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Plurality of the production of secured spaces in Genoa's historic centre: Justification and spatial justice

Sébastien Jacquot

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Summary

This article examines the multiple modes used for securing Genoa's historic centre by identifying the demand for spatial justice. As formulated in or underlying public and private interventions, through the reference space where these activities take place and the justifications proffered for them. This work relies on the premise that actors have the competence to work towards ensuring justice, based on certain aspects of pragmatic sociological knowledge. The "production" of security therefore appears to be multi-faceted, based on several rationales and justifications for taking action. An urban renewal issue, the urban security policies implemented by the municipal authorities are based on the application of recommendations issued by a network of local bodies working on this problem – the FISU (Italian Urban Security Forum) – and the implementation of a policy aimed at increasing the traffic of certain types of users, along with the desire to keep a check on certain marginal groups, particularly sex workers. The controversial private closure of certain public areas has brought other expressions of security requirements to light. Such an approach to spatial justice is akin to the idea of procedural justice.

Key words: Spatial justice, security, securing, legitimacy, eviction, historic centre, Genoa.

The central districts of Mediterranean cities, emblematic of popular city-centres, have undergone a significant process of gentrification since the 1990s (Bidou-Zachariasen, 2003). However, this gentrification may be described as somewhat incomplete as the changes that have taken place in these areas have been patchwork-style, marked by resistance from the working classes (Giroud, 2007). The co-existence of groups from a variety of horizons, with different practices, in the same central areas, raised the issue of legitimacy – who are the area's legitimate residents and visitors? In this connection, some practices or population categories were seen from an angle of insecurity. This article focuses essentially on urban security issues.

Urban security implies ensuring security in the city through the institution of specific apparatus. The « apparatus » consists of the ensemble made of discourses, institutions, urban developments, thereby enabling territorial control (Foucault, 1994), through discourses on the city, an "urban security planning" (Bourdin, 2004) and its specific techniques (video surveillance, closing-off areas), urbanistic regulations, and the definition of the role of individuals. Urban regeneration increasingly includes such an apparatus of secured spaces production (Coleman, Sim, 2000).

However, urban security is not the monopoly of public actors and may stem from several sources, falling within the framework of both public and private policies and practices. In addition, it is impacted by different conceptions of law and order, of control and the maintenance of public order, as well as different models of intervention. These models of intervention are themselves based on values and ideologies and the definition of practices and categories of users deemed illegitimate and those designated as the "usual suspects" (Coleman, Tombs, Whyte, 2005). Hence, security is manifested through the deployment of heterogeneous apparatus, relying on different actors and spaces, akin to Ugo Rossi's stand on the "multiplex city" (2004).

In the central areas examined, over-investment was noted in some districts, marked by real estate, social and commercial changes, bringing different territorial inequalities to light. This corresponded to the initial, spatial injustice-related approach, as developed by Harvey (1998)

in his "liberal considerations". And yet, justifications can inevitably be found for such territorial inequalities. In the case of Genoa's historic centre, according to municipal and government actors, the purpose was to focus attention on strategic activities that would then spread like wildfire through urban standardization efforts. Hence, territorial inequalities are not necessarily unjust – it all depends on the perspective adopted. Theories regarding justice themselves admit to a certain dosage of inequality in the name of equity, according to John Rawls, for instance. Based on the possible plurality of justifications or protests pertaining to spatial inequalities, the first section of this work shall demonstrate the need to consider the manner in which spatial justice requirements are raised in urban security models and practices by the actors themselves. This position is inspired by pragmatic sociology methods (Boltanski, Thévenot, 1991); it is based on the principle of the existence of criteria and judgments that are internal to the socio-spatial, plural and perhaps even concurrent worlds, and find expression in the practices and justifications of actors who are presumed to enjoy reflexive and critical abilities, making it possible to develop a sociology of criticism (Boltanski, 2009). Justice is primarily the skill of being able to judge, and only secondarily an exogenous assessment category for researchers.

These multifarious definitions of spatial justice shall be examined on the basis of the different forms of the production of urban security in Genoa. They can be seen both in public interventions – in which the issue of spatial justice is described explicitly, with reference to theories and models – and in private or even informal urban practices that also include an assessment of the just or unjust nature of public measures and the current situation. After an introduction describing how the subject of insecurity emerged in Genoa, different security models that have developed there shall be examined, which will make it possible to identify a kind of spatial justice that is internalised in political and citizens' mobilisation.

1. The development of the issue of security in Genoa

Spatial justice and securing the city

Spatial justice is a fairly recent concern (Gervais-Lambony, Dufaux, 2009; Soja, 2010), as compared to the idea of social justice, while frequently being used as an entry point for building works proposed as a form of radical geography, both to serve environmental interests (Blanchot, Moreau, 2009), as well as to provide access to the city (Fainstein, 2009; Lehman-Frisch, 2009).

In geography, the issue was first raised in the 1970s by David Harvey (1998). In the first approach, spatial justice may be considered to mean the fair or just allocation of resources in a given territory. The deprivation of some goods, the remoteness of urban amenities and the combined location of groups facing social difficulties are the signs of an unjust city, as described in the works by Lefebvre (1968). Applied to the "production" of security, such a conception of spatial justice takes inequalities in access to security into account on a territorial basis, for instance, through a geo-statistical analysis of the distribution of offences or the territorialisation of urban security. This method identifies areas that are more or less concerned by some types of offences a posteriori and makes it possible to identify various forms of injustice – from absence of power to marginalisation, according to Iris Young's categorisation (Dufaux, Gervais-Lambony, 2009). These categorisations help in progressing from merely spotting inequalities described as unfair (provided that the criteria can be demonstrated, since inequalities cannot in themselves be described as such), to studying the processes that produce such injustices.

That brings us to a second approach, in which insecurity is perceived to be as much a "spatialised" good as a factor interacting with urban space – in other words, both a product of urban space and an urban factor of production. Both these approaches – pertaining to the "spatial turn" (Soja, 2000; 2010) – have been theorised by M. Dikeç (2009). He makes a distinction between the spatialisation of injustice and the injustice of spatiality, which refers to the manner in which space itself produces and maintains situations of injustice. Consequently, interactions between spatial justice and security designate both the spatialisation of inequalities linked to insecurity and security, as well as the manner in which spatialised apparatus produce spatially differentiated security.

However, what is missing is the criteria that could help assess the degree of spatial justice – a situation of injustice cannot be deduced merely from the acknowledgement of inequalities. And as shown by L. Boltanski, the framework in which such an assessment of a given situation is reached must itself be constructed: "the critical reference to justice struggles to define not just the sets within which asymmetries must be unveiled, but also the beings that must be taken into account – whether they are human or non-human" (2009). When applied to the idea of spatial justice, this raises the issue of the construction of a reference space, somewhere between calling States into question as the regulatory space, the emergence of cities as political territories (Le Galès, 2003), the fragmentation of institutions and the formation of transnational solidarities. When spatial justice is developed locally, it implies a reference spatial framework, relying on a special spatial imaginary (Dikeç, 2007), as will be shown by taking the example of the production of secured spaces in Genoa's historic centre.

Thus, rather than attempting to identify objective criteria enabling the researcher to assess the degree of spatial justice contained in security modalities, this article is based on the idea of the ability of actors (including inhabitants) to judge justice. This position draws its inspiration from the pragmatic school of sociology (Boltanski, Thévenot, 1991), which takes a serious view of assessments made by individuals themselves through the "sense of justice" that "ordinary critics" have (Boltanski, 2009). It involves considering that individuals and institutionalised groups have a certain "competence in justice" (Boltanski, 1990), i.e. the skill to define and assess situations. Discussions or controversies between actors reveal criteria – certain "orders of magnitude" referring to different types of legitimisation. These types of legitimisation are based on the idea of "superior common principles" enabling an agreement on the fair or unfair nature of a situation. The need or demand for spatial justice is therefore internalised within the socio-spatial world, making it possible to accept a multitude of conceptions of spatial justice; all their manifestations, discourses, effectiveness and coherence would be studied. Such an approach may be related to the idea of procedural justice, "defined and negotiated between several stakeholding actors" (Dufaux, Gervais-Lambony, 2009), but without affirming the nature of the outcome as just in itself, as evidenced by the participatory debate on the redevelopment of the Bronx Terminal Market analysed by S. Fainstein (2009). Likewise, by analysing the public transport conflicts in Los Angeles, E. Soja (2010) showed the "contrasting visions of equity and justice" that can be found at the root of the stands taken by different parties to a conflict. The idea of a plurality of possible conceptions of spatial justice put forward by different actors through conflicts or negotiations is the main thrust of this article.

The study is the outcome of research trips to Genoa between 2006 and 2008, which made it possible to conduct formal interviews and informal discussions with the historic centre's actors who led to the transformation of its security situation (public institutional actors,

inhabitants mobilised in various security projects, actors from local associations), along with phases of observation and a study of urbanistic and local press documents¹ (1997-2010).

Genoa and the emergence of insecurity as an urban problem

Genoa's historic centre stands out because of its special morphology, an outcome of urbanistic processes of destruction and protection, and is currently established as a public action territory within the framework of urban regeneration (Gazzola, 2003), identified as such in different regulatory plans² in Genoa since 1976. Marked by the dilapidation of the built area, the historic centre became the target for interventions covering 113 hectares, particularly in view of the preparations for the 1992 Colombian event at the old port, adjoining the medieval area. Other urban events (the G8 in 2001, European Cultural Capital in 2004) offered further opportunities for mobilising massive public funds (Masbouni, 2004) in order to proceed with the rehabilitation of Genoa's historic centre. In this context, the issue of security was present right from the beginning, in the form of citizens' demands or as part of urbanistic programmes. It was also taken up by the local press in Genoa's historic centre – a series of articles published between 1984 and 1987 reveal an extensive coverage of petty crimes in the historic centre and the presentation of areas that could be considered as being conducive to crime due to their shape itself; the historic centre was reduced to its lanes and by-lanes – called *vicoli* or *carruggi* – seen as a hub for muggings, overdosed drug-addicts and sometimes crime.

However, the focus on insecurity was not based on any consensus, and appear through major conflicts based on principles. Indeed, insecurity was envisaged here not in the form of a feeling or statistics, but as a political category, in the sense that the emergence and mobilisation of the idea of insecurity could change the priorities and modalities of public action (Bonelli, 2010). The issue of the insecurity of areas in Genoa's historic centre was highlighted by citizens' groups of varied orientations, whereas the responses of public actors gradually changed, leading to a crystallization of the principles of intervention.

In the 1980s, Residents' Committees were formed that castigated the dilapidation of the built-up area and the presence of drug addicts in the centre's lanes and by-lanes. The issue of security was raised explicitly, with an appeal for intervention by the authorities, whose activities were till then seen as a complete abandonment of the area (Associazione per la Rinascita del Centro Antico, 1992), while the relationship between immigrants and insecurity was increasingly evoked by some of these committees. The committee movement then split up into two groups; while one initiated a participatory approach based on urban requalification programmes, subscribing to the idea that urbanistic interventions were a prerequisite for the resolution of other problems (Besio, 1999), the other group highlighted the security-related dimension of the inhabitants' demands and did some self-organisation. Thus, at the end of the 1980s, patrolling by groups of residents, armed with sticks, was initiated, and they went after certain so-called undesirable elements (drugs peddlers in particular). While speaking of this period during interviews, some of the traders legitimised these activities by ascribing the fault to the authorities' powerlessness.

Conversely, for the authorities, the security issue came second. For them, interventions in the built-up area and urban regeneration seemed to hold the promise of resolving security

¹ Il Secolo XIX.

² Piano Regolatore Generale in 1976, followed by Piano Urbanistico Comunale in 2000.

problems. Consequently, the lack of security was analysed in the diagnostic documents on the historic centre produced by the historic centre's commune-level observatory, CIVIS, or in the argument defending the URBAN 2 project, as one of the dimensions of "degrado sociale" (social degradation). Giuseppe Pericu, Genoa's Mayor from 1997 to 2007 (left coalition), commented on his two terms in office in a book reviewing this period (Pericu, Leiss, 2007); while the historic centre occupied an important place in his narrative, the issue of security was not used as an entry point for his discourse.

On the other hand, Marta Vincenzi, the new Mayor elected in 2007 and a member of the same coalition, changed the order of priorities, in view of the greater predominance of the security issue at the national level. An urban security department was established, with F. Scidone as the assessor. However, this change was not merely the outcome of the advent of a new municipality team; in fact, for several years, the regional government, along with the municipal authorities, had been thinking about urban security and both the geographical proximity of the seats of power between Genoa's Town Hall and the Liguria Region's building, and their political concordance³, promoted informal and formal discussions (symposiums) between elected representatives and regional and municipal technicians. In addition, the emphasis on security in municipal politics was in line with Italy's national-level measures. Under the impetus of the national government, a series of Patti di sicurezza or security pacts were set up between the prefecture, commune, region and province, which then agreed on common objectives. This instrument drew inspiration from the Local Security Contracts drawn up in France in 1997 (Bonelli, 2010). The security pact was concluded in June 2007 in Genoa, defining shared commitments and intervention priorities (prostitution control, urban requalification for the purposes of security, etc.). The municipality then emerged as a legitimate actor for regulating security, reinforced by the 8/8/2008 national decree. These changes then raised the issue of the centre's security models.

2 Public principles for the centre's security

The production of secured spaces in the historic center called for the concept of social justice underlying public action to be defined. Next we'll have to study the categorisations that are formulated to act on insecurity.

Actors' networks and principles of security – what kind of spatial justice?

The interviews conducted with public actors revealed the desire to base urban security on principles. In fact, security actors in Genoa's municipality claimed to follow the new intervention methodologies summarised by the FISU or Italian Forum for Urban Security. The FISU was an offshoot of the European Forum for Urban Safety (EFUS), a federation of local governments established in 1987 by the former Mayor of Épinay-sur-Seine, Gilbert Bonnemaïson, active in the field of municipal security in the 1980s and 1990s. In 2010, the EFUS brought together several hundred local authorities in Europe, particularly in France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Portugal. Its activities were based on a preventive and integrational rationale (Bonelli, 2010). The FISU was formed in 1996 and brought almost a hundred Italian local governments together. It acted as a relay-network between theories and practices formulated abroad and Italian practitioners and elected representatives, making it possible to adapt programmes and initiate exchanges of experience.

³ Marta Vincenzi, Genoa's mayor since 2007, is a member of the Partito Democratico (centre-left party), along with Claudio Burlando, the former Mayor and current President of the Liguria Region.

In fact, the FISU published a certain number of recommendations and clearly stood apart from other forms of security that were based exclusively on repression or situational prevention. Among its founding principles is the balance between freedom and security and the idea that security is achieved more effectively through better integration and a fairer distribution of resources within the city. Thus, one prerequisite for fair socio-spatial distribution is put forward, illustrating the idea of a spatial justice that is internal to actors' practices and discourses, and it seems to be accepted as a publication listing 100 best practices mentions "the complete philosophy guiding security principles" (FISU, 2008). The manifesto adopted in 2000 by the European Forum in Naples, "Sécurité & démocratie, le manifeste des villes" (Security and Democracy – The City Manifesto), promotes the development of multi-cultural cities and the inclusion of security in urban policies. It puts forward the principle of the need for "inclusion" and "prevention", while exclusively repressive policies are deemed inefficient. The political dimension of security was therefore laid down, making it possible to oppose strictly technical responses that evaded the debate on principles.

A forum of local authorities, this network is motivated by the idea that cities are the fundamental cogs in the wheel and the main partners in public action regarding security, by implementing its fundamental principles through a sharing of experiences via publications compiling best practices. It offers training programmes and seminars for elected representatives and local technicians, imparted by expert practitioners often wearing two hats – an academician's and a local public actor's hat. The courses offered to local officials and management staff include a theoretical as well as practical approach, mobilising urban theoreticians and urban security. However, this does not mean that models are to be directly adapted; on the contrary, a critical study is undertaken, for instance by standing out from situational prevention. Thus, one of the trainers said, "A safe community is a community that looks after itself and does not abandon any of its members facing difficulties"⁴ (Bonaposta, 2006). This implies preventive measures that seek greater social linkages. Conversely, situational prevention is deemed ineffective and unjust, as it leaves the "cause of the problems unchanged, only limiting itself, in substance, to pushing them elsewhere" (FISU, 2006/class by D. Bonaposta). Thus, the principles and modalities of action promoted by the FISU present a specific vision of spatial justice related to preventive policies, as opposed to situational prevention and repression models. Its reference space is the city and not district, which means that the consequences of security policies must be taken into consideration at this scale.

Genoa's municipal authorities actively subscribe to this network. The Liguria Region too is an active member, conducting experimentations in its different cities, including Genoa. In addition, Claudio Montaldo, the region's deputy security in-charge has been the FISU president for several years. In the discussions on principles and recommendations related to local security policies, the Liguria Region has emerged as a key connector and actor. A regional urban security observatory was set up, led by Stefano Padovano, a sociologist specialising in the study of urban insecurities, and Claudio Montaldo monitored its activities directly. The experiments conducted by the region were taken over by the Genoa commune, despite some differences (on the use of video surveillance). Another indication of the multi-dimensional conception of security was the inclusion of the sociologist, Carla Costanza⁵ - who previously managed a municipal department that dealt with problems related to the

⁴ D. Bonaposta's intervention is based on a commentary of North American texts, hence the use of the term "comunità" in his courses – a direct derivative of the term "community".

⁵ Two interviews were conducted with Carla Costanza in 2006 and 2008.

ageing of populations – in the Città sicura municipal department in 2007. The change in department was a sign of greater linkages between social issues and security issues. Urban security was linked to municipal and regional social intervention policies, and was based on two pillars: "welfare and urban requalification" (interview with S. Padovano, 2008).

The reconfiguration of public action framework in the field of security in Genoa (principles, re-organisation, actors mobilised) was therefore based on the FISU's recommendations, deploying a specific conception of spatial justice, rooted in the idea of the city as an area of intervention and of the necessity of handling security through a social prism.

Managing mobilities to produce secured spaces

Other long-term intervention rationales were added to the FISU's recommendations, particularly the promotion of a principle concerning human circulation and the categorisations of legitimate users, unveiling a pluralistic conception of spatial justice, and functioning at another scale as well, by defining who should occupy the rehabilitated areas.

The first times security was taken into consideration in urbanistic interventions in the 1980s, it was based on a premise that has been upheld since then by local public actors: human traffic flows within crisis areas contribute to their recovery and security. The first (unrealised) project of this type was prepared by the Genoese architect, De Carlo, for the Pré and Darsena neighbourhoods in the 1980s – among the most dilapidated areas – within the framework of the historic centre's urban regeneration plan, in preparation for the 1992 urban event. Under this project, the creation of human traffic flows through the development of attractive facilities was used as an instrument for bringing about urban changes, since rehabilitation was "entirely subordinated to the establishment of effective transportation links with the urban space facing it and with the city in general" (De Carlo, 1987). The historic centre's rehabilitation modalities in the 1990s also seemed to comply with this principle; the stories about the changes that took place in the historic centre recounted during interviews with various actors emphasise the role initially played by the establishment of cultural and university facilities (Faculty of Architecture, La Tosse theatre) because of their ability to attract new users. However, the traffic flows thus generated led to new usages that did not lead merely to the disappearance of illegal practices, but, rather, restructured the relationships between legal and illegal practices. Consequently, the historic centre's Sarzano district became a late-night hangout for students and young employees, leading to the relocation of practices related to drug consumption, following the 1990 urban regeneration. Illicit activities did not take place away from the rest of the city, but in relation to it (Dal Lago and Quadrelli, 2006), making the application of the human traffic flow principle even more complex.

The same principle was applied for subsequent interventions. The Darsena port area was finally transformed in the 2000s, with the establishment of the Economics Faculty, generating new student traffic along the carruggi⁶ between Darsena and via Balbi, crossing the via di Pré, the focal point of security related fears. In the same way, the security plan drafted for the Community Initiative Programme, Urban 2 (2001-2006) refers to the creation of a "constant flow of people able to influence the social [context], banking heavily on the construction of hotels and lodgings for students" as a strategy against insecurity (Comune di Genova, Settore Centro Storico, Piano della Sicurezza). On the basis of this observation, a programme for the establishment of shops and stores in the historic centre was launched through the enterprise

⁶ Dialectal Genoese term for the narrow lanes and by-lanes of the historic centre, associated with an imaginary world of insecurity and social transgression.

incubator (266/97 Bersani National Act) – a department co-funded by the region and the municipality, which provides support to shops and stores in crisis-hit districts⁷. The new traffic flows and mobility generated by commercial practices (corresponding to the ideal users: tourists, students, "gentrifiers") were supposed to constitute an additional security factor. On the other hand, the entire area outside these traffic flow dynamics became conducive to crime, as mentioned by the municipal representative for security, Angela Burlando (interview, 2006): "where do young drug peddlers go? They go essentially to areas that are not so busy, and [an area] that is not very popular is more dilapidated, whereas for years together, the historic centre has been a prime area for local criminality".

Some formulations took the form of a re-conquest – for instance, the following presentation of the Ghetto project, a former district seen as having deteriorated: "It is an attempt to colonise the most deserted areas of the city, which nonetheless retain a certain mystery, through a series of phenomena that contributed to bringing [in] a string of people who used to live outside the area to the historic centre, leading to its squares filling up, thanks to concerts and events" (Giberti, 2006). Here, traffic was supposed to lead to a further "social mixing", which related back to the advent of new social strata, perceived as a prerequisite for urban renewal and as an additive for real estate value addition (as confirmed by interviews held between 2005 and 2009 with B. Gabrielli, urban development assistant at the municipality, or by certain specialised real estate agencies, such as Pugliese). Conversely, the individuals that circulated in those spaces before urban regeneration are regarded as insignificant. For instance, according to the founder of the La Tosse Theatre, before it was built, the Sarzano district "was deserted, with the bar becoming a hub for clandestine gaming – nobody came here" (meeting in 2006). Hence, it was not about promoting anonymity through widespread human traffic, but about actually controlling the traffic categories.

However, this principle led to tension between everyone's right to movement in the regenerated old town, and the specification of the desirable users. In fact, it was accompanied by the determination to evict certain marginal groups incarnated by typified individuals, who seemed to be at the bottom of the heap or the targets of the policies implemented.

3. Defining the legitimate users of urban areas

After having examined the public principles of security and their connections with spatial justice, this latter section is devoted to emerging security-related productions – manifestations of the idea of a multi-focal, public and private, formal and informal source of security. The controversies in terms of spatial justice relate to the categorisation of users as legitimate or not, between eviction and negotiations, and the accompanying mechanisms.

Opening, closing: Private control over space and concurrent legitimacies

Faced with the municipality's supposed failures, people started reacting to the situation, favouring self-organisation, acting on the urban area itself, by installing gates to close-off lanes in their areas, which were thenceforth reserved for the houses concerned, which alone held keys to them. The closing down of public pathways took place within the framework of a major political debate within the city, with two types of legitimisations.

⁷ This instrument was used in other Italian cities as well, for instance, in degraded districts of Naples (Burrioni, Piselli, Ramella, Trigilia, 2009).

On the one hand, part of the inhabitants and some committees claimed each resident's right to security within their domestic space and its surroundings. During a meeting, Fiorella Guarnero, the driving force behind these movements, showed me press cuttings and photos showing people lying surrounded by syringes in a lane in the city centre. The aim was to convince me of the legitimacy of closing-off the lanes, based on the right to security, deemed to be above and beyond negligence of public interventions, giving citizens with "goodwill" the right to organise themselves. Some rightist elected representatives in the District Councils offered the same justification for the actions taken by certain inhabitants due to their need to take their security into their own hands. A recurring expression used was, "non è terra di nessuno (no man's land)" (mentioned during several interviews in 2008 with elected representatives of the area or inhabitants close to these positions) – a rather ambivalent quotation that designates both the desire to avoid any arbitrary appropriation and the marginal nature of those who were supposedly controlling the area illegitimately, whose foreign nationality – notably Moroccan – was often specifically mentioned. The self-organisation stand taken was based on principles that conflicted with those of the municipality, and took shape through a gamut of different approaches to intervention: public accusation, writings declaring their positions (Guarnero, Simonetti, 2008), petitions, alliances and collaborations with other actors, especially the prefecture or the police, etc. The district's Municipal Council Chairman, Aldo Siri, close to these movements, used the term "deviant solidarity" (interview, 2008) to characterise the predominant modalities of intervention in Genoa – in the name of tolerance, everything could be considered acceptable (nocturnal nuisance, drunkenness on public roads, etc.). This was in deliberate contrast to the FISU's recommendations, as shown by the use of the term of "solidarity". The justification for the security-related stand brought the criterion of efficiency into play, and a clearer differentiation of individuals – between the area's inhabitants and less legitimate users. The idea of spatial injustice was present in these mobilisations, and was based on the gap between the current situation of the historic centre and the legitimate claims of its legitimate inhabitants – the Genoese facing such arbitrary appropriations. The closing-off of the lanes was legitimised as self-defence, made necessary due to the negligence of the authorities. This multi-location, spatial mechanism was aimed at a socio-spatial restoration.

Conversely, another section of the centre's inhabitants castigated the closing-off of certain areas in the name of the very quality and character of a public space. Acts of vandalism took place, with the locks on the gates being sabotaged. The Comitato Santa Brigida, a social action association in the district (on the highest part of the historic centre), organised a questionnaire in 2008 addressed to the inhabitants, in order to legitimise its position. The association's members criticised the individualised management of the problem by the municipality, which authorised the installation of gates at its discretion, as long as a few inhabitants submitted a complaint, in order to calm down the protests. The reference territorial level for these citizens (interviews in 2008) was the city – not just their own district; closing-off a lane displaced the drug dependency problem to another area of the city. These two stands were obviously based on political arguments, which gave way to each side's own conception of what was right and what was not, based on a specific territorialisation, and envisaging the consequences of spatial provisions in terms of spatial justice.

Faced with these different kinds of mobilisation, between the closing-off of lanes and protests in the name of every citizen's right to freedom of movement, the municipality is trying to draft an open public space policy that would be partially managed by private actors. Hence, right from its inception, the transformation of the Dei Trugoli Square, conducted by the historic centre enterprise incubator, was based on networking between the various shops, influenced by the Business Improvement Districts – storeowners' organisations established in

the USA, characterised by the private management of public areas and their security (Steel, Symes, 2005). The storeowners are organised into a consortium that is responsible for organising events in the area, by proposing cultural activities, creating a feeling of unity. Questioned during an interview (2008), storeowners mentioned their participation in securing the district through an informal surveillance of the different areas and activities, in order to regulate petty crimes related to drug use: "What is most important is to show that I don't fear them, that they are wrong and must move away" (shopkeeper, 2008). A specific environment needs to be created for customers, avoiding glimpses of drug addicts in the square, located close to a drug trafficking route (Via di Pré). Some shopkeepers were also sorry for the social contents of the square's restoration project as a whole, with the number of social housing complexes, whereas according to them, the advent of new social strata would have led to the spread of more appropriate ways of living. Insecurity is not a distinct social reality, but is thought of in continuity with other social processes, including the issue of the social mix within the city.

Security and evictions: Negotiating the right to the city

Securing areas is therefore not confined to a unique source. The various forms of public and private security are based on different justifications, calling a conception of spatial justice into play that leads to the definition of a reference territory but also legitimate uses and users of areas, establishing the right to the city-centre, in an imposed or negotiated manner.

That leads to a growing concern about the future of certain marginalities. Staying on in the historic centre calls for negotiating strategies and resistance movements, partially expressed by using the language of security.

Prostitution in the historic centre, presented as an urban problem, illustrates these issues. The desire to evict seems to correspond to the direction given by city-centre urban regeneration policies in Europe, which are increasingly translated into the eviction of sex workers (Hubbard, 2004; Kantola, Squires, 2004). Hence, in Italy, prostitution is becoming a highly sensitive issue: national-level studies are being conducted by the Ministry of the Interior, whereas the Liguria's Regional Urban Safety Observatory sees it as a category of hidden criminality. These studies present prostitution as the problem. The Ministry of the Interior, by its 8 August 2008 decree, granted Mayors the possibility of intervening with regard to prostitution, both in the name of behaviour in public areas and the exploitation of sex workers. Several cities are taking measures in this direction.

In Genoa, daytime prostitution is located in the lanes leading out of Via Garibaldi, the heart of the sector that was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2006. Interventions here were complicated by the heterogeneous nature of prostitution in the historic centre. Along with essentially Italian transsexual prostitution in the Ghetto district and the legendary Italian prostitution, mythified through the songs of Fabrizio de André, since the 1980s, diversified foreign prostitution was added: sex workers from Latin America, prostitutes from Nigeria who have to reimburse their debts to human traffickers, or prostitutes under the control of East European groups (Abbatecola, 2005). These diverse modalities were related to a form of urban degradation by some local actors, along with insecurity, generating conflicts with residents (Il Secolo XIX, 21/08/2008).

Initially, the action chosen did not target sex workers as such, but the urban conditions in which prostitution took place, by acting on the concerned areas. In fact, sex workers used premises that were on the ground floors of medieval buildings, called "bassi". In meetings, a large number of actors pointed to the obvious links between the bassi and organised crime –

Sicilian and Calabrian mafia families were said to be the owners of these *bassi*, rented out to sex workers. Local certainty about these links⁸ led to a specific operational modality aimed at removing the sex workers from the historic centre, based on regulatory town planning. An August 2008 ordinance changed the possible uses of the *bassi*, prohibiting residential use (the presence of a bed).

However, this policy provoked local forms of resistance and negotiation. Firstly, social acceptance of the transsexuals present in the Ghetto district had grown, as can be seen from their participation in the district contract drawn up by the preceding municipality for the Ghetto or in the negotiation of timings for public works in the light of their working hours (meeting with B. Gabrielli, Deputy Mayor in 2007). They mobilised local supporters, in particular the Catholic San Benedetto community and its founder, the famous priest, Don Gallo⁹, and turned the whole argument back to securing the area. The transsexual sex workers broached in the Ghetto in 2008 at their working place in front of the *bassi* that they often owned, referred me to one of their spokespersons, who mentioned their own role in securing the area, especially with regard to drug trafficking, thanks to their continuous presence throughout the day and the inhabitants' attachment to their presence. The right to remain in the centre was therefore legitimised by a type of visual territorial surveillance and informal security. Following this mobilisation, the Ghetto managed to elude the anti-*bassi* regulation, illustrating the differentiation between sex workers, based on the degree to which they were locally rooted and their nationality.

Subsequent criticisms by various feminist, social and leftist associations, who accused the municipality of playing with the inhabitant's feelings of insecurity to the detriment of the most fragile population groups, led to the cancellation of the regulation. The territorial issue was another key factor in the argument, evoking the risk of displacement to the suburbs and, therefore, dismantling the sex workers' relationship with the territory, which made it possible to provide them a minimum level of security. During meetings, several members of the road unit managing the programme, *Oltre la strada*, highlighted the securing role played by sex workers in an area in which diverse forms of marginality were present, but also their high level of vulnerability faced with diverse forms of insecurity.

The link between safety and prostitution was therefore turned around. A negotiated approach between the sex workers and the municipality was adopted in 2009. The sex workers in the historic centre undertook to lower their visibility, through their behaviour and clothes, but also to collaborate with public actors, by informing them of petty crimes. The role of individuals earlier deemed as undesirable in the informal regulation of urban areas was therefore recognised, following the Town Hall's initial failure in evicting the phenomenon, but also after the principles used for the eviction of sex workers were turned on their head. In fact, the sex workers negotiated their right to remain in the city-centre by arguing that they contributed to the area's security. The right to remain in these areas was therefore negotiated, but remains precarious, as testified by the new 26 October 2010 municipal ordinance highlighting the control of passive forms of soliciting and leading to fresh protest actions by the sex workers in the historic city centre.

All this points to the ambivalent status of categories of individuals, deemed both victims and a causal factor of degradation, at the crossroads of different justifications, based on

⁸ The tax audits carried out made it possible, for instance, to identify a family from Calabria who owned 78 *bassi* (*La Repubblica*, 04/07/2009).

⁹ Don Gallo is a national figure, committed to working for marginalised groups, who mobilises several activities, for instance, for the legalisation of drugs.

arguments highlighting the rightness or wrongness of a territorial occupancy to be renegotiated.

Conclusion

Genoa's historic centre therefore seems a place where multiple forms of production of security have emerged, stemming both from public sector actors as well as associations and action groups set up by its inhabitants. The plurality of safety mechanism is based on different justifications and scales of reference. For public actors, it corresponds to the issue of urban regeneration and the influence of shared models, experiences and values, between the municipality and the region, disseminated by the FISU network, which promotes a security that is connected with social intervention and identifies the city as a coherent territory for providing security. Municipal action is also structured by the principle of developing mobilities of certain kinds of users within areas deemed crime prone, along with the a desire to evict certain marginal groups, illustrating the relationship between security, spatial mechanisms and the categorisation of the legitimate users of the areas concerned. However, public intervention is not the only source for the development of a security-related discourse and interventions, as can be seen by urban controversies over the closing-off of lanes by inhabitants, with the latter also proffering justifications founded on the idea of spatial justice or injustice. Finally, the debates on the eviction of sex workers from the historic centre point to a certain geography of negotiations that re-structures the notions of security and spatial justice.

The identification of the various configurations in which security is "produced" and discussed is based on the postulate that individuals are competent with regard to justice, according to the work done by L. Boltanski and L. Thévenot, which makes it possible to study how the need for spatial justice is deployed in public security policies, but also through initiatives taken by action groups established by inhabitants and private actors, based on a logic of substitution, support, or resistance. This need for justice may be broken down into several modalities of legitimacies for occupying space, while also establishing categories of individuals and modalities of "spatialising" justice. The definition of spatial justice remains the actors' responsibility and finds concrete shape in the modalities of intervention of certain institutions or in the inhabitants' informal activities. If these justifications are placed one against another, such a notion of spatial justice presupposes the examination of conflicts and negotiations in order to bring to light the multiple forms of justice possible, as M. Dikeç (2007) was able to do in the case of the city's policies. This implies a procedural conception of spatial justice, without, however, waiting for a univocal outcome, but, rather, demonstrating the precarious and committed nature of definitions of a fair situation.

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