

EPILOGUE

Somewhere Inbetween: Rethinking “Elsewhere”

Closing this book, the Epilogue invites the reader to rethink today’s city through prefigurative practices, hopes, and dreams of the residents of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales. It suggests looking at their placemaking through the lens of “Somewhere Inbetween,” acknowledging their migratory narratives, resistances, and resilience toward the border regime. As well as their proposal of a more inclusive urban landscape that reflects the diversity inherent in migratory flows. These communities resist the marginalization imposed by border regimes by creating alternative placemaking. Through these convivial approaches, they rethink urban spaces, collective projects, and coexistence within today’s postcolonial cities.

7.1 Autonomous Places

In closing this book, I would like to return to one of my initial questions, which has been the guide in this research: How do these so-called non-places transform and change into social places? This time, I would like to look at it through the urban lens of the self-management and self-construction of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, which, by occupying abandoned buildings and land in the city, have managed to create autonomous places. I use the term *autonomous* in relation to these places to highlight their processes of self-governance, also connecting their placemaking to the idea of “autonomy of migration,” which forms part of their strategy against the border regimes discussed in the following paragraphs.

Even though this falls outside the scope of this chapter, I want to note that I am aware of the debates around the impossibility of fully autonomous urban spaces, especially the view that complete autonomy is unrealistic and utopian, since everything today is, in some way, interconnected (see Knights and Willmott, 2002; Coleman, 2015). Still, as I examine in this chapter, this framework helps me capture the different alternative forms of placemaking that are happening in the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales. I draw on argumentation from the cultural and historical geographer Alexander Vasudevan, who, in his paper “The Autonomous City: Towards a Critical Geography of Occupation” (2015), examines the entanglements

of the process of urban autonomous occupation and the struggle toward alternative methods for the “right of the city.” Vasudevan describes occupation as no longer just an action of “occupying” but as something which itself becomes a political act of resistance to the neoliberal and capitalist model and its effects on speculation that are the basis of ongoing gentrification in the city. He highlights that the role of “occupation” in an abandoned space within the city is an autonomous form of urban growth. In this sense, “occupation,” from the perspective of critical geography, is related to political common spaces, where the community autonomously plays an essential role in the political processes for the right to the city (Vasudevan, 2015).

Recent works in critical geography, radical urbanism, urban governance, and the politics of housing, among others, are rethinking the right to the city (Attoh, 2011: 675; see Dikeç, 2005; Harvey, 2008; Mitchell, 2003; Purcell, 2003, as cited in Vasudevan, 2015: 319). They mainly focus on the occupation processes within the city as consequences of Western governments’ current global financial crises (Lunghi and Wheeler, 2012; Bauer et al., 2012; Taylor et al., 2011, as cited in Vasudevan, 2015: 317). Although each occupation process is specific and particular in its context, they embrace diverse elements that could be seen as a “transnational protest movement” (Vasudevan, 2015: 317) struggling for economic and social equity, reclaiming urban spaces as devices of reappropriation and transformation for alternative urbanism and city-making (Mitchell, 2012, as cited in Vasudevan, 2015: 317). The Džjungal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales are examples of this notion of occupation. However, their context differs from the occupation histories provided by critical geographers of the protest camps and squats present throughout the long history of European anti-capitalism and anarchism. As their particular reclamation of urban space continues a process of migratory transformation, where they develop self-organized strategies to create new ways of living within the border regimes. This is exemplified by the residents of Los Arenales, who claim the right to *vivienda digna* (decent housing) in their ongoing struggle with the municipality and the Chilean state (a point I will return to in the following paragraphs).

As I have analyzed in previous chapters, their self-management and self-construction processes are exemplified by states of inbetweenness and ongoing becoming. Initially, as discussed in Chapter 5, I interpreted these places from the perspective of liminality—a concept referring to the states of inbetweenness, subjectivization, and placemaking experienced by these communities when engaged in their own management and construction. The residents experience a sense of “limbo,” as some mentioned when referring to the inbetween feeling of “what was” and “what is to come.” Their ongoing feeling of being in a spatial inbetweenness due to the temporal uncertainty of whether there will be an “eviction tomorrow,” leads to the sensation of being in a “terrestrial limbo.” Here, the occupation is no longer only through a specific territory but within a particular time frame during which the residents live in these places. The daily uncertainty of possible eviction gives their placemak-

ing processes their specific characteristics. Therefore, at first glance, liminality was a concept that could cover this sense of duality and uncertainty while allowing for spatial and temporal particularities, enabling processes of becoming and dwelling that go beyond an individual liminal state. Later, as I have analyzed throughout this book, I came to understand the difficulty of today's definition of liminality in a migratory context as it reaffirms "migrants as people out of time" (Ramsay, 2019b), reproducing a state of exception and marginalization, relegating to second place their placemaking and resistance to the border regime and their right to the city (see also Chapter 5). The Dzjantal, Tiburtina and Los Arenales, thanks to their processes of transformation and becoming through their migration narratives, propose another definition of the city, which, as Vasudevan argues, leads us to reflect on the composition of "new critical urbanisms" by asking: "What is the relationship between the figure of occupation and the affirmation of an alternative 'right to the city'? And in what way might a critical geography of occupation challenge our conceptualizations of the city?" (Vasudevan 2015: 318).

To look more closely into these places, despite their shared experience of people seeking refuge and forming self-built environments, the roots of these realities differ. In South America, particularly in Chile, a long history of creating autonomous places, known as "Las Tomas" (or in Central and South America as "Favelas"), has been shaped by poor communities. This history provides an alternative solution for people-in-transit to address the lack of support during their refuge and later in inclusion. The "Tomas" offer concrete possibilities for communities such as Los Arenales. Such communities' refusal to accept the precarious and overcrowded forms of housing offered to the undocumented by private agents and smugglers, and faced with a lack of help from the Chilean government, has led to the occupation of "peripheral" land spaces, where they have developed alternative forms of self-construction in their aspiration for dignified housing.

By contrast, the reality of self-organized and self-built places in Europe, especially in France and Italy, is largely influenced by the communities that migrate to these countries, rather than by the countries' poor citizens. The primary modes of resistance of the Dzjantal residents, who occupied the Les Dunes zone on the outskirts of Calais, outside of formal French refugee centers, were aimed at avoiding registration in the European Migration Database and therefore remaining "free" to decide for themselves in which country to initiate the asylum process—in this case, ideally crossing to the UK and claiming asylum there instead of in France (see Chapter 6). In the case of Tiburtina, not having access to reception centers that the Italian government was supposed to provide, this community occupied the abandoned building of a former newspaper to create an alternative form of welcoming newcomers from the Mediterranean routes. In this context, the recurrent disappearance of such places in Europe can be attributed to aggressive eviction strategies, such as in Tiburtina and the Dzjantal, while in South America evictions have occurred at a slower pace, and

aggressive strategies are less prevalent. This allows places like Los Arenales to persist and evolve, moving beyond a mere aspiration for the future to become a tangible reality in the present.

These examples invite us to reconsider how we understand placemaking itself, not only as an institutional urban planning practice, but as self-governance processes on the part of these communities advocating for new ways of understanding the city. Therefore, the particularities of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales represent another aspect of the idea of occupation, based on migration narratives charged with self-governance, as one of multiple strategies of resistance against border regimes and their bureaucratic asylum procedures.

Broadening the Notion of Placemaking through Autonomy

In urban and geographic studies, placemaking focuses on how elements of a culture are embodied in a particular urban setting—a process of making meanings in the city. The communities become part of the urban area, creating a “sense of place” (Massey, 1995; see Chapter 6). The community planner Mark Wyckoff (2014: 2) defines placemaking as a “process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in.” This process, originating from urban planning, comprises stakeholders such as urban planners, architects, politicians, businesses, community leaders, and residents, who are essential agents for a successful placemaking (Wyckoff, 2014). From this point of view, placemaking is characterized by a city that can provide its citizens with quality components to feel part of a place.

The urbanist and activist Jane Jacobs (1961: 238) argues: “Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” Here, Jacob suggests thinking of the city as a form of placemaking in which everyone should be involved and actively participate, in which every person can share their values, cultures, and identities. Yet this assumption becomes unstable when applied to communities that are excluded from formal participation and denied the right to belong. From this starting point, I ask: how have the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales created placemaking without the support of social and political stakeholders, and within cities that do not welcome them?

The uniqueness of placemaking in the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales lies in their need for self-governance against border regimes. These placemakings are influenced by their migration experiences, their daily struggle with border regimes, and their desire to physically express their cultures in the occupied territory. They battle to find their position in the city and struggle to have the right to it through alternative placemaking, which, without the help of political agents and without support from many, stresses their inclusion. This is not only to give physical form to their placemaking processes through self-built homes, but also to propose—as in the case of Los Arenales—new ways of neighboring that expand the boundaries of

traditional urban planning. Los Arenales envision the creation of a "Latin American city," not grounded in notions of nation or territory, but in shared ways of living and collective projects that include all who inhabit the city (a point I will return to in the final section of this Epilogue).

By occupying an abandoned space in the city and deciding to start building without urban planning regulation permits, the Dzjanganl, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales actively take control of their homemaking with the required prerequisites for an alternative way of living. These political practices of "space configuration" (Simone, 2018) redesign the city. In this way, the autonomous specificity of these communities allows envisioning the city not only as an urban and sociopolitically marginalizing entity but also to consider it as a "flexible resource" (Simone, 2018: 200) that contributes to a maximization of resources for the self-construction of these places (Vasudevan, 2015). Here I interpret the city and its infrastructure as a "large depository" that, through various "available" resources, these inhabitants use to create strategies of self-construction.

Therefore, the residents of the Dzjanganl, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales become "self-builders" (Castellanos, 2017). By deciding to build their home and being part of the placemaking of their neighborhood, the inhabitants go beyond the traditional definition of building as an act of edification. In his paper "Self-Construction and Autopoiesis: The Expressive Houses," the visual artist Ricardo Castellanos (2017) argues that the processes of self-construction, which he analyzes from a Latin American perspective, drawing on discussions of the sociologist Aníbal Quijano (2007), are a resistance to capitalist policies based on colonial structures in America. Hence, these "popular neighborhood" constructions in Latin America, having a very early history in the struggle for land (rural vs urban), are symbolized today by the dignified housing movement (Zubechi, 2008, cited in Castellanos, 2017: 62). These rural and urban struggles combat "territorial hierarchization" from the capitalist, modern, and colonial systems (Castellanos, 2007). The self-construction becomes a process that occupies "the two modes of build: build as 'caring,' in Latin *collere*, culture; and to build as 'raising buildings,' *aedificare*" (Castellanos, 2017: 3). Thus, dwelling is an intertwining between processes of material-physical edification and processes of construction from the daily care of the built. Self-building becomes a relation of "building" and "caring," a process of placemaking that moves away from standard urbanization toward processes based on belonging, identity, and culture.

(Urban) Autopoiesis

Exploring further the entanglement between "self-management" and "autonomy" as a placemaking, the sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1984) was the first to use the idea of "autopoiesis" to refer to the different social-urban systems that are constituted by "self-creation" (Keenan, 2022) within society. The biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, in their publication *Autopoiesis and Cognition: The Realization of*

the Living ([1972] 1991), introduced the term autopoiesis to the discipline of biology, which later influenced other fields such as architecture and sociology, as Luhmann introduced the concept to organizational theory.

Maturana and Varela define autopoiesis as a state of being—the ability of living cells to continuously reproduce and organize themselves (Keenan, 2022). Luhmann moved this analysis to communities' social processes and urban structures, suggesting that although there are large-scale structural frameworks and systems in society, this does not prevent each actor within society from including its own processes. In other words, the same agency within society constructs the elements it consists of. Therefore, an autopoietic system develops its own components—these autonomous and self-managed processes are essential to recognize as they are the basis of the same systems on a large scale (Agüero, 2010).

In his paper “The Autopoiesis of Architecture,” the architect Patrik Schumacher (2011) interprets the notion of autopoiesis in the discipline of architecture as an autonomous network of communication systems, where rather than seeing architecture as consisting of separate categories, such as types of artifact, types of knowledge (academic), or types of practice of the profession, it is the intertwining of all of them, “artifacts, knowledge, and practices,” as modes of communication that connect each other, producing autonomous circular networking (Schumacher, 2011). Schumacher moves away from the relationships of architecture and its sociopolitical effects and interactions with other systems within society. However, what interests me here is to highlight the interpretation of autopoiesis in architecture and sociology as a system of communication and networking that allows the reproduction of self-management. Particularly with regard to the Dzjangan, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, I look at the placemaking of these communities as interconnected with the processes of self-construction, where “artifacts, knowledge, and practices” within them at the time of their ongoing construction have allowed for the creation of an urban ecology that has to be interconnected for it to function, and hence become social and housing communities in the present and future.

(Urban) Autonomy of Migration

I cannot leave aside in this section the definition of “autonomy” in the context of *Autonomy of Migration Theory* (Bojadzijeve and Karakayali, 2007; Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013; Mezzadra and Nielson, 2013; Scheel, 2017; Nyers, 2015; De Génova, 2015), which comes from a history marked by the entanglement of academia and activism, from a Marxist perspective, and the political sociology of migration outlined by the sociologist Abdelmalek Sayad (1992). These starting points reflect migration beyond the economic and political structure of the territory but provide the possibility of placing the “migrant individuals” and their own life experience with borders at the center of the analysis. The initial aim, as highlighted by the anthropologist Guillermo Castillo Ramirez (2023), was to understand the structural systems of

migration and their relationship with borders and their regimes. Since 2000, there has been an increase in contemporary migration studies in Europe, especially in Germany, for the guest worker system, and in France and Italy, for postcolonial migrations. Scholars from these three countries, such as Manuela Bojadzijev, Serhat Karakayali, Dimitris Papadopoulos, Sandro Mezzadra, and Nicholas De Genova, among others, led to a greater theorization of migration topics due to the heterogeneity and uniqueness of each migration phenomenon in these countries. Most of them were "irregular migrations" that, through different strategies and ways of experiencing mobilization, resisted European border regimes (Cordero, Mezzadra, and Varela, 2019; Castillo Ramirez, 2023). Thus, the *Autonomy of Migration* moves away from the frameworks of economic and citizenship structures to analyze migration and its approach from the perspective of the "individual migrant" and their life experiences from their countries of origin to the final destination. One of the directions of this theory is to accompany the process of migration and understand their migration strategies and practices as processes that permeate border regimes (Mezzadra, 2005; Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos, 2008; Mezzadra and Nielson, 2013; Castillo Ramirez, 2023).

This is highlighted by Castillo Ramirez in his paper "Autonomy of Migration: From the Political Production of Borders to Migrant Struggles" (2023), in which he maps the different aspects of the *Autonomy of Migration* theory from a European context and its possible translation to a Latin American context. Rather than reading *Autonomy of Migration* as a fixed and completed theoretical framework, it can be interpreted as a research framework. This growing academic discourse provides several directions of analysis, such as the relationship between migration and labor in a neoliberal capitalist context, the subjectivization of irregular migration and its exclusion processes from a sociopolitical perspective of both the state and the "migrants" agency, and their different strategies and practices in resisting border regimes (Mezzadra, 2012; De Genova, 2015; Castillo Ramirez, 2023). The last is essential when analyzing the placemaking processes of the Dzjanganal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, which are typified by strategies and practices of resistance and struggle against the border regime. I will return to this point in later paragraphs.

According to the sociologist Stephan Scheel (2019), "autonomy," as variously conceptualized by *autonomy of migration*, is not necessarily the ability of people to decide and act for themselves, as philosopher Immanuel Kant says; the ability to have the degree of control, power, and freedom in everyday life events (Sensen, 2013). But in the context of border regimes, autonomy represents the "uncontrollability" of people-in-transit at borders as a cause of today's border regimes (Scheel, 2019). Therefore, autonomy in this context is the struggle between the border regime's strategies against migration and its challenge to resist. If there were no resistance on the part of "migrants" to challenge border regimes, there would be no autonomy within migration; thus, border regimes would be successful (Scheel 2019; Metcalfe, 2022).

In her paper “Autonomy of Migration and the Radical Imagination” (2022), Philippa Metcalfe, researcher on technology, mobility, and violent borders, draws the definition of autonomy from the philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis, who refers to the autonomous state as a “self-institution” where the individual or society develops its own laws, which differs from “heteronomous societies” where the law-making process is delegated to an authority that is not necessarily part of it (Castoriadis, 1983, cited in Metcalfe, 2022: 52). Thus, “autonomous societies” go beyond pre-established systems of organization and control to self-create their laws and self-legislate (Castoriadis, 1983, cited in Metcalfe, 2022: 52). By this, Metcalfe, analyzing Castoriadis, does not mean that migration can entirely self-legislate. Still, as the concept of autonomy of migration proposes from its many angles, it possesses the self-creating capacity of a “reactive and relational force” (Metcalfe, 2022: 8), tensioning, resisting, and struggling with the fixed social structures and established border regimes that exclude and repress, calling for a reconfiguration of borders (Nyers, 2015; also cited in Metcalfe, 2022: 53).

In this context, “autonomy” refers to how individuals engage with the nation-state where they seek asylum and with the states they pass through on their journey. Here, the “individual migrant” as a political agent, through their strategies, tactics, and narratives, deals with the regimes of the nation-state of arrival and transit and is essential in shaping migration systems, regimes, and border policies (Mezzadra, 2012). As Mezzadra (2012) argues, for individuals who have been “irregularized” and “illegalized” by nation-states for not having migration documents, the “migrant” agency (often) acts “as if” they are already citizens of the arrival country. In this case, the autonomy of the “migrant” agent becomes an action of not accepting their irregularity and illegality by proclaiming the right of citizenship.

In other words, by acting “as if” they are already a citizen within a state that sees them as “irregular” and “illegal,” they stress citizenship from a new perspective, no longer from the gaze of the state and its administrative policies, but rather from the perspective of the “migrant” individual and their strategies of resistance toward the receiving nation-state (Castillo Ramirez, 2023). Thus, the residents of the Dz-jangal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, through autonomous migratory strategies of placemaking, proclaim their right to the city and, therefore, their citizenship. Or even further, by acting “as if” they are already citizens in the country of arrival and they have the right to be part of it through their placemaking, they initiate a process of reconfiguring and reimagining a new meaning of the city, leading to “prefigurative practices of city–citizen relations ‘as if’ they were otherwise” (Thorpe, 2023: 183; see also “prefiguration,” in Boggs, 1977).

7.2 Liminality and Prefiguration as a Way of Placemaking

In one of the conversations I had with my community in Chile, questions about this research were raised, particularly concerns about the lack of regulations and laws of the Chilean border regime in relation to the arrival of large groups of people-in-transit in my hometown. One of the community members asked me about the case studies on which this book is based. In particular, he asked me what the future held for the residents of Los Arenales, pointing to the dramatic evictions of the Dzjantal and Tiburtina as examples to support his argument. "The 'Tomas chilenas'¹ are living on borrowed land and time because sooner or later they will disappear", he argued. Our conversation went back and forth, with me highlighting the activism and placemaking that was happening in Los Arenales and pointing out the realistic possibilities of it becoming an "official neighborhood," which for him was a "utopia," even more so when I mentioned to him the residents' dream of becoming a "Latin American city" (see the last section of this Epilogue). This community member asked me: How do you cope when these communities tell you about a hopeful future that aspires to an ideal, utopian city? His question made a kind of sense if one assumes a time-space continuum of transition between A and B, between the migratory past of the residents of Los Arenales and the aspirational future of an "ideal city" (Latin American city).

In my initial interest in liminality, I considered the process of subjectivation of the residents of these places as an intermediate process between "what was before" and "what is to come," creating space for a hopeful future that could lead to a utopia. My reflections were based on the hopeful atmosphere I found in the narratives of these places. However, in two of them, evictions and displacement took concrete form, and from that, "hope" seemed to be not only a condition for their visions of the future, even if evictions took place, but also a driving force for everyday practices (I will return to this in the following sections).

How does one escape the traps of "utopia" when analyzing the process of occupation and self-constructed places that rely on "hope" and aspirations as a driving force? This was one of the questions that arose in some academic presentations, when I emphasized "hope" as a constant state in the processes of resistance and placemaking in the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales. Thanks to my colleague and dear friend, the cultural anthropologist Magdalena Buchczyk, and her suggestion to look more closely at the notion of prefiguration (Boggs, 1977) in order to distance myself from the sense of "utopia," I have found the space to look for other temporalities that move away from the limitation of liminality as a form of linear transition between A and B, between the past and the present of migratory narratives.

1 Informal housing in Chile.

As I have already discussed in Chapters 5, one of the many complexities of looking at these places from a linear liminal temporality is that it assumes that at the end of liminality the process of transformation has been completed. Victor Turner describes this as *liminoid*, referring to the moment of time/space created to have a liminal experience producing the sense of being “outside of time”—a form of momentary withdrawal from modern society (Turner, 1967; see Chapter 5). The continuous and permanent reality of the transitory state of people-in-transit makes me look at their placemaking strategies not only with an eye toward the future but also with regard to everyday practices and tactics in the present.

Coined by the scholar of social science Carl Boggs in the 1970s, the concept of *prefiguration* is constituted by an act, modes, strategies, and relations created in the present by social groups and movements for a society that pursues the future (Boggs, 1977). Boggs claims that prefiguration is the ongoing political practice of a group, where their social modalities, decision-making, and personal and group experiences serve the ultimate goal of their desires for the future, but are already embodied in the present.

The social movement scholar Darcy Leach further developed the term, arguing that the prefigurative

Refers to a political orientation based on the premise that the ends a social movement achieves are fundamentally shaped by the means it employs, and that movements should therefore do their best to choose means that embody or “prefigure” the kind of society they want to bring about. (Leach, 2013: 1)

Amelia Thorpe, a scholar working on environmental law, draws from prefiguration to propose *prefigurative performances*, referring to critical and political interventions within the city that produce city–citizen relations “as if” the city were already different. Rather than “proposing” actions, these groups act “as if” the modalities they want to change have already been achieved (Thorpe, 2023).

The political scientist Leandro Minuchin (2021) looks at *prefigurative urbanization* from the perspective of critical geography to describe the immediate praxis of social movements in the present framed by a post-capitalist society. In other words, it is the reclamation of collective agency by the citizens, without the mediation of policy-makers, producing a new urban constellation through their actions: “The notion of prefigurative urbanization [is] to depict a territorial process where a plurality of self-managed infrastructural manifestations, replaces the role played by sovereign institutions and planning technologies in organizing spatio-temporal relations” (Minuchin, 2021: 1).

Looking at the placemaking of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales through a prefigurative lens opens up another way of understanding their temporality as an ongoing status. Rather than focusing on the liminal linear state between A and B, it

suggests visualizing the future in the practices of the present. By applying a prefigurative lens to these places, I open the possibility of considering the state of in-betweens as ongoing. Through their placemaking strategies and political practices, the Dzjanganl, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales pre-design the present toward a desired aspiration for the future. Rather than replacing the existing notion of urbanism and construction, they reimagine another mode of placemaking through the self-constructions that constitute their places. Here, the objects, materials, designs, and elements that are part of their urban area become part of a "prefigurative practice" (Cooper, 2016a, cited in Thorpe, 2023: 184), by producing alternative imaginaries "as if" they are already part of a city that welcomes them and recognizes their citizenship. I return here to the autonomy of migration and the "migrant's" agency when dealing with the country of arrival, in which, although they are perceived by the nation-state as "irregular" and "illegal" individuals, in many cases they act "as if" they are already citizens (Mezzadra, 2012). By embodying "the agency of being an agency" (Thorpe, 2023), the "migrant" individual allows themselves to reimagine and redesign the pre-established orders of the city, opening up new forms of city-citizen relations from an autonomous perspective. The residents of the Dzjanganl, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales take agency over their urbanization, acting "as if" they were already part of an "official neighborhood" within the city. Although burdened by the risk of eviction, they are already making neighborhoods. Here, utopia is crushed by a place in the making.

"Hope" as a Prefigurative Practice

Delving deeper into the placemaking of the Dzjanganl, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, I suggest here the use of "hope" as a prefigurative method to analyze the social practices within these places. During my stay within the communities, I encountered the state of "hope" as a feeling that precedes expectation, aspiration, and desire for something particular to happen in the future. Rather, "hope" was perceived as a form of everyday practice embodied in strategies and methods of placemaking.

I initially interpreted the state of "hope" represented in these placemakings through the lens of the "space of possibilities" that is also embodied by liminality. In his book *Les Rites de Passage*, the ethnographer Arnold Van Gennep ([1961] 2019) describes the liminal temporality between A and B as a transformative process, in which the person opens to the possibility of other perspectives and experiences a rebirth of their own being. The anthropologist Bjørn Thomassen (2012, 2015, 2016) takes this transformation of temporality into spatiality, moving away from the person-centered in order to analyze liminal processes in a spatio-territorial context, especially places that are between geographical and sociopolitical borders. Here, the "space of possibilities" is viewed from the perspective of territory, opening up a "hopeful state" of optimism. In this sense, the temporality of liminality is

understood as a process of transformation that creates new possibilities within the territory, with “hope” situated as the final state of transformation. However, the limitation of liminality lies in its linear temporality (from A to B), which overlooks the concept of prefigurative practices and the idea of “hope” as the driving force of these processes. Prefigurative practices, by contrast, represent a continuous process of bringing the future into the present—transforming the present-future into a permanent state in the making.

Within anthropological studies, “hope” is focused on a discussion of the future in cultural analysis (Appadurai, 2007, 2013). Specifically in migration and border regimes studies, “hope” goes hand in hand with the notion of “waiting,” investigating aspects of the future by focusing on the present that waiting provides. As I have discussed in previous chapters, waiting is often defined by residents as a state of “limbo,” which in some cases, triggers a “waning of hope” (Kornienko, 2014: 47, cited in Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner, 2018: 71). Waiting becomes a key strategy on the part of the border regime to “control and delay” migration, leading to a “disruption of hope” in which the “hopeless” state emerges. As I analyzed in Chapter 6, through state-run camps distributed in frontier cities across Europe, the border regime finds a temporary (and spatial) method of delaying these communities from moving. However, from the perspective of those living in these camps, waiting can also be transformed into a strategy against the border regime, which Appadurai calls the “politics of patience” (2001). Patience becomes a strategy to endure waiting, in which “hope” turns waiting into movement: waiting as motion (SAVVI Contemporary Berlin, 2022; see also Chapter 6).

Therefore, the complexity of engaging with “hope” in a border regime setting is that it can be practiced not only by the people-in-transit but can also be a strategy on the part of political agents, municipalities, and nation-states when managing and controlling migration flux. Specifically, in the case of self-built settlements, “hope” becomes one of the political state tactics to cope with the lack of permanent solutions and, in many cases, facilitate evictions within the city. “Hoping temporarily prevents informal settlement from breakdown” (Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner, 2018: 14; see below). Here, it highlights the other side of hoping and how the nation-state deals with informal processes in these places. “Hope” becomes a tactic to avoid giving definitive solutions to these informal constructions, substituting “false hope.” In this sense, “hope” becomes a double-edged sword since, when viewed from the perspective of political agents, hoping is a way to keep people “occupied and controlled” (Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner, 2018: 14), to delay solutions and decisions, as in the case of the brutal eviction of Tiburtina in 2003.

The Roman municipality was at that time in constant negotiations with the Tiburtina community, through round tables and meetings with the leaders and the community to look for solutions and strategies for Tiburtina to become a model of welcoming people-in-transit, something that, at that time, Italy lacked. These possi-

ble solutions were surrounded by “hopeful words” on the part of the political agents. In turn, Tiburtina’s placemaking was linked to the 2003 elections of the Roman municipality in which the center-left party—whose candidate, Enrico Gasbarra, was later elected president of the Province of Rome between 2003 and 2008—was in conversation with the Tiburtina community, promising bureaucratic solutions in terms of migratory asylum and support for the improvement of Tiburtina’s housing. These actions went viral on social media and television, building a positive image toward the center-left party, and thus getting more votes from Roman citizens, as they seemed to be looking for solutions to the “migration problem,” which were scarce at that time in the context of the Italian border regime (see further Briguglio Asgi, 2003²). The center-left party’s “hopeful promises” contributed to the final eviction of Tiburtina, as it took the residents by surprise and led to a rapid and violent eviction without resistance from the residents, NGOs, and volunteers (see Chapter 1). Here, “hope” became a tactic of violating human and housing rights, leaving the people of Tiburtina homeless and “hopeless” of an urban future.

However, “hope” from these perspectives remains person-centered, where the expectations and aspirations of people-in-transit frame the way the future is perceived. What if “hope” is considered a material-cultural practice of the present and a method for social and urban change? I draw inspiration from the notion of “Landscapes of Hoping,” a term coined by the anthropologists Janine Hauer, Jonas Østergaard Nielsen, and Jörg Niewöhner in their article “Landscapes of Hoping: Urban Expansion and Emerging Futures in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso” (2018). The authors argue for “hope” as a practice, by considering its temporality and the degree of driving force it exerts in “peripheral” urban spaces. They move away from the idea of “hope” as a person-centric modality to bring it closer to cultural-material processes, especially in self-building settlements, as a constant negotiation between the material reality of the present and expectations for a neighborhood in the future. I could sense firsthand the role of “hope” as a driving force in the placemaking of this research’s case studies. Apart from the waiting and the sense of “limbo,” “hope” seemed to be a state that was present in every moment, something that, in previous chapters, I referred to through the notion of becoming (see Chapter 6) and the capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2001; see Chapter 2), as people in these places engage with waiting through hope while navigating border regimes. Some residents of Los Arenales referred to the close connection between “hope” and “waiting” through the Spanish wordplay of “espera-nza” (waiting: *espera*; hope: *esperanza*).

As Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner summarize, the notion of “hope” has returned to the spotlight in anthropological discourses where the relationship

2 See <https://briguglio.asgi.it/immigrazione-e-asilo/2003/ottobre/rass-stampa-ferrari-14-10.html>

between contemporary migration and “hope” has been at the forefront in discussions of current migration regimes. Likewise, it is closely intertwined with optimism, expectation, anticipation, and, in some cases, utopianism as a term that has been very influential in the last decade. In this regard, “hope” is viewed as distinct from the subjectivization of person-centeredness and becomes a driving force for collective sociopolitical change. Appadurai, in his text “Housing and Hope” (2013), intertwines urban social change with “hope,” especially in “peripheral” urban spaces where poverty and precarity are the basis for a kind of “hope” that drives the community to act, protest, and demand change. Here “hope” focuses on the person and their community’s ability to confront their present reality and seek changes for the future—the “capacity to aspire” (Appadurai, 2001), for poor and “migrant” communities to make changes in their quality of life.

Instead, Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner shift away from the form of protest action and social change as specific events of “hope” toward the cultural material of everyday life, looking at it as a tangible and concrete practice of the present. Specific protest events are no longer regarded as gestures toward an abstract future but rather as actions of “hoping” in the present. The authors propose that “hoping” is an ongoing process and practice and, through the lens of material semiotics, analyze how “hope” emerges from particular worldly situational material in specific settings of self-construction in “peripheral” areas. Here, they outline how “hope takes place” (Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner, 2018: 2) when referring to the self-building of housing and urban spaces in the urban “periphery”, birthing the idea of “Landscapes of Hope” (Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner, 2018: 1).

The Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales strongly present “hope” as a tangible practice of their everyday self-construction. For example, in Los Arenales, the construction materials used by residents were not lightweight, such as plastic, chipboard, and wood, as in the case of the improvised structures in the Dzjantal; instead, they built their houses using cement and stone, which signified durability and permanence. As one of the members of Los Arenales argues: “We build with cement and stone so that no one can evict us.” Here, she tangibly exemplified a prefigurative practice of urban space. Deciding to use materials with these characteristics was a form of resistance and territorial proclamation, in which the “hope” of not being evicted was transformed into the “hope” of building permanently, “as if” they were already part of the urban space.

Another member of Los Arenales, who mentioned that after the daily construction work, many neighbors would get together to eat dinner, discuss their progress, and give each other building tips for the next day. “This was the moment of the day when we realized that our houses were already taking shape, and one felt hopeful to continue the next day,” this community member said. Here, motivation was derived from “hope” for the next working day, contributing to the daily driving force required to achieve the main objective of finishing their houses. Another commu-

nity member, shared with me his construction tactics when he gave me a tour of his house. After establishing the first pillars and foundations, he focused on where to build the sleeping quarters and then later the construction of the bathroom, living room, and kitchen. He recounted that this idea of building from the "inside out" was a common form of self-building strategy since "one does not know if the building material will be enough in the next few days." Essential rooms needed to be ready first, and the bedroom was the priority since it is "the room that gives the first foundation of belonging to a home." He recalled that when he and his family were building the main bedroom, they all "hoped" to see their home finished in the following years: "Hope made us get up every morning to keep building our home" (fieldnotes; Garland, 2022).

Therefore, the life experiences of these community members exemplify how "hope," in these specific cases, becomes the key to self-building, becoming the daily driver in the present to make room for an imagined urban future. That is to say, "hope" is not necessarily visualized in the future but is situated in the present, pre-designing building expectations. "Hope" becomes an action that produces the motivation to work the next day, not only from an individual perspective but also from one which accommodates the collective imagination of building an urban space—"Landscapes of Hoping" (Hauer, Østergaard Nielsen, and Niewöhner, 2018: 1). In parallel it becomes a material and tangible element: The houses become a concrete representation of "hope," no longer perceived as a "utopian" possibility but transformed into an action already happening in the here and now—these self-builds are "already" happening. From this perspective, "hope" becomes a unified strategy of placemaking by strengthening resistance and struggle in the long run while creating community in the here and now. The Dzjanganl is an excellent example of how duration serves as proof that "hope" became a mechanism to keep the settlement and its ecology of people, infrastructure, and networking from breaking down. The Dzjanganl lasted approximately 20 years. Although the community was only named in 2015, from the late 1990s groups of people-in-transit were already settling in the Les Dunes area outside Calais, where it gradually developed into one of the largest settlements in Northern Europe (see Chapter 1).

Therefore, the occupation in these places is based on an ongoing state of "hope," evolving in the present to open up possibilities and aspirations for the future. Through the lens of prefigurative practice, "hope" becomes a driving force for placemaking, which grabs the imagination of the future and forms the basis of everyday political practices. In these cases, "hope" is not utopianism but a concrete and tangible state coming to light through placemaking.

7.3 Rethinking the “Elsewhere”: *Somewhere Inbetween* as a Way of Neighboring

In this book, I have undertaken holistic research into the social transformation of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, often categorized as “non-places” and “places of exception.” The central questions that guided my research revolved around the social forms by which these places have created conviviality in the face of confrontation with border regimes. The thread that connects the anthropological and artistic-ethnographic dimensions of this book revolves around three key questions: How do the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales—so-called non-places—become social places? How have these self-constructed places created sociability in the face of violent interaction with border regimes? And to what extent might the concept of liminality and the state of inbetweenness play a role in their transformation and becoming? I conclude this Epilogue by inviting the reader to consider these questions through the tentative lens of *Somewhere Inbetween*—a notion that emerged gradually through the ethnographic and artistic process, rather than from a theoretical framework. This evolving conceptual and artistic framework aims to move away from the marginalized labels of “non-places” (Augé, 1995), “places of exception” (Agamben, 1998), and “peripheral places” (Gregory et al., 2011), toward places that move beyond these polarized categorizations. *Somewhere Inbetween* has helped me to look more closely at forms of placemaking that challenge the conventional dichotomy of “center” and “periphery” inherent in Western urban areas.

The Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales, through their particular placemaking, make tangible how their migratory experiences challenge the assumed dichotomy of “center-periphery” and, to a certain extent, question the duality between Western and non-Western societies. “The Marxist sociologist and cultural theorist Stuart Hall argues that the idea of the “West” is no longer merely a geographical concept, but becomes a discursive and power-political binary in the global imaginary between “the West and the Rest” (Hall and Gieben, [1992] 2018), which plays an important role in the postcolonial reflections of the last decade” (Garland, 2024a: 28). Through their self-organized practices and self-constructions, the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales embody a state of personal inbetweenness, as well as navigate the territorial inbetween within the geographical borders of the city. This challenges the polarized urban borders associated with Western postmodern cities.

In this sense, viewing these places through the tentative lens of *Somewhere Inbetween* suggests understanding their social construction as integral to the city rather than as distant outliers implied by the idea of the “periphery.” By recognizing the active role of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales in reshaping urban space, they challenge the notion of “peripheral places” by existing in a “somewhere” within the urban fabric. “Somewhere”—in-some-place—points to a place still inside the city’s

boundaries, though its precise location remains unclear³. With this, *Somewhere Inbetween* invites us to consider these places as active part of urban life (Somewhere) and through the residents' migratory state of inbetweenness (Inbetween), open other possibilities for living and belonging in the city. In other words, *Somewhere Inbetween* could express both the physical presence of these communities within the city and their ongoing negotiation of identity, belonging, and sociability. (I will return to this in the last section of the Epilogue).

In doing so, it also opens a contrast with the notion of "elsewhere." While *Somewhere Inbetween* suggests urban presence, "elsewhere" points to a space that lies beyond a defined zone. The word "elsewhere" implies "an-other" as an element that is neither neighboring nor familiar but rather distant and foreign. This use of "other" reflects a duality between "us" and "them," accentuating the idea of "otherness" highlighting subordinate social positions. In postcolonial theory the understanding of "Elsewhere" moves to a slightly different direction involving the production of knowledge and practices outside the scope of Western ideals and colonial structures, as analyzed in Chapter 6. The post-colonial scholars Ian Chambers and Lidia Curti ([1996] 2002) explore the ramifications of living on the margins or beyond established borders, framing it as an experience originating from "Elsewhere," or, as the decolonial scholar Catherine Walsh (2012) articulates, the product of "another thought." This underscores the multivocality that emerges from alternative perspectives, offering critique and resistance to prevailing Eurocentrism (see Chapter 6).

Renowned intellectuals such as Edward W. Said and Franz Fanon, in works including *Orientalism* (Said, 1977) and *Black Skin White Masks* (Fanon, 1952), deconstructed "the other," examining issues of race, culture, and intellectual development. Said highlighted the fixed polarity of colonial structures, creating a dichotomy between the "dominant West" and "inferior East," perpetuating a homogenized view of the "other." This racial hierarchy, present in Fanon's concept of the "White Mask," represents the negotiations of identity within the colonial power dynamic. The postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak (1985) coined the term *Othering* to highlight the imperial and colonial action discourse that marks the difference between the "self" and the "other" by creating the notion of the "other" as the marginalized voices excluded from the discourse of power (Römhild, 2018). Through these lenses, the construction of "the other" can be captured in the terms analyzed in this book: "non-places" (out of place), "place of exception" (out of society), "liminal places" (out of time), and "peripheral places" (out of the urban). Considering the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales not as places detached from the dynamics of the city,

3 This metaphoric naming is inspired by the various tactics residents use to protect these places from disappearing. Many of these sites are absent from mapping platforms such as Google Maps, a factor that can also slow down eviction processes.

but as unique examples of placemaking in their own right, challenges the idea of colonial binaries between “us” and the “others.” By examining the prefigurative practices inherent in these places, it is possible to uncover the community’s efforts against marginalization and exclusion, challenging these colonial structures.

Therefore, the Dzjungal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales demonstrate that it is possible to be interconnected within Western cities while simultaneously envisioning alternative forms of urban life, challenging the conceptual limits of Western ideals. Despite their struggle against border regimes, these communities have created their own urban environment, transcending the conventional understanding of placemaking. In their inbetweenness migratory state, characterized by constant uncertainty, flux, and struggle against border regimes, the residents of these places have fostered an environment that allows for cultural dialogue and the flourishing of diverse knowledge production. In this way, *Somewhere Inbetween* emerges as a provisional framework for a more inclusive understanding of placemaking, suggesting that alternative urban practices are essential for transcending the rigid categorizations imposed by colonial frameworks. The possibility of imagining alternative urban lifestyles within Western cities holds transformative potential, inviting a reexamination of urban spaces as sites of dynamic cultural exchange and co-creation. In this sense, *Somewhere Inbetween* operates as a lens through which to observe these places of alternative collective negotiations, struggles, resistances, becomings, and aspirations. Here, the inbetweenness of migratory experiences becomes visible not as a condition, but as a political and intellectual stance toward border regimes.

The Dream of a “Latin American City”

A compelling illustration of this emerges in the idea of the “Latin American city,” where Los Arenales generates forms of knowledge that unsettle the assumed dichotomy of “periphery” and “center.” Los Arenales’ desire to become “a Latin American city” exemplifies how dreams, aspirations, and projects can emerge from an in-between space. The prefigurative strategies emerging in Los Arenales distance themselves from the dichotomy of colonial preconceptions by offering a shared understanding of conviviality as practices of reclaiming territory, as well as dealing with violent interactions with the border regime. When I first learned about the Los Arenales community’s dream, one of the community members answered my question: If the community could say in a few words what Los Arenales is, what would it be? She replied without thinking: “Los Arenales is the idea of a Latin American city.” I asked her why a Latin American city and not a Latin American neighborhood? She replied:

Those of us who live in Los Arenales come from different origins, not only geographically but culturally, which makes our community full of diversity. Why

shouldn't we share it with others in the city? In any case, thanks to our arrival, Antofagasta is no longer just Chilean. We already have the second generation here—we think it's time to cross the borders.

The idea of a Latin American city in this case goes much further than an idea of territory and city, but proposes a way of living with and through communities. Therefore, the uniqueness of Los Arenales, located in Chilean territory introduces an alternative perspective of what a city could look like, one that diverges from conventional Western norms of urban planning. The term “Latin America” acquires here a closed connection to decolonial thinking. The inhabitants of Los Arenales are inspired by the ideas of South American and Latin American decolonial intellectuals who have transcended academic boundaries to shape the city through decolonial practices. This suggests that we should view Latin America not merely as a geographic region but as an expanding perspective and epistemic space that can resonate globally.

It is an approach that, again, while it can be said to have roots in the Latin American experience, finds sustenance globally; hence the appeal to many critical theories, especially those emerging from similar subaltern epistemic locations. This differentiates it sharply from earlier “Latin American paradigms,” such as dependency and liberation theology even if these also had a transnational dimension. (Escobar, 2020a, n.p.)

This notion of Latin America contrasts with European colonial ideologies, as it sets aside nationalism and embraces a more inclusive narrative. For the post-development thinker Arturo Escobar (2020), the concept of Latin America serves as a geopolitical manifesto, inviting us to break away from the enduring 19th-century Eurocentrism that violently imposed the ideal of homogenizing the diverse Americas. The Latin American ideology has deep historical layers that encompass the eradication of indigenous peoples to create a Latin America with rigid borders, where only Europeans could be included. Escobar emphasizes that we as Latin Americans must abandon and break with these obsolete fixities and seek more nuanced and inclusive approaches that fit the multiplicities, complexities, and realities of our present.

In his book *The Idea of Latin America*, the decolonial thinker Walter D. Mignolo (2009) also rethought inherited categories by bringing to the surface the constructed aspects of the “idea of Latin America.” For Mignolo, Latin America is not a tangible entity, but an idea constructed by European colonialism that imagines a Eurocentric and racialized continent at the “service” of the colonizer's development. Mignolo argues that rather than visualizing the “discovery” and “conquest” of America, it is an “invention” of it (Shaw, 2006). Seen through this lens, over the centuries, Latin America has moved away from its “Latinity”—which refers to the Latin colonizers from Spain, Portugal, and France who settled in American territory and subse-

quently produced a “neo-Latin culture,” which is the result of miscegenation with the indigenous peoples and, to a lesser extent, sub-Saharan Africa (Lucena, 2014). By distancing itself from European associations, Latin America has become the “new world,” categorized as a continent with “mestizaje” in the racial hierarchies of white supremacy (Mignolo, 2009).

From this perspective, “mestizaje,” the Spanish word for “miscegenation,” describes the complicated mixture of biological and cultural elements between different ethnic groups. Through a decolonial lens, the term “mestizaje” carries a derogatory connotation, as it implies that one ethnic group is considered “superior and purer” than another, perpetuating the obscuring of underlying racial structures and marginalizing groups with a predominantly indigenous heritage. However, it continues to be used to define Latin American identity, highlighting the merger between Europeans and indigenous communities (González-Barrera, 2015). In an interview with the scholar Patti Blanco in 1991, the feminist, queer, activist scholar Gloria Anzaldúa takes the idea of “mestizaje” in a new direction by developing the concept of the “new mestiza consciousness,” highlighting how this concept can provide metaphors for a more inclusive and audacious society, with the “new mestiza” as border-crossers who are able to move between cultures, territory, and languages. This perspective from the “borderland” is a unique point of view that cannot be experienced from a “monocultural” perspective (Betancor, 2012) (see Chapter 6).

Today, in a postcolonial era, the idea of the “monocultural” is fractured by a post-migrant society in which the borders within a city are already juxtaposed and fluid. With the image of the “new mestiza,” Anzaldúa motivates us to break with the alienating dichotomies of Western thinking. In doing so, she proposes first unlearning the Western dichotomy, which she describes from a feminist and queer perspective as “the whore/virgin dichotomy” (Anzaldúa, 1987: 84; also Betancor, 2012), which, by extension, reveals the complexity of this supposed colonial polarization. By this, the “new mestiza consciousness” not only challenges the binaries of colonial thinking, but also points toward forms of worldliness based on plurality and lived intertwining, echoing alternative understandings of cosmopolitan belonging.

Returning to the idea of a Latin American city, Los Arenales proposes a place-making where multiple cultures, identities, and knowledges come together, interact, coexist, clash, and, in some cases, create joint projects of alternative urban landscape. In this way, Los Arenales distances itself from the traditional idea of “cosmopolitanism” rooted in patriarchal, bourgeois, and white-dominated colonial structures that pretend that all people are part of the same “universal community” (Kleingel, 2003; see also Cheah and Robbins, 1998). In turn, Fanon (1952) emphasizes how colonialism has influenced other forms of cosmopolitanism, giving the term a postcolonial perspective. This type of cosmopolitanism is intertwined with the contradictions of colonial legacies and analyzes what “global citizenship” is in the postcolonial era. With this, I want to depart from the colonial idea of cosmopoli-

tanism to highlight how postcolonial discourse has opened up a rich spectrum of ideas that help us understand today's dynamics of mobility, cross-border exchange, and hybridization.

The everyday negotiations in Los Arenales echo what some scholars call "minor cosmopolitanism," which moves away from the idea of "flânerie: a white man's journey around the world" (see Chapter 3). This is a concept that underlines the impossibility of the cosmopolitan claim today, even if the idea of globalization and the technology of communication and mobilization say otherwise. Inequality, racist structures, and patriarchy, among other factors, are embedded in the construction of the cosmopolitan ideal. Instead, "minor cosmopolitanism" does not leave out diversity between communities but embraces it as part of today's postcolonial and postmigrant society while not rejecting the search for common coexistence and shared understandings of justice and equality (RTG Minor Cosmopolitanisms research group, 2018).

Following this, the anthropologist Regina Römhild (2018) coined the term "cosmopolitan interventions" to highlight practices that analyze and transform colonial structures and power dynamics constituted in an urban space, which rejects the traditional Eurocentrism of cosmopolitanism. She sees the minor cosmopolitan as a "cosmopolitanism of the border," which opposes dominant colonial structures and current border regimes from a migratory perspective through "subaltern, minority and minoritized" practices. The "minor" practices of the "minor cosmopolitan" distance themselves from the global ideals of the traditional cosmopolitan; rather, their strategies in the struggle against Eurocentrism are present in their everyday practices (Römhild, 2018: 66). Los Arenales' ideal of a Latin American city thus reflects these two important aspects of a contemporary minor cosmopolitan. On the one hand, in daily prefigurative practices Los Arenales residents contest the structures of Western cities by questioning who has the right to belong and who does not. On the other hand, the recognition and celebration of Los Arenales as a community full of cultural and knowledge-based diversity through the idea of a "Latin American city" proposes an urban living model that recognizes that the city is an urban space where there is "one world with many worlds" (De la Cadena and Blaser, 2018). Los Arenales recognizes that it is part of a postmigrant city in which the Western polarization between the "center" and "periphery" is blurred by a form of mutual conviviality. This is not necessarily communal and collective, but rather framed by respect for others or, as they call it, "respect for one's neighbor." Here, Los Arenales dreams of a city far away from pre-established borders and preconceived nationalisms. A vision captured in their own words:

In our city we have good communication with the neighbors, there is peace, no fights are seen. It can be said that in our ideal city we live in tranquility, things go well but we respect each other. In our city there is no racism, we fully live diversity

in the broad sense of the word. In our city, we have stopped surviving to start living and enjoy well-being. The houses are dignified and spacious, and they allow us to develop intimacy, being sheltered from the outside, with privacy. In our city there are green areas, there are good schools, we have health services appropriate to our needs, commerce is nearby, we have security thanks to the closeness of public order agents with whom we maintain fluid and respectful relations. In our city we all have access to culture and information is available to everyone, especially for the children, who can always attend different workshops that allow them to find new friends and interests. In this city we all know each other. Some get along, others don't, but mutual respect always prevails. In our city we can find recreational spaces full of joy, ideal for us to recognize each other as neighbors. Our city is orderly, clean, and dignified. This city does not yet exist, but we want it to become a reality.

Manifesto excerpt from "Building our ideal city in Los Arenales" created in the workshop on the right to the city held at La Casita in 2019. My English translation from Spanish.

Toward Future City-Making through *Somewhere Inbetween*

Closing this Epilogue, I take inspiration from the dream of the ideal city in Los Arenales quoted above. By searching for ways to design a city that embodies conviviality and neighborhood, Los Arenales invites us to reimagine an urban space from the perspective of autonomous places of migration. In today's urban landscape, characterized by ambiguous borders and unclear socioeconomic dynamics on the one hand, and violent border regimes with racist structures on the other, self-built places such as the Dzjanganl, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales emerge as alternative infrastructures that challenge the current definition of the city. The prefigurative practices observed in these communities are part of their daily struggle to integrate into the city, showing the potential for an alternative understanding of urban life. The creativity and ingenuity of these communities—building homes and neighborhoods on abandoned urban and land spaces—reveal the limits of traditional forms of doing urban planning and pave the way for alternative approaches to placemaking, overcoming the divisive ideas of “periphery” and “center” in today's cities.

Returning to the notion of *Somewhere Inbetween*, I do not wish to romanticize the precarious lives that these communities experience on a daily basis, lives that are, as the urban scholar AbdouMaliq Simone says, “uninhabitable” and characterized by constant “volatility and uncertainty” (Simone, 2018: 16). Instead, I seek to challenge conventional notions of inhabiting a city and engaging in urban life. Simone's insightful analysis in his book *Improvised Lives: Rhythms of Endurance in an Urban South* (2018) helps me to look at the habitability of these places as a form of stepping out of the preconceived idea of the “periphery” and “center.” Simone argues that the survival strategies of the poor are to “take what they can get” from a city that increasingly excludes them from socioeconomic structures. He examines how placemaking

in the Global South provides the elements and infrastructures available in the city for the poor to construct their own kind of urban life. The inhabitants of the Dzjanggal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales go one step further. In occupying abandoned spaces and going beyond mere acceptance of the norms dictated by the border regime, they take control by distancing themselves from urban dichotomies, initiating alternative methods of placemaking. Their prefigurative practices of self-governance allow these communities to engage with the fabric of the city; in a sense they take control of "what they want to get" from the city and seek alternative ways to build their own form of neighborhoods.

Through their prefigurative practices, the Dzjanggal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales exemplify daily forms of resistance to the border regimes. These "rhythms of endurance" (Simone, 2018) serve as keys to survival and also underscore how everyday resistance offers avenues to discover alternative forms of placemaking. The ecological systems created both inside and outside these places highlight the communities' remarkable ability to foster conviviality, a phenomenon Simone describes as "relation-making." The uniqueness of these places lies in the convergence of various forms of relation-making outside Eurocentric ideals.

Viewing the city through the tentative lens of *Somewhere Inbetween* means also advocating for an alternative urban cohabitation that promotes practices of care and territorial healing with a particular perspective that emanates from this migratory context. The urban planners Catalina Ortiz and Oscar Gómez Córdoba (2023) advocate for "territorial healing" as a holistic approach to address trauma stemming from violence in the Global South. Rooted in a decolonial perspective and drawing from postconflict city studies, they emphasize interventions that collectively restore "geotraumas" (Pain, 2021, quoted in Ortiz and Gomez Córdoba, 2023: 1). Their proposal transcends institutional frameworks, incorporating decentralized and autonomous methods to address the symbolic, embodied, and emotional dimensions of urban life (Ortiz and Gomez Córdoba, 2023). The prefigurative practices of places such as the Dzjanggal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales are closely related to territorial healing. The creation of a Latin American city on Chilean territory, as envisioned in Los Arenales, reflects a commitment to civic care and territorial healing. Coming from a migration perspective of the inbetween, these places take the social and political position of the "third space" (Bhabha, [1994] 2012) seriously in order to initiate a process of repair and the healing of wounds suffered on their migration journey.

Building on this, territorial healing is one of the principles of a reconfiguration of the urban landscape that departs from traditional urban paradigms, in which capitalist, neoliberal, and fast-paced life in metropolitan cities often forgets the existence of "the other as neighbor." I am inspired by the ideas of hn. lyonga, a poet, author, and dear friend who has artistically investigated what it means to "become a neighbor" in a European metropolis such as Berlin, researching everyday practices within neighborhoods and rethinking their boundaries for groups that exist outside

of them. For hn. lyonga, the concept of neighborhood goes beyond the physical proximity between communities; it involves belonging and rootedness in a collective way. hn. lyonga argues that fundamental aspects such as listening, mutual learning, and collective thinking are necessary for the creation of a neighborhood, emphasizing that a neighborhood is intertwined with neighbors, friends, and networks whose social values are commitment to community participation and exchange of ideas. This creates opportunities that invite one to imagine “us” as a way of making places (hn. lyonga, 2023). In this way, neighborhood is transformed into *neighboring* (hn. lyonga, 2023), a verb that describes the act of creating a collective identity within the urban landscape. Los Arenales’ ideals of becoming a Latin American city resonate with this idea. Their deliberate decision to discard the label of “migrants” and become “neighbors,” as mentioned in Chapter 6, transforms the way people-in-transit relate to the city they have arrived in. Self-identifying as a “neighbor” becomes a strategy of care and affection toward the new territory and its inhabitants. This mindset of respect for others as neighbors often contrasts with Western cities, where the fast-paced rhythm of life often prevents communal connections, exchange, and bonding within the confines of the home.

As a final reflection, the sociability inherent in the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales has become evident throughout this book, countering the label of “non-places” (Augé, 1995), as well as “places of exception” (Agamben, 1998), and “peripheral places” (Gregory, 2011), as their placemaking goes beyond territorial and geographical aspects and includes the social, cultural, and neighboring dimensions of the city. Through their migratory narratives, resistances, and resilience toward the border regime, these places propose a more inclusive and compassionate urban landscape that reflects the diversity inherent in migratory flows. In other words, the placemaking of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales proposes a rethinking of urban planning and the fostering of a sense of belonging within a foreign homeland. By prioritizing the well-being of both the inhabitants and their surroundings, they aspire to create urban spaces that resonate with a spirit of care, conviviality, and neighborliness.

In today’s evolving urban policy in the West, where people-in-transit find themselves marginalized from the fabric of the city, it is vital for political figures, municipal authorities, urban planners, architects, and others to earnestly consider alternative perspectives of placemaking. The adoption of a “politics of care” (Simone, 2018) emerges as a key proposal, emphasizing the daily prefigurative practices unfolding in these often-overlooked places by advocating for existing processes, ensuring the “right of way” (Simone, 2018: 134) for these communities and offering support for their improvisational efforts and collaborative initiatives. It seeks to harness the positive energies derived from these grassroots practices, with the ultimate goal of fortifying urban infrastructures and services. These communities offer prefigurative practices that suggest an alternative foundation for a future city-making. Recogniz-

ing their community-making as a form of political practice against border regimes provides invaluable tools for understanding and reshaping today's urban environment. In this vision, cities go beyond mere functionality, becoming welcoming and inclusive.

The places of the Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales strengthen community ties by going beyond conventional placemaking and incorporating various community-building aspects that stem from their own migratory narratives. By interweaving cultural nuances, individual narratives, and collective endeavors, they create a resilient fabric with shared aspirations for the future. Through these ongoing efforts, these communities suggest to the city that it is possible to transcend traditional borders and encourage rethinking established notions of "periphery" and "center." The Dzjantal, Tiburtina, and Los Arenales generate collective responses to contemporary border regimes and foster interconnected social spaces that address the challenges of inclusion in today's cities, proposing that it is indeed possible to envision belonging across borders.