people caught in the crosshairs of multiple intersecting urban crises. Using examples from ethnographic research with migrants’ and drug users’ liberation groups in two “Olympic cities” of the Global North, I consider provisional encampments in Paris, France and Vancouver, Canada that persist and proliferate beyond municipal-technocratic efforts to contain and remove them as “liminal prax[es] of the many” (Lancione & Simone, 2021). Working with themes of freedom and fugitivity as offered by recent Black-geographic renderings of constrained spaces as well as the lived experiences of research interlocutors, I trace the political and pragmatic purposes of encampment and their capacities to resist the violence of the permanent temporary and forge hopeful futurities amidst the daily labour of survival in the ruins. I also examine the duality of provisional dwelling and démantèlement, where the former signifies a mode of dwelling-otherwise and the latter I theorise as the political technologies of banishment that constitutes the carceral city and ratifies régimes of racialised dispossession at multiple scales.

In the sections that follow, and as a conclusion that remains focused not only on what I have done in this dissertation, but what I am doing and hope to do in future work, I further develop my emerging conceptualisation of encampments as forms of inhabitation and liberatory projects by situating them within the context of abolitionist geographies.

Figure 15.1 Poster at the #stopthesweeps campaign press conference in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, August 16th, 2022. Photo: Melora Koepke.

15.3. The forbidden cities

> The violence which governed the ordering of the colonial world, which tirelessly punctuated the destruction of the indigenous social fabric, and demolished unchecked the systems of reference of the country's economy, lifestyles, and modes of dress, this same violence will be vindicated and appropriated when, taking history into their own hands, the colonized swarm into the forbidden cities (Fanon, 2021, p. 39).

In 2017, I was volunteering with a civil organisation in the north of Paris that was supporting people living in encampments that proliferated in “vacant” spaces of local neighbourhoods. Along the tram tracks, in the medians of the boulevards and under the boulevard péripherique, where the former ramparts of the city had been rebuilt as highway ramps in the neighbourhoods named after *portes* (gates) at the city limit line — Porte de la Chapelle, Porte d’Aubervilliers and Porte de la Villette — unauthorised migrants, mostly children and young people who had come to claim asylum in France, were living outside in makeshift shelters and constantly building and rebuilding the clusters of their provisional human cohabitations in the margins of urban space. While they were traumatised, exhausted and scared, they were also abandoned by the State and forced to live outside for days, weeks and months due to the lack of capacity for asylum-seekers and unaccompanied minors in the governmental system, despite the fact that these are required by French and international laws governing refugee reception. While forced to live outside, exposed to the elements and multiple public health emergencies, they were also racialised and gendered in ways that exacerbated their vulnerabilities: Since most were young men and boys of colour, the daily harassment and violence from authorities was supported by some local residents and organisations.

However, others worked in lieu of the State to support people living in encampments, which we understood as necessary and crucial steps in the struggle to survive and to claim and procure better forms of access to housing and shelter. Inhabitants of encampments knew well that in order to be considered an asylum claimant or a minor, they had to find ways to persist, to remain and to endure for the many weeks and months it took to navigate the labyrinthine and failing bureaucracies designed to exclude them. For most, encampments (or shelter offered by local residents, in their own homes) were their only way to accomplish this. So, as they struggled to survive in the margins of the world’s most-visited European tourist city, we tried to support them: We organised food distributions and legal advocacy, blankets and tents, haircuts and French classes. We also organised field trips, museum visits and other *sorties* (outings)*,* because we saw the importance for these young people to find respite by leaving the stigmatised and pressurised space of Porte de la Chapelle and the constant pressure of sleeping rough amidst inhospitable conditions and perpetual police brutality and harassment. At night, police squads patrolling under the boulevard

péripherique executed démantèlement orders from the Préfecture de police, shredding canvas tents, snapping tent poles and dousing sleeping bags with teargas. By day, we picnicked and played football on the Champs de Mars, stopped to take selfies under the Eiffel Tower, and sat in the shade and practiced our French by reading Fanon.

For me, these became important if minor tactics of relation that embodied the being *with and for* others, the "study" that Moten and Harney talk about (2013) and that I had invoked as a methodology for working in the design of my doctoral research: This being "with and for" interlocutors was my clumsy attempt to work with people as theorists and philosophers of observable and lived conditions of life, rather than just as "native subjects" gripped by unfolding events (Koepke, 2022). Relatedly, in the recent work of Maynard and Simpson, where they invoke rehearsals (in turn drawn from Gilmore's words, "abolition is life in rehearsal") that "offer us, in my interpretation, a way of inhabiting our world with intention, as organisers, as theorists, as people in extended communities, based in attunement. An attunement not only to the unfolding disaster of the present, but to the unfolding experiments in living differently, to the more liberatory ways of organising human and earthly life that are being seeded, in real time all, around us. And most importantly, it's an invitation to join in. And it is a reminder that liberation is not a destination but an ongoing process, a praxis" (Maynard et. al., 2021, p. 146).

Figure 15.2 Boat trip across the Mediterranean. Photo: Melora Koepke.

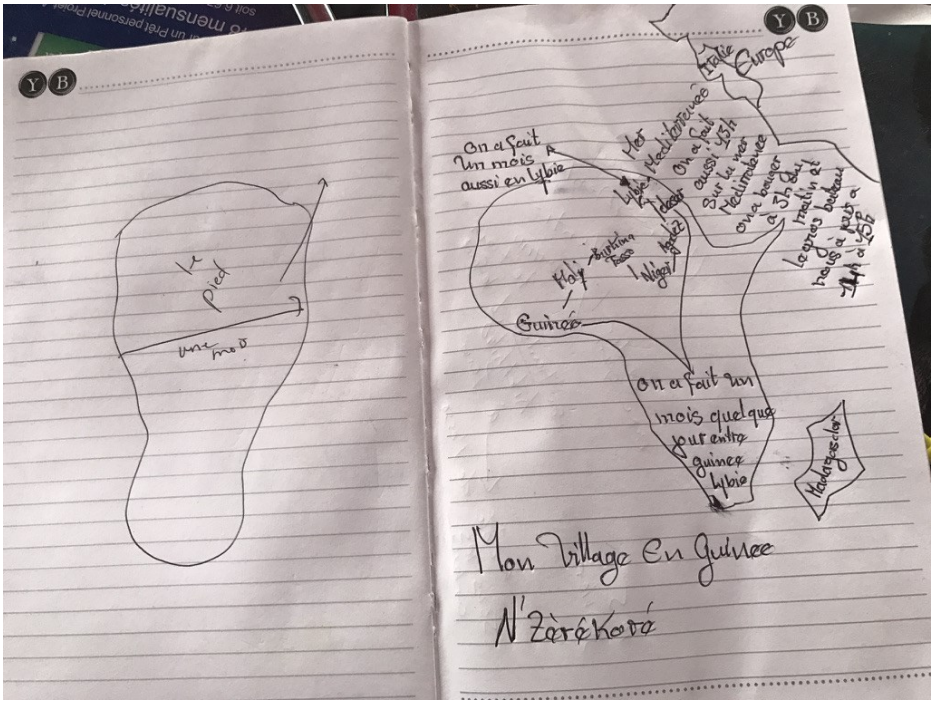

Figure 15.3 Map of Africa/map of a journey from a village in Guinea to Porte de la Chapelle. Opposite page: Map of a foot. Photo: Melora Koepke.

In Porte de la Chapelle and other northern Parisian neighbourhoods, the young people sleeping rough were from Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Eritrea, Syria and Somalia, as well as former French colonies like Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal. Some who had studied French and/or spoke the language suggested we read excerpts from *The Wretched of the Earth*; they liked reading about the "violent ordering of the colonial world" from the pen of a Black author writing in French about Europe and Africa. In *Concerning Violence*, Fanon writes about "the colonized taking history into their own hands, and swarming into the forbidden cities" (Fanon, 2021, p. 39). They too, said that they thought of their journeys across the ocean or the continent as embodied histories, that Paris was their "forbidden city" — this was how they valued their Eiffel Tower selfies, and also why they understood the constant cycles of encampment and démantèlement as forms of banishment that were at the limits of the territorial processes of unhousing (Graziani et al., 2022).

Figure 15.4 Le Printemps Africain. *Le Monde* magazine special issue, May 2017.

One afternoon in the summer of 2017, we took the metro 45 minutes away from the dust and heat and chaos of Porte de la Chapelle, into the shady and verdant 16th arrondissement, where the new Frank Gehry-designed museum, the Fondation Louis Vuitton (FLV), was showing a retrospective of African outsider art. This exhibition was

part of a strange and sprawling cultural event *Le Monde* had dubbed *printemps africain* (African spring), in which Parisian museums, galleries and even department stores participated in a kind of citywide homage or celebration (?) of the postcolonial links between Africa and France, a tracing of the filaments of history that highlighted the multidirectional linguistic, cultural and political ties between cosmopolitanism in Paris and former French colonies. With the young residents of Porte de la Chapelle, we had organised field trips to view some of these exhibitions, and that afternoon, as we entered the air-conditioned lobby of the FLV, we paused in the lobby in front of the bookstore and gift shop, underneath a stencil from William Kentridge's monumental *Triumphs and Lament*s. The original 500-metre frieze depicting the city's history had been stencilled onto the walls of the Tiber River in 2016.

Figure 15.5 Stencil for *Triumphs and Laments*, by William Kentridge, at the FLV, summer 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke.

This giant image, depicting passengers on an overstuffed inflatable boat of the kind used by Africans to cross the Mediterranean or to arrive in Lampedusa, hung prominently above the bookshop; these young men, many of whom had shown me cellphone snaps of their actual journeys across the Med in leaking boats, paused for a moment to view it before entering the gallery. We spent the whole afternoon inside, the generous air-conditioning a welcome respite from the relentless canicule that had

hospitalised some earlier that week; the tents tucked in among the concrete heat islands of northern Paris had turned scant shelter into uninhabitable ovens in the summer heat.

Figure 15.6 Gallery exhibit of Bodys Isek Kingelez's maquettes, FLV, July 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke

In the dark and cool depths of the gallery, we spent the afternoon looking at the work of Congolese maquette-maker and "fantastical architect" Bodys Isek Kingelez, whose scale models of imaginary, utopic versions of his city of Kinshasa were on display.

> "Without a model, you are nowhere. A nation that can't make models is a nation that doesn't understand things, a nation that doesn't live," said visionary artist Bodys Isek Kingelez (1948–2015). Based in then-Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), following its independence from Belgium, Kingelez made sculptures of imagined buildings and cities that reflected dreams for his country, his continent, and the world. Kingelez's "extreme maquettes" offer fantastic, utopian models for a more harmonious society of the future. An optimistic alternative to his own experience of urban life in his home city of Kinshasa, which grew exponentially and organically with urban planning and infrastructure often unable to keep

> step, his work explores urgent questions around urban growth, economic inequity, how communities and societies function, and the rehabilitative power of architecture — issues that resonate profoundly today…Kingelez's vibrant, ambitious sculptures are created from an incredible range of everyday materials and found objects — colored paper, commercial packaging, plastic, soda cans, and bottle caps — all meticulously repurposed and arranged… In the complex multi-building cityscape *Kimbembele Ihunga* (1994), the artist reimagines his agricultural home village complete with a soccer stadium, banks, restaurants, and skyscrapers. In *Ville Fantôme* (1996), which will be accompanied by a Virtual Reality experience for visitors, the artist has imagined a peaceful city in which doctors and police are not needed *(Bodys Isek Kingelez, City of Dreams*, n.d.).

When Gilmore writes of "freedom as a place" (Gilmore, 2007), I think of how Kingelez's model future cities constructed out of found objects and recycled materials gathered from urban remains spoke to my companions at the gallery that day. They understood how the artist's words about the models in the gallery text indicated his visions of alternative urban futures that were prefigured in the models of a handmade city that could contain their ambitions and their energies. These imaginary cities are a long way from reality, but nevertheless gesture toward abolitionist futures where cities function without military or police, where hand-built and reimagined provisional dwellings are not seen as nuisances or dangers, but understood as prefigurative urban futures built with energy, imagination and perseverance — the same qualities that are required in order to survive and endure and make your own way in autoconstructed encampments built into the very cities working towards your violent exclusion. Community-building, in the interstices of power and in the margins of cities, requires ingenuity and the energy of community care. That afternoon, in the cool dark of the gallery, far from the noise and chaos of Porte de la Chapelle, my companions and I, who were able to contemplate Kingelez's work and discuss it at our leisure, made the crucial link — one that is often obscured, and that they themselves often missed — between their work of inhabitation and the futures they were striving to build through their daily labour of corporeal survival and inhabitation, and the work of imagining and conceptualising possible futures. This understanding of the everyday struggle to survive casts encampments as autonomous spaces that can be understood, following Gilmore and others, as *freedom places* that carry the possibilities of future liberation through the endurance and coalitional care of the present. In the clusters of makeshift shelters tucked into the interstices of the city, where forms of dwelling were provisional at best, and always fugitive and in the process of being violently unmade, residents had also found pathways to construct legal

frameworks for rights-claiming where "*a tent is a home and thus cannot be removed without prior notice*" (see Chapter 12).

Figure 15.7 Kinshasa la Belle: Future UN Building, by Bodys Isak Kingelez, at the FLV, Paris, July 2017. Photo: Melora Koepke

Could their provisional encampments in the shadows of this global city therefore be understood as examples of this "liminal prax[es] of the many" (Lancione & Simone, 2021) that persist and proliferate beyond technocratic or institutional efforts to contain and remove them? Encampments, in this view, are more than emergency responses to burgeoning interconnected urban crises that differentially affect poor, marginalised, often racialised people in the city. They are places of freedom and possibility, movement and mobility, or provisional homes for those who otherwise could not access the means for shelter. From this perspective, encampments can be understood as social infrastructures and their usefulness can be constituted not only in terms of homelessness and urban theories of marginality and exclusion, but also in terms of Black geographies, where themes of freedom and fugitivity can be generatively read as

“spaces of livingness” (McKittrick, 2006) in that they persist in creating new possibilities for living, and even for imagining, the city differently.

15.4. Encampment and care within and of the “crisis”

On February 10th, 2022, British Columbia’s coroner’s report was released, enumerating an unprecedented number of overdose deaths in the province in 2021 — higher than the number of deaths from COVID-19 and all other causes of “unnatural death” combined. A vast majority of these drug toxicity deaths were in Vancouver, the province’s largest city, whose Downtown Eastside neighbourhood — which has historically been the epicentre of multiple intersecting crises — saw a large proportion of these deaths. This report once again highlights the urgency for decriminalisation and safe supply in the current emergency context of the toxic drug crisis in Canada. Consumers of illicit drugs without safe supply constantly face the threat of death due to a cascade of drug policy failures across multiple scales.

As news of the fatalities caused by policy failure and carceral forms of unequal justice crash like waves over this neighborhood, drug user groups, advocates and allies have also been tracing the effects of another “everyday crisis” in progress: Street sweeps. These regularly remove encampments in public space — on sidewalks, in local parks and in other marginal places where unhoused and poor people who depend on public space create shelter. The relationship between drug policy failures and the spatial control and violence of street sweeps is simple: Without a safe supply, marginalised users of drugs who use alone and unsupervised are at greater risk of death. Many drug users fear the isolation and loneliness of homeless shelters that don’t meet their needs or have barriers to access for drug users, and the supportive housing options that are available — often aren’t. In Vancouver, around the time of the coroner’s announcement, drug user activists staged various actions and protests to demand safe supply and push for representatives from the movement to have a place at the table in solving these crises at all levels of government.

Recent history shows that street sweeps are a threat to poor and unhoused people, some of whom are further marginalised as racialised or Indigenous people and drug users, whose safety and lives are threatened by multiple policy failures even as they utilise public space to protect themselves and use together in the midst of the worst

drug poisoning and overdose crisis in history. The story of encampment and use of public space cannot be told without reference to the fatal dangers of this current overdose crisis where the only chances of survival for drug users are to not use alone or furtively, as is frequently the reality for many in supportive housing and other State-run "emergency sheltering" operations. Not being alone means not dying. What is needed are pathways to homes and housing and legal modes of existence without fear of the carceral State, not the performance of institutional care that disappears and invisibilises people by removing them and their vestiges from public space without the provision of suitable alternatives.

On August 9th, 2022, authorities manifested the materially violent project resulting from the recent history of encampment and decampment in Vancouver, beginning the tactical removal of tents from a burgeoning encampment along a main thoroughfare of the city, Hastings Street. After nine such decampment operations had taken place since 2019, the city had signed a memorandum of understanding to cease regular street sweeps, and despite the paternalistic discourses of care and concern from the municipality that echoed those I have detailed elsewhere in Paris that preceded and framed démantèlement actions (Koepke, 2022), this coordinated process of removal came after a disingenuous order from the fire chief (Our Homes Can't Wait, 2022). This situation quickly escalated into a so-named police riot where over 100 uniformed officers secured the streets around a local community centre and violently arrested a number of activists, inciting a riot (Khandwani, 2022). In subsequent communications, the representatives from a coalition made up of local drug user activist and anti-poverty groups were able to situate these forms of violence within ongoing projects of colonial and settler-colonial violence and racial banishment that are enacted in carceral city and municipal policies and practices (Roy et al., 2020).

Recent histories of encampment and démantèlement in other locations (such as Paris, for example) have been increasingly repressive and violent for multiple communities of unhoused people who depend on public space. In Paris, decampments and other strategies of controlling and governing unhoused people have become more concerted and calculated as authorities evolve their decampment discourses and strategies and the city moves towards hosting the 2024 Olympics. During a recent field visits in March and July of 2022, several alarming developments indicated a new phase for the recent history of encampment in Parisian public space. The marginally famous

community of extremely precarious crack users who used to frequent the colline du crack in Porte de la Chapelle, where I worked with GAÏA's outreach squad from 2016 to 2019, had been kettled into a small city park in a northwestern corner of the 19th arrondissement near Porte de la Villette, where police had also lately been directing camping migrant families elsewhere. This actualised the fears of volunteers in the period of my fieldwork, that all unhoused people in Paris would become further precaritised through the evolving practices of démantèlement and the lack of differentiation between people. This chapter's opening vignette, centred around the movements of one Afghan family encountered in 2018, illustrated both the function of volunteers and the futility of our brief involvement in order to show the impossibility of relation and the paradoxical yet precious necessity of corporeal forms of care, which become methodologies for conveying intimacies and "domestications" of public space as a bodily politics of inhabitation that works towards the liberation of all. In the sections that follow, I conclude this dissertation with some propositions for how encampment can be understood and supported as a liberatory practice that, while not idealising care and inhabitation as desirable solutions in and of themselves (Malson & Blasi, 2020), offers ideas and indications of how we might imagine them differently.

In this context, the presence of encampments — as well as their inhabitants — are understood to constitute a crisis, to be sure, but what kind of crisis? Using the example of the Parisian "migration crisis" from multiple perspectives, I argue that the terms of this crisis generated ways of ushering in new ideologies, politics and ethics of care (and control) that are inextricably linked to the ways that crises are named and framed, and by whom. The "affective facts" of threat can be understood to be self-causing, as generating an atmosphere of hazard that is as real, or more real, than actual threat and thus justifies pre-emptive action (Massumi, 1995). Herein, I have intimated that this conceptualisation of an "affective fact" of threat can be applied to crisis as well — insofar as the "affective facts" of crisis can be seen as self-generating and their effects frequently mistaken for causes (Koepke, 2022). In Porte de la Chapelle, the arc of spatial control and repression on the movements of certain unauthorised migrants echoes their exclusion from France's and the EU's asylum régimes and results in encampments on the literal historical ramparts of the "capital of Modernity" but also generates affective atmospheres of "crisis" that are felt and lived in urban public spaces — and remotely, via media representations of these events and places. Another

perspective on the causes of this very real and material “crisis” would ascribe it to State failures and the abandonment of certain people who are determined to be disposable, whose basic survival needs are eclipsed by the public mood of urgency and the naming and framing of “crisis” that turns encampments and their inhabitants into political hostages, even as their bodily presence is felt to be a problem (to reverse the Du Boisian formulation).

In this dissertation, I have also highlighted the role of provisional encampments as social infrastructures in excess of, and in lieu of, the State — where relationships of mutual care are woven by people who have nothing but each other. At the confluence of various forms of violent literatures on urban politics and autonomous migration, I also enter into conversation with a postcolonial urbanism that explores the margins of cities as spaces of anti-racist and insurgent politics that resist European nativism and the primacy of White subject exclusion and abandonment. By enacting futures through forms of emplacement, endurance and errancy within the everyday work of survival in makeshift encampments, inhabitants of encampments also interrogate cities’ self-images as places that welcome and include all within categories of the human.

The visibility of proliferating encampments in Paris and Vancouver, and particularly the mediatised violence of decampment and removal, challenge and incite greater accountability for their most vulnerable residents, while undermining their cherished reputations as “livable cities” that develop innovative strategies to encounter and intervene in multiple intersecting and interconnected crises. France is a tourist destination that attracts 75 million visitors a year and derives significant financial benefit from its semblance of openness and accessibility, while the ongoing “colonial present” (Gregory, 2004) is being actualised within the city’s symbolic and lucrative status as a living museum. Similarly, in Vancouver, community groups in the DTES are currently in the midst of a concerted struggle to stop the police from destroying shelters and evacuating the occupants of a burgeoning tent encampment along a main thoroughfare – to nowhere. This recent development is an evolving practice stemming from the city’s everyday campaign of street sweeping, in which unhoused peoples’ possessions have been confiscated and destroyed (Mannoe, 2022); also see Koepke et al., 2023). These current events, which have been widely reported and are ongoing and intensifying, challenge Vancouver’s self-promotion as a livable and equitable city, as well as a city of reconciliation. In a more general sense, encampments trouble the ideas of cities as

spaces of equity and opportunity but also, perhaps, act as imaginative claims to rights to the city that are both symbolic and pragmatic, acting as “political processes that prefigure and materialise the social order which they seek to enact” (Vasudevan, 2015). But also, maybe: That these makeshift and informal forms of occupation, between the actual, the virtual and the possible, trespass on our imaginings of urban spatial politics, what we understand of cities, and what futures are possible within them.

The affective, material and discursive politics of “crisis” speak to a politics of presence enacted by the people who live, by necessity and invention, in encampments that provide shelter but also expose them to ongoing and ever more ubiquitous State violence. The racialised nature of these differential exclusions has been highlighted by recent events: In the Parisian context, the reception of Ukrainian refugees has shown the capacities of the city to offer differential welcome when newcomers are White and recognisably “European”. Meanwhile, in Vancouver, a self-proclaimed “city of reconciliation”, more than 50% of unhoused residents identify as Indigenous people, many of whom are also affected by the ongoing and increasingly fatal cluster of policy failures and betrayals known as the drug poisoning crisis.

My hope is that by investigating, comparing, mapping and drawing counter-topographical linkages between encampment and decampment in rich cities of the Global North, the future life of this research will be to further and support the struggles of those whose dwell in urban margins, interstices, “vacancies” and liminal spaces. These “rebellious methodologies for living” (McKittrick, 2021) allow their inhabitants to (sometimes, and provisionally) evade the capture of necropolitical State violence, governmental humanitarianism and the policy and material failures of institutionalised care. As insurgent architects of settler-colonial and neocolonial and still-colonial cities that are built on stolen or hoarded lands where unchecked value extraction and financialisation excludes many if not most of us, they work to reconfigure the decolonial politics of mobility and remaining, their presence exceeding categorisation and control, refusing the necropolitics of borders and exclusions that are increasingly present within urban spaces (Koepke, 2022; Ramirez, 2019). They are doing the important work of redesigning and rebuilding the city that is to come, and that we need.

15.5. Encampments as “practices of liberation”

> Metaphors are not just metaphoric, though. They are concretized. This means — if we believe the stories we tell and share — that the metaphoric devices we use to think through Black life are signaling practices of liberation (tangible, theoretical, imaginary) that are otherwise-possible and already here (and over there) (McKittrick, 2021, p. 11).

In this brief speculative conclusion I have brought together threads from past, present and future work in order to map out a path forward for research in the two cities where I reside, and where I am involved in activist research that links currently unfolding histories of encampment/decampment in the summer of 2022: Paris and Vancouver. As I type these words, cycles of encampment/decampment in both cities are currently making headlines in mainstream news cycles, as communities of unhoused people struggle to resist decampment and the destruction of their provisional homes installed in public space. As encampment as a practice of survival and resistance has intensified in cities, the processes of decampment (the violent removal of encampments) have become more notorious and mediatised in recent years due to public scrutiny and the increasingly spectacular forms of violence used by authorities to destroy encampments and banish their residents. In my dissertation research, I highlighted the role of provisional encampments as social infrastructures in excess of, and in lieu of, the State — where relationships of mutual care are woven by people who have nothing but each other. At the confluence of various forms of violent exclusion and abandonment, they enact futures through forms of emplacement, endurance and errancy within the everyday work of survival in provisional encampments at the margins of the city.

While the auto-construction of provisional shelter is a necessary practice for many who are abandoned and excluded from dignified and suitable housing and therefore depend on public space, the twinned processes of encampments and their destruction through processes of decampments, dismantlement, camp sweeps or démantèlements — especially in wealthy Western cities of the Global North — have become increasingly notorious. Activists and scholars argue that encampments constitute forms of autonomous political organisation, of political agency, of necessity, of occupation — but we are only echoing what residents tell us. What will be important in the future, what is important now, is to highlight the value and necessity of the mutual aid, care, sociality and self-organised networks that necessarily take place in these spaces. These makeshift shelters constitute a “homing” of urban spaces by people who

depend on urban public space to survive, and those spaces can be understood as both metaphorical and concretised practices of liberation “that are otherwise-possible and already here” (McKittrick, 2021).

This speculative proposition — that we think of encampment as a liberatory practice as well as provisional, emergency survival work taking place in the urban margins of the city — calls for connections to be made across places and contexts, and necessary further research and solidarity work to be developed and executed in collaboration with the people who are doing the frontline work of inhabitation and capacity-building within their own practices of inhabitation needs. The labour with which abandoned people take care of and protect one another amidst the ruins of the financialised city — the collective work of care, materialised in encampments — is rich and important frontline work. It constitutes a resistance not only to the violence of decampment, but also to emergency sheltering operations that enforce a version of governmental humanitarianism or State care that is, in the estimation of those who are unhoused and who continue to live outside, unsuitable and even dangerous — more dangerous than sleeping rough and continuing to occupy public space despite coordinated and militarised operations to remove them on behalf of the State.

My corporeal and philosophical engagements with the “field” and with interlocutors have evolved over the course of the last five years of research in that, at present and going forward, I no longer consider or believe research to be a solitary endeavour. If scholarship and praxis are to be forms of collective liberation, they must be and have always been collective — the challenge is in *how* to move forward and take up and advance the future implications and directions for this research that have emerged over the course of the work. Participants, interlocutors and collaborators who shared their experiences and struggles with me demonstrated in multiple ways how they strive for inhabitation and what is beyond it — often corporeally dwelling in prefigurative future bodies as their only available means of resisting the ever-evolving carceral aspects of the city that also carry the possibilities of liberation and abolitionist futures. Therefore, this essay both concludes the dissertation and sets a course for future inquiry by asking a question that has long eluded those who theorise urban exclusion in cities of the Global North: Why do encampments persist despite and beyond State offers of “emergency shelter” services?

Abolitionist geographies posit “freedom as a place” (Gilmore, 2007; Gilmore et al., 2022), but also intimate the processual nature of freedom that is always in progress, and never complete. These broad and hopeful conceptualisations of what freedom might look like should, I argue, be put into conversation with research that considers the municipal management of bodies designated as “undesirable” (Agier, 2008; Koepke & Noûs, 2020) and the way that these exceed their provisional inhabitations of urban space. The bodily engagements, encounters and entanglements at the frontiers of the city speak to both the carceral and the emancipatory potential of cities. Yet that space is also coveted, competitive and contested. In the vignette that led this section, Asmarina’s small body constituted such a threat to public order that she and her family were driven from the city; their corporeal domestications of urban space signifying a provisional form of inhabitation through which they resisted invisibilisation, removal and co-optation by the State into carceral forms of governmental humanitarian aid— their insistence on inhabiting spaces of the city constituting a corporeal politics of presence that begins, but does not end, with bodies and their capacity to resist and to remain.

15.6. Future propositions

A major question that emerges from the research I conducted for this dissertation and will be conducting in the near future focuses on exploring the long-overlooked question pertaining to urban encampments in otherwise-wealthy cities of the Global North: Why do they persist? Why do unhoused people — drug users, unauthorised migrants and others deemed “undesirable” in urban space (Agier, 2008; Froment-Meurice, 2016; Koepke & Noûs, 2020) — continue to inhabit these stubborn and incorrigible constructions of alternate modes of sheltering and survival, despite and beyond State “emergency shelter” services? Abolitionist geographies have long posited “freedom as a place” (Gilmore, 2007), and yet it is also, and continuously, processual (Maynard et al., 2022). In the context of recent histories and the current state of encampments installed in the urban interstices of two cities — Vancouver and Paris — I have begun to explore the importance of these autoconstructed and makeshift dwellings as necessary interventions into ongoing colonial projects of removal, exclusion and abandonment. By investigating how they exceed their function as temporary shelter — both materially and symbolically — I show how it is essential to consider their translocal contexts; how encampments in many places have necessarily become resistance to

dispossession, banishment and continuous violence, but also ways of inhabiting "impossible futures" otherwise (see Chapter 14). They are the spatial enactments of the right to move, of freedom of mobility across borders and places, and also the right to remain in place, and the right of access to fair, just and suitable housing. For many unhoused people, who might be unauthorised migrants or drug users or both or neither, encampments have also become spaces of mobility and flight, sites of respite and struggle but also prefigured futurities for those caught in multiple intersecting urban crises.

As inhabitants of encampments have endured ongoing cycles of harassment, displacement and removal on the sidewalks and parkways where their survival constitutes the work of world making, we should not underestimate encampments by thinking of them as "mere" social infrastructures or tools for survival, though they are certainly those as well. We can understand them as fugitive territories of movement and mobility, but also of foundational community-building, protection and care where inhabitants construct the foundations of otherwise-possible futures. As code-shifting architects of emergent abolitionist horizons, their continued presence exceeds capture and refuses the paucity and inadequacy of State provisions, the necropolitical borders, carceral cities, humanitarian or governmental care and police forces that destroy shelter and decamp vulnerable people. Encampments are (some of) the indicators of our failures to build cities and claim our rights to them; they signify a form of improvised transnational struggle where the colonised come to occupy "forbidden cities" by enacting the corporeal politics of inhabitation here and there, and everywhere. Having crossed deserts, oceans and continents, or remained in place for centuries, having evaded capture at digital and actual borders, on transportation, even biometric capture, they inhabit public space as a way of rights-claiming the "impossible futures" that have been denied them. By tracing the political and pragmatic purposes of encampment and their capacities to resist the violence of the permanent temporary, we may better understand their purpose: To resist the processes of dispossession that constitute the carceral city and ratify the régimes of economic and racialised banishment across spaces, scales and contexts.

Figure 15.8 Makeshift encampment behind the Granges-aux-Belles kindergarten, August 9th, 2022. Photo: Melora Koepke.

In the summer of 2022, the situation at the gates of Paris has never been worse. Through several démantèlements, beginning with the destruction of the colline du crack in 2019, unhoused people, migrants, marginalised drug users and others have been progressively moved from one place to another, up against the wall of the périph (Collectif SoCS Collective, 2022). These extremely marginalised communities of people have been kettled into one city square in a northwestern corner of the 19th arrondissement near Porte de la Villette, about a kilometre from Porte de la Chapelle; however, they have also been the subject of a highly publicised campaign of mise à l'abri, in which many community members have been relocated to single room occupancy accommodations (SROs) or hotels where they are monitored by local associations contracted by the city. Meanwhile, outreach volunteers at Utopia and other local associations report that migrant families in encampments are being directed by police to the same park and told it is the only place they can sleep. This degenerating situation has, at the time of this writing, persisted since 2020. These recent developments in the carceral strategies developed by authorities to manage urban space are highlighted by the perception of untenable "crises" among local residents of

cities that announce themselves as “sanctuary cities” or “cities of reconciliation”, staking claims to global reputations for inclusivity and progressivity. Meanwhile, multiple intersecting crises inscribe themselves on the bodies of those most alienated from their rights to Parisian public space, while the liminal areas of the city, whether in the margins or the centre, remain or become violent border zones. As of July 22nd, 2022, Utopia teams manage two encampments and support their inhabitants; one an encampment of families who refuse to be decamped in Pantin, a suburb in the north of the city, the other an encampment of unaccompanied minors in Place de la Bastille.

Figure 15.9 Encampment of unaccompanied minors in Place de la Bastille supported by Utopia 56, as of August 9th, 2022. Photo: Melora Koepke.

This research has also highlighted how encampments can become more than spaces of survival and resistance towards this violence of permanent temporariness, how they are built and maintained by inhabitants and supported by advocates who forge relations of radical care that orient towards futurities that would otherwise be untenable or impossible. For those have been denied equal access to easy mobility and movement (Mayblin et al., 2020; Sheller, 2016), encampments can be understood as spaces of liberation and freedom, mobility and presence. This dissertation has developed the idea

that these two purposes are inseparable, that indeed materialities of care are and become political as they foster encounters between people, and between sites and their emergent relations. Lancione has highlighted how care is individually instantiated, how "one can retrieve a *politics of care* and understand it for what it is: A proposition of its own standing, an underground inscription impossible to appropriate and sustainable only in its own refrains, at its own tempo" (Lancione, 2020, p. 34). If care can be thought of as a force of life "that saves itself from its own history, one that refuses institutionalisation, and one that constructs its own way of being into the world — that is, its own way of dwelling, by caring for its own unfolding" (Lancione, 2020, p. 33), the care that emerges from crisis exists on its own terms, enacted in bodily and material entanglements as well as through its own political engagements.

Figure 15.10 Utopia 56 encampment for unaccompanied minors, Place de la Bastille, being serviced by city workers. Sign reads: "Encampment of adolescent minors, the State chooses to leave them in the street. We demand immediate protection for these children!" [Author's translation]. Photo: Melora Koepke.

Within this frame, encampments can be understood as crucial and incontrovertible installations in cities: Where those who inhabit the uninhabitable by necessity are doing the crucial work of signaling how things are not as they should be —

and therefore asking “who matters” and enlivening what it might mean to “attend to the one who matters” (Stevenson, 2014, p. 3), as I discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 14. While they remain spaces of destitution traversed by the dangerous effects of very real crises that are intentionally caused by States and authorities, encampments can also therefore be understood as fugitive territories of struggle, movement and flight that generatively speak of modes of living otherwise, spaces that generate relations of care and mattering that orient towards futurities and possibilities amidst the daily work of survival in the ruins.

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