Chapter 10
The Making of Reception as a System. The Governance of Migrant Mobility and Transformations of Statecraft in Greece Since the Early 2000s

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10.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the governance of migrant mobility by examining the reception system in Greece during two key periods. We view the reception system as an intermediary space which engages diverse policy actors who question the established understanding of the relationship between mobility and inclusion in distinct ways. More specifically, we examine how, different policies and measures have shaped this intermediary space since the beginning of 2000s. We also comment on the participation of grassroots organisations, other than formally recognised policy actors, 'whose objective is a different form of conduct' (Foucault, 2007, p.194), in the configuration of this process.

In this analysis, reception, as a term, refers to varied practices around migrant mobility that apply once migrants have crossed the border. In official discourse, the term 'reception' has often been used in a euphemistic way, as in the examples we provide in subsequent sections, to cover up the inadequate provisions and protracted violation of basic rights for persons arriving in Greece and seeking international protection, and to deter or impede migrant mobility. Our intention in this chapter is to shed light on the different, complex and sometimes apparently conflicting rationales that establish reception practices, and their ambivalent use in multiple levels of migration management.

Migration management is a form of governance that treats migration as a kind of irregularity (Ceiger & Pecoud, 2013); it is part of what Fassin (2011) calls the 'humanitarian state' or 'humanitarian government.' Humanitarianism has become an approach that links values and affects inextricably, and serves both to define and justify discourses and practices that govern human beings (Fassin, 2011).

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Humanitarian and security actions are both actions which frame 'border-care' governance and conceptualisations of protection (Bigo, 2006; Walters, 2010).

We consider the making of reception as a system during two key periods in Greece – at the early 2000s and in the post 2015 era. These are pivotal moments in which to investigate the different forces that have shaped the governance of mobility, and indeed, these have been important periods for migration in the EU in general. In the first period, during which transit migration was being established as a result of specific EU regimes, Greece became one of the major frontline areas of the EU. In the second period, Greece's external and internal borders became the main corridor for migration to Europe leading the European border regime into a period of crisis (Kasparek, 2016b). Both periods were important in the shaping of the reception system, and in our analysis, we draw attention to the different governmentalities that are activated within them.

Before moving on to the exposition of the two periods we briefly locate our approach within the literature on the governmentality of migration and reflect on the discourses and practices of the main actors involved in the construction of this intermediary space. In contemporary policy making, 'governance' refers to the diverse interactions and modes of co-ordination between political authorities, social and economic actors. The term governmentality was adopted by Foucault to address the rationalities and technologies of governing by different agencies in many areas of everyday life, i.e. in directing the conduct of others and oneself (for a concise definition see Dean, 2017). Governmentality studies draw upon Foucault's writings to analyse the exercise of political power through multiple interactions, stressing the role of conflicts and confrontations that the official discourses seek to minimise. Foucault (2007, 2008), in his earlier lectures during 1978–1979, traced the origins of modern governmentality in the eighteenth century, whereby liberal government was associated with the knowledge of controlling the population, and regulate the behavior of various groups and individuals. In his later lectures, during 1982 and 1983, Foucault (2005, 2010) expanded his conception of governmentality to examine how political government was linked to ethical self-government. Since then, the analysis of governmentality has been increasingly concerned with how specific 'problems' (health care, crime control, welfare assistance, migration etc.) are constructed as objects of government (i.e. 'problematised') through competing forms of knowledge and ethics.

10.2   Problematising Mobility, Reception and Inclusion

Over the last 20 years, studies on the governmentality of migration have flourished and have contributed in two main ways to the critical analysis of migration policies. On the one hand, earlier studies of governmentality elaborated the role that expertise, bureaucracy, humanitarian agencies and technologies of government play in the production of borders, the management of mobility and differential inclusion (Bigo, 2002; Fassin, 2011; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; Nyers, 2010). On the other

hand, more recent studies have shifted attention to the contingency of bordering. Thus, research has looked at the specific political alliances and historical circumstances within which technologies that channel migrant mobility come to be stabilised or destabilised. Current research further focuses on the inclusive possibilities that civil society and migrant agency open up, by examining how routes, trajectories, informal knowledge and settlement practices emerge through migrant networks and struggles (Mitchell & Sparke, 2018; Tazzioli, 2014; Walters, 2015). Cities have become prominent sites for research into how certain practices challenge and potentially transform the hierarchies into which migrants are inserted, as well as the stratification of their capacities for belonging. These include commons, sanctuary spaces, welcome and solidarity initiatives, everyday cosmopolitanism and practices of coexistence and emplacement (Bagelman, 2016; Darling & Bauder, 2019; Glick-Schiller & Çağlar, 2016; Oomen, 2019; Trimikliniotis et al. 2016; Wessendorf & Phillimore, 2018). In the present chapter, we seek to further understand the changing dynamics of inclusion by exploring the distinct governmentalities that unfold in the spaces of reception.

In one of his most cited statements, in which he introduced the concept of governmentality, Foucault (2007, p. 109) suggested that 'What is important for our modernity, that is to say, for our present, is not then the state's takeover (etatisation) of society, so much as what I would call the "governmentalisation" of the state.' He went on to explain that the transformation of the state and the continual definition of its competences and the relationships between public and private have 'allowed the state to survive' (Foucault, 2007, p. 109). As key theorists of governmentality have maintained (e.g. Dean, 2009; Larner & Walters, 2004), this statement implies that the state extends its power by connecting to and remaking existing networks of power, thereby reconstituting its relation with society. Dean (2002) further elaborates the relationship between the state and civil society, arguing that it can be conceived of as a series of 'foldings.' These combine freedom with coercive instruments, thus allowing for the possibility of certain amalgamations of liberal and authoritarian practices, as in the examples of poor relief, colonial rule, and the so called 'War on Terror'. Critical within this system is the 'liberal police,' which is primarily concerned with security, and works through three inter-related processes, he calls 'foldings': 'an unfolding of the (formally) political sphere into civil society; an enfolding of the regulations of civil society into the political and a refolding of the real or ideal values and conduct of civil society onto the political' (Dean, 2002, p. 45).

Our conceptual innovation stands in our effort to extend and modify Dean's thesis (2002) by considering an issue that escaped his attention, as he was only concerned with explaining the articulation of liberal with authoritarian practices. We introduce Foucault's notion of 'counter-conduct' [*contre-conduite*] (cf. Foucault, 2007, pp. 191–226) to capture the effects of two additional processes: the process of 'counter-folding' initiated by those struggles, which resist and modify the operations for conducting others and, what we term 'transfolding.' 'Transfolding' refers to the political response which, in partial and contradictory ways, attempts to mirror and model the practices of those who question the dominant operations and want to be led differently.

The unfolding of the political into civil society may take extreme forms when linked to sovereign power and the exercise of territorial control. The use of official spaces and infrastructures for detention, reception and accommodation thereby serve as a means of fragmenting migrant populations, by deciding who will be excluded and who will not. Refolding involves the remodeling of administration and society to the regulations of the market, and, as we suggest, may combine with the exercise of 'pastoral power,' i.e. a productive power of life and care (Foucault, 2007). Through refolding, migration and humanitarian agencies may be subjected to compliance with the inscription of managerial logics onto their operations. Enfolding, following Dean (2002, p.45), can be seen as merely a 'replication' of 'what is presumed to occur within civil society' in order to buttress the obligations of authoritarian government. Enfolding becomes evident in the engagement of parochial communities with xenophobic attitudes in local government. We argue, however, that the contingency of migration policies is shaped most especially by the operation of counter-folding, grassroots initiatives and migration struggles. Moreover, 'transfolding' may involve attempts to incorporate the informal techniques of civil agencies and grassroots initiatives, and may, as a consequence, be shaped by pro-migrant sentiments within civil society. Thus, this modification of Dean's thesis enables us to capture the effects of those political struggles and informal techniques which modify authoritarian tendencies; and the rescaling of the care and control competences of the state.

Indeed, the 2010–2018 bailout agreements and reforms on debt crisis management that occurred on Southern Europe, combined the dismantling of rudimentary welfare state structures with the piecemeal rebuilding of decentralised and privatised forms of social support but were challenged by solidarity initiatives (Arapoglou & Gounis, 2017). A concomitant attempt to decentralise and privatise asylum schemes has been observed in the context of the so-called refugee crisis and the closing of the Balkan route.

In keeping with the scholarship on counter-conduct and bottom-up governmentality, we identify those elements of inclusive experiments that can foster diverse cosmopolitan and egalitarian spaces. Moreover, it is important that civil society in the European South should not be understood as confined to formal charity, Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs), or humanitarian assistance, but should rather be extended to include grassroots organisations, a variety of local solidarity initiatives and even transnational movements (Kanellopoulos et al., 2020; Kanellopoulos et al., 2021).

In order to proceed with an analysis of the reception system, we first need to make a number of conceptual clarifications of the term 'reception.' As a system of governance, reception must be seen in relation to mechanisms of migration management and the invalidation of migrant mobility and settlement that happen through the different (re)labelling processes that characterise these mechanisms. The distinction between deserving refugees and undeserving migrants is presented as crucial and necessary for protecting people in need. The invalidation of immigrant or migrant mobility –as opposed to the migration of refugees– is occurring because the crossing of borders is considered to be a free and autonomous *choice*. Such a conception of free choice positions migrants 'as unworthy of social, economic, and

political rights' (Holmes & Castaneda, 2016, p. 17). This kind of invalidation of movement of different categories of migrants is directly related to the design of policies and infrastructure that function in specific border areas as well as on the mainland.

In the Greek case, reception emerges and unfolds both as a narrative and a practice that is marked by the complexity described above. Local and humanitarian agencies working in the field of reception implement European Union (EU) and governmental regulations that aim to filter mobility and sort newcomers. At the same time, they continue to uphold a humanitarian rhetoric. The end result is often the creation of fragmented spaces and practices, whose management combines humanitarian spirit with parochial or nationalistic values.

Yet, through our examination of the recent history of migration policy in Greece, we also observed that reception has had to accommodate a parallel world of intra-migrant relations that are developed in contexts of overlapping displacement (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016). Fiddian-Qasmiyeh points out how multiple periods of protracted displacement in (peri)urban settings can be considered as periods of overlapping displacements in at least two senses. Firstly, because refugees and displaced persons have already experienced secondary and tertiary displacement before reaching the EU borders. Secondly, refugees are experiencing overlapping displacement as they share physical space with other displaced people in the asylum system's many spaces (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2016). In addition to this world of intra-migrant relations reception has had to accommodate also diverse welcoming and solidarity initiatives. Thus, it has become an intermediary space where practices, performances and narratives on short and long term solutions for the settlement of migrants in the context of protracted staying (in limbo), generate narratives and practices around inclusiveness. We argue that the intermediary space of reception must be considered together with the concept of the sociabilities of emplacement (Wessendorf & Phillimore, 2018). The concept refers to some of the ways in which migrants forge social relations which enhance their connectedness with the place in which they settle and the wider society around them. Therefore, the relationalities and proximities that are tied throughout the short and long term procedures of settlement could render some aspects of this intermediary space of reception more inclusive. We move now to a discussion of the two key periods that we consider important in the emergence, evolution and consolidation of this intermediary space of reception.

10.3   The 'Transit' Era: The Unfolding of Exclusions and the Counter Folding of Solidarity

The concept of 'transit migration' first appeared in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Despite not having any basis in legal or institutional definition, it became a key concept (Duvell, 2011) and international organisations; EU agencies and national governments started referring to 'migration movement' that had to be stopped or

controlled. From this point on, the external borders of countries such as Greece, Italy and Spain were treated as the EU's external borders, and they became frontline EU countries. These areas were therefore expected to prevent migrant mobility from moving further onto other EU countries; which is why, together with the mobility they 'hosted', these areas were named transit areas. For these latter, this designation meant EU intervention and critique of the way in which border controls and the reception of newcomers were carried out. For migrant mobility, it meant protracted periods in situations of limbo, in between border areas and border countries.

The concepts of transit migration and countries of transit have been viewed critically as they simplify and depoliticise migration movement. At the same time, they usually attribute an irregular status to that specific form of mobility. In order to avoid reproducing the same line, we view migrant mobility from that era through the lens proposed by Angels Pascuals de Sans (2004). Thus instead of transit, we refer to 'a sequence of movements that are linked to each other by periods of settlement in spaces of relationships, in socially constructed places' (p. 350).

The context in which this sequence of movements unfurls is the one defined by the establishment of the so-called European External Border or Border Regime.[1] This border regime was produced from the nexus between the Schengen Agreement and the Dublin System. It was during this period that the EU started 'doing border' (Kasparek, 2016a) by forcing migrant mobility in Europe into a constant cycle of departure and deportation (Kasparek, 2016a, p. 60) through the use of the Dublin convention. Kasparek suggests that we view the above mechanisms as the evolving art of government that is represented by this process of constantly interrogating the patterns of migration and adapting to their concrete manifestations (p. 66). This constitutes not so much a prevention or reversal of mobility, as the disenfranchisement of migratory populations and the implementation of social practices of differential inclusion (p. 68).

From the late 1990s onwards, Greece began to play the role of the EU's external border. It did so by reinforcing the surveillance of entries at the Greek-Turkish borders and blocking departures by air (Athens) or sea (*Patras* and *Igumenitsa*, which are amongst the country's main points of departure). Even though this era was marked by a lack of coordinated policies vis-à-vis migration, both parties alternating in government, PASOK (*Panelinio Sosialistiko Kinima* [Panhellenic Socialist Movement], the centrist 'third-way' party) and *Nea Dimokratia* (the right-wing section of the political scene) adopted conservative and exclusionary policies in order to address migrant mobility and to divert public discontent by mobilising anti-migrant sentiments. As Tramountanis (Chap. 13 in this volume) presents, the first national plans for the integration of immigrants in 2002 and 2005 remained on paper and their subsequent development until 2014 adopted a clear assimilation rationale with evident nationalistic tones.

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[1] Dimitriadi (Chap. 11 in this volume) describes how Greece continues to be seen as a transit country after the EU-Turkey Statement.

However, the asylum system of the time was one of the most stringent in Europe, with a recognition rate of less than 1%. Further, newly arrived migrants picked up at the border were detained (Law 3386/2005). According to EU law, detention should be considered a last resort and decided on an individual basis. However, as noted at the time in the *Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants* by the United Nations' (UN) General Assembly (2013) in the case of Greece being a migrant in an irregular situation constituted a crime for which non-custodial measures existed. For that reason migrants in Greece were systematically detained. The reception infrastructure was limited to very few special detention facilities for newly arrived migrants. These were called 'Special Accommodation Centres for Aliens' (created by Law 3386/2005) and were located mainly at the Greek-Turkish borders. Reception facilities for unaccompanied minors and the most vulnerable migrants were almost non-existent. Therefore, at the start of 2000, Greece's reception system was made up of a plethora of different detention-like sites which could be set up practically anywhere: in regular police cells or at police or border guard stations, as well as in yards and other improvised facilities adapted for this purpose.

This first period, which we consider key in the creation of the reception system, was characterised by complex mobilities. During that period, frontline states as well as EU institutions were concerned primarily with what they termed 'irregular crossings.' These were the object of statistics and analyses aimed at controlling and channelling them by means of established policies. However, these policies and mechanisms of control provoked other types of crossing such as push-backs, deportations and returns. These last mobilities remained unnamed in the narratives of the different stakeholders (policy makers and practitioners) who designed the constant cycle of departure and deportation that Kasparek (2016a) refers to.

The spatial patterns traced by this constant cycle highlight the interplay between departure and return, between irregular and unnamed mobility. That mobility which was observed in border areas, provoked by returns and push-backs, remained unnamed. The same is true of the perpetual to-and-from Italian ports which was induced by the mechanisms of control implemented at Italian and Greek ports. Two further forms of mobility that went unnamed are the transfers of migrants to holding facilities –dispersed across Greece– and the roaming itineraries of those released from these holding facilities.

During the first key period, a vast number of places such as encampments, transit areas, 'jungles' and so on, became visible within the (social, political and media) daily life of different countries. And in a broader sense, camps or encampments have become the places of everyday life for tens of millions of people around the world (Agier, 2014).

In Greece, such infrastructures started to develop during this period in the context of overlapping displacements. The grassroots manifestation of this sequence of movements was the proliferation of different types of enclaves of precarity in various urban and peri-urban areas. The spontaneous makeshift camps of *Patras* and *Igumenitsa* –port cities that border the Adriatic– constitute such an example. In these, migrants organised their daily lives as a response to the blocking of their onwards mobility to Italian shores. The camp of *Patras* in particular, had a very long

life as it was established at the beginning of 2000 and was finally demolished only in June of 2009. Starting as a small settlement, it evolved into a large camp inside the city.[2] In Athens, migrants who found themselves in limbo took shelter in over-crowded apartments and squatted buildings. In addition, public squares and other public spaces were precariously inhabited by homeless migrants for short periods of time.

As noted above, in the early 2000s, there was no centrally organised reception plan, neither in policy nor in practice, for dealing with 'new-arrivals.' Nevertheless, the grassroots spaces produced by the sequence of movements as in the cases of *Patras* and *Igumenitsa*, manifested different subversive practices. These rendered reception more inclusive and in a sense challenged migrants' state of waiting and the transit character of the places that hosted them. In *Patras*, migrants transformed city spaces into an important stage in their itinerary, thereby forming atypical urban constellations, that is to say, ephemeral configurations with a permanent character. Such urban configurations provoked the emergence of solidarity initiatives at the local, national and European levels. According to Hole (2012), activist groups were involved in migrants' struggles in *Patras* and, rather than giving rise to a coherent solidarity movement, they forged a complex space made up of competing political voices.

One could view the intermediary space of reception as being built, during this long period, by diverse negotiations for the location of migrants' informal settlements between, on the one hand, those living in the camps and the different solidarity initiatives that supported them, and, on the other hand, the various manifestations of anti-migrant sentiment by municipal/national authorities and some locals. These negotiations occurred during a period in which reception did not even exist as a package of measures and practices, and instead a handful of detention facilities were operating as explained above. Migrants and grassroots initiatives, were increasingly treated with hostility by the Greek governments and public authorities, implementing harsh austerity measures.

In December 2008, the murder of a secondary school student by a special unit police officer in central Athens sparked weeks of civil unrest across the country (see Vradis & Dalakoglou, 2011). This event triggered the emergence of an underlying discontent that existed on multiple levels. State narratives and practice approached youth protests as a problem of lawlessness in Athens' central districts. Along the same lines, the government and media stigmatised migrants, qualifying them as a 'health bomb' in the city centre (Filippidis, 2013). Emblematic of this attitude was the 'witch hunt' against HIV positive sex workers (many of whom where migrants) in downtown Athens initiated by the then Health Minister *Andreas Loverdos*.[3] Equally representative of the period is *Antonis Samaras'* (*Nea Dimokratia*) key statement, made during a pre-election rally, on the issue of migration in Greece:

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[2] For more on this see Hole, 2012; Lafazani, 2013; Teloni, 2011.

[3] Sex workers picked up on the streets of Athens where arrested and detained, while mainstream media stigmatised them by broadcasting their photos.

'We shall reoccupy our cities and our neighborhoods…And the feeling of security shall be reinstated among their residents' (Filippidis, 2013).

It was in this climate that, between 2008 and 2012, the practice of 'zero tolerance' was extended to also include intensified police raids on makeshift camps, together with what are known as 'sweep operations' in central Athens, *Patras* and *Igumenitsa*, amongst others. In June 2009, the makeshift camp in *Patras* was demolished by the police and municipality. In May 2011, police raids resulted in the dismantling of the *Igumenitsa* 'jungle.' From August 2012 onwards, police raids were more centrally coordinated under operation '*Xenios Dias*'. The name of the operation draws from the Greek mythology, and refers to the hospitable *Zeus*; therefore, coordinated police raid operations in the government's narrative were conceived as operations of hospitality. This describes in the most cynical way certain aspects of the management of migrant mobility (and thus, certain aspects of the reception practices) of that era.

However, the hesitant introduction of a formal reception system occurred after pressure of international and humanitarian agencies. Between 2010 and 2014, varied measures were taken in an effort to transform informal reception practices into an institutional system of governance for channelling migrant mobility. Greece became the object of severe criticism for its non-existent asylum system, arbitrary detentions and inhuman reception conditions for migrants.[4] In early 2010, the Greek government took steps to take asylum procedures out of police hands. Law 3907/2011 aimed to respond to criticisms of arbitrary detention by creating new structures called 'first reception centres,' along with new detention facilities and asylum services. It was during this period that both the concept and institution of 'first reception' initially appeared. The contradictory reshaping and expansion of this system took place after 2015 amidst the turmoil of political events regarding the fate of the bailout agreements and international concerns for the escalation of migrant mobility during this period.

10.4   The Post-2015 Period: The Contradictions of Reception, Refolding Humanitarianism and 'Transfolding' Solidarity

In 2015, Greece's political scene underwent a significant change as for the first time, the coalition of parties of the left and radical left known as SYRIZA (*Sinaspismos Rizospastikis Aristeras* [Coalition of the Radical Left]) formed a government with the national-conservative ANEL (*Anexartiti Elines* [Independent Greeks]), a National Patriotic Alliance which served as its junior partner. This paradoxical

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[4] The ECtHR, M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece in 21.01.2011 is a case that encapsulates the basic violations of fundamental human rights that were taking place in Greece in the sphere of migration and asylum during the period. For more see EDAL (2011).

coalition brought about some changes in the narratives on migration, introducing pro-migrant rhetoric in a period during which migrant mobility towards Greece was reaching its peak. It is beyond doubt that the strict mobility control policies implemented after 2016 in particular, were designed to counterbalance the pro-migrant rhetoric of the coalition's first phase in power.

The 2015 summer is commonly conceived as a 'refugee crisis.' We place our analysis on that part of literature that displaces the concept of crisis from the refugee arrivals to the policy responses that address them until that moment (Christodoulou et al., 2016; Crawley, 2016). More in particular, we consider that 2015 constitutes the culmination of a crisis that had already begun since 2011. As Kasparek (2016b, p. 25) states the main elements of the European border and migration regime gradually entered a crisis in 2011, culminating in the 2015 summer of migration and the temporary breakdown of the European migration and border regime. The vast scale of migrant mobility during 2015–2016 and the border policies which forced that mobility into limited and remote pathways –in Greece's case, via the islands of the North East Aegean– created a hybrid situation in relation to the reception system on those islands. The different stakeholders providing first reception in the field were largely still in formation when they suddenly had to start dealing with very large numbers of border crossers. First reception services were unable to do anything as they lacked both the time and the infrastructure for registering and channeling that mobility. Rozakou (2017) describes this situation of the non-recording of migrant mobility as a modality of statecraft and not as an indication of state failure. This was a period during which the islands of the North East Aegean became a hub for International Organisations (IOs), NGOs, volunteers, students and journalists who put into practice various arts of government that were complementary as well as conflictual, both in relation to themselves and to national and EU level practices (see Papataxiarchis, 2016). Thus, diverse agents and jurisdictions set up a complex infrastructure of reception where formal practices went hand in hand with what Rozakou (2017) calls 'irregular bureaucracies.' During this period, the phenomenon of migrant mobility to Europe evolved from an issue that concerned only frontline member states, to one that confronted the EU as a whole.

In the post 2015 era, the framework within which the reception system had developed consisted of various types of policy and practice. The most significant of these were the hotspot approach, the 'closing down' of the Balkan route, the EU-Turkey Statement –which went hand in hand with geographical restrictions– and the new reception infrastructure that emerged during the period, which was characterised by a proliferation of camps, mechanisms of relocation and housing programmes that used apartments and hotels.

The hotspot approach, also known as the hotspot scheme, constituted an effort to institutionalise and regularise practices designed back in 2011 when first reception initially emerged as a concept and as a service. In a sense, the hotspot scheme was aimed at instituting what until then had only existed on paper or which had been taking place unofficially. For these reasons, the hotspot scheme activated different streams of funding and a reception economy emerged locally, nationally and at the European level (for more on this see Bartolini et al., 2020).

It was Law 4375 in 2016 that sought to establish the hotspot scheme. The Law mandated that newly arrived persons should be directly transferred to a Reception and Identification Centre, where they were subject to a short restriction of their freedom in order to undergo reception and identification procedures. It is through the hotspot approach that the first reception of all third-country nationals was established both as an obligation of the third-country nationals themselves and of national institutions. Furthermore, the hotspot scheme institutionalised the outsourcing of services related to border control, first reception and the channelling of migrant mobility from state institutions to EU institutions, IOs and NGOs. Parsanoglou (Chap. 12 in this volume) describes in a very explicit way how the new geographies of control that emerged with the establishment of the hotspot approach go hand in hand with the involvement of non-state actors in the migration management. The hotspot approach constituted an EU initiative to put forward a specific form of governance of the places at which migrants arrived, i.e. frontline member states (Greece and Italy). It was neither a policy, nor a practice, nor a place. And yet, it created policies and practices just as it created places and influences local geographies, as highlighted in the work of Vradis et al. (2018) on hotspots and the European migration regime.

During the summer of 2015, the Balkan route became the main corridor of migrant mobility towards Europe. From Greece's borders, migrants continued their journey to Northern Macedonia and further north, through Slovenia or Hungary, towards countries like Germany. As a de facto or de jure interruption of the Dublin Convention and of the 'first safe country' principle (Triandafyllidou & Mantanika, 2016), this itinerary became known as 'the opening of the Balkan route.' After some months, countries along this route started to randomly apply the category of refugee (Christodoulou et al., 2016) at their borders, initially only allowing migrants originally from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to pass and later= not allowing any migrants to pass at all. Hence, migrant mobility was blocked along this route. This produced a domino effect that ended at the Greek-Macedonian border in the town of *Idomeni*. In this period, within a matter of days, the region surrounding the small village of *Idomeni* was transformed into a vast makeshift camp which, little by little, assumed the characteristics of a humanitarian intervention.[5] As time passed and the border crossing became more and more difficult, this obstruction of migrant mobility started affecting neighbouring mainland areas as well as the cities of Athens and *Thessaloniki.*

Along the same lines, a few months later, the EU-Turkey Statement established procedures on the islands of the North-East Aegean, that were also applying an arbitrary interpretation of the category of refugee. The difference in this case was that these arbitrary practices were henceforth transformed into official agreements and legislation. More specifically, the EU-Turkey Statement was designed to stop arrivals from the Aegean Sea. It aimed to do so via the roll out of mechanisms to sort

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[5] The ethnographic documentary *Feeling of a Home* is an excellent film that presents the different levels of meaning attached to that border during this specific period (Kastanidis & Chaviara, 2017).

and categorise newly arrived migrants on Greek territory in order to return them to Turkey.

The EU-Turkey Statement disrupted the logic of the hotspot approach and the reception system on the islands. It created two types of reception: one that applied to the islands (a de facto prolonged stay) and the other to the mainland (see Petracou et al., 2018). From that point on, reception on the islands equated to the restriction of movement and detention. Dimitriadi (Chap. 11 in this volume) describes in a very illustrative way how the EU-Turkey Statement attempted to constraint the migrant mobility through a complex nexus of bordering practices. The most significant development with regards to de facto prolonged reception on the islands was the March 2016 geographical restriction that was imposed, first by the police and then by the Asylum Service, on every newly-arrived person on specific islands. As a result, migrants were enclosed within the wider territory of these islands, unable to move on to the mainland.

After the imposition of geographical restrictions, the channelling of vulnerable migrants and other persons with special needs from the islands to the mainland occurred through referral mechanisms. For other refugees, transfer to the mainland took place once they had applied for asylum. However, those who went through the fast track procedure along with those who had not applied for asylum were excluded from this process. Therefore, the way that reception has officially since then evolved, functioned as mechanism for excluding those migrants that were categorised as ineligible for international protection.

In accepting the EU-Turkey Statement, the SYRIZA government attempted to counter for mandatory EU obligations on border surveillance and normalisation with a strategy of integration.[6] By doing so, it made a tactical attempt to refold informal arrangements and to enroll an array of national and international humanitarian agencies into a plan for social integration that included only those who were eligible to apply for asylum. This move complied with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) pressure and priorities for the settlement of vulnerable people within the fabric of large cities, and it was also supported by NGOs and some local authorities. At the same time, this top-down attempt to create a decentralised strategy for the making of inclusive spaces was also an opportunity to repair the party's image, which had been damaged by the bailout agreement. However, this plan for social integration remained limited to short-term housing solutions and did not foresee other parallel aspects for/of integration. Furthermore, solidarity initiatives and grassroots movements in Athens and *Thessaloniki* criticised government plans and the operation of the UNHCR schemes as selective and contradictory. At the same time, these initiatives created a parallel infrastructure of commons through the temporary appropriation of urban spaces (Foerster, 2019; Mezzadra, 2018; Squire, 2018; Tsavdaroglou & Lalenis, 2020).

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[6] Tramountanis (Chap. 13 in this volume) offers some more details about the subsequent devise of the national strategy for Integration by the SYRIZA-ANEL government which shifted the emphasis to refugees and was guided by an intercultural orientation, in contrast to the assimilationist orientation of its predecessors in the 2000s.

During 2015 and at the start of 2016, the reception system aimed at providing assistance and services to people upon arrival as well as during their transit to the northern border of *Idomeni*. However, at the end of February 2016, its focus was on 'border procedures and large-scale registration and examination of asylum claims' (Petracou et al., 2018, p. 68). From that period onwards, the humanitarian response has striven both to compensate for gaps in basic needs provision and to orientate its services so as to address longer-term needs trying to address the protracted staying of thousands of migrants.

Of particular interest in this new era is the Greek state's outsourcing of a very significant part of the governance of migrant mobility to international organisations. This fact has inaugurated a daily interaction between local and national authorities and EU institutions, non-state stakeholders and grassroots initiatives. The interaction between these actors is visible even in the way in which reception is funded. Two very large European Funds were assigned to migration and security for the period 2014–2020, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Internal Security Fund (ISF) (see Bartolini et al., 2020). These provided member states with a policy and budgetary framework for national and local implementation of programmes and actions. Therefore, the main components of reception funding in Greece (as elsewhere) were outsourced to supranational and non-state institutions. Thus, the reception system's governing authorities were numerous; their interventions took place across many scales and were deployed through complex coalitions.

In the period that followed the 'summer of migration' in 2015, the Greek government put together an emergency action plan to address the accommodation needs of 100,000 refugees and migrants. At this time, longer-term reception was becoming established and expanding rapidly on the mainland. As Belavilas and Prentou (2016) note:

> Around the country, hundreds of different hot spots, rescue points, open camps, and finally organised hostels and residencies were created…Some of them are self-made, others are made by volunteers or NGOs, others by the army or the municipalities. They are located in the cities, near the cities or in the middle of nowhere.

The camps that proliferated across Greece over a very short period of time are a key aspect of the establishment and evolution of reception. According to Belavilas and Prentou (2016, p. 3), the creation and development of the network of refugee camps has been consistent with the evolution of refugee flows and the broader conditions affecting them. Their analysis suggests that the informal and first line structures that were set up in 2015 as immediate responses to arrivals on the islands, in turn opened the way for the establishment of second-line reception, which to a limited extent fulfilled the political aspirations for transforming the country's integration policies. This attempt may be considered a contradictory and indecisive process over the mentalities of government, namely the balance between enfolding the values and demands of NGOs within an EU funded humanitarian economy and the *ethos* and practices of grassroots solidarity initiatives.

The UNHCR has been a key actor in the accommodation of refugees and asylum seekers since the beginning of the refugee emergency in 2015. UNHCR played a significant role in the management of the camps and has additionally been in charge of implementing the Emergency Support to Integration and Accommodation (ESTIA)[7] programme. ESTIA aimed to address the needs of those asylum seekers and vulnerable refugees who arrived on Greek soil from 2015 on. The programme's objective was to fund accommodation mainly in apartments, hotels and other buildings. Furthermore, ESTIA provides its beneficiaries with food, personal hygiene products, social support, interpretation services and travel assistance. Medical, legal and psycho-social assistance is also provided, depending on need. Funded by the European Commission, the programme designated municipalities and NGOs as its implementing actors (UNHCR, 2017) and the time or drafting of this chapter is still operational.

Tackling the same needs as ESTIA, refugees, NGOs, volunteers and activists have devised alternative solutions for shelter, and have thereby built an unofficial network of reception, mainly in Athens, but also in other areas of the country. Its members come from various civil society initiatives such as grassroots organisations, local solidarity groups and transnational networks of activists that emerged from anti-austerity movements and welcome initiatives during the refugee crisis (Arampatzi, 2018). These have the potential to uncover migrants' invisible needs and claims and these projects have experimented with protection and accommodation set ups that enhance the appropriation of urban spaces.

10.5   Conclusions

Our analysis of the first key period (the early part of the decade of 2000) reveals that the border regime and the migrant patterns of that period created the broader context in which the intermediary space of reception took shape as a concept and practice. The complex mobilities and the enclaves of precarity that encircled urban and peri-urban areas (and that were enduring) were symbolic of the characteristics that this intermediary space took on. Reception was set up during the late 1990s through varied informal, semi-formal and formal practices. Being mainly invisible, it was comprised of informal networks of friends, family, acquaintances and facilitators. This system constituted a 'premature' form of reception, which was precarious, but at the same time more inclusive. During the second key period (the post 2015 era), the reception system gradually evolved into a complex mechanism for the governance of migrant mobility, and expanded its scope in order to address the protracted staying of migrants on the islands and mainland. Reception therefore developed into a complex infrastructure set up by diverse agencies and jurisdictions. Nevertheless,

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[7] For more see UNCHR (n.d.), while for a critical analysis of the ESTIA programme and similar accommodation projects, see Kourachanis, 2019.

its foundations derived from prior non-formal and more grassroots experiences. Interestingly, this complex infrastructure is established as a response to the European border regime crisis that began unfolding already from 2011 and culminated in 2015: a crisis of the nexus between Schengen and Dublin which describes the common response of EU to the migrant mobility that is heading towards its borders.

As evidenced in the section in which we problematise the governmentality of mobility and reception, our argument is that political responses are crucial in determining whether inclusive policies will be modeled in accordance to humanitarian concerns, funding and market oriented regulations, or whether, they will develop in accordance with grassroots and solidarity initiatives. Our study of the reception system during the first key period demonstrates how diverse informal and solidarity practices constitute counter-foldings that create inclusive spaces. Solidarity practices respond to governmental attempts to channel migrant mobilities and draw their sources from migrants' strategies to negotiate their settlement in the territory and/or their departure from that territory. The spaces in which these practices are enacted can be physical spaces (urban and peri-urban areas of precarious settlement) or symbolic places of government intervention (complex mobilities). The intermediary space of reception is made up of these physical and symbolic places: in-between borders; in-between staying and leaving; in-between urban and peri-urban; in-between non-citizen and local inhabitant. Along the same lines, our examination of reception during the second key period brings to light those factors which were involved and replicated in the transformation of reception into a more institutionalised mechanism of mobility governance. Thus, the informal practices of screening and sorting migrants and refugees have become established policies. In addition, with the proliferation of open and closed camps on the mainland and in border areas, precarious settlement has assumed more permanent features. During this second key period, one must look to the multiplicity of physical and symbolic spaces constructed by the complex interventions of NGOs, IOs and EU institutions focusing on where these meet national and local practices around migrant mobility and settlement. It is also necessary to assess the extent to which formal policy venues were able to learn and make use of the informal supports to migrants and their struggles.

Through this research we intend to intervene in the broader discussion about the governmentality, governance and governmentalisation of migration. We contribute to this discussion by focusing on and highlighting the changes in the dynamics of inclusion, that interact with the development of reception as a system. By examining the two key periods we trace the distinct governmentalities of inclusion that unfold in spaces of reception. In the first period, the reception system remained mainly informal and the possibilities for inclusion that were created were limited to migrants' strategies and, to a lesser extent, to grassroots initiatives. With time, reception was shaped into a more complex infrastructure. Once established as a system of governance, it concerned only those eligible to apply for asylum and those already part of the scheme (inside the different camps or other settlement solutions such as the ESTIA programmes etc.). Therefore, from an institutional point of view, potential inclusion excludes all those who are not enrolled in any scheme. In this way, it reproduces precarity in terms of the duration of the provisions and the form of settlement (camps and temporary housing solutions in apartments).

We believe that further research into the intermediary space of reception is needed, particularly in depth analysis of the interactions of its diverse actors and the knowledges they produce. Such investigations would enable us to better understand the different forms of inclusive governmentality, and continuities and disruptions in the governance of migrant mobility.

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