Media, Migrants and Human Rights

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In the Evolution of the European Scenario of Refugees' and Asylum Seekers' Instances

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Chapter Twenty   Performing Arts, Diversity and the Right to the City

Abstract: The chapter proposes a reflection on how performing arts can produce alternative representations on migration and "otherness", challenging the humanitarian and securitarian emergency frame conveyed by contemporary mediatic and political rhetoric. These sensationalist and stereotyped images depict migrants as "victims" and/or "potential criminals", influencing public opinion. Within this context, arts, and particularly performing arts, can play a role in challenging these forms of representation, overturning the spectacle of the migration into collective performances. Drawing upon these conceptual premises, the chapter starts with a general reflection on how arts can promote alternative representations of migration. It will, then, continue with a reflection on the role of performing arts in enhancing spaces of intercultural conviviality, experiencing different languages and narratives, new communicative spaces and alternative perspectives on experiential citizenship.

1 Enhancing an Alternative Perspective on Diversity

In the last decades, Europe is experiencing a crisis of the liberal order and its related integration processes. Under the pressure of globalization, digital revolution and multiculturalism, the European Union is not adjusting to its promises of well-being, inclusive democracy and security, and is liable to become less egalitarian, democratic and open to cultural diversity than it was envisaged. Political leaders who are overtly inspired by illiberal principles – from Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán to sovereign populist forces in Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Italy, Latvia and Slovakia – formulate the political debate by riding the wave of general discontent with the negative effects of economic globalization, distrusting the so-called establishment (including the European one). Populist parties and movements, sometimes xenophobic, which make division and separation out of their main programme, fuel the hatred of others and profit from fears.

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1   The authors worked together to the conceptualisation and construction of the chapter. Although, Paola Parmiggiani wrote paragraph 1 and 3, Roberta Paltrinieri paragraph 2 and Melissa Moralli paragraphs 4 and 5.

A particular characteristic of this period is the obsession with immigration, even in the case of a radical reduction in arrivals. The "migration crisis", instrumentally constructed and amplified by those who politically benefit from it, feeds on the fears of citizens, strengthens them and presumes to provide simple (static) answers. Answers made of walls to block immigration, undermining respect for human rights both in domestic and foreign policies, as demonstrated by the outsourcing of the management of migrants to third countries such as Libya or the failure to sign the Global Compact on migration by various European countries. These recent facts clash with intra-European solidarity, which envisages that maintaining the free movement of people in the Schengen Area is the fundamental bond of the Union.

The media and their imaginary play a key role in this process. In fact, the strategies of representation and discursive practices conveyed by the mediatic and political rhetoric describe migration as a perpetual emergency, as a cyclical phenomenon (Calhoun, 2010; Vaughan-Williams, 2015; La Rocca, 2017; Musarò & Parmiggiani, 2017) that must be managed in terms of "crisis", often represented by boats trying to reach an increasingly distant Europe. Thus, the negative portraits of migration influence public opinion (Pastore, Monzini & Sciortino, 2006; de Haas, 2007; Musarò & Parmiggiani, 2014), as the gap between perceptions of the number of migrants within a country and their actual presence show.[2] In a context where freedom of movement becomes the main factor of social stratification (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013;Wihtol de Wenden, 2013; Bauman, 2016), the negative representations of migrants depict them as unwelcome "invaders" (Albahari, 2015), crystallizing the imbalances of power between those who have the opportunity to narrate and those forced to be narrated, promoting a rhetoric of passivity (Ahmed, 2004). Images (and imaginaries) that dehumanize migrants, helping to legitimize the imperialist gaze of those who have established the rules of the game of mobility (Mirzoeff, 2011).

Based on the above considerations, it is nowadays necessary to make room for imagination so that it can produce a vision of solidarity that goes beyond the idea of the "ironic spectator" (Chouliaraki, 2014). It is therefore required to enhance

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2   For further information visit: http://www.cattaneo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Analisi-Istituto-Cattaneo-Immigrazione-realtà-e-percezione-27-agosto-2018–1.pdf. Thus, the negative portraits of migration influence public opinion (Pastore, Monzini & Sciortino, 2006; de Haas, 2007; Musarò & Parmiggiani, 2014), as the gap between perceptions of the number of migrants within a country and their actual presence show (Ipsos, 2018).

an alternative vision of solidarity, no longer based on compassion, capable of recognizing the other as a human being, despite the harsh oppressive conditions of the global and local structures of injustice.

Within this context, in this chapter we propose to widen the reflection to the role that theatre and performing arts can play in the production of different representations of migrations, as privileged tools to foster conviviality and processes of transformation of everyday practices. Our research is focused on specific questions: What is the role of culture in challenging the narrative structures that characterize the European imaginary on migration? And, specifically, how can performing arts become a tool to promote diversity and political participation for migrants and asylum seekers in European cities?

Starting from a more general reflection on the social, political and symbolic role of art in promoting alternative representations of migration, in the following sections we will investigate on some of the most significant aspects that emerged during an action-research based on a European project, *Atlas of Transitions*, which involves artists, researchers, experts and communities of action from seven countries in order to experiment with new languages, spaces of conviviality and innovative self-expression. A project that, as we will have the opportunity to emphasize, aims to create alternative social imaginaries on the migration phenomenon through the use of artistic devices of different types. Our analysis will shed light on how to promote an intercultural encounter based on the enhancement of diversity, but also on the re-conceptualization of citizenship and justice in an increasingly Eurocentric political space.

2 Arts as a Political Space for the Negotiation of Diversity

The expressive power of performing arts, conceptualized both as a process of knowledge and as a dynamic concerning the living experience of bodies, is not only able to intervene within the processes of negotiation of the meanings related to the migratory phenomenon. It also represents a space of inclusion, recognition, belonging and citizenship. Indeed, a space where to experiment and promote new citizenships, individual and collective, as Mouffe (2008) suggests when she mentions the "agonistic" dimension of artistic practices capable of subverting the dominant hegemony through a conflictual approach in the management of public space. According to the author, in fact, the negation of the controversial dimension typical of the liberal approach implies an idea of consensus based on reason, determining a political hegemony which creates, at the same time, the exclusion of certain groups: "According to the agonistic approach, critical art is art that foments dissensus, that makes visible what the dominant consensus

tends to obscure and obliterate. It is constituted by a manifold of artistic practices aiming at giving a voice to all those who are silenced within the framework of the existing hegemony" (Mouffe, 2008, p. 11). From this perspective, therefore, art can be a valid tool to counteract hegemonic discourses such as the Eurocentric discourse, based on an exclusive identity and aimed at cancelling out diversity when perceived as being too distant from European values.

In this way, art can represent a privileged means to foster conviviality and transform everyday practices, since it is a pedagogical as well as a political tool able to reshape the existing imaginary around migration and its impacts on territories. First of all, art can become an instrument, but also a physical and symbolic space where migrants and refugees can develop processes of intercultural participation (Martiniello, 2016), stimulating the creation of alternative narratives that lie beyond the dominant, dichotomous and stigmatizing vision promoted by contemporary media and political representations (Musarò, 2018).

Among the devices that artists, researchers and activists use to provide an unconventional, dissonant and counter-hegemonic image of migration and its protagonists, there exist movies, street art, documentaries, web-series, exhibitions, photographs and installations. These tools strive to create a sympathetic identification between European citizens and "Strangers at Our Door" (Bauman, 2016), cementing a cosmopolitan solidarity increasingly challenged by the populist and sovereign political instrumentalization. For example, contemporary art becomes an instrument of criticism of unequal geopolitical relations and the way in which the migratory phenomenon is managed and represented. Among the most famous cases is Mion's mural "European Programme for Migration", which transforms the tragedies of the Mediterranean into a naval battle played by a child in an ironic and provocative way. Another example is Banksy's works "Floating Bodies" or his project "Dismaland-Bemusement Park"[3]. A similar aim is shown in Ai Weiwei's numerous works on the dramatic situation of refugees at the borders of Europe and, above all, the fate of those drowned in the Mediterranean, such as the two temporary installations "Reframe" at Palazzo Strozzi (Florence) and "Rettungssäulen" at the Konzerthaus (Berlin).

In the copious production of recent years on the theme of migration, films like Ai Weiwei's documentary entitled "Human Flow" (2017) open intimate insights

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3   "Floating bodies" shows bodies floating in a sea forming the European flag, whereas in "Dismaland-Bemusement Park", Banksy proposed a "game" in which visitors could make overcrowded refugee boats sail. See the video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2NG-MgHqEk (last access on 24/09/2019).

into the complexity of a phenomenon – migration – strongly conditioned by international geopolitical balances and stigmatizing visual representations (Abruzzese, 2001). Even more interesting are the film productions that amplify the voice of migrants, such as "Midnight Traveler", a documentary shot on a mobile phone by an Afghan family trying to reach Europe, or "Ľordine delle cose" (2017), which fosters the emergence of public resolve, encouraging the audience to advocate the migrants' rights. These movies, directed by or engaging migrants, not only lead us to reflect on the need to overcome the dominant rhetoric that portrays migrants as a number and not as people with a story to tell, but amplify their stories and voices.

These are only some of the many artistic projects that try to challenge the contraposition between "us" – Europeans guided by *rational* – and "them" – subjects characterized by over emotional reactions. As Ahmed (2014, p.3) suggests, in fact, "the association between passion and passivity is instructive. It works as a reminder of how 'emotion' has been viewed as 'beneath' the faculties of thought and reason. To be emotional is to have one's judgment affected: it is to be reactive rather than active, dependent rather than autonomous". As the following paragraphs show, in fact, arts, and especially performing arts, can break this perspective, making emotionality and expressiveness a form of mutual recognition and, in some cases, of shared belonging that challenges this dualistic rhetoric.

Among the artistic forms that enhance a collective mobilization towards the freedom to move, we focus here on theatre. Political art *par excellence*, as Aristotle or, more recently, H. Arendt claimed, the idea of theatre is not simply associated with entertainment, but it is seen as a form of moral education, capable of stimulating forms of solidarity based on mutual universal rights (Chouliaraki, 2014). These principles and values are particularly important when dealing with the migration phenomenon. However, if theatre was developed as an instrument of education and sensitization to the values of the public sphere of the polis, it became explicitly a political tool with directors such as Brecht, Piscator, Stanisvlaskij and Artaud. For example, by reintroducing the concept of catharsis, Brecht proposed an idea of theatre that pushed to action, a collective awareness that, beyond any reactionary expedient, turned into some sort of political participation. If until the end of the 19th century theatre was considered as the "Temple of the Muses" (Piscator, 1929), in Piscator and Brecht "the search for a political theater has become the search for a new theater, which was identifying its own political function. Political theater, a term that represents a fascinating and provocative concept because of its versatility of meanings, it rightly meant as the theater that wants to participate, with its own specific means, in the general attempt to contribute to the process of transformation of social reality [. . .]"

(Fazio, 2001, p. 4).[4] In this view, performing arts also constitutes a political space where new instruments of participation, inclusion, recognition and belonging can emerge (Belfiore, 2002). This is the case of the project "Atlas of Transitions – New Geographies for a Cross-Cultural Europe" which shows how art can facilitate an intercultural dialogue between participants, the audience and, more generally, the local community (Lo & Gilbert, 2002; Musarò & Moralli, 2019; Paltrinieri & Gemini, 2018). In fact, as we will illustrate in the next paragraphs, these experiments of performing arts, political interventions, intercultural theatre and creative installations, played a significant role in the process of negotiation between different cultural sensibilities and in the enhancement of diversity.

3 The "Atlas of Transitions" Project

Co-financed by the European programme "Creative Europe", "Atlas of Transitions"[5] is a European project which includes ten partners in seven countries – Italy, Albania, Belgium, Poland, France, Greece and Sweden – and a network of university stakeholders that investigate the relationship between migration and performing arts through the methodology of action-research (McNiff, 1998; Trombetta & Rosiello, 2000; Levy, 2017). The project intends to challenge the stereotypical imagery conveyed by the mediatization of contemporary migratory phenomena through an innovative use of performative practices, working on new ways of perceiving public spaces and experimenting creative conviviality between European citizens and newcomers.

The project alternates theatre performances with urban itineraries, public meetings on the theme of borders and the right to mobility, participatory DJ-sets in peripheral neighbourhoods, but also installations, workshops on body archives and actions of political activism. Since the activities developed by the European partners in the first two years are numerous, our analysis will focus on some transversal aspects that emerged from the analysis of the artistic projects proposed in the city of Bologna, which have seen a collaboration between Emilia-Romagna Teatro Foundation[6], Cantieri Meticci collective[7] and the University of Bologna[8].

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4   Translated by the authors.
5   For further details on the project, please visit: http://www.atlasoftransitions.eu/(last access on 29/08/2019).
6   http://bologna.emiliaromagnateatro.com/ (last access on 29/08/2019).
7   http://www.cantierimeticci.it/ (last access on 29/08/2019).
8   Specifically, the departments included in the project were the Department of Sociology and Business Law and the Department of Arts.

Adopting an approach aimed at co-creating some of the performative practices and processes from the earliest stages of our investigation, action-research seemed to be the most appropriate methodology not only to better understand the relationships between migration and arts, but also to develop other narratives on the migration phenomenon through the voice, ideas, creativity and skills of migrants themselves. Therefore, the action-research was not limited to try to blur disciplinary boundaries, enriching the perspectives on the phenomenon, but also to promote, through different ways, a mutual collaboration between artists, researchers and participants of the workshops proposed throughout the duration of the project. Hence, many of the projects mentioned are to be considered as the result of a process of cooperation that has alternated moments of theoretical reflection with performative interventions, research in the field with opportunities for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary dialogue, developing results in which the theoretical, practical and analytical dimensions are strictly interrelated.

The action-research started with an exploratory phase of context analysis – at national and local level – on the phenomenon of migration, as well as with ethnographic observations of the artistic workshops developed in Bologna by the artistic collectives Cantieri Meticci and Zimmerfrei[9]. The ethnographic research was integrated by in-depth interviews with artists, curators, participants and activists. On the basis of this first level of analysis, the action-research included different tools, such as meetings between all stakeholders involved, interdisciplinary conferences and seminars on project issues, public debates open to citizens, art workshops, training in high schools and university courses, debates with the communities of migrants living in Bologna and its surroundings. The participant observations took place during the overall project but mostly in the first months (November 2017–May 2018). In total, 47 in-depth interviews were conducted.

The framework of analysis was completed by a questionnaire addressed to the public of the two festivals held in 2018 (230 questionnaires in total[10]). The first festival, "Right to the City", took place in the city of Bologna from 15 to 24 June 2018, and developed the theme of the right to participate and

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9   Zimmerfrei is an artistic collective that combines different languages ranging from documentary films to video art, sound and environmental installations, capable of conveying unconventional representations of public space and, in general, cities: http://www.zimmerfrei.co.it/ (last access on 29/08/2019).

10 The results of the quantitative analysis will be presented in a forthcoming paper.

re-appropriate of symbolic and physical urban spaces. The second festival, "Home", animated the city from 1 to 10 March 2019 and dealt with the feeling to be at home or being away from home, starting from the reflection of Ahmed (2014), who suggests to overcome a representation of migrants as "ontological uprooted". Based on a feminist and post-colonial approach, this perspective tries to challenge the ethnocentric narratives that depict migrants as an indefinite community that belongs nowhere, and primarily to a Europe with borders remodelled and fortified by the Schengen agreements. These two conceptual nodes – the right to the city and the concept of home – were primarily used as narrative and design expedients to reflect on issues such as identity, belonging, inclusion and citizenship.

4 Reconfiguring Imaginaries on Migration and Diversity

The primary objective of the project was to try to deconstruct the imagery conveyed by stigmatizing media and political rhetoric, which represents the migrant, as mentioned in the introduction, as a victim to be saved – fuelling imbalance of power and conveying pietism – or an invader to be rejected – fuelling a generalized criminalization of growing episodes of "everyday" racism. Indeed, one of the crucial elements adopted to activate this process of deconstruction of the imaginary linked to the migratory phenomenon consists in the fact that "Atlas of Transitions" does not directly address the issue of migration or social inclusion. Rather, it seeks to enhance diversity in two main ways. The first one refers to the direct involvement of people from different backgrounds in the artistic workshops. The second one refers to the ability of most of the projects to address issues that are transversal to the migration phenomenon – issues capable of stimulating connections, cognitive effervescences, direct or indirect references stimulating a reflection on the social inequalities linked to the right to move, but also collective experiments of new forms of social integration capable of enhancing diversity.

The artistic project developed by the famous Moroccan choreographers and dancers Taoufiq Izeddiou and Said Ait El Moumen is a clear example of how performing arts can become a tool for re-appropriation of space and intercultural dialogue without necessarily explicitly addressing these topics. The performance "100 Pas Presque"[11] invited a hundred people of different origins, ages, genres,

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11 http://bologna.emiliaromagnateatro.com/laboratorio-gratuito-100-pas-presque/, visited on 04/02/2019.

educational and professional backgrounds to participate in a series of dance and theatre workshops in order to create two collective performances within the festival "Right to the City". The performances were realized in two different areas of Bologna: one in the city center, the other in the periphery, and more precisely in Piazza dei Colori in Croce del Biacco, a district characterized by continuous social conflicts due to the coexistence of migrants hosted in the regional hub of Emilia-Romagna and the inhabitants of the neighbourhood – many of them retired/unemployed or families with low and middle income.[12] The performance, which at the beginning consisted in a dance for 100 metres in public space by the workshop participants, subsequently opened to the audience, making participants and spectators plunge into a rhythmic spiral, capable of creating a discontinuity in the perception of the rhythms of the city. According to the choreographer, "dancing across 100 meters very slowly is likely to provide another way to occupy a place together, to ask questions about listening, about the other, as well as to revisit their relationship with time and space".[13] Therefore, if the dimensions of integration, dialogue and interaction in urban space were not directly discussed by the choreographer, neither with the participants of the workshops – nor with the audience itself – it was conveyed through forms of communication that were not verbal but visual. This mechanism is also explained by a workshop participant:

> Through the workshop, I have realized to what extent the 'other' can stimulate a dance move like for other things. It was a dance workshop, so I'm talking mainly about that, but in my opinion, this is also true for many other things. This is the message for me, the message I got from the workshop. They are now common words, but never reminded enough. . .zero walls and zero constructions of barriers, absolutely! (Vittorio, 27 years old, Italian).

It is, therefore, through the artistic space that processes of dialogue with diversity were activated, without being directly questioned, but through relationships facilitated by doing things with different people. By activating processes of

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12 In June 2019, the regional hub was closed and several protests aroused to highlight the social and economic consequences for the migrants and the people who worked there (https://www.radiocittadelcapo.it/archives/bologna-chiude-hub-via-mattei-centro-accoglienza-migranti-presidio-prefetto-avvocati-diretta-204395/, last access on 24/09/2019).

13 The interviews were conducted in Italian and translated by the authors from Italian into English. The interviews were translated by the authors providing, in some cases, a youth spoken text. Some of the translation choices, therefore, have been adopted in order to be loyal to the oral source text.

Verfremdung, of estrangement in the Brechtian sense (Brecht, 1957), these projects thus reminded the need for more complex, alternative stories, challenging the "sympathetic understanding evoked by traditional feelings of piety and terror" (Fazio, 2001, p. 35).

A second important element concerns "Atlas of Transitions" effectiveness to avoid the exploitation of arts as a mere tool to promote social inclusion. Here, the artistic device is not a simple "medium" (Piscator, 1929). In these projects, on the contrary, artistic skills and competences are positively integrated with the desire to enable inclusive processes, without generating imbalances between the aesthetic/artistic dimension and the social dimension. In other words, the importance of realizing performances with a high artistic value is not overshadowed by the need to facilitate forms of conviviality and dialogue through arts, and vice versa. This perspective is well clarified by a teacher of the company Cantieri Meticci:

> Here you come to learn how to perform, you are not in a social center, you are not in a recreational club, we are not here to carry out social activities, we must not entertain someone or have a pietist gaze such as 'poor Africans, poor migrants'. You are here to learn how to perform and I often use theatrical techniques that constitute my educational background. So, theater – the traditional one – has a strong influence, I give artistic indications to students. For example, I say that they have to move in a certain way, and I give suggestions on how to do it. . . (Francesco, Cantieri Meticci).

By promoting valuable artistic performances, aesthetically elaborated in every detail, and not explicitly dealing with the theme of migration, "Atlas of Transitions" helped to deconstruct the pietistic imagination of migrants as "silent victims" (Chouliaraki, 2014), vulnerable and suffering people in need of protection and help. Narratives that ignore their stories and personal experiences, and that end up in legitimizing the reproduction – rather than the change – of dominance relations between the North and the South of the world.

In the project "Atlas of Transitions", migrants, asylum seekers and refugees do not appear as "victims" or as people to be helped, who do not have their own will, becoming the fulcrum of our humanitarian thought. On the contrary, performing arts become "an authentic revolutionary alternative to the dominant language" (Fazio, 2001), generating new and unexpected imaginaries and forms of mutual recognition. Hence, those who are usually represented as "non-persons" (Dal Lago, 2009) participate in a performance of high aesthetic and artistic value with their skills and experiences, de-coupling themselves from the common imagination that combines the practices of inclusion to charitable works, linked to "sad" or "poor" contexts, where there is no room for self-expression.

5 Supporting Relations Beyond Artistic Performances

Besides promoting unconventional narratives on migration, most of the projects developed in "Atlas of Transitions" became not only didactic and expressive, but also symbolic and physical spaces of de-territorialized relationships (Massey & Jess, 1996).

The workshop entitled "Unleashing ghosts from urban darkness", for example, worked on the perception of movements and the relationship between individual and collective urban space. These aspects were materialized through the body of the participants and their interpretation of the characteristics of the objects mapped in the public space. Hence, the workshop, developed by Alessandro Carboni, a researcher artist who works in the field of performance and critical geography, not only presented itself as an opportunity to critically rework the relationship between the individual and the city. It also proved to be an opportunity for creating social relations among the participants, most of them coming from different areas of the world (Bangladesh, China, Romania, Italy, Brazil, etc.).

A similar example was offered by the collective Zimmerfrei, which organized three workshops dedicated to Italian and foreign young people (15–22 years old). The groups developed some practices of storytelling, transposing their personal experiences into sounds and images in order to realize a three-episode documentary, "Saga", with the aim to give an unconventional vision of the city of Bologna. The tools adopted ranged from individual stories to scripts for images, from interviews to informal conversations, passing through examples of collective storytelling, auto-fiction, urban legends and domestic narratives. In addition to providing technical knowledge of the use of filming tools and documentary techniques, the workshops promoted forms of encounter, confrontation and intercultural but also intergenerational dialogue that enhanced diversity as a source of the creative process. Being different, having particular stories to tell and to transform into sources to be used in the artistic production process, allowed the participants not only to break down interpersonal barriers (of origin, gender and age), but also to feel part of a community of action (Kaufmann, 2004). The artistic/creative device has therefore, in this case, conveyed a sense of belonging based on "integral relationships" which, unlike the "community of belonging" (*Ivi*), maintain the collective sense of acting together, valorizing diversity. These aspects were underlined several times by the participants, as Marta (18 years old, Albanian) suggests:

> "This project made me grow, it was a good thing to meet new people . . . I was one of the youngest and others were much older than me, but despite this we got along very well, it was a very positive thing".

Similarly, Enrica (16 years old, Italian) admits:

> "It was great to meet such different people... there were many university students... normally I could never have the possibility to meet them, it was nice. In the second workshop, we had times of great chats between all of us. And on these occasions, everyone started to talk about what they liked, where they wanted to go... So, it was a significant exchange. Then it was nice because they also described cities that are completely different from Bologna. But they did it very well, it was like having experienced it a little... Being able to have this exchange on people's experiences and stories was very nice".

Many of the artistic projects had the capability to create new relationships, to increase – according to a Bourdieusian vision (1979) – the "social capital" between people who, for various reasons, rarely share spaces and experiences. In other words, these projects conveyed new forms of conviviality, even beyond the workshops. This aspect has also contributed to overcome the temporariness and the "ephemeral" dimension of the artistic workshops. In all those cases where the final performance was preceded by a workshop, in fact, direct relations were created between the participants. As an example, Haroon (29 years old, Pakistani) told us that, after the workshop, he often stayed with other participants "to eat together or drink a beer". But also Lea (20 years old, Chinese), who invited some of her group to share a "real Chinese dinner"; and Maria (23 years old, Brazilian), who was able to "meet new people, also because I have just moved here", thanks to her participation in the workshops.

In some cases, these new relationships were incorporated into other artistic and creative interventions, which developed outside "Atlas of Transitions". As, for example, in the case of a participant of the Cantieri Meticci workshop, who explained to us during an interview:

> It was fantastic to involve some of them in the presentation of my personal artworks. And this is incredible, it is not because I want to show off, absolutely. One thing I noticed with my creative work is that the choral, collective dimension is increasingly important. In the last event, I managed to involve 7–8 people from Cantieri Meticci, and it was an honor for me, not only to enter this world, but to make this world enter my life. A transversal exchange, an important reciprocity. I bring them into my world where there are other people, and it becomes a successful exchange. It seems like a multiplication of loaves and fishes at a relational level (Vittorio, 42 years old, Italian).

By expanding relational possibilities and generating a dialogue that does not repress but enhances diversity and direct confrontation, "Altas of Transitions" has therefore promoted a new idea of integration based on direct relationships, capable of de-constructing stereotypical imagery that confines the possibilities of confrontation with diversity only in certain spaces and times, entering the dynamics of everyday life (Moralli, 2016).

5 Arts, Migration and the Right to the City

As explained above, the project "Atlas of Transitions" aimed at deconstructing Eurocentric narratives, promoting mutual recognition and spaces of collective participation. Hence, the artistic interventions represented physical spaces and processes of knowledge that developed plural and various forms of conviviality. These aspects are particularly interesting in urban contexts, where diversity emerge more strongly than in other contexts (Wood & Landry, 2007). In these contexts, the declination of citizenship goes beyond its legal meaning and can be expressed through the concept of the "right to the city". In fact, the way in which people can live the city, have access to its resources and can transform urban space, is a central issue for contemporary societies.

In this regard, Harvey (2012) suggests that the right to the city is primarily the right to change ourselves with the city, and refers not only to the economic dimension and the (re)distribution of resources, but also to the relational and political dimension, which concerns the right of those who can be included and excluded from urban life. In the city, all these plans intertwine and overlap, creating a political and social geography that conditions the individuals' lives. These subjects develop a sense of belonging also through the ways in which they live and act within public spaces. Resorting to Lefebvrian's conceptualization of the right to the city (Lefebvre, 1968),, we agree that it is based on two strongly inter-related processes. The first process relates to the "(re)appropriation" of physical and symbolic spaces where social relations are established on the basis of common values. The second process refers to "participation", which concerns not only the tools through which people can participate in urban life, but also the opportunities that are created to redefine the norms on which exclusion is founded, supporting what Appadurai (2004) defines the "capacity to aspire".

One of the projects developed by "Atlas of Transitions" can represent a paradigmatic example of this alternative declination of citizenship. The project, entitled "EXIL #17/Terra rossa", was presented by the collective Strasse within the first Festival. Here, the right to the city emerged as a form of participatory DJ set that involved asylum seekers hosted in the regional hub and the inhabitants of the Croce del Biacco district. Some days before the performance, the artistic collective entered the hub and involved the asylum seekers in the creation of a playlist to be used for an evening DJ set that took place in the local park. During the performance, the right to the city was expressed through the movements of the participants and their spatial relations. At the beginning of the DJ set, in fact, we experienced an overt spatial polarization: the asylum seekers sat all together on the left of the stage, whereas the inhabitants of the neighbourhood

sat on the opposite side. A physical polarization that reflected the social and cultural polarization that characterizes the contemporary European debate on migration, usually associated with the rhetoric of the opposition between "we"/ Europeans vs. "them"/others. Nevertheless, through the performance (the participatory DJ set), at the end of the evening this polarization was completely dissolved, transforming the park into a collective and shared space: migrants, elderly residents, children and adolescents danced together to the rhythm of the music from different areas of the world. By sustaining a participatory process, the performance has therefore not only helped to redefine the daily practices of coexistence in urban space, but also to mediate between citizens and newcomers, while promoting an alternative definition of doing politics in public space. Within the performative process, therefore, the park transformed into a "competitive space" (Mouffe, 2008), thanks to a new relationship between actors and spectators, between participants and audience, equally active in deconstructing and re-constructing meanings linked to a space where they could experience diversity. In other words, the performance has generated alternative "acts of citizenship" (Isin & Nielson, 2008).

Like "EXIL #17/Terra rossa", other projects developed within "Atlas of Transitions" have conveyed an idea of citizenship that goes beyond the mere legal framework. These projects promoted a more articulated idea of citizenship through daily practices of belonging, encouraging a wider right to the city within the spaces of "everyday life" (de Certeau, 1984). In fact, a similar process took place within the laboratory "Unleashing Ghosts from Urban Darkness". Starting from the perspective of critical cartography, but involving elements linked to dance and contemporary art, the project has been able to represent a different image of Bologna. This image wanted to be closer to the rhythm experienced by its inhabitants than to the traditional cartographic representation. As the artist himself states, the project was able to develop a sort of collective resemantization from below: "I have approached those practices that use the city as a rhythm and not as a stage, those practices that interact with the rhythms of the city, that enter into its dynamics" (Alessandro Carboni). Similarly, the project "100 Pas Presque" allowed the re-appropriation of the public space through dance, in the centre as well as in the periphery of the city of Bologna. As a participant of the artistic laboratory suggests, in fact:

> I tell you something important, I had this impression there, in that space, in that street I always walk in, with all those unknown people around me…I had the impression of appropriating something mine, and it's important. I keep on thinking about it a lot. One of the things I was asking myself before the workshop started, being loaded with all that is happening now in Italy, was that I would have participated in it because it also

responded to principles that are part of my – and certainly other people's – background now, but they are no longer popular among those who are in power now. And, also, this idea of appropriating a space together with other people, of being together with a person who comes from a different country, who has a different culture, a different religion and a different dance style was very important. For me it was also a political act and not just a cultural one (Carlo, 27, Italian).

Thanks to its innovative methodology, "Atlas of Transitions" challenged the social conventions and power relationships that lie behind the ways in which different people are represented. Using the performers' body – a body with an aesthetic and performative value but also a strong political meaning – as a way of participating and re-appropriating urban space, the projects have acted both on an aesthetic and emotional level (Ahmed, 2004), as forms of (inter)cultural political interventions. Moreover, they intervened on a relational level, modifying social practices. In other words, the projects have shown how art can become a "narrative of change" (Wittmayer et al., 2015), capable of fighting "against pre-existing cultural and institutional narratives and the structures of meaning and power that they transmit" (Davis, 2002, p.25). In fact, it is precisely through the creative and cognitive activation of new forms of urban coexistence and shared reflection that – as already suggested by the theorists of social movements at the end of the last century – new models of action and negotiation processes can be activated. These alternative forms of identity and citizenship propose a new idea of justice as "mutual recognition", which aims to integrate and overcome both the idea of justice as "non-domination" – which recalls the need to manage complex phenomena such as migration through international governance – and the idea of justice as "impartiality" – which emphasizes the role of institutions in guaranteeing fundamental rights (Eriksen, 2016). These are important processes that aim to stimulate, beyond the normative codes of official politics, new "architectures of listening" (MacNamara, 2016) and a renewed sense of solidarity and coexistence.

By doing this, the participatory approach of the "Atlas of Transitions" projects partially solved some limits that may concern these types of artistic interventions, such as the lack of involvement of specific social groups or the transitory temporariness of the performances. By selecting the stage venue outside the traditional places where culture is produced, involving the centre as well as the periphery, institutional places but also streets and reception centres, and encouraging the participation of different people, the project has included and amplified the voice of those who usually are not heard. An experiment that showed how performing arts can have both an aesthetic and political value, promoting a broader idea of citizenship (Mouffe, 2008; Martiniello, 2016).

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