The Appreciated Other

Ideals of revitalization through integration

A Master's Thesis

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Comu jamu?

Potenti!

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Glossary

Accoglienza – "hospitality".

Accoglienza diffusa – accommodation in separate housing units rather than one building.

Badolatese/i – the singular/plural demonym for a person from Badolato.

Bar – equivalent to "bar" in English, but also interchangeable for café.

Catoja – "cellar" in the Calabrese dialect. Traditionally where the Badolatese kept food supplies and wine barrels. Today, many *catoja* have been transformed into restaurants.

Città fantasma – "ghost town", in the sense of an abandoned city or village.

Giù – "down" or "downwards", in Badolato referring to the part of town called Badolato Marina.

Haram – Arabic for "forbidden", as opposed to *halal*, which means "permissible".

Lido – "beach", or "beach resort".

L'uffico – "the office", in Badolato referring to the headquarters of CIR.

Meridionali – "southerners", Italians coming from the south of Italy.

Paese di accoglienza – "the hospitable town".

Piazza – "town square".

Su – "up" or "upwards", in Badolato referring to the part of town called Badolato Borgo.

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Prologue

"*Buongiorno*!" Too distracted by the thought of my morning cappuccino, I fail to notice the store clerk waving from one of the side alleys that lead up to the main street where I am walking. I jump at her sudden appearance but manage to return the greeting before I continue towards the Piazza Castello, where the bar is located. At a sudden gust of wind, I tighten my coat, bracing myself against the cool February air. Lifting my gaze from the cobblestones under my feet, I can see the narrow street widen onto the town square ahead, while to my sides, glimpses of olive trees and dry yellow valleys can be seen around every corner. I reach the *piazza*, being slightly out of breath, not yet used to living in a town whose structure rises and falls as it clings on to the mountain it is situated upon. 240 meters down from Badolato Borgo, where I am living, is the newer part of town called Badolato Marina, a settlement that stretches along the white beaches and blue waters of the Ionian cost. While the Marina hosts up to 3000 inhabitants, there are only around 200 people in the Borgo, at least during the winter. The vacant streets make the town seem dormant, as if in winter hibernation. Nonetheless, I manage to exchange morning greetings with several people on my way. I smile to the *muratori* (masons), who are working on rebuilding some of the many dilapidated houses. I wave to the *contadini* (farmers), who are grabbing something to drink before heading out to the fields for work. Outside of the bar, I greet the senior citizens, who are sitting in groups, catching up on the latest news.

While ordering a cappuccino at the bar on the *piazza*, I meet Pepé, a man in his 60s whom I met through a fellow acquaintance. Pepé seemingly knows everything and everyone in Badolato, and he has happily been introducing me to his beloved town. This morning he invites me to his garden, a plot of land situated on the southeast hillside of the mountain, called *u Destru* in the Badolatese dialect. As we make our way across the *piazza*, we meet Osman, a young Gambian man who has lived in Italy for five years, two of them in Badolato. Osman decides to join us down the steep hill, telling us that he is happy to hang out since he lucked out on work today. As we enter the garden, we must lower our heads to avoid the big lemons that are pulling down on the branches, nearly blocking the entrance completely. We continue up a set of old stone steps, passing different vegetables, herbs and citrus trees growing in neat rows on different levels. Behind me, I can see lush olive groves and arid

valleys of dry ground stretching out in the distance. Pepé takes us to the different crops, and we taste, smell and feel the leaves, peels and juices of rosemary, bergamot and lemons. He cuts and squeezes fresh grapefruit juice into little plastic cups, and Osman is especially delighted to taste the refreshments. “I’ve worked picking these fruits many times, but I’ve never tasted them before!” he laughs.

The Gambian is one of many immigrants living and working in Italy while waiting for his papers. He is in Italy on the grounds of the *permesso di soggiorno per motivi umanitari*, or simply, *il permesso umanitario*, meaning he has been granted residence permit because of humanitarian reasons (IOM, 2019b, p. 94). However, once this type of residence permit expires, it can be hard to obtain a new one. Waiting for the proper documents renders life in Italy unpredictable for Osman. He is constantly looking for work, having to take odd jobs here and there. Usually, the work consists of unofficial manual labor for farmers who need a hand in their fields, or as a busboy at tourist resorts. Depending on the shifting seasons, Osman spends his days picking, digging, reaping, cleaning, and lifting. When there is no work, he is *waiting.* Sometimes he works without a contract, making him vulnerable to the mercy of his employer. The often long overdue salary can be 15 euro or less, which is normal for a ten-hour day of hard work. The times he gets a contract, it is usually short term, lasting two-to-four months at a time.

Pepé, Osman and I walk further up until we arrive at a well carved in the shape of an oval hole into the mountain. I can hear the water trickle, and, without seeing it, I imagine how it is further irrigated into the ground, running along the rows of Pepé’s crops. We sit down at the stone steps by the well, and with a voice recorder in one hand, and a cup of freshly squeezed juice in the other, we listen to Pepé talk about life in Badolato. Pepé is a born and raised Badolatese. He has studied and worked some time away from Badolato, before moving back to take care of his elderly mother, and to tend to his father’s garden. “Nature is the true richness of the world”, Pepé says admiringly. “Here, you stay in peace. With clean air. And no noise pollution.” Pepé lives in Badolato Borgo all year round, following people’s movements as they come and go with the changing seasons. “During the winter, there remains very little people here, mainly old people who stay shut in their houses. The young people have gone away.” Osman nods at this last part, being all too much aware of the Borgo’s winter silence. I ask Pepé about the tourists arriving in summer, to which he enthusiastically replies: “We exchange things! You tell me something about your people, he tells me

something about his people and I tell you about my people." He gestures towards the three of us, before saying: "We become richer with knowledge, not money." Osman smiles and nods enthusiastically to Pepé's words. Pepé continues:

> Immigration is a resource! They need houses. Him [Osman], he lives in a house owned by the municipality. Because where would we make them stay? Under a tree? Then, of course, we don't have any work to give here. But him, he is a resource. If I must have work done here by hand, he is young and strong. I, who am old, can't do this kind of work, and you can't reach this place with machines [Badolato, my translation from Italian, February 2019].

Abstract

Due to a history of accommodating immigrants since the 1990s, Badolato has built a reputation of being *il paese di accoglienza* (the town of hospitality), with its own *modello di accoglienza* (accommodation model). In the news, immigration in Italy and Europe is often depicted as a problem to be fixed, and the influx of migrants is described as a liability for the receiving state. It is therefore interesting that in Badolato, several of the local Italians perceive immigration as an opportunity of revitalization and reciprocal cultural exchange in the face of regional depopulation and an aging population. The facilitators of integration in Badolato work towards creating a sustainable community that includes the migrants, so that they can help stimulate the local economy and revitalize the town. However, many of the migrants did not seem to envision themselves as part of the integration narrative of revitalization and cultural exchange. Their lives in Badolato are characterized by temporality and a precariousness that does not match what the integration project intends.

What forms of social bonds are created across and within the different groups of the community in light of this divergence of expectations? In the thesis, I set out to explore the social dynamics that unfold in the intersection between the idealistic narrative of the intercultural accommodation model, and the social reality that I observed during my fieldwork. I discuss the facilitators of integration's attempts to rekindle the original experiment of the 1990s' arrival of the Kurdish refugees in order to carry forth the narrative of the hospitable integration town. This project is dependent on the Appreciated Other – the social imaginary of the foreign guest that reinvigorates the host culture through his otherness. However, the conceptualization of the Appreciated Other presents the migrants as extraordinary guests and commended outsiders, thereby reproducing them as "strangers within". Genuine hospitality may therefore be lost in symbolic gestures of staged hospitality. Rather than the advocacy for the urgent political aspects of immigration, moments of community building between the migrants and the Badolatesi developed during mundane activities like football, voluntary work and the sharing of food. Genuine hospitality was therefore more likely to take place when performativity and political agenda was absent from the interaction between the migrants and the facilitators of integration.

Keywords: migration; integration; othering; hospitality; waiting.

Chapter 1:

From Ghost Town to Host Town

Photo 1: Badolato Borgo. By Ida Karin Sagvolden.

Introduction

To understand the present-day socio-political conditions of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza* (the hospitable town), it is important to understand how people's movements within and outside of Badolato have shaped the town's identity. The encounters between the locals and the migrants are influenced by Badolato's previous experience of depopulation and economic decline, followed by attempts of repopulation through immigration. It is therefore important to have a certain knowledge of how the town transformed from ghost town to host town. In this chapter, I will therefore give a rough outline of the history of Badolato, emphasizing the demographic development, leading up to the arrival of the first refugees that marked the beginning of the accommodation project.

The historical review will serve as a backdrop for the following exploration of the social dynamics of present-day Badolato. How did Badolato go from being characterized as *la città fantasma* to *il paese di accoglienza*? And in what way does the town's history of depopulation by emigration, followed by a repopulation through immigration, shape the encounters between the migrants and the locals? The narrative of Badolato as "the welcoming town" states that there was established a sense of shared community with the Kurdish refugees back in 1997. Meanwhile, the present social scenery of Badolato bears little resemblance to the idealistic image of the past. Finally, in this chapter, I will illustrate how the narrative of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza* is an echo of the past that creates a double pressure on the African migrants: on one hand, the migrants must navigate the general difficulties of being a refugee in a foreign country, while on the other hand, simultaneously, live up to the expectations of being refugees in the image of *il paese di accoglienza*.

Città fantasma

Calabria is a region located in the southwestern part of the Italian peninsula. It belongs to the southern region of Italy, and includes the provinces of Catanzaro, Cosenza and Reggio di Calabria. Commercial activities in Calabria mainly consist of agriculture, including the cultivation of olives, citrus fruits, figs and wine, as well as the breeding of sheep and goats. Additionally, tourism is a growing industry in the region.

Calabria has a long history of both abandonment and reconstruction. In *Il senso dei luoghi* (2004), Italian anthropologist Vito Teti characterizes several towns in Calabria as *città fantasma* (ghost-towns). These towns have been abandoned throughout a history of natural disasters, economic decline and mass-emigration. Teti's ethnographies include Badolato. In the book, he writes about the "life course" of places: a place is founded, it changes, it becomes abandoned and it is revitalized (Teti, 2004, pp. 4–5). Likewise, the history of Badolato is the story of those who left, those who returned and those who stayed. Therefore, if one wants to understand the present social dynamics of Badolato, it is important to understand how the people's movements within and outside of Badolato have shaped the town's identity.

Photo 2: Map of Italy, where Calabria and Badolato is encircled (Ahoerstemeier, 2003, edited by author).

Badolato is a *comune* (township/municipality) located in the province of Catanzaro in the region of Calabria. Although there are traces of settlement dating back to prehistoric, ancient and Byzantine times, Badolato was officially founded in 1080 by the Norman adventurer and conqueror Robert Guiscard (Teti, 2004, p. 459). Located on a hilltop about five kilometers from the sea, the medieval Borgo was built at a safe distance from the coastline, which was considered dangerous because of potential invasion from travelers at sea. Today, there

are 2939 people living in Badolato (ISTAT, 2019). While most of the population is settled in Badolato Marina, only around 200 people live in Badolato Borgo, also called Badolato Superiore. Badolato Borgo is divided into four main districts: facing south-east there is *u Destru*, towards north-west is *u Mancusu*, the west-facing fourth district is called *Spinettu*, while the lower area of the village is called *Jusuterra*.

Photo 3: Badolato Borgo. By author.

The population of Badolato has changed considerably over the years, among other things due to several natural disasters. In 1640, there was a great earthquake that killed about 300 people and partly destroyed the town. Another earthquake further damaged the town in 1659, followed by a third earthquake in 1783 that killed two people and caused considerable destruction (Comune di Badolato, n.d. a). However, the town got back on its feet, and, gradually, it managed to become an important economic and commercial center in the region. In 1783, the population was at about 3700 inhabitants, and in the period 1871 to 1951 it even rose to 4-5000 people. Then, due to yet another earthquake in 1947, some families began relocating down to the Marina where the State had granted the construction of the first public

houses. When a disastrous flood hit the Borgo in 1951, many more people were forced to leave the old town and go live in the Marina (Teti, 2004, pp. 459–460; Riviera e borghi degli Angeli, 2019).

Photo 4: Badolato Borgo from afar. By author.

Although involuntarily driven out of the Borgo by the natural disasters, the relocating to the Marina benefitted the Badolatesi as well, at least in terms of infrastructure and commodities. In the Marina, people got access to facilities that were lacking up in the Borgo. This included the railway, highway and the sea, which allowed more traveling and commercial activities. Thus, Badolato improved its connection to the rest of the region from the Marina. When the WWII hit Italy in the 1940s, Badolato received a number of American soldiers. The foreigners introduced a different lifestyle to the *contadini* and the *muratori* of Badolato, directing their gaze north of Badolato, even to the north of Italy, to seek their fortune abroad (Teti, 2004, p. 461). According to local historian Vincenzo Squillacioti, the encounter with the Americans was the first significant reason for the emigration of the Badolatesi (Teti, 2004, p. 461). Thus, Badolato went from being in one place to multiple places as several expat communities were established abroad. In fact, there is a "Badolato" in Switzerland with a population of about 700 people, there are 500 Badolatesi living in the province of Milan called Rho, and even a small Badolato in Buenos Aires (Teti, 2004, p. 461). Italy, like many other southern European countries, participated in the postwar economic growth as countries

of emigration, exporting workers to the developing economies of northern Europe and America (Quassoli, 1999, p. 219).

The population fluctuation resulted in a division between the old Badolato and the new settlements. The Badolatesi did not find the Borgo to be sufficiently accommodating anymore and envisioned their future elsewhere. As families left, nature slowly consumed the old town. Trees, moss and vines took over the empty homes and antique buildings, the churches and streets. However, the Badolatesi still thought of the Borgo as the original Badolato and the source of their cultural heritage. It was there they buried their dead and celebrated their traditions. Nevertheless, the town was turning into one of the many *città fantasma* of Calabria.

Photo 5: A chipped old sign saying "Welcome to Badolato". By author.

In October 1986, a journalist by the name of Domenico Lanciano wrote an article in the Roman newspaper *Il Tempo*. The article was called “Badolato – Paese in vendita in Calabria” (Lanciano, 2016), and the goal was to draw attention to the fact that Badolato was becoming a ghost town. With the article, Lanciano created a slogan for Badolato as a *paese in vendita* (a town for sale) (Comune di Badolato, n.d. a). The media picked up and spread the slogan, and, soon, the town attracted the attention of real estate agents, hotel companies, tourist operators and other investors. Televisions and newspapers from all over the world arrived in Badolato

(Comune di Badolato, n.d. a). The extensive press coverage triggered disagreement among the Badolatesi, who were worried that selling the old houses to outsiders would mean disrespecting the town's integrity and neglecting the history embedded in the Borgo (Teti, 2004, p. 464).

Photo 6: Signs of decay from natural disasters and abandonment. By author.

Nevertheless, about 80 houses were bought and restructured by families coming from Switzerland, Austria, Germany and other Italian cities like Naples and Milan. The tourist operators' approach was to attract people who would value cultural sensitivity and local sustainability, and, according to Squillacioti, the buyers agreed to maintain the traditional architecture of the Borgo when transforming it into their new vacation homes (In Teti, 2004, p. 465). However, notwithstanding the new surge of life and attention, Badolato remained a travel destination mainly during religious holidays and summer vacation. This limited function of the town did not solve its chronic problems of unemployment, economic decline, general degradation and desolation. Yet, the Badolatesi's nostalgic attachment to their deteriorating old town arguably laid the foundation for *il paese di accoglienza*: With the arrival of the Kurds, the Badolatesi could envision another future for their town by rendering their deserted Borgo into a place of refuge.

Il paese di accoglienza

On the 24th of August 1997, a boat carrying refugees reached the shoreline of Badolato (Elston, 2005, p. 176). From the boat came men, women, children and elderly people in very bad health. The Badolatesi were eager to assist the refugees, bringing them necessities like food and clothes. About 475 of them were accommodated in a school in Badolato Marina. Together with the locals, they ate food, sang and played music. The Badolatesi were moved by the drama of the arrival and the close encounters with the refugees. However, because the Dublin Regulation was not enforced until later that year, there were no regulations as to how to formally deal with the foreigners. Many of the refugees left for other European countries like Germany, France and Sweden, and after a while, few refugee families remained (Trapasso, personal communication, February 2020).

On the 26th of December the same year, another ship arrived at the shoreline of the neighboring towns of Santa Caterina and Guardavalle. The second boat, named "Ararat", carried approximately 835 refugees, mainly Turkish Kurds (Teti, 2004, p. 466). The arrival of "Ararat" received much media attention. On television, people could watch how the refugees, having fled from the horrors of war and political turmoil, were now met with accommodation and solidarity by the Calabrian people (Teti, 2004, p. 467). The mayor of Badolato, Gerardo Mannello, was asked by the prefecture of Catanzaro to accommodate the newly arrived Kurds. Considering the positive experience with the previous arrival of refugees, Mannello accepted, and Badolato received 375 people from "Ararat" (Trapasso, personal communication, February 2020). Since the police were not used to handling these types of situations, they thought it best to separate the women and men. However, by doing so, they overlooked the fact that they were separating families. Mannello was personally involved in reuniting the husbands and wives by driving them in his car, and from these close and personal encounters, he got the idea for the pilot accommodation project (Trapasso, personal communication, February 2020; Mannello, personal communication, June 2019).

On a June afternoon in 2019, Gerardo Mannello invited me onto his boat to show me the beautiful coastline. As we were floating on the very waters that brought the refugees in the 1990s, we talked about the origins of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza*. Mannello, who back then was and still is the mayor, remembers the first arrival of refugees clearly:

> I got the idea of giving houses to the refugees who came from Kurdistan, so that I could give them a new life, a new dignity. They were engineers, doctors, merchants, farmers, elderly people, children, and pregnant women… Initially it was a huge resource for us. [Badolato, June 2019, my translation from Italian]

The initial housing arrangements consisted of using an elementary school as a first reception center. However, it quickly became apparent that the accommodation of the refugees demanded a more permanent and dignified solution. Mannello proposed to the prefecture of Catanzaro that some of the abandoned houses could be provided to the Kurds while they were waiting for the asylum applications to be processed. Around twenty houses were renovated to accommodate the refugees (Elston, 2005, p. 178). Together with Mannello, city council member Daniela Trapasso was another central figure in the institutionalizing process of hospitality for the Kurds, and the establishment of CIR in Badolato in 1999. CIR is a non-governmental humanitarian organization that was established in Italy in 1990 on the initiative of the United Nations. The organization defends the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, manages reception and supervises the conditions of integration. CIR base their operations on projects approved and financed by the UN, the European Union, the Italian Government and regional and private foundations (CIR, 2018). Together with the municipality, CIR launched a pilot accommodation project in Badolato. The pilot project was reputedly the first of its kind in Europe (CIR, 2018), and aimed at facilitating integration for the refugees through the accommodation model called *accoglienza diffusa*[1] (Fabbricatti, 2013, p. 69; Lo Piccolo, 2013, p. 152). The refugees were thus welcomed as neighbors up in Badolato Borgo. Living in the Borgo enabled them to thoroughly socialize with the local population. As Mannello explains:

> I didn't like seeing them locked up in the school. I spoke to the superiors and immediately sent them up in the town. This way they fraternized with the Badolatesi; they were at the bar playing cards together in a community, a new community. [Badolato, June 2019, my translation from Italian]

The pilot project organized different businesses and activities to employ the Kurds into the local economy. These businesses included a Kurdish restaurant, a blacksmith's shop and ceramic business (Mannello, personal communication, June 2019). Badolato received

[1] "Diffused accommodation", carried on by accommodating the refugees in separate housing in between the houses of regular inhabitants, as opposed to big reception centers or camps.

extensive media coverage because of the arrival and accommodation of the Kurds. Documentary makers, musicians, researchers, university students, and social activists came to visit the town (Elston, 2005, p. 171). Amongst the visitors was Domenico Lucano, the mayor of a neighboring town called Riace. Lucano was so inspired by what he saw that he founded "Associazione Città Futura – Giuseppe Puglisi", an association that wanted to transform Riace into a *città dell'accoglienza* (a welcoming city) for immigrants (Ass.ne Città Futura G. Puglisi, 2017). The integration efforts of Lucano and his associates brought international attention to Riace. Fortune Magazine even advocated Lucano as one of the world's 50 greatest leaders in 2016 (Fortune, 2019). However, in October 2018, Lucano was arrested, accused of facilitating illegal immigration and of arranging marriages of convenience between immigrant women and local Italian men (Bassano, 2018). These allegations marked the beginning of the end of Lucano's accommodation project, and the political turmoil resulted in Lucano being put in house arrest and later exiled from his hometown. State funding was withdrawn from the integration project in Riace, and many of the migrant families who had been living there thanks to the project, were transferred. The supporters of Lucano are still working to rebuild the accommodation project while the former mayor is facing trials and investigations (Wallis, 2019).

Photo 7: Banner saying "Peace". By author.

By the time I arrived in Badolato, most of the Kurdish population had departed from the town. CIR now hosted young men from different African countries: my informants consisted of people from Cameroon, Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Somalia. In an interview with Antonio Laganà, head of CIR Badolato since 2011, I was told that the aim of CIR was to create an "*ad hoc* path for each beneficiary". CIR can host up to 30 beneficiaries, which allows them to operate on an individual and personal level. In the interview, Laganà further explained what characterized CIR:

> Our policy is that of having small numbers, because only with small numbers can we think of creating an integrative path and 360-degree assistance for these people. The people of Badolato have never seen [the immigrants] as enemies or as different. Indeed, in them they have seen their own children who left for emigration. So, I would say that it was like *accoglienza famigliare* with these people. [Badolato, my translation from Italian, July 2019]

By invoking family terms when describing the local community's relationship to the immigrants in Badolato, Laganà tries to account for what he and other facilitators of integration characterizes to be Badolato's historically unique approach to integration in Italy, which emphasizes multicultural community building and close individual contact. Over the years, the Kurdish families left Badolato to be reunited with other family members and to search for new opportunities elsewhere. The experience with the Kurds nonetheless marked the beginning of Badolato's status as *il paese di accoglienza*. During my fieldwork, it seemed as if the pilot project with the Kurds created a double pressure on both the migrants and the facilitators of integration. The migrants had to navigate the general difficulties of being refugees in a foreign country. In addition, they were represented as the embodiment of the hospitality of Badolato, thereby faced with the expectations of appearing as refugee guests in the image of *il paese di accoglienza*, even though most seemed uninterested in the narrative of the past. The employees of CIR and integration workers, on the other hand, had to manage the general issues of integration, which were especially challenging in the context of increasingly right-wing politics, in addition to having to adapt to the temporary conditions of their migrant beneficiaries. The following chapters will explore the social dynamics that develop within this context of diverging expectations.

Immigration in Italy

In Italy, the arrival of immigrants peaked between July 2015 and January 2016. The numbers have then steadily decreased by more than 95% in 2018, compared to the highest numbers of the previous years. In 2017, approximately 187,000 irregular migrants arrived in EU by sea, which was roughly half of the previous year, and this trend remained in 2018 (Sorana, 2019). According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than 2,000 migrants died in the Mediterranean in 2018, by far making this one of the deadliest routes for irregular migrants (IOM, 2019a). Maritime arrivals to Europe in 2018 came from countries like Afghanistan, Syria, Arabic Republic, and Iraq, while migration flows to Spain and Italy was significantly made up of North and sub-Saharan Africans (IOM, 2019a, pp. 94–95).

Despite the decrease in the number of arrivals in Italy after 2016, there is a perception among many Italians that the flow of migration represents an "invasion", and right-wing politicians like Matteo Salvini has therefore adopted a strong anti-immigration position (Sorana, 2019). In the news, immigration in Italy and Europe is often depicted as a problem to be fixed, and the influx of migrants is described as a liability (Aarnes, 2019; Settineri, 2013, p. 99; Skartveit, 2020). According to Italian writer Francesco Sorana, the Italians, compared to the European average, have shown a decidedly negative attitude towards immigrants: 74% of Italians believe that immigrants increase crime levels in the country (EU 57%), 62% believe that immigrants are a weight for the welfare (EU 59%) and 58% believe that immigrants are stealing jobs from Italians (Sorana, 2019).

When a foreigner arrives in Italy through unofficial channels, he or she is received with first aid and assistance operations that take place in centers that are set up in the principal places of disembarkation. These centers are called First Aid and Reception Centers (*Centro di primo soccorso e accoglienza*, CPSA). The CPSA provide first aid and identification of the newly arrived immigrants, before they are transferred to other centers (AIDA, 2020). Asylum seekers who enter the Schengen area are identified by having their fingerprints saved in a system called EURODAC Regulation, which is part of the Dublin system (Brekke & Brochmann, 2015, p. 3). The Dublin system serves to establish that only one member state of the European Union is responsible for a given asylum application, namely the first member state in which the asylum seeker was initially identified (ECHR, 2016).

A refugee spends the first period in Italy clarifying his or her legal status, which is a process can last several years (Bianco & Cobo, 2019, p. 2). The second-line reception system where the migrant goes next, was formerly known as SPRAR[2]. However, due to a 2018 reform, SPRAR was renamed to SIPROIMI[3] (AIDA, 2020). The 2018 reform, named DL n. 113/2018, generally referred to as *il decreto Salvini* ("the Salvini decree"), is a contested legal reform that has made significant changes to the protection system of Italy. One of the central changes from this law is that the immigration protection system now only offers its services to international protection holders and unaccompanied foreign minors (Bianco & Cobo, 2019, p. 3). Due to the *decreto Salvini*, the category of humanitarian protection was abolished (Bianco & Cobo, 2019, p. 3). Consequently, according to the new law, CPA–centers are no longer required to provide integration services to people who would previously qualify as humanitarian protector holders. These people therefore lose access to crucial services, like legal and psychological support, language courses and work orientation services (Bianco & Cobo, 2019, p. 3). However, asylum seekers and humanitarian protection holders who were involved in the former system of SPRAR can remain in this accommodation system until the end of their project. This applies to several of my informants, who during my fieldwork were in a transitionary period, having entered Italy under the humanitarian protection. As their accommodation and integration projects with CIR drew to an end, they were facing an uncertain future concerning their legal status. Because only unaccompanied minors have immediate access to the current system of SIPROIMI, the protection system is available to adults only after international protection has been granted (AIDA, 2020). However, local authorities can accommodate victims of trafficking, domestic violence and exploitation, people who are issued a residence permit for medical treatment, or for acts of civic value (AIDA, 2020).

Methodology and ethical considerations

This thesis is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Badolato over a period of six months, from the beginning of February to the end of July 2019. The ethnography includes data collected through participant observation, practiced with three main groups of

[2] *Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati*, which translates to "System of Protection for Refugees and Asylum Seekers".
[3] *Sistema di protezione per titolari di protezione internazionale e minori stranieri non accompagnati*, which translates to "System of Protection for Beneficiaries of Protection and Unaccompanied Minors".

informants: local Italians, African migrants, and, to some extent, tourists coming from other parts of Italy and foreign countries. I conducted participant observation through the routine of my daily life in Badolato, and by actively taking place at public events and private occasions. For example, I celebrated Easter with the Italians and I practiced Ramadan with the Muslim migrants. Otherwise, I regularly ate dinner at the houses of informants, and I attended Italian language classes with the migrants. Much of the data was collected while waiting for the bus with the migrants, and by hanging out at the bar and on the *piazza*.

Doing participant observation offered me insight into what Julie Zahle calls "the nonverbalized aspects of culture", meaning tacit information about social life (Zahle, 2012, p. 55). People generally communicate a great deal of information beyond words. For example, by spending much time waiting for the bus together with the migrants, I gradually understood the importance of mobility and the relationship between independence and owning a car. By observing the migrants stomp their feet in frustration over a late bus, or joining them in a run for the last bus home, I got a more profound understanding of the precariousness of waiting – not only for the bus, but for access to the Italian society as such, in this case, the necessary legal documents of residence permit in order to get a driver's license (see chapter 4).

Besides doing participant observation, I conducted unstructured and semi-structured interviews. These interviews allowed me to further explore what my informants thought about their situation in Badolato. Whenever the conversation touched upon themes that I found relevant for my research, I would ask my informants to elaborate by doing an unstructured interview, which meant that I let them talk about the topic in question without trying to lead the conversation. For the occasional semi-structured or in-depth interview, I would organize a time and date with the informant and prepare a set of open questions in advance. This chapter's interview with Gerardo Mannello is an example of one of the semi-structured interviews that I conducted, while the opening vignette with Osman, Pepé and I, is an example of an unstructured interview.

James Staples and Katherine Smith describe the interview as "a space for the detachment and envisioning of subjectivities at a particular moment in time…" (Staples & Smith, 2015, p. 3). In other words, an interview enables the informant to reflect upon the theme in question to a greater extent than during informal situations, allowing him to detach himself and others from a particular event and thus analyze it more clearly. I used a voice recorder for the semi-

structured interviews, and a notebook for the unstructured interviews. The voice recorder and notebook worked as "performance-enhancing props" (Schwandner-Sievers, 2009, p. 185), in the sense that they enabled me to create a more formalized setting. By showcasing my "props", like taking out my notebook during a conversation, I signaled to my informants that I wanted to know more about a certain topic, to which they usually responded with giving more details. The notebook was also functioning as a performance-enhancing prop when it came to performing professionalism. I used the notebook to continuously "re-stage my research persona" by visibly taking notes, and thus remind my informants of my role as a researcher (Schwandner-Sievers, 2009, p. 182).

Throughout the fieldwork, I made sure to keep the people I surrounded myself with knowledgeable about my research, in order to secure their informed consent (Zahle, 2017, p. 473). This included telling them about the intentions of my research and letting them know that the thesis will be publicly accessible. I also reminded them about their right to revoke their consent at any time. Because Badolato is a considerably tight community, information about me was traveling through unofficial channels, or the village's "rumor mill". It was therefore relatively easy to keep the people in Badolato informed about my role as a researcher. I was also interviewed by local and regional newspapers and television channels, which enabled me to broadcast the reasons for my presence in Badolato and thus make the research transparent. For example, several prints of an interview I conducted with a local municipal volunteer group were placed on multiple locations around town for all to see. In Badolato Borgo, I became known as *la studentessa norvegese* (the Norwegian student) and *l'antropologa* (the anthropologist). To ensure my informants' right to privacy, I have anonymized their identities by changing their names. Regarding the informants that I spent the most time with, I took further measures in ensuring informed consent by writing a consent form in Italian that contained information about my research and their rights. They each got a signed copy of the consent form and have its content readily available should they wish to read it again.

I want to note that the purpose of this thesis is not to scrutinize any "true" motives of the people involved, for example by judging whether the accommodation of the refugees and migrants was either done in a "bad" or a "good" fashion. The thesis is rather an attempt to showcase the socio-political, sometimes asymmetric relationship between guest and host, as I have observed my informants during the fieldwork. Furthermore, I want to remark that the

thesis' ethnographic data is mainly collected through participant observation with the migrants, and less with the employees of CIR. This is for several reasons. For example, I became quickly adopted into the migrant group as "family" based on a shared "peerness" (explained below). In addition, the migrants and I did not have the same means of mobility as the Italians who owned cars, and therefore the bus became a common denominator and social arena. By waiting for and taking the bus, the migrants and I spent much more time together than I did with the employees of CIR, who did not live in Badolato Borgo, and who had busy schedules compared to the migrants. Although I attempt to show the complexity of Badolato's social life in this thesis by including the local Italians' point of view, the thesis will nevertheless be characterized by an emphasis of the migrants' standpoint because of the reasons mentioned above.

The researcher in the field: language and trust

Before the fieldwork, I spent one month in the city of Perugia doing an intensive language course in Italian. The language skills I acquired in Perugia, in addition to previous knowledge of the Italian language, turned out to be crucial for gaining access to my informants in Badolato. Most of my informants were either uncomfortable with English, or did not master it well enough to speak it. This was true for both those who had Italian as their mother tongue, and those who came from French-speaking West-African countries. The Cameroonian, Senegalese and Guinean migrants spoke Italian with me, while those who came from Nigeria and Gambia preferred English. My proficiency in Italian and English facilitated me in the process of building trust among my informants: both the Italians and the migrants.

By speaking Italian and showing interest in the local dialect Calabrese, the people of Badolato included me in conversations I would not have had access to, had I not acquired some linguistic competence beforehand. To be able to participate in small talk at the bar was for example an excellent occasion for catching up on town news, as well as for building rapport with the locals. With the migrants, the fact that none of us had Italian as our first language worked as a common denominator that marked us as fellow outsiders. The migrants and I would bond over shared inadequacy over the local language, which created a sense of community. Besides language being a source of communication and building rapport, I also used language in a reciprocal manner – because the migrants taught me about their ways of

living, including bits and pieces from their languages (whether it was French, Pular or Mandinka), I organized informal language courses in English with some of my closest informants as a way of giving back and to strengthen social ties.

Since the greater part of this thesis is based on my own ethnographic research, it is important to take a moment to reflect upon my role as a researcher in the field and explore the possible impact I have made on my data. I am a white, young, female university student from a Nordic country. These different aspects of my identity would in some cases increase the possibilities of building rapport, and in other cases prevent me from accessing certain types of information. As an example: I am not Italian, but I am European. Based on a conception of shared (white) Europeanness, some Italians would tell me their opinions about the African migrants. For example, an elderly Italian once wanted to warn me about some of the Africans that he considered *cattivo* (bad). Another example is when Italians wanted to ask questions about Islam during Ramadan, but turned to me instead of asking the Muslim migrant next to me. The migrants and I built rapport based on the fact that we were peers age-wise, but also due to shared personal interests and references to popular culture. The migrants would invoke family terms when addressing me. For example, my gender got me the role as a "little sister", which was reinforced by the fact that I always asked questions that they thought of as strange or funny. At the same time, the fact that I was at the same age as many of the migrants also made me "one of the guys", exemplified by the recurrent nicknames of "boy" and "man". Doing fieldwork can be a very trying time for an inexperienced anthropologist, and one is prone to loneliness when figuring it all out for the first time in a new place surrounded by unknown faces. It is therefore a great moment when the researcher feels as if she has gained her informants' trust. I interpret the family terms, and the fact that they explicitly told me I was "part of the family", as the migrants accepting my presence and person.

Categories

The Badolatesi alternately refer to the migrants as *ospiti* (guests), *benificiari* (beneficiaries) or just *i ragazzi* [*del CIR*] (the guys of CIR). The categories we use to denote individuals and groups carries with them certain socially, culturally, politically and historically conditioned associations (Gullestad, 2002, p. 42). In *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies* (2013), a book on migrant farm workers in the United States, anthropologist Seth Holmes writes about how in

immigration studies, social scientists use several terms that can misrepresent and even justify social inequalities. For example, terms like “immigrant” and “migrant”, both terms that frequently show up in the media and in everyday discourse, can be understood as involving freely chosen movement between communities (Holmes, 2013, p. 186). This is seldom the case for the African migrants in Badolato, as their reasons for leaving their home countries range from working to support a struggling family while acquiring an education, to fleeing prosecution and war. I use the term “migrants”, sometimes “immigrants”, when writing about the African population in Badolato, because it is general enough to cover each of the young men within the accommodation project.

In consideration to Holmes’ reflections, however, I would like to emphasize that the migrants’ reasons for migrating varies. Many of the African men in Badolato has been involved in cases that can broadly be referred to as forced displacement, or forced migration (IOM, 2019b, p. 77). The recipients of the services of CIR are reserved for refugees, defined after the 1951 Convention in Geneva (IOM, 2019b, p. 171; Comune di Badolato, n.d., b) and asylum seekers (IOM, 2019b, p. 14). However, I also met many African men in Badolato who were not a part of the project of CIR, and whom I therefore do not know the official status of. They were either visiting friends in Badolato, or they were in town for reasons unknown to me. Nonetheless, in choosing to denote one part of my informants according to their migratory status, and the other part (the Badolatesi) according to their status as locals, I will hopefully be able to give insight into the specific themes of this thesis (othering, integration, hospitality) while simultaneously having sufficiently stressed that the people I encountered during fieldwork are of course so much more than the categories I ascribe them here.

The reader might notice that I mainly use the masculine pronoun when referring to my informants throughout the thesis, even in gender-neutral contexts where a feminine pronoun would have been just as fitting. This is a conscious decision based on the fact that most of my informants are male. The reason for having mostly male informants, at least among the African migrants, is because CIR in Badolato only admits male participants. An Italian friend who was working with facilitating integration in a neighboring town, once suggested to me that separating single male refugees and migrants from women and families was done to avoid “promiscuity”. While gender division in refugee camps are common, I was never able to retrieve information as to exactly why Badolato stopped admitting families, like they did with the Kurds in the 1990s, and why they started just enrolling single men. As I will show in

chapter 4 and 5, the absence of family units and women have a significant impact on the way that the young Africans relate to their host town, and ultimately, how it works to undermine the potential for them to make stronger connections to Badolato.

Thesis structure

In this chapter, I have provided background information and historical context of Badolato in order to lay the basis of understanding the present-day context of the town. In chapter two, "The Appreciated Other", I will elaborate on the social dynamics that develop between the Italian and the migrant community in Badolato by looking at the practices of hospitality exercised by the facilitators of integration. In chapter three, "The Performance of Accoglienza", I will explore how hospitality is performed through analyzing three cases. In chapter four, "The Panoptic Piazza and Waiting", I will discuss the migrants' experience of place and how they relate to time as two central dimensions to their life in Badolato. In chapter five, "Piety and Morality", I will look at the migrants' different conceptions of moralities and ethical practices in relation to religious piety. In chapter six, "Revitalization through Integration", I will summarize the key points of the chapters and make some concluding remarks about the future.

Chapter 2:

The Appreciated Other

Photo 8: Open door in the Borgo. By Ida Karin Sagvolden.

Introduction

In this chapter, I will present two categories that I have developed in order to analyze the social relationships between the local community and the African migrants. These are the *Appreciated Other* and the *Advocate of Inclusion*. The Appreciated Other refers to the migrants in Badolato who, through social interaction with the local community, are characterized as a specific kind of Other: the African young men are welcomed as an essential part of the accommodation narrative of *il paese di accoglienza* due to their "otherness", and are consequently rendered commended outsiders. For migrants, this constitutes an ambiguous position because the migrants are included into, yet can never truly be a part of the local community.

On the other hand, the Advocate of Inclusion refers to the local Italians who are engaged in facilitating the integration of the migrants, including both employees of CIR and others who play an unofficial but nonetheless significant role in the migrants' lives. The two categories are interrelated through practices of hospitality. In this chapter, I will look at food as a central part of the practices of hospitality, both for the migrants and the Badolatesi. I will address the following questions: Why and how are the migrants reduced to Appreciated Others, and what implications does this category have for the migrants' process of integration in Badolato? Furthermore, what social consequences emerges through the practices of hospitality enacted by the Advocates of Inclusion?

I will argue that the practice of welcoming the migrants as a revitalizing component in the idealistic construction of *il paese di accoglienza* is counterproductive to the goals of the Advocate of Inclusion, because it renders the migrants Appreciated Others. In fact, by treating the migrants as extraordinary guests, they experience a social distance from the local community which consequently hinders them from investing in lasting relationships to Badolato and its inhabitants.

Buon appetito

It is a quiet April evening. I am outside walking in the Borgo when I spot a group of migrants standing at the bus stop by the *piazza*. I head towards them, and upon arrival the men

cheerfully greet me. I carefully reciprocate their handshakes, having learnt from my earlier mistakes of prematurely high-fiving fist bumps. My friends Ismael, Souleymane and Seydou are all in their early 20s and come from the same city in Guinea. After we were introduced by the head of CIR in February, the Guineans have gradually included me in their close-knit group. I ask Ismael where they are going at this hour, but he just shrugs and replies that he is not sure what is going on. "There'll be food, that's all I know", he says. A car draws up to the curb to pick the Guineans up, and I spontaneously join them down to the Marina. The driver is an Italian man who works for the municipality. He explains that the church in the Marina is hosting a dinner for the immigrants in Badolato. The church supposedly want to make the dinner into an annual event, having arranged it once before the previous year. We drive for about 20 minutes down the twisting hills before we are let off outside the church. After a waiting period, an elderly *signora* comes jangling with a set of keys and lets us in a side building connected to the church.

Behind the doors is a spacious hall. Chairs and tables are stacked along the walls, and in the back of the room there is a door leading to the kitchen. The Guineans immediately head towards a foosball table to play while the *signora* begins organizing the chairs and tables. When I offer to help her, she smiles and wordlessly point out things I can do. Gradually, more people begin to arrive: the rest of the migrants and the employees of CIR show up, as well as other migrants who are slightly older and who are not with CIR anymore. In addition, the *signora* with the keys is joined by more Italian women. I figure they must be volunteering for the church. While the migrants join the Guineans' games of foosball and checkers, I join the women in the kitchen. They are bustling about, preparing for dinner, rapidly turning the hall into an impromptu restaurant. Occasionally, the women pause and mingle with the migrants that they seem to know from before. The atmosphere is relaxed, and delicious smells of lasagna and fried chicken seeps out into the hall from the kitchen.

Then, the priest of the church arrives. He goes around in the hall greeting the migrants. I notice the priest and deacon from the church in the Borgo have arrived as well. In the kitchen, I am mingling with about 10 Italian *signore*, all of whom must be around the age of 50. One of them asks me if I speak Italian, and when I say yes, they clap their hands together in surprise and laugh. "She speaks Italian, we can communicate!", says one of them. "Some of the guys who was here last year don't speak any better Italian this year." The other women nod disappointedly. Before we can continue our conversation, dinner is ready. We are about

30 people spread out on three big tables that have been put together in long lines. I am sitting on a table of 10, next to Ismael, Souleymane and Seydou. The priest welcomes us to join him and the volunteers in prayer before we eat, but because most of the people in the room are Muslim, most just sit quiet while the Catholics say grace. Instead, the Muslims whisper *Bismillah* as is custom in Islam before eating. Then, the air is filled with the sound of cutlery clinking. The Italian women are going around the room serving food. A Cameroonian man at my table is frowning upon a piece of lasagna, much to the amusement of his seatmates. He hurriedly proceeds to dump the pasta onto another plate before happily accepting some fried chicken. Soon, we are all sighing contently and drooping on our chairs due to our full stomachs. Ismael makes a game out of accepting more food on behalf of the others, teasingly insisting that his victim is only being modest when turning down a fourth round of lasagna.

Afterwards, the Italians want to do a photoshoot. We all line up in two rows to pose for the camera, resting our arms over each other's shoulders. One of the migrants is the photographer, collecting cell phones so that everybody can have their own picture of the group. Simultaneously, many of the migrants are taking selfies, which means that we keep smiling in multiple directions. The photo shoot goes on for a while until everyone is satisfied. We end the night by shaking hands and thanking each other for the evening, before one of the employees of CIR gives Ismael, Souleymane, Seydou and me a lift to the Borgo. On our way to the Guineans' place, we pass a bar on the *piazza* where two local men are drinking beer by the entrance. Their laughter fades away as we enter the apartment. Inside, Ismael pours us some wine while Souleymane sits down by the kitchen table to shuffle cards for a round of "Games". The doorbell buzzes, and Osman and a Gambian named Bakary arrives. Ismael fries us some rice with to go with our nightcap, and together, the five men and I spend the rest of the evening drinking and playing cards.

The Advocate of Inclusion

The ethnography above describes an occasion from when the migrants of Badolato were invited to a charity dinner hosted by the Catholic church in the Marina. In this case, the members of the church collaborated with CIR in enabling social networking between the Italians and the migrants, two groups who otherwise do not interact on a regular basis. The charity dinner was therefore a special occasion where the employees of CIR and the

volunteers of the church could express their hospitality towards the subjects of charity. The migrants, on the other hand, could enjoy a free meal and the excitement of attending a big event where they could mingle with other migrants from the area as well as with the Italians. The charity dinner exemplifies the category of *The Advocate of Inclusion*, which refers to people in Badolato who are involved in facilitating the integration of the migrants. The term is intentionally broad because it covers a variety of people: The Advocate of Inclusion can either be an official employee of CIR and the municipality, or a person who play an unofficial but nonetheless significant role in the migrants' lives, like the women organizing the charity dinner. Pepé, the Badolatese farmer introduced in the prologue, is another example of an Advocate of Inclusion. After I introduced him to some of my migrant friends, Pepé regularly took initiative to socialize with the Africans. He purchased food and drinks, offered car rides between the Borgo and the Marina, and simply hung out with the migrants.

Through administering the bureaucratic practicalities, promoting refugee issues or by offering support and friendship, all Advocates of Inclusion actively engage in accommodating the migrants. However, besides Pepé, there was less to no regular contact between the local community and the migrant population. There are several reasons for this lack of social interaction. One influential dynamic is exemplified in the fact that the migrants usually did not stay in Badolato long enough for the local community to develop closer ties with them. The division was also partly due to the conceptual reduction of the African migrant into the Appreciated Other.

The Appreciated Other

Once during fieldwork, I told a Calabrian couple that I was living in Badolato, to which they responded in an amused tone: "Oh, the town full of foreigners, right?". As discussed in chapter 1, much of Badolato's regional reputation and identity is centered around the arrival of "Ararat" and the Kurdish refugees back in 1997. The narrative of *il paese di accoglienza* can be seen in light of so-called *campanilismo* ('bell-towerism'), which, according to anthropologist Antonio Sorge, is a well-known attitude in Italy where the bell tower of one's own parish church is said to be taller than those of all the other villages. The bell tower is a metaphor for the community's collective reputation (Sorge, 2009, p. 5). What makes Badolato unique in the eyes of the Advocates of Inclusion is the hospitality that is embedded in the

integration of the migrants. Whether the promotion of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza* can be characterized as *campanilismo* or not, the accommodation narrative is nevertheless central to the town's status, especially when it comes to tourism. The social media profiles of the different tourist agencies frequently use phrases like "*il borgo degli stranieri*" (the town of foreigners) in promoting Badolato as a destination for multicultural encounters.[4] In order to carry forth the narrative of the hospitable integration town, the Advocates of Inclusion are dependent on the Appreciated Other – the social imaginary of the foreign guest that reinvigorates the host culture through his otherness.

In 1978, sociologist Edward Said published the acclaimed *Orientalism*. In the book, Said demonstrates how a dominant European political ideology, developed through colonialist practices, has constructed an imaginary of "the Orient", the East, as an ontological and epistemological contrast to "the Occident", the West. Orientalism has been and is being produced and reproduced through Western academic institutions, by Orientalist researchers whose endeavors, fortunes and specializations are built upon, and carry forward, the Orientalist tradition. Roughly tracing the starting point back to the late eighteenth century, Said discusses and analyzes Orientalism as a corporate institution for dealing with, and in extension, having authority and rule over the Orient (1978, p. 3). In other words, Orientalism is the Western academic tradition of positional superiority relative to the Orient – and other previous colonial regions, like South America and Africa. Within an Orientalist way of thinking, the Other is a subject that is considered culturally and/or ethnically different, and subsequently often inferior, to the West. The same goes for a non-European minority within Europe. Simultaneously, Orientalism is a dynamic structuralist process, because the construction of "the West" is dependent upon identifying a Western Self by contrasting it to the other "non-Westerners". Said notes that Orientalism does not unilaterally determine what can be produced about the oriental subjects, but rather that it acts like a backdrop that influences a given discourse (1978, p. 7). As anthropologist Marianne Gullestad writes: "the intense focus on 'them' puts 'us' out of focus, at the same time as 'we' reflects ourselves in our construction of 'them'" (Gullestad, 2002, p. 17, my translation from Norwegian). The

[4] It is important to note that when referring to *stranieri*, the tourist agencies do not only mean the refugees. In fact, *il borgo degli stranieri* applies just as much to what is referred to as *neo-badolatesi*, which includes tourists from North-Italy, Scandinavia, America and other nationalities who have bought and renovated the old dilapidated houses of the Borgo and who lives in the town for longer periods of the year. In this thesis, however, I have chosen to focus on the African migrants and less on the presence of the *neo-badolatesi*. For future reference, it would be interesting to expand this thesis with a study of the total international community of Badolato.

Other is therefore a social imaginary that influence our understanding of what we consider to be "not like us", at the same time as it maintains the idea of "us".

The narrative of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza* is dependent upon the conceptualization of Appreciated Other. The Appreciated Other refers to the African migrants' socio-politically inferior position that is created through interaction with Advocates of Inclusion, during which the migrants' otherness is stressed and highlighted for the sake of the multicultural project. There lies an ambiguity in the status of the Appreciated Other, because in some way, the term is an oxymoron – while the migrant Other is appreciated, accepted and even welcomed exactly on the basis of his otherness, the term also involves the demarcation of the Other as something from the outside, which is therefore not truly a part of the community. With the emphasis on the migrants as extraordinary guests, the migrants are rendered commended outsiders and are therefore reproduced as "strangers within".

Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager discusses practices of *othering* and cultural border making in Italy. She argues that the politics of the former minister of the interior Matteo Salvini and his administration are strategically and systematically othering certain groups of people in Italy, including migrants and refugees. In fact, according to Khrebtan-Hörhager, practices of othering are happening both on an institutional and a rhetorical level. On the institutional level, the othering is for example done through judicial changes in immigration laws and the management of refugees, something she refers to as "policies of exclusion" (Khrebtan-Hörhager, 2019, p. 1). On the rhetorical level, processes of othering are enacted through connecting the image of immigrants as an alien threat. She writes: "Worlds are created with words" (Khrebtan-Hörhager, 2019, p. 3), meaning that the rhetorical framing of immigrants as criminal invaders has very real implications for the daily lives of non-Italian people residing in Italy. The words politicians use shape the social realities of the Italian people. For example, slogans like "*Gli italiani – al centro!"* ("The Italians in the center!") and "*gli italiani prima di tutto!*" ("the Italians first and foremost") reinforce the borders between the allegedly culturally superior national/local versus the so-named inferior transnational/global" (Khrebtan-Hörhager, 2019, p. 3). The boundary maintenance of the categories is thus policed from a top-down perspective through political discourse, which shapes borders between the Italians and foreigners and create the category of the Other. In Khrebtan-Hörhager's words, the slogans of anti-immigration policies are based on "an exaggerated need to protect national Selves against unworthy, often despicable cultural Others" (2019, p. 2).

The boundaries are also managed and maintained at grass root level, with ordinary citizens reproducing processes of othering based on personal experiences with foreigners perceived as dangerous Others. An example of grass root level boundary maintenance is the Roman civilian vigilante group CAOP (*Coordinamento Azioni Operative Ponte di Nona*). In 2015, they decided to take upon themselves to "protect and secure" the neighborhood Ponte di Nona against a camp of Roma people situated nearby, despite there being no evidence that this particular area was more affected by crime than other neighborhoods (Ivasiuc, 2015, p. 55). According to anthropologist Ana Ivasiuc, the non-governmental security measures taken by this group was enacted because the Roma are widely perceived as culturally inclined towards criminality (2015, p. 56), thereby invoking the racial stereotype of the criminal immigrant.

During fieldwork, I witnessed several instances where the migrants were exposed to both explicit and subtler forms of stereotyping and othering. A recurrent theme was that of the African men's bodies; particularly their skin color and physical strength. For example, I was once walking up a steep hill together with a Badolatese farmer and a Gambian migrant, when the farmer admiringly remarked to the Gambian that: "they [Africans] have always used their feet", and are therefore: "more used to walking than us Europeans". The farmer thus invoked a gendered stereotype of the "strong African man" that can be characterized as an act of positive stereotyping and fetishizing – a positive evaluation of a group of people based on ethnic or racial attributes. Positive stereotyping can often materialize in flattery and compliments, but comments like these inherently depersonalizes a person by reducing him to his ethnic or racial attributes. Another example of positive stereotyping is from the time a *signore* approached Osman, Ismael, Souleymane and I as we were relaxing on the beach. The Italian launched into an unwarranted monologue, praising the young men for being *bravi* (good) and saying that they were not "*cattivi* (bad/evil) like the Roma". The *signore* thus expressed his appreciation of the Africans through comparing them with another immigrant group in Italy that he disfavored. Regardless of the Italian's intentions, the positive evaluation of the Africans *in comparison* with the Rumanians depersonalized and stereotyped them.

Another example of positive stereotyping that concerned the migrants' bodies was the misconception that because of their African descent, they could tolerate hot weather. Throughout the summer, locals would tell the migrants how they, as Africans, were lucky because of their ability to endure the heat, often pointing at their skin. Comments like these show how locals can turn to generalized assumptions about Africans in lack of knowledge of,

or curiosity about, the vast climatic variations of the African continent. “Why do they think that I manage heat better than them? It is hotter here than at home!” my friend Eric once told me in a mix of humor and despair. Eric is a young man from Cameroon who was studying to become an *operatore socio sanitario* (healthcare worker). He worked in a predominantly white hospital, and told me that when he entered a room there, everybody would stop and stare at him. “What am I supposed to do, paint my face white?”, he said. He also told me that his colleagues and patients usually assumed that he was Muslim, and that when he informed them that he was not, they seemed relieved. “That always makes me laugh”, he said. Eric’s experiences point to the fact that due to the visible difference in skin color, the African migrants in Badolato were more vulnerable to discrimination and prejudice.

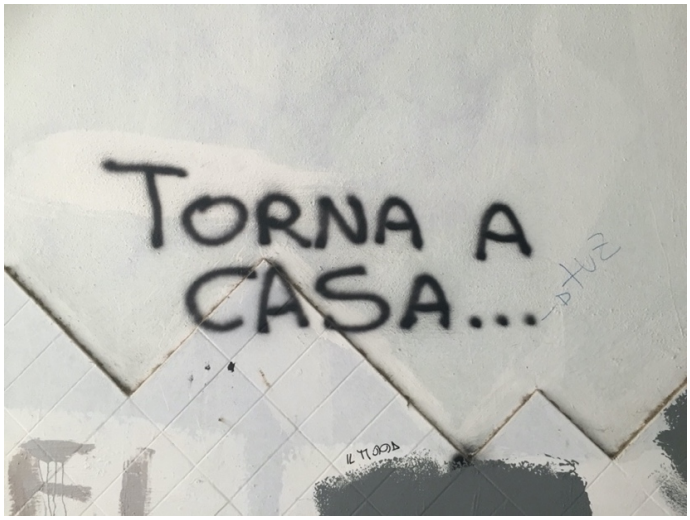

Photo 9: A piece of graffiti saying: "Go back home". By author.

The examples above illustrate a general divisive attitude of “us” and “them” based on attributes of race and ethnicity, which, regardless of intention, worked as a constant reminder that the migrants were different Others. The othering would take the shape of appreciation and admiration, or the migrants would be subjects to more explicit forms of prejudice. For example, one time when I was strolling along the *lungomare* (sea promenade) with the Guineans, Ismael went to wash his hands in a water fountain. Suddenly, three local men shouted from a couple of meters away: “You should wash your feet too since they’re so black!” Ismael did not say anything, but the men kept talking to him while laughing, saying: “Relax, we’re only joking!” The three men’s comments were made in such a ridiculing fashion that Ismael found it difficult to respond, but the expression on his face as we were walking away clearly indicated that he was very unsettled by the incident. In addition to the

alienating effect of the racist remarks, the following howls of laughter further mocked Ismael, and we left the *lungomare* in silence.

The Italian Internal Other

As illustrated above, the African migrants encountered different attitudes that in various ways stressed the notion that they were Others. In Badolato and the south of Italy, there also exists a conception of the Italian Internal Other. The mayor of Badolato, Gerardo Mannello, once spoke to me about the division between the North and South of Italy: "When *i meridionali* (southerners) travel north to find work, [the northerners] always look at them with distrust. I'm not saying it's racism, but there is a form of rejection towards those who come from the outside to the north". With this statement, Mannello points to the general conception of southern-Italians as Italian Internal Others in relation to the North. During a doctor's appointment in Perugia, which is a city located in the center of Italy, the doctor was curious as to what I was doing there. When I told him that I was going to live in Calabria for my fieldwork, the doctor responded by grimacing and pushing his chair away from his desk. With a worried expression on his face, he said: "In Calabria, there is no trust, no friendship, no love. Only 'what's in it for me'". The doctor then went on speaking about how he did not trust southern-Italians, accusing those who traveled to the North of criminality and corruption. The incident with the doctor resonates with Mannello's statement.

When Mannello spoke about the origins of Badolato's accommodation project, he said: "thank God we [in Badolato] don't have this distinction of religion, culture, or color of the skin [like in the north]. We accommodated them [the Kurds]". This comment mark Badolato as hospitable and inclusive, as opposed to the 'inhospitable' North. Pepé would also point to the division between the South and North of Italy, saying he had experienced discrimination when working in the North. "Look, I too have darker skin than the northerners", he would sometimes say, comparing himself with the migrants in efforts to level with them. Pepé and Mannello's comments suggest that otherness is a common denominator between the African Other and the Badolatesi as Italian Internal Others. For the Advocates of Inclusion, therefore, the conception of a shared marginalized position work as a basis for the integration project of Badolato.

Accoglienza: hospitality and food

The practices of hospitality enacted by the Advocates of Inclusion worked to define and maintain the relationships between who was inside, who was outside, and what happens when what was outside comes inside. Sorge, mentioned above, describes how practices of hospitality: "maintain the exclusiveness of the moral community vis-à-vis the outside world, and incorporate outsiders into a special category which neutralizes the danger they initially present" (2009, p. 4). Hospitality is therefore like a ritual that manages the encounter with strangers, working to establish and maintain the guest/host-dichotomy. Ritual is here used in Benjamin Boudou's sense of the word, which is: "a set of practices that are identifiable and repeatable by its participants for framing a situation in time, space, and with actors" (2012, p. 3). Sorge studied hospitality in the Sardinian village of Orgosolo. Within the *cricca* (friendship clique), he observed how his informants reinforced internal solidarity through so-called "rituals of commensality" (Sorge, 2009, p. 8). The men of the *cricca* took turns in offering food and drink as a way of strengthening their social ties. Likewise, the Badolatesi engaged in rituals of commensality through offering coffee, which was always followed by a good-natured argument over who was supposed to pay. This argument usually went on until the one who initially offered the coffee managed to slip the payment to the barista, while the other had to accept, promising to buy the next round. The rituals of commensality thus established and maintained social ties – each coffee confirmed the friendship, which then was prolonged by the promise of future repayment.

However, in Badolato, rituals of commensality seemed to be almost exclusively practiced within the local community, only occasionally including strangers like myself. In the beginning of my fieldwork, I was seldom allowed to pay for my own coffee. After much friendly dispute, however, the elderly *signore* finally accepted my money, and even occasionally let me pay for their drinks as well. My social status as a white, Scandinavian woman thus enabled me to participate in the rituals of commensality with the Badolatesi. The African migrants, however, were prevented from the reciprocating this type of hospitality, partly due to their limited economical means, and partly because of their perceived lower status. As Boudou asks: "even if [the guest] is at the same "table" as his hosts, is he really an equal?" (2012, p. 11). The answer to that would be "not necessarily". Without being able to reciprocate, the migrants lacked a platform where they could bond with the local community. I rarely witnessed the Italians and the migrants share a meal, apart from events organized by

CIR, like the charity dinner described above. The charity dinner is different from the rituals of commensality of the *cricca*, because it confirms the migrants' roles as subjects for charity, and not as peers who can repay the gesture. Consequently, even though food was an important practice of hospitality for the Badolatesi, not all members of the community were able to sit by the same table as equals.

In the beginning of this chapter, the last part of the ethnographic vignette describes the migrants heading straight towards the Guineans' apartment, passing the bar where the Italians were drinking. This detail illustrates how the migrants used the Guineans' apartment in the same way as the Badolatesi used the bar, thus creating their own social arenas in which they practiced their own rituals of commensality. Inside their own homes, the social roles of public life in Badolato could flip, so that as soon as I entered the migrants' kitchen, they were the hosts and I was the guest. The Africans' hospitality was largely expressed through food, and because I developed close relationships to my African informants, I received dinner invitations every day. At their places, I was served the most delicious meals, like *haako poutè* from Guinea and *banku* from Nigeria. Eric and I spent hours in his kitchen where he taught me how to cook Cameroonian cuisine. Our relationship developed while we were peeling potatoes, sifting spinach, grinding pepper and frying fish. "Here, too many things are missing", Eric used to say. "Like dried shrimp, and this fish that we used to dry in the sun called *bunga*." Clearly feeling nostalgic towards his home country, Eric would show me pictures on his phone of the dishes that he used to make back in Cameroon, and he would scoff and throw his hands up in the air out of frustration whenever he saw an ingredient he particularly missed. "If I go back to Africa, I got to look for this stuff. Oh, Africa!"

By making Cameroonian dishes and teaching me how to cook "African style", Eric was recreating a sense of home in his kitchen. Matei Candea and Giovanni da Col write that "the act of sharing food is the primary template of value creation which externalizes the self beyond the physical person, hence achieving control over spacetime" (2012, p. 9). In other words, food can facilitate agency. For example, because there were many aspects of Eric's life that were out of his control, like his economy or legal status, the kitchen worked an important element of structure. The process of acquiring ingredients, making African dishes and serving it to those he cared for, was something Eric and the other migrants could control.

Food was therefore important in the social networking of both the Badolatesi and the migrants. However, because the migrants and Italians seldom ate together, the groups did not get to build rapport through food, despite this being central to their cultural identities.

Photo 10: Fried fish with potatoes, tomatoes, onion and chili. By author.

Photo 11: Eric grinding pepper. By author.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that the migrants were rendered Appreciated Others, a term with which I seek to highlight what I consider to be the migrants' ambiguous role as a specific kind of Other; the migrants' otherness was emphasized and appreciated by the Advocates of Inclusion, who perceived them as an opportunity of revitalization and cultural reciprocity. By emphasizing the migrants' otherness, albeit with the intention of integration and cultural appreciation, the migrants were rendered commended outsiders and therefore reproduced as "strangers within". Treating the migrants as a revitalizing component in the idealistic construction of *il paese di accoglienza* was therefore counterproductive to the goals of the Advocates of Inclusion, because the pronounced focus on the migrants' otherness inspired a sense of alienation and even discomfort among the migrants. This discomfort is illustrated in the ethnographic examples of stereotyping and othering that the migrants were exposed to, which points to the local community's lack of knowledge about, and communication with, the migrants. Through the different encounters, like the charity dinner, the migrants were thus included into, yet always demarcated as outside, their host community. While food was central to both the Badolatesi and the African migrants' ways of practicing hospitality, the socio-political statuses of the migrants prevented them from participating in the local rituals of commensality. Without being able to build rapport through food, the migrants had few platforms where they could invest in any lasting relationship to the Badolatesi. The conceptualization of the Appreciated Other, who was encouraged to stay but not invited as an equal to the dinner table, so to speak, made the migrants experience a social distance from the local community, thereby undermining their processes of integration.

Chapter 3:

The Performance of Accoglienza

Photo 12: Migrant being interviewed. By Ida Karin Sagvolden

Introduction

The integration project in Badolato is one of the town's most central hallmarks, and the Advocates of Inclusion invest a lot of effort into promoting their work. Journalists who travel to Badolato are invited to cover the narrative *il paese di accoglienza*, and a significant part of the tourist experience is based on the presence of the migrant community. The promotion of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza* therefore depends on the participation of the migrants. However, many of the migrants did not envision themselves as being a part of the narrative of "the hospitable town". In fact, many of them expressed apprehension, even resentment, when asked to participate in interviews, and most of them tried to avoid situations where they would be put on display in front of an audience – whether the spectators consisted of journalists, tourists, or simply crowds of people.

In this chapter, I will discuss the social dynamics that develop during *The Performance of Accoglienza* (performance of hospitality), which is a term I have developed to describe the performative nature of certain types of interactions between the Advocates of Inclusion and the African migrants. I will present and analyze three cases: the first two can be characterized as Performances of Accoglienza, while the third case will illustrate what happens when performativity is put aside. Through analyzing the three cases, I will try to answer the following questions: How is the Performance of Accoglienza played out between the migrants and the Italians, and what are the different social consequences of the Performance of Accoglienza? Finally, are there moments of *genuine accoglienza* (genuine hospitality), and if so, how is it achieved?

I will try to show how the Performance of Accoglienza is a socio-political, role-demarcating encounter that lead to at least three consequences: First, it reinforces the dichotomy of guest and host and thus alienates the migrant from the host community. Second, the Performance of Accoglienza can make the migrant feel as if he is put on display. To avoid the spotlight, he will consequently avoid the Advocates of Inclusion, which in turn creates distance between the migrant and the Italian community as such. However, the Performance of Accoglienza can also allow the migrant to create his own performance. This is the third and final consequence of the Performance of Accoglienza, and points to the migrant's agency within the relatively confined context that is structured by the Advocate of Inclusion. Lastly, I will argue that

genuine accoglienza can develop when performativity is put aside and the interactions between local and migrant is centered around voluntary work.

Tell me your story

The first case I explore in this chapter is about a group of local scouts who asked the migrants to share their personal stories as refugees. The case will illustrate how the Performance of Accoglienza was experienced as discomforting for some of the migrants, while for one of them, the situation offered him the possibility to shape the audience's impression of him. This way, the Performance of Accoglienza enabled him a moment of agency within a context that is otherwise characterized by a lack of control. Agency is here understood as a person's capacity to influence his or her surroundings and thus exercise control.

It is a cold February evening, and I am standing alone in an empty parking lot. Earlier that day I had received a text on WhatsApp from a CIR employee. I was invited to join a meeting with a group of scouts that would come to visit the Borgo. The meeting is taking place at the headquarters of CIR Badolato. Simply referred to as *l'ufficio* (the office), the headquarters of CIR is a two-story brick building located in the Borgo. *L'ufficio* serves as a working space for the employees of CIR, and as a place to hang out for the migrants. On the first floor, there is table tennis and a TV, while the office space is located on the second floor. The young men spend much time on their phones connecting with friends and family back in their home countries. The free Wi-Fi is therefore one of the most attractive features of *l'ufficio*. However, when not in use by the staff, the building is kept closed, with only one spare key entrusted to one of the migrants at the time. It is therefore common to see the men standing against the wall or in the parking lot with their phones, searching for the perfect spot to get Internet connection.

This evening, Osman happens to be doing just this. As he enters the parking lot, he spots me and walks up to me. I show him the invitation from CIR, and he decides that he wants to check it out as well. The text message contains little information about what kind of meeting it will be, and, so far, Osman and I are the only ones who have arrived. I therefore text Eric and ask him whether he is coming or not. He replies that he will come now that he knows that I am there. A moment later, Eric and his Cameroonian roommate appear around the corner.

Finally, the scouts come trotting upwards the hill from the Marina. The group consists of teenagers, presumably between the ages of 16–19, and three adult leaders. They are all dressed in matching yellow outfits, smiling brightly as they shake hands and greet us outside *l'ufficio*. When we try to enter the building, we discover that the doors are locked, and Eric run to retrieve the keys. The scouts, who are wearing only shorts and shirts, jump up and down in efforts to keep warm. When Eric returns with the keys, we hurry inside.

Photo 13: The office of CIR seen from the parking lot. By author.

L'ufficio, like most houses in South-Italy, is built for the Calabrian summer weather, with cool surfaces of brick walls and marble floors to keep the heat away. In February, therefore, indoors feels even colder than the outdoors. Next to the stairs leading up to the second floor, a couple of sofas are placed in a circle, and we huddle up around an electric fan heater that is the size of a football. All settled down, we introduce ourselves, going in circle saying our names and where we are from. I say a few words about my research, and then the scout leaders explain what they are doing in Badolato. They tell us they want to listen to the migrants of CIR share their personal stories as refugees, so that they can get a better understanding of the immigration situation in Italy. "We want to make sure you all know that not everybody in Italy is behind Salvini and his people," they say. Then, without further ado, the scouts ask if any of the migrants would like to start sharing. The room goes silent, and everybody's eyes fall upon the three migrants. Osman and the Cameroonian are standing up against the wall with their arms crossed over their chests. When nobody says anything, the scouts spend a long time trying to assure the men that they are among friends, and that their

intentions are good. Eventually, two of the migrants come closer to the circle, though still standing up and not speaking.

Eric, however, had joined the circle from the beginning. From previous conversations, I know him to be open about his past. In fact, just earlier that day, Eric and I had traveled to the neighboring city of Soverato together. Walking along the beach, he told me why he left Cameroon, how his travels across Africa went, and how he managed to get into Italy. Eric's life back in Cameroon was tough. Orphaned, and without any prospects of money or education, criminal gangs were trying to recruit him, threatening to hurt his family if he did not comply. When the police did nothing about the threats, Eric decided to escape. "I did not want to be a thief. I wanted a calm and better life." He left Cameroon in May 2015 and arrived in Italy the 1st of September 2016. For over a year, Eric traveled across Africa, crossing the countries of Nigeria, Benin, Niger, Algeria, and Morocco. While traveling, he earned some money doing odd jobs, like working as a busboy in a shop for four months in Algeria. Eric tried to enter Europe through Spain, but his entrance was denied, and he therefore had to return to Algeria. By paying smugglers around 200 euro, he was brought across the desert and into Libya. The unforgiving weather and the smugglers' violence made the desert trip harsh. Had he run out of money, the smugglers would have abandoned him, or shot him and dumped his body in the desert.

Photo 14: The beach where Eric told me about his travels. By author.

In Libya, Eric was put in a refugee camp containing 800 other people. He stayed in the camp for six months. One night, at 3 a.m., Eric boarded a rubber boat with 115 other persons. The smuggler told them that the trip would only take two hours, and that since they were traveling at night, the sea would be calm. Under the open sky, and with one leg in the water due to lack of space in the boat, Eric sailed towards Italy. There was no food or water aboard, and a woman even gave birth during the trip. Besides the newborn, there were no small children aboard. They arrived at the port of Pozzallo in Ragusa, Sicily. From there, Eric was moved to four other towns before finally arriving in Badolato. He had asked his *assistente sociale* (social worker) to be reunited with his current roommate, a Cameroonian he had met in Campobello. This February, Eric have been in Badolato for three months. He attends *scuola media* (lower secondary school) and is studying to become an *operatore socio sanitario* (healthcare worker). "Now I am in Italy, and I really want to learn Italian and work for the Italian people. I want to do all things that are good for Italia. It is therefore I am here in Italy."

In *l'ufficio*, everybody kept quiet while Eric told his story. When he finishes, the scouts are eager to establish that at least here, the young man has found himself a good life. When Eric affirms that yes, he has been received well here, the scouts seem pleased. Then, Osman is asked if he is willing to share his story, and he eventually does, though not with as much detail as Eric. Looking shy and speaking with a low voice, Osman briefly explains that he had to flee Gambia because of war, and that now he is by himself without a family. While he talks, I am reminded of the first time I met Osman. At a bench by the church in the Marina, we began chatting, and upon learning that I was not Italian, he immediately became open about his criticism of Italy. He told me about personal experiences of racism, labor exploitation and what he deemed to be an unforgiving bureaucracy regarding residence permit. Osman does not mention any of these opinions to the scouts, however. The third migrant, Eric's Cameroonian roommate, politely declines the scout's request to share his story and will not budge even though the scouts ask several times. "I don't want to talk about it", he says.

Center of attention

The second case I explore in this chapter is from an event called World Refugee Day, where the presence of the Advocates of Inclusion, journalists and the Italian crowd made the migrants feel as if put on display.

World Refugee Day is an annual global event that the UNHCR has established to raise international awareness about refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons all over the world (UNHCR, 2019). On June 20th, in collaboration with the Red Cross, SPRAR and other volunteers, CIR Badolato organized a gathering on a *lido* (beach resort) in the Marina. Souleymane, Ismael, Osman and I arrived early so that we could enjoy a full day at the beach. The resort owner lent us a *pedaló* (paddleboat), and we spent the morning out on the water beneath the hot sun, diving into the crystal-clear waters to cool down. Afterwards, we played beach ball on a court *lido*. While we were jumping around on the scorching hot sand, people started to arrive for the World Refugee Day, and our match attracted some spectators. Amongst the onlookers were employees of CIR, who observed us from a distance while leaning against the fence of the *lido*'s eating area. We kept on playing until a group of local teenagers started their own match on the court next to ours. Souleymane suggested that we joined the people at the *lido*.

Photo 15: The lido when empty. By author.

"I don't understand! Why are they looking, looking, looking? Are we ghosts?" Yosef exclaims while scanning the area, his eyebrows raised and his mouth open in a disbelieving

little smile. When he is not working in the fields, the young Nigerian usually stays inside his apartment. Today, he and the other migrants has come to the *lido* to check out the event. We watch how the resort is getting crowded; people everywhere are mingling while helping themselves to the refreshments served by volunteers. Meanwhile, I see the migrants hanging out by themselves, standing or sitting in groups, occasionally chatting with the staff of CIR. Earlier, I had asked a Gambian migrant if he looked forward to today's event. He replied "no", because "these parties will never be good." When I asked why, he said: "they [the Italians] only eat and talk, and they talk about immigration too much. I am not an immigrant."

The event is being well documented, as there are multiple journalists present on the *lido*. A TV-crew is sweeping their camera over the crowd while a journalist is conducting close-up interviews. It makes me wonder how many of my pictures exist without my knowledge, and a memory of a conversation with a Senegalese migrant comes to my mind. The migrant had said to me: "We don't want to be on Instagram". Now, reflecting on this event, I understand why the migrants are using their caps to hide their faces, turning their backs to the lenses, and why they are often looking at the ground when the cameras move about.

At one point, tensions rise high. Previously, there had been a disagreement between the staff and the participants of CIR about a young Gambian who were struggling with his mental health. After his project was finished, CIR was no longer responsible for him. They could therefore not continue supporting him, nor demand that he stayed on in Badolato, even if it were for his own good. The man wanted to go to Milan and CIR therefore put him on a bus. None of the migrants or employees of CIR managed to get in touch with the man for a long time, which caused a lot of concern. The migrants were angry at CIR for sending him away since they were convinced that he could not manage by himself. Now that everybody is gathered at the *lido*, the topic is brought up again, and the conversation quickly escalates. Especially Osman is agitated because this is the first time he hears of his friend's sudden departure. As the group's voices grow louder, they catch the attention of the crowd, including a filmmaker who has brought her camera. She approaches the group and silently shoots the conversation. The migrants either do not care or do not notice the camera, because they keep on arguing. Osman is demanding an explanation from CIR, and one employee alternates between trying to calm down the discussion and arguing back, defending their decision. After a while, Eric joins the group. He is just as confused as Osman about their fellow migrant's dispatch. While Eric is trying to catch up on the situation, another CIR employee taps him on

the shoulder and asks him to do an interview. Behind the employee is a journalist who is standing ready with a microphone and a TV-camera. Eric replies that he does not want to talk because he is tired from school. “Just a little interview, it’ll be super short!” says the CIR employee, and Eric has to decline the interview several times before being left alone.

Meanwhile, I am standing together with an African woman who is visiting Badolato from a neighboring town. After giving up on Eric, the journalist turns to the two of us. They quickly discover that the woman is too shy to talk in front of the camera, as she just giggles and shakes her head “no”. I also try to turn down the interview, being more interested in listening to the discussion between CIR and the migrants. However, the CIR employee and journalist will not have it, and therefore I end up saying a few words about the event anyway. When they are satisfied, the journalist recommences his tour of the *lido*, while I try to think over what I just said, afraid of having made serious grammar errors.

Close to the end of the World Refugee Day, Ismael, Souleymane, Seydou and I are hanging out with Pepé a little distance away from the *lido*. “They are treating you like zoo animals”, Pepé says to the men. They do not reply.

La giornata ecologica

The third case I will present is from the time when the migrants and I joined a local voluntary civil group in cleaning up the town before Easter. With this case, I will try to show how genuine accoglienza can be achieved when performativity is put aside, and that moments of reconciliation and social networking can develop through collaboration and volunteer work.

It is an early Sunday morning in March, and I am walking down a set of steep, medieval steps towards the Chiesa dell’Immacolata. Built in 1686, the old church is perched at the edge of Badolato Borgo, offering a spectacular panorama of where land meets ocean, and ocean meets sky. Today, the church serves as a meeting place for the event of *la giornata ecologica* (“eco day”), where people volunteer to pick garbage in the Borgo. Moreover, in just over a month, Badolato is expecting hundreds of visitors who are arriving for Easter. Therefore, the Borgo needs to be cleaned in preparation for the oncoming tourist season. A committee consisting of

regular citizens organizes the cleaning. As Pepé said with a sigh when he invited me: “If we don’t clean, nobody will.”

Photo 16: Clearing grass. By author.

Photo 17: Garbage picking. By author.

When I arrive at the church, I see that the migrants have been invited as well. The young men cheerfully greet me, smiling brightly despite the hot sun and the heavy weight on their shoulders. Because they are the only youth present, they are assigned to do most of the heavy lifting, like carrying big wooden boards and different metal object out from the church and up the hill towards a storage room in one of the rundown houses of the Borgo. I join them, and together we trot up and down the medieval steps, chatting and working. Since the weather is hot, we regularly take brakes, sipping on ice-cold sodas in the shade of a palm tree. During garbage picking, I team up with Eric and his Cameroonian roommate, and, armed with plastic

gloves and bags, we go around town picking cigarette butts, paper tissues, and pieces of plastic and ripped clothes.

Enzo, a local tourist operator and active member of the civil group, is taking pictures of us while we are working. Enzo is always quick to capture moments like these, later posting them on Instagram and Facebook with hash tags promoting Calabria, Badolato and the "multicultural events" that take place in town. Enzo has a good relationship with many of the migrants. He spends time socializing with them, and he often volunteer to help them out with different tasks, like giving lifts to their doctor's appointments. Therefore, instead of the skeptical looks and usual search for an exit, the men smile and pose for Enzo's cell phone camera. The general atmosphere among the migrants is light and cheerful. At the end of the day, Enzo and the civil group want to thank everyone who participated by inviting us to eat pizza at one of the restaurants in the Borgo. At first, many of the migrants do not show up. Enzo therefore tells me to contact, in his words, my "African friends", to ask where they are. Some of the migrants finally arrive, and we spend the rest of the evening enjoying ourselves with pizza.

The Performance of Accoglienza

Above, I have presented two cases of the Performance of Accoglienza. The third case stands out from the first two and will be discussed below. The first case describes the meeting with the scouts, where the few migrants that showed up were asked to share their stories. The second case is from the event organized by CIR for the occasion of the World Refugee Day, where locals and migrants gathered on the *lido*. The third case is about migrants and locals working together in cleaning the Borgo for *la giornata ecologica*.

I characterize the first two cases as Performances of Accoglienza, based on the performative nature of the interactions. Sociologist Erving Goffman use the term "performance" to refer to all the activity an individual does in front of a set of observers, specifically activity that influence the audience in some way (1987, p. 32). In the first case, the scouts were invited to speak with the migrants and learn about their situations in Italy. In the second case, the journalists were invited to cover the story of *il paese di accoglienza* through interviewing the migrants. The first two cases therefore illustrate the efforts of CIR to promote the integration project by presenting the migrants to an audience. The Performance of Accoglienza is a

temporary manifestation of the Advocates of Inclusion's hospitality. It is temporary because, apart from the language lessons and occasional social events organized by CIR, the migrants were largely left to themselves (see chapter 4). The sporadic invitations to socialize with a third part, like the meeting with the scouts, often became yet another interaction in which the migrants' otherness was emphasized. The focus on the migrants' status as refugee Others points to the first consequence of the Performance of Accoglienza, which is that it reinforces the dichotomy of guest and host. Although in the center of attention, the migrants seldom got the opportunity to interact with the audience on their own terms, because the meetings were mostly managed by the Advocates of Inclusion. Instead, their roles were limited to that of extraordinary guests through the Advocates of Inclusion's efforts to promote the integration project and Badolato's status as *il paese di accoglienza*.

From the Advocates of Inclusion's point of view, the promotion of the integration project was done in advocacy for humanitarian issues. Moreover, CIR needed to have a public voice in order to ensure the continuation of the integration project. In this way, through the Performance of Accoglienza, CIR tried to appeal to the public by presenting a human face to oppose the right-wing narrative of the "immigration invasion" (Sorana, 2019). The World Refugee Day was a perfect opportunity to do so because of the presence of the journalists. Despite the good intentions, however, the Performance of Accoglienza inspired skepticism, distrust and even antipathy among the migrants. The second consequence of the Performance of Accoglienza is that the migrants tried to avoid the Advocates of Inclusion whenever they felt the pressure to perform. Once, I asked a Gambian migrant why he did not want to be interviewed. He answered: "They want to tell me my problems, and then they leave me high and dry." Another migrant once told me something of a similar notion: "They take your words. Be mindful what you contribute." Both examples suggest a general sentiment of mistrust and ambivalence towards the Advocates of Inclusion.

The first and second case include several examples of how being put in the spotlight was a source of distress for the migrants. At the *lido* in the second case, Yosef felt as if he was stared at, while the Gambian disliked the focus on him as an immigrant, perhaps wanting to be portrayed as something more than "just" an immigrant. The second case also includes a scene in which the migrants argue with the employees of CIR. During the argument, the journalists were tugging at the sleeves of Eric to get an interview while he was busy trying to understand what happened with his friend. Eric politely refused to be interviewed, but I could

tell he was annoyed by the insistent behavior of the TV-crew. During the meeting with the scouts in the first case, Osman only shared a couple of sentences to the audience before breaking off, looking shy and bothered. The Cameroonian roommate refused to speak altogether.

My role in Badolato as *l'antropologa* often attracted the interest of tourists and journalists. On several occasions, I experienced the same feeling of discomfort under the spotlight as my migrant informants. For example, during World Refugee Day, I felt pressure to participate in the TV-interview. I was afraid of making a fool of myself, especially language-wise, a concern I most likely had in common with my African informants. The migrants were generally skeptic to the frequent requests for interviews. Souleymane told me that he did not want to be recognized on social media by friends and family, expressing his discomfort of being publicly presented. "They can't just keep asking somebody who doesn't want to do it", Souleymane once sighed after having ignored multiple text messages from CIR, who tried to get a hold of him.

The examples above illustrate the sense of distress the migrants sometimes felt when interacting with the Advocates of Inclusion. When the migrants felt as if "put on display", they consequently tried to avoid social contact with the local community. For example, none of the migrants had planned to show up at the meeting with the scouts, likewise with the pizza party mentioned in the third case. In both cases, I ended up contacting the migrants on behalf of the Advocates of Inclusion, thereby acting as a sort of link between my informants.

So far, we have seen how the Performance of Accoglienza emphasize the migrants' status as commended outsiders and extraordinary guests. We have also seen how the othering and performative nature of these interactions can make the migrants distance themselves from the Advocates of Inclusion, and subsequently the local community. In addition, a third consequence of the Performance of Accoglienza is that it can function as a platform where the migrant creates his own performance. By doing so, he can present and represent himself and his own interests and thus shape the audience's impression of him, which points to the possibility of agency.

Like many of the other migrants, Eric often turned down interviews, like he did in the second case when he rejected the TV-crew at the *lido*. During the meeting with the scouts, however,

Eric shared his personal story with the crowd. His storytelling was well-performed and almost identical to the story he told me earlier that day. This is partly because when immigrants arrive in Italy, they must tell their stories as refugees in a convincing and evocative way to receive a residence permit. Therefore, by repeatedly having to tell his story, Eric had gradually perfected his presentation. While this does not in any way suggest that what he said was not true, Eric's presentation can still be viewed as a socio-political strategy just like the Performance of Accoglienza is for the Advocates of Inclusion. He did not criticize Badolato or mention any of his negative opinions about Italy's immigration policies. Most likely, this was because he wanted to appeal to his spectators, who, after all, were on his side against the policies of Matteo Salvini.

In another instance, Eric was asked to hold a presentation in front of the municipality and citizens of Badolato. On that occasion, Eric spoke about how he and other migrants were frightened by the political turmoil and anti-immigration sentiments that the Salvini administration was promoting. On that day, he said:

> We go to bed seriously worried. It hurts. We are afraid. We have arrived here in Italy, not to sleep and eat. We have risked our lives to come here, to have a good life and to have protection. And now we don't have protection. Salvini doesn't know the true lives of immigrants. He doesn't know how we live and suffer. Italy saved me from the sea. I could never think badly of Italy because now I study. Italy gives me food to eat, Italy gives me a house. Soon, I will have a professional title. For me that is a huge thing. I thank you for letting me be here and I ask you to please don't listen to Salvini [Badolato, March 2019, my translation from Italian].

Eric's presentation may be viewed in light of Goffman's terms of *social front* and *front stage* (1987, p. 114). The front stage is an individual's performance that is directed towards an audience, with the intention to foster a specific impression (Goffman, 1987, p. 110). *Back stage*-behavior, on the other hand, is typical amongst close friends and family, where the actors do not feel the need to put on any mask to control the impression they give off (Goffman, 1987, p. 115). In the presentation above, Eric showed the audience his gratefulness to Italy and implored them to disregard Salvini. In this instance, as with the meeting with the scouts, Eric informed the Italians of what he perceived to be the *real* situation of African immigrants in Italy. Although structured by the Advocates of Inclusion, the meeting with the

scouts and the presentation in front of the people of Badolato allowed Eric to oppose any potentially negative conceptions of immigrants like himself. This illustrates the ways that Eric is able to exercise agency through the Performance of Accoglienza.

While Eric used the spotlight to voice his opinions about Salvini and express his gratitude towards his Italian hosts, other migrants were more reluctant to participate in the Performance of Accoglienza. After some encouragement from the scouts, Osman ended up saying only a few words. During private conversations with me, however, he often expressed dissatisfaction with his treatment as a foreigner and refugee in Italy. The first time I met Osman, he told me upfront: "I don't like Italy man, I'm sorry, but I don't like it. They don't want us black people here. They don't want to give us our rights, and they exploit us." In front of the scouts, however, Osman did not share any of these opinions and experiences. In contrast to Eric's detailed story, Osman's short front stage-performance consisted of sharing as little as possible, perhaps in order to avoid revealing ungratefulness and dissatisfaction in front of the audience. Whether his silence was due to him being shy, or if he just not felt like speaking, Osman's silence resonated, or at least did not break, with the performance that Eric had just delivered. In this way, Osman and Eric played their roles as the beneficiaries of *il paese di accoglienza*, which allowed political opinions about the policies of Salvini, but that did not necessarily include the critique of Badolato.

Genuine accoglienza

So far, we have seen how the othering nature of the Performance of Accoglienza made the migrants seek to avoid social contact with the Advocates of Inclusion. At the same time, the Performance of Accoglienza also enabled the migrants to present and represent themselves, which can be seen as a form of agency. In chapter 2, I discussed problematic encounters and various issues regarding the migrants' marginalized positions. It is important to mention that I also observed moments of friendship and trust between the African and the Badolatese community. These moments usually took place when there was no audience to perform for.

During the Performance of Accoglienza, the migrants usually expressed discomfort or ambivalence towards being observed by an audience. This is what happened during the World Refugee Day and in front of the local scouts. During the voluntary work at *la giornata*

ecologica, however, the migrants were genuinely smiling and posing for Enzo's camera. This was a change in attitude from the usual skeptical looks and shyness in front of the lens. In contrast to the first two cases, during *la giornata ecologica,* the migrants were asked to help the local community, and thus their participation was based on their physical strength and generosity rather than their socio-political identities as refugees or immigrants. While the youth took care of the more physical demanding work, the older Italians went about doing other tasks, like cutting and burning overgrown grass. The voluntary work was not a performance of hospitality, and the migrants were appreciated for their efforts, not of their otherness. In this way, I observed what I would characterize as genuine accoglienza– the shared physical exhaustion, and the subsequent sharing of beverages during the break, created a temporary sense of community where the African men were included not as migrants, but as regular youth.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to account for how different social consequences develop during the Performance of Accoglienza. I have used theatrical terminology like "performance" and "front stage" to try to show how people tactically present themselves and others in attempts to give off a certain impression. This is not to question the actors' sincerity or to discredit their intentions. Rather, based on my experiences of the different actors' front –and back stages (during private conversations *off stage*), I have hoped to illuminate some of the social dynamics that developed during the interactions between the groups. For the Advocates of Inclusion, the wanted impression might have been that of presenting Badolato as hospitable compared to other places in Italy, and/or proving the continuation of the integration project necessary, despite, or maybe because of, the anti-immigration policies of the political right-wing. The migrants, on their side, would perhaps want to present themselves as hardworking and grateful, as Eric's presentation suggests.

First, I have argued that the Performance of Accoglienza limits the actors' roles to that of humanitarian host and refugee guest. By reinforcing the dichotomy of guest and host, the Performance of Accoglienza thus emphasizes the migrant's role as an outsider inside the Italian community. Second, I have argued that the Performance of Accoglienza made the migrants experience a constant pressure to present themselves as refugees, which

consequently made the migrants feel apprehensive towards having social contact with the Advocates of Inclusion. The fear of being put in the spotlight lead to the migrants avoiding the Advocates of Inclusion, thereby creating a distance between the migrant and the Italian community as such. Lastly, I tried to show that that Performance of Accoglienza also functioned as a platform where the migrants could create their own performance. The third consequence therefore points to how the Performance of Accoglienza offers a possibility of migrant agency.

In addition to the two cases of the Performance of Accoglienza, I have included a third case to try to illustrate what happens when performativity is put aside. During *la giornata ecologica*, the migrants were needed because of their youth and strength. Their valence to reciprocate was recognized, which consequently emphasized their 'peerness' rather than their otherness. In this way, genuine accoglienza could develop, because during *la giornata ecologica*, the migrants and the Italians worked side by side, helping each other, not questioning each other's place, origin or status.

Chapter 4:

The Panoptic Piazza and Waiting

Photo 18: Waiting for the bus. By Ida Karin Sagvolden.

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the interrelations between conceptualizations of place and the experience of time as two central dimensions to the lives of the African migrants in Badolato. During fieldwork, I experienced a social division between the local Italians and the African migrants – a division that manifested itself spatially in the different uses of public and private space. In the first part of this chapter I will try to answer the following questions: how and where do the migrants construct their places in Badolato, and what implications do their conceptions of these places have for their process of integration? By looking at the main *piazza* of Badolato Borgo, I will argue that the migrants' experience of public space is ambiguous in nature. On one hand, the *piazza* renders the migrant community visible in the general social landscape of the town, which consequently facilitates integration by enforcing a recognition of the migrants as part of the local community. On the other hand, the spatial visibility of the *piazza* also illuminates differences in class and unequal power relations between the migrants and the local inhabitants, thereby preventing integration by reinforcing the socio-political division between the groups. I have termed this last dimension of the migrants' experience of public space in Badolato the *Panoptic Piazza*. The term refers to the migrants' sensation of being gazed upon by the local community, which I will argue induce a process of othering. In other words, I will show how the *piazza*, as a place to both observe and be observed, enforces both intercultural recognition and community building, as well as social dynamics of power inequalities.

The conceptualization of a place is shaped by how time is experienced. In Italian, time is translated to *tempo*, as in "the speed of which an event happens" (Cambridge University press, 2020). In the second part of this chapter, I will explore the migrants' experience of *tempo*, in the sense of how they experience the flow of time. More specifically, I will discuss two dimensions of the migrants' relation to time in Badolato – how time is experienced as moving slowly due to the act of waiting, and, simultaneously, how the migrants consider their time in Badolato to be temporary. I will argue that the experience of time in Badolato as both slow and temporary enforces the precariousness and uncertainty of the migrants' life situation.

La piazza

The farmers rise with the sun. Gathered at the bar, they grab a cornetto with a cappuccino for breakfast. Out on the *piazza*, a group of migrants are summoned by the farmers through text messages. The Italians finish their coffees, pick up the migrants with their cars, and together, they leave for the fields. Outside the bar, the *signori* are stationed on white plastic chairs. The group consists of elderly men whose kin is living *giù* in the Marina, or abroad. They keep each other company until noon when it is time for *il pranzo* (lunch). During lunchtime, the *piazza* becomes almost deserted, except for one migrant. Because of an argument with his unofficial employer, he was not picked for today's farm work. The man is sitting alone on a bench, scrolling on his phone, playing faint tones of reggaeton music. By now, most Badolatesi are in their homes with their families, having pasta for *pranzo*, while the other migrants are either in school or out in the field. The man on the bench might consider going back to the apartment to sleep, but for now, he just sits there.

When the sun sits high in the sky, small groups of tourists wander across the *piazza* on their way to photograph the different panoramas of the Borgo. Little by little, the narrow streets begin to buzz again come evening, as people emerge from their houses, on their way to grab an *aperitivo* (appetizer) after work. In a corner of the *piazza*, a group of Africans are gathered. Some of them play football, while the rest sit on benches, chatting and drinking cheap rosé wine from plastic containers. On this corner, the air is filled with Afrobeat music and the languages of Mandinka, Poular, French and broken Italian. From here, one can see restaurants begin to fill up with guests. The smell of freshly baked pizza seeps out from the surrounding kitchens, and the throbbing Afrobeat rhythms blend into the sentimental strumming of the guitar playing from some nearby speakers. A group of local children leave their dinner tables to join the migrants in a football match. Near dusk, when the people at the restaurants have all finished their desserts and are well into a third round of singalong to Rosa Balistreri's "Cu ti lu dissi", the migrants withdraw to the Guineans' apartment, which is located just around the corner from the *piazza*. The men sit down by the little kitchen table and the rest of the evening is spent playing several rounds of cards, eating chicken with rice and drinking more rosé, bought from a corner restaurant. The sound of laughter and clinking beer bottles is heard from outside on the streets below the apartment. Inside, the men turn up the volume of Bob Marley and play another round of cards.

Place-making and visibility

In *Place* (2004), poet and geographer Tim Cresswell examines the concept of place and its centrality to everyday life. Cresswell's understanding of place goes beyond just the materialistic sense; he looks at place as space that people are attached to in one way or another. Space is often seen as the opposite of place, but for Cresswell, what distinguishes place from space is that while space is more of a shapeable and abstract concept, place is a "meaningful location" (2004, p. 7). Borrowing from political geographer John Agnew, Cresswell discerns three fundamental aspects of place: *location*, *locale*, and *sense of place*. The *location* of a place is its fixed co-ordinates in the world, while the *locale* of a place refers to the material setting for social relations, or in other words, the concrete form of the place. By *sense of place*, Agnew refers to the subjective and emotional attachment people have towards places (In Cresswell, 2004, p. 7).

One afternoon I was walking around town with a Nigerian migrant named Adam. I brought him to a place I had discovered while previously exploring the old town. This location was situated on the opposite side of the *piazza*, and in addition to being easy to find, offered a spectacular view of the ocean. When we reached the lookout point, Adam was surprised by its beauty, telling me that he had never been to this spot before. I thought this was a bit strange considering the relatively small size of the Borgo. However, the migrants' use of space in Badolato was often contingent on practicalities. They moved about depending on where they had formal business and appointments, whether it was to collect pocket money at the office of CIR, or attend the language course in the Marina. The *piazza* was probably one of the few places where the migrants would socialize in public without having a specific task at hand.

Applying Agnew's three fundamental aspects of what makes a place to the *piazza*, the *location* of the *piazza* is that it is in Badolato Borgo, while the *locale* is its function as a nexus that connects the networks of streets and people in the town. Accordingly, the *sense* of the *piazza* may be that of connectedness and sociality. As shown in the ethnographic vignette in the beginner of this chapter, the *piazza* was an especially socially vibrant part of town during the summer. From a middle-class Scandinavian family, to a Badolatese group of teens, or an irregular migrant from Senegal – everyone gathered on the *piazza*. Still, different parts of the *piazza* were used by different groups of people. Haci Akman has done a study on ethnic minorities' use of Torgallmenningen – a town square located in the Norwegian city of

Bergen. In the study, Akman observes that on the town square, ethnic minorities in diaspora seek what he refers to as "cultural territories" – spaces in which they can create their own places that allow them to maintain the group's collective memories, solidarity and ethnic awareness (2002, p. 104). In a similar fashion, the migrants used the *piazza* as a meeting place for recreational activities and social bonding. During the evenings, they would bring different objects, such as Bluetooth speakers, a football, a checkers board game and usually something to drink. These objects worked to create a relaxed atmosphere in which the migrants could joke around, discuss common topics and exchange news and gossip. A Gambian migrant once told me that whenever he saw another African in Italy, he always greeted that person. "He is my brother, you know", the Gambian said. Due to factors like sharing many of the same cultural references, having traveled similar roads to Europe and having experienced the same position of marginalization in the Italian society, the migrants found company in their fellow peers. Although they were of different nationalities and ethnicities, and spoke different languages and dialects, they developed a fellowship through their use of the *piazza*. Through the games, music and sharing of beverages, they construed the corner of the *piazza* as "their place", or alternatively, as their cultural territory (Akman, 2002, p 104).

At the same time, the migrants' corner of the *piazza* was part of the town's general public space. In this way, the migrants' territory simultaneously entered the place of the Italian community. In fact, a shared space like the *piazza* facilitated cultural recognition by rendering visible the migrants as part of the general community. In contrast to other integration models found elsewhere in Italy, where the refugees and migrants are accommodated in institutions and centers somewhat removed from the general population, the migrants' housing in Badolato was located amidst the regular population through the aforementioned model of *accoglienza diffusa*. The migrants therefore had easy access to the same public arenas as the local Italians. By taking space both physically, as for instance by claiming the football corner, and sensually, by filling the air with talk and music, the migrants claimed a piece of the *piazza* as their own cultural territory in which they could strengthen social ties within the group. In addition, the *piazza* offered the opportunity to establish contact with the local community. In fact, the *piazza* was probably the only social arena where the migrants could interact with the local Italians in an informal manner, without the encounter being organized by CIR. Football, in particular, turned out to be a great source of common interest and cross-cultural contact between the migrants and the Italian children. In addition, after getting to know Ismael, Seydou and Souleymane through myself, Pepé would regularly purchase rounds

of ice cream or offer a glass of wine, which we enjoyed together on the *piazza*. Through Pepé, the migrants would then be introduced to other Italians and friends of the farmer. The *piazza* thus enabled the migrants to emerge from the image constructed of them through processes like the Performance of Accoglienza. This image is part of what Federica Mazzara calls "spaces of invisibility", defined as spaces where the migrants are (de)-identified as mere representations of "the refugee", (2015, p. 452). The migrants got the possibility of entering spaces of visibility instead, thus enabling individual recognition.

Photo 19: A mosaic depicting the globe on the ground of the piazza. By author.

However, the *piazza* served also as a vehicle for social distancing. Although the visible presence of migrants in Badolato worked to normalize them as being a part of the town and thus boost possibilities of integration, that same visibility simultaneously confirmed the social boundaries that existed between the groups. By being physically close to each other on the *piazza*, the social distance between the migrants and the rest of the community was coming to light. Furthermore, the visibility of the *piazza* also had an othering effect, thereby rendering public space even more ambivalent to the migrants.

The Panoptic Piazza

In *Discipline and Punish* (1997), the French philosopher Michel Foucault discusses "panopticism", a concept based on the early 19th century theory of "the optimal prison" by the British philosopher Jeremy Bentham (Mathiesen, 1999, p. 9). The architectural figure of Bentham's prison consists of a peripheral, annular building that encircles a tower at its midpoint. The prison cells are located in the peripheral building, and are designed with two windows: one facing the inside of the circle, corresponding to the windows of the tower in the center, and another on the outside that allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other. A supervisor residing in the tower can observe all the inmates in their cells, but because of the specific architectural design of the prison, the inmates cannot see the supervisor. In Foucault's words: "in the peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen" (2008, p. 6). The power exercised by the supervisor in the tower is therefore *visible*, in the sense that since the inmates can always see the tower, they are always reminded of the possibility of being observed. Simultaneously, the power of the panoptic prison is *unverifiable* because the inmates can never be sure if or when they are being watched. They only know that they can be observed at all times (Foucault, 2008, p. 6).

The *piazza* of Badolato Borgo can be viewed as an inverted form of the Panopticon – instead of the tower in the center that is surrounded by the annular cells, the "inmates", or subjects of supervision, are placed in the middle, encircled by the spectators who are in their houses or standing around the football corner. According to Foucault, "power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights and gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up" (2008, p. 6). It is therefore not the exercise of individual power that is central to the Panoptic Piazza, but rather the (re)production of the power inherent to the socio-political categories that people belong to. On the Panoptic Piazza, the spectators' motivations for watching, or whether they are really watching or not, is irrelevant to the fact that just the possibility of being observed without knowing when or by whom can influence a persons' mind and body. In Foucault's own words: "[H]e who is subject to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power" (2008, p. 7).

The act of gazing and being gazed upon are forms of communication. In *Staring: How We Look* (2009), Rosemarie Garland-Thomson describes staring as "a social act that stigmatizes by designating people whose bodies or behaviors cannot be readily absorbed into the visual status quo" (2009, p. 44). In other words, staring can be a form of othering. In her treatment of national identity and Muslim immigrant representation in the British and Danish press, Michelle Lawrie writes about "suspect communities" – defined as a strand within the Orientalist discourse that frames the migrant as belonging in a "culturally incompatible 'suspect community' of Muslims […] who are racialized and categorized as the Other" (Lawrie, 2019, pp. 2, 340). The discourse of "suspect communities" and the act of staring establishes a binary opposition between the local and the immigrant community, whereby the latter is stressed as out out-of-place element. As discussed in chapter one, the migrants are a minority group in a marginalized position. According to Indian scholar Homi Babha (1983), the suspect panoptic lens on Muslims (or migrants) is necessary to maintain power and gaze over the Other (In Lawrie, 2019, p. 341).

In one instance, I was sitting under the shade of the trees outside the bar with a group of elderly Badolatesi. The elders spoke to me about the migrants. "If I came to your house", a man said, "I would have to behave myself now, wouldn't I? [The migrants] must respect our customs". He then went on talking about how he disliked the way the migrants treated the accommodation they were given by the municipality, claiming they acted ungrateful by ruining the houses. The locals often told me of instances where they had observed the migrants behaving in a certain way, expressing their general impression of the migrants based on singular events. Even if judging groups based on individual behavior was something that went both ways, the point here is that of power dynamics. The feeling of being observed makes people self-regulate their behavior: the gaze is internalized (Urry, 1992, p. 178). The seemingly disapproving or suspicious looks that were shot in the migrants' direction made the migrants self-aware. As an example, Souleymane would sometimes shush the other migrants whenever they were making a ruckus in public, seemingly wanting to avoid attracting attention. In the migrants' eyes, the local gaze did not approve of them. This perception was then embodied and manifested in how they used public space. Some migrants therefore kept more to their apartments than they did outside.

As with the Performance of Accoglienza, the attention that the migrants received while being in public space had implications for the way they related to Badolato, its inhabitants and their

process of integration. There were several factors that rendered the migrants *different* in the context of the *piazza*. First, as discussed in chapter two, the black skin color of the migrants made them stand out in a town mostly populated by white people. The African men therefore attracted attention out in public, especially from tourists who had heard of the migrant community through the narrative of Badolato as *il paese di accoglienza*. On one hand, the migrants could enjoy meeting tourists and other travelers who wanted to interact with them. On the other hand, because these encounters often concerned the migrant or refugee status of the men, many of the migrants disliked the attention. "It is too much", Eric used to say when CIR asked him to meet a group of visitors.

It was not unusual for tourists to photograph the migrants when they were out in public, most often without asking permission first. One time, a group of tourists took photos of the migrants and I as we played football on the *piazza*. The game slowed down as some of the men turned their backs to the camera, and I eventually had to ask a tourist on their way onto the field if they would be so kind as to move out of the game. Instances like these are examples of tourists' visual consumption of the migrants and might not seem significantly problematic at face value. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the attention directed at the migrants in these types of encounters added up to a general feeling of being perceived as a spectacle. In other words, the tourist gaze ultimately worked as a form of othering. What can be unnerving about being observed, is that you have little control over what impression you give off due to the distance and lack of communication. In the words of Foucault, the one being observed is "the object of information, never a subject in communication" (2008, p. 5). The tourists' photographing seldom turned into more interaction or actual communication, and thus, the migrants were rendered Appreciated Others, visually consumed from a distance.

The Panoptic Piazza both produces and is a product of the unequal power relations between the migrants and the rest of the community. One of the central social dynamics of power inequalities that became visible on the *piazza*, is the aspect of class. The migrants were often low on money due to several reasons: the pay for working in the fields was a mere 15–30 euro a day, and the weekly payment of pocket money (10 euro) was often delayed. In addition, the migrants were often expected to send money home. For example, I witnessed how Ismael would spare only the 10 euro for himself and sending whatever else he made from work back to friends and family in Guinea. While the tourists and local community could access a range

of recreational activities that included the services of bars, restaurants and the *gelateria*, the migrants' economic means did not allow for the same level of leisure.

Illustrated in both the ethnographic vignette from the beginning of chapter two, as well as the ethnographic vignette from this chapter, the migrants would often retire into the Guineans' apartment in the evenings. There, they had established their own cultural territory in which they could reproduce a sense of community with the other migrants. When being outside in public, they preferred to stay in the corner of the *piazza*, where they could hang out in groups and thus successfully transfer their sense of community to the outside. Apart from the corner of the *piazza* and a few other locations, there was several places where the migrants did not seem to have achieved a sense of cultural territory. One incident illustrates the migrants' sense of being "out of place" when in public: I was at a bar in the Marina with Pepé, Ismael, Souleymane and Seydou. Throughout our visit, the other customers in the bar kept looking over at us. One can assume that the staring was either unintentional, or that it happened because they were not used to the migrants visiting that particular bar, at least not when it was four of them together with other white people that was not employees of CIR. I observed how the three Guineans became visibly uncomfortable under the gaze of the people in the bar. They kept their voices low and their bodies small, and the usual atmosphere of humor and light-spiritedness that characterized the relationship between the five of us was somewhat muted. We drank our coffees while Pepé and I made small-talk. The Guineans hardly uttered a word.

Non c'é vita: village rhythm and waiting

One April evening, I was playing FIFA with Ismael and Souleymane at their place. The following day was *l'Anniversario della liberazione d'Italia* (Italy's Liberation Day), and Ismael was annoyed because this meant that the bus would not be driving. Because it was a public holiday, he had to reschedule an appointment he was supposed to have in Catanzaro. Ismael's frustration sparked a conversation between the two men about the time they had spent in Milan before coming to Badolato. "How come in Badolato, there's no machine to buy bus tickets like there is in Milan?" said Ismael, dropping the game controller. "Every time there is *la festa* (holiday) in Badolato, we become like prisoners." Souleymane nodded, and Ismael continued: "I remember the first time I arrived in Badolato. While the bus was driving

uphill, I looked at the Borgo, and I thought to myself 'wow, there's nobody here'". Souleymane scoffed and replied: "All there is to do here is sleep and wake up, sleep and wake up. *Non c'é vita* (there's no life)."

Because the accommodation of the migrants was located up in the Borgo, the men were dependent upon the bus connecting *sù* and *giù* whenever they wanted to travel. The Borgo is separated from the Marina by a 240-meter drive. Consequently, the Borgo would often make the migrants feel as though they were trapped. In fact, Badolato Borgo *is* quite small and without a car, there are not many places to go in comparison to larger cities. That is why every Sunday and during holidays, when public transport stopped operating, the migrants would feel like "prisoners", trapped in the medieval structure. CIR and the Advocates of Inclusion provided the migrants with basic services like accommodation, pocket money, language course and assistance in matters of asylum and applications for a residence permit. Beyond these services, it was up to the migrants to structure their own lives. However, due to the precariousness that followed from their dependence upon social and economic support, the aspect of waiting permeated the life of the migrant in Badolato. Whether they waited for the monthly supply of pocket money, the bus, or for their projects to end so that they could leave Badolato, the migrants experienced the town as a place of "temporal limbo" (Bendixsen & Eriksen, 2018, p. 90).

Some migrants were waiting on clearance regarding their legal status. The transition from being paperless to attaining residence can be seen as a state of liminality, meaning a temporal state of ambiguity and disorientation that occurs in the transition from one status to another (Turner, 2008, p. 95). Giovanni Gasparini points to the precarious nature of waiting, describing it as: "at the crossroads not only of the present and future, but also of certainty and uncertainty" (1995, p. 31). Likewise, for the migrants in Badolato, the seemingly open-ended waiting time for life to begin was characterized by uncertainty – about whether they would get a residence permit, earn enough money to send home, or fulfill their family's expectations of marriage. Waiting implies that an actor is oriented towards the future (Gasparini, 1995, p. 30). Many of the migrants did try to fill their time with productive and goal-oriented activities, like attending Italian language classes or working to save money. However, these activities took up only so many hours of the day. In addition, because of the uncertainty that followed from being irregular, many migrants had a hard time devoting themselves themselves to the language classes. Why invest in learning Italian when life itself is

experienced as put on hold? During my stay, the attendance rate of the language class dropped significantly after the first couple of months. When the migrants got work, they tended to drop out of class, and consequently, their language skills faltered. This further slowed down the integration process, considering knowledge of Italian is key to successfully integrate in Italy (Bianco & Cobo, 2019, p. 3).

On an evening in May, I was in the kitchen of Seydou, Ismael and Souleymane, together with a group of other migrants. Bakary began speaking about previous experiences from other immigration camps in Italy. "I don't like Italy man, it's boring", Bakary said, "only *campagna* (countryside). No good for your career." He told us he had spent nine months in a refugee camp in Palermo, in a crowded house of six floors. A Somali sitting beside him jokingly remarked: "Oh, so you spent nine months in prison then", and they all laughed. In Palermo, Bakary had tried to ask for school equipment so that he could study. "Like pen and paper, and backpack to carry the stuff". He did not get it. They had received 30 euro a month, but the camp did not provide water, and the food was just watery rice. "There is no place for us in the world", the Gambian solemnly concluded. Bakary is just one of many examples of how the migrants in Badolato are used to waiting under precarious conditions. The refugee camp in Palermo did not offer Bakary educational support. Consequently, his days in the camp was characterized by just waiting for the next meal.

Illustrated in Bakary's statement above, the migrants expressed a dissatisfaction of the town's *tempo*. They frequently said that they were bored, and that there was nothing to do in the Borgo. The young men often said that to just stay inside and sleeping was "no good for the head". Nonetheless, some migrants seemed to sleep in order to shorten their days. I would often encounter a tired-looking Yosef, who would tell me that he had slept all day because "what else is there for me here?". Different statements suggested that the migrants disliked the slow-paced rhythm of village life. One of the last things Adam told me before leaving to find work elsewhere, was that: "Badolato is no place to live, there is only old people". He laughed, then crossed his arms in the air, shouting: "*Finito*!".

While the locals' shift from private to public space often depended on events such as holidays or religious festivities, the migrants' use of public space often seemed like a matter of "killing time". Football, as discussed above, was a central activity in exercising body and mind, in addition to establishing a sense of community among the migrants. Another way they felt

connected, was through browsing the Internet and use social media. Prone to loneliness in a foreign country and without their social network, the possibility to maintain social ties, updating family on their situations and upholding friendships was consequently vital for them to kill some time within the "temporal limbo" of waiting.

Rootlessness and temporality

During fieldwork, I observed that the social contact between the migrants and local Italians were restricted to the few events organized by CIR, like the charity dinner described in chapter two, or World Refugee Day from chapter 3. Otherwise, the migrants were largely left to themselves. One central reason for the lack of contact between the locals and the Africans in Badolato was the temporary nature of the migrants' stay. Every individual integration project only lasted for six months, and if the migrants did not find work shortly after their project ended, many left to find work in other Italian cities, usually in the North. Almost all the migrants I talked to did not intend to stay in Badolato for long. They would say that as soon as they could, they would take whatever money they had earned and leave. Seydou, for example, wished to go back to his friends in Palermo where he had spent most of his time in Italy. Ismael planned to go first to the north of Italy, and then later to move to France. Eric was the only one to claim that he would not mind staying in Badolato, depending on whether he would find work after his studies or not. With the migrants coming and leaving, the local community would perhaps have a hard time bonding with them, and vice versa.

The migrants in Badolato were used to leaving. During their travels, they have had to leave behind their networks of family and friends several times – first back in their home countries, and then, as they traveled through Africa and Europe. They have met and lost people on the way, for example traveling companions across the desert or Italian friends in former integration projects. Take for example Ismael: he arrived in Italy by a boat from Libya and was eventually placed in Milan. There, he lived with a host family, went to school and made friends. However, it was suddenly decided that he would be transferred to Badolato, and therefore he had to leave his network for an unknown place. Many migrants felt lonely in Badolato. As an example, I was once sitting in the *piazza* with a Gambian migrant. While looking out on the empty space in front of us, he started talking about how he missed his family compound back in Gambia. He chuckled fondly as he said that since he grew up in the

same place as his extended family, he had to lock the door whenever he wanted some privacy. The past of the lively crowdedness of the family compound stands in stark contrast to his current situation as a single male in a foreign country.

Integration in Badolato has changed over the years when it comes to who is accommodated. In the 1990s, the Kurdish refugees arrived in families, and the story of their accommodation states that a central part of the Kurds' integration process included the local and Kurdish children playing together. The African migrants, on the other hand, had few possibilities to make their own families, due to at least two factors. First, CIR only admitted male beneficiaries. Second, the women of Badolato were generally off-limits for the migrants. Both factors lead to the Africans lacking prospects of romantic love, which in turn rendered life in Badolato as temporary, considering their 'rootlessness' due to the lack of family or close familiar relationships that tied them to the village.

Anthropologist Christine Jacobsen points out that "the construction of the East as Europe's Other has been heavily gendered and sexualized" (Jacobsen, 2011, p. 172). Feminist readings of Said's *Orientalism* show how Muslim men are portrayed as potentially dangerous, oppressors and victimizers of women, while the women are silenced victims (Jacobsen, 2011, p. 172). An incident that illustrates how Italian women were unavailable to the migrants, happened on the *piazza* while I was hanging out with a group of migrants. One of the migrants had greeted a local woman who passed him, saying "*ciao"*, to which she responded by saying "*ciao*" back. The woman happened to be accompanied by her boyfriend, who was visibly angered by the migrants' gesture. On a later occasion, the Italian boyfriend tried to start a fight with the migrant, accusing him of trying to steal his girlfriend. Osman, who was a couple of years older than the other migrants, often said that he wanted to marry and have children, preferably with a European woman. "Only when their men aren't looking, they want to have fun", Osman would say. His comment suggests that Osman was involved with European women in some way or another, but that he did so secretively because the European men did not approve.

The temporality of the migrants' stay in Badolato was enforced by the precarious nature of their working conditions. Due to the historical presence of a large area of self-employed workers, micro-enterprises and subsistence economies, the economies of southern European countries, like Italy, is characterized by a large informal sector (Quassoli, 1999, p. 214). The

informal sector concerns all economic relevant activities and arrangements that avoid state regulation, fail to observe institutional rules and/or are unprotected by the state (Quassoli, 1999, p. 213). In the beginning of this chapter, I described how the migrants were picked up on the *piazza* by farmers to work on their farms. In fact, these working arrangements are a remembrance of the South-Italian past. South-Italian agriculture is historically characterized by domestic farmhands hiring immigrants for irregular work on a temporary, even daily, basis (Quassoli, 1999, p. 221). The South-Italian day workers were referred to as the *bracciante agricolo*. The name *bracciante* stems from the Italian word for "arm" and refers to the physical strength that the worker lends to the employer.

Today's informal economy in Italy consists heavily of irregular migrants from underdeveloped countries that work in agriculture (Quassoli, 1999, p. 218). This type of work is associated with high levels of labor exploitation and limited opportunities for regular jobs. Mike, a Nigerian informant, would tell me about his troubles regarding his working conditions: "Here, they don't sign contracts, and this is a big problem because then the government thinks that we [the migrants] aren't working." The migrants were usually employed on a seasonal basis, and the farmers did not offer contracts, which therefore excluded any system of protection. Without being able to register their labor as official work experience to be put on a CV, the migrants did not have the possibility to prove their job experience in an official format, and were consequently stuck working in the black market. The agricultural work exposed the migrants to dangers of heat-stress, dehydration, back pain and machinery related injuries. Whenever Mike rolled his shoulders, he used to wince in pain due to backache he got from work. Likewise, Yosef would tell me about his physical pains from working in the fields, saying: "white people won't do this", demonstrating how he picked products off the ground with his back bent. Anthropologist Seth Holmes analyzes the back pains of migrant farm workers as the embodiment of the structural violence of social hierarchies (Holmes, 2013, p. 89). Likewise, Mike and Yosef's physical pain can be understood as the embodiment of their marginalized positions in the Italian society.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the interrelations between conceptualizations of place and the experience of time for the migrants. By looking at the *piazza* as an inverted Panopticon, where the subjects of supervision are encircled by the supervisors, I have tried to account for how the social division between the local and the African community manifested itself spatially in the different uses of public and private spaces. I have argued that on one hand, the visibility of the Panoptic Piazza enables a recognition of the migrants as part of the local community. On the other hand, that same visibility reinforces the socio-political division between the groups by rendering visible the differences in class.

Furthermore, I have explored how the migrants experienced time in Badolato as a sluggish, temporary waiting period. The slow-paced rhythm and temporality of their lives is largely due to their marginalized position in the Italian society: their irregular legal status, lack of prospects of romantic love and marriage, and the uncertainty deriving from their informal and exploitative work arrangements. The combination of these factors produced a sense of rootlessness for the migrants, which therefore made them eager to leave Badolato as soon as they could afford it. In the meantime, they tried to engage in goal-oriented activities, like attending language class. However, they seemed to lack motivation to invest in the language classes, most likely due to the uncertainty of their futures, not knowing whether their residence permit would be renewed. Many migrants therefore chose to earn money through the informal agricultural work instead of studying. When not working, they engaged in activities of "killing time", including football and the use of Internet. These activities enabled the migrants to tie friendships among themselves, and to stay connected with the friends and family they had left behind.

Chapter 5:

Piety and Morality

Photo 20: Ramadan prayer. By Ida Karin Sagvolden.

Introduction

In this chapter, I will explore different conceptions of moralities and ethical practices in relation to religious piety. Like any other youth, the Muslim migrants in Badolato had expectations of romantic love, they were consumers of popular culture and were involved in recreational activities that are not necessarily in accordance with the most pious teachings of Islam. At the same time, religious devotion is a significant part of the Muslims migrants' self-image. Especially during Ramadan and Easter, they emphasized the centrality of religion in their lives. I will therefore use the case of Ramadan to discuss in what ways the migrants' conceptions of piety and moral conduct shaped their processes of integration in Badolato.

I will address the following questions: How do the Muslim migrants negotiate the seemingly contrasting identities as pious Muslims on one side, and on the other, being young men involved in the secular European and African lifestyles? Furthermore, how do the migrants relate to the Catholic context of Badolato? I will use the case of Easter in comparing and exploring how the different groups conceive of each other in terms of (religious) morality.

I will argue that for the Muslims migrants, being pious is an important identity marker that works to differentiate and, to a certain degree, give them a sense of elevation from the local community of Badolato. This way, the pious ideals and secular activities work together in enabling the migrants to create and adapt their moral and religious selves within the European and South-Italian context.

From party to piety

At the end of March, the wind gusts and rainfalls of winter are slowly being replaced by the rising temperatures of spring. Armed with both umbrellas and sunglasses due to the rapidly changing weather, the people of Badolato are beginning to spend more time outside their houses. During the day, the elderly are chatting under the shadow of the mimosa trees on the *piazza*. The smooth roof of the post office levels with the *piazza*, and makes a great location for the children to play football. In the evenings, when the children are being called to dinner and the football field is desolated, the migrants meet to hang out and kick some ball. Reliving the nostalgic glee from my school days of playing sports in the breaks, I join the young men

on the field. Wine and beer are often introduced in between the loosely structured matches, and I notice that some of my Muslim informants are drinking more than usual. Although it is common for many Muslims to drink, it is regarded as *haram* (forbidden) according to the Qur'an to do so, and therefore choosing to drink can be a source of ambivalence and shame. However, the unlawfulness of alcohol can also be a source of humor. Based on shared religious knowledge, the young Muslims in Badolato know how to push their friends' buttons when it comes to drinking alcohol. On the football field, they are playfully teasing each other, saying things like: "You just take a good sip now, 'cus soon you won't be drinking for a month!" Through the teasing, I come to learn that it is soon time for the holy month of Ramadan, and I understand that the increased consumption of alcohol is a way for the Muslims to prepare themselves. By getting the partying out of their systems, they are readying themselves for the following month's religious and moral discipline.

In the spirit of the anthropological method of participant observation, I ask three of my closest informants if I can join them in doing Ramadan. I am four months into my fieldwork and have more or less been adopted into the everyday lives of Souleymane, Ismael and Seydou. They are both pleased and intrigued as they agree to include me, nonetheless warning me about the difficulties of fasting. "Leave it be, Jenny, it's too hard", Seydou says one night we are gathered around the dinner table. "We'll see," I answer, swallowing a big spoon of chicken couscous.

Halal and haram during Ramadan

Ramadan is the ninth month of the year according to the Islamic calendar, and the fourth of the five ritual obligations listed as the Pillars of Islam. From one sighting of the crescent moon to the next – a period that can last for between twenty to thirty days – Muslims across the globe dedicate themselves to *sawn* (fasting), *salah* (prayer), reflection and community. Ramadan entails a complete abstinence from food, drink, smoking, and sex from dawn to sunset. It is a blessed, holy month that brings forth a general sense of increased social, moral, and pious commitment (Sandberg et al., 2018, p. 57; Schielke, 2009, p. 26). In Badolato, most of the migrants involved in the project of CIR were Muslims, with a few exceptions of Christians, and all practicing in various degrees. Most of the Muslims I talked to looked forward to Ramadan, while others were more anxious for the hardship of fasting. Either way,

there was an excitement in the air. As discussed in chapter 4, the migrants were often bored and spent much time in a temporal limbo waiting for an uncertain future. With Ramadan, however, the Muslims expected to devote themselves to dense religious practice for a whole month. Ramadan therefore seemed to reinvigorate the Muslim migrants.

To be able to follow the praying schedule and to refrain from the temptations of breaking the fast, I moved into the guest room of Ismael and Souleymane. As I had become accustomed to my informants' loosely structured lifestyles, the rigid time schedule of praying and fasting enhanced the element of participation in participant observation. Just before dawn, we performed the prayer called *Fajr*, which was around 4:12 a.m. At 12:51 p.m, we did the midday prayer called *Dohr*. Then, the next rounds of prayers were *Asr*, held in the afternoon around 4:40 p.m., followed by *Maghreb* at 7:48 p.m. We ended the fast right before *Maghreb*, usually by eating *ghossi*, which is a sweet rice-based dish. Lastly, we performed the evening prayer called *Isha* around 9:23 p.m., before the rest of the night was spent eating excessively and drinking water in preparation for the next day of fasting. The young Muslims relied on an application called "Muslim Pro" to organize their Ramadan. The app offered a praying schedule customized after the user's geographical position, a compass to position yourself towards Makah during prayer, chapters from the Qur'an, daily inspirational quotes to encourage you to abstain from breaking your fast, and a live stream from the prayers in Makah. The "Muslim Pro"-application would remind the user to pray by playing *adhan*, which is a musical call to prayer that is usually played from speakers of the Mosque in Islamic countries.

My experience of Ramadan is perfectly summed up by the opening line of Samuli Schielke's article "Being good in Ramadan" (2009): "For young men in the northern Egyptian village of Nazlat al-Rayyis, the holy month of Ramadan is a privileged time for football" (Schielke, 2009, p. 24). Every afternoon before fast ended, the migrants and I would gather at the football field in the corner of the *piazza*, where we would play football until dawn. Football is a form of *lamma* (sociality) and *taslîya* (amusement) that characterize Ramadan as much as fasting and prayer do (Schielke, 2009, p. 24). Despite my initial skepticism towards the idea of combining fasting and physical exercise, I discovered that football and fasting did in fact go well together. Football became a way of energizing an otherwise slow-paced period, a possibility of killing some time and forget the bodily discomfort before finally commencing the night's endeavors of eating. Without religious authorities or structures to organize

religious practice, like for example an elderly family member or a neighborhood Mosque would have done, the migrants relied on each other to make sure they adhere to the guidelines and demands of Ramadan.

One night, the three Guineans and I were gathered in the living room to play videogames. It was around 4 a.m., and from the men's cell phones sounded the *adhan*. While Ismael, Souleymane and I had already prayed in the bedroom next door, Seydou had not, and the clock was ticking. However, he did not seem bothered, and he calmly smoked his cigarette as he started a next round of FIFA. Souleymane, on the other hand, gradually lost his patience, finally saying: "Don't just sit there smoking! Go pray!" Seydou laughed in response and jokingly patted his heart, saying Ramadan was within him, and he therefore did not need to pray. Ismael laughed at his comment, but Souleymane would not let it go. "If you don't pray, I won't open my door for you again." The room went silent for a moment, before Seydou took a last drag of his cigarette, excused himself and went home to pray in time for *Fajr*. This incident illustrates how the young Muslims took responsibility for each other's piousness. Even though one of the five pillars of Islam states that one should pray five times a day, the observance of this instruction varies from person to person. Prayer can nevertheless be a constant source of guilt for Muslims (Sandberg et al., 2018). Through supporting and rebuking each other, the Guineans created their own structures in the absence of the religious authorities they were used to at home. Ismael would usually lead the prayers, having been taught how to since early childhood by his father. He was therefore acting as our *imam* (person who leads the prayer) and would teach me about Islam throughout the holy month.

Comradeship was not only enacted in inspiring and exhort each other to pray. During Ramadan, I observed that the regular football matches and peer-supervision induced a stronger sense of community. Schielke describes Ramadan football like "a time of exceptional morality that, by its nature, will only last as long as Ramadan lasts", and goes on saying that the temporally limited nature of Ramadan therefore "legitimizes less consistent approaches to religion and morality for the rest of the year" (Schielke, 2009, p. 25). In Badolato, Ramadan football produced a consistent, although temporary schedule of physical exercise. Likewise, the general religious devotion was significantly concentrated during Ramadan. The emphasized piety was reflected in their religious devotion to fast and prayer, but also in their behavior towards one other. As an example, I observed that they became increasingly generous with food, always sharing whatever was on their plates. Part of the reason why pious

behavior increased during Ramadan is the belief that doing pious deeds during this period "counts" more than otherwise in the eyes of Allah. Usually, whenever I was visiting the homes of the migrants, a music video displaying women dancing in a sexual manner around a male protagonist would be playing in the background of our conversation. At the household of the Guineans during Ramadan, however, we avoided listening to secular music all together. The only music we listened to was a genre called *nasheed*, with lyrics based on the Qur'an. In addition, Souleymane deleted social media applications on his phone, like Instagram, to avoid seeing something *haram*, like sexual or violent content. In this way, the migrants increasingly observed religious guidelines and prohibitions that they otherwise did not follow outside of Ramadan.

Photo 21: Halal chicken from the butcher. By author.

Considering the shift in the migrants' behavior, I got the impression that they considered Ramadan as an annual exercise in piety, and a chance to redeem any sins one might have committed during the rest of the year. In addition to practicing the stricter religious teachings during Ramadan, the Muslims were also more active in verbally promoting their religiosity to the Advocates of Inclusion. When asked about the fasting, the Muslims often responded with downplaying how challenging it could be. When they revealed that fasting prohibited drinking as well, they seemed to enjoy the Italians' shocked faces. During these interactions, I noticed a sense of pride in the migrants over their religiosity. The Catholic context of

Badolato, in addition to my presence as a non-believer (but in their eyes, a possible convert), seemed to make the Muslims focus even more on being pious than outside of Ramadan. Furthermore, they seemed to want to be even more pious than the Catholic Italians. Striving to be religiously observant was therefore an important identity marker for them, and perhaps especially so due to their context of diaspora.

Scholar of religion Jocelyne Cesari argues that normative Islamic traditions are changing, and that a "new Muslim subject" has emerged in Europe (In Sandberg et al., 2018, p. 44). According to Cesari, Islam is becoming increasingly individualized. The individualization primarily concerns Islam in Western countries, and the process is characterized by the transition from religious practice in the Mosque to the private sphere. The individualization of Islam also entails a fragmentation of religious dogmas; Muslims more often choose to observe only specific parts of Islam according to what they deem to be required of their practice (Sandberg et al., 2018, p. 44). The Muslims in Badolato's religious practices might be understood as a form of individualization. At the Guineans' apartment, we always prayed in the private sphere of their bedroom, and never anywhere else, say for example, in another Muslim's house. At the same time, the individualization of Islam in Badolato might simply be a matter of circumstance. In the Catholic town, the Muslims lacked access to the same public structures of Islam that they were used to from home. They consequently *had* to carry out their religious practice in their private spheres. I did, however, observe that the young Muslims did not use the Mosque that was located in a nearby town. It is hard to say whether this was due to the distance or a process of individualization of Islam.

More relevant is perhaps the part of Cesari's argument that states that the individualization of Islam entails a fragmentation of religious dogmas. Outside of Ramadan, whenever the topic of *haram* activities was brought up, like for example drinking alcohol or having pre-marital sex, the migrants would often say that there would come a time when they would fully dedicate themselves to more pious commitments, but that for now, they were just young men enjoying life. They therefore kept off practicing stricter versions of their faith with the promise to seriously devote themselves to a more pious lifestyle in the future. Ramadan therefore functioned as a cyclic, annual exercise in piety, while outside of Ramadan, piety was perceived in terms of a linear time span, meaning it was something they would dedicate themselves to in the future. This future was usually imagined coinciding with marriage and family obligations. The Muslims, therefore, deemed secular activities as unproblematic with

their religious identities outside of Ramadan. The fact that they were postponing a pious lifestyle until marriage and choosing to observe only specific parts of Islam suggests a tendency to fluctuate between religious and secular activity. Sociologist John O'Brien notes that people's identities are cross-cutting and fluctuating depending on the course of everyday life, rather than assuming a single overarching identity (2013, p. 101). O'Brien's study of piety is based on five young second generation immigrant Muslim Americans. He observed their strategies of weaving between religious and secular contexts, as they worked to fulfill their religious duties as well as being hip hop artists. Instead of looking at the Muslims' consumption of "profane" popular culture as incongruent to their religious conviction, O'Brien notes that what is considered sufficiently pious is always open to contestation, because piety is locally established and socially constructed (2013, p. 107). Like the informants of O'Brien, the Muslim migrants in Badolato wanted to be "both religiously observant and secularly cool" (2013, p. 105). Outside of Ramadan, the migrants often played the music of the Italian-born artist of Egyptian-Sardinian descent called Alessandro Mahmoud (known as Mahmood). The songs of Mahmood include references to Islam, as well as secular themes, like alcohol and partying. The Muslims' consumption of the music of Mahmood can understood as efforts to obtain "cool piety" – "a way of being Muslim that is devout without being too religious and that is cool without being un-Islamic" (O'Brien, 2013, p. 116).

Except for some ground rules, like to refrain from eating pork or eat during fast, what the Muslims in Badolato considered *haram* (forbidden) and *halal* (permissible) during Ramadan varied from person to person. As mentioned, music was generally considered *haram* and thus temporarily off limits at the Guineans' apartment. Yosef, on the other hand, listened to music during Ramadan, while insisting on his religious observance when speaking to me about his faith. One day, Yosef visited Souleymane and Ismael carrying speakers that played rap music loudly. The Guineans laughed at Yosef as he made some dance moves in front of them. Then, they asked him to turn the music off because it was Ramadan. Yosef eventually did so, but not before rolling his eyes at them, making fun of their stricter religious practice. This incident suggests that the Muslims in Badolato had different conceptions of what was sufficient pious behavior during Ramadan. Outside of Ramadan, they seemed to share the perception that "real piety" was reserved for the future, as mentioned above, and the consuming of secular popular artifacts (that was generally perceived as *haram* during Ramadan), was common. The increased focus on piety during Ramadan suggests that the Muslims, like any other youth, had to weave between contexts and balance ideals of moral

(pious) behavior on one side, and on the other side, participate in the secular youth culture within the mixed African and European contexts that they lived. The combination of, and the weaving between, secularity and piety, thus worked as a form of identity group-building that was in line with both their identities as young men, and their identities as Muslims.

By participating in the religious practices and observing the following Muslim youth identity-building, Ramadan worked as a platform where I could observe the migrants' different ways of dealing with the complexity of everyday life as young African Muslims living in a European, Catholic context. One month before Ramadan, my Italian informants had celebrated Easter, which is one of the most central religious traditions of Catholicism. Like with Ramadan, I was invited to participate in the celebrations. Easter gave me insight into different conceptions of piety within the local community, as well as how the migrants related to the piety of their hosts.

The spectacles of la Pasqua

In April, the arrival of *la Pasqua* (Easter) transformed the quiet months of winter into sunny days of music and color, and the whole town seem to be revitalized by the spring festivities. Easter is one of Badolato's most celebrated holidays, and the spectacle of the processions attracts hundreds of tourists every year. For me, *la Settimana Santa* (the Holy Week) of Easter started as I was eating breakfast at the bar. Anna, an Italian girl I knew, joined me and asked if I would like to join her to la Chiesa di Santa Caterina to watch today's procession. Together, we slipped down the wet dark moss covering the flat stone steps of *u Mancusu*, which is the left part of the Borgo where the sun is *ammanca* (dialect for "lacking" and "left"). Outside the small church, the church's confraternity was waiting for the procession to begin, dressed in white robes with bright red capes over their shoulders. Inside the church, a choir of old and young men were singing in a circle. Anna introduced me to a *signore* who told me that he was originally from Badolato, but that he had arrived from Florence in order to participate in the Easter celebrations. When he learned about my research, he invited us to join their procession, and brought us into a room in the back of the church where they kept the red and white costumes. While the man left for us to get dressed, Anna whisperingly asked me if I was Catholic or not. When I shook my head no, she teasingly smiled. From the altar, a voice asked: "Are there any more sisters or brothers who would like to join us?". We

hurriedly put the white dresses over our clothes and joined the group outside. The man from Florence tied a red rope with a tassel around our waists. Anna and I got to carry tall, white candles in front of the procession, and we marched through the narrow streets of *u Mancusu*, towards the main church of the Borgo, called la Chiesa Matrice. A man who was carrying a wooden statue of a crucified Jesus walked between us. Every now and then, we were told to stop and pause, and the choir positioned themselves in a circle to sing for a couple of minutes, before we continued.

Photo 22: La Chiesa Matrice

Inside la Chiesa Matrice, the Catholics of Badolato gathered for *la Santa Messa* (mass). Anna and I put our candles next to the figure of Jesus at an altar. Then, we sat down at the wooden benches in the front row. I glanced around and copied the positions of the people sitting next to me, folding my hands in my lap and looking down, bowing my head slightly. During the mass, the crowd chimed in with the priest, saying "amen" and "*sancto spirito*". I, however, remained silent, not knowing when to speak. Suddenly, it started to rain, and shortly after, thunder crashed and lightning flared outside. The huge church room lit up from the lightning, and at one point, the electricity went out. The storm made the atmosphere inside seem sacral even to an atheist like me. It was as if God himself was banging on the church doors. At the end of the mass, the faithful went to receive sacramental bread, and the priest waved a

container with incent around the room. The man from Florence invited me to join the next day's procession as well, seeming pleased that I had participated.

The procession described above was part of the many spectacles of the Easter celebrations. Later in the week, other events were organized, all to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. For example, *Giovedì santo* (Holy Thursday) was dedicated to the representation of *L'Ultima Cena* (The Last Supper). Towards the end of *la Settimana Santa,* the processions increasingly attracted more people, and on *Sabato santo* (Holy Saturday), about 200 people participated in a procession that was reenacting the suffering of Jesus Christ by the hands of the Romans. During one of the many stages of the procession, a man representing Jesus was walking while carrying a big wooden barrel that symbolized the cross. Jesus, his face covered so that no one could recognize the actor, was whipped and dragged through the Borgo all day by the men playing Roman soldiers. Crowds of tourists watched from the sides of the road, while I was in the middle of it all, dressed in the traditional outfit and carrying a white candle.

Photo 23: Jesus, the Roman soldiers and the disciplinaries. By author.

Walking together with Jesus and the Romans were about 70 *disciplinari*[5] (disciplinaries), consisting of hooded men and women dressed in white and with crowns made of thorns on their heads. Throughout the procession, the *disciplinari* were rattling with metal chains, and from time to time, they whipped themselves on their backs to self-punish. The purpose was to redeem their sins and to feel closer to the pains and passion of Jesus. The whipping was done in a light manner and the blow was softened by a protective pillow carried on their backs, Still, the sound of the rattling and sight of whipping rendered the display quite dramatic.

Photo 24: The disciplinaries going inside the church. By author.

During the spectacles of Easter, it seemed as if the whole town was outside. Public spaces, previously occupied by the elderly and unemployed migrants, were now filled with families and groups of tourists. The restaurants, bars, shops and beach resorts reopen, and in the evenings the *piazza* came alive with the buzz of people. I was excited by the sudden revitalization of a town that I had hitherto experienced ass slow-paced and quiet. The migrants, however, did not seem to care about the Easter processions. While I ran outside every time I heard the sacred hymns of the confraternities' choruses sounding from the narrow alleys, the migrants stayed inside. I did not see the Muslims' disinterest in Easter as a sign of rejection. On the contrary, they were respectful of this Catholic religious practice.

[5] They discipline themselves, hence the name.

Bakary, one of my Gambian informants, once asked me what I believed in, and when I explained that I was an atheist, he responded with: "But you have to believe in something? Why not Christianity even?" Bakary was perplexed by my lack of faith, and a few times he urged me to reconsider my conviction, seemingly preferring me to be at least Christian, if not Muslim. The Muslim migrants therefore approved of the Catholic religious activity, and they would occasionally make comments about the Italians' religious conduct in relation to religion. However, while praising religious practice in general, the migrants also had negative conceptions about the religious morality of their hosts.

Evaluations of morality

One time, on the bus down to the Marina, Eric and the bus driver got into a conversation about Easter. We were in the middle of *La Settimana Santa*, and Eric was telling the driver about how he thought Italians lacked proper religious devotion. "Italy is the motherland of Christianity", he said, "why are they like this? When I first came to Italy, I did the *Quaresima* (lent), and the Italians looked at me like 'eh?! Why are you doing that?'" *La Quaresima* is the Catholic tradition of fasting for 40 days to commemorate Jesus' fasting. According to the Badolatesi, only the elderly, if any, still practiced this tradition. Eric was a Christian, but did not practice religion any more. Still, he thought it was strange that Italians were not more religious. Eric's statement echoed a general sentiment among the migrants that their Italian hosts occasionally displayed dubious behavior. While for the Badolatesi, the religious tradition of lent was increasingly perceived as belonging to the past, the migrants used the lack of religious practice as basis for devaluating the religious conduct of the Italians. Another time, we were sitting at the bar in the Marina, waiting for the bus. Scrolling on his phone, Eric suddenly exclaimed: "*Festa, festa, festa!*" He then showed me a calendar of the following national (religious) holidays in Italy, before he continued:

> I have never been to a place that have so many parties as here in Badolato. If you ask me, parties get better if you wait. [The Italians] say that there is no money, but then they have parties like this. How is that possible? (Badolato, April 2019, my translation from Italian).

Eric, and several other migrants, thought the Badolatesi had too many celebrations during a year. They also suspected the Advocates of Inclusion of lying about how much money they had, using the different public holidays as evidence that the money existed, it just did not reach the right people. Although done in a joking manner, the negative evaluation of the moral conduct of their hosts seemed to make the migrants perceive themselves as having morally higher ground, especially in relation to religion. As mentioned above, the Muslim migrants were proud over their religious devotion during Ramadan. They perceived the Italian Catholics to be less pious than themselves, illustrated in how they made fun of the Badolatesi for supposedly having double standards. However, the Muslim migrants also used Catholicism as a way of comparing and finding common ground with the local community. For example, when asked about the Muslim practice of *hijab* (veil), Ismael explained that it was similar to the headwear of Catholic nuns. For Ismael, the religious symbol of the *hijab* functioned as a common denominator with the Catholics, as well as a way for him to make sense of the practice for me in terms he assumed were closer to my understanding.

The Badolatesi, whether practicing or non-practicing Catholics, seemed to think of the Muslims' fasting during Ramadan as *too* pious, but did not specifically condemn the practice either. Rather, they seemed impressed that the migrants followed such a demanding religious practice. An Italian once said to one of the migrants that was fasting: "I would die if I were you!". By saying this, the Italian expressed both admiration and rejection of the practice. Either way, the migrant gained recognition from the Italian's reaction, and he was visibly content from this. I thus observed how the Italians' recognition of the Muslim migrants' religious practices made the latter seem more comfortable and proud, which stands in contrast to many of the other interactions I have described in the previous chapters. During Ramadan, the Muslims seemed to enjoy their perceived higher moral standing than the locals, which lead to them being more interested in communicating with the local community.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to account for how the Muslim migrants in Badolato negotiated ideals of piety on one side, and secular European youth culture on the other. Living in a Catholic country away from their familiar Muslim community and thus without certain structures to organize their religious practice, I have tried to show how the Muslims in

Badolato rely on each other to make sure they adhere to the guidelines and demands of Ramadan. By supporting each other during Ramadan, they seemed to sufficiently meet expectations of Islam, while at the same time building a stronger sense of community among themselves. In addition, the peer-supervision, produced by the lack of external Islamic structures, seemed to increase pious behavior among the Muslims. Outside of Ramadan, the group identity of the Muslim migrants entailed engaging in secular activities, mixing African and European youth culture. Since the secular activities happened outside of Ramadan, they did not collide or contradict with the ideals of piety and moral behavior of Islam. Those who challenged the conceptions of *haram* and *halal*, exemplified with Yosef, who listened to music in the Guineans' apartment, did not perceive their actions to be morally wrong, which can be understood in terms of the "new Muslim subject" who chooses to observe specific parts of Islam, in line with the religious individualization. This way, the migrants worked to create and adapt their moral and religious selves as African Muslim diaspora subjects within a European context.

Furthermore, I have argued that being pious was an important identity marker that worked to differentiate and, to a certain degree, make the migrants feel a sense of elevation from the local community. During the fieldwork, this sense of elevation was never as pronounced as during Ramadan and Easter. Many migrants thought that the Badolatesi excessively celebrated national holidays, and they questioned the moral conduct of the Advocates of Inclusion, by for example suspecting them of spending more money on parties than on the integration project. While suspicions like these worked to undermine feelings of trust and community between the migrants and the Badolatesi, the aspect of religion also worked as a common denominator. The migrants respected the Catholic's faith, and related to parts of their religious practice, like veiling. This way, conceptions of religious moralities and ethical practices worked as a platform of differentiation, but also integration, through discovering common religious ground.

Chapter 6:

Revitalization through Integration

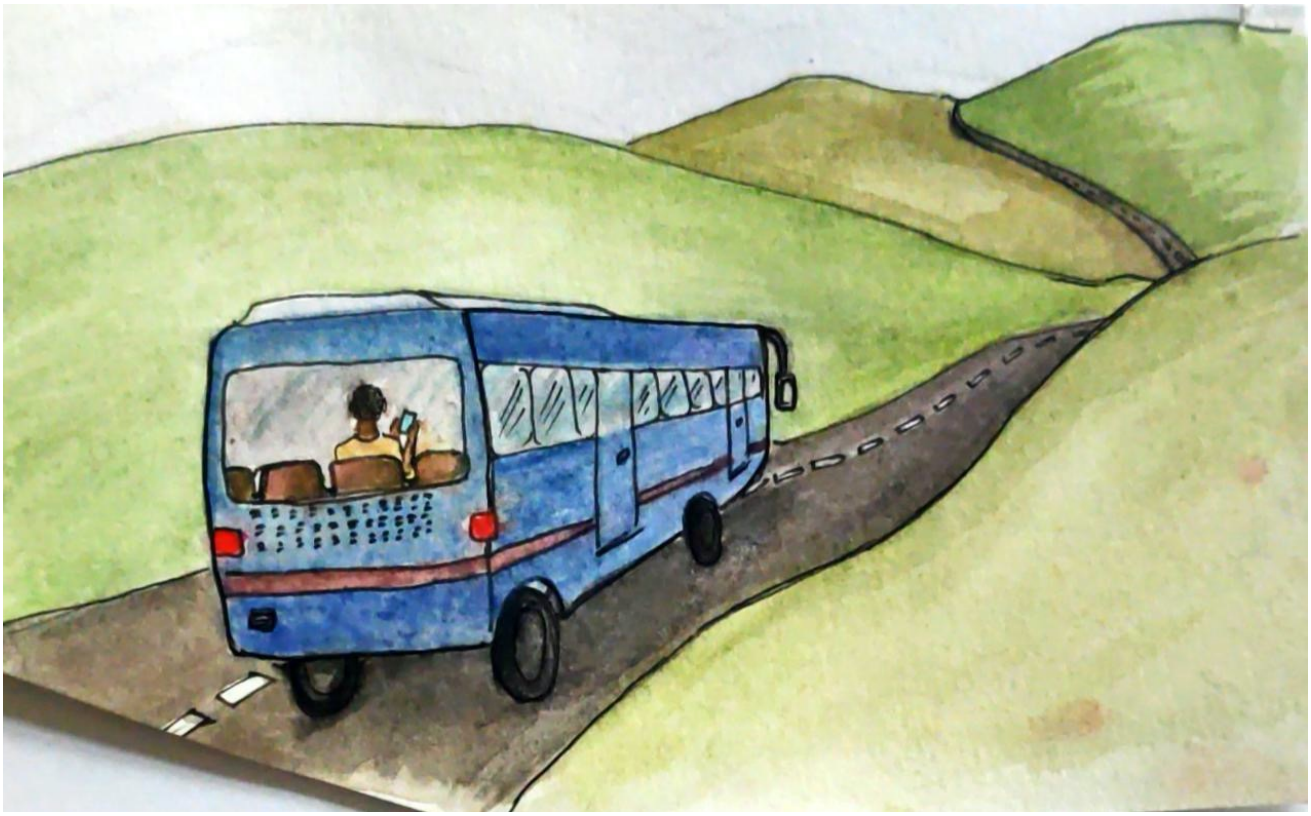

Photo 25: Towards an unknown future. By Ida Karin Sagvolden.

Summary

In this thesis, I have explored the social dynamics between the African migrants and the local community of Badolato. In chapter one, "From Ghost Town to Host Town", I outlined the trajectory of the history of Badolato from its period of being a *città fantasma* characterized by depopulation and economic decline due to natural disasters and emigration. I also showed how Badolato was transformed to *il paese di accoglienza*, with the arrival of the Kurdish refugees. I posed that the pilot project with the Kurds created a double pressure on the current situation of the migrants and the facilitators of integration. The migrants were faced with the expectations of appearing as refugee guests in the image of *il paese di accoglienza*, thereby being represented as the embodiment of the Badolatese hospitality as well as having to manage the general issues of their marginalized positions in the Italian society. The facilitators of integration, on the other hand, had to perform their integration work within the challenging conditions of the increasingly right-wing and anti-immigration context of Italian politics, in addition to having to adapt to the temporary and shifting conditions of the migrant recipients.

In chapter two, "The Appreciated Other", I discussed how Badolato's status as *il paese di accoglienza* made the Advocates of Inclusion conceptualize the migrants as Appreciated Others – commended outsiders who were included into, yet continuously demarcated as outside their host community. Through being exposed to stereotyping and othering, the migrants experienced a sense of alienation that prevented them from investing in any lasting relationships to Badolato. Although food clearly had the potential to enable an ideal platform to practice reciprocal hospitality, certain factors prevented genuine accoglienza to occur. Mainly, this was due to the inferior socio-political positions of the migrants and consequent exclusion from the local rituals of commensality, as well as their lack of possibility to reciprocate. These factors reinforced the dichotomy of guest/host, thereby undermining the process of integration.

In chapter three, "The Performance of Accoglienza", I highlighted interactions during the promotion of the integration project, and argued that it limited the actors' roles to that of local humanitarian host and refugee guest. Furthermore, the fear of being put in the spotlight lead to the migrants avoiding the Advocates of Inclusion and the local community as such. However, the Performance of Accoglienza also functioned as a platform where the migrants could

create their own performance, thereby enabling the possibility of agency. Genuine accoglienza, however, appeared during situations that did not involve performativity, as with the last case, where the otherwise divided groups of migrants and locals became momentarily united through voluntary work.

In chapter four, "The Panoptic Piazza and Waiting", I discussed the interrelations between conceptualizations of place and the experience of time for the migrants. I used the visibility of the Panoptic Piazza to illustrate how on one hand, the shared public space enforced a recognition of the migrants as part of the local community, while on the other, that same visibility illuminated differences and reinforced the socio-political division between the migrants and the local community. Furthermore, I explored how the migrants experienced time to be slow-paced, because they were waiting for their lives to "begin", and temporary, due to their "rootlessness" without the possibilities of establishing a family, as well as living in insecurity due to precarious working conditions. To endure the waiting and insecurity, "killing time" through football and the Internet was central in enabling the migrants to bond within their diaspora group and to connect with their pasts.

In chapter five, "Piety and Morality", I explored the migrants' different conceptions of piety and moral behavior. I discussed how the Muslims balanced ambitions to be religious observant on one hand, and participation in secular youth culture on the other. During Ramadan, piety functioned as an important identity marker and community builder among the Muslim migrants, giving them a sense of moral elevation from their host, whom they perceived as less pious than themselves. Outside of Ramadan, the migrants postponed "proper piety" to an unforeseeable future of marriage and family obligations. By weaving between religious and secular contexts, the migrants created and adapted their moral and religious selves within the European, Catholic context of Badolato. Easter was a source of skepticism to the migrants, who perceived the ways of the Catholics' celebrations to be a sign of less pious behavior. However, religion also worked as a common denominator, where the migrants to some extent respected and related to the religious practices of the Badolatesi.

Structural obstacles

The aim of this thesis has been to shed light on some of the processes that develop between the facilitators of integration, the local community and the immigrant group of Badolato. I chose to study Badolato because I wanted to explore the idea of integration as a possibility of revitalization in a town that otherwise struggled with depopulation and economic decline. Like the other journalists, academics and tourists that visits Badolato, I was attracted to the narrative of *il paese di accoglienza* that originated with the 1990s' accommodation of the Kurds. However, I soon discovered that over the years, the Kurdish refugees had left to be reunited with family members and friends in other places. The few migrants that remained from that time spoke to me about economic struggles and wishes to leave due to the perception that "there was nothing there for them" in Badolato.

The integration project continued, but the Kurds were replaced by a new immigrant group, arriving from different African countries. Like the Kurds, the African migrants expressed similar notions of restlessness and dissatisfaction. In contrast to what I was told about the Kurdish experience, however, there was less to no contact between the local community and the African migrants, apart from the informal agricultural work and the occasional CIR-organized event. I observed the facilitators of integration struggle with trying to fulfill the integration ideals of the past, while simultaneously dealing with the structural obstacles of politics and bureaucracy. In fact, the Badolatesi, as much as the African migrants, were exposed to mechanisms of state power and elements of insecurity regarding their occupations and economic situations. Therefore, the facilitators of integration probably found it necessary to display their hospitality to whomever would listen. The requests for interviews, such as with the scouts or the journalists during World Refugee Day, were perhaps attempts to rekindle the original experiment from the 1990s. In addition, the facilitators of integration had to promote the benefits of their accommodation model project to ensure the continuation of the project, and subsequently the migrants' wellbeing.

Consequently, it is important to acknowledge that there are structural obstacles that render facilitation of integration in Badolato difficult, and that the alienating and othering interactions that I have dealt with in this thesis are also results of many complex socio-political processes. Badolato is a relatively small town characterized by a high rate of unemployment. The empty houses of the Borgo are ready to accommodate those who need a

roof over their head, but without prospects of work, locals and immigrants alike subsequently look beyond the borders of the town. The revitalization through integration look more optimistic with the arrival of the Scandinavian, European and American tourists, who want the slow-paced village life that Badolato can offer. The migrants, on the other hand, travel North, and thus represent the historical phenomenon of emigrants leaving the ghost towns of Calabria.

Building bridges

The aspect of integration seemed to fade away with the facilitators' approach of channeling their solidarity with the migrants through public media. Genuine accoglienza may therefore be lost in symbolic gestures of staged hospitality. Although my migrant informants were politically conscious and could be vocal to me about immigration policies, they were more concerned with regular aspects of daily life, like getting an education and obtaining a job to support their families in Africa. However, I observed several interactions that showed potential for building rapport between the African and the Italian communities. Such interactions appear throughout this thesis. In chapter three, the third ethnographic case from *la giornata ecologica* illustrated that collaboration through voluntary work can enable moments of genuine accoglienza. In chapter four, the football matches on the *piazza* were perhaps the most consolidative activity in bringing together the young African men and the Italian children. Although differently practiced and with various evaluations, chapter five showed that religion was common ground and could be a source of respect. In chapter two, I argued that food have the possibility to work as a common denominator between the migrants and the locals due to its centrality in both the African and the Italian practices of hospitality. Early on in my fieldwork, I observed how Pepé bonded with the three Guineans by regularly offering them coffee and lemons from his garden. In return, the migrants shared with them whatever they had, whether it was homemade food or a helping hand. Likewise, the relationship with my informants was primarily developed in the kitchen – Pepé and I would make *tagliatelle* and *cannelloni* at his house, and during Ramadan, both the absence of food during fasting and the following feast of 'Eid procured a strong sense of friendship between the Muslim migrants and me. In other words, by eating and drinking together, dichotomies like us/them, self/Other and guest/host seemed less pronounced, if not even overruled, by goodwill and community building.

The voluntary work, football matches and the sharing of food are therefore activities that have the potential to build bridges between the migrants and the Badolatesi. My African friends seemed the most open and involved whenever they could "bring something to the table", both in the literal and metaphorical sense, rather than simply being referred to as refugees. In my opinion, genuine accoglienza was therefore more likely to take place when performativity and political agenda was absent from the interaction between the migrants and the facilitators of integration.

While it is important to acknowledge the realities of the political dimension to the migrants' situations in Italy, in order to accomplish revitalization through integration, it is equally important to lay the foundations that encourage seemingly mundane, everyday interactions. Such activities can include the rewarding participation of voluntary work, the unifying effects of sports and shared love for good food. By added emphasis on these activities, perhaps the temporariness of the migrants' lives in Badolato could be replaced by an optimistic outlook for future collaboration and co-habitation. If such musings may seem too idealistic, I would at least propose that such a focus could help to create an environment in which the African migrants in Badolato would feel less skeptical to, and more included in, the local community, something which in turn could motivate them to contribute to the efforts of the Advocates of Inclusion.

Epilogue

Shortly before my departure from Badolato, my Italian friends wanted to arrange a big dinner, urging me to invite my African friends. They had been curious to try the migrants' cooking ever since I told them that Ismael, Souleymane and Seydou used to eat pasta with mayonnaise and chicken. The Guineans agreed to cook some of their favorite dishes, and gradually, the event grew bigger as friends and neighbors heard about our plan. On the day of the event, the Guineans had to move their operations to the larger kitchen of a *signora* in order to make enough food. The Italians gathered in the kitchen to lend a hand to the young Guinean chefs. The food was then served outside on a little *piazza*. Among the crowd was Pepé, my Scandinavian and American neighbors, as well as Enzo, who had brought with him a small group of tourists who wanted to have a taste of the Guinean cuisine. Together, we ate different dishes of couscous, chicken and pasta. Afterwards, we drank wine and danced to the rhythms of Afrobeat music that was playing from a couple of speakers that Osman had brought. The party went on into the night as we lost track of time.

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