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***Exclusion or inclusion? Spacing the refugee camp through  
the prism of a volunteer experience***

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## **Introduction**

Up until now, scholars of organization and management studies had remarkably little to say about the latest European refugee “crisis” or its earlier versions (with the exceptions of Philipps & Hardy, 1997; Hardy & Philipps, 1999; Mintzberg, 2002). Yet, organizations play a vital role in this so-called crisis; as “thresholds” (Agamben, 1998; ten Bos, 2005) they classify people as legitimate refugee or illegitimate economic migrant, as “bare life” or highly qualified worker and manage passages between these categories. Being part of an inter-organizational network of local authorities – consisting of the police, security companies, third and private sector organizations and NGOs amongst others, they, on the one hand, exclude the newly-arrived from free access to the labour market, housing or other societal domains, on the other, they gradually grant certain rights which lay the foundations for inclusion across life domains.

One of these “thresholds”, in which societal in- and exclusion is organized is the refugee camp (Fontanari, 2015), which during the “crisis” emerged all across Europe. Some have almost prison-like qualities, e.g. in Lesbos, and seek to detain and shield refugees from the local population. However, the recent crisis also brought about different camps. They are not hidden from the wider public at the “margins of the world” (Agier, 2008), but are located in urban centres (Picker & Pasquetti, 2015). In Germany, such camps were set up as a response to the crisis. As they were visible and influence the everyday life of the local population, they became major sites for volunteer engagement. Volunteers, often from the direct neighbourhood, provided care and help for the newly arrived, organized resources to meet the basic needs of the refugees, tried to wangle access to education, housing, jobs or legal rights as well as accompanied the refugees during the asylum application procedure. More generally, these volunteers tried to organize for the social inclusion of these potentially “wasted lives” (Bauman, 2004).

In this paper, I draw attention to the spatial organizing of inclusion in a refugee camp. I seek to shed light on volunteers as organizers of and for social inclusion. Based on an extensive ethnography in a volunteer organization of a refugee camp, I explore how volunteers as members of the host society understand and enact inclusion on the micro-level in the space of the camp. Thus, contrary to extant literature on inclusion in organization studies, I shift the focus of inquiry from those subjectively experiencing in- or exclusion to those organizing for inclusion. This shift might be criticised for depriving those of voice who are mostly affected by in- or exclusion, namely the refugees. However, organizers for inclusion, e.g. volunteers, can be seen as gatekeepers to the host society. As they have a certain power to decide whom they

will help and under which conditions, their understandings of inclusion and inclusive practices arguably can influence the refugees' experience of in- or exclusion.

In order to shed light on both, the emic understandings and organizing practices of inclusion, I suggest to use space as an analytical lens. Space is a central category for belonging or not belonging (Dale, 2005), exclusion and inclusion (Tyler & Cohen, 2011; Wassermann & Frenkel, 2015), inequality or equality, ownership and (non-)access to social resources (Richer, 2015). It can be seen a social product of the interplay of planning discourses, practises and imaginations (Lefebvre, 1991). As a result, it can tell us about subjective interpretations of inclusion, practices of inclusion via their concrete physical materialization in door knobs, access rights to rooms, patterns of movement and aesthetic choices and the debates that evolve around these issues.

In exploring how volunteers design and organize the camp as an in- or exclusive space, e.g. via access policies, decoration, the installation of physical boundaries and spatial rearrangements, this paper makes three contributions: First, empirically, it shows how the camp space is organized as a “filter” to the host society. By studying the everyday interactions of volunteers and refugees on the peak of the refugee crisis over the course of one year, it provides insights on how members of the host society organize the camp as a “threshold” to social inclusion. Second, theoretically, the paper adds to the inclusion literature by adopting a processual perspective and shifting the focus from inclusive organizations to the organizing of inclusion. In doing so, it shows how different understandings of inclusion and the to-be-included refugee shape its organizing in everyday life. Thus, the paper accounts for the complex, ambivalent and highly political ways in which emic understandings of inclusion translates into concrete materiality, practices and discourses and can produce exclusionary effects of their own. Third, analytically, the paper introduces Lefebvre's theorization of space as a lens to understand how inclusion is organized, practiced and imagined on the micro-level. A spatial reading of inclusion makes it possible to capture social inclusion on three levels: It shows how access to different spaces is mapped and negotiated, it accentuates the performance of inclusion, and it brings to light the meanings attached to these mappings and practices.

### **The refugee camp: A relational space**

Over the last two decades Agamben's notion of the camp (1998, 2005) has heavily influenced research on camps more generally, and refugee camps in particular. Following Agamben, the camp is a space which “remains outside of the normal order” (1998 p. 96) of law and politics

and thus is a result of a continuous state of exception, in which nation states exclude certain people, *homini sacres*, of the legal and political sphere. Whoever lives in the camp, is stripped from his or her political rights and is casted as “bare life”, a mere biological existence, which is directly unshielded from the state’s or others’ violence. Paradoxically, although the camp is a space of exclusion, this very exclusion is constitutive of the state’s power and sovereignty. Whilst Agamben’s argument is theoretical, it inspired several empirical studies, which showed how camps as spaces of exclusion operate (Picker & Pasquetti, 2015; Fontanari, 2015; Turner, 2016; Feldman, 2015; Giaccaria & Minca, 2011).

However, Agamben’s concept of the camp as a space of total exclusion has been criticised as agentless and “alarmist”<sup>1</sup> (ten Bos, 2005). Extant research has called for a more complex understanding of the camp in order to show how ex- or inclusion is enacted in the camp (Feldman, 2015). Turner describes the camp as a “limbo” (2016, p. 142), which is characterized by the ambiguity of space, time and social relations. Spatially, camps are organizing devices to confine “others” in a locus with clear-set boundaries between the inside and the outside. Yet, these boundaries are permeable and frequently transgressed by its insiders and outsiders in search of economic, cultural or social exchange. The temporalities of camps are equally janus-faced. Camps are, by definition, temporary emergency measures to respond to a crisis. In reality, however, they often become permanent spaces with urban qualities, which are closely linked to the surrounding local populations (Agier, 2002a, 2002b, 2014). Nevertheless, their “indeterminate temporariness” (Turner, 2016, p. 142) keeps the refugees in an impasse, “confined to the threshold” (Fontanari, 2015), where they are stuck without knowing when and to where they will move on.

The camp’s social relations are equally ambiguous: On the one hand, camps are indeed spaces in which “the other” is abandoned and contained. In camps “one form of life (separated out in an act of racism and imagined as responsible for biological threats) is perceived to another form of life (imagined as a ‘society’), which means that society must be defended”; thus camps are understood as “a management technique best suited to the production of naked life” (Ek, 2006, p. 369). Yet, on the other hand, camps are also spaces of interaction between refugees and members of the host society, be it staff, doctors or volunteers. Yiftachel and Meir (1998, 3-5)

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<sup>1</sup> Partially, this critique is based on a misunderstanding: Agamben’s main example of camps are the concentration camps of the Nazis, which were certainly the most perverted form of reducing human beings to mere bodies. While his diagnosis is that the form of sociality that the camp produces becomes normalized and comes into play beyond the physical boundaries of the camp, the camp in Agamben’s writings is a paradigmatic theoretical figure that points out these tendencies without claiming those empirical realities (Raulff, 2004, p. 610).

have described this relational quality of the camp by naming it a “twilight zone”, in which the host society sharpens its collective identity by engaging with the refugees. Hence, a camp does not only provide their residents with a place to speak from and claim certain political rights (Sigona, 2015), but, from the host society’s perspective, it is also a “laboratory of citizenship-making” (Fresia & Känel, 2015, see also Turner, 2016), in which the inclusion of the refugees into the society and the conditions according to which this takes place are negotiated. Following this line of argument, camps are coined by overlapping and contradictory regimes of ex- and inclusion (Inhetveen, 2014) and can be understood as complex organizational sites that mediate the social relations between a marginalized population and society. Therefore, camps are a fruitful sites for researching how social inclusion is accomplished by shifting the focus to the actors and trace how they engage in organizing for social inclusion.

### **Organizing for inclusion: volunteer organizations**

In the latest refugee “crisis”, a prominent example of such actors organizing for inclusion were volunteer organizations. The relation of volunteer organizations and inclusion is twofold: On the one hand, their organizing aims to “affect the pattern of privilege and disadvantage in society” (Hinings & Greenwood, 2002, p. 411), on the other, asymmetrical power relations are inherent in the relation of help-providing and help-receiving. As promoters for inclusion, volunteer organizations are often centred on notions of “doing good” (Blackstone, 2009), helping those at the margins of society and alleviating social evils (Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth, 1996; Baines & Cunningham, 2011; Hustinx et al., 2010; McAllum, 2014; Mesch, Rooney & Steinberg, 2006). Hence, volunteer work itself can be depicted as a social practice, which organizes access to societal resources and thus is aimed at including those at the peripheries of society. Furthermore, volunteer organizations create social bonds between their members, but also between members and clients that can turn into social capital (Putnam et al., 1993; Wilson & Musick, 1997). By including people in communities with shared values (Wilderom & Miner, 1991; Prouteau & Wolff, 2008), and dense social networks (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003; O’Toole & Grey, 2016), volunteer organizations can be engines of social inclusion. They are, for example, alternative unpaid workplaces for people who are otherwise excluded from the paid labour market due to dependency on social welfare (Cohen, 2009), long-term unemployment (Baines & Hardill, 2008), disability (Miller et al., 2003) or refugee status (Tomlinson, 2010). Yet, volunteer organizations can also reproduce the social exclusion of outsiders, e.g. by victimization, paternalism or racism (Papa, Papa, Kandath, Worrell, & Muthuswamy, 2005; Rogozen-Soltar, 2012).

More generally, volunteers can decide whom to help and to what conditions as well as who gets access to different kinds of support. While the idea of inclusion is central to their work, they also fulfil a gatekeeper function to society. This paradoxical relation might be constitutive for other organizers of inclusion such as NGOs, CSR projects, diversity or inclusion initiatives or social entrepreneurs (Bell-Isle et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2012; Pless & Appel, 2012).

In order to understand how organizing for inclusion is coined by these ambivalences, this paper sheds light on how the volunteers' emic understandings of inclusion translate into organizing practices and material realities in the camp. It is hence concerned with the meanings ascribed to inclusion and how these, in turn, are enacted in the organization of the camp space. Thus, my starting point differs from the extant literature on organizational and social inclusion. The former discusses inclusion mainly as the "individual sense of being part of the organizational system in both the formal processes, such as access to information and decision-making channels, and the informal processes, such as the 'water cooler' and lunch meetings where information exchange and decisions informally take place" (Mor Barak, 2015, p. 155) and thus highlights the subjective experience of belonging and being valued for one's unique contribution to the organization (Niishi, 2012; Shore et al., 2011). The latter fuzzily conceptualizes inclusion as supposedly "normal levels of access, participation and wealth in the social setting in question" (Cameron, 2006). What both approaches have in common is that they focus on the end result of an organizing process – the subjective feeling of being included or objectively defined measures of inclusion. The process that brought about this feeling or social position, however, remains obscured. This paper aims at casting light at the organizing processes of the actors in the field that precede inclusion and the ambivalent effects that these processes produce. More specifically, it shows how inclusion is constructed, contested and practiced by the volunteers and how this organizing of inclusion is situated in and mediated by the camp-space. Accordingly, the paper builds on the following assumptions: Organizing means to create social and material orderings in space that in turn create, reproduce or challenge cultural and historical meanings of belonging and non-belonging (Dale, 2005; Dale & Burrell, 2008). That is to say, in order to understand in- and exclusion, one has to look at how these are organized through space-related means.

### **Space as an analytic lens for organizing inclusion**

Despite an ongoing "spatial turn" in organization studies (Dale & Burrell, 2008; Hernes, 2004; Kornberger & Clegg, 2004; Taylor & Spicer, 2007), surprisingly little connections have been drawn between the concept of inclusion and space. While in the broader social sciences social

exclusion is often understood in spatial terms and tied to spatial entities such as neighbourhoods, streets, slums, asylums or camps (Massey & Denton, 1993), social inclusion remains strangely disconnected to space (Cameron, 2006). The same disconnection between space and inclusion can be found in organization studies. There seems to be a general awareness that space is far from being an innocent container for organizational processes; various empirical accounts have explored how organizational spaces can be read as materializations of power relations (Baldry, 1999; Brown, Lawrence & Robinson, 2005) between management and “the shopfloor” (Collinson, 1992; Collinson & Collinson, 1997) and intersecting exclusions along the categories of gender, class and race (Acker, 2006). However, these approaches tend to downplay the complexities of social space, which are produced, planned and interpreted by its various users in different manners and therefore partially lie beyond the tight grip of managerial control and elitist influence (Courpasson, Dany & Delbridge, 2017; Taylor & Spicer, 2007). In order to depict these complexities of organizational space, many scholars use Lefebvre’s notion of social space (Dobers & Strannegard, 2004; Dale, 2005; Watkins, 2005; Zhang & Spicer, 2014). Following Lefebvre (1991), space is socially produced in three ways; it is first “perceived”, that means practised, used and changed by those inhabiting it. Second, it is “conceived”, and as such planned, designed and mapped and, third it is lived through imagination and bodily as well as emotional experience. These three ways are different modes in producing space. However, they cannot be understood as clearly distinct dialectical spheres, but as intertwined and mutually constitutive (Beyes & Steyaert, 2011).

Few studies so far have explored how these three modes of spatial ordering affect the exclusion of certain groups in organizational settings. Wassermann and Frenkel (2015) show how ideas of a predominantly masculine and Western architecture (the conceived space), translated into different practices of displaying or masking feminine and/or Israeli identities (the perceived space), which led for some organizational members to the sense of being excluded (the lived space). Similarly, Tyler and Cohen (2010) shed light on the spatial performativity of gender in academia, which among female researchers caused feelings of being simultaneously invisible and overexposed. In the same vein, Richer (2015) examines how cultural practices of social inequality and status differences are emplaced in a high-end shopping centre. He reveals how “space is both the medium and, in certain respect, the means through which social hierarchies are produced and legitimated” (p. 348) and as such organizes the movement of actors as well as their sense of denied access or exclusion to certain elitist spaces.

Taken together extant research shows convincingly how organizational spaces and the organization of space (Dale & Burell, 2008) matter for social exclusion. Yet, much less is known about the role of space in organizing inclusion. The reason for this might be that the very notion of inclusion remains fuzzy and slippery. Defined as “normal levels” (Cameron, 2006) of access and participation or as a subjective feeling it is difficult to pin down in empirical research. Put differently, whilst social exclusion becomes visible when material or symbolic boundaries are established between the majority society and its deviant others (Lamont & Mólmar, 2002), social inclusion seems to remain largely obscured as a normalized state of being embedded in the social fabric.

However, in this paper I will argue that inclusion can be unravelled using space as an analytic lens. I will propose that inclusion becomes visible in the social ordering of space and the negotiations that evolve around this ordering. By looking at how space is planned, practised and imagined as inclusive and how actors struggle to overcome material and social boundaries, I seek to shed light on how the volunteers in a refugee camp negotiate and organize for the social inclusion of the refugees. For this purpose, I take a similar approach as Wasserman and Frenkel (2015) who look at the “spatial work” of the actors in the field, namely, their legitimizing planning discourses, their material and bodily practices as well as their imagining and interpreting of and vis-à-vis the material space. Yet, while they focus on how top-down design of space by managers and architects clashes with bottom-up emplacement and excludes certain facets of the employees’ identities, I will look at how the volunteers simultaneously act as planners, architects, interior designers, users and interpreters of the camp space, in which their work is situated. Thus, I will explore how space – the conceived, perceived and lived (Lefebvre, 1991) – becomes an organizing tool for inclusion.

Shifting the focus to the volunteers’ practices, experiences and understandings of inclusion implies moving away from the subjective experience of the in- or excluded. This potentially bears the danger of depriving those of voice who are mostly affected by in- or exclusion. However, looking at members of the host society as those enacting in- or exclusion is central to understand the difficulties of social inclusion. Hence, I believe that investigating inclusion from the perspective of the majority can produce valuable insights, without claiming that the target group of these practices – in my case the refugees – necessarily subjectively feels included (as the empirical section will show). Thus, the goal of this paper is not to depict social inclusion as harmonic or smooth, but to examine how organizing for inclusion is sometimes



hurtfully negotiated and contested among those including and can create exclusionary effects of its own.

### **Introducing the case: An urban emergency camp for refugees**

To make these points, I will draw on an extensive ethnography (October 2015 to October 2016) of volunteers in one of the biggest refugee emergency camps in Berlin. Thus, data collection was executed on the peak of the so-called refugee crisis. The camp was installed as a temporary emergency shelter in a former town hall by Berlin's city administration when the capacities of the regular infrastructure for asylum seekers were more than depleted due to high refugee numbers, who mainly escaped from the severe conflicts in the Middle East. While voluntary work played a crucial role in the first months of the refugee crisis all over Germany, it was particularly important in my case. Here, volunteers were the main providers of help and services for the refugees, along with other actors such as the supporting organization (a big German NGO) which administered the camp as well as a private security company. Throughout the "crisis" the topic of social inclusion of the refugees was intensely debated in the wider public. Whereas the growing political right judged the volunteers as do-gooders, media mainly welcomed their engagement as prime example for the society's inclusion efforts. These debates heavily fed into the self-understandings of the volunteers, who, against the backdrop of this public debate, constructed themselves as organizers for inclusion.

In the first days after the decision to establish a camp in the former town hall, hundreds of volunteers self-organized via Facebook and word-of-mouth in order to support the non-profit-organization and its emergency management staff, which set up the camp on behalf of the public authorities. It quickly became a prime example for volunteer engagement in the refugee "crisis" 2015. Some of the volunteers even became public figures, which commented on voluntary work in the refugee crisis in nationwide media. During the first weeks euphoria and improvisation ruled, but the volunteers quickly professionalized their work: They set up a departmental organizational structure as well as defined and formalized work processes, positions and responsibilities. At the end of the study, volunteers ran more than twenty departments, such as a logistics centre that receives, sorts and allocates clothing donations, a women's and men's clothing counter, a food counter, a medical department, psychological counselling, a wash and dry, translators and mentors, a play room for children, a women's room, a sewing room, a department which organizes events on Christian and Islamic holidays, a toy counter, a department for German language courses, a library, a bicycle garage as well as a coordination office and a Public Relations department. However, the initial euphoria ceased due to the

ongoing professionalization, conflict among the volunteers and with paid staff as well as the volunteers' frustration about the ever-poor living conditions in which the refugees were stuck due to the overstrained public authorities. So whereas in the first weeks far more volunteers offered their workforce than needed, volunteer numbers decreased steadily. Also, the volunteers changed in terms of demographics. In the initial phase, mostly students with stronger political motivations volunteered, while later on older people, predominantly retired or part-time working women, took over responsibilities and filled the gaps the students left when they returned to the university after the summer semester break.

While the volunteers developed organizational structures of their own, their work was embedded in the overall camp structure, in which other actors also played a decisive role. The supporting non-profit organization had the formal responsibilities for the accommodation, food, safety, health and legal issues of the refugees and increasingly employed social workers, translators, kindergarten teachers, doctors, kitchen staff and cleaners. Although the paid staff recognized the engagement of the volunteers, conflicts and pet peeves about responsibilities were common and fostered by the general lack of resources and different work motivations. Another important actor was the private security company, which was contracted in order to prevent conflict, enforce the house rules and fire protection requirements as well as to ensure the safety of the refugees, volunteers and employees of the camp. Its staff consisted predominantly of young men with a Kurdish or Arabic background. Hence, to a certain extent the security guards took on the role as linguistic mediators between the refugees and the other actors. Yet, the refugees regularly accused the security guards of unfair treatment, violence or lack of professionalism.

While the conditions in the camp were seen to be better compared to other emergency camps (at least the former town hall had separate rooms and the volunteers provided some additional services beyond accommodation, medical aid and food), it still was an emergency camp. This meant that it catered only to the most basic needs of the refugees. Over the first six months the number of refugees housed in the camp increased to approximately 1.200 and has, after a stable phase until the end of 2016, now declined to roughly 900. Although the camp was designed as a temporary emergency shelter for short-term accommodation, the majority of its residents ended up staying for several months, awaiting the decision about their application for asylum by the overburdened asylum authority. Most of them had no work permit, so they spent their days with waiting for their paperwork, going to the different administration offices and German classes. Furthermore, a government programme allowed a few refugees to work in the camp for

a symbolic wage of one Euro per hour. Yet, being stuck in an overcrowded emergency camp which addressed only the basic needs, along with the disappointment about the slow-moving bureaucratic procedures of the asylum application process, the lack of privacy, conflicts with paid staff, securities and volunteers and generally unmet expectations about life in Germany led to a high level of frustration. Other more lucky ones found their way into the German society quicker, especially the young, single and well-educated men, who were also the ones who had the most contact to the volunteers. The latter not only became friends, some also helped them to learn the language faster, arranged (shared) flats, language courses, internships and contacts within their private network. Indeed, some of the volunteers even harboured refugees in their flats, became custodial guardians for refugees underage and partially took on parental responsibilities.

The case is particularly insightful for understanding how social inclusion is organized and negotiated on the micro-level by actors who promote inclusion as part of their mission: The volunteers themselves framed their work as an inclusive practice and described inclusion as one of their main goals. Their work was aimed at alleviating the negative effects of camp life for refugees and getting personal contact to the refugees. At the same time, the volunteers' work was situated in a camp setting, which was heavily coined by the tremendous and sometimes traumatic losses caused by the refugees' flight and the constraints and deprivation of rights connected to the asylum status. Thus, volunteers worked in and with a spatial and organizational formation that caused and symbolized social exclusion. Organizing for inclusion in a space of exclusion created challenges and paradoxes of its own: Volunteers fought over competing understandings of inclusion and their conditions for inclusion. These conditions materialized in the uses, orderings and mappings of the camp space and partially led to feelings of exclusion and resistance by the refugees. On grounds of these dynamics, the case embodies an extreme case for the problems that organizers for inclusion, such as CSR projects, diversity initiatives, and volunteer organizations, face. While they enter spaces of excluded with best intentions to include, they still are in the position to decide about conditions for inclusion. Hence, while these projects and initiatives might establish zones of interaction and contact, asymmetrical power relations in favour of the organizers for inclusion might translate into new exclusions.

## **Methods**

The empirical research for this ethnographic study was undertaken during the peak months of the latest refugee "crisis" over the course of a year in the camp described above. I took interest in the relation of in- or exclusion and space after my first steps in the field, when I got fascinated

with the ambiguities and contradictions of the camp space in the former town hall; Kafkaesque corridors told stories of bygone German bureaucracies, the security guards and checks and the prison-like quadrangle left me with a certain unease, a feeling that clashed with the homely atmosphere between the volunteers and their caring and engagement for the refugees. Taking my own emotional irritation about the contradictory clues and meanings of the camp space as a productive starting point (Gilmore & Kenny, 2015), I became attentive to how in- and exclusion matters to, is mediated and organized via space.

### *Data collection*

In order to understand how volunteers made and negotiated inclusion, a special focus of the data collection was set on the materiality, design and aesthetics of camp space (Kornberger & Clegg), the spatial tactics of the actors (Munro & Jordan, 2013), the uses, rhythms and sounds of space as well as the meanings actors, especially the volunteers, attached to the camp space (Lefebvre, 1991).

During the one year of participant observation, I worked as a regular volunteer two to three times a week. I was granted access by the non-profit organization running the shelter, who allowed me to research the camp and informed the other actors in the weekly bulletin, which was made available to the actors in the field in German, Arabic and Farsi. As I observed overtly, further consent was established in informal talks with the actors. Fully participating as a volunteer in work shifts, meetings and informal gatherings, I shadowed the volunteers and followed their movements through the camp, their activities and daily routines (Czarniawska, 2007) and slowly became deeply immersed in everyday camp life (Ybema et al., 2009). In order to broaden and deepen my understanding of the camp space, I circulated through the different departments of the shelter, working in the logistics centre, the women's and the men's clothing counter, the kitchen, the food counter, the coordination office, the children's and women's room, German class, and holiday programmes. Activities reached from sorting old clothes, cleaning, repairing pushchairs and bicycles, tidying cellar rooms, giving out clothes and hygiene articles, playing with children, wrapping up donated Christmas gifts and co-hosting events to giving out food, preparing Ramadan lunchboxes and washing dirty dishes. Taking up the position as a volunteer shift supervisor gave me access to the team meetings of the volunteers in the "higher ranks". More informal contact was established with other volunteers, paid staff and refugees in coffee breaks, parties, shared meals and events – occasions which involved numerous informal ethnographic interviews (Spradley, 1979). During the observation, in situ field notes and short voice recordings were taken, which were written up in detail after

leaving the field. Additionally, I took photos of the building, its design and objects like posters, plans and maps (photos of actors were strictly forbidden) which I used as a memorial aid as well as document of aesthetic design (Buchanan, 2001; Warren, 2008). Further documentary data from the field was collected, such as leaflets, paper work (e.g. the volunteer contract), small objects, Facebook and messenger conversations as well as the daily digital volunteer shift plan. Other material from outside of the camp complemented the data and was used to contextualize the case in the broader social setting of volunteer engagement for refugees: I participated in various events and workshops of the local volunteering scene and collected newspaper articles and other media outlets about the camp.

While the participant observation generated data which resonated with all three modes of social space – the conceived, the perceived and the lived – (Lefebvre, 1991), 29 formal semi-structured were conducted with volunteers and paid staff to specifically explore their lived space, or put differently, their embodied local knowledge about and subjective experience of the camp space (Tyler & Cohen, 2011; Zhang, 2006). Due to my own movement through the different departments of the camp, sampling was contingent (I used informal ethnographic interviews and conversations as a way to recruit participants for formal interviews), snowball (interviewees indicated possible informants) and strategic (key players were identified based on the insights of the participant observation and intentionally approached). Interviews were conducted in the camp before or after work shifts, cafés or apartments of the volunteers. The interview guide consisted of different thematic sections, one of them being space. Questions related to their impressions of and feelings vis-à-vis the camp space, their experience of the architecture and design as well as their typical ways and routes through the building. The interviews, lasting between 30 and 90 minutes, were digitally recorded and transcribed. Refugees were also approached for formal interviews on various occasions. However, they reacted warily or defensive, unsure whether and how the interview might affect their asylum process or reputation in the camp. Due to these anxieties attached to the formal interview situation, I dropped my recruiting ambitions and instead purposefully engaged with them in informal “friendly conversations” (Spradley, 1979).

### *Data analysis*

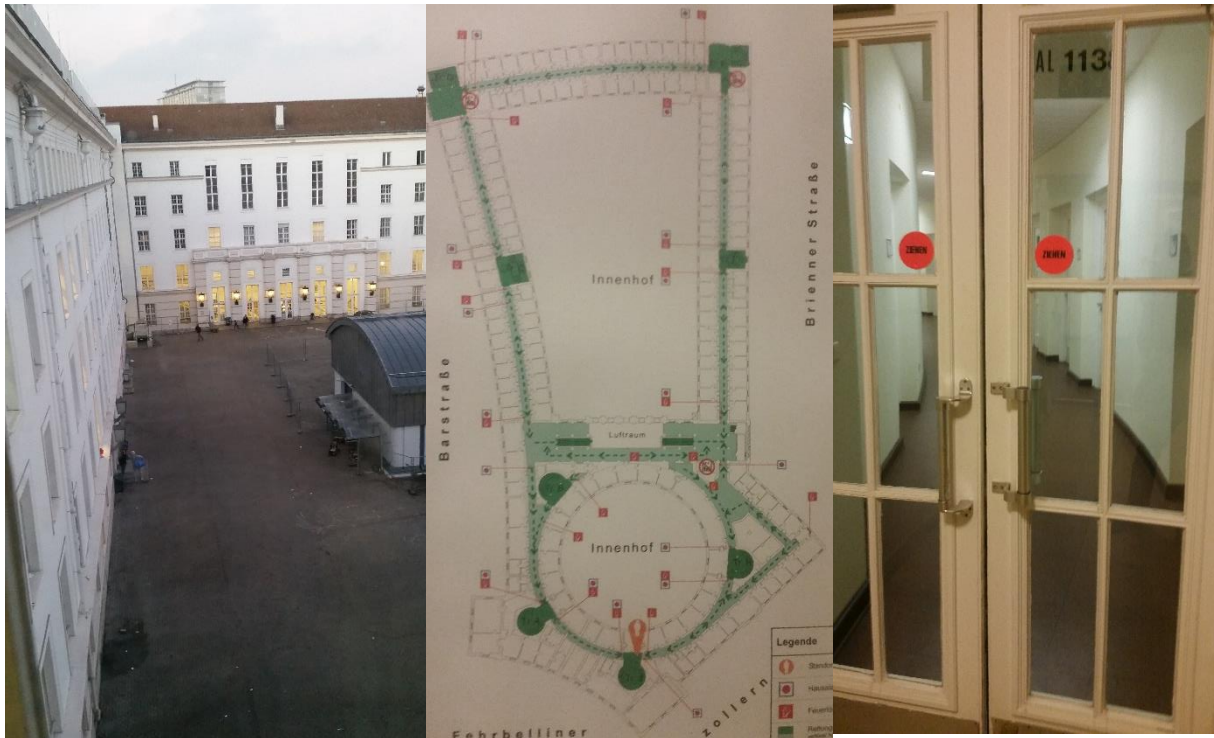
Analysis of the generated data was executed in four steps: First, the author engaged in close and interpretative readings of the data to identify key issues with regard to camp space and in- or exclusion, respectively. In a second step, data was organized using analytical categories derived from Lefebvre’s spatial triad (1991): the planned and abstract space (as symbolized in

maps, plans, charts and spatial and material design), the practiced space (the using of space, appropriation of space as well as the actors bodily movement in space) and the lived and phenomenological space (the imaginations of and subjective feelings of the actors, place-making). Within these three key analytical categories, data was, thirdly, grouped into themes that related to in- or exclusion of the refugees. Fourth, these themes were then compared across the key analytical categories to delimit how the three moments of social space were productive of in- or exclusion. This inter-categorical comparison led to second-order themes, which exemplify the spatial making of inclusion in the researched camp.

As an illustration for the research process consider the following example: Being located in a former town hall, the corridors were long, abandoned and decorated with once modern and now shabby brown linoleum and pastel-coloured wall paper in mint, pink and yellow (conceived space). Volunteers reported that the corridors “smelled like bureaucracy”, and experienced them as sterile, uncanny and outdated – impressions they linked to the social exclusion of the “other” (lived space). In order to create a more welcoming and homey atmosphere for the refugees, they engaged in different practices of home-making, e.g. the painted yellow clouds on the walls in the stair cases (perceived space). This dynamic was captured in the second-order theme “creating a private space”, which will be developed in more details below, along with two other dynamics, “creating a public space” and “crossing the threshold”.

### **Findings: Spacing the camp for inclusion**

The building, in which the camp was set up, is a former administration building with five stores, located directly at one of the transport nodal points in the south-western part of Berlin. Built during the Nazi era as representative headquarters for the German Labour Front (Hitler’s state-operated union), it features neo-classicist forms (clear horizontal and vertical lines) and colours (mainly white and grey), an underground air-raid shelter as well as a representative quadrangle and a round-shaped court of honour. After the Second World War, in 1954, the building was repurposed as a district town hall and refurbished and renovated in the 80s. The district administration moved out of the building in 2014. After one year of being vacant, in early summer 2015, the public authorities decided to temporarily use the building as an emergency camp to accommodate refugees, who came to Berlin in high numbers. The rooms around the court of honour were set up as offices for the administration of the camp, whereas the parts around the quadrangle were bit by bit turned into rooms for the refugees by putting in simple camp beds. Other infrastructure was established: The former canteen was equipped with beer table sets, dishwashers, ovens and a food counter (the food was delivered by an external caterer



*The quadrangle*

*The official site plan*

*Residential corridor*

as the water system and electrics were rotten); hygiene facilities, especially showers, were installed, first in a tent and later on in a small prefabricated building. Concurrently, a service infrastructure was established, mainly by volunteers, with rooms dedicated to the collection, sorting, giving out and storing of donations, German class, children and women and many more (s. below).

Interestingly, when being asked how they perceived the building, many volunteers shared my ambiguous feelings. Uta describes her first – sensual and emotional – impressions as follows:

„It has seen better days. Yes, bureaucratic. You come in and it smells like bureaucracy. On the other hand, it is much better than other camps, simply because one has a roof over one’s head. Of course, it was not intended to be that, that is clear. Surely, it is a better alternative compared to other camps. It is rather neutral, clinical. In some places it is a little shabby, too.“ (Uta, 54, interviewee)

These three contradictory aspects were dominant in the data; on the one hand the material space and design of the camp was experienced as excluding and controlling, dirty and run-down, on the other, the building was seen as enabling the organizing for social inclusion. The first aspect was often phrased using very drastic images. Volunteers described how the materiality of the camp left them with unease and emotional tension and connected their own impressions with the social exclusion of the refugees, who were described as “incarcerated”. A recurrent image used to describe the camp was that of a prison. Consider the following quotes of volunteers:

“Well, the quadrangle is a little prison-like, I think. These barriers, being incarcerated, securities standing everywhere. It feels like this a little bit.” (Corinna, 29, interviewee).

“This brings me back to the metaphor of the prison ((laughing)). Yes, unfortunately, also physically it has the outlook of a prison. Well, of course there is no fence and no wall around it, but this is not even necessary, because already this barrier, this fear of going outside of the camp, maybe I do not have a lot of money, I cannot orient myself in the city, or I do not have any money at all. I can, well, I cannot communicate, if I get lost, I am lost. I think this keeps many refugees inside of the camp and then this space turns into a more or less self-chosen prison. But it also appears like this physically. And this is why I think this metaphor works quite well here.” (Sabine, 31, interviewee).

Furthermore the building was described as being characterized by an antiquated bureaucratic atmosphere, which was experienced as “this typical depressing atmosphere, which is just a German problem” (Dana, 32, interviewee). This bureaucratic outlook was also associated with social control. Sabine explicates:

“I think, with this kind of bureaucratic building, I immediately thought of the student loan authority, you almost immediately are put into the role of a suppliant, somehow. And if that is what also others emotionally experience, when they enter this site, like, I am now a suppliant and have to make myself look very small. This is why I said to you, like 10 cm smaller, that is not good for anybody’s self-esteem.” (Sabine, 31, interviewee)

Together with the run-down interior, the flaking wall paper, and the broken windows in the ground floor, the physicality of the building, according to the volunteers, communicated hopelessness and social marginalization.

However, the architecture of the camp was also depicted as “enabling”, “privileged”, “five stars”, “paradisiac” and almost “luxurious” in comparison to other emergency camps. These judgments specifically related to the room layout with its plethora of separate rooms, which allowed to accommodate one family or only up to six single refugees per room. As other camps were set up in gymnasia, abandoned airport hangars or mobile homes, this situation granted the refugees a minimum of privacy. At the same time, this room layout made it possible to provide services to the refugees and also to guide them in a controlled manner through the rooms in which these services were provided. Consider the following excerpts:

“Well for an emergency camps, the space is very good, I think. Although I thought in the beginning, ‘no sinks, no showers, nothing there’. Not even here it suffices. But at least there are rooms. In fact, they cannot be locked. But at least there are rooms in which a family or some people can live. There is heating, windows. It is, in comparison to other emergency camps, luxury.” (Dora, 48, interviewee).

“Well I think because of the architecture it is pretty relaxed here. There are how many different shifts for the meals, so you can come one after another (...) It just works. If you installed a table with food and 500 people would queue, it would be different. Or if you always heard and saw your neighbour. Or also with respect to sexual assaults. Here this is much harder than if one was in a big gymnasium. (Gesa, 32, interviewee).



Overall, the physical space of the camp was interpreted as at the same time excluding and enabling social inclusion. Whereas the building evoked images of total institutions, control and marginalization, it also allowed for a certain level of privacy and a functioning living together. These opportunities the physical space provided were used by the volunteers. They re-organized the already existing camp space in order to create more humane and less marginalized living conditions for the refugees as will be developed below. Thus, the case is different from the extant studies on space and exclusion (Richer, 2015; Tyler & Cohen, 2011; Wassermann & Frenkel, 2015): These studies look at how management and architects design material spaces, which clash with the practised and lived space of its users. In my case, the aesthetics of a long past organization overshadowed its present, in which the volunteers acted simultaneously as planners, users and imaginers of the camp space. Yet, this role overlap did not make the production of social space smooth or harmonic. Indeed, struggles evolved about how the camp space has to be organized in order to facilitate the social inclusion of the refugees.

### *Creating a private space*

One of the difficulties of life in the camp was the constant lack of privacy, basic comfort, and a safe “home”. Although the refugees were accommodated in rooms with only six persons maximum, the majority of refugees did not experience these rooms as providing them with a temporary home. A major reason for this was – besides the insecurities connected to the unsure residence times – the absence of door locks, as the former locking key system was broken. The non-profit organization made a request to install a new one, however, the request was turned down due to fire protection requirements and costs. As the rooms were, at least in the beginning, not equipped with lockers, the refugees could not safely store their personal belongings. Stealing was more than common as one of the Farsi translators, Nima, explained:

She tells me that they “now also steal from each other” directly from the rooms, because they cannot lock it. I say that this astonishes me as I have read the other day that it was the support organizations’ duty to provide keys. Nima shakes her head. She already asked the supporting organization to at least install lockers, but nothing has happened and this is a major problem for the refugees. Women and children are afraid when being alone in the rooms, especially at night. Stealing is more than common, because more expensive items like sneakers are sold on the “black market”. (field notes)

Thus, the refugees took precautions: A field contact, a 14 year-old Syrian girl who helped in the clothing counter told me that one family member always has to stay in the room no matter what. Similarly, Ahmad, a thirty something IT specialist from Damascus, showed me during an event that he always carried his personal belongings, including his paper work, with him in his backpack, even if he just went to the toilet or the shower.

Another problem were the very poorly equipped rooms. In the beginning, rooms were only furnished with camp beds. Especially for families, who often lived with many children in one room, this lack of furniture was problematic. A volunteer, who became engaged as “grandma” of a couple with three small children, describes how the mother struggles with this difficulty:

“And she was feeling pretty horrible. Well, I always thought she is psychically at the end of her tether. Because she cannot keep it tidy. There is just nothing there to sort things.” (Mrs. Schumacher, 78, interviewee)

Furthermore, refugees suffered from a general lack of privacy, especially those who shared a room with non-family members. Complaints about the snoring or stealing roommate, who was listening to loud music or watching movies in the middle of the night were common. Also couples who shared a single room with their children struggled with the spatial narrowness, leaving little space for intimacy – although condoms were one of the most sought after item at the hygiene counter.

The volunteers engaged in different practices in order to create a safer, more comfortable and more private sphere for the refugees. Attempts to put pressure on the camp management to install a locking system failed as the management was not granted its cost absorption by the regional authorities. However, volunteers in cooperation with the supporting organization created rooms for the most vulnerable residents, women and children. The women’s room was meant to be a safe place in which women could withdraw from the ever-present male gaze. Religious women, for example, could take off their hijab and dance without being watched. Thus, access for male adults and adolescents was strictly forbidden – a rule female volunteers enforced rigorously during the opening hours.

A second practice aimed at creating a private sphere for the refugees was the movement patterns of some of the volunteers. Many respondents stated that they just know the “public” rooms of the camp, in which services are provided and organized. Even though many were curious to see how the refugees’ rooms looked like, many refrained from walking through the residential corridors to not “disturb” the privacy of the refugees or give them the feeling of being a “zoo animal”. Dana explains:

“I think I would feel a little bit like an intruder if I would walk through the residential corridors. Because if I have the feeling this is not a place where I should be. I would have the feeling of incommoding someone. I am very peculiar with my apartment. My apartment is my cave, my place where I retreat from the outside world. This is why I want / this is why I understand if others want to have it like this as well. This is why I would not just walk through the residential corridors.” (Dana, 32, interviewee)

Other volunteers, however, had a different understanding and saw themselves as participating in the refugees' private sphere. They "just knocked on the door" of refugees they knew or went through the residential corridors to get an "authentic" impression or assure themselves that the rooms were acceptable. Furthermore, some of the volunteers used the more "public" rooms in the camp as a private space: They decorated them, stored personal belongings and food there, and met their friends living in the camp there. However, this was read by others as an illegitimate appropriation of space:

"because she basically made the helpers' office her private living room. She had parties there with her friends, was always there, or at least very often. She left her personal mark here very strongly, she was one of the last, who even managed to stay here until after midnight, although after 10 pm the fun is over. She even managed that the securities did not dare to go into the helpers' office." (Iris, mid-thirties, field contact)

Hence, although most volunteers shared the wish to create a private sphere in the camp, they did not agree about who is part of this private sphere – an incongruity which led to friction and debate.

Moreover, volunteers helped to equip the refugees' rooms with furniture, articles of daily use and decoration items in order to make the rooms more "comfy", "homey" or organized. In the beginning, volunteers gave out donated furniture in order to complement the very Spartan interior. However, the building inspection office interdicted this practice due to fire protection requirements. Yet, the volunteers still organized articles like blankets, curtains, decoration items and articles of daily use such as cutlery or dinnerware. These efforts to render the bureaucratic and prison-like atmosphere more "homey" and welcoming included also other parts of the camps, which were painted, decorated and furnished, e.g. with seats. Consider the following quotes:

"They [the volunteers] have painted all the staircases. Awesome. The camp could use more of that. Well, there are certain things for which the supporting organization is clearly not responsible, but they do change the atmosphere a lot." (Ida, late forties, interviewee)

"I have to say, I do not feel that it is scary anymore. Well, for example, the staircase has been painted at least. The floor still looks terrible, but at least the wall has been painted. There is some progress, nonetheless, these things are a drop in a bucket." (Sabine, 31, interviewee)

### *Creating a public space*

Along with attempts to create privacy and a homey atmosphere, volunteers engaged in various practices in order to create a public space in the camp. The refugees did not have enough spatial infrastructure in order to meet, talk to each other and to the volunteers. Moreover, most of them were excluded from public life outside of the camp as they did not have enough money or other

resources to participate. In order to alleviate this situation of social exclusion, volunteers organized the camp space in a manner that facilitated “doing something together”, community, participation, consumption and entertainment. For example, they installed a small community garden in the quadrangle. With the help from local members of the Green party, they set-up wooden raised herb beds, in which the refugees could cultivate herbs and vegetables. The quadrangle was also endowed with two table tennis tables and playground items. Furthermore, the clothing counter which was run by volunteers was deliberately structured like “a department store”. Consider the following excerpt from the field notes:

The shift supervisor tells us to give them time to look through the clothes and discuss with their friends, whether to take or not to take it, like if they were shopping. They should also help them to pick the right sizes and hold the mirror for them, like in a boutique. In the male clothing counter the volunteers even established a “cash point”: Refugees had to show the items they wanted to “buy” which were than listed on their personal index card. Amounts were clearly regulated – so if they ran out of “money”, they could not shop anymore. (field notes)

Further “public” infrastructure that was established by the volunteers, in cooperation with the supporting organization, included prayer rooms, a kindergarten, a sewing room, a music and sports room, an internet café, a bicycle garage, an event room as well as a hairdresser. Some of these public spaces were also used for different events and celebrations like concerts, panel discussions and religious and cultural festivities (e.g. Christmas, Easter, Eid, Newruz) and Saturday night parties. Different formats of participation were also established: Volunteers and paid staff organized an election for a refugee council which should represent the inhabitants’ interests vis-à-vis the supporting organization and the volunteers. Furthermore, several refugees were offered “jobs” in the camp, e.g. in the clothing counter, paid symbolically with one Euro an hour by a government programme. Overall, the volunteers created public spaces in the camp, in their words, “a village infrastructure” or a “city in the city” with the aim to make camp life more normal and less excluding.

However, volunteers took strong control and ownership of these public spaces. They set the event agenda, decided about access policies and degrees of participation and made the rules of how the spaces should be used. In the clothing counter, for example, volunteers prescribed not only the exact amounts of clothing items every person received, they also decided about how much time each “shopping trip” could take, who could become an “employee” and so forth. This strict and to some extent random regime was a controversial subject amongst the volunteers. Whereas the volunteers in the clothing counter argued that the stringent rules were needed to ensure fairness, others described their rule-making and strong sense of ownership as “bizarre”, “ridiculous”, “unnecessary”, and even reproducing social exclusion. However, a

strong sense of ownership and taking control over the public spaces also became visible elsewhere in the everyday of the camp life. The following episode illustrates this:

“We were sitting outside after the team meeting, smoking and having beer in the quadrangle. Some young men played football, shooting in our direction, like, really hard. One time, it almost hit Zati’s head. Then we took the ball away from them and said, this is enough. One of them got angry, and it almost became a brawl. They [the refugees] behaved like it was THEIR quadrangle.” (Conversation with Doria, volunteer, field notes)

Thus, besides the volunteers’ quarrels over the “right” rules and degrees of access and participation, struggles arose when the refugees did not play by these rules. Rule-breaking was read as offending the public infrastructure and subverting the community and inclusion the volunteers created for the refugees. More drastic examples for rule-breaking were stealing items and breaking into the clothing counter on two occasions as well as destroying valuable things and donations. These events were experienced as deeply frustrating and even caused some volunteers to quit. Ida narrates:

“I see how much is destroyed here. Especially, for example, the push chairs. We receive very few push chairs and here they are destroyed (...) I really miss a sense of shared responsibility for this place and this really frustrates me.” (Ida, late forties, interviewee)

### *Crossing the threshold*

Apart from creating public spaces in the camp, many volunteers also aimed to foster the refugees’ social inclusion in the local neighbourhood and community. For them, the spatially bounded camp provided a locus to make contact with the refugees and help them to cross the spatial boundaries of the camp. The co-presence in the field as well as the refugees’ dependency on the volunteers’ services and help made interaction inevitable, which was very welcomed by both, the refugees and the volunteers. More and more, these contacts extended beyond the camp space, which for many volunteers was a declared goal. Consider the following quotes:

“I know families, they invite them over, cook with them, go with them to the museum. Ida’s mum takes one resident out to the museum. Rudi’s wife has adopted two families, who come for dinner regularly, or for having a shower, if the showers [in the camp] are frozen up. Well there is more exchange beyond the camp, clearly.” (Doria, 32, interviewee)

“I think I am the exception almost, because I did not take up a guardianship, found a flat, or subleased a room to a refugee. That is crazy to see. Especially those, who help way beyond their engagement in the camp.” (Ida, late forties, interviewee)

Volunteers increasingly built “bridges into society” and granted the refugees access to their professional or private network. These “bridges” were constructed in multiple ways: Volunteers accompanied them to the asylum authorities, to school or to job interviews, and planned many activities outside of the camp, such as museum, zoo, game and concert visits, which were

formally announced in the bulletin of the camp and advertised in the helpers' office. Furthermore, volunteers organized more informal activities outside of the camp like dinners, going to the cinema or to the pub, which allowed refugees and volunteers to step out of their role of help giver and help receiver and thus enabled contact on a more personal level:

“He kind of became a friend. And if we go to the cinema, he just comes with us (...). Somehow that is what we always wanted: That we stop saying ‘them’ and ‘us’ and that integration happens in a manner that they are just on board.”

“We just go to a place where you can have an inexpensive meal. We invite them, but we do not pick an expensive place. On the one hand, to save our own money, on the other we want to give them the possibility to pay for a beer. That they have the feeling, they can invite us sometimes as well (...). How this works then? Like a men's night out. We joke around, talk about women and football.“

Some volunteers even housed refugees they got to know in the camp, either as flatmates or as “family members”. These volunteers even referred to them as their “children” or “sons they never had”. However, this closeness was also subject of debate among volunteers. Some criticized this very intimate contact as inappropriate or, at least, did not want to get involved at this personal level. The following quotes illustrate this:

“I had situations in which I thought that this is way too much. For example, I come in [the clothing counter] and he gives each of them [the refugees] a razor and shows them what else they could shave. And I just was like, oh my god.” (Katharina, 33, interviewee).

“At some point, you get friend requests on Facebook or somebody asks you for your number or Whatsapp or so. And that is the moment, where I decided in the beginning, okay, I will say no to everyone. Because I do not want this. I love to help these people. But I am not close friends with them. This has nothing to do with them living in the camp (...) I think one has to separate the private and volunteering. (Julia, 25, interviewee)

The close bonds between some of the volunteers and refugees were also debated among the refugees. Those who were very attached to the volunteers were mainly young Afghan or Iranian males, well-educated, more liberal and speaking English. Thus, Syrians accused the volunteers of unequal treatment as well as discrimination due to language ability, religiousness and origin.

Indeed, volunteers understood the camp as a space for practicing “integration on the small scale” and saw themselves as mediators between the refugees and the German society. However, there were clear conditions for this integration as it was tied to distinct unnegotiable values. In particular, these values were non-discrimination of gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion as well as non-violence. The volunteers felt that they were responsible for “educating them” and “teaching” them these values in order to prepare them for the outside world. Posters with “no homophobia” or “no “racism” were hung up on the walls and doors of the public rooms and corridors. Shortly before one of the biggest gay pride celebrations took place close to the

camp, these were complemented with flyers and posters which explained the status of LGBT rights in the German law and society. Hilmar, an openly gay volunteer, explains the rationale behind these posters:

“Honestly, I always defend them. But I was afraid that this [gay pride celebration] leads to riots or problems. I mean, four underground stops away. And I saw three poofs in feather boas and leather in the underground the other day. And I just wanted to state the following in the camp: You can avoid the party, you can go to the party, but you definitely have to accept it. (...) I mean, there we get impressions that are difficult to handle even for fifty percent of the heterosexual city slickers. What should we then tell an Afghan, Syrian or Iranian resident? And so we said: ‘We have to deal with this in an offensive way’.” (Hilmar, 35, interviewee)

The volunteers took a similar approach for other supposedly sensitive topics, one of them being the Jewish community, who also became involved as volunteers, especially over Christmas to replace the Christian volunteers. Posters and flyers were put up, explaining that antisemitism is not acceptable in Germany, particularly when considering its historical guilt. Doria elaborates on these conditions for social inclusion:

“Well, consider, the Jewish community is much more present than the Islamic. And you could suppose that this is problematic, especially with the Syrians. But it seemed to work out, they were here three times, I think. We now live together and we want it that way. A newcomer has to deal with how Germany works, and we are pretty open here. But stick to these few rules. (...) For me this is very important, because I live close, and I want that this works in this neighbourhood.” (Doria, 32, interviewee)

Apart from these posters and flyers, volunteers also practiced these values in the camp in order to prepare the refugees for their life after the camp. Especially gay men were overrepresented among the volunteers and openly showed and talked about them being gay:

“their [same-sex] wives and husbands pick them up and then kiss them and then they walk off the quadrangle hand in hand. I think it is a question how you exemplify it with your own life. (...) These are the limits. (...) But if you stick to those rules, we do not give a shit about if you are Muslim, Christian or whatever. We do not care if you are small, tall or fat. We don’t give a shit. We accept you how you are. And we want you to accept your neighbour as well.” (Peter, 24, interviewee)

Whereas the “education” mainly aimed at communicating cultural values the refugees should learn “before they move out and find a flat”, more mundane topics were also a part of preparing them for the outside world:

“But we say: This is Germany, we do not jump a red light, this is how we are. We wait if someone speaks and wait until it is or turn. If the medical practice opens at 10, it opens at 10. (...) We have to, and we did educate them. They have been through a lot, and you have to see that. They are glad that they are here now and think, because they heard this through the grapevine, that this is the land of unlimited opportunities. But there are rules, and it only works if there are rules. (...) And you have to follow these rules.” (Natascha, mid-forties, interviewee)

Yet, the volunteers did not only want to prepare the refugees for the outside world; they also intended to politically educate this very outside world, especially their friends or family. They used the physical, used and lived camp space as prove that social inclusion is possible and can be organized. Consider the following statements:

“I have this urge in me, well, to show my parents this here. Simply to show them: ‘Look how well it works here with all its deficits and problems. I am part of this here, here I feel good, and that it is a nice space somehow.’” (Frida, 27, interviewee)

“With my friend from Rennes, she was here, I took her with me to the camp. By the way, Luigi came with me to the camp as well, this is obligatory if you visit me ((laughing)) (...) Because I want to know / because especially Italy has also difficulties with migrants and them coming. You have to see this here [the camp], you can organize this like this as well and only half of it is as bad as you tell each other.” (Fritz, early sixties, interviewee)

However, these efforts to educate others were not restricted to family and friends. Volunteers also tried to reach out to the local communities, the neighbourhood and the wider society. In doing so they used the camp as a spatial reference point, which exemplifies how social inclusion can be organized:

“The camp does have the responsibility to contribute to the political discourse. Because we can clarify things. (...) I think we have a responsibility to educate more. How can we win the volunteers over as multipliers for these ideas of tolerance, acceptance that they pass this on offensively? Why do I get engaged in this camp? Why am I here for these people? Yes, and to ask yourself more often why did I actually come here? What was the motive? That has to be on the agenda more often.” (Peter, 24, interviewee)

Overall, the volunteers tried to interconnect the camp space with the outside world in two ways: First, they claimed to prepare the refugees for this world by “educating” them, but also by accompanying them, providing them with support, resources and networks for moving and living outside of the camp. Second, the camp space was also used as a spatial reference point for a successful social integration of the refugees, and as such brought into play to educate the outside world both, by bringing it in and reaching out to it.

## **Discussion**

The empirical analysis has revealed three different ways in which the volunteers in the camp organized social inclusion by spatial means: They tried to change the bureaucratic and prison-like atmosphere by using the spatial infrastructure as an enabling resource to, first, create a private “homey” atmosphere, in which the refugees could live a personal life as close to the ideals of a German normality as possible. Second, they aimed at creating a public sphere, in which consumption, employment, participation and entertainment was possible – societal domains from which the refugees were excluded outside of the camp due to a lack of monetary,



social and cultural capital. Third, volunteers took on the role as mediators between the camp space and the outside world. In order to promote social inclusion, they organized the material, practiced and lived camp space so as to prepare the refugees for life in the German society and achieve social inclusion at a small scale. However, they also made use of the camp as a spatial reference to illustrate to outsiders how social inclusion can be organized. In the following, these findings will be reflected in the light of the theoretical ideas on camps, inclusion and space developed above in order to flesh out the contributions of this paper.

### *Camps as “filters” for inclusion*

The findings of this paper contradict Agamben’s interpretations of camps as spaces of total exclusion, in which refugees are produced as mere bodily existences (1998, 2005). Instead, they resonate with the more nuanced readings of refugee camps as “limbos” (Turner, 2016) or “twilight zones” (Yiftachel & Meir, 1998). This quality of in-between-ness is produced by the distinct organization of social space in the camp. On the one hand, the researched camp was indeed a space of organized exclusion: Spatially, the refugees were oftentimes practically confined to the camp, unable to participate in the outside world due to the lack of cultural, social and financial capital. Thus, they were stuck in the camp, in which daily life was coined by discipline and control, the deprivation of rights connected to the asylum status, social marginalization, struggles for economic resources, and a tight temporal regime dictating the rhythms of the everyday. On the other hand, several actors tried to organize the camp space in a manner that facilitated the refugees’ social inclusion, with the volunteers being the most prominent. They had a substantial impact on camp life as they related to the refugees not only as victims, but also as private persons, camp citizens and potential migrants, which have to be prepared for the life after the camp. Their engagement might be seen as emblematic for a new type of temporary urban camps which emerged throughout the latest crisis (Picker & Pasquetti, 2015). Being located in the middle of the city and not in a “social void” (Malkki, 2002), such camps become undeniable parts of neighbourhoods and directly confront the members of the host society with the questions of the refugees’ belonging and non-belonging, inclusion and exclusion. Hence, in order to understand these camps, it is crucial to comprehend the ways in which members of the host society relate to the refugees and engage in the organization of their lives.

The findings suggest that these camps, indeed, can be seen as spaces in which the host society, embodied in the volunteers, sharpens its collective identity by engaging with people who are still “confined to the threshold” (Fontanari, 2015) of that social order. In my case, this

engagement took place as an attempt of social engineering; the camp space was organized as inclusive, but only for refugees who fulfilled the volunteers' conditions for inclusion. Certainly, the camp became a "laboratory of citizenship-making" (Fresia & Känel, 2015), in which the "right" refugees were provided with care, voice and networks, whereas the "wrong" refugees were to a certain extent deprived of those things.

Building on Nail (2016), this quality of the camp of sorting people in and out might be best conceptualized with the theoretical image a "filter". Whereas Nail theorizes borders or bordering regimes, I suggest that his ideas might bring forward our understanding of camps as spatio-organizational formations. He claims that a border can be conceptualized as a "filter that allows one path or road to continue ahead and another to be redirected elsewhere through detention, deportation or expulsion (2016, p. 4). Similarly, camps, being part of an overall bordering regime, work like a "filter", which regulated how fast different types of refugees move towards social inclusion (see also Andrijašević, 2010). The volunteers' engagement even accentuated the filter quality of the camp as their support and care was dependent on their image of an "appropriate" refugee, who follows the rules volunteers judged as constitutive for society.

#### *Inclusion in the making*

The "filter" quality of the camp also points to the ambivalent role organizers for inclusion have in a space of the potentially excluded. On the one hand, the volunteers indeed tried to alleviate social exclusion and attempted to create access to a "normal" private life, a public sphere and the wider society. On the other hand, this access was mediated by different emic understandings of inclusion, of the to-be-included, the refugee, and the role of those including, the volunteers. Some volunteers mainly saw the refugees as victims who lost a home and thus tried to enact social inclusion by home-making practices which were aimed at creating a space for a dignified private life in the camp. However, debates evolved around who belongs to that private sphere. Whereas some volunteers saw themselves as participants of the refugees' private lives, as friends or family, others tried to not become part of it, leaving the private sphere to the refugees themselves. The latter casted themselves not as friends, but as representatives of the German society. Similarly, debates evolved around the public sphere of the camp. The volunteers interpreted the refugees as responsible "citizens" of the camp, or "campzens" (Sigona, 2015). However, they disagreed on the role of the volunteers in the "camp-city" (Agier, 2002). While some saw themselves as facilitators of the refugees' citizenship, others identified as teachers of citizen behaviour or controllers of the public sphere. The volunteers' different understandings of the role of refugees and the volunteers in the camp led to different forms of enacting inclusion

in the space of the camp, which partially created exclusionary effects for certain groups of refugees, e.g. the more religious and traditional families.

These findings suggest that organizing for inclusion might create exclusionary effects, especially when the understandings of inclusion among the organizers contradict each other. Thus, for organizations like NGOs, CSR projects, diversity or inclusion initiatives as well as social entrepreneurs (Bell-Isle et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2012; Pless & Appel, 2012), which aim at working for social inclusion it might be crucial to explicitly negotiate on what grounds and understandings of inclusion, the to-be-included and the role of themselves their work is based. As the empirical research of this paper indicates, negotiating these understandings might lead to conflict and disagreement. However, a clear and explicit notion of what inclusion is, how it should be enacted and under which conditions, would make it easier for those to-be-included to engage with and negotiate these understandings with these organizations. Shifting the focus of research from inclusive organizations to the organizing for inclusion might help to delimit what inclusion means in different organizational settings. This paper has adopted such a processual perspective to show how inclusion is negotiated in the extreme organizational setting of a refugee camp.

#### *Space as an analytic lens for inclusion*

The paper has developed space as a central analytical category for researching processes of organizing for social inclusion. Whereas extant literature understands organizational space and the organization of space as constitutive of exclusion (Dale & Burrell, 2008; Tyler & Cohen, 2010; Wassermann & Frenkel, 2015), the relation of space and inclusion so far remains underexplored. However, the findings of this paper indicate that investigating the organization of social space (Lefebvre, 1991) can reveal what inclusion means in a given empirical setting. In looking at the physical and the material, the practices, uses and imaginations of space, inclusion in the making becomes visible on different levels. Thus, studying the “watercooler” and the lunch meetings (Mor Barak, 2015, p. 155) instead of the subjective experiences of inclusion in organization might bring to light how inclusion is enacted, debated and contested in organizations.

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