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Urban Geography

Displacement in 'Actually Existing' Racial Neoliberalism: Refugee Governance in Paris --Manuscript Draft--

Full Title:	Displacement in 'Actually Existing' Racial Neoliberalism: Refugee Governance in Paris
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Article Type:	Special Issue
Keywords:	Urban refugees; Political Economy; global displacement; Race; neoliberalism
Abstract:	<p>3.5 million people currently live without adequate housing in France with some 10 million others in sub-standard accommodations without secure and affordable rental tenure. In Paris, homelessness has increased a staggering 84 percent since 2005 due to cuts in social service expenditure and the downloading of poverty management onto cities. Since 2015, the European Union has seen a large influx of refugees from protracted conflicts problematically referred to as the European migration crisis. Although France has amongst the highest rates of refugee application rejections in Western Europe, Paris is increasingly becoming a hotspot for displaced people who are fleeing improper treatment in frontier states. The Paris case illustrates 'actually existing' racial neoliberalism pointing to both the material and ideological features of refugee marginalization. The purpose of this article is two-fold: First, it highlights the various issues of political and shelter-based survival for urban refugees—an aspect understudied especially in cities in the global North. Second, the article aims to overlay pre-existing crises of homelessness, inadequate housing, and poverty with the racialization of refugees within the European migration crisis.</p>
Order of Authors:	Ali Bhagat
Response to Reviewers:	<p>Dear Dr. Moore,</p> <p>Thank you very much for managing this manuscript. I am delighted that this article will be suitable for publication in Urban Geography. I would also like to thank the reviewers for giving this article a second review.</p> <p>In general, I have changed the title to : Displacement in 'Actually Existing' Racial Neoliberalism: Refugee Governance in Paris. I have also added full names to the reference list and have made sure that the list is accurate with regard to the journal's style guide.</p> <p>I will address some of the issues raised by reviewer 1 first. I have now done a further proof-read and have caught the few remaining grammatical errors. I have also double-checked my reference list and included all the missing references where necessary (including referencing the cited interviews). I thank the reviewer for the generous and positive feedback.</p> <p>For the issues raised by reviewer 3, I have wholeheartedly taken on board the suggestion of using governance over the more complicated (and ungrounded term) governmentality. The reviewer was correct in their suggestion that governance is a more appropriate term for this article. I have thus, scrubbed the article clean (so to speak) of any references to governmentality. I have, however, noted the references provided by reviewer 3 as it will certainly help my theorisation of governmentality in neoliberalism for a future paper. Indeed, the inclusion of subjectivities would obfuscate the theoretical premise of this article (and would require far more room) to be included successfully. I also take on board the repetition of phrases and have worked to make the writing more engaging and add further explanation to key concepts.</p> <p>The word psychic is removed from excavation on page 8. On page 3, the banality of tolerant rhetoric is changed as per the reviewer's suggestion. On page 6, the phrasing for 'Neoliberalism's conception as an ongoing process...' was changed per the reviewer's suggestion. Page 9, paragraph 2, is also altered to point out the meaning that hard work is an ideological facet of neoliberalism that absolves the state's responsibility for welfare.</p>

There are some other minor instances where grammatically incorrect or imprecise language is altered.

Thank you again for this opportunity to publish in Urban Geography, it would give me an immense pleasure to publish in this top-tier and widely read journal.

Sincerely,

Author of Displacement in 'Actually Existing' Racial Neoliberalism: Refugee Governance in Paris

Displacement in ‘Actually Existing’ Racial Neoliberalism: Refugee Governance in Paris

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Abstract

3.5 million people currently live without adequate housing in France with some 10 million others in sub-standard accommodations without secure and affordable rental tenure. In Paris, homelessness has increased a staggering 84 percent since 2005 due to cuts in social service expenditure and the downloading of poverty management onto cities and civil society organisations. Since 2015, the European Union has seen a large influx of refugees from protracted conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa—commonly, and problematically, referred to as the *European migration crisis*. Although France has amongst the highest rates of refugee application rejections in Western Europe, Paris is increasingly becoming a hotspot for displaced people who are fleeing improper treatment in frontier states. The Paris case, as suggested here, illustrates ‘actually existing’ racial neoliberalism pointing to both the material and ideological features of refugee marginalization. The purpose of this article is two-fold: First, it highlights the various issues of political and shelter-based survival for urban refugees—an aspect understudied especially in cities in the global North. Second, the article aims to overlay pre-existing crises of homelessness, inadequate housing, and poverty with the racialization of refugees within the *European migration crisis*. Drawing on the Paris case, I argue that housing precarity and ongoing displacement from the city’s commercial core are interrelated features surrounding the governance of racial neoliberalism that facilitates refugee survival upon relocation.

Keywords:

Urban refugees; political economy; global displacement; race; neoliberalism

Word Count: 10739

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In 2015 and 2016 more than 2.5 million new asylum claims were made in the European Union (EU) signalling a moment of heightened migration referred to as the European Migration Crisis (EMC)¹. The EMC refers to the management of mostly African and Middle-Eastern bodies as they flee conflict and socioeconomic well-being and attempt to enter the EU. That is to say, the migration ‘crisis’ is only named as such because the bodies seeking entry into Europe are dark-skinned and thus, demonised. According to the Eurobarometer survey, 73 percent of EU citizens believe that the EU’s management of migration is inadequate thereby calling for greater reform, stronger borders, equitable distribution of migrants, and an increased effort to fight terrorism (European Parliament, 2017). The resurgence of far-right politics in many countries of the EU echo these tensions of nationhood, citizenship, and race as a reaction to unwanted migration—a perceived challenge to white European identity. The literature on urban refugees, while providing some theoretical insight, is silent on experiences of displacement in the global north. The refugee subject continues to be understood through a state-centric lens; however, as Darling (2017) suggests, the city is complicit in interpreting, reshaping, and creating modes of enforcement for refugees within neoliberalism (Darling, 2017; Ehrkamp, 2016).

Of the 2.5 million new claims, only 61 percent received positive decisions leaving the rest to return to their country of origin or seek informal avenues for relocation (EU-Europa, 2017). While Italy and Hungary have received high numbers of refugees, national level politics have resulted in violence and expulsion of refugees from these frontier states.² Thus, many migrants face ongoing displacement to countries like France and Germany even upon entering the borders of the EU—this is known as third-country displacement and is a significant part of the management of refugees in the EMC. While Berlin has received some recent scholarly attention as a major site of refugee arrivals and processing (Soederberg, 2017), the issues surrounding urban refugees in Paris have not yet been studied. Paris is an important case, not only because it is the site of the first ‘urban refugee camp’ in Europe, but also because of the ongoing tensions of police-led violence and forced removal of refugees by the national state.

¹ This term is used in an contested manner and deserves further unpacking. It is worthwhile to note that the crisis is termed as such due to the large influx of Black and Brown bodies into a territory that is mostly White. This is considered an issue of management and something that Europe must (benevolently) cope with. This trope, characterising migrants of colour as unwanted subjects, is removed from any analysis of neoliberalism or urban austerity.

² Around 3 million migrants live in the EU illegally with Germany, Italy, and France gaining the highest numbers between 2015-2016 (Eurostat, 2017). Germany receives 60 percent new asylum claims in the EU, while Italy and France receive 10 and 6 percent respectively. While Germany continues to accept high numbers of asylum claimants—880,000 first instance positive decisions between 2015-2016—France consistently ranks second in positive decisions despite high numbers of Italian applications (Eurostat 2017b). Italy has recently become the epicentre of forced migration in the Mediterranean; however, the treatment of migrants in the country is harsh, resulting in state-led violence and detention (New York Times, 2017).

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4 Marine Le Pen's presidential bid, along with amplified anti-migrant and Islamophobic
5 sentiment in the aftermath of the Paris attacks, has led to the scapegoating of migrants
6 particularly in arrondissements with high migrant populations (Reuters, 2015; The Guardian,
7 2017). 18,000 refugees currently reside in Paris and the closure of the Calais refugee settlement
8 is forcing more than 6000-10000 new migrants to Paris between 2016-17 exacerbating the need
9 for adequate social housing within the city (Al Jazeera, 2017; New York Times, 2016).
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14 In addition, Paris has the highest number of homeless people in comparison to any city in
15 Europe. There are currently 29,000 homeless people in the metropolitan area and 141,500
16 homeless people in France—50 percent higher than the recorded numbers in 2001 (BBC, 2018).
17 The city, historically, has been divided with a glamorous commercial centre and a crumbling and
18 racialized *banlieue* periphery (Wacquant, 2008). This article situates refugee displacement in
19 Paris within an already burgeoning crisis of homelessness and affordable housing. Racialized
20 poverty and marginalization in Paris is not a new phenomenon and the ongoing displacement of
21 refugees upon relocation reflects the racialized dynamics of expulsion present in Paris's history.
22 Thus, this article frames refugees within racial neoliberalization. The latter phrase has two
23 definitional components. Neoliberalization is understood as a dominant ideological and
24 disciplinary feature of market-based regulation resulting in government downsizing and
25 increased pressure on cities to contend with social issues of welfare and poverty (Peck and
26 Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2015; Roberts and Soederberg, 2014) thereby producing housing insecurity
27 and other issues of survival for refugees. A central feature of these conceptions is the urban
28 scale—where the political economy of austerity along with the refugee crisis is most apparent.
29 The racial aspect of neoliberalization; however, remains muted in these discussions. Indeed,
30 neoliberalism's ideological project has worked to avoid any discussion of the racial state but has
31 simultaneously entrenched and furthered racial divisions through policing and inequality under
32 the guise of securitization (Omi and Winant 1994). State securitization—the discursive reasoning
33 for preventing migration—masks racial tensions and co-exists with international norms of
34 acceptance. As Goldberg (2009) highlights, neoliberalism presents a duality where the existence
35 of racism and its associated politics are glossed over through the bolstering of multicultural
36 policies and a rhetoric of tolerance from liberal and conservative politicians alike. On the flip
37 side, and through the retrenchment of the welfare state, the neoliberal state is one of hyper-
38 surveillance vis-à-vis the policing of Black and Brown bodies under the guise of security.
39 Following this, racial neoliberalization is defined as an ongoing process of government
40 downsizing and market-based regulations that actively and adversely prevent the survival of
41 racialized poor not only on the national scale but in urban centres too.
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55 With these definitions in mind, I ask, how does racial neoliberalization shape the survival
56 of refugees in Paris through various stages of displacement within emergency, short-term, and
57 long-term shelter solutions? To answer this question, I first provide a brief historical overview of
58 racialized displacements in Paris. Second, I build the theoretical framework of racial
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neoliberalism as it pertains to displacement. Third, I examine racialized housing access in Paris. Fourth, I provide the overarching context of refugee governance in racial neoliberalism linking EU and French laws and practices with the urban scale in Paris. Fifth, I look at the lived experiences of urban refugees as they struggle to access housing and the ways in which every day experiences can be better understood through the lens of racial neoliberalism. Drawing on 30 interviews with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), International Organisations (IOs), representatives from government agencies, and refugees themselves from field research in Paris in 2017, I argue that refugees, framed within racial neoliberalization, face deep levels of marginalization through ongoing modes of displacement in Paris. Urban refugees are both ideologically and materially incongruent within the governance of racial neoliberalism which, in turn, facilitates the struggles for survival upon relocation.

I. Framing Capitalist and Racial Expulsion in Paris

This section provides a brief overview of the literature surrounding racial and class-based dimensions of expulsion and displacement in Paris and highlights the need for a theoretical framework emphasizing racial neoliberalization. While much of the recent media attention focuses on the migration crisis as an unprecedented event, it is important to historically contextualize working-class and racialized expulsion in the city of Paris in order to situate urban refugees within a longer historical trajectory of marginalization.

As mentioned above, racial neoliberalization refers to the ideological and material features of market-based governance vis-à-vis the ongoing downsizing of the welfare state, and devolution of welfare responsibility to the urban scale that adversely impacts the racialized poor. While a survey of the literature in critical race theory exceeds the limits of this article, I flag Robinson's seminal and under-utilized text *Black Marxism* (1983) as a conceptual framework that highlights the coinciding development of capitalism vis-à-vis the subjugation of colonized people. The colonial other, constructed in opposition to white European identity, became a permanent source of cheap labour through active constructions of difference. In this sense, capital accumulation has always been bolstered by racial difference and racialized migrants—as potentially useful and integrated labour—fit within the overall strategies of capital accumulation³. Omi and Winant (1994) argue, these practices of racial subjectivity and exploitative labour have only been reiterated in recent times through institutions, policies, conditions, and rules that are implicit in white supremacist states.

³ This is historically significant, the Irish, for example, were amongst the lowest paid workers during British Industrialization. U.S infrastructure and economic development was built on the enslaved labour in the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Robinson 1983)

Racialization requires some definitional specificity and is understood as an economic and political process where non-whites are ascribed arbitrary and essentialized identities by the majority (White) group resulting in unemployment, underemployment, illegal work, incarceration, and/or overall marginalization (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011; Gilmore, 2007). These processes are built into the urban environment with housing as a key feature of neoliberalization especially in light of the global financial crisis (Aalbers & Christophers, 2014; Rolnik 2013). As Wacquant (2008) and others note, Paris has a history of expelling the poor from wealthy arrondissements near the city's core and refugees struggle to access social housing within an already bloated and backlogged system. Although the 10th, 18th, and 19th arrondissements were historically working-class, refugee populations now face xenophobic tensions forcing them out of these historically marginal areas to even more distant spaces outside of Ile-de-France. Importantly, over 3.8 million people are inadequately housed in France (Abbe Pierre Foundation 2017) and urban refugees exacerbate these tensions due to their racialized positions as explored in sections below.

Expulsions in the city of Paris predate the 'Commune',⁴ where Haussman's utopian project of redevelopment required the absorption of large quantities of surplus labour and capital in the city. Hausmannisation, as a process, redesigned whole neighbourhoods by expelling industry to the periphery of the city thereby displacing mass populations of the working class to the East of Paris. This created a wealthy, and consumption centric west Paris, and an industrial and 'noxious' east Paris—a city divided by class (Harvey, 2006; 2010).

While class is a clear indicator of spatial divide, the arrival of migrants in the 19th century and refugees since 1945 have resulted in racialized expulsions as well. France, experiencing a labour shortage after the First World War, saw a rise in Italian and Polish migrants for manpower in its major industrial zones (Frederickson, 2003). These groups fulfilled the labour requirements in the country, but their racial positions placed them in low-wage labour and marginal positions on the fringe of the 'noxious' city. Here, I borrow from Ong et al. (1996) who note the racialization of class that is central in the construction of non-white Parisians as unwanted, yet necessary labour. Although class structures inequality and facilitates accumulation, it is racialized groups that face severe limitations in terms of their survival within capitalism.

The post-World War II era brought Jews and other European migrants into the city while it was not until the 1960s that migrants and refugees from North and Sub-Saharan Africa were allowed in. These migrants faced an entirely different set of rules—having French nationality but being barred from French citizenship. Racialized immigrants lived in shantytowns on the outskirts of Paris and were basically considered non-citizen workforce. While the French state

⁴ Insurrection of and violent repression of working-class uprising (and governance) in 1871. While an analysis of the Commune far exceeds the limitations of this short article, it is important to historicize class tensions on the urban scale. Accumulation too, is not a recent phenomenon solely contained within neoliberalism.

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4 saw immigration as an indicator of economic boom it also revealed a housing problem—
5 racialized workers could not live or afford the city but remained necessary industrial manpower
6 (Blevis & Pezet, 2012). The solution arose through the formation of the *banlieue* periphery
7 suburbs that further entrenched racialized dimensions of working-class expulsion from the city.
8 While the brutalist sub-urban development provided a solution to the shanty-towns the eventual
9 decline of welfare spending resulted in ghettoized, and widespread, unemployment, violence,
10 and social alienation in the neoliberal era starting in the 1980s. Wacquant (2008) refers to these
11 spaces as those of ‘advanced marginality’ as the poor are excluded from larger macroeconomic
12 trends within Paris and France.
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18 Paris’s need for cheap labour has not disappeared. As Enright (2013) points out, the city
19 developed a mass transit system that sought to create a more accessible and unified Ile-de-France
20 region that boosted financial, industrial, and cultural clusters. The market-based rationality of
21 this development project failed to highlight the further displacement of the urban poor due to
22 increased property values in areas that were better connected to Grand Paris. Meanwhile, the
23 buildings in *banlieues* have become increasingly dilapidated and housing conditions have
24 worsened (Angelil & Siress, 2012; Hancock 2017). Dikec (2006) highlights how *banlieues* are
25 racialized spaces and it is through this conception of ethnicity that the state is able to expel,
26 penalize, and reorganise its citizens in France. By painting the *banlieues*, and the people in it, as
27 social menace the state was able to enact authoritarian social policies focused on keeping certain
28 populations in place.
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35 The tensions of racialized displacement in Paris is renewed in this current moment of the
36 EMC. Indeed, one official at a recent Eurocities conference noted, “We don’t have a refugee
37 crisis. We have a housing crisis” (Eurocities, 2016). This is important because not only are urban
38 areas key sites of experimentation and innovation as it concerns capital accumulation but also
39 sites of restraint and austerity. This is what Peck et al. (2012; 2013) name as creative destruction
40 where the neoliberalized state apparatus appears as a result of national-level decentralization
41 where sub-national authorities are forced to manage social welfare. Undoubtedly, the burden of
42 refugee management falls upon the urban scale in Paris within already insufficient social housing
43 regimes. While the literature presented in this section addresses some of the key concerns of
44 racial expulsion within the city, a more nuanced understanding of racial neoliberalization is
45 required in order to frame urban refugees within overlapping housing shortage and ongoing
46 displacement in Paris.
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53 **II. Theorizing Forced Displacement in Racial Neoliberalism**

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56 A conception of neoliberalism as an ongoing process of market-oriented governance and
57 welfare retrenchment informs my conception of ‘actually existing’ racial neoliberalism. Before
58 identifying the intersections of race as regards neoliberalism—an extant gap in urban geography
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4 and forced migration studies—it is important to ground this process in its historical-materialist
5 conceptions that are of most relevance to the study of displacement and housing on the urban
6 scale—the scale where material survival is contested and most evident (Brenner et al., 2010). As
7 Peck and Tickell (2002) highlight, neoliberalism (or neoliberalization) is neither monolithic nor
8 universal but has generalizable effects on multiple scales with local particularities. In short, the
9 process refers to the destruction of the welfare state and its institutions in favour of a
10 neoliberalized state which, on the urban scale, promotes economic growth and urban austerity
11 (2002: 396-6; Tonkiss, 2013). Harvey’s exploration of uneven spatial development suggests, new
12 institutional arrangements—either through state and or capitalist interest—are being (re)
13 constituted in response to material circumstances embedded in capital accumulation (2006: 81).
14 Importantly, housing refugees and promoting their long-term survival upon relocation contrasts
15 these aims of growth and urban competition. Refugee hosting requires increased welfare
16 capabilities and with the downloading of these welfare responsibilities onto cities—what Peck
17 (2012) refers to as austerity urbanism—cities are simply unable to cope with the budgetary and
18 political requirements of high numbers of refugees as evidenced in the EMC.

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27 In understanding neoliberalism, this article emphasizes these processes in their ‘actually-
28 existing’ forms. Indeed, neoliberalism is contextualized by what Brenner and Theodore (2002)
29 refer to as an embeddedness of these restructuring projects within regional, national, and urban
30 contexts (2002:350; Brenner et al., 2010). Governing refugees in Paris is embedded in the
31 contradictory geographies of neoliberalism particularly as it concerns shelter thereby
32 emphasizing the urban scale as the primary site of contestation as refugees struggle to survive
33 upon relocation (Di Felicianantonio, 2016; Dikec & Swyngedouw, 2017). While these historical-
34 materialist theorizations account for the inherent tensions in neoliberalism, discussions of race
35 and racialization are often muted.

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41 To address this gap and deepen the theorization of ‘actually existing’ racial
42 neoliberalism, I echo Robinson’s (1983) ontological assertion that capitalism has always been
43 racial and draw upon scholarship that incorporates race and neoliberalism as concurrent threads
44 of analysis. I take on board Roberts and Mahtani’s (2010) suggestion to *race* neoliberalism and
45 focus on their assertion that race deepens our understanding of neoliberal pressures on issues
46 such as labour, migration, and welfare (2010: 249). In particular, this article expands the analysis
47 of racial neoliberalism as regards migration and the shelter governance of refugees in a major
48 global North city like Paris. As Bonds (2013) further highlights, racial inequalities are evidenced
49 in geographic space where economic and racial logics fuse together to sustain marginalization
50 and vulnerability (*c.f.* Wyly et al. 2009)

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56 Kapoor’s (2013) conception of the racial neoliberal state is also of relevance because it
57 points to a duality useful for the theorization of urban refugee governance. Kapoor asserts,
58 “...articulations of racism in the current moment need to be understood through an analysis that
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relates to the context of the contemporary political economy and the advancement of the neoliberal state” (2013: 1030). In terms of migration, race not only represents the management of black and brown bodies, but in allowing these migrants entry to Europe, also bolsters the international image of Western states as ones of unequivocal acceptance. There are inherent contradictions in the acceptance of refugees, as Fassin (2008) shows, some refugees are victims of humanitarian assistance while others are deemed undeserving of aid. Racial neoliberalism, while simultaneously silencing race and issues of racism and ensuring the space for capital accumulation (Goldberg 2009), allows for refugee issues on the urban scale to be depoliticized from the pre-existing conditions of austerity, housing shortage, homelessness, and ongoing displacements endemic in Paris. In particular, racial neoliberalism reifies xenophobic notions that migrants are threatening to economic security thereby facilitating their displacement and poor housing upon relocation.

Racial neoliberalism reflects upon the ideological and material conditions of urban refugee governance and allows for an excavation of the processes inherent to exclusion and marginalization in Paris. As Goldberg (2006) shows us, race is a set of conditions that shifts over time and is a product of social tensions and relations (2006: 337). Conceiving race as a shifting social relation sheds critical light on the governance of neoliberalism. As shown above, the expulsion of racialized bodies from Paris’s core is not a neoliberal phenomenon (though it is capitalist); however, the neoliberal management of refugees in the current moment of the EMC reveals pre-existing issues of shelter and labour inadequacy that are ignored in favour of xenophobic predispositions towards refugees. Chief amongst these approaches to governance are portrayals of refugees as terrorists or security threats or, in the least, jobless and lazy thereby placing a strain on welfare. The Paris case also reflects a wider trend in refugee acceptance and humanitarianism (Fassin, 2007) in the EU that views some Middle Eastern bodies as authentic refugee claimants over allegedly irregular or inauthentic African migrants. Refugees do share some similarities within their categorization of social marginality and their experiences in urban centres; however, they are far from a homogenous category—some lives are coded as more valuable or more in need of urgent assistance than others illustrating that race influences the regulatory assistance, or lack thereof, in major cities like Paris.

Following Rajaram (2018), the differences between racialized poor migrants and refugees are often blurred; however, I nuance this distinction here especially with regard to housing. This is because refugees—in their search for citizenship and employment access—are prevented from entering social housing markets and cannot be formally employed until they receive a decision on their asylum claim or until a maximum of nine months and only if the Office of Refugee and Asylum Protection (OFPRA) is delayed in its decision making⁵. This reality contrasts the views of the IMF and other international actors that focus on the integration of refugees due to their labour utility. In Paris, refugees are not allowed to work for close to a year, but the racial rhetoric

⁵ <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-labour-market>

of refugees as lazy and undeserving of aid continues to shape their existence on the fringe of society.

Thus, urban refugees are brought into this analytical fold of racial neoliberalism as newly marginalized urban subjects, not only on a global scale, but also, specifically in Paris. More than half of the refugees in the world live in cities and are disproportionately targeted due to their marginalized race and class-based positions (UNHCR 2016). As Darling (2016; 2017) suggests, the city is simultaneously a location of immense surveillance and passive acceptance of urban refugees as underclass and unwanted populations. Paris, for instance, draws refugees because of perceived safety and economic opportunity; however, sheltering refugees is fraught with racial tensions embedded in market-based governance leading to shelter insecurity. Mitchell and Heynen's (2009) conception of survival in neoliberalism, through the netting of public and private spaces, including social services, not only determines how people live but whether they live at all. The geographies of survival are contingent on the criminalization of the vulnerable poor and, in the Paris case, show how refugees are unwanted in urban spaces and are thus, forcibly displaced from the streets of the city. Importantly, despite the overarching pressures of racial neoliberalism refugees do survive and, in this survival, there is resistance evidenced through the micro-dimensions of violence faced by these groups on an everyday basis. The next section utilizes the theoretical premise of racial neoliberalization developed here to understand social housing in Paris.

III. 'Actually Existing' Racial Neoliberalism in Parisian Social Housing

France's experience with neoliberalism is rooted in its colonial history of integration. National policy models interlace French nationhood and neoliberalism as a means of discriminatory integration (Bonjour & Lettinga, 2012). As explored below, French housing policies of social mixing are intended as universalist principles of integration—many of the organisations interviewed for this study indicate their explicit focus on integrating refugees into French society in order to make them economically useful. Neoliberal governance uses 'hard work' as an ideological tool to facilitate the slashing of welfare services thereby blaming the poor for their own poverty and absolving the state from the responsibility of welfare. Universalist social housing programmes render poverty invisible by favouring middle-class interests and reducing the number of social housing units for the working poor. In universalizing social housing policies, discrimination based on race or ethnic indicators are ignored or unrecognized by the state (Sala Pala, 2010). French scholars have pointed to obvious cases of discrimination based on ethnicity (Balibar & Wallerstein, 1998; Simon & Kirszbaum, 2001).

At present, France has undergone five rounds of austerity measures through a combination of tax increase and public spending reductions placing heavy burdens on households. Austerity measures have undoubtedly brought on greater poverty with over 7 million French citizens being

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4 considered poor. Inequality has widened, and unemployment has steadily remained around 9-10
5 percent since 2013 (INSEE 2017). Austerity has impacted French social housing financing as
6 well. France has a social housing stock of 17 percent and the state has gradually removed itself
7 from social housing responsibility since the 1980s⁶. Not only did President Sarkozy diverge from
8 France's historical commitment to social housing by instilling a 70 percent goal of home
9 ownership rate in the country, but budgetary constraints, through EU-wide austerity, made it
10 doubly difficult to keep subsidies for social housing investment at the same level (Driant & Li,
11 2012).

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15 All social housing in France is managed by 'rent controlled housing' or *habitation à loyer*
16 *modéré* (HLM) and there are three main types of housing loans that correspond to a different
17 target population group that needs housing. PLAI (*prêts locatifs aides d'intégration*) accounts for
18 households with the lowest income; PLUS (*prêts locatifs à usage social*)—the main output of
19 social housing for low and median income households; and PLS (*prêts locatifs social*) for higher
20 income households that could not afford a house in a city like Paris for example (Government of
21 France Housing, 2017; *c.f.* Driant & Li, 2012). Briefly, the combination of austerity measures
22 including the deregulation of social housing, and withdrawal of the national level state in social
23 housing schemes, has forced HLMs to come up with their own means of funding thereby forcing
24 HLMs to buy properties from commercial land developer. An interview with an expert working
25 in HLMs suggests that since HLMs have to pay back either the state or the *caisse des dépôts*
26 (CDC)—state-sponsored financial institution—most of the social housing units happen to fall
27 within the PLUS category loans as a means to ensure rental income (Interview, B).

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34 This context of austerity is important in influencing access to affordable and longer-term
35 housing for racialized people and refugees alike especially in Paris where homelessness is on the
36 rise and emergency shelters are completely backlogged and incapable of housing the most
37 vulnerable (Abbe-Pierre Foundation 2017). Undoubtedly, the experience of neoliberalism in
38 France has racial features that predate the 2008 crisis.

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41 Emerging in the 1990s the Besson Law set quantitative goals of social housing (25
42 percent by 2020) by preventing high levels of poor in certain *arrondissements* thereby
43 diversifying the housing sector through a mixture of private and social home ownership. These
44 policies are collectively known as social mixing that seeks to provide a mixture of class-based
45 households in each social housing establishment. Social mixing seeks to diversify the poor
46 population by placing them in more affluent *arrondissements* (Genestier, 2010); however, only 4
47 out of 20 hold any significant number of social housing stock (Gorczyncka, 2017). As Sala-Pala
48 (2010) notes, social mixing aims to prevent spatial segregation of ethnicities thereby preventing
49 community-building on ethnic lines and thereby propagating white middle-class interests.

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53 More, very few units are available to the extremely impoverished or long-term
54 unemployed—a distinct departure from the 1990s where when the Besson Law was created in
55 order to address issues of poverty and homelessness in France (Bacqué et al., 2014). In fact, the
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59 ⁶ France is intermediary with regard to social housing provision in Europe. Netherlands has a housing stock of 35
60 percent, UK at 20 percent but Italy only 5 percent (Levy-Vroelant & Tutin, 2010)
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4 middle class has moved into historically poor areas on the margins of the city turning the concept
5 of social mixing on its head by further displacing the poor from their communities and
6 neighbourhoods that they were originally placed in (ibid).
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8 The racialized urban poor continue to be displaced as formerly working-class buildings
9 are demolished for the sake of private interest within ongoing processes of gentrification (Kipfer,
10 2016). More, the veneer of ‘housing for all’ benefits the public and private stakeholders,
11 including the municipal state. Social housing landlords are able to, more steadily, cover their
12 building costs and encourage further housing developments in the historically working-class
13 arrondissements while the rich areas continue to be devoid of social housing stock. As Kipfer
14 (2016) notes, bourgeois interest in social housing includes the demolition of older buildings and
15 the depletion of housing stock in Paris forcing the working and non-working poor to the
16 *banlieues*. The average rent per square meter of social housing in Metropolitan France is €5.30
17 while Paris, particularly, is €7.70 per metre (INSEE, 2016). Not only is social housing difficult to
18 attain, due to long wait-times and overall housing shortage, it is also far more expensive in Paris
19 in comparison to national averages.
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21 In addition to these class-based dimensions of housing exclusion, it is also important to
22 point to the ways racialization interlaces with social mixing policies in Paris. Rental housing
23 market discrimination based on ethnicity is evident in Paris—North-African, Sub-Saharan
24 African, and Middle Eastern people face difficulties in accessing rental tenure (Acolin et al.,
25 2016). These discriminations are exacerbated by differences in income, racialized tenants are
26 seen as incapable of paying rent on time and creating dysfunction in the neighbourhood (Bonnet
27 et al., 2016).
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29 In an interview with an expert on social housing policy in France, the participant noted
30 that, “Social mix strategies in France are an example of abject racism. These strategies play into
31 France’s national rhetoric of integration and treat minorities in a tokenistic way. Although the
32 previous government did a good job at raising housing stock in the country, it is never enough.
33 More than two-thirds of France’s population could have a claim to social housing... In Paris,
34 even if certain arrondissements have wealthy [visible] minorities these areas are deemed
35 inappropriately mixed because there is not enough of a white or “French” population”
36 (Interview, B). Indeed, the policies are jingoistic and reflect France’s commitment to integration
37 under the guise of ‘housing for all’ within social mixing.
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39 The poorer arrondissements of Paris not only have the highest unemployment rates but
40 are also home to the make-shift refugee shelters in the city. For example, the wealthy 1st
41 arrondissement’s unemployment percentage has been steadily around 7-8 percent since the mid-
42 2000s, while the 19th arrondissement’s unemployment rate has climbed from 11 to 13 percent
43 since 2006 (INSEE 2016). In effect, the racialized poor are forced to the peripheries of the city as
44 is consistent with Paris’s development historically.
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46 Although statistical data is not yet available with regard to urban refugee populations it is
47 important to note that refugees in Paris are living in make-shift shelters in the 18th, 19th, and (to a
48 lesser degree) 10th arrondissements according to an important social justice organisation and a
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group of legal activists working with urban refugees in the city (Interview, C). For example, the City of Paris's emergency shelter initiatives are all located within the boundaries of the 18th and 19th arrondissements. Porte de la Chapelle and the metro stations Juarez and Stalingrad have received high numbers of refugees. Since the city has poor emergency shelter service, refugees and other homeless people are forced to seek shelter in highly policed and contested spaces such as subway stations in order to survive the night.

Average rent, even in the cheaper arrondissements, hovers around 1000€ per month making private rental housing unaffordable for most refugees. In general, finding social housing in Paris, according to interview data with a key housing organisation and a homelessness organisation, requires an average wait time of 3 years; however, depending on the family size, it could take up to 7-10 years to find adequate housing (Interview, A; G). Since both public and private solutions to housing urban refugees pose extreme difficulties, refugees struggle in finding long-term and durable affordable housing in the city. Within racial neoliberalism, refugees fall outside the purview of urban welfare and thus, rely on piecemeal and inadequate assistance in order to survive. As the following sections show, refugees face expulsions from the city of Paris, and use informal solutions to access durable housing relying on their kinship connections. NGOs and local-level state actors are unable to provide durable housing solutions within the context of high rates of asylum claims rejection. The following section highlights the various barriers to survival and access in emergency, short-term, and longer-term housing in Paris.

IV. Urban Refugees and Racialized Survival

Urban refugee governance is inseparable from the national and international contexts of refugee assistance and humanitarianism. As Table 1 illustrates, not all refugees are created equal and the logics of racialization deem certain countries more eligible for asylum thereby expelling other refugees based on race, class, and nationality. Following the conception of race as a shifting social relation, it is important to highlight that despite Afghan and Syrian refugees receiving higher rates of acceptance than other groups, they are still portrayed as security threats and, upon relocation, also framed as economic burdens. Using Fassin (2007), it is important to highlight that some refugees are coded as humanitarian victims that need assistance. Indeed, Afghan and Syrian refugees are France's top priority reflected in the resources available for their welfare and the quick adjudication of their claims. African refugees, due to racialized positions of marginality, are considered less worthy of protection as further explored in this section. After providing a brief overview of the institutional barriers to refugee acceptance, this section also examines the Dublin III protocol that exemplifies racial neoliberalism on multiple scales.

<i>Country of Origin/Continent</i>	<i>Total Primary Demands of Asylum in France</i>	<i>Percentage Accepted Asylum Claims</i>
Sudan	5,897	42.3
Afghanistan	4,058	80.9
Haiti	4,927	3.4
Albania	4,601	11.4
Syria	3,615	97.3
Democratic Republic of Congo	2,551	15.6
Guinea	2,336	28.6
Bangladesh	2,276	7.1
Africa	29,060	26.5
Asia/Middle East	21,221	49.4

Table 1: Highest Number of Asylum Claims by Country and Continent and Percentage rejections (OFPRA 2017)

Refugee survival in Paris depends on three interrelated factors even before they are granted status: First, upon entering the city, refugees must apply for a permit at the prefecture that is sent to the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People (OFPRA). Second, and simultaneously, they must apply for assistance at the Office of Integration and Immigration (OFII) for housing and welfare payment. Third, as these applications are being processed, they must try and find an emergency housing solution—a nearly impossible task with overcrowding in the city’s emergency shelters and lack of refugee housing shelters called Centre d’accueil de demandeurs (CADA) availability. If refugees are lucky enough to receive status, they must leave their emergency housing as soon as they can and look for private accommodation and employment without much assistance from local government. The tensions between national level commitments to accepting refugees, despite rising xenophobia in France, and the downloading of welfare responsibilities to the municipal level, vis-à-vis austerity urbanism, are apparent in the Paris case.

OFPRA’s report (2016), corroborated by interview data, suggests that the state, at the national level, does hope to aid refugees as long as the legal requirements set by France and the EU are met. The death of Alan Kurdi—the three-year old Syrian boy who washed up on the shores of a Turkish beach (The Guardian, 2015)—captivated the attention of French officials and private citizens alike according to a state representative in the City of Paris (Interview, C). However, many of France’s refugees are not of Syrian origin and the doubts expressed by state officials towards ‘illegal’ or ‘economic’ migrants seem to be pointed at those of African origin. Importantly, I do not aim to minimize the plight of Syrian refugees especially in seeking asylum in third-countries. As one representative from the City of Paris notes, Syrian refugees are vetted previously by international organisations making their status more *reliable* (Interview, C). Refugees from African countries simply do not have that privilege. State officials display

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4 significant anxieties in authenticating the stories of refugee claimants as evidenced by an
5 interview with the Director of a prominent LGBT refugee rights organisation. The informant
6 notes,

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8 The French system of asylum is entirely foreign to many of these asylum claimants...they want specific
9 details from childhood, for example, when did you first know you were gay? When did you have feelings
10 for a man? When? Where? How? All these questions are too difficult and confusing for refugees from the
11 Middle East and Africa because they do not think in this chronological French way and this is to their
12 detriment because then they [adjudicators] think they [refugees] are lying if their stories do not match
13 (Interview, N).

14 Importantly, which refugees are ‘authentic’ and which are deemed as fraudulent is hinged,
15 again, on class, race, and nationality regardless of whether the claims are based on sexual
16 orientation or gender identity which I have explored elsewhere (Bhagat 2018; 2018)
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20 Built-in to the asylum adjudication process in France, is integration—a policy-basis that
21 demarcates which refugees are desirable and which are excess and should be returned because
22 they either do not fit into the narrative of deserving refugees or are deemed as economic burdens
23 who will steal jobs away from citizens—a trope in racial neoliberalism’s refugee governance.
24 Enshrined in EU law is the Dublin III treaty that allows countries to return refugees to their port
25 of entry in Europe. Since Italy and Hungary are now major ports of entry and enact brutal
26 violence towards these displaced people, many refugees flee to third countries such as France.
27 Despite claims of violence and incarceration, OFPRA returns many people to these countries
28 citing the Dublin treaty. Out of the 66,000 asylum seeker applications in 2014, for example, a
29 total of 16 percent of refugee applicants were approved on their first attempt and only a further
30 27 percent of appealed claims were approved (OFPRA 2014).
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36 Being “Dublined” refers to the forced removal of asylum applicants from France (Dublin
37 II, 2003; Dublin III *recast*, 2013). As one national level immigration official suggests, “Many
38 people in the [department hidden] are racist French nationalists...they do not want refugees in
39 the country and ‘Dublin’ as many people as they can” (Interview, D). Claiming refuge in Paris is
40 difficult, claimants make an application at the prefecture that decides whether a claim is
41 legitimate. While certain policies must be followed according to national and international
42 regulations, the prefectures lean left or right politically thereby denying or accepting claims
43 based on political inclinations (Interview, D).
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49 ‘Dublining’ is also a form of circuitous displacement—an exhausting and seemingly
50 never-ending process. In an interview with a Sudanese refugee (Abdul) ⁷I gathered that the
51 prefecture decisions regarding Dublin are firm and evading this decision would result in arrest
52 and deportation. In Abdul’s situation, his case worker told him that he had to return to the
53 country of origin where he was finger-printed upon entering Europe—in this case Italy. Abdul
54 notes that the conditions in Italy are brutal and he wants to stay in Paris; however, under Dublin,
55 this is impossible (Interview, E).
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60 ⁷ Pseudonym
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Another example is a case of two Syrian refugees who were finger-printed in Germany but fled to Paris due to poor economic circumstances and lack of close kinship ties. They understood that they had come to Paris illegally and were hoping for their Dublin period to expire so that they could seek asylum from the prefecture. A social justice organisation responded by telling them to try and evade arrest during this time—“if you get arrested they will send you back” (Interview, F). The use of the Dublin treaty reflects upon racial neoliberalism that facilitates and normalizes circuitous displacement from Paris to other countries in the EU. In contrast, refugees also use this treaty to avoid arrest as illegal subjects in Paris and sometimes hope to get sent back to their port of entry so that they can attempt access to different cities in the EU through other channels. While OFPRA and OFII are aware of the violence in Hungary and Italy, the bouncing back of refugees reduces the strain on Paris’s poorly funded housing budget. These cases, along with many others, reveal the violence that refugees face in order to gain legal status and survive in Paris. It also indicates that Paris is a central city for refugees despite xenophobic policies and lack of economic opportunities. I now focus on the issues of access surrounding various forms of housing access.

V. Racial Neoliberalism and Ongoing Shelter Displacement

Before 2014, many refugees congregated at metro stations in the historically working-class arrondissements of the city. Metros Juarez and Stalingrad, home at one point during the early stages of refugee influx in the city, are close to emergency, health, and education services. At the onset of the EMC, the city even provided these migrants with free WIFI and electricity during the cold winter months. These camps were supported by donated tents and blankets from local NGOs. Fuel, food, and emergency healthcare is also donated by private citizens and many refugees are in even more precarious conditions as there are not enough emergency resources to fulfill the needs of refugee squatters. I flag governance in racial neoliberalism in two ways here: First, the fact that this type of temporary sheltering was considered an acceptable, perhaps even humane, solution to house an influx of migrants reveals the low social position occupied by urban refugees. And, second, despite this arrangement providing only the bare minimum of support for refugees, these informal camps were quickly shut down by the City of Paris and the National Police in Ile de France because the shantytown was considered an inconvenience to local residents who feared for their security.

By the summer of 2015, the residents of the 18th and 19th arrondissements grew discontented with the refugees in their area, and as mayoral election season approached, the city decided to ‘clean-up’ the metros. By July, the make-shift refugee camps near Juarez and Stalingrad were shut down by the police—barbed wire and large stones replaced the shelters in order to prevent new migrants from squatting. Refugees staying in these shelters were rounded up and sent to rural and remote CADA housing in France illustrating another example of expulsion of racialized poor in Paris—the first within the European migration crisis (Interview,

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4 H). The camps, despite being repeatedly shut down by national police, keep popping up. In the
5 present day, informal squatting continues in Paris near Porte de la Chapelle in a constant tussle
6 between police and refugees who have nowhere else to stay.
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8 In response to the closure of metro camps, the city created the first emergency shelter (or
9 urban refugee camp) in France. ‘The Bubble’, located in the 19th arrondissement and funded
10 entirely by the City of Paris, is both a processing facility and an emergency shelter. An official
11 from the city notes, “Paris has unprecedented flows of migrants and the city certainly promotes
12 itself as pro-refugee...the Bubble opened in the spring of 2016 in order to process asylum claims
13 and provide emergency housing” (Interview, C). In addition, the city also opened two
14 accommodation centres for single men and another for women and children in Paris Nord with
15 about 400 beds available. The city official further notes that Paris has an obligation to follow
16 Dublin III however, it is doing everything it can to protect refugees while maintaining its
17 responsibilities to France. When asked about evictions and closures of make-shift refugee camps,
18 the city official cited that violence and overcrowding forced the police to act against the migrants
19 (Interview, C). It is important to note that the police in Paris represent the national-level state.
20 The city’s position remains that the police acted against the migrants due to threats of violence
21 despite Paris’s own commitments to housing refugees. Although the police allegedly act
22 independently, a prominent refugee rights NGO notes that the city and the police are both
23 complicit in the closure of these camps and the removal of ‘problematic’ refugees especially with
24 looming municipal elections at the time (Interview, H). The governance of refugees between the
25 City of Paris and the national-level state reveal inherent tensions in racial neoliberalism where
26 refugees are simultaneously important for Paris’s image as a caring global city while also
27 committing to racial tropes of security where its actual citizens should feel safe and the streets
28 should look presentable—a type of governance strategy that keeps racialized poor housing away
29 from the city’s core (Dikec, 2006).
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31 The Bubble—despite being a useful site to record and process incoming refugees—is also
32 overcrowded. Many refugees wait in line everyday hoping for a chance to gain access to the
33 centre. The ones who do not make it into the Bubble centre are forced to live on the street. They
34 face homelessness and housing precarity even in attempting to access this basic emergency
35 service. The Bubble also exists on the last metro station away from the city’s commercial core in
36 the North. While the City foresees a problem with refugees in the streets, the segregation of these
37 racialized people in a shelter closer to the suburbs is more feasible. Despite these efforts, the
38 Bubble is inadequately equipped to house the large influx of refugees. Refugees continue to
39 congregate around metro stations—now closer to Paris North near Porte de la Chapelle—having
40 no other option for shelter. The police, in-turn, crack down on squatters resulting in further
41 arrests and expulsions from the city (Interview, H). Once refugees are processed at the Bubble
42 they are only allowed to stay for a maximum of 14 days before being returned to the street. In
43 addition, processing allows the city to bounce refugees away from Paris and encourages them to
44 seek CADA housing outside the city. At this stage, many refugees, awaiting their status from
45 OFII and an interview date at OFPRA, could be assigned to CADA housing; however, since the
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shelters are overcrowded and underfunded refugees must find alternate solutions. Refugee shelter falls within a racial-spatial fix—since refugee labour is unwanted in Paris beyond the neoliberal rhetoric that emphasizes the importance of work, it is easy to lure these groups to rural areas of France with the promise of free housing. In turn, refugees are made to populate rural areas instead of waiting for years for housing in Paris despite the fact that this ongoing displacement is isolating and away from perceived economic opportunities.

Some refugees are able to use their kinship ties to live in overcrowded apartments near the city, while others cycle in and out of emergency shelters—that were solely for the homeless of Paris but have now expanded to serve refugees. A homelessness prevention organisation notes, “...homeless people and refugees must call 115 if they want housing, but most emergency housing in the city is full...if you want emergency housing the only option remaining for refugees is 115 and if they offer you a room and you decide not to take it then you are blacklisted and will not be offered a room again...most refugees sleep on the streets, or by the metro or they go sleep in the hospital waiting rooms...this is the reality of Paris now” (Interview, K). Emergency housing shelters in the city are poorly maintained and many refugees face violence and are robbed of their belongings. A Somali refugee I interviewed said, “my hostel is very dirty...people are always stealing my things, and everyone is always fighting...I cannot live there anymore” (Interview, L). For refugees waiting in limbo they have no other option except to wait for CADA and then apply for long-term housing once they are granted status

Since CADA housing is not guaranteed, refugees are given a subsidy named the Asylum Seeker’s Allowance (ADA – allocation pour demandeur d’asile) that is meant to cover daily costs. A single person receives approximately seven euros per day and an additional four euros if the state has not provided the person with accommodation. This ends immediately when a decision is made on the asylum claim (Refugee Law Centre, 2018). Recall that average rent in Paris hovers around 1000 euros per month making the ADA supplement perhaps only minimally useful outside the city. As one representative from a refugee housing activist organisation notes, “Private rental housing is difficult for anybody in Paris let alone refugees...any one must provide references and bank account statements ensuring the landlord that they can pay the rent...refugees do not have these resources” (Interview, K). The ADA was introduced as a means to subvert the CADA housing shortage; however, this also means that refugees cannot hold the subsidy and a CADA unit at the same time. Once refugees agree to receive ADA payments they must accept any form of housing—usually outside of Paris—trading their ADA payments for relocation (Interview, K; Interview, M)

A representative from a prominent minority rights advocacy organisation notes, “According to OFII, every refugee has to be housed in a room or centre, this is the law, but it is not being followed because of housing shortage. Majority of refugees are not housed, they used

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4 to go to CADA but then that is full...so then refugees had no option but to stay in HUDA⁸, but
5 now that is also full...the majority of refugees must then try to find a family member or
6 acquaintance, but this is also a trap” (Interview, N). As the informant suggests, this is a trap
7 because the ADA payment is exploited by fellow refugees who agree to share their space with
8 those who cannot find CADA housing in Paris. Many refugees, forced to share close living
9 quarters with virtual strangers, are exploited for their ADA. The informant further notes,
10 “...Many of them are charged 240 euros a month, plus another 60 for expenditures...they also
11 arbitrarily extort them for money because they know these people are receiving ADA leaving
12 less than 50 euros for personal expenditure per month” (Interview, N).
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15 The refugees who are able to live in Paris also face extreme housing precarity. An
16 example of this comes from an organisation that works directly in the poorer 19th
17 arrondissement. Here, the informants note that there is a higher demand for social housing
18 because of increased homelessness due to the influx of refugees. They work closely with a
19 family of seven that lives in a 20m² apartment since the migration crisis and have waited for
20 social housing ever since they were given status. When asked why some refugees decide to stay
21 in Paris, the informants suggest that perceived economic opportunities and closeness to
22 communities make it difficult for migrants to leave the city. They also said, “It can take 8-10
23 years to get an adequate enough space within the city especially if they have bigger
24 families...whether they want to or not, eventually, many are forced out of the city” (Interview,
25 H).
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28 The ADA, although providing refugees with short-term sustenance, can be seen as
29 another strategy of expulsion within racial neoliberalism. Through ADA, the pressure on CADA
30 housing is somewhat eased as refugees find Paris unaffordable and are thus, forced into other
31 areas outside the city. Even when they remain in the city, housing precarity, coupled with
32 unemployment or underemployment, constrain the choices of survival for forcibly displaced
33 people. It is also important to reflect upon the nuances and tensions of these schemes. On one
34 hand, housing is deemed as an unequivocal right according to OFII, on the other, the quality,
35 durability, and timeliness of housing access is severely constrained by pressures of austerity.
36 This is also apparent in longer-term housing solutions when refugees finally receive status.
37 Once, mostly Syrian or Afghan, refugees receive status they still do not have any viable options
38 of long-term housing.
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41 This has led to private citizens to take up some of the burden of housing and the state also
42 funds certain NGOs that support housing allocation. For example, touted as the ‘Air Bnb for
43 refugees’, CALM (comme à la maison) connects private French citizens with refugees who
44 share common interests in terms of employment skills. Over 800 people subscribed to host
45 refugees in 2015 and the numbers have risen ever since. Syrian and Afghan refugees are at the
46 top of the list as French citizens host refugees for free. The central goal of the organisation is to
47 integrate refugees into French society and link them to connections that allow them to find
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50 ⁸ Emergency housing on a shorter-term basis than CADA and was predominantly for homeless people –
51 Hébergement d’urgence pour demandeurs d’asile
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4 meaningful employment and become “productive members of society” (Interview, P). As the
5 representatives from CALM suggest, “housing is central to refugee success...when they are able
6 to find housing, they can train themselves in French, look for jobs, improve skills...44 percent of
7 the refugees in the program found work, 27 percent resumed studies, and 4 percent are
8 entrepreneurs” (Interview, P). Undoubtedly, the CALM project has been a success especially at
9 the scale at which it operates; however, it is important to note the push for integration and
10 productivity especially in Paris. Indeed, the logic of employable skills, productivity, and the
11 French language itself indicate that refugee populations can be useful within the confines of
12 racial neoliberalism. CALM is able to gain national-level funding because it speaks to the
13 interests of the state in rendering refugees as productive labourers or entrepreneurs.
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17 **VI. Conclusion**

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20 This article has linked housing precarity for refugees within overall issues of
21 neoliberalism while also pointing to the historical and material dimensions of racialized
22 expulsion in Paris. While Paris’s racialized urban poor are already struggling to find shelter in
23 the city, refugees represent a group that faces deeper levels of marginalization due to their race
24 and class positions within the current moment of heightened xenophobia in Paris and in France
25 more generally. This article has also pointed to the tensions inherent in survival that include
26 resilience to the pressures of racial neoliberalism. For example, housing shortage has led to the
27 ongoing displacement of refugees to rural areas; however, many refugees use their ADA
28 instalments to afford shelter. Even the destroying of refugee camps in urban Paris have not
29 prevented refugees from returning to the streets in search for sustainable housing. Refugees also
30 contend with housing shortage sharing, with increasing tension, the same circuits of emergency
31 housing as Paris’s homeless and attempt to survive through meagre supplements and cyclical
32 homelessness even after receiving status. The Paris case shows how refugee governance is a
33 multi-scalar process that plays out on the urban scale. More, examining ‘actually existing’ racial
34 neoliberalism reveals the contradictions of the so-called migration crisis. Indeed, the EMC is a
35 trope that masks the material realities of housing and labour inadequacy for many people in
36 major European cities such as Paris. The crisis is thus, only named as such due to the perceived
37 threat of Black and Brown bodies in previously White spaces. While refugees are framed as a
38 deeply marginalized population, this paper also shows that the boundaries between racialized
39 poor/homeless and new migrants are blurry and the EU, France, and Paris are incapable of
40 assisting these groups in the long-term within the multi-scalar operations of racial neoliberalism.
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Displacement in ‘Actually Existing’ Racial Neoliberalism: Refugee Governance in Paris

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Abstract

3.5 million people currently live without adequate housing in France with some 10 million others in sub-standard accommodations without secure and affordable rental tenure. In Paris, homelessness has increased a staggering 84 percent since 2005 due to cuts in social service expenditure and the downloading of poverty management onto cities and civil society organisations. Since 2015, the European Union has seen a large influx of refugees from protracted conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa—commonly, and problematically, referred to as the *European migration crisis*. Although France has amongst the highest rates of refugee application rejections in Western Europe, Paris is increasingly becoming a hotspot for displaced people who are fleeing improper treatment in frontier states. The Paris case, as suggested here, illustrates ‘actually existing’ racial neoliberalism pointing to both the material and ideological features of refugee marginalization. The purpose of this article is two-fold: First, it highlights the various issues of political and shelter-based survival for urban refugees—an aspect understudied especially in cities in the global North. Second, the article aims to overlay pre-existing crises of homelessness, inadequate housing, and poverty with the racialization of refugees within the *European migration crisis*. Drawing on the Paris case, I argue that housing precarity and ongoing displacement from the city’s commercial core are interrelated features surrounding the governance of racial neoliberalism that facilitates refugee survival upon relocation.

Keywords:

Urban refugees; political economy; global displacement; race; neoliberalism

Word Count: 10739

In 2015 and 2016 more than 2.5 million new asylum claims were made in the European Union (EU) signalling a moment of heightened migration referred to as the European Migration Crisis (EMC)¹. The EMC refers to the management of mostly African and Middle-Eastern bodies as they flee conflict and socioeconomic well-being and attempt to enter the EU. That is to say, the migration ‘crisis’ is only named as such because the bodies seeking entry into Europe are dark-skinned and thus, demonised. According to the Eurobarometer survey, 73 percent of EU citizens believe that the EU’s management of migration is inadequate thereby calling for greater reform, stronger borders, equitable distribution of migrants, and an increased effort to fight terrorism (European Parliament, 2017). The resurgence of far-right politics in many countries of the EU echo these tensions of nationhood, citizenship, and race as a reaction to unwanted migration—a perceived challenge to white European identity. The literature on urban refugees, while providing some theoretical insight, is silent on experiences of displacement in the global north. The refugee subject continues to be understood through a state-centric lens; however, as Darling (2017) suggests, the city is complicit in interpreting, reshaping, and creating modes of enforcement for refugees within neoliberalism (Darling, 2017; Ehrkamp, 2016).

Of the 2.5 million new claims, only 61 percent received positive decisions leaving the rest to return to their country of origin or seek informal avenues for relocation (EU-Europa, 2017). While Italy and Hungary have received high numbers of refugees, national level politics have resulted in violence and expulsion of refugees from these frontier states.² Thus, many migrants face ongoing displacement to countries like France and Germany even upon entering the borders of the EU—this is known as third-country displacement and is a significant part of the management of refugees in the EMC. While Berlin has received some recent scholarly attention as a major site of refugee arrivals and processing (Soederberg, 2017), the issues surrounding urban refugees in Paris have not yet been studied. Paris is an important case, not only because it is the site of the first ‘urban refugee camp’ in Europe, but also because of the ongoing tensions of police-led violence and forced removal of refugees by the national state.

¹ This term is used in an contested manner and deserves further unpacking. It is worthwhile to note that the crisis is termed as such due to the large influx of Black and Brown bodies into a territory that is mostly White. This is considered an issue of management and something that Europe must (benevolently) cope with. This trope, characterising migrants of colour as unwanted subjects, is removed from any analysis of neoliberalism or urban austerity.

² Around 3 million migrants live in the EU illegally with Germany, Italy, and France gaining the highest numbers between 2015-2016 (Eurostat, 2017). Germany receives 60 percent new asylum claims in the EU, while Italy and France receive 10 and 6 percent respectively. While Germany continues to accept high numbers of asylum claimants—880,000 first instance positive decisions between 2015-2016—France consistently ranks second in positive decisions despite high numbers of Italian applications (Eurostat 2017b). Italy has recently become the epicentre of forced migration in the Mediterranean; however, the treatment of migrants in the country is harsh, resulting in state-led violence and detention (New York Times, 2017).

Marine Le Pen's presidential bid, along with amplified anti-migrant and Islamophobic sentiment in the aftermath of the Paris attacks, has led to the scapegoating of migrants particularly in arrondissements with high migrant populations (Reuters, 2015; The Guardian, 2017). 18,000 refugees currently reside in Paris and the closure of the Calais refugee settlement is forcing more than 6000-10000 new migrants to Paris between 2016-17 exacerbating the need for adequate social housing within the city (Al Jazeera, 2017; New York Times, 2016).

In addition, Paris has the highest number of homeless people in comparison to any city in Europe. There are currently 29,000 homeless people in the metropolitan area and 141,500 homeless people in France—50 percent higher than the recorded numbers in 2001 (BBC, 2018). The city, historically, has been divided with a glamorous commercial centre and a crumbling and racialized *banlieue* periphery (Wacquant, 2008). This article situates refugee displacement in Paris within an already burgeoning crisis of homelessness and affordable housing. Racialized poverty and marginalization in Paris is not a new phenomenon and the ongoing displacement of refugees upon relocation reflects the racialized dynamics of expulsion present in Paris's history. Thus, this article frames refugees within racial neoliberalization. The latter phrase has two definitional components. Neoliberalization is understood as a dominant ideological and disciplinary feature of market-based regulation resulting in government downsizing and increased pressure on cities to contend with social issues of welfare and poverty (Peck and Tickell, 2002; Peck, 2015; Roberts and Soederberg, 2014) thereby producing housing insecurity and other issues of survival for refugees. A central feature of these conceptions is the urban scale—where the political economy of austerity along with the refugee crisis is most apparent. The racial aspect of neoliberalization; however, remains muted in these discussions. Indeed, neoliberalism's ideological project has worked to avoid any discussion of the racial state but has simultaneously entrenched and furthered racial divisions through policing and inequality under the guise of securitization (Omi and Winant 1994). State securitization—the discursive reasoning for preventing migration—masks racial tensions and co-exists with international norms of acceptance. As Goldberg (2009) highlights, neoliberalism presents a duality where the existence of racism and its associated politics are glossed over through the bolstering of multicultural policies and a rhetoric of tolerance from liberal and conservative politicians alike. On the flip side, and through the retrenchment of the welfare state, the neoliberal state is one of hyper-surveillance vis-à-vis the policing of Black and Brown bodies under the guise of security. Following this, racial neoliberalization is defined as an ongoing process of government downsizing and market-based regulations that actively and adversely prevent the survival of racialized poor not only on the national scale but in urban centres too.

With these definitions in mind, I ask, how does racial neoliberalization shape the survival of refugees in Paris through various stages of displacement within emergency, short-term, and long-term shelter solutions? To answer this question, I first provide a brief historical overview of racialized displacements in Paris. Second, I build the theoretical framework of racial

neoliberalism as it pertains to displacement. Third, I examine racialized housing access in Paris. Fourth, I provide the overarching context of refugee governance in racial neoliberalism linking EU and French laws and practices with the urban scale in Paris. Fifth, I look at the lived experiences of urban refugees as they struggle to access housing and the ways in which every day experiences can be better understood through the lens of racial neoliberalism. Drawing on 30 interviews with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), International Organisations (IOs), representatives from government agencies, and refugees themselves from field research in Paris in 2017, I argue that refugees, framed within racial neoliberalization, face deep levels of marginalization through ongoing modes of displacement in Paris. Urban refugees are both ideologically and materially incongruent within the governance of racial neoliberalism which, in turn, facilitates the struggles for survival upon relocation.

I. Framing Capitalist and Racial Expulsion in Paris

This section provides a brief overview of the literature surrounding racial and class-based dimensions of expulsion and displacement in Paris and highlights the need for a theoretical framework emphasizing racial neoliberalization. While much of the recent media attention focuses on the migration crisis as an unprecedented event, it is important to historically contextualize working-class and racialized expulsion in the city of Paris in order to situate urban refugees within a longer historical trajectory of marginalization.

As mentioned above, racial neoliberalization refers to the ideological and material features of market-based governance vis-à-vis the ongoing downsizing of the welfare state, and devolution of welfare responsibility to the urban scale that adversely impacts the racialized poor. While a survey of the literature in critical race theory exceeds the limits of this article, I flag Robinson's seminal and under-utilized text *Black Marxism* (1983) as a conceptual framework that highlights the coinciding development of capitalism vis-à-vis the subjugation of colonized people. The colonial other, constructed in opposition to white European identity, became a permanent source of cheap labour through active constructions of difference. In this sense, capital accumulation has always been bolstered by racial difference and racialized migrants—as potentially useful and integrated labour—fit within the overall strategies of capital accumulation³. Omi and Winant (1994) argue, these practices of racial subjectivity and exploitative labour have only been reiterated in recent times through institutions, policies, conditions, and rules that are implicit in white supremacist states.

³ This is historically significant, the Irish, for example, were amongst the lowest paid workers during British Industrialization. U.S infrastructure and economic development was built on the enslaved labour in the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Robinson 1983)

Racialization requires some definitional specificity and is understood as an economic and political process where non-whites are ascribed arbitrary and essentialized identities by the majority (White) group resulting in unemployment, underemployment, illegal work, incarceration, and/or overall marginalization (Cowen and Siciliano, 2011; Gilmore, 2007). These processes are built into the urban environment with housing as a key feature of neoliberalization especially in light of the global financial crisis (Aalbers & Christophers, 2014; Rolnik 2013). As Wacquant (2008) and others note, Paris has a history of expelling the poor from wealthy arrondissements near the city's core and refugees struggle to access social housing within an already bloated and backlogged system. Although the 10th, 18th, and 19th arrondissements were historically working-class, refugee populations now face xenophobic tensions forcing them out of these historically marginal areas to even more distant spaces outside of Ile-de-France. Importantly, over 3.8 million people are inadequately housed in France (Abbe Pierre Foundation 2017) and urban refugees exacerbate these tensions due to their racialized positions as explored in sections below.

Expulsions in the city of Paris predate the 'Commune',⁴ where Haussman's utopian project of redevelopment required the absorption of large quantities of surplus labour and capital in the city. Hausmannisation, as a process, redesigned whole neighbourhoods by expelling industry to the periphery of the city thereby displacing mass populations of the working class to the East of Paris. This created a wealthy, and consumption centric west Paris, and an industrial and 'noxious' east Paris—a city divided by class (Harvey, 2006; 2010).

While class is a clear indicator of spatial divide, the arrival of migrants in the 19th century and refugees since 1945 have resulted in racialized expulsions as well. France, experiencing a labour shortage after the First World War, saw a rise in Italian and Polish migrants for manpower in its major industrial zones (Frederickson, 2003). These groups fulfilled the labour requirements in the country, but their racial positions placed them in low-wage labour and marginal positions on the fringe of the 'noxious' city. Here, I borrow from Ong et al. (1996) who note the racialization of class that is central in the construction of non-white Parisians as unwanted, yet necessary labour. Although class structures inequality and facilitates accumulation, it is racialized groups that face severe limitations in terms of their survival within capitalism.

The post-World War II era brought Jews and other European migrants into the city while it was not until the 1960s that migrants and refugees from North and Sub-Saharan Africa were allowed in. These migrants faced an entirely different set of rules—having French nationality but being barred from French citizenship. Racialized immigrants lived in shantytowns on the outskirts of Paris and were basically considered non-citizen workforce. While the French state

⁴ Insurrection of and violent repression of working-class uprising (and governance) in 1871. While an analysis of the Commune far exceeds the limitations of this short article, it is important to historicize class tensions on the urban scale. Accumulation too, is not a recent phenomenon solely contained within neoliberalism.

saw immigration as an indicator of economic boom it also revealed a housing problem—racialized workers could not live or afford the city but remained necessary industrial manpower (Blevis & Pezet, 2012). The solution arose through the formation of the *banlieue* periphery suburbs that further entrenched racialized dimensions of working-class expulsion from the city. While the brutalist sub-urban development provided a solution to the shanty-towns the eventual decline of welfare spending resulted in ghettoized, and widespread, unemployment, violence, and social alienation in the neoliberal era starting in the 1980s. Wacquant (2008) refers to these spaces as those of ‘advanced marginality’ as the poor are excluded from larger macroeconomic trends within Paris and France.

Paris’s need for cheap labour has not disappeared. As Enright (2013) points out, the city developed a mass transit system that sought to create a more accessible and unified Ile-de-France region that boosted financial, industrial, and cultural clusters. The market-based rationality of this development project failed to highlight the further displacement of the urban poor due to increased property values in areas that were better connected to Grand Paris. Meanwhile, the buildings in *banlieues* have become increasingly dilapidated and housing conditions have worsened (Angelil & Siress, 2012; Hancock 2017). Dikec (2006) highlights how *banlieues* are racialized spaces and it is through this conception of ethnicity that the state is able to expel, penalize, and reorganise its citizens in France. By painting the *banlieues*, and the people in it, as social menace the state was able to enact authoritarian social policies focused on keeping certain populations in place.

The tensions of racialized displacement in Paris is renewed in this current moment of the EMC. Indeed, one official at a recent Eurocities conference noted, “We don’t have a refugee crisis. We have a housing crisis” (Eurocities, 2016). This is important because not only are urban areas key sites of experimentation and innovation as it concerns capital accumulation but also sites of restraint and austerity. This is what Peck et al. (2012; 2013) name as creative destruction where the neoliberalized state apparatus appears as a result of national-level decentralization where sub-national authorities are forced to manage social welfare. Undoubtedly, the burden of refugee management falls upon the urban scale in Paris within already insufficient social housing regimes. While the literature presented in this section addresses some of the key concerns of racial expulsion within the city, a more nuanced understanding of racial neoliberalization is required in order to frame urban refugees within overlapping housing shortage and ongoing displacement in Paris.

II. Theorizing Forced Displacement in Racial Neoliberalism

A conception of neoliberalism as an ongoing process of market-oriented governance and welfare retrenchment informs my conception of ‘actually existing’ racial neoliberalism. Before identifying the intersections of race as regards neoliberalism—an extant gap in urban geography

and forced migration studies—it is important to ground this process in its historical-materialist conceptions that are of most relevance to the study of displacement and housing on the urban scale—the scale where material survival is contested and most evident (Brenner et al., 2010). As Peck and Tickell (2002) highlight, neoliberalism (or neoliberalization) is neither monolithic nor universal but has generalizable effects on multiple scales with local particularities. In short, the process refers to the destruction of the welfare state and its institutions in favour of a neoliberalized state which, on the urban scale, promotes economic growth and urban austerity (2002: 396-6; Tonkiss, 2013). Harvey’s exploration of uneven spatial development suggests, new institutional arrangements—either through state and or capitalist interest—are being (re) constituted in response to material circumstances embedded in capital accumulation (2006: 81). Importantly, housing refugees and promoting their long-term survival upon relocation contrasts these aims of growth and urban competition. Refugee hosting requires increased welfare capabilities and with the downloading of these welfare responsibilities onto cities—what Peck (2012) refers to as austerity urbanism—cities are simply unable to cope with the budgetary and political requirements of high numbers of refugees as evidenced in the EMC.

In understanding neoliberalism, this article emphasizes these processes in their ‘actually-existing’ forms. Indeed, neoliberalism is contextualized by what Brenner and Theodore (2002) refer to as an embeddedness of these restructuring projects within regional, national, and urban contexts (2002:350; Brenner et al., 2010). Governing refugees in Paris is embedded in the contradictory geographies of neoliberalism particularly as it concerns shelter thereby emphasizing the urban scale as the primary site of contestation as refugees struggle to survive upon relocation (Di Felicianantonio, 2016; Dikec & Swyngedouw, 2017). While these historical-materialist theorizations account for the inherent tensions in neoliberalism, discussions of race and racialization are often muted.

To address this gap and deepen the theorization of ‘actually existing’ racial neoliberalism, I echo Robinson’s (1983) ontological assertion that capitalism has always been racial and draw upon scholarship that incorporates race and neoliberalism as concurrent threads of analysis. I take on board Roberts and Mahtani’s (2010) suggestion to *race* neoliberalism and focus on their assertion that race deepens our understanding of neoliberal pressures on issues such as labour, migration, and welfare (2010: 249). In particular, this article expands the analysis of racial neoliberalism as regards migration and the shelter governance of refugees in a major global North city like Paris. As Bonds (2013) further highlights, racial inequalities are evidenced in geographic space where economic and racial logics fuse together to sustain marginalization and vulnerability (*c.f.* Wyly et al. 2009)

Kapoor’s (2013) conception of the racial neoliberal state is also of relevance because it points to a duality useful for the theorization of urban refugee governance. Kapoor asserts, “...articulations of racism in the current moment need to be understood through an analysis that

relates to the context of the contemporary political economy and the advancement of the neoliberal state” (2013: 1030). In terms of migration, race not only represents the management of black and brown bodies, but in allowing these migrants entry to Europe, also bolsters the international image of Western states as ones of unequivocal acceptance. There are inherent contradictions in the acceptance of refugees, as Fassin (2008) shows, some refugees are victims of humanitarian assistance while others are deemed undeserving of aid. Racial neoliberalism, while simultaneously silencing race and issues of racism and ensuring the space for capital accumulation (Goldberg 2009), allows for refugee issues on the urban scale to be depoliticized from the pre-existing conditions of austerity, housing shortage, homelessness, and ongoing displacements endemic in Paris. In particular, racial neoliberalism reifies xenophobic notions that migrants are threatening to economic security thereby facilitating their displacement and poor housing upon relocation.

Racial neoliberalism reflects upon the ideological and material conditions of urban refugee governance and allows for an excavation of the processes inherent to exclusion and marginalization in Paris. As Goldberg (2006) shows us, race is a set of conditions that shifts over time and is a product of social tensions and relations (2006: 337). Conceiving race as a shifting social relation sheds critical light on the governance of neoliberalism. As shown above, the expulsion of racialized bodies from Paris’s core is not a neoliberal phenomenon (though it is capitalist); however, the neoliberal management of refugees in the current moment of the EMC reveals pre-existing issues of shelter and labour inadequacy that are ignored in favour of xenophobic predispositions towards refugees. Chief amongst these approaches to governance are portrayals of refugees as terrorists or security threats or, in the least, jobless and lazy thereby placing a strain on welfare. The Paris case also reflects a wider trend in refugee acceptance and humanitarianism (Fassin, 2007) in the EU that views some Middle Eastern bodies as authentic refugee claimants over allegedly irregular or inauthentic African migrants. Refugees do share some similarities within their categorization of social marginality and their experiences in urban centres; however, they are far from a homogenous category—some lives are coded as more valuable or more in need of urgent assistance than others illustrating that race influences the regulatory assistance, or lack thereof, in major cities like Paris.

Following Rajaram (2018), the differences between racialized poor migrants and refugees are often blurred; however, I nuance this distinction here especially with regard to housing. This is because refugees—in their search for citizenship and employment access—are prevented from entering social housing markets and cannot be formally employed until they receive a decision on their asylum claim or until a maximum of nine months and only if the Office of Refugee and Asylum Protection (OFPRA) is delayed in its decision making⁵. This reality contrasts the views of the IMF and other international actors that focus on the integration of refugees due to their labour utility. In Paris, refugees are not allowed to work for close to a year, but the racial rhetoric

⁵ <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/france/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-labour-market>

of refugees as lazy and undeserving of aid continues to shape their existence on the fringe of society.

Thus, urban refugees are brought into this analytical fold of racial neoliberalism as newly marginalized urban subjects, not only on a global scale, but also, specifically in Paris. More than half of the refugees in the world live in cities and are disproportionately targeted due to their marginalized race and class-based positions (UNHCR 2016). As Darling (2016; 2017) suggests, the city is simultaneously a location of immense surveillance and passive acceptance of urban refugees as underclass and unwanted populations. Paris, for instance, draws refugees because of perceived safety and economic opportunity; however, sheltering refugees is fraught with racial tensions embedded in market-based governance leading to shelter insecurity. Mitchell and Heynen's (2009) conception of survival in neoliberalism, through the netting of public and private spaces, including social services, not only determines how people live but whether they live at all. The geographies of survival are contingent on the criminalization of the vulnerable poor and, in the Paris case, show how refugees are unwanted in urban spaces and are thus, forcibly displaced from the streets of the city. Importantly, despite the overarching pressures of racial neoliberalism refugees do survive and, in this survival, there is resistance evidenced through the micro-dimensions of violence faced by these groups on an everyday basis. The next section utilizes the theoretical premise of racial neoliberalization developed here to understand social housing in Paris.

III. 'Actually Existing' Racial Neoliberalism in Parisian Social Housing

France's experience with neoliberalism is rooted in its colonial history of integration. National policy models interlace French nationhood and neoliberalism as a means of discriminatory integration (Bonjour & Lettinga, 2012). As explored below, French housing policies of social mixing are intended as universalist principles of integration—many of the organisations interviewed for this study indicate their explicit focus on integrating refugees into French society in order to make them economically useful. Neoliberal governance uses 'hard work' as an ideological tool to facilitate the slashing of welfare services thereby blaming the poor for their own poverty and absolving the state from the responsibility of welfare. Universalist social housing programmes render poverty invisible by favouring middle-class interests and reducing the number of social housing units for the working poor. In universalizing social housing policies, discrimination based on race or ethnic indicators are ignored or unrecognized by the state (Sala Pala, 2010). French scholars have pointed to obvious cases of discrimination based on ethnicity (Balibar & Wallerstein, 1998; Simon & Kirszbaum, 2001).

At present, France has undergone five rounds of austerity measures through a combination of tax increase and public spending reductions placing heavy burdens on households. Austerity measures have undoubtedly brought on greater poverty with over 7 million French citizens being

considered poor. Inequality has widened, and unemployment has steadily remained around 9-10 percent since 2013 (INSEE 2017). Austerity has impacted French social housing financing as well. France has a social housing stock of 17 percent and the state has gradually removed itself from social housing responsibility since the 1980s⁶. Not only did President Sarkozy diverge from France's historical commitment to social housing by instilling a 70 percent goal of home ownership rate in the country, but budgetary constraints, through EU-wide austerity, made it doubly difficult to keep subsidies for social housing investment at the same level (Driant & Li, 2012).

All social housing in France is managed by 'rent controlled housing' or *habitation à loyer modéré* (HLM) and there are three main types of housing loans that correspond to a different target population group that needs housing. PLAI (*prêts locatifs aides d'intégration*) accounts for households with the lowest income; PLUS (*prêts locatifs à usage social*)—the main output of social housing for low and median income households; and PLS (*prêts locatifs social*) for higher income households that could not afford a house in a city like Paris for example (Government of France Housing, 2017; *c.f.* Driant & Li, 2012). Briefly, the combination of austerity measures including the deregulation of social housing, and withdrawal of the national level state in social housing schemes, has forced HLMs to come up with their own means of funding thereby forcing HLMs to buy properties from commercial land developer. An interview with an expert working in HLMs suggests that since HLMs have to pay back either the state or the *caisse des dépôts* (CDC)—state-sponsored financial institution—most of the social housing units happen to fall within the PLUS category loans as a means to ensure rental income (Interview, B).

This context of austerity is important in influencing access to affordable and longer-term housing for racialized people and refugees alike especially in Paris where homelessness is on the rise and emergency shelters are completely backlogged and incapable of housing the most vulnerable (Abbe-Pierre Foundation 2017). Undoubtedly, the experience of neoliberalism in France has racial features that predate the 2008 crisis.

Emerging in the 1990s the Besson Law set quantitative goals of social housing (25 percent by 2020) by preventing high levels of poor in certain *arrondissements* thereby diversifying the housing sector through a mixture of private and social home ownership. These policies are collectively known as social mixing that seeks to provide a mixture of class-based households in each social housing establishment. Social mixing seeks to diversify the poor population by placing them in more affluent *arrondissements* (Genestier, 2010); however, only 4 out of 20 hold any significant number of social housing stock (Gorczyncka, 2017). As Sala-Pala (2010) notes, social mixing aims to prevent spatial segregation of ethnicities thereby preventing community-building on ethnic lines and thereby propagating white middle-class interests.

More, very few units are available to the extremely impoverished or long-term unemployed—a distinct departure from the 1990s where when the Besson Law was created in order to address issues of poverty and homelessness in France (Bacqué et al., 2014). In fact, the

⁶ France is intermediary with regard to social housing provision in Europe. Netherlands has a housing stock of 35 percent, UK at 20 percent but Italy only 5 percent (Levy-Vroelant & Tutin, 2010)

middle class has moved into historically poor areas on the margins of the city turning the concept of social mixing on its head by further displacing the poor from their communities and neighbourhoods that they were originally placed in (ibid).

The racialized urban poor continue to be displaced as formerly working-class buildings are demolished for the sake of private interest within ongoing processes of gentrification (Kipfer, 2016). More, the veneer of ‘housing for all’ benefits the public and private stakeholders, including the municipal state. Social housing landlords are able to, more steadily, cover their building costs and encourage further housing developments in the historically working-class arrondissements while the rich areas continue to be devoid of social housing stock. As Kipfer (2016) notes, bourgeois interest in social housing includes the demolition of older buildings and the depletion of housing stock in Paris forcing the working and non-working poor to the *banlieues*. The average rent per square meter of social housing in Metropolitan France is €5.30 while Paris, particularly, is €7.70 per metre (INSEE, 2016). Not only is social housing difficult to attain, due to long wait-times and overall housing shortage, it is also far more expensive in Paris in comparison to national averages.

In addition to these class-based dimensions of housing exclusion, it is also important to point to the ways racialization interlaces with social mixing policies in Paris. Rental housing market discrimination based on ethnicity is evident in Paris—North-African, Sub-Saharan African, and Middle Eastern people face difficulties in accessing rental tenure (Acolin et al., 2016). These discriminations are exacerbated by differences in income, racialized tenants are seen as incapable of paying rent on time and creating dysfunction in the neighbourhood (Bonnet et al., 2016).

In an interview with an expert on social housing policy in France, the participant noted that, “Social mix strategies in France are an example of abject racism. These strategies play into France’s national rhetoric of integration and treat minorities in a tokenistic way. Although the previous government did a good job at raising housing stock in the country, it is never enough. More than two-thirds of France’s population could have a claim to social housing... In Paris, even if certain arrondissements have wealthy [visible] minorities these areas are deemed inappropriately mixed because there is not enough of a white or “French” population” (Interview, B). Indeed, the policies are jingoistic and reflect France’s commitment to integration under the guise of ‘housing for all’ within social mixing.

The poorer arrondissements of Paris not only have the highest unemployment rates but are also home to the make-shift refugee shelters in the city. For example, the wealthy 1st arrondissement’s unemployment percentage has been steadily around 7-8 percent since the mid-2000s, while the 19th arrondissement’s unemployment rate has climbed from 11 to 13 percent since 2006 (INSEE 2016). In effect, the racialized poor are forced to the peripheries of the city as is consistent with Paris’s development historically.

Although statistical data is not yet available with regard to urban refugee populations it is important to note that refugees in Paris are living in make-shift shelters in the 18th, 19th, and (to a lesser degree) 10th arrondissements according to an important social justice organisation and a

group of legal activists working with urban refugees in the city (Interview, C). For example, the City of Paris's emergency shelter initiatives are all located within the boundaries of the 18th and 19th arrondissements. Porte de la Chapelle and the metro stations Juarez and Stalingrad have received high numbers of refugees. Since the city has poor emergency shelter service, refugees and other homeless people are forced to seek shelter in highly policed and contested spaces such as subway stations in order to survive the night.

Average rent, even in the cheaper arrondissements, hovers around 1000€ per month making private rental housing unaffordable for most refugees. In general, finding social housing in Paris, according to interview data with a key housing organisation and a homelessness organisation, requires an average wait time of 3 years; however, depending on the family size, it could take up to 7-10 years to find adequate housing (Interview, A; G). Since both public and private solutions to housing urban refugees pose extreme difficulties, refugees struggle in finding long-term and durable affordable housing in the city. Within racial neoliberalism, refugees fall outside the purview of urban welfare and thus, rely on piecemeal and inadequate assistance in order to survive. As the following sections show, refugees face expulsions from the city of Paris, and use informal solutions to access durable housing relying on their kinship connections. NGOs and local-level state actors are unable to provide durable housing solutions within the context of high rates of asylum claims rejection. The following section highlights the various barriers to survival and access in emergency, short-term, and longer-term housing in Paris.

IV. Urban Refugees and Racialized Survival

Urban refugee governance is inseparable from the national and international contexts of refugee assistance and humanitarianism. As Table 1 illustrates, not all refugees are created equal and the logics of racialization deem certain countries more eligible for asylum thereby expelling other refugees based on race, class, and nationality. Following the conception of race as a shifting social relation, it is important to highlight that despite Afghan and Syrian refugees receiving higher rates of acceptance than other groups, they are still portrayed as security threats and, upon relocation, also framed as economic burdens. Using Fassin (2007), it is important to highlight that some refugees are coded as humanitarian victims that need assistance. Indeed, Afghan and Syrian refugees are France's top priority reflected in the resources available for their welfare and the quick adjudication of their claims. African refugees, due to racialized positions of marginality, are considered less worthy of protection as further explored in this section. After providing a brief overview of the institutional barriers to refugee acceptance, this section also examines the Dublin III protocol that exemplifies racial neoliberalism on multiple scales.

<i>Country of Origin/Continent</i>	<i>Total Primary Demands of Asylum in France</i>	<i>Percentage Accepted Asylum Claims</i>
Sudan	5,897	42.3
Afghanistan	4,058	80.9
Haiti	4,927	3.4
Albania	4,601	11.4
Syria	3,615	97.3
Democratic Republic of Congo	2,551	15.6
Guinea	2,336	28.6
Bangladesh	2,276	7.1
Africa	29,060	26.5
Asia/Middle East	21,221	49.4

Table 1: Highest Number of Asylum Claims by Country and Continent and Percentage rejections (OFPRA 2017)

Refugee survival in Paris depends on three interrelated factors even before they are granted status: First, upon entering the city, refugees must apply for a permit at the prefecture that is sent to the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless People (OFPRA). Second, and simultaneously, they must apply for assistance at the Office of Integration and Immigration (OFII) for housing and welfare payment. Third, as these applications are being processed, they must try and find an emergency housing solution—a nearly impossible task with overcrowding in the city’s emergency shelters and lack of refugee housing shelters called Centre d’accueil de demandeurs (CADA) availability. If refugees are lucky enough to receive status, they must leave their emergency housing as soon as they can and look for private accommodation and employment without much assistance from local government. The tensions between national level commitments to accepting refugees, despite rising xenophobia in France, and the downloading of welfare responsibilities to the municipal level, vis-à-vis austerity urbanism, are apparent in the Paris case.

OFPRA’s report (2016), corroborated by interview data, suggests that the state, at the national level, does hope to aid refugees as long as the legal requirements set by France and the EU are met. The death of Alan Kurdi—the three-year old Syrian boy who washed up on the shores of a Turkish beach (The Guardian, 2015)—captivated the attention of French officials and private citizens alike according to a state representative in the City of Paris (Interview, C). However, many of France’s refugees are not of Syrian origin and the doubts expressed by state officials towards ‘illegal’ or ‘economic’ migrants seem to be pointed at those of African origin. Importantly, I do not aim to minimize the plight of Syrian refugees especially in seeking asylum in third-countries. As one representative from the City of Paris notes, Syrian refugees are vetted previously by international organisations making their status more *reliable* (Interview, C). Refugees from African countries simply do not have that privilege. State officials display

significant anxieties in authenticating the stories of refugee claimants as evidenced by an interview with the Director of a prominent LGBT refugee rights organisation. The informant notes,

The French system of asylum is entirely foreign to many of these asylum claimants...they want specific details from childhood, for example, when did you first know you were gay? When did you have feelings for a man? When? Where? How? All these questions are too difficult and confusing for refugees from the Middle East and Africa because they do not think in this chronological French way and this is to their detriment because then they [adjudicators] think they [refugees] are lying if their stories do not match (Interview, N).

Importantly, which refugees are ‘authentic’ and which are deemed as fraudulent is hinged, again, on class, race, and nationality regardless of whether the claims are based on sexual orientation or gender identity which I have explored elsewhere (Citation Hidden ⁷2018; 2018)

Built-in to the asylum adjudication process in France, is integration—a policy-basis that demarcates which refugees are desirable and which are excess and should be returned because they either do not fit into the narrative of deserving refugees or are deemed as economic burdens who will steal jobs away from citizens—a trope in racial neoliberalism’s refugee governance. Enshrined in EU law is the Dublin III treaty that allows countries to return refugees to their port of entry in Europe. Since Italy and Hungary are now major ports of entry and enact brutal violence towards these displaced people, many refugees flee to third countries such as France. Despite claims of violence and incarceration, OFPRA returns many people to these countries citing the Dublin treaty. Out of the 66,000 asylum seeker applications in 2014, for example, a total of 16 percent of refugee applicants were approved on their first attempt and only a further 27 percent of appealed claims were approved (OFPRA 2014).

Being “Dublined” refers to the forced removal of asylum applicants from France (Dublin II, 2003; Dublin III *recast*, 2013). As one national level immigration official suggests, “Many people in the [department hidden] are racist French nationalists...they do not want refugees in the country and ‘Dublin’ as many people as they can” (Interview, D). Claiming refuge in Paris is difficult, claimants make an application at the prefecture that decides whether a claim is legitimate. While certain policies must be followed according to national and international regulations, the prefectures lean left or right politically thereby denying or accepting claims based on political inclinations (Interview, D).

‘Dublining’ is also a form of circuitous displacement—an exhausting and seemingly never-ending process. In an interview with a Sudanese refugee (Abdul) ⁸I gathered that the prefecture decisions regarding Dublin are firm and evading this decision would result in arrest and deportation. In Abdul’s situation, his case worker told him that he had to return to the country of origin where he was finger-printed upon entering Europe—in this case Italy. Abdul

⁷ Author is the same as the person writing this article

⁸ Pseudonym

notes that the conditions in Italy are brutal and he wants to stay in Paris; however, under Dublin, this is impossible (Interview, E).

Another example is a case of two Syrian refugees who were finger-printed in Germany but fled to Paris due to poor economic circumstances and lack of close kinship ties. They understood that they had come to Paris illegally and were hoping for their Dublin period to expire so that they could seek asylum from the prefecture. A social justice organisation responded by telling them to try and evade arrest during this time— “if you get arrested they will send you back” (Interview, F). The use of the Dublin treaty reflects upon racial neoliberalism that facilitates and normalizes circuitous displacement from Paris to other countries in the EU. In contrast, refugees also use this treaty to avoid arrest as illegal subjects in Paris and sometimes hope to get sent back to their port of entry so that they can attempt access to different cities in the EU through other channels. While OFPRA and OFII are aware of the violence in Hungary and Italy, the bouncing back of refugees reduces the strain on Paris’s poorly funded housing budget. These cases, along with many others, reveal the violence that refugees face in order to gain legal status and survive in Paris. It also indicates that Paris is a central city for refugees despite xenophobic policies and lack of economic opportunities. I now focus on the issues of access surrounding various forms of housing access.

V. Racial Neoliberalism and Ongoing Shelter Displacement

Before 2014, many refugees congregated at metro stations in the historically working-class arrondissements of the city. Metros Juarez and Stalingrad, home at one point during the early stages of refugee influx in the city, are close to emergency, health, and education services. At the onset of the EMC, the city even provided these migrants with free WIFI and electricity during the cold winter months. These camps were supported by donated tents and blankets from local NGOs. Fuel, food, and emergency healthcare is also donated by private citizens and many refugees are in even more precarious conditions as there are not enough emergency resources to fulfill the needs of refugee squatters. I flag governance in racial neoliberalism in two ways here: First, the fact that this type of temporary sheltering was considered an acceptable, perhaps even humane, solution to house an influx of migrants reveals the low social position occupied by urban refugees. And, second, despite this arrangement providing only the bare minimum of support for refugees, these informal camps were quickly shut down by the City of Paris and the National Police in Ile de France because the shantytown was considered an inconvenience to local residents who feared for their security.

By the summer of 2015, the residents of the 18th and 19th arrondissements grew discontented with the refugees in their area, and as mayoral election season approached, the city decided to ‘clean-up’ the metros. By July, the make-shift refugee camps near Juarez and Stalingrad were shut down by the police—barbed wire and large stones replaced the shelters in order to prevent new migrants from squatting. Refugees staying in these shelters were rounded

up and sent to rural and remote CADA housing in France illustrating another example of expulsion of racialized poor in Paris—the first within the European migration crisis (Interview, H). The camps, despite being repeatedly shut down by national police, keep popping up. In the present day, informal squatting continues in Paris near Porte de la Chapelle in a constant tussle between police and refugees who have nowhere else to stay.

In response to the closure of metro camps, the city created the first emergency shelter (or urban refugee camp) in France. ‘The Bubble’, located in the 19th arrondissement and funded entirely by the City of Paris, is both a processing facility and an emergency shelter. An official from the city notes, “Paris has unprecedented flows of migrants and the city certainly promotes itself as pro-refugee...the Bubble opened in the spring of 2016 in order to process asylum claims and provide emergency housing” (Interview, C). In addition, the city also opened two accommodation centres for single men and another for women and children in Paris Nord with about 400 beds available. The city official further notes that Paris has an obligation to follow Dublin III however, it is doing everything it can to protect refugees while maintaining its responsibilities to France. When asked about evictions and closures of make-shift refugee camps, the city official cited that violence and overcrowding forced the police to act against the migrants (Interview, C). It is important to note that the police in Paris represent the national-level state. The city’s position remains that the police acted against the migrants due to threats of violence despite Paris’s own commitments to housing refugees. Although the police allegedly act independently, a prominent refugee rights NGO notes that the city and the police are both complicit in the closure of these camps and the removal of ‘problematic’ refugees especially with looming municipal elections at the time (Interview, H). The governance of refugees between the City of Paris and the national-level state reveal inherent tensions in racial neoliberalism where refugees are simultaneously important for Paris’s image as a caring global city while also committing to racial tropes of security where its actual citizens should feel safe and the streets should look presentable—a type of governance strategy that keeps racialized poor housing away from the city’s core (Dikec, 2006).

The Bubble—despite being a useful site to record and process incoming refugees—is also overcrowded. Many refugees wait in line everyday hoping for a chance to gain access to the centre. The ones who do not make it into the Bubble centre are forced to live on the street. They face homelessness and housing precarity even in attempting to access this basic emergency service. The Bubble also exists on the last metro station away from the city’s commercial core in the North. While the City foresees a problem with refugees in the streets, the segregation of these racialized people in a shelter closer to the suburbs is more feasible. Despite these efforts, the Bubble is inadequately equipped to house the large influx of refugees. Refugees continue to congregate around metro stations—now closer to Paris North near Porte de la Chapelle—having no other option for shelter. The police, in-turn, crack down on squatters resulting in further arrests and expulsions from the city (Interview, H). Once refugees are processed at the Bubble they are only allowed to stay for a maximum of 14 days before being returned to the street. In addition, processing allows the city to bounce refugees away from Paris and encourages them to

seek CADA housing outside the city. At this stage, many refugees, awaiting their status from OFII and an interview date at OFPRA, could be assigned to CADA housing; however, since the shelters are overcrowded and underfunded refugees must find alternate solutions. Refugee shelter falls within a racial-spatial fix—since refugee labour is unwanted in Paris beyond the neoliberal rhetoric that emphasizes the importance of work, it is easy to lure these groups to rural areas of France with the promise of free housing. In turn, refugees are made to populate rural areas instead of waiting for years for housing in Paris despite the fact that this ongoing displacement is isolating and away from perceived economic opportunities.

Some refugees are able to use their kinship ties to live in overcrowded apartments near the city, while others cycle in and out of emergency shelters—that were solely for the homeless of Paris but have now expanded to serve refugees. A homelessness prevention organisation notes, “...homeless people and refugees must call 115 if they want housing, but most emergency housing in the city is full...if you want emergency housing the only option remaining for refugees is 115 and if they offer you a room and you decide not to take it then you are blacklisted and will not be offered a room again...most refugees sleep on the streets, or by the metro or they go sleep in the hospital waiting rooms...this is the reality of Paris now” (Interview, K). Emergency housing shelters in the city are poorly maintained and many refugees face violence and are robbed of their belongings. A Somali refugee I interviewed said, “my hostel is very dirty...people are always stealing my things, and everyone is always fighting...I cannot live there anymore” (Interview, L). For refugees waiting in limbo they have no other option except to wait for CADA and then apply for long-term housing once they are granted status

Since CADA housing is not guaranteed, refugees are given a subsidy named the Asylum Seeker’s Allowance (ADA – allocation pour demandeur d’asile) that is meant to cover daily costs. A single person receives approximately seven euros per day and an additional four euros if the state has not provided the person with accommodation. This ends immediately when a decision is made on the asylum claim (Refugee Law Centre, 2018). Recall that average rent in Paris hovers around 1000 euros per month making the ADA supplement perhaps only minimally useful outside the city. As one representative from a refugee housing activist organisation notes, “Private rental housing is difficult for anybody in Paris let alone refugees...any one must provide references and bank account statements ensuring the landlord that they can pay the rent...refugees do not have these resources” (Interview, K). The ADA was introduced as a means to subvert the CADA housing shortage; however, this also means that refugees cannot hold the subsidy and a CADA unit at the same time. Once refugees agree to receive ADA payments they must accept any form of housing—usually outside of Paris—trading their ADA payments for relocation (Interview, K; Interview, M)

A representative from a prominent minority rights advocacy organisation notes, “According to OFII, every refugee has to be housed in a room or centre, this is the law, but it is not being followed because of housing shortage. Majority of refugees are not housed, they used

to go to CADA but then that is full...so then refugees had no option but to stay in HUDA⁹, but now that is also full...the majority of refugees must then try to find a family member or acquaintance, but this is also a trap” (Interview, N). As the informant suggests, this is a trap because the ADA payment is exploited by fellow refugees who agree to share their space with those who cannot find CADA housing in Paris. Many refugees, forced to share close living quarters with virtual strangers, are exploited for their ADA. The informant further notes, “...Many of them are charged 240 euros a month, plus another 60 for expenditures...they also arbitrarily extort them for money because they know these people are receiving ADA leaving less than 50 euros for personal expenditure per month” (Interview, N).

The refugees who are able to live in Paris also face extreme housing precarity. An example of this comes from an organisation that works directly in the poorer 19th arrondissement. Here, the informants note that there is a higher demand for social housing because of increased homelessness due to the influx of refugees. They work closely with a family of seven that lives in a 20m² apartment since the migration crisis and have waited for social housing ever since they were given status. When asked why some refugees decide to stay in Paris, the informants suggest that perceived economic opportunities and closeness to communities make it difficult for migrants to leave the city. They also said, “It can take 8-10 years to get an adequate enough space within the city especially if they have bigger families...whether they want to or not, eventually, many are forced out of the city” (Interview, H).

The ADA, although providing refugees with short-term sustenance, can be seen as another strategy of expulsion within racial neoliberalism. Through ADA, the pressure on CADA housing is somewhat eased as refugees find Paris unaffordable and are thus, forced into other areas outside the city. Even when they remain in the city, housing precarity, coupled with unemployment or underemployment, constrain the choices of survival for forcibly displaced people. It is also important to reflect upon the nuances and tensions of these schemes. On one hand, housing is deemed as an unequivocal right according to OFII, on the other, the quality, durability, and timeliness of housing access is severely constrained by pressures of austerity. This is also apparent in longer-term housing solutions when refugees finally receive status. Once, mostly Syrian or Afghan, refugees receive status they still do not have any viable options of long-term housing.

This has led to private citizens to take up some of the burden of housing and the state also funds certain NGOs that support housing allocation. For example, touted as the ‘Air Bnb for refugees’, CALM (comme à la maison) connects private French citizens with refugees who share common interests in terms of employment skills. Over 800 people subscribed to host refugees in 2015 and the numbers have risen ever since. Syrian and Afghan refugees are at the top of the list as French citizens host refugees for free. The central goal of the organisation is to integrate refugees into French society and link them to connections that allow them to find

⁹ Emergency housing on a shorter-term basis than CADA and was predominantly for homeless people – Hébergement d’urgence pour demandeurs d’asile

meaningful employment and become “productive members of society” (Interview, P). As the representatives from CALM suggest, “housing is central to refugee success...when they are able to find housing, they can train themselves in French, look for jobs, improve skills...44 percent of the refugees in the program found work, 27 percent resumed studies, and 4 percent are entrepreneurs” (Interview, P). Undoubtedly, the CALM project has been a success especially at the scale at which it operates; however, it is important to note the push for integration and productivity especially in Paris. Indeed, the logic of employable skills, productivity, and the French language itself indicate that refugee populations can be useful within the confines of racial neoliberalism. CALM is able to gain national-level funding because it speaks to the interests of the state in rendering refugees as productive labourers or entrepreneurs.

VI. Conclusion

This article has linked housing precarity for refugees within overall issues of neoliberalism while also pointing to the historical and material dimensions of racialized expulsion in Paris. While Paris’s racialized urban poor are already struggling to find shelter in the city, refugees represent a group that faces deeper levels of marginalization due to their race and class positions within the current moment of heightened xenophobia in Paris and in France more generally. This article has also pointed to the tensions inherent in survival that include resilience to the pressures of racial neoliberalism. For example, housing shortage has led to the ongoing displacement of refugees to rural areas; however, many refugees use their ADA instalments to afford shelter. Even the destroying of refugee camps in urban Paris have not prevented refugees from returning to the streets in search for sustainable housing. Refugees also contend with housing shortage sharing, with increasing tension, the same circuits of emergency housing as Paris’s homeless and attempt to survive through meagre supplements and cyclical homelessness even after receiving status. The Paris case shows how refugee governance is a multi-scalar process that plays out on the urban scale. More, examining ‘actually existing’ racial neoliberalism reveals the contradictions of the so-called migration crisis. Indeed, the EMC is a trope that masks the material realities of housing and labour inadequacy for many people in major European cities such as Paris. The crisis is thus, only named as such due to the perceived threat of Black and Brown bodies in previously White spaces. While refugees are framed as a deeply marginalized population, this paper also shows that the boundaries between racialized poor/homeless and new migrants are blurry and the EU, France, and Paris are incapable of assisting these groups in the long-term within the multi-scalar operations of racial neoliberalism.

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Table 1

<i>Country of Origin/Continent</i>	<i>Total Primary Demands of Asylum in France</i>	<i>Percentage of Accepted Asylum Claims</i>
Sudan	5,897	42.3
Afghanistan	4,058	80.9
Haiti	4,927	3.4
Albania	4,601	11.4
Syria	3,615	97.3
Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	2,551	15.6
Guinea	2,336	28.6
Bangladesh	2,276	7.1
Africa	29,060	26.5
Asia/Middle East	21,221	49.4

Table 1: Highest Number of Asylum Claims by Country and Continent and Percentage rejections (OFPRA 2017)