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Invisible Refugees

The Integration of Refugees Living in Informal Hospitality Structures in the City of Rome

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Supervisor: Vibeke Andersson

10th Semester – Septemer 2016

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This Master thesis focuses on refugees and people entitled of international protection, who live in what I called *Informal Hospitality Structures (IHS)* in the city of Rome. More in detail, I analyse the effects, that the fact of living in an *Informal Hospitality Structure* has on the integration process of refugees. The *Informal Hospitality Structures* are places not recognised by the law, often they are squats, illegally occupied buildings or shelters that are not included in the *Institutional Hospitality Network,* where the living conditions are extremely hard. I aim to analyse the condition of social and economic fragility of refugees living in IHS and the consequences it has on the choice of the *acculturation strategy* to pursue, especially on the integration process.

In order to to that, I rely on the information collected during the one year project "Protection of rights and advocacy" I took part in, firstly as an intern, during the traineeship semester, and then as a volunteer of the association accountable for this project. I dedicate a large space to the perceptions and experiences of refugees through semi-structured interviews I run between April and May 2016 and I also base the research on reports and dossiers of humanitarian organisations and associations, that work with migrants and refugees, in order to prevent their social exclusion. During the time I spent working in the project, I got in touch with many different people, that had in common this peculiar residential situation, which is widespread in all the biggest Italian cities, but in Rome it is slightly more complex. The complexity of the case of Rome is the result of different aspects. Firstly there is a problem of numbers: asylum seekers and refugees are much more than the places available in the *Institutional Hospitality Network* of welcoming reception and often the *Institutional Structures* lack of efficient projects of social inclusion. Secondly the rents are the among the most expensive in Italy. In such a context of economic and social fragility, squatting can be the only alternative to the street. Thirdly there is a legal issue, namely the fact that people in IHS, due to the fact that they illegally occupied a place, are prevented to exercise some basic social rights. Mostly Rome turned (in)famous in autumn 2014 and spring 2015, during the investigation of Carabinieri (Italian Army corp) so-called "Mafia-Capitale inquiry", on the association "Mondo di Mezzo" linked to the Mafia, that was involved (among many other fields) in the management of hospitality of migrants. Shortly, due to the high level of corruption, the funds allocated for social politics, ended up in the hands of associations and co-op linked to Mafia and other criminal organisations. All these elements have a strong influence on the integration, or better, the non-integration of refugees and people entitled of international protection.

I conduct this thesis taking as a starting point the lack of social and legal protection of refugees living in IHS, which they are entitled of, according to their international status. This paradoxical situation lead me to develop a specific interesting in the condition of social exclusion these people are experiencing.

Therefore, the purpose of this analysis is double: firstly I illustrate the consequences that the living conditions of refugees in IHS have on the integration process and secondly I aim to explore which kind of intervention can be successful, to overcome the condition of social exclusion.

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1 Introduction

This thesis takes as starting point my experience during the internship I conducted in the fall 2015. I did it with an association called FOCUS – Casa dei Diritti Sociali (House of Social Rights), taking part in a project called "Protection of Rights and Advocacy". The aim of this project was the promotion of social and cultural integration giving assistance to migrants, foreigners and Italian citizens, asylum seekers recently arrived or refugees living in Italy since a long time, in a

condition of social and economic fragility, in order to prevent social exclusion and to reach the full autonomy. During this period I had the opportunity to get in touch with many people, experiencing different situations of fragility, but I was particularly interested in the condition of refugees after the recognition of the status and their integration in the Italian context.

I started to develop this specific interest in this topic because I had to deal with many refugees, people entitled of international protection (political asylum or subsidiary protection), that were experiencing a condition of social fragility, linked to their housing situation. In fact, many people face deep difficulties finding a proper accommodation once they have their status recognized and they have to resort to what I called in this paper *Informal Hospitality Structures*. I illustrate what is an *Informal Hospitality Structure* in the following sections, but just to give a short definition, they are places not recognised by the law, often squats, illegally occupied buildings, centres that are not part of the *Institutional Hospitality Network,* but also the streets and the slums in the countryside.[1] This happens for two main reasons: firstly, because there are way more asylum seekers and refugees than places available in the structures established by the law and secondly, because the *Institutional Hospitality Network* often lacks of efficient integration projects for refugees, to prepare them for the life outside the camp (IntegrAzione, 2012). In a city like Rome, where rents are among the most expensive in Europe, squatting can be sometimes the only solution available. In this thesis I focus especially on refugees living in structures not recognized by the law, such as squats and big occupied buildings.

The city of Rome offers an interesting picture of this situation. Being Rome the capital, the most populated city, where there are the main Italian stations and airports, it is the core of mobility and networks, many people flow into the town in order to join friends and relatives, to settle and start their new life. But the city is not prepared to face the amount of people that move

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1   http://www.meltingpot.org/Roma-I-Rifugiati-Invisibili-il-censimento-dei-migranti.html#.Vw-c0naLStF

there, so a large amount of refugees end up living this kind of residential condition[2]. Mostly Rome turned (in)famous in autumn 2014 and spring 2015, during the investigation of Carabinieri (Italian Army corp) so-called *"Mafia-Capitale inquiry"*, on the association *"Mondo di Mezzo"* linked to the Mafia, that was involved in the management of hospitality of migrants (among many other fields). Shortly, due to the high level of corruption, the funds allocated for social politics, ended up in the hands of associations and co-op linked to Mafia and other criminal organisations.[3]

Furthermore, to make the situation even more difficult for people living in squats and especially for refugees, the Italian government approved in May 2014 the so-called *"Piano Casa" (Housing Plan),* a law that regulates the residential situation in Italy, which includes the art.5 stating: *"whoever illegally squats a building is not allowed to apply for a residence permit or use public services"*. This means that all the people living in squats are prevented to register a permanent residence permit, which is a very important tool for integration and essential requirement to exercise some fundamental social rights. For instance it is necessary in order to enrol in the public health care system and get the health insurance card, apply for public housing, exercise some political rights, get welfare payments and be followed by social services, renew the ID card, apply for Italian citizenship, obtain or convert the driver license and many other services (UNHCR, 2014). Moreover, according to the procedure in force in Rome, a permanent residence address is needed in order to renew the permit to stay for foreign citizens. That creates an absurd situation in which people entitled of international protection are prevented to exercise their rights and discriminated in effect, due to their housing situation. That is why I decided to call these people "invisible refugees" in the title, citing the report of the association IntegrAzione of 2012, to underline the fact that they are basically ignored and in a way tolerated by the Institutions and the greater society, until they become a problem of public order, due to the state of illegality in which they live.

I do not aim with this paper to simply criticise the institutional approach to the welcoming reception of refugees, rather I want to turn the attention on this paradoxical situation, that I find very interesting and involving. Therefore, I decided to get more in depth in the analysis of this phenomenon and it lead me to my research question:

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2 More or less 1700 refugees live in informal hospitality structures according to the report of the Association IntegrAzione in May 2012. In 2016, the extimate population in IHS grew exponentially reaching more than 2000 people (MSF, 2016)

3 http://www.rainews.it/dl/rainews/articoli/Mafia-Capitale-le-tangenti-delle-coop-un-euro-per-ogni-migrante-accolto-82c6fa23-f269-41ab-b74b-3fd24086239d.html

"how integration of refugees is affected by the fact of living in an informal hospitality structures? The case of Rome"

I want to investigate the living conditions and the effects on the integration process of refugees living in the *Informal Hospitality Structures,* in order to change the way the institutions generally look at this phenomenon, as mere problem of public order. I analyse this topics with the purpose of understanding which are the causes of this phenomenon and which kind of interventions are useful to implement also at an institutional level, to reach a satisfying level of integration.

In order to answer to this question, some background information are needed and in the following section I illustrate what are *Institutional Hospitality Structures* and *Informal Hospitality Structures,* analysing more in detail the latter.

2 Background

In this section I start with a brief illustration of the procedure to follow in order to apply for political asylum in the city of Rome. Then, I describe the *Institutional Hospitality Structures* (currently defined as "centres" or "camps") that can welcome asylum seekers and refugees during and after their path to the recognition of international protection. The last part of this section describes instead the so-called *Informal Hospitality Structures*, especially squats and illegally occupied buildings.

2.1 The political asylum procedure application in the city of Rome[4]

Unfortunately it is really difficult to describe the general procedure that rules the application for political asylum in Italy, because it varies from a Questura[5] to another. According to the Questura of Rome the procedure to pursue is the following. Firstly the person seeking asylum has to apply for directly at the Refugee Section of Questura, that will leave a certification of the request and make a successive appointment to record the asylum application. The day of the appointment the

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4   http://www.meltingpot.org/La-procedura-per-il-riconoscimento-della-protezione.html#.Vw-mtXaLStF

5   Questura is the Central Police Office that is in charge of the asylum request process.

applicant is required to deliver the passport and to give some personal data (name, surname, place of birth, family composition, date of arrival in Italy,...), to outline shortly the reasons that pushed him or her to leave his/her Country, in order to fill a document called "Modello C3". During this appointment, the Questura releases a temporary document, recording the fingerprints of the applicant, that certificates that the person is waiting for the permit to stay for asylum seekers. It is also in this date that the asylum seeker is required to apply for hospitality in case he or she needs it.

The institution accountable for the examination of the asylum request is the "Territorial Commission for the Recognition of International Protection". Even if the Commission does not recognise the protection to the asylum seeker, he/she is allowed to remain into the centre that is giving him/her hospitality during the appeal against the decision of the Commission.

If the decision of the Commission is positive, there are three possible outcomes: the recognition of the refugee status (political asylum), the subsidiary protection or the issue of a permit to stay for humanitarian reasons.

Granting political asylum means that the person has been recognised as a refugee according to the definition of the Geneva Convention of 1951. So, he or she has been identified as a victim of persecution for race, religion, belonging to a particular social group or nationality or for his/her political opinions.[6] It gives the right to a permit to stay for 5 years and to the Italian passport.

The Subsidiary Protection is also a kind of international protection, but it is given in case the Commission evaluates a risk for the physical integrity of the person. For example if the applicant risks the death penalty or the torture in the Country of origin, or if there is a serious threat to the life of the person, due to a widespread violent situation or to an internal or international conflict. Also in this case the person has the right to a 5 years document, and he/she can choose to apply for the Italian passport or to keep the passport of his/her Country according to the personal story.

The permit to stay for humanitarian reason is not a consequence of the recognition of some degree of international protection, but the Commission recommends the issue of this kind of permit in case there are serious humanitarian concerns or a particular condition of fragility for the applicant[7]. This kind of permit to stay lasts for one, maximum two years and the holder of the permit has to demonstrate the existence of the same condition of fragility in order to renew it.

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6   Art.1 Geneva Convention 1951

7   http://www.meltingpot.org/Il-permesso-per-motivi-umanitari.html#.V5ObmHaLStEe

2.2 The *Institutional Hospitality Structures* for asylum seekers and refugees

Due to the frequent changes in matter of immigration policies, it is difficult to describe the type of structure that gives hospitality and assistance to asylum seekers and refugees.

At the present day there are basically three kind of structures, that are different for organization, management, financial resources. They are defined as CARA, CAS and SPRAR. In the following sections I describe briefly these three structures.

CARA (Centro Accoglienza Richiedenti Asilo – Shelter for Asylum Seekers): this type of centres is financed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and managed by big public and private co-operatives. They are set close to the offices of the Territorial Commissions for the Recognition of International Protection. Here asylum seekers wait for the formalization of their asylum request and the date of the interview with the Commission. According to the law, this time should be of maximum 40 days, but due to the complex bureaucratic system, the formalization of the application lasts way more time, even months, so people stay "parked" in the centre. An asylum seeker is hosted in a CARA in three cases:

- if he or she applied for asylum after trying to avoid the border controls

- if he or she applied for asylum after being found irregular in Italy by the authorities

- from the date of the record of the Modello C3, until the release of the temporary permit to stay for asylum seekers, as authorities need to check the identity of the applicant

(SPRAR et al., 2012).

CAS (Centri Accoglienza Straordinaria – Extraordinary Shelters): this kind of centre has been relatively recently created (September 2015), to face the increasing amount of people arriving from North Africa. The Prefecture in collaboration with the third sector and the public institutions aimed to answer to the problem of the creation of an equal "triage of people" in every Italian region, based on the GNP and population present in the region. This provision was implemented in order to avoid the concentration of the asylum seekers in the southern regions, which are also the economically poorest. The main problem is that an extraordinary system facing an emergency situation that than becomes permanent often lacks of transparency and there are no clear norms and procedures that regulates its management. Mostly it happens quite often that

people managing a CAS have not the necessary experience in matter of protection of rights of asylum seekers and refugees. Sometimes asylum seekers are welcomed in CAS if it not possible to find them a place in a CARA or in a SPRAR (SPRAR et al., 2012).

SPRAR (Sistema di Protezione Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati – Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees): it is a centre managed and run by a collaboration among NGOs, associations, ANCI (Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani – National Association of Italian Municipalities), UNHCR and the Ministry of Internal Affairs with a multidisciplinary team that guarantees the assistance to people during the whole asylum procedure and also after the recognition of the status. The management of a SPRAR is based on what is called *integrated hospitality,* which guarantees not only shelter and food, but also advocacy and assistance for various matters, aiming to create a path that will lead to the social and economic integration and autonomy of the refugee in the greater society. The SPRAR is therefore accountable to provide: health care assistance, social assistance, inter-cultural and language mediation, the promotion of intercultural activities, legal advice, services for finding an accommodation and a job, Italian school and courses of professional formation (Servizio Centrale et al., 2015).

This last kind of centre is the one I find more relevant for my research, because it is created with the purpose of accompany the refugee for the whole procedure of asylum request and promote his/her integration in the Italian society. Unfortunately, due to a lack of coordination in the net of associations and institutions, the shortage of funds and the bad management of resources, the interventions in favour of asylum seekers and refugees are in many cases limited to the mere provision of food and shelter. After the stay in the centres, they are totally abandon to themselves and not sufficiently prepared to face with the challenges of the new context of settlement (IntegrAzione, 2012).

The first problem a refugee has to deal with once he/she ends the time in the centre is finding an accommodation. But due to the peculiar housing situation of the city of Rome and to the lack of a efficient path that leads to autonomy and integration, many people entitled of international protection end up living in what I called *Informal Hospitality Structures*. I dedicate the last part of this section illustrating what they are and where they are located in the city of Rome.

2.3 The *Informal Hospitality Structures* (IHS) in the city of Rome

As I mentioned before, the informal hospitality structures are places that are not part of the *Institutional Hospitality Network* I described in the previous paragraphs. Typically the *Informal Hospitality Structures*, or Informal settlements are illegally occupied buildings and squats, centres not recognised by the law, and also slums in the countryside or in the remote areas of the big cities or even the street and the waiting room of the stations.

According to a report of the humanitarian organisation "Medici Senza Frontiere", there are two kind of informal settlements for asylum seekers and refugees and they generally depend on the amount of time people have been living in Italy. Usually, people that are just arrived on the territory, tend to settle outside in the streets, because they do not know where to go or because they do not want to apply for asylum in Italy and they consider it a temporary situation. On the other side people that live in IHS as occupied buildings, squat and slums in the outskirts of the cities, are often people entitled of political asylum or subsidiary protection, that have been living in Italy for years. It is common that these people never benefited of the hospitality from the welcoming reception structures or, even if they spent some time in the structures, they never conclude an effective procedure of social inclusion (MSF, 2016).

I decided to focus on the big squats and occupied buildings in the city of Rome, the so called "Grandi Occupazioni (Big Squats)", which sometimes take the shape of real ghettos where the communities of migrants and refugees live their daily life in a parallel dimension to one of the greater society.

It is really difficult to collect data and take a precise pictures about people living in Big Squats, but according to the last report of the humanitarian association IntegrAzione in 2012, there are more or less 1700 people entitled of international protection that found a shelter in this kind of informal hospitality structures (IntegrAzione, 2012).

These shelters are places with a high risk of deviance, recruitment and exploitation by the criminal organisations. People are prevented to accede to basic public services and they often do not even know which rights they are entitled of. Here refugees are completely cut off from the social net of the city. Mostly the living conditions in occupied buildings are extremely precarious: most of these places are in fact crumbling structures, belonging to the State or the Municipality, abandoned and not maintained since years, where the basic services such as water and electricity are not guaranteed and the heating system is completely absent. I illustrate further on the iving

conditions in these structures.

Another fact I mention before is that since 2014, people living in squats and occupied building are prevented to register their residence permit in the place here they live and as a consequence, they have not the possibility to exercise some basic social rights.

For all these reasons I decided to explore the consequences that the fact living in IHS has on the integration process of refugees, in order to overcome the most widespread perspective among the authorities and the society in general that sees these spaces of illegality as a mere problem of public order and not as the expression of the bad management of the question of hospitality and integration (MSF, 2016).

I examine more in depth in my analysis the living condition of two specific structures in the city of Rome: the Big Squats set in Via Cavaglieri and in Via Collatina, but there are hundreds of informal settlements and dozens IHS. I want to make clear that the *Informal Hospitality Structures* do no depend from the Italian government and they are not part of any institutional plan of welcoming reception, they are spontaneous and self-managed.

I illustrate in the further chapters how the fact of living in Informal Hospitality Structures influences the integration process of refugees and people entitled of subsidiary protection.

3 Structure of the paper and methodology

In this chapter I articulate the structure of the paper and the methodology I used in order to conduct my analysis.

3.1 Structure of the paper

I start this thesis with a short introduction where I explain why I chose this topic and why precisely in the city of Rome and how my personal experience influenced the research question (*"how integration of refugees is affected by the fact of living in an informal hospitality structures? The case of Rome"*), highlighting the link it has with some recent political events in Italy.

After that, I insert a brief chapter that gives a useful background, in order to have a better understanding of the context where this research is set. In this section I illustrate the procedure to apply for political asylum in the city of Rome and then I describe what are the *Institutional Hospitality Structures* and the I*nformal Hospitality Structures.*

I continue the paper exposing the theories I adopted to conduct my analysis. I start the analysis of the information I collected in the interviews following the distinction suggested by Giorgio Agamben, between *zoe* and *bios, bare life* and *full life* (Agamben, 1998), to illustrate the living conditions in IHS and the relevance of social rights in the life of people, as often people living in informal hospitality structures lack of basic social and human rights and they are forced to live in a situation of impasse. Refugees and asylum seekers are considered as simply breathing bodies, they can not benefit of basic services or cultivate their aspirations and follow their desires and this condition strongly influenced their integration process. Moreover I use the notion of *state of exception* to identify the informal hospitality structures, as they are places where rights and law are absent.

The main theories that frames the structure of this paper are the *"acculturation theories".* Following this approach I illustrate which can be the outcomes of acculturation, defined as the negotiation among two or more cultural groups (Berry, 2015) and the different strategies these groups can pursue, focusing especially on the meaning and the characters of the *integration process* (Berry, 2005). Furthermore, I illustrate theories about the development of integration indicators. These theories are extremely useful to structure the interviews and to be able to elaborate the information I obtained, in order to answer my research question. To build up the interviews and to try to measure the level of integration I rely on qualitative indicators suggested by the IOM (International Organisation of Migration) and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). I illustrate these indicators in depth in the theoretical framework.

Then, I spend few words to illustrate the network theory of migrations, which is considered from part of the literature as a integration strategy, but it can be considered more as *"a strategy of containment of economic poverty"* and that can contributes to *"arrest exclusion process"* (Gallina, 2002 p. 63). I ague that it is a relevant theory to explain not only the decision of migration destination, but it also regulates, the access to *Informal Hospitality Structures*. I illustrate how people living in IHS rely on the presence of a network is helpful to overcome the risk of falling in extreme poverty, but it does not contribute to the integration process.

To better explore the material and psychological conditions of refugees and asylum seekers

living in informal hospitality structures, I follow the human right based approach (HRBA), in opposition to the Need-Based Approach, to underline the importance of some basic social rights in the integration process, to overcome perspective that considers the hospitality nothing more than "food and shelter". This approach is necessary to highlight to presence/absence of basic human and social rights, which is one of the condition that can lead to a successful integration or to social exclusion and marginalisation (Kha Lee, 2010). Moreover It is extremely useful to people that are involved in giving assistance and protection to people, especially to refugees living in informal settlements, because they are often abandoned to themselves with no information and no orientation services about their rights and life opportunities.

I apply these theories in my analysis , in order to map the living conditions and integration degree of refugees dwelling in IHS.

To finish I dedicate the last section of the paper to the sum up the core concepts that emerged from the analysis and the conclusion I deduced.

3.2 Methodology

In this section I outline the methodological approach I use to conduct my analysis, including the method I applied to collect data and information, the sources I used and the aim and the limitations of the paper.

In order to investigate the level of integration of refugees living in informal hospitality structures I decided to collect data and information mainly through qualitative research methods and semi-structured interviews. Therefore, I gathered information through books, journal articles, newspapers articles and reports from humanitarian associations, but I also chose to collect narratives of refugees with individual semi-structured interviews, because I find it the most appropriate way to picture the context where refugees live.

In a qualitative analysis, the researcher aims to investigate how the informants perceived the social world where he/she lives (Bryman, 2004), and through the semi-structured interviews it is possible to leave space to the perceptions of the informants in order to obtain reliable qualitative data (Bernard, 1988).

As the degree of integration is not that easily measurable with quantitative data, I decided to focus on the context and the informants' point of view, but in order to build up the

question for the interview I rely on standard indicators to measure integration (OECD, 2003) I illustrate in depth in the following chapters. Notwithstanding I find these indicators extremely useful to structure the interviews, I consider that they are not enough to capture the complex reality the interviewees are experiencing, therefore I use the indicators to give a general structure to the interviews, but I give the opportunity to the informants to freely express their own perceptions.

3.3 The interviews and the informants

I performed the interviews during April-May 2016 in Rome, Italy. The informants are 6 in total, all of them refugees (entitled of a permit to stay for political asylum) or entitled of subsidiary protection, from the African Horn (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan). They are 5 men and 1 woman aged between 28 and 51, living in the "Big Squats" of Via Collatina and Via Cavaglieri in Rome.

It has been relatively easy to find informants, thanks to the work I did during my internship at the "Advice Desk" of the association FOCUS-CDS (Casa dei Diritti Sociali – House of Social Rights). As I mentioned before people live in squats are prevented to register a residence address, but one of the main contributions of the association in order to reduce the social and economic vulnerability of people is the provision of a *virtual residence address*. Shortly, this means that people can register their residence address by our association, in order to access to all this social rights that otherwise would be denied. I illustrate in the coming chapters what is a virtual residence address. This allowed me to enter immediately in contact with people I wanted to interview. They know they can trust me, as I am an operator working to help them and some of them where more than happy to help me back to write this paper. Mostly the interviews were taken in a separate corner in the office of the "Advice Desk" in respect of their privacy, where they could feel comfortable and free to talk, in a place they consider as safe. The informants have been recruited directly at the Advice Desk, when they presented the application for obtaining the permanent residence address. I had only to make sure they were entitled of a permit to stay for international protection (political asylum or subsidiary protection(and check in the form they fill, the address they declared. Then I simply asked if the person was willing to answer to some question about his/her residential situation.

In the very beginning of the research I aimed to run the interviews in the places where

refugees lives. Images, sounds, smells are extremely important to give a complete picture of the context of the research. Unfortunately I did not manage to enter in the occupied buildings, as it is difficult to obtain the permission if you are not well known by the community. Therefore I had to rely only on what came out from the narratives of the informants and the information I manage to gathered from reports of other humanitarian association.[8]

Notwithstanding the favourable conditions to recruit informants, I faced some difficulties before and during the interviews. Firstly, I would have liked to interview the same number of men and women, but it has not been possible as I found women way more reticent to talk about their life than men. Secondly, even if most of them live in Italy since years, one of them did not speak Italian or English at all, so I had to resort to an interpreter, that luckily works in the association. Mostly even if they were feeling comfortable talking to me, they were reluctant to talk with me about their migratory path and the first period of their staying in Italy.

I managed to record only two of the six interviews as the informants were feeling more comfortable if I was simply taking notes of their answers. I granted them the total anonymity, but I was allowed to use the initial letter of their name, the age and the Country of origin as personal information. Even if these facts created some problems to the conduction of my analysis I overcame these issues, addressing to reports of other humanitarian associations. It is important to be aware of the fact that most of these people were living under a dictatorship and experienced torture before and during their travel to Italy and it is totally understandable if they do not feel comfortable talking about their very traumatic experience with a person they do not know intimately.

The interviews generally follow this scheme:

The first questions are mainly introductory:

- what's your name/how old are you/where are you from/study level
- what's your legal status

The second section aims to get more in the depth in the migratory process:

- when did you arrive in Italy

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8 I insert in the analysis some representative pictures of the big squat of Via Collatina and Via Cavaglieri pp.

- why did you chose Rome
- did you come by yourself or other family members
- did you immediately apply for asylum
- how long did it take to have your status recognized

The third section is specifically dedicated to the residential condition of the informant during the period of the asylum procedure and after the recognition of the international protection

- did you ask for hospitality during your asylum request
  - No: why
  - Yes: where/ for how long/ how was the condition in the camp:
    - shelter and food
    - health care assistance
    - legal assistance
    - Italian school
    - language and intercultural mediation
    - assistance for job search/territorial services
    - leisure time and intercultural activities
- did you immediately find accommodation after the recognition of the status or the end of the stay in the camp
- why did you chose a squat
- since when do you live in the squat
- is this housing situation temporary or permanent
- how would you describe the living condition in the squat

The fourth and last section is where I focus on the integration degree of informants, using some integration marks suggested by OECD

- are you entitled of health care assistance
- do you work
- do you participate in political and social life of the city

- how would you describe your relations with the neighbours

This questions are clearly a draft, I decided to leave as much space as possible to the personal narrative of the informants and their perception of the context where they live (Cohen, 2006). It is mainly because of that I decided to run my analysis using this methodological approach.

3.3.1 Short biography of the informants

As mentioned before, I can use only the first letter of the name, the age and the nationality of the informants. Mostly they were hesitant to tell about the first period of settlement during the asylum procedure, but I managed anyway to collect useful information from their interviews. The following short biographies of the informants were collected during the first part of the interviews and I chose to insert them in this section, before starting the analysis, as I quote some of their answers, and I believe it easier for the reader if there is already a previous knowledge of the informants.

A. female, 31 years old comes from Ethiopia. She arrived in Italy 5 years ago in Sicily. She came with her brother and then they decided to go together to Rome, because a family friend was living in the town. She did not say much about the travel to reach Italy, but as soon as she obtained the subsidiary protection, she moved in the big squat in Via Collatina, with her brother. Now he is employed in countryside and provides for the her basic needs as well. She does not work and she did not manage to find another accommodation. She has no plan to move away.

H. is a 28 years old Sudanese guy. He lives in Italy since he was a minor. He arrived by himself, therefore he was under the protection of the social workers until he was 18. He applied for political asylum and he obtained the status. He spent several years abroad, but his papers are issued by the Italian State, so he decided to move back. With the impossibility of finding a proper accommodation, he ended up in the Collatina occupation, with other members of the Sudanese Community.

B. is a man of 51 from Eritrea. He has been living in Italy for more then 10 years now. He used to have a job in a factory in the north of Italy until 2010, when the factory closed and fired the

workers. He did not manage to find another job, also due to his age and since a couple of years he lives in Collatina.

Y. is 29 and he is from Somalia. He is entitled of subsidiary protection and he lives in Collatina since he arrived in Italy 7 years ago. He arrived by himself, but a cousin that was living in the squat, found a place for him as well. He has a job in a restaurant as a waiter, but he earns not enough to move in Germany, which is his project. Therefore he prefers to stay in Collatina, to save more money and to stay with his brother.

T. is a man in his 40s from Eritrea, entitled of a permit to stay for political asylum. He arrived in Italy in 2010, through Libya, then in Sicily and then he stopped in Rome, where he applied for asylum. After he got the permit to stay, he left the camp and he moved in a house with other friends. After some months the landlord sold the place and kicked them out and he decided to move in the big squat of Via Cavaglieri. He does not work and he is not looking for another accommodation. He would like to bring his family here, but he does not know how to maintain them, and above all he does not want his children to live there.

S. is a 34 young man from Eritrea. He arrived in Italy a couple of years ago, but he tried immediately to moved to Sweden, where his older brother lives with his family. S. is a "dublinated"[9], the Swedish authority send him back to Italy as it was the first European Country of arrival, according to the Dublin regulation. He is living in the occupation of via Cavaglieri with another brother, but he does not speak Italian at all. He is still planning to move to Sweden.

3.4 The language of my research

One of the problems I faced during the research, is the fact of conducting an investigation in a language and in a context different from the one the research must be drawn up. Therefore, I decided to dedicate this short section, to explain how I proceed with the translation in English of

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9   "Dublinated" is the litteral English translation of the word "dublinato", which indicates a person that tried to apply for asylum in a Country which is not the first Country of arrival and he/she is sent back by the Authrities of the third Country of settlement. According to the Dublin regulation, the first Country of arrival is the one which has to proceede the asylum application, therefore the authorities of the third Country of setlement send the migrant back to the first Country of arrival.

the Italian terminology regarding institutions and procedures.

Where I can use the faithful translation in English, I choose to use directly the English term. For example talking about the status of refugees and so on. Where the direct translation is not possible I prefer to keep the Italian name, with the explanation in English. For example in the case of the "Comune", I added the English closest translation "Town Hall" and definition (the main office of the administration of the local government of a city), in order to make the concept as clearer as possible.

I use the term "welcoming reception" to translate the Italian term "accoglienza", when I talk about the phenomenon of giving hospitality to refugees and the term "hospitality", when the object is the structure or shelter, where refugees and asylum seekers found accommodation (in Italian: "centri di accoglienza", "strutture di accoglienza").

Another term that presents some kind of difficulties of translation is the word I use to indicate the illegally occupied buildings. I use indifferently the words "squat" and "occupation" to define a place, where people live abusively, without paying a rent and without the permission of the owner. Often, they are places in a state of semi-abandonment.

Moreover, it is difficult to correctly translate terms related to the legal status of refugees and other terms linked to the Italian bureaucratic system . Some dictionaries translate the word "permesso di soggiorno" with the term "residency permit". In order to avoid misunderstandings among "residency permit" and "residence address ", I use the term "permit to stay" to indicate the authorization that the Questura releases to non-European citizens, to legally remain in the Country. The term "permanent residence address" (or simply "residence") indicates instead the address that a person registers in the archives of the Comune, as a proof of his/her presence on the territory. However, I illustrate in detail what it is exactly a "permanent residence address" in the analysis and clarify any eventual doubt.

4 Theoretical framework

As discussed in the methodological section, I divide the research in three interconnected segments, in order to answer to my research question: *"how integration of refugees is affected by the fact of living in an informal hospitality structures?"*.

In the first part of the analysis I describe the living condition of refugees living in *Informal*

Hospitality Structure, according to the concepts of *bare life, full life* and *state of exception,* defined by Giorgio Agamben. The second part of the analysis is focused on the integration process itself, where I apply the theories of the *acculturation strategies* and *integration,* mentioning also the *network theories* linked to th eintegration process. Then, in the third part, I adopt the *Human Right Based Approach* in order to analyse to the relationship between refugees living in IHS and institutions. In this section I illustrate more in depth the theories I follow to conduct my analysis.

4.1 *Bios* and *zoe*: *bare life*, *full life* and integration

Biopolitics and *biopower* are theories elaborated by Foucault (Foucault, 1978) and re-formulated by Giorgio Agamben in 1998. Following the Foucaultian definition, the term *biopower* indicates a mechanism that the power of *biopolitics* uses to regulate people's lives and, in the case of modern society, it is the Nation-State that, in order to defend the *status quo,* establishes a *politic of security* that categorizes the population in the dichotomy *us* (legal citizens) and *them* (illegal immigrants) (Fassin, 2012).

Taking as a starting point Foucault formulations, Agamben argues that in the modern society *biopolitics* is a phenomenon that is characterised by the separation between the biological and political sphere (Zembylas, 2010). He uses the Aristotelian concepts of *bios* and *zoe* to illustrate this distinctions. *Bios* is defined also as *full life* and means that individuals socially exist in the world, in opposition to the concept of *zoe* or *bare life,* that is the simply fact of being alive (Agamben, 1998).

Linked to the concept of *bare life,* Agamben illustrate the notion of *state of exception,* that is a space where the law is suspended and people living in this space are deprived of their rights, taking as example the detention camps for refugees and asylum seekers, where they are treated as b*are life* and excluded from the community that instead is socially and politically in the world (Agamben, 2005).

These notions are very useful to proceed with my analysis I argue that the *Informal hospitality Structures,* can be consider a sort of *state of exception,* where people often live a *bare life*, in a barely total lack of basic social and human rights and the consequent denied access to public services and it has strong consequences on their integration process.

4.2 Acculturation strategies

In order to talk about integration of immigrants, I aim to give in this section an overview of the acculturation process, of which integration is one of the possible outcomes.

The *acculturation process* is defined as *"a dual process of cultural and psychological change that take place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members"* (Berry, 2005, p. 698). According to Berry the acculturation process is dual because it involves both the cultural level and psychological level and it implies changes in the social structures, institutions and cultural practices, but also changes in the behaviour of people at an individual level and these two dimensions are strongly linked.

When we discuss about migration following this perspective, acculturation is not a one-way process, but it necessarily regards the ethno-cultural groups, the larger host society and the societal context where the process is set.

Further on I illustrate the attitudes and behaviours, the *acculturation strategies,* that ethno-cultural groups and larger society put in practice when they come in contact. The *acculturation strategies* of ethno-cultural groups are four: *integration,* a*ssimilation, segregation* and *marginalisation.* (Culhane, 2004). *Integration* strategies are implemented when members of a group manage to accept and adapt to host culture maintaining their original culture. *Assimilation* means that individuals fully adapt to culture of the place of settlement and move away from their culture of provenance. *Separation* strategies happen when the members of the ethno-cultural group perceive themselves separated from the larger society and the host culture and tend to socialise only with people of the same ethno-cultural group. Marginalisation is instead an alienation from both cultures, the one of origin and the host-culture.

As acculturation process as a two-way process, it is important to mention that the larger society as well puts in place acculturation strategies according to the general orientation and historical attitudes towards immigration. These are: *multiculturalism, melting pot, segregation* and *exclusion.*

Multiculturalism is the strategy adopted by the greater society that evaluate positively the difference and encourage the maintenance of diversity. *Melting pot* means that the host culture seek to assimilate the minority ethno-cultural group. *Segregation* is a strategy that has as a consequence, the forced separation between the larger society and the ethno-cultural group. *Exclusion* happens when the host culture imposes the marginalisation of the minority group

(Berry, 2001).

It is important to notice that people of non-dominant groups do not have the possibility to freely chose the acculturation strategy they prefer, but above all in the case of integration it is doable only if the larger society agrees to find a mutual accommodation.

As I mentioned before, I am aware of the importance of the social context and the attitude toward migration of the larger society, but due to the methodological choices I made, I examine the integration process from the perspective of the minority group, namely refugees and people entitled of international protection living in IHS.

According to Berry the acculturation process can have to consequences: one is a *behavioural shift* with a good level of adaptation and the other is what is defined as *acculturative stress* that leads to a great level of conflict between groups. Integration is defined by Berry as the process in which*"there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained, and at the same time seeking, as a member of an ethnocultural group, to participate as an integral part of the larger social network"* (Berry, 2005 p. 705). Integration is therefore the acculturation strategy that implies the lowest degree of conflict and because of that, it is the most desirable to pursue. (Berry, 2005).

4.3 Defining and measuring integration

The debate about integration is broad, not univocal and far from finding a common meaning of the integration process. The point is that it is difficult to define a phenomenon that present so many different aspects depending on the context of analysis (Sciortino, 2015).

In Europe, the debate about integration started during the 1990s, when the governments acknowledged the permanent character of migrations and they realized that the community of immigrants settled to remain and not just for a period (Amersfoot, 1998). The Italian case presents other peculiarities compared to other European Countries. For example it is a Country that only recently became a Country of immigration, when it was historically a Country of emigration. Therefore, the discussion about integration is still open and I do not aim to find an exhaustive definition of integration, I rather try to build a framework to reach a better comprehension of this process in the context of the *Informal Hospitality Structures*.

I follow the prevailing approach suggested by the literature (Sciortino, 2015), that indicates three dimensions of integration:

- the *socio-economic integration* regards the access to the job market and the educational system;

- the *legal-political integration* concerns the acquisition of residence and other basic rights;

- the socio-cultural integration refers to knowledge of the native language of the place of settlement and the fact that the immigrant community is legitimised by the greater society and recognized and accepted in its differences.

The same discussion concerns the measure of the level of integration with objective parameters and finding a common system of measure at European level. The indicator systems are experimental and strongly context-dependent. Nevertheless, it is possible to use similar indicators for different situations. For these reasons, I decided to rely on the indicators of integration outlined by IOM in 2004 and Anja Rudiger and Sarah Spencer for OECD report in 2003. Integration is a two-way process in which migrants are active part and and implies structural changes in the larger society. The social context and the actors involved in the integration process are numerous, therefore there is not a specific path to follow and an assured outcome. There are different situations that require different approaches and the implementation of different policies (Rudiger and Spencer, 2003). Nonetheless, it is important to find a common ground on which evaluate and measure the level of integration of people in comparison with the larger society. In order to do that I take in consideration the parameters suggested by the International Organisation of Migration (IOM). These criteria are the basis on which I structured the interviews.

The basic indicators are:

- the proficiency in the language of the host society;

- the integration within the educational system, the fact that migrants attend University or secondary schools, or more in general invest on post-secondary education;

- the level of social integration: namely the degree of involvement in the social life of the host culture, but also the psychological conditions of migrants and the inclusion in health care system of the society;

- the level of political integration, that is the degree of participation in associations, also migrant associations, trade unions or political parties;

- the level of economic integration which is basically the inclusion in the labour market;

- the residential integration, the area of settlement, the level of regional concentration and the housing standard.

Even if I do not analyse in depth the integration process from the perspective of the greater society I find necessary to briefly illustrate the fields where the institutions can operate to

contribute to the achievement of a successful integration, in order to find a beneficial way to operate in the hospitality network. Therefore, in a two-way process perspective, the OECD report indicates policy approaches and tools to the greater society institutions and their implementation depends on the national political and cultural context (Rudiger and Spencer, 2003). The key areas of intervention are: the *legislation, social inclusion policies* and *policies to increase participation.*

According to the OECD report, there are three *key-areas* where the legal apparatus can operate to improve and subsidize the integration process: legal procedures for *family reunification,* also after the relatives settled in the host society, laws regarding *citizenship, naturalisation* and *rights based on residency* and *anti-discrimination policies.* Following this approach, it is fundamental to overcome the inequality still present in institutional and political framework through the acquisition of civil and political rights, the equal treatment between citizens and non-citizens. Therefore, the extension of rights is a precondition to integration and not an outcome (Rudiger and Spencer, 2003).

Regarding the social inclusion policies and the policies to improve participation, the operational areas are various and largely coincide with the indicators suggested by the IOM: the *labour market,* the *education field,* the *housing situation,* the access to *health* service and the actions that enhance *participation,* sense of belonging and the acquisition of rights and responsibilities.

Due to the peculiar residential condition of people living in IHS, I take as a starting point the housing situation, in order to analyse the other interconnected factors that influence the integration process of refugees.

4.4 Network theories and integration

Migrant networks are defined as groups of interpersonal and reciprocal obligation relations between new migrants and former migrants that aim to facilitate the settlement in terms of entrance, accommodation and employment in the places of destination (Spittel,1999). Having a social connection with someone who experienced a migration process before creates a migratory feedback mechanism, facilitates the movement and builds a bridge between places of origin and of destination. Presenting the network theory, Boyd argues that this is a *middle perspective theory,* because it considers the migratory process as a social output and not only the consequence

of an individual rational decision, and that is not only leaded by economic and political factors, but it is an effect of the interaction among all these elements (Boyd, 1989).

Even if they can not be considered as integration strategies, they are pivotal for the outcome of the integration process (Gallina, 2002). Mostly I argue that in the case of people living in IHS, the existence of the network is useful in the first time of settlement in order to limit the risk of ending in a condition of extreme poverty, but it can lead to a process of marginalisation as refugees do not get in touch with people outside their ethnic group.

4.5 *Human Right Based Approach* and integration

The fact of separating the humanitarian concerns about refugees from the politics, is defined as *liberal-humanitarism*. From one side it makes a de-humanisation of refugees more difficult, but on the other hand legitimises their social exclusion and the invisibility in the political life, making more difficult a successful integration process (Zembylas, 2010). This is even more true in the case of refugees living in *Informal Hospitality Structures* as they are put in a condition of social exclusion and they are prevented to improve their material, social and cultural living conditions, due to the absence of social rights. *Social integration* passes through the recognition of basic human and social rights (Gallina, 2002), therefore I decided to follow the *human rights based approach*, in order to to analyse the conditions of asylum seekers and refugees living in informal settlements and to suggest the approach the institutions should follow, in order to implement virtuous policies directed to integration.

The human rights-based approach (HRBA) is a *"conceptual framework normatively based on international human right standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights"* (OHCHR, 2006 p.15). The HRBA is based on the assumption that everybody has the right to protection and to a certain degree of well-being, psychological and material, which are necessary preconditions for a successful integration process. (Gallina, 2002) This approach presents clear differences to the *need-based approach*, so much so that the first one is presented in opposition to the other. The main characters which distinguish these approaches are two. The first one is the above-mentioned fact that protection and well-being are rights and not just needs and the second one is that people in need are not mere beneficiaries, but active objects of assistance and protection, as they are empowered to claim for their rights. According to this approach the actors involved in the humanitarian assistance are the *"rights-holders"*, the *"duty-*

bearers" and the *"other key stake-holders"* (OHCHR, 2006 p.15). The rights-holders are all these people that want to claim for their rights, the duty-bearers are the agents and institutions responsible for the implementation of the protection and the respect of human rights and the other key stake-holders are the organization that can influence the relationship between right-holders and duty-bearers. I argue that in a condition of *bare life,* it is very difficult for refugees to act as *right-holders* as they are not socially present in the world and therefore implement a successful integration process.

In the next chapter I apply these theories to my case of study in order to analyse the effects of the fact of living in *Informal Hospitality Structures* on the daily life of refugees and on their integration in the greater society.

5 Analysis

In the following chapter I get more in depth in the topic of the thesis, firstly analysing the living condition of IHS and secondly I focus on the effects that the fact of living in this kind of residential places has on the integration of refugees in the Italian society.

In order to do that I ground mostly on the information collected during the interviews I conducted, but also on reports of humanitarian associations and my personal experience at the Advice Desk of the association I worked with. During my internship, I had the opportunity to get in touch with many people sharing the conditions I illustrate later on.

5.1 The *Informal Hospitality Structures* as *State of exception:* the living conditions as *bare life*

Among the people I interviewed four of them live in the one of the biggest occupied buildings in the city of Rome, set in via Collatina, and the other two in the other in-famous building set in via Cavaglieri, in the neighbourhood called Romanina, both set in the east-outskirts of the city, far away from the marvellous historical city centre and among the poorest and abandoned areas

around the Capital.

In this section I illustrate the living conditions of refugees in these two places, that are unfortunately common to the majority of the IHS in occupied buildings. I argue that *Informal Hospitality Structures* can be considered a sort of s*tate of exception,* following Foucault's definition, because in this kind of places there is a total institutional and legal vacuum, no social rights are respected and people living there are considered mere problems of public order that can be solved only recurring to the public force (Medici Senza Frontiere, 2016).

5.1.1 Via Collatina 385: "Natnet"

The 4 people living in Natnet ("freedom") I had the opportunity to interview are three men and one woman.

The "big squat" set in via Collatina is a former building of property of the Finance Ministry, abandoned due to a real risk of collapse (IntegrAzione, 2012). It has been occupied in 2004 and right now there are more or less 600 people, among them families with minors. according to various reports of humanitarian associations and confirmed in the interviews I conducted.

> *"We are many people living there, I don't know exactly how many, there*
> *are many people coming back and forth [...]. Families with children? Ye*
> *s, there are a few [...]. How can you live in the street with children? It's*
> *better in an occupation than a side-walk." (A. fromEthiopia)*

The majority of people living in Natnet come from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan and they are entitled of a regular permit to stay for political asylum or subsidiary protection.

As mentioned before, these kind of structures are self-managed by an "internal committee", here composed by 8 people that manages the affairs regarding the structure itself, such as the organisation of the cleaning, the maintenance of the common areas and the solution of the problems that can arise among he members of the community. There are various services in the structure included a mini-market, a pentecostal church and an infirmary. There are electricity, but not drinkable cold running water, but there is no heating and no warm water and the toilet facilities like showers and toilets are crumbling and absolutely not sufficient for all the resident, in the average one toilet and one shower every 10-20 people.

It is not easy when you are with many other people, you have to queue to go to the toilet, and it can happen to get stressed about this situation. (H. from Sudan)

There are few humanitarian association that work with the refugees living in Natnet, trying to create better condition for the people living there, give assistance, orientation and advice, but it is very hard, mainly due to the condition of illegality of the squat and also to the reticence of people living there, that developed a sort of diffidence towards institutions and the greater society (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014). This fact is even more dramatic, taking into consideration the large number of people living in the structure that suffer a heavy psychic diseases and present symptoms due to post-traumatic stress. (MEDU, 2012)

Residents of Natnet do not find an open opposition by the population of the neighbourhood, mainly because the place is set far away from the post populated areas of the city and have basically no contacts with the neighbours.

The front of the building Natnet" picture from www.repubblicaroma.it (2012)

5.1.2 Via Arrigo Cavaglieri 8 (Romanina): "Selam"

The other two people I interviewed, live in the occupied building in the neighbourhood called Tor Vergata in the outskirts in the south of the city, around 20 kilometres away from the city centre.

The structure is a former university building, occupied since 2006, that now hosts more than 1000 people. The residents call the place "Selam" ("peace" in Aramaic). They come from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan and they are refugees or entitled of subsidiary protection.

The management of the place is conferred to a management committee, as it is for "Natnet", and it is composed by 8 members, two for each ethnic group living in the building, that change every year.

There are no other nationalities in Selam, as it is very important to know somebody already living there in order to find a place. As for the other occupied place, there are electricity and cold running water, but the heating is absent and consequently no warm water. The sanitary facilities also in this case are not enough to satisfy the necessities of so many people. According to the report of the humanitarian association "Cittadini del mondo" of 2014, there is one toilet every 19 people and one shower every 33.

As it is easy to imagine, the hardship and the difficult living condition are fertile ground for tense and problematic situations, that most of the times are solved with spontaneous solidarity among inhabitants or with the intervention of the committee, but it is not enough to mange the critical condition people are exposed in the structure.

It can happen [to fight among each other], above all among people of different nationalities, but in the end we always find a solution […] I have no problems, but I would like to bring my family in Italy and I don't want them to live there (T. from Eritrea)

The front part of "Selam" sited in Via Arrigo Cavaglieri 8 – photo from www.caritasroma.it (2014)

A refugee in the terrace of "Salem" - photo from www.repubblicaroma.it (2012)

A room in "Salem" - photo from www.baobabroma.org (2012)

Further on, I analyse more in depth the condition of illegality of IHS and the lack of protection of social rights for refugees, taking as starting point the denied right to residence.

5.1.3 Right of residence and basic human rights in the *Informal Hospitality Structures*

This paragraph is dedicated to a fundamental issue for people living in an *Informal Hospitality Structure*: the right of residence.

The residence defined as *the place where a person establishes his/her habitual abode*

(Art 43 CC - Italian Civil Code). It is a fundamental social right itself granted by the Italian Constitution in the Article 16 and a necessary requirement that give access to other essential human and social rights.

> *Ogni cittadino può circolare e soggiornare liberamente in qualsiasi parte del territorio nazionale, salvo le limitazioni che la legge stabilisce in via generale per motivi di sanità o di sicurezza. Nessuna restrizione può essere determinata da ragioni politiche. (Art. 16 Costituzione Italiana)[10]*

As mentioned before, a law approved by the Parliament in 2014, prevent people living in illegal occupied buildings, to register the permanent residence address in the places where they actually live. This fact causes many difficulties to people, that are already living a condition of economic and social fragility.

> *Art. 5 decreto legge 28 marzo 2014 (Lotta all'occupazione abusiva di immobili) Chiunque occupa abusivamente un immobile ai sensi dell'articolo 633, primo comma, del codice penale, non può chiedere la residenza né l'allacciamento a pubblici servizi in relazione all'immobile medesimo e gli atti emessi in violazione di tale divieto sono nulli a tutti gli effetti di legge. (decreto legge – 28 marzo 2014 n.47, Misure urgenti per l'emergenza abitativa, per il mercato delle costruzioni e per Expo 2015.)[11]*

The registration of the permanent residence address is an official act, that must be endorsed by

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10 All citizens can freely circulate and stay wherever on the national soil , except for limitations established by the law for health and safety reasons. No restriction can be determined by political reasons " (Art. 16 Italian Constitution)

11 Art.5 law 28 March 2014 (To fight the illegal occupation of buildings). Whoever illegally occupies a building, according to the article 633, first comma of the penal code, can not register the permanent residence address and is not allowed to use the public services (electricity, water, heating) in the building and all the acts produced again the following prohibition are invalid. (Law – 28 marzo 2014 n.47, Urgent measures for the residential emergency and for the contruction market and Expo 2015.)

the an office of the Comune[12] called Anagrafe.[13] One of the duties of this office is to collect and register the people present on the territory of the city, in order to plan the services that the public sector has to provide. So people can benefit of some services and exercise some rights only if they managed to register their residence address at the Anagrafe. Among the most important there are the right to:

- enrol in the public health care system and get the health insurance card
- enrol children in the public school closer to the place where people actually live
- apply for public housing
- exercise some political rights
- get welfare payments and be followed by social services, which are the public services accountable of the advocacy for the most vulnerable bracket of the society
- apply for family reunification
- renew the ID card
- apply for Italian citizenship and European long-term permit to stay[14]
- obtain or convert the driver license

and many other services (S.C. SPRAR et al., 2014).

Therefore, the residence address is an important proof of the fact that a person lives in the territory of the city and he/she is part of the social network. It grants the access to the above-mentioned basic rights and people who are prevented to register a residence address, as it is the case for people living in *Informal Hospitality Structures*, are automatically excluded from this range of rights and services and are condemned to live a condition of uncertainty and lack of protection.

It is important to highlight, that the fact of not having a permanent residence address, is a problem that bonds Italians and foreign citizens, that live in occupied buildings. Although the

12   Comune can be translated with the word "Town Hall" and it is the main office of the administration of the local government of a city

13   Anagrafe is translated in English as General Register Office and it is the office that organizes the system that the local governments use to catalogue the vital facts of the resident population.

14   The European long-term permit to stay is released to non-EU migrants who live permanently in a Eropean Union member State, according to specific requirements. The permanent residence address is one of these compulsory requirements.

situation is even more complicated for extra-Euopean migrants, because the residence address is a necessary precondition not only to exercise some fundamental social rights, but is also a compulsory requirement to renew the permit to stay, as it is stated in the papers released by the Immigration Office of Questura at the moment of renewal.

Shortly, the procedure to renew the permit to stay is the following: the foreign person should register the residence address while the permit to stay is still valid in order to be able to renew it in the future, but the difficult living situation, the widespread phenomenon of the "black rent" phenomenon and the recent art 5 of the law of the 28 March 2014, make hard for people to register a residence address and consequently to renew the document. For all these reasons, it is sadly common for refugees and people entitled of international protection to end up in a situation of lack of protection and advocacy.

I ague that this paradoxical situation an example of what Agamben defines a condition of *bare life,* namely a situation in which the individual is considered only as a *suffering body* deprived of any social instance and desire of self-determination that express itself in a *full life*: refugees hold right to international protection, but they are prevented to benefit of the rights derived from the same international protection that the Italian State accorded to them.

> *Since a couple of years, the residence where I lived is not valid any more. I found it out some months ago, when I went to Comune to renew my ID card. I didn't know what to do and then someone told me to come to via Giolitti[15] and apply here. [...] I have a hernia, that causes a lot of pain in my back, but I couldn't go to to see the doctor. (B. from Eritrea)*

> *I want to apply for the long-term permit to stay, but I can not without a residence address to declare [...] I don't want to stay in Italy, I would like to live abroad, in Germany, that's my dream (Y. from Somalia)*

Five over the six informants I recruited, have been living in Italy for more than five years. Nonetheless, they did not manage to find another accommodation in order to apply for a permanent

residence address and due to the fact they live in occupation, they had to resort to a virtual

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15   Via Giolitti 225 is the address of the association FOCUS-cds that releases virtual residence address.

residence address in order to get their rights. I describe later in the analysis what is a virtual residence address.

Further on I illustrate the consequences that living in an *Informal Hospitality Structure* and fact of not having a permanent residence address on the integration process.

5.2 Living in IHS and the consequences on the integration process

After illustrating the general living condition in the *Informal Hospitality Structures*, I analyse the implications of this residential situation on the implementation of basic social and human rights and the consequences it has on the integration process of refugees.

As exposed in the theoretical framework of this thesis, the debate about an univocal and universalistic definition of a successful integration and the identification of common integration indicators is still open and broad (Sciortino, 2015). I do not aim to find an exhaustive and final solution to the discussion with this paper. I rather want to give my personal contribution, analysing some factors that are an obstacle to the integration process. The interviews I run during these months of research are only few examples, but they are extremely useful to depict the condition of social marginalisation of refugees who live in occupation.

I asked my informants to talk about their personal situation and experiences in 5 fields, that I use as indicators of integration. I discussed above the residential situation, in the next sections I analyse the other 4 indicators of integration, namely the access in the job market, the access in the healthcare system, the knowledge of the Italian language and the access in the educational system, the relationship with the institutions and the greater society.

5.2.1 Refugees in IHS and the access in the job market

It is important to consider that the economic situation in Italy still suffer the economic crisis of 2008 and even if the unemployment rate decreased in the first months of 2016, people are employed with temporary contracts, in a condition of insecurity and instability[16]. This is even more common for migrants and refugees, that are most of times employed in the low-skill jobs with no protection of rights.

16   http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2016/04/29/lavoro-a-marzo-disoccupazione-giu-dello-03-aumentano-gli-
    occupati-ma-tornano-a-salire-i-precari/2681602/

The unemployment rate in IHS is very high, according to many reports from humanitarian organizations, it can reach also the 60-70% in Collatina. Who is not unemployed, is often occasionally employed in the informal sector or is a seasonal worker in the countryside. (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014).

Among the refugees living in informal hospitality structures, there are people like B. 51 years old, who has been living in Italy for more than ten years and he used to have a job in a factory in the North of the Country. The factory closed in 2010 and since then he did not manage to find another job. With no income and the impossibility to pay rent, he ended up in Natnet, because his brother lives there.

> *I know that having a stable income and a permanent job is a kind of dream for everybody in Italy, but I am desperately looking for it [...] it is not a matter of money, at least not only, since I am unemployed I feel I am cut off from everything, I don't do anything, and everyday seems always the same and I don't manage to stop this circle [...]. Luckly I can count on the other people from Eritrea, living in Natnet. (B. from Eritrea)*

A. from Ethiopia manages to work sometimes, but she did not get a contract and the lady who employs her, calls her only few days per months, when she is in need and the other person she hired is unable to go. A. can not count on this job to survive, but his brother, who works seasonally in the countryside can provide also for her needs.

> *I work sometimes, as a baby-sitter for an Italian lady. A friend of mine found this job for me. I go when she cannot, but it is only for a couple of days per month, sometimes more, sometimes less.[...] My brother found a job in the countryside, near Foggia. He also earns very less money, more than I do, anyway. But I am not happy when he goes. [...] It's very few money, for all the work he has to do there, but what else we should do? (A. from Ethiopia)*

Another aspect that emerges from the interviews is the feeling of uselessness that refugees living in IHS experience, due to the lack of employment and consequently of perspectives for the future.

It is the case of T. from Eritrea, who finds really difficult to cope with the fact of being unemployed. The main reason is that he would like to make the reunification with his wife and daughter, but he could not provide for their needs in case they come.

> *I don't do anything all day long. Sometimes I walk walk walk, all the way around the city, sometimes I stay l day long at home. But I started back to deliver my CV in job-agency and companies since a couple of months. [...] I had some hard times last year, I started drinking and I stopped looking for jobs. [...] Now I feel better, but sometimes I still feel very depressed. (T. from Eritrea)*

From this perspective job is considered not only a mean to provide for basic needs, but also a key-factor for integration, as it allows people to be economically independent and to get in touch with different segments of the populaton. Job is deeply connected to the residential condition. The fact of not having a job, often leads people to find accommodation in an IHS and the fact of living in an IHS, with the consequences it has on the legal status of refugees, makes hard for people to find an employment.

5.2.2 The health conditions of refugees in IHS

As mentioned before, the access to the SSN[17] is granted both to Italians and foreign citizens, only in case an individual has a permanent residence address registered in the list of the Anagrafe Office of the Comune. Therefore, refugees living in IHS encounter many difficulties to exercise their right to health, even if they aware of the importance of prevention and treatment of illnesses.[18] The most common obstacles they find, is that they can not choose a family doctor, who provides the basic medical assistance, or in case they managed to register a "virtual residence address", they are obliged to address to the hospital closest to the place of residence, that most of the times is far away from the real place of residence. The virtual residence helps people to overcome the problem of the access to the SSN, but the geographical distance between the real residence address and the virtual residence address make things more complicated

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17 Servizio Sanitario Nazionale is Public Healthcare Service

18 The six informants I interviewed turned to the association to register the permanent residence address mainly to renew the Healt Insurance Card

(MEDU, 2012)[19].

Moreover, there is a lack of linguistic and cultural mediators in the Healthcare Public Structures, that causes difficulties of communication between users and health workers, also because of the complexity of the healthcare bureaucratic system[20]. Therefore, many people prefer to direct to the First Aid, even if the situation is not an emergency with the consequence that they have to wait for a long time in order to speak with the doctors and obstruct the First Aid.

The health prevention is almost absent and the living conditions in the IHS increase the rise of illnesses that even if they are not so serious, get worse due to disregard. Many other diseases are linked to the migratory path, to heavy jobs, to stress and of psychological origin, and also psychiatric cases, that are often not followed by any healthcare structure. B. from Eritrea suffers a hernia in his back, that sometimes prevents him to move, but he states that in general he is fine, compared to other people.

> *At least I am fine in my mind, but other people are not. [...] There is one guy, he is from Eritrea as well, he speaks very good Italian, but he keeps on saying always the same things, as a broken disc and he is always walking, he is not able to stay still for more than one minute. [...] I don't know if he is followed by a doctor, I don't think so (B. from Eritrea)*

Eating disorders and diseases related to the nutrition, are also common. Many refugees suffer from obesity, due to the impossibility of have available good food and because the junk food is cheaper and more easily achievable.

> *Thank God I feel good, but a friend of mine who lives with me, she is very fat and she was not like that when she arrived. It is a very serious problem, probably she will need surgery. That scares her terribly. (A. from Ethiopia)*

Another aspect that makes problematic the access to the healthcare system and to implement

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19 I illustrate further on what is a "virtual residence adress" and why it is a useful tool to overcome the condition of exclusion of refugees in IHS.

20 For example, the booking of a specialistic provision in the public service can be done only by phone, and that creates many problems to people that do not speak good Italian. I personally booked some appointments for people that came to the Advice Desk of the association in search for help.

successful prevention campaigns and intervention is people mobility. It is nearly impossible to depict the complete health condition of person that arrived in Italy as a grown-up, without documents from the country of origin and that crossed so many countries before landing in Italy (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014)

This situation is undoubtedly problematic, but according to many humanitarian organisations, it could be overcome with an update and upgrade of the healthcare institutions for example providing social and cultural mediators in the structures, making the bureaucratic system easier and faster, investing on prevention and information among refugees (Centro Astalli, 2015).

5.2.3 Learning Italian for people living in IHS and the access to the educational system

According to UNHCR, knowing the native language of the place of settlement is a necessary precondition to reach a successful integration and the teaching of the language should be provided by the structures that take care of the first welcoming reception. (UNHCR, 2007).

This is even more true in Italy, where the knowledge of a foreign language by Italians is still nowadays an exception and it is really difficult to find English or French speakers, in particular in the offices of the Public Administration and there is a lack of cultural mediators.

Many times the teaching of the Italian language in the first months of hospitality in the institutional structures is not sufficient. (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014). To overcome this problem, other organizations provide classes of Italian for foreigners. On one hand, there are the CPIA (Centri Provinciali per l'Istruzione degli Adulti)[21], which are public schools for Italians and foreigners to obtain the "licenza media"[22] and that organize Italian courses for foreigners. Some are for free and some others require a small contribution, but the residence and a valid permit to stay is compulsory in order to enrol in these courses. Mostly these schools have a specific opening time and this often does not match the possibilities of refugees, if they have a job or the have to look after the children (IntegrAzione, 2014). On the other hand, there are schools of the associations, based on the work of volunteers, that are for free, do not require money contributions or papers to sign up and have more flexible opening times, but unfortunately they are not allowed to release official certificates.

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21   Centres for Education of Adults

22   The first level of the Italian Education System

Among the people I interviewed, only one person did not speak Italian at all and I had to turn to an interpreter. Nonetheless, it is common, that people living in big squats, do not have a good level of Italian, at least not good enough to manage independently the relation with the bureaucratic system. (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014) Living among compatriots in a structure which is in a way self-managed and self-sufficient to provide the basic needs, do not push people to the "outside" and this is reflected on the proficiency in the Italian language.

> *I don't have Italian friends, maybe I would like to, but it is not easy […].*
> *The truth is that I am not making that many efforts, my brother speak very*
> *good Italian and it is enough for both. (S. from Ethiopia)*

The other informants I interviewed have a sufficient level of Italian, in order to understand each other during our conversation. A special case is the one of H. from Sudan, who arrived in Italy when he was 17. He went to school and he got the "licenza media" degree, with the help of the social worker, that was following his case. Therefore, he has very good level of Italian, But he is not planning to stay in Italy for good. He spent some months in Germany, working for a night-club as PR, and he is planning to move back there, once he will get the papers.

A. from Ethiopia, the only woman I managed to interview, stated proudly and at the same time sadly that she is one of the few women in the occupation that speaks good Italian. Especially women who arrived with their husbands, have trouble learning Italian. They rarely go to school and they rely on their husbands or other male members of the family.

> *When I arrived I didn't speak a word in Italian. It seemed to be so hard to*
> *learn it. But I was alone. My brother is often far from Rome, due to his*
> *job in the counrtyside, so I had no excuses, so much free time and nobody*
> *that could speak for me. […] I went to school, even if it was far away and*
> *I would like to improve. […] There are women in the occupation that*
> *have been living in Italy for many years, more than me, and they don't*
> *speak a single word. It is because their husbands talk for her. I don't have*
> *one, so I had to do everything by myself. (A. from Ethiopia)*

Another indicator of integration suggested by the OECD, is the school for children, as parents are pushed to get in touch with other parents and to be included in the social life of the

neighbourhood (Rudiger and Spencer, 2003). This is very difficult for families living in IHS. Firstly because the enrolment of children in the kindergarten requires a residence address and the child has to attend the school in the area where he or she is officially resident. As illustrated above, people living in IHS have to turn to a virtual residence address, which is in many cases far away from the real living place.

In case families are entitled of a permanent residence address (real or virtual), they have the opportunity to ask for the help of the welfare services and social workers in order to enrol the children in the school closest to their house, but the positive outcome of this procedure is not guaranteed, as it depends on the resources available of the welfare system (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014).

Learning the Italian language and enter the educational system is a fundamental step to reach a satisfying level of integration, and as illustrated it is particularly hard for people living in IHS. Refugees living in this kind of structures find very difficult to follow Italian classes, mostly because the courses are located far away from the place where they live and they rely most of the times on the help of compatriots that speak better Italian.

5.2.4 A tough relationship with the institutions and the greater society

The last indicator I analyse is the relationship with the institutions and the other segments of the Italian society.

The condition experienced by refugees in IHS is reflected in the complex relation between refugees living in IHS and the institutions, such as the Comune and the apparatus of public security.

As depicted above, one of the main obstacles in the integration process is the condition of illegality in which refugees living in *Informal Hospitality Structures* have fallen into. This fact leaded to an almost total abandon by the institutions, of refugees of IHS, leaving to the humanitarian association the task to protect the rights of refugees (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014). For this reason a large amount of refugees living in IHS tend not to trust the public institutions and not to address to them to solve their problems, but they rather prefer to find a solution among

the members of the community, for example turning to the internal committee of the squat. (IntegrAzione, 2012)

Another important integration indicator is the level of interaction between the refugees of the big squat and people living in the neighbourhood around the buildings, which is very low. According to the report wrote by Medici Senza Frontiere in 2016, the 67% of the refugees living in informal hospitality structures declares that they have no relations at all with the people living outside the occupation (MSF, 2016). This is confirmed also in the interviews I run, where 4 over 6 people told me that they do not have any contact with the neighbours and that in general the relations with Italians are delimited in the job places or when they need advice from social workers, and they excluded friendship or other intimate relationships.

Italian friends? No, I don't have. [...]. I work in an restaurant and my colleagues and boss are nice, but we are not friends, a friend is something different, you know what I mean? (H. Sudan)

Due to spatial isolation of the two occupied buildings I chose to analyse, the contact between refugees and the Italian population is basically absent. In other cases, the informal settlements, but also the institutional settlements are located close to residential places, often in neighbourhoods that present already problems of social fragility and marginalisation, This fact caused many conflicts among the local population and the refugees. As for instance, in 2014, when in Tor Sapienza, another neighbourhood in the eastern outskirts of the city, there was a violent "uprising" of Italian citizens against a structure that was giving hospitality to refugees and asylum seekers[23]

5.2.5 Separation, integration and the role of networks

Following Berry's definition of acculturation, it comes out from the interviews and the confrontation with other reports of humanitarian associations, that refugees in IHS live a condition of *separation* from the host culture: the cultural group analysed perceives itself as something different from the host community (Berry, 2005). The contact with the greater society is sporadic and often is complicated and conflictual. Therefore, refugees opt for a *separation*

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23 http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2014/11/13/tor-sapienza-continua-rivolta-anti-immigrati-via-spostamento-
    rifugiati/1209470/

strategy, and have relations only with members of the same community of the big squat. A clear example can be found in the answer that to the question *"would you like to move out from the big squat?"*. Despite the hardship and the difficult living conditions, 6 over 6 informants answered *"no"*, stating that the big squat is better than not having a house at all and that at least there is a strong sense of community and they can always count on the help of the community.

It is important to remark, that the refugees do not chose completely freely the acculturation strategy to follow. As illustrated in my analysis the role of institutions and the greater society is crucial for the implementation of a strategy or another. The condition of illegality of refugees in informal settlement is a consequence of specific politics implemented by the Italian government, and it is one of the biggest obstacles to a path to integration

I find useful to analyse the role of networks in the choice of a *separation strategy* for refugees living in IHS. I argue that, even if the presence of a network is helpful to avoid a condition of extreme poverty, as it allows people to find a place in this kind of structures, it can not be considered as an integration tool. According to what emerged from the interviews, the existence of a partner or a friend and more in general of the ethnic group of origin, prevents people to follow an autonomous path to integration, as they greatly rely on the community of origin to survive, for example for what concerns the knowledge of Italian.

Move away? Where should I go? Here I have a roof on my head, it is always better then the street. (H., Sudan)

> *I don't think so [moving away], maybe one day, I actually don't know.*
> *[...] I know, it's not the best, at least there are many people from Eritrea,*
> *we speak the same language, we eat the same food and I don't feel lonely.*
> *(T., Eritrea)*

I illustrate in my analysis the effects that the fact of living in *Informal Hospitality Structure* has on the process of integration (or non-integration) of refugees. I recognise that the fact of living in IHS is itself a consequence of a failure of the integration process, that should start at the very beginning of the asylum procedure. I dedicate the last section of this thesis to the approach that institutions, associations and humanitarian organisation and refugees should follow in order to find a solution the lack of virtuous projects of social inclusion for asylum seekers and refugees.

5.3 The *Human-Right Based Approach* and the integration process

Working in an association that is involved in the advocacy and protection of rights of socially fragile people, gave me the opportunity to get in touch with many different situations, where the basic social and even human rights are often violated. Far from considering the refugees mere *suffering bodies* (Fassin, 2012), the work of the association is to provide the tools for people in order to claim for their rights.

In this paragraph I apply the Human-Right based approach, illustrated in the theoretical framework, to analyse the work that institutions, organisations of the third sector and refugees as well, do to overcome this condition of marginalisation.
Following the HRBA, the refugees living in IHS are the *right-holders,* wanting to claim for their rights, the *duty-bearers* are the institutions that are accountable to protect human rights and the other *key stake-holders* are the third sector organisations that can influence the relationship between right-holders and duty-bearers.

I argue that the the humanitarian associations, that according to the scheme are considered a *key stake-holder,* have to perform the task of duty-bearers, if the institutions in charge are not able (or willing) to implement their functions. Therefore, the role of the State institutions (such as the Comune, the Questura di Roma etc...) is essential and of great importance in the integration process and to prevent social exclusion.
A good example of the practical application of the HRBA can be found in the provision of a virtual residence address I mentioned in the previous chapter. In the following section I illustrate what it is and how it is useful to implement a succesful integration strategy.

5.3.1 "Virtual residence address": a tool for integration

The virtual residence address is provided by humanitarian associations to homeless people in order to have granted the access to basic human and social rights derived from the permanent residence address. As illustrated in the previous chapters, the residential situation in Rome is very dramatic and often people are prevented to register the residence in the place where they live. So, even if they are not exactly homeless, they are allowed to recur to a virtual residence address.

According to the HRBA the refugees living in *Informal Hospitality Structures* are the *right-holders,* the State institutions, such as the Comune and the Questura are the *duty-bearers* and the

associations and humanitarian organisations are the *key stake-holder.*

Refugees in IHS, that are prevented to In the case of Rome, can resort to three associations that work for improving the social conditions of migrants and people in a condition of social and economic fragility. These associations are authorized to release the "virtual residence address", thanks to an agreement with the Immigration Office of the Questura di Roma and the Comune di Roma. Therefore, people have the opportunity to register the residence using the address of the associations, even if of course it is not the place where they live. That is why it is called "virtual residence address" and it gives people in the above mentioned living conditions the same rights of people having a "real residence"[24].

The procedure to get a virtual residence address is more or less the same for all the associations that are allowed to give it. The three associations are: Centro Astalli (Via degli Astalli 14/A), Comunità di Sant'Egidio (Via Dandolo 10) and FOCUS – CDS (Via Giovanni Giolitti 225).

In order to apply for the virtual residence address, the migrant must be in possession of a valid permit to stay or at least the receipt of the renewal[25]. It is important to highlight that a virtual residence address is considered valid by the Questura di Roma only to renew the permit to stay for political asylum, subsidiary protection and humanitarian reasons. People entitled of all the other permit to stay (work, study, etc) are required to furnish a "real" residence address in a house.

According to the Italian law, the registration of the residence address is complete after 45 days from the delivery of the address at the Comune.[26] Once this time is passed, the applicant is officially a resident and he/she can use the address of the association to proceed with the renewal of the permit to stay and to access to all the provisions for which the residence address is required, including the mail service.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the "virtual residence address" is not a final solution to the condition of illegality of occupied buildings, but it is undoubtedly a useful tool for helping people to exit from the social exclusion they are living.

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24 Descision 280 of Giunta Capitolina (Joint session of Town Hall Assembly) (11 August 2015)

25 See art.1 and 2 comma 1 law nr. 1228 24/12/1954 and art.14 D.P.R n.334 18/10/2004

26 See law nr. 35 4/4/2012

5.3.2 Welcoming reception: the beginning of the path to integration.

In this last section I illustrate how the condition of *separation* of people living in IHS is the result, among other factors, of the inadequacy of the system of welcoming reception, when asylum seekers and potential refugees are just arrived in Italy.

I described in the first part of this thesis the procedure to apply for asylum and the measures of hospitality implemented by the Italian government. As mentioned before, the number of places in institutional hospitality structures are not enough to satisfy the needs of all the people arriving on the Italian soil and the lack of economic resources makes difficult to implement a virtuous process of social inclusion (Centro Astalli, 2015).

It is interesting to notice that the refugees I interviewed were reluctant to talk about their migratory path and their first months in Italy. To the questions regarding these topics their answers were unclear and confused, often they simply state "I don't remember", "I am not sure", "It was long time ago". A. from Ethiopia explicitly told me that she was not feeling comfortable talking about her experience of forced migration and the first time in Italy. T. from Eritrea, also was confused about that period, but he told me a story regarding another asylum seeker, that I find interesting.

> *I spent more or less one year in the camp, waiting for the date of the*
> *commission. The camp was in Rome, but not in the city centre, it was far*
> *away. [...] In a way I've been lucky, because as I come from Eritrea, I*
> *immediately got my status recognised, but there was another guy, he was*
> *from Burkina Faso, or Mali, I don't remember. Well, he didn't get the*
> *status from the Commission and he had to make an appeal with a lawyer.*
> *He remained in the camp, but he had to wait for so long. When he left the*
> *camp, he was still there, waiting. (T. from Eritrea)*

5 out of 6 informants have been living in Italy for more than 5 years, only 1 of them arrived in Italy two years ago. All of them arrived by boat in Sicily, passing through Libya. Among the 6 informants only one was aware of the possibility to ask for international protection, the others were informed of this opportunity only once they arrived in Italy. 5 out of 6 informants remained in Italy, also because they had already a network of compatriots or relatives settled in the Country and that one of them instead, decide to try to settle in Sweden, where the sister's family is now

living, but he got "dublinated" back in Italy in 2014[27]. This fact gives confirmation to the importance of a network in the destination choices of refugees. Regardless to the dramatic experience of the forced displacement that can be cause serious traumas, it is also likely that refugees actually are not sure about which type of structure was giving them hospitality, due to the scarce knowledge of the Italian system and the rapidity it updates. (Cittadini del Mondo, 2014).

As illustrated in the previous section, there are different kind of structures and also the structures of the same type can be different according to their management (IntegrAzione, 2012). According to a report of Medici Senza Frontiere of 2016, less than a half of the refugees now living in *Informal Hospitality Structures* benefited of an institutional structure and among them only a small percentage benefited of the hospitality in a SPRAR. A great number of asylum seekers and refugees spent a long time in the other *Institutional Hospitality Structures*, even more then one year, waiting for the Commission to evaluate, take a decision about their case and even after they obtained their status and during this period they did not take part in any project of social inclusion. (MSF, 2016). I argue, according to various reports of humanitarian association and my personal experience, that the weakness of the projects of social inclusion during the procedure of application for political asylum, the ineffectiveness of the Institutional interventions are among the causes that lead to a process of separation. Moreover, the institutions implement policies of welcoming reception that are orientated simply to the solution of the problem in an immediate perspective of public order and not a problem of social inclusion on the long-term. (MSF, 2016; IntegrAzione, 2012, MEDU, 2014).

I do not want to make unproductive polemic in this section, rather I aim to highlight a critical situation that can be overcome, only recognising it. According to Sciortino the socio-economic and legal inclusion is a necessary precondition to a successful socio-cultural and psychological integration. Therefore I argue that the integration process should start in the first times of settlement of people in the Country, and it should be based on the acquisition of their rights.

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27 According to the Dublin Regulation, a person seeking for asylum must apply in the first Country of arrival, where he/she has been identified through the fingerprints. In this case, even if the person decides to leave the Country of arrival, he/she will be send back by the authority of the new Country of settlement (Ministry of Interior, 2015).

6 Conclusions

I spent the last few months working on this research and at the same time I was continuing the project of protection of rights and advocacy. During this time I faced many situation of social exclusion and lack of autonomy, mostly among refugees and people entitled of subsidiary protection that live in informal settlements. So I started wondering how the fact of living in IHS affects the integration process of refugees and I believe that this analysis helps to give a detailed picture of what does it mean to live in an *Informal Hospitality Structure*.

The interviews I run, allowed me to enter a world, that is unknown for many people and not sufficiently considered by the Institutions and also to get in touch with people with an amazing strength and the capability to never give up, even in the worst situation.

Through the interviews I explored the condition of *separation* that refugees in IHS are experiencing and I managed t get more in depth analysing the failure of their integration process. Therefore I argue that the *separation strategy* implemented by refugees is a consequence of the illegality of their residential condition, but also of a bad-management of the Italian welcoming reception system.

The hard living conditions and the illegal residential situation, worsen by the recent political developments in matter of residence and to the changes in the internal law of the last two years, make the process of integration even harder, as it prevents people to exercise some basic social rights and reach the full autonomy.

More than a half of the population living in IHS does not speak good Italian, does not have job, have problematic issues with the educational and healthcare system and have few contact with the Italian population. Moreover, less than one half of refugees living in *Informal Hospitality Structures* benefited of the welcoming reception in *Institutional Hospitality Structures*, and among them, only a few number of them took part in a project of social inclusion.

Therefore I believe it is important to rethink the welcoming reception practices and the management of the *Institutional Hospitality Structures* in order to implement successful programmes of inclusion. Luckily, the implementation of alternative ways of welcoming reception started already. It is the case for example of the projects of "Accoglienza diffusa" (Widespread Hospitality), that are getting a foothold in various cities. These programmes imply a high level of involvement of asylum seekers and refugees, the host community and the institutions in welcoming reception projects. The Hospitality Structures are small flats, where

people can manage their business in a more autonomous way, avoiding in this way the situation of assistentialism, marginalisation and dependence. Unfortunately the situation in Rome is more complex, due to the large amount of people that flows into the city and the difficulties of management of a city, which is describes often as out of control, but there are many social and humanitarian organisation that are deeply involved and work hard for the implementation of a new system of hospitality that promote the social inclusion and respect the rights and the dignity of people.

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