Martina Tazzioli and Oana Pârvan

Technologies of Control and Infrastructures of Redistribution

Martina Tazzioli

A well-known slogan that emerged from the disability movement during the 1990s goes: "Nothing about us without us."[1] It stresses that no policy should be adopted without fully involving those who are affected by that policy. Nowadays, it is a catchphrase used across different fields and institutional settings, signaling that "participation" has become a placeholder for inclusion, democracy, and horizontal decision-making processes. Yet, what does "participation" in a given system mean when the epistemic-political codes, the ability to maneuver, and the stakes of the participation are set in advance by the party in control? So-called "participatory programs," like surveys and other forms of data acquisition, have been used extensively by humanitarian agencies since the 1990s, and more recently have shifted into systems for practicing what I instead call "participatory confinement." In such systems, individuals are nudged and encouraged to actively participate in their own confinement and governmentality, "for their own good." Christopher Kelty, a scholar of science studies and anthropology, rightly claims that this sort of "participation is more often a formatted procedure by which autonomous individuals attempt to reach calculated consensus."[2] Not only are the goals and forms of participation often preestablished and surreptitiously imposed, but individuals are also de facto pushed to corroborate, contribute to, and improve mechanisms of confinement and coercion. Here, I focus on refugee humanitarianism as a case study for coming to grips with modes of participatory confinement as a systematic political technology of governmentality.

Modes of participatory confinement in refugee humanitarianism are inflected by clear-cut asymmetric relations between asylum seekers on one side, and humanitarian actors on the other. This initial condition and its trend towards reform by way of inviting participation is reminiscent of the diagnosis of prison reform by Michel Foucault in a lecture he gave in 1976. Furnishing an anticipatory example of participatory confinement, he writes: "There is an attempt to make prisoners themselves participate in devising the very programmes for their punishment, through the prisoners' councils and so on. This is the idea that the individual, singly or collectively, is meant to accept the punitive procedure."[3] Nowadays, participatory approaches are center stage on the agendas of international agencies and NGOs in the context of the so-called "refugee crisis" in Europe. They continue to operate with the same neoliberal logics of prior reforms to systems of

Protesters at the Walk Now for Autism fundraiser in Portland, OR in 2009. Photo by Philosophographlux on Flickr. License: CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.

punishment and control that performatively invite the exploited to frame the forms of that exploitation, while actually ceding no power to the "participant."

Furthermore, invoking a term from Tiziana Terranova, participatory confinement in refugee humanitarianism can also be considered a form of "soft control."[4] Asylum seekers are increasingly asked to answer questionnaires and provide detailed information to humanitarian actors about their coping strategies, migratory journeys, the logistics of border crossing, and their protection needs. These activities are presented to refugees as an opportunity to improve their individual situation and, at the same time, the asylum system at large; in actuality, they just increase the control that the system has over refugees. In *The Undercommons*, Fred Moten and Stephano Harney refer to a similar process as the "invitation to governmentality" which subjects are repeatedly exposed to.[5] Elaborating on this notion, it can be argued that this "invitation" in the context of humanitarian participatory programs also involves pushing subjects to perform unpaid labor by providing feedback. They thus implicitly consent to being sites for the extraction of knowledge, which is used by NGOs to further enforce modes of control and governance. Speaking of an invitation to governmentality in these terms also sheds light on the multiple forms of interpellation that individuals are subject to, and how they are nudged to participate "for their own good." That is, the invitation to governmentality that individuals are exposed to in different contexts often turns into a form of subtle coercion.

UNHCR's "Participatory Revolution"
The agency that most clearly demonstrates the shift to what I am calling "participatory confinement" is the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), whose projects since the 1990s have nudged asylum seekers to provide more and more feedback about their coping strategies. (Such a shift to participatory confinement was not completely new, as it followed the "participatory turn" in the development sector that started earlier.[6]) UNHCR's "participatory revolution" consisted not only of changes to rhetoric and discourse; it also introduced a new organizational modus operandi for engaging with refugees and NGOs. In 2001, UNHCR established the main principles of a "community development approach" in refugee camps, stressing the importance of involving "refugees and their communities in shaping their future and in their ongoing search for a solution to their plight."[7] Published one year later, the text "UNHCR Evaluation Policy" remarks that refugees should actively participate in the

"identification, planning, implementation, and utilization of evaluation projects."[8] A case in point is the UNHCR's "participatory assessment" tool, according to which "refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees must be at the centre of decision-making concerning their protection and well-being."[9] In the last decade, the participatory turn has been further developed as asylum seekers have been pushed to design and enact the solutions to their own displacement – what scholars have defined as an approach "by refugees to refugees."[10] Thus, asylum seekers are not only encouraged to provide feedback and information about their experience as displaced persons; they are also encouraged to fix the broken system and to refuse to be passive "beneficiaries." As already mentioned, participatory confinement is thus also about extracting hidden and unpaid labor, which asylum seekers are coerced into doing to fill in the gaps left by the failures of humanitarianism. In the words of Ruth Wilson Gilmore, asylum seekers are forced to make up for the "organized abandonment" of states.[11]

This brief genealogy of UNHCR's programs enables us to situate similar developments elsewhere in humanitarian structures within a longer historical trajectory. The mechanisms of participatory confinement shed light on what I call "extractive humanitarianism," that is, on the centrality of knowledge- and data-extraction processes in modern refugee relief. Such processes are at the very core of refugee governmentality. Following Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, extraction happens "when the operations of capital plunder the materiality of the earth and biosphere, but also when they encounter and draw upon forms and practices of human cooperation and sociality that are external to them."[12] Stressing that refugee humanitarianism largely relies on extractive operations invites further analysis of the central role played by knowledge and data extraction in generating economic and governance value.

Refugees' Participatory Confinement and Unpaid Labor
UNHCR's Digital Access, Inclusion and Participation Programme is tasked with devising and experimenting with technology in refugee camps, with the official goals of improving refugees' access to internet connectivity, streamlining communication between humanitarian workers and asylum seekers, and increasing the efficiency of identification procedures and financial support programs. Two specific contexts – Jordan and Greece – provide informative case studies of how this has unfolded. In 2017, UNHCR implemented chatbots in refugee camps in Jordan to facilitate communication between asylum seekers and

humanitarian actors. The use of chatbots was justified by their flexibility and adaption in response to feedback. Here, artificial intelligence is used to extract knowledge in a systematic way and to nudge UNHCR's "beneficiaries" to provide responses to specific questions. As UNHCR stresses, "Through engagement with refugees via digital platforms, humanitarian responders can provide not only relaying critical lifesaving information to refugees, but also establish a dialogue in which refugees can provide their insights, feedback and priorities."[13] Participatory confinement does not necessarily involve coercive mechanisms of persuasion. Rather, it involves "voluntary" activities that are used to extract both personal data and feedback from asylum seekers.

The participatory digital mapping project RefuGIS, tested by UNHCR in the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, is a second case in point illustrating the unpaid digital labor and enforced participatory detention of asylum seekers. By involving the asylum seekers in the creation of a digital map of their camp environment, UNHCR seeks feedback on what infrastructural problems to fix in the camp, and also aims to enhance the refugees' "skills including cartography; data visualization, collection, and analysis; and computer programming."[14] In other words, the official purpose of the mapping project is to involve asylum seekers in their own governmentality. RefuGIS not only nudges asylum seekers to generate detailed information useful for humanitarian actors, but also pushes them to manage the camp's infrastructure themselves, thus extracting their "voluntary" unpaid labor. This labor is later used to generate a product that is considered beneficial to the refugee community – a "better" refugee camp. These modes of participatory detention reveal the systematic interpellation of asylum seekers in refugee camps.

Since 2015, the Greek refugee context has progressively turned into a space of protracted confinement for women, men, and children who seek asylum in Europe. While in 2015 Greece was a transit point for migrants heading to Northern Europe, with the closure of the Balkan route and the signing of the EU-Turkey Deal in March 2016, many became trapped on Greek islands or stranded in refugee camps on the mainland. In 2017, the EU launched the Refugee Cash Assistance program in collaboration with UNHCR and the financial company Prepaid Financial Services.[15] As part of the program, asylum seekers in Greece who have submitted asylum applications receive monthly financial support uploaded to a prepaid card. Similar to other refugee contexts in the world, in Greece UNHCR conducts post-distribution monitoring activities

"to collect and understand refugees' feedback on the assistance provided by humanitarian agencies like UNHCR, … to identify challenges and constraints experienced, and seek refugees' feedback on any improvements."[16]

In Greece, humanitarian organizations use post-distribution monitoring to understand how asylum seekers use the prepaid cards. Asylum seekers who receive monthly financial support are subject to different forms of interpellation: UNHCR selects some of the "card beneficiaries" and asks them to participate in individual interviews, focus groups, or surveys, under the framework of post-distribution monitoring activities. Surveys consist of multiple-choice questions targeting detailed information about strategies for coping with the difficulties of migration. Asylum seekers are asked questions like "In what ways has the cash card money increased your sense of safety?" and "Has anyone in your household had to employ any of the following practices in the past month, such as … accepting dangerous, risky or exploitative works … or asking for money from strangers (begging)?" According to UNHCR, the responses from asylum seekers include recommendations to "improve information provision" and to directly "involve asylum-seekers and refugees" in crafting the support they receive. While asylum seekers are depicted in this process as "para-customers" lodging complaints and making claims, in practice their demands fall on deaf ears. They are encouraged to speak and provide information, but no meaningful action is taken in response.

In refugee camps, asylum seekers are not only spatially confined; they are also kept in a state of protracted dependency on humanitarian aid and disciplinary rules. At the same time, they are constantly interpellated and pushed to interact with humanitarian agencies: their feedback and information is constantly solicited, even if they are deemed to be untruthful.[17] Indeed, the discursive economy of participatory confinement is characterized by a call for asylum seekers to speak and interact, even as they are simultaneously discredited as deceitful subjects. This is reminiscent of the relationship between colonizer and colonized that Fanon analyzed in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Unlike contexts in which subjects envisage some kind of reward – including moral compensation – for taking up the invitation to participate in their own governmentality, in the asylum system participatory confinement gives nothing back. In the field of asylum, the economy of the promise – "do this for your own good" – is inflected by an indirect blackmailing of refugees. That is, the promise that *if refugees do* participate in "voluntary" activities, it will be benefit them, is

intertwined with refugees' fear that *if they do not* take part, they might be negatively affected. And still, some asylum seekers reject the invitation to governmentality and silently refuse to collaborate since they do not see any gain or advantage in it.

Conclusion

Reflecting on the ethical-political implications of participatory approaches in machine learning, sociologist Mona Sloane has introduced the concept of "participation-washing" to describe the power and economic asymmetries that are reinforced by involving users in design processes.[18] Sloane's term also gestures toward the unremunerated work that individuals co-opted into participatory approaches perform in order to prop up these systems of data collection. Similarly, the concept of participatory confinement explored here identifies the subtle coercion that incorporates asylum seekers into their own detention and control. Participatory confinement is predicated on the blurred boundaries between consent, willingness, obligation, and fear, which problematizes the very idea of voluntary activities in coercive systems like international migration law and humanitarianism. Such an understanding of participatory confinement enables us to foreground and politicize asylum seekers' "voluntary" activities in terms of the invisible and unpaid labor they are pushed to do "for their own good" and for the sake of becoming *good refugees without rights*. The invitation to governmentality is widespread nowadays, extending far beyond refugee governance. Resisting it is not easy, but many refugees are showing the way by engaging in local and individual tactics of refusal, which avoid strengthening, reproducing, and legitimizing coercive mechanisms. They are rejecting the invitation to participate in their own detention.

Oana Pârvan's Response

By underlining the link between extractive humanitarianism and participatory confinement, what emerges with clarity in Martina Tazzioli's text is the centrality of data acquisition – both quantitative and qualitative. The purpose of this is to increase surplus value while smoothing out the process of governance through what appears very much as an operation of externalization: the governed subjects constructed as refugees feed and perfect the same system devised to control them in exchange for an evanescent promise of improvement in their living conditions. Refugees are coerced to give voluntary accounts of their use of financial tools, such as credit cards granted in refugee centers. The purpose is ostensibly humanitarian: that of incrementing

"resilience" and independence, even if only in terms of consumption rather than actual subsistence. Yet it could be debated whether the benefit of the interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires about their financial behavior lies with the refugees themselves or with the financial entities allowed to use quantitative and qualitative data for future policies, predictions, and ongoing models used beyond the refugee camps. The paradox is that it is considered a humanitarian approach to normalize refugees' confinement in Europe instead of recognizing their freedom of movement as a human right – since that which suspends their independence and resilience on European soil is indeed the same condition of confinement that they are called to "improve" through their feedback. So, if in the refugees' case the only acceptable "improvement" should be freedom, how can this case study help us imagine the purpose of the quantitative and qualitative data that we voluntarily provided in the 2019–21 biennium?

As data scientist and Tesco marketing consultant Clive Humby famously signaled in 2006, with much attention to shifting modes of production: "Data is the new oil."[19] This comparison alone helps reframe the implications of the extractive humanitarianism that Tazzioli sees proliferating around practices of refugee data collection. Yet, can we depart from precisely those same pieces of data and imagine to what extent we can conceive of data acquisition and refinement as the battlefield for justice and redistribution today and in the future? Bear in mind that 2019–21 could be seen as a massive, if not the biggest, operation of planetary data acquisition with regards to biological samples, personal data, and mobility patterns in the history of humanity. Some argue that "our ability to process and secure these data lags significantly behind our ability to collect them."[20] So, what purpose might these data be processed towards *when* it occurs? Big data has been summoned to fight the pandemic, but what's next? With regards to a country very able to process big data in real time, namely China, data scientists have warned against the threat of "function creep," namely that of "adopting a system of surveillance for one purpose and using it past the originally intended aims."[21] Yet, instead of a "surveillance creep," what would "liberation creep" look like, powered by the repurposing of data acquisition towards redistribution to all rather than extraction for the few? There is a future in which our geolocation data alongside our DNA and the track of every movement of ours could support basic healthcare, green spaces and communal gardens for food sovereignty, more funding to public schools and hospitals in the neighborhoods most

Photo illustration of Christina Morini's *Life is mine: Feminism, self-determination and basic income* on Radical Philosophy (Winter 2020) translated by Oana Pârvan: https://www.radicalphilosophy.com/article/life-is-mine.

affected by the virus, additional income to people who can't work from home, and research against cancer that everyone can benefit from, free of patents and gatekeeping.

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Oana Pârvan

The legacy of the 2019–21 biennium is yet to be fully grasped and processed, and often the urgency of chasing the next affective imperative (be it fear, terror, concern, relief, or indignation dictated by the virus's iterations) can distract from looking back at how rapidly this period has transformed the world in ways unacceptable before 2019. Superficially, corporate capital in the form of techno-giants, big pharma, and the surveillance industry has managed to do the unimaginable: extract, evade, and profiteer even more than before, enabled by governments and central banks – the same governments and central banks advocating for the resilience, self-reliance, and autonomy of welfare states, individuals, and real economies. All the while, in many countries, the mantra of "public health on the brink of collapse" echoed as the best and most insistent advertisement for private healthcare in decades.

As more inhabitants of the planet seemed to empathize with experiences of being immobilized, terrified, and collateralized, the assassination of George Floyd in Minneapolis generated the Abolitionist Summer, with unprecedented multiracial and internationalist resonances. This was the most affirmative legacy of the biennium, alongside the activation of mutual aid infrastructures and all the practices of reciprocal nurture that kept most alive.

According to the Greek economist Yanis Varoufakis, August 12, 2020 – the day the UK's national income declined by over 20 percent as the London Stock Exchange saw an increase of more than 2 percent – was the symbolic moment of the decoupling of finance and the real economy.[22] Continuing the trend that started after the 2008 financial crisis, in 2020 the global economy was supported by the proliferation of central bank money, independent of whether profit was made or not. Furthermore, the pandemic also determined a massive relocation of value extraction to digital platforms, which now adhered even more to people's time, reproductive work, and eventually their lives. "Amazon," Varoufakis explains, "is not a market; it's a fiefdom. And it's a fiefdom that's connected to other fiefdoms, like Facebook, through the cloud services of Amazon, which are much greater and bigger than Amazon.com. It's like a more technologically advanced form of

feudalism."[23] In his postcapitalist utopian novel *Another Now: Dispatches from an Alternative Present*, Varoufakis depicts a world in which capitalism died in 2008 thanks to a utilities pay strike in Yorkshire. Inspired by speculative fiction and social-justice movements, what are some directions for imagining top-down redistribution into existence? A good starting point is the $427 billion in global corporate and private tax evasion in 2020 – money that could be used to cover the salaries of thirty-four million nurses every year, thereby granting free healthcare to everyone.[24] While rich countries are responsible for facilitating 98 percent of all global tax losses, impoverished countries are losing "tax equivalent to nearly 52% of their health budgets."[footnote *The State of Tax Justice*, 4.] A true global challenge that requires international collaboration, tax justice can be achieved by global policy measures such as the automatic exchange of bank account information between countries, the registration of the beneficiaries of profits ("beneficial ownership registration"), country-by-country reporting of the profits of multinational corporations, a unitary taxation system for corporations to pay taxes where the real work is done (not where they declare profits), and, eventually, a UN tax convention, able to be enforced by tax collectors equipped and funded to do their jobs.

While the Tax Justice Network, an advocacy group consisting of researchers and activists, has pushed for these measures since 2003, Covid-19 has brought new challenges in terms of international tax abuse. The pandemic iteration of capitalism requires customized redistribution antidotes to what some have called the "Amazon model."[footnote *The State of Tax Justice*, 10.] One antidote is an excess profit tax

> on the large multinational corporations whose profits have soared during the pandemic while local businesses were forced into lockdown. For the digital tech giants who claim to have our best interests at heart but have been short-changing us out of billions in tax for years, this could be their redemption tax.[25]

Another antidote is a wealth tax on asset values that have exploded during the pandemic, as in the case of Amazon shares, which have increased in value by $60 billion during the pandemic. What if profit was to be taxed where workers and consumers generate it? Corporate tax abuse isn't new, but with inequalities dramatically exacerbated by the pandemic, is it not time to end the "moral bankruptcy of allowing value to be captured far from where it is generated"?[footnote *The State of Tax Justice*

2020, 9.]

What to do with a spare $427 billion then? Varoufakis might claim that this money isn't even necessary, as the aforementioned central banks could just divert digital money from corporate finance toward common citizens, through a personal digital bank account, a portion of which would represent a form of universal basic income (UBI) not derived from taxation but rather from a sort of redistribution of global dividends. Italian feminist Cristina Morini slightly tweaks the notion of universal basic income, taking inspiration from the Italian feminist movement Non Una Di Meno. Moroni argues that with waged labor almost extinct and gendered reproductive labor a terrain of extraction for both techno-capitalism and the state, what is needed is "self-determination income," in other words,

> basic income which is self-determined, universal, and unconditional and which does not depend on job activity, on citizenship status or a permit to stay … An instrument for everyone for preventing gender violence and for providing autonomy and freedom from exploitation, labor and precarity.[26]

Can our conception of politics be shifted from the capitalist trope of producing scarcity for extraction to an ecology of the redistribution of abundance? Morini's self-determination income not only resonates with the postworkerist[27] imaginations of time freed from alienation and devoted to care and art; it also provokes the question of what global citizenship looks like at a time when many countries are eroding the rights of elderly citizens, and "denizenship" proliferates at nauseating speed, with an ever-renewed arsenal of borders and incarceration.

While this period is certainly marked by a discursive emphasis on the public dimension of care and health, and while the virus itself brings forward a dimension of interdependence that one cannot unsee, the underlying idea "we are in this together" bears an estranging tone in the various settings, as states either abandon public health and safety, or enforce isolation and containment. But could interdependence become *the* foundation of politics? The Care Collective, born out of a London-based reading group, thinks so. In their book *The Care Manifesto*, they advocate universal care promoted by a state – "not a paternal, racist or settler-colonial state" – that can

> enable everyone to cultivate what disabilities studies have called "strategic autonomy and independence," while creating the conditions that allow for new

relationships within and among the state and its diverse communities – relationships predicated on everyone receiving what they need both to thrive and to participate in democratic practices.[28]

Inspired by mutual-aid traditions and social-justice movements, the ongoing practices that answer the question "how do we care for each other and the planet?" should be only the starting point for altering larger systems of cohabitation, like markets, constitutions, states, and neighborhoods. This is how we reach solutions and tools for redistribution, like a return to public space making, platform cooperativism, new municipalism, replacing outsourcing with insourcing, and replacing public-private partnerships with "public-commons partnerships" "in which co-operative institutions link up with public services and local citizens with an active stake in their organisations."[29]

Within the discursive moment of this biennium, the movement for black liberation and for abolition has been an indispensable and tireless space for projecting futures, imagining safety, health, and thriving not only for this generation but for many to come. With the *Vision for Black Lives*, which was first published during the post-Ferguson movement of 2016 and then rewritten in 2020, the Movement for Black Lives built a policy platform around the demand to end the war against black communities, especially black youth; black women; black trans, queer, gender-nonconforming, and intersex people; black disabled people; and black migrants. They also called for the abolition of all jails, prisons, and immigration detention centers; an end to the death penalty and the war on drugs; an end to the surveillance of black communities; and an end to pretrial detention and money bail.[30] And while these demands sound very specific to the North American setting, are racism and mass incarceration really just North American? I am specifically thinking about the proliferation of privately managed maxi prisons in the UK – publicly funded, privately managed prisons that will eventually have to be filled somehow.

The North American movement for black liberation is a source of inspiration for at least two reasons. Firstly, the hegemony of the US means that its oppressive social and economic ideas can become influential in all communities directly impacted by its geopolitical reach, so understanding the consequences of those ideas is key. Secondly, movements like Black Lives Matter have had political and organizational victories in one of the most hostile and militarized civilian environments in the world. Their methods are thus a model for how

marginalized communities everywhere can make their voices heard. In a time marked by terror and isolation, Black Lives Matter has made space for people internationally not only to unearth the roots of genocide in the past and expose the obscenity of racism in the present, but also to "radically reimagine public safety, community care and how we spend money as a society."[31] Black Lives Matter put abolition on the public agenda, provoking debates that went beyond merely defunding the police. While older generations, in "old media" like tabloids and talk shows, often dismissed the abolitionist option, younger generations were digitally exposed to imaginaries of futures in which climate justice, abolition, and queerness were embraced and uplifted. Those seeds of the future find support in policy initiatives like the Breathe Act, a revolutionary piece of proposed legislation unveiled by the Electoral Justice Project of the Movement for Black Lives in 2020. The Breathe Act redefines public safety and community care in an abolitionist direction, which is an indispensable dimension of present and future redistribution. The proposed legislation calls for

> divesting federal resources from incarceration and policing, while investing in new, non-punitive, non-carceral approaches to community safety that leads states to shrink their criminal-legal systems and center the protection of Black lives, by allocating money to build healthy, sustainable, and equitable communities.[32]

What if the Breathe Act were to inspire other countries to divest from privately managed maxi prisons or detention centers for migrants, and invest in public insourced quality healthcare and education, while redistributing self-determination income for all, irrespective of citizenship or permission to stay? From feminist theories and political practices to the Breathe Act, what is at stake are different conceptions of the state and the public good that transcend all previous models of welfare, since they make visible those same infrastructures of gendered and racialized extraction on which states were built and continue to thrive for the benefit of the few.

As abolitionist geographer Ruth Gilmore Wilson teaches, "if unfinished liberation is the still-to-be-achieved work of abolition, then at bottom what is to be abolished isn't the past or its present ghosts, but rather the process of hierarchy, dispossession, and exclusion that congeal in and as group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death."[33] A horizon of redistribution in the context of the pandemic iteration of capitalism is intrinsically opposed to

carceral practices and inspired by the longevity of what Gilmore Wilson calls "abolition geography," which "is capacious (it isn't only by, for, or about Black people) and specific (it's a guide to action for both understanding and rethinking how we combine our labor with each other and the earth)," which "takes feeling and agency to be constitutive of, no less than constrained by, structure," and which is "a way of studying, and of doing political organizing, and of being in the world, and of worlding ourselves."[34]

Martina Tazzioli's Response

"Can our conception of politics be shifted from the capitalist trope of producing scarcity for extraction to an ecology of the redistribution of abundance?" By raising such a key question, Oana Pârvan interrogates the possibility of a radical politics of redistribution in the era of Covid. Indeed, the "Covid-19 emergency" has been defined by an acceleration of already existing trends (of surveillance, wealth accumulation, and so on) and, at the same time, has triggered a series of transformations in the mechanisms through which these trends operate. Indeed, during the peak of the pandemic, borders multiplied. I am not speaking only of restrictions imposed on movements across national frontiers, but more broadly, of heterogenous bordering mechanisms; urban, socioeconomic, and local borders have proliferated by enhancing and exacerbating economic inequalities and class-based mobility. Who gets access to what – whether public services, private and public spaces, etc. – appears as the main battlefield during the pandemic. The question of radical redistribution in the time of Covid is not simply about how to contain or alleviate socioeconomic inequalities. Rather, it entails appropriating and twisting the politics of austerity grounded on predatory economics.

However, as Pârvan stresses, Covid-19 has unveiled the insufficiency of redistribution mechanisms predicated on national citizenship. For this reason, the "incorrigible" presence of migration, in the words of Nicholas De Genova, confronts us with the roots of a politics of redistribution.[35] Indeed, migration and asylum policies do not only restrict access to free movement for some; by restricting access to certain rights, these policies also impoverish and socioeconomically deprive those who are governed as "migrants," "asylum seekers," or "refugees," while defining them as such in the process. In this regard, the anthropologist Sharham Khosravi has poignantly spoken about the "stolen time of migration" to highlight that migration policies do not only obstruct movement, strengthening racialized hierarchies

of mobility, but also fundamentally delay the routes, plans, and lives of those who are labelled as "migrants."[36] Migration policies disrupt and steal migrants' life-time, occluding futurability – that is, the very possibility of projecting oneself into the future and making plans in that time scale. Socioeconomic and legal modes of destitution are mutually intertwined: women, men, and children seeking asylum are increasingly rejected as refugees and are thus turned into illegalized migrants by state formations. This rejected and legally invisible population without rights on the European territory encapsulates the effects of displacement and dispossession "that congeal in and as group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death," in the words of Ruth Wilson Gilmore.[37] In actuality, even those who are recognized as "refugees" are increasingly treated as "migrants," meaning that they are in practice excluded or obstructed from accessing the mitigated welfare and rights that the former term might guarantee, even if in theory more than in practice.

As Michael Denning contends, terms such as "wasted life" and "superfluous life" are not appropriate for capturing the multiple extractive processes that migrants are subjected to.[38] Value and data extraction from asylum seekers and migrants takes place not just *in spite of* their deprivation and impoverishment, but rather *through* it. As migrants blocked at the French-Italian border in 2015 claimed, "We are not going back": that is, their presence could be invisibilized by media and state authorities, but could not be erased from the ground where they stood and organized.[39] A radical politics of redistribution disjoined from exclusionary citizenship criteria should start precisely from this incorrigible persistence in space. Such a move also requires de-essentializing state-based categories of "migrants" and "asylum seekers" and gesturing towards common mechanisms of impoverishment and socioeconomic displacement. In fact, the current pandemic illuminates how formal rights and legal statuses are less and less guarantees of actual equal access to welfare, public space, and mobility. Thus, at the core of a radical politics of redistribution are struggles against heterogenous bordering mechanisms, which cut across citizenship status. Both "migrants" and some citizens are turned into a source of value extraction while at the same time they are impoverished and destitute, even if this operates according to differential degrees of precarity. Conceived in this way, redistribution is about undoing diverse bordering mechanisms while at the same time "building up [and] ... creating new institutions," in the words of Angela Davis.[40]

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The slogan has been used since the 1990s across the world, from Eastern Europe to South Africa. In 2004, the United Nations used it as the theme for International Day of Disabled Persons. See https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/iddp2004.htm.

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