



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

Report about the Association “Nonna Roma”

CIVIS course

“Urban regeneration through informality: theories and experiences”



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Introduction

The recently concluded CIVIS course entitled “*Urban Regeneration through informality: theories and experiences*” has focused on the analysis of various experiences of urban regeneration and informal civic participation in the city of Rome. In particular, this paper examines one of the projects we visited in the city of Rome, which is called “*Nonna Roma*”.

Informality has been a subject for social sciences since the 70's, first with the publication of the *Kenya Report* by Hans Singer and Richard Jolly¹ that mainly focused on the measure of works that weren't regularised (or declared) and how the management of this kind of work was affecting local activities and being transposed to urban spaces, therefore shaping new neighbourhoods, even new cities.

Becoming an actual study object of the scientific community, the subject of urban informality is mainly divided into two types of ideologies according to the author Ana Roy. First labelled as an urban problem then emerged the idea of a form of entrepreneurship. Both of those perceptions are underlining the crucial fact that informality is inseparable from the governance of urban spaces².

As a general definition, informality can be understand as the following principle “ the administration demands that the partnership with the citizens takes place in accordance with the requested formalities only when it is provided for by law. In the rest of the cases it ensures flexibility and simplicity in the relationship, as long as it is possible to guarantee the respect of the public ethic, as it is regulated by the code of conduct of the public sector employees, and the respect of the principles of impartiality, efficiency, transparency and judicial certainty”³. Informal economies can be seen as the result of human capital deficits, because of underdevelopment of the national economy or missing employment opportunities in the formal economy to provide a livelihood apart from the formal economy.⁴

This raises two essential questions:

Primarily, Is informality the manifestation of vulnerability and does it reinforce it or contribute to mitigate it? Secondly, does informality build a new relationship between citizens and local authorities in urban spaces in the future in order, at a more global scale, to interrogate local governments of the cities?

This paper, after presenting the association's activities, will be attached to understand how Nonna Roma through its project has been bypassing the local authorities at both different scales of time and space while in the meantime blurring the boundaries between formal and informal.

After focusing on the roots of the project with anthropological and geographical approaches developed in the third and four chapters, we will move to political and legal questions that surround Nonna Roma and finishing with a critical sight of their activities.

¹ Singer, H.W., Jolly, R. (2012). Employment, Incomes and Equality: Lessons of the ILO Employment Strategy Mission to Kenya. In: Jolly, R. (eds) Milestones and Turning Points in Development Thinking. IDS Companions to Development. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137271631_9

²Roy, A. (2005). Urban informality: toward an epistemology of planning. *Journal of the american planning association*, 71(2), 147-158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944360508976689>

³ Article 3 of Bologna Regulation - <http://www.labgov.it/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/BolognaRegulation-on-collaboration-between-citizens-and-the-city-for-the-cure-andregeneration-Of-urban-commons1>

⁴Tamar Diana Wilson (2010). An Introduction To The Study Of Informal Economies. *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development*, WINTER, 2010, Vol. 39, No. 4, Informal Economies in North America (WINTER, 2010), pp. 341-357 https://www.jstor.org/stable/41291330?seq=1&cid=pdf-reference#references_tab_contents

1. Activities of the Association

Nonna Roma is an association composed of voluntary workers, born on 31 May 2017, within the Arci Sparwasser club. A large group of boys and girls supported the idea of setting up a mutual aid bank with the intention of trying to provide material answers to the precarious conditions in which thousands of people live in the city of Rome, starting from the V Municipality of Rome. The project, strongly supported by other associations like the Arci Committee of Rome and the CGIL of Rome and Lazio, aims to fight poverty and economic and social inequalities. The project has been named *Nonna Roma* because in the collective imagination the grandmother is that figure who dispenses solidarity and support and increasingly represents an indispensable piece of individual and social welfare.

Nonna Roma is involved in various activities, but above all has a specific focus on food and the problems related to access to basic necessities. Therefore it is structured primarily as a mutual aid food bank with an equalising purpose, collecting and distributing foodstuffs and personal hygiene products to families in absolute or relative poverty. Starting from food as a point of access and interception of the community's needs with its latest social market, the association has activated a network of services to enable users to get out of a condition of economic and social hardship and marginality. The Association's objective is not only to provide services, but to gradually involve the people assisted in defining objectives, developing skills and sharing practices. Since 2018, it has been launching work inclusion paths through the social enterprise tool, in order to offer a service based on a broader idea of human development.

As mentioned above, the main service provided by the association is the distribution of food. Until February 2020, the association looked after 243 families, a total of 629 people, in three Municipalities of Rome: I, IV and V⁴. These people were indicated by the Social Services of the Municipalities, the informal network of associations with which Nonna Roma collaborates, and self-disclosure by the recipients themselves. The assisted people come to collect the package at one of the territorial offices. With the Covid-19 emergency, the activity increased. Since it was not possible to move because of the lockdown, the voluntary workers decided to deliver the packages at home and to open the possibility to anyone who asked for it. As a result, they delivered 8,642 parcels to 8,099 families (as of 1 August 2020) in all fifteen municipalities of Rome and some municipalities of the Castelli Romani such as Ciampino⁵.

The food distribution activity allows the association to come into contact with people and learn about their various needs. Therefore, Nonna Roma supports families with free initiatives related to the school context. For example, they have activated "*Matita Sospesa*" (Pencil Suspended): the association collects school materials in order to distribute them to families in need; the "*Fuoriclasse*" project based on the idea of setting up an after-school programme for primary, middle and high school students at risk of dropping out and Italian courses for foreign adults living in the area.

Nonna Roma also promotes the Sportelli di Mutuo Soccorso (Mutual Aid Desks), a listening and proximity service in the different territories in which it is present, through social and solidarity desks for economic and legal assistance and for the performance of bureaucratic procedures (access social, health and school services, which are essential for citizen's rights). The counter activity of Nonna Roma takes place through collaboration for some services with Inca and Caf CGIL and with the Arci

⁴ Data published by Nonna Roma on their website, at the link: <https://nonnaroma.it/distribuzione-alimentare/>

⁵ Ibid.

committee of Rome. In the Third Municipality, they collaborate with the Sportello Tuteliamoci, which is held at Lab! Puzzle.

Nonna Roma strongly believes that poverty must also be fought by developing opportunities for sociability among people. Since its foundation, Nonna Roma has organised recreational activities, such as the “*Multiethnic Carnival*” for children, the “*Pigneto Libera Tutt**”, the “*CinemAperto*” and many other events that all participate to ensure social cohesion and build a new narrative of the neighbourhood in the initial place, the V Municipio.

2. The commitment in the first place at a local scale: the V Municipio

2.1.A scale of commitment based on a double interpretive experience...

To begin with the thematic of informality through the example of Nonna Roma we can first ask how the activity of the association is renewing the experience of the city and participating in the urban regeneration of Rome?

This question has to be considered with a multi-scale approach when we talk about Nonna Roma which is evolving at different stages in terms of time but also in terms of geography.

In fact, the beginning of Nonna Roma can be resumed at one place, the neighbourhood of the V Municipio, and one activity, the food distribution, both anticipations of a larger development and commitments which involve nowadays the scale of Rome.

Therefore, at a local scale, in the Municipio V the initial activity was based on different realities, an interpretive conscience of the activist but also a real social and economic disabilities of the neighbourhood.

We can assume that appropriate solutions to emerging problems are “devised most effectively by those who have the advantage of local information, and also have to live with the consequences of their decisions”⁶. Indeed, in the case of Nonna Roma, it appears that the experience of the three “activists” is at the root of the project.

Effectively, Nonna Roma was founded by three young activists that were also inhabitants of the V Municipio. It is their daily experience of the social and economic neighbourhood’s issues that has been “the springboard of their involvement”⁷. For the three founders, being a member of the neighbourhood has created a sense of belonging that has participated in their commitment as well as their previous engagements in other associations.

Indeed, if their work as association’s members hasn’t created their sense of belonging such as their status as inhabitants, they explicitly mentioned that it has, at least, reinforced this feeling.

Also, their “luggage” as activists has truly participated to raise their awareness about the actual social and economic living conditions of the neighbourhood.

So, we can understand that in the case of Nonna Roma, the intersection of the inhabitants’ status and activists of the V Municipio from the three founders is in reality the connecting trigger of their social

⁶ Beetham, D. (1991). Models of bureaucracy. *Grahame Thompson & ea (Eds.), Markets, Hierarchies & Networks: the Coordination of Social Life*, 128-141

⁷ Extract from the interview of the 24 of May 2022 with the association Nonna Roma.

aspirations and their hopes for the neighbourhood driven by their shared commitment to give appropriate solutions.

The sense of belonging has also grown with time and for a lot of Nonna Roma's volunteers, the Covid crisis has raised a new level of commitment helping to change their lives as citizens.

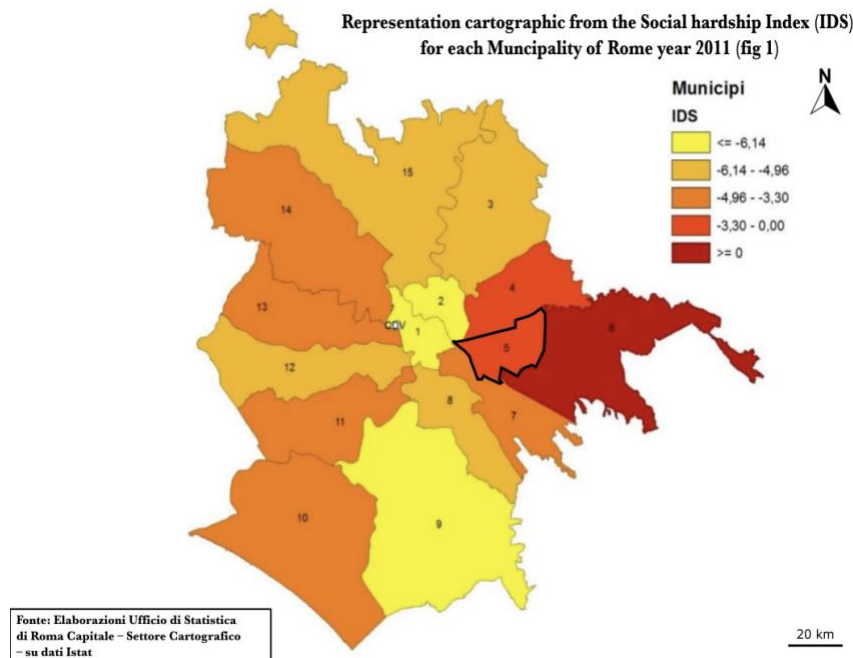
In fact, even though the volunteers that we met have insisted on the fact that "they were not charity work"⁸ the example of the second in charge that completely changed his working life after first being a volunteer in Nonna Roma (before he was a sales assistant and now divides his time between the activity of Nonna Roma and working with disabled children) can illustrate how the experience of the terrain can change the perspectives of a life.

Regarding the powerful effect of this kind of commitment in the first place we can ask ourselves how the experience of the neighbourhood of the three founders, as inhabitants and activists, may have led to a potential misjudgement of the neighbourhood's conditions or if in reality the difficulties are concrete.

2.2.but based on real social and economic difficulties

In fact, we wonder if the daily experience of poverty and social needs of the three founders might have encouraged them to create the association more than a real social distress of the community.

Therefore, do their subjectivities have participated to misrepresent the living conditions in the neighbourhood and amplify the perception of a lack of local authorities' investment?



In reality, regarding the social indexes of the neighbourhood we can see that the situation of the V Municipio is showing some signs of poverty and social needs. Located in the east quadrant, which is the poorest area of Rome, peripheral areas where the issue of inequality also arises as regards access to cultural and recreational opportunities, the neighbourhood is suffering from a real lack of services.

⁸Extract from the interview of the 24 of May 2022 with the association Nonna Roma.

Indeed as we can see with the social hardship index⁹ of the Municipio (fig 1) it is one of the highest of the city since it exceeds 0. The social hardship index (IDS) provides a measure of the possible socio-occupational criticality of a given area according to the weighted average of four indicators : unemployment rate, employment rate, youth concentration rate and education rate.

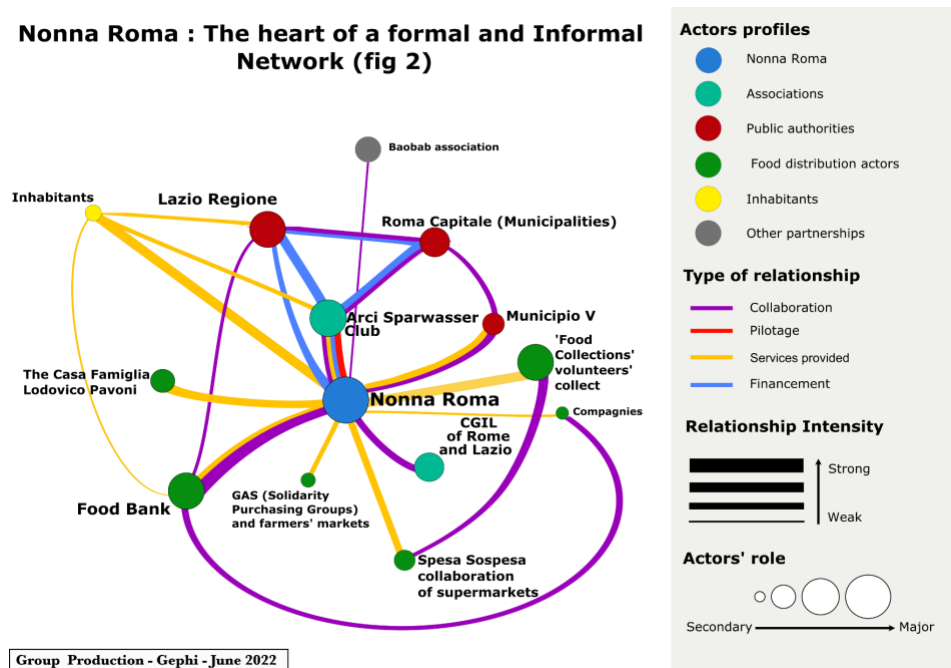
Consequently, we can easily assume that being the three founders of Nonna Roma inhabitants of the V Municipio is the source of the commitment but that the experience of it is quite objective regarding the social index of the municipality.

3. The build of “social network” : interacting scales of parallel and bottom up governance and the “alternate” sustainable and circular city

3.1. The progressive development of a network of activists/associations interacting with local authorities and institutions

Through its different activities and services but more specifically with its first commitment as food distribution service, Nonna Roma has held itself as a well-known actor of change in the larger Arci Sparwasser club. Driven with different associations by the shared idea of creating a Mutual aid desk born with the intent of trying to provide material answers to the precarious conditions, Nonna Roma has been growing in terms of skills but also in terms of geography, acting at a city’s scale.

We can easily understand how the association’s expansion has been creating through its network and new places of service an alternative informal form of city’s governance (built consciously or not) by the actor’s collaborations. The network, not only reserved to association and informal actors, is in reality interacting with formal institutions and local authorities to build this new urban governance that is blurring the boundaries between formal and informal (fig 2).



⁹ Extract from the annual statistical report from Rome Municipality for the year 2021 : https://www.comune.roma.it/web-resources/cms/documents/02_Bollettino_Statistico_Settembre_2021.pdf).

As mentioned above, for Nonna Roma we can see with this graph its network driven by its relationship with formal actors/institutions such as the Banco Alimentare Nazionale, the region of Lazio, the V Municipio or social services or informal actors/associations such as Baobab, the Casa Famiglia Lodovico Pavoni association, the Arci Sparwasser club etc.

We can see through this list, how various these sources are and how by their status it implies different levels of formality or informality. For example, one of them has for purpose the distribution of food such as the Food Bank, through a formal agreement which supplies branded products every month, whereas as for the Food collection of the supermarket it implies the informal collection from the volunteers of the left or expired products provided by the supermarkets.

It is difficult to really identify the degree of formality and informality from those relationships regarding the entire services of Nonna Roma since they are implying different actors with sometimes singular status regarding their legality. Nevertheless, we can already assume that the new scale of social action drawn by the actors is reversing or at least questioning the usual/regular governance (driven by the local authorities) through the experience of the bottom up based on communities' needs.

We can introduce here as an example the collaboration between Lab!Puzzle and Nonna Roma for the Mutual desk aid and their mutually offered services regarding the legal questions of the communities. There, the experience of the bottom up implies here a sort of professionalisation of the activists and is also creating a sense of solidarity between them.

Linked by their conditions more or less similar but even more because of the complementarity of their skills and the insatiable drive to serve the community they are proposing a consciously or not an alternate governance of Rome.

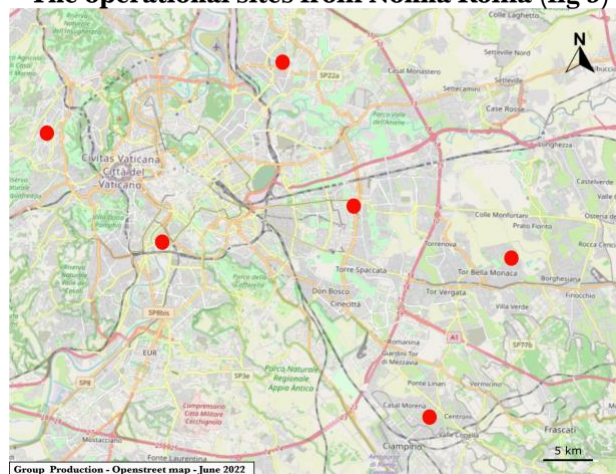
This “alternate governance” is not only relying on the expansion of the services provided but is also through a geographical expansion of Nonna Roma.

Indeed, as we said before, it resulted from the Covid crisis, the expansion of the activities of Nonna Roma and the association has once again taken the responsibility to provide services in five more new places.

Unlike the other social experiences such as Scomodo, Lab!Puzzle or the Scuola Cadlolo, Nonna Roma is now in some sense acting at the scale of the entire city (fig 3).

Once again, it's derived on the census of the Municipios' needs that the association is choosing to base its spaces of action and is therefore participating as its own scale to provide social services that are pointing in some sense to the lack of involvement of the institutions and reversing consequently the usual/formal local governance.

The operational sites from Nonna Roma (fig 3)



Finally, we can conclude that regarding the geographical and association network expansion of Nonna Roma, a part of social and economic informal activities of the city are in reality really structuring the Municipios but even more the territory of Rome. Alongside, are identified as key actors for the local governance, even sometimes as we are going to see in the second development, they are substituting themselves from other institutional actors.

We can also add, that the activity of our specific association Nonna Roma, is not only re-interrogating the governance of the city but even though is participating, at its own scale, on the building of a new cycle of urban that is proposing an alternative of the production structure of the city of Rome.

3.2. Nonna Roma, an informal path to build a circular and sustainable city

Not only acting for the communities in need, we can see the activity of Nonna Roma as an informal path to build a circular and sustainable city.

In fact, the idea of recycling spread through the different activities of Nonna Roma.

This idea, not only impacting the families and Nonna Roma, is also relying on the involvement of the various actors which together by their collaboration are producing a positive effect on the economy and sustainability of the city also as well in terms of social cohesion.

Indeed, mostly at local scale, the neighbourhood of the V Municipio can beneficiate from the recycling of clothes as well as the laptops.

Inside the social market (also storage unit) of the association, the families can bring, exchange and then leave with recycled clothes. The clothes are mainly provided by the volunteers or other families' donors. Furthermore, through the project *'Device4all'* Nonna Roma collects electronic devices, repairs them and provides them to the families who need it the most (especially the ones with children).

Other than the idea of recycling that is participating to build new consciousness about a sustainable city in general, we can see how the activity of Nonna Roma can affect the neighbourhood in terms of social cohesion. Also other than the clothes and the laptops the association provides scholar materials to the families also used for their after-school aid, which is also an example of how the association is creating a new narrative of the neighbourhood betting on the youth to change the future social conditions of the families.

But not only acting at the scale of the V neighbourhood, Nonna Roma is also by its major activity in some sense helping to build circular and sustainable spaces at a city's scale.

With the food distribution, we can see how this specific activity, with the participation of various actors in time and space, is linked by the same manner of action through the work of Nonna Roma. It is drawing an alternative network that is participating both informally and formally to provide services to the citizens.

Indeed, The National food Bank, The Casa Famiglia Lodovico Pavoni Association, the Spesa Sospesa project, the Food collection of the supermarket, food's companies' partnerships, or Solidarity Purchasing Group (GAS) and farmer markets are as many sources as involved in the food distribution network of Nonna Roma.

By this activity Nonna Roma is not only providing an answer to social difficulties but also linking in a virtual circle of urban metabolism.

In fact, Nonna Roma can be seen as the key intermediate that is linking the needs of a part of the urban society and the “leftovers” of the other part of this same society.

Rather than waste, what one part of the society is considering as deficient, expired in the case of the food, Nonna Roma, by linking various providing sources formally and informally, is reinstating it as a solution for public needs and is therefore proposing an alternative end of the cycle of production of Rome.

Consequently, we can wonder here how by pointing to the cause of the challenges and highlighting lack of the municipalities, the association is really re-interrogating the production cycles of a city and even more it is legitimating its action as a new actor of local governance.

4. A unique political and legal background

4.1. A form of evolving delegation

In order to proceed to a systematic analysis of the environment in which Nonna Roma is embedded and of its political role as an association, we must take into account certain features of the Italian welfare system.

The Italian welfare system is fully in line with the “familist” model, where the family is the provider of care and assistance to its members and the State assumes a marginal and residual role, while the private third sector grows, and the work of associations and informal actors increases. Moreover, in Italy, there is increasing criticism of the prolonged care of the poorest people, seen as a degenerative phenomenon of the redistributive and income support policy promoted by the welfare state. In reality, in Italy itself, there is no real redistributive policy capable of mitigating the ever-growing inequalities and economic polarisation within society. This is why an association like Nonna Roma exists and has the potential to last, because the state will never replace Nonna Roma's activity.

By definition, the Italian Constitution assigns to municipalities all administrative functions related to the organisation and delivery of public assistance and charity services, based on the principle of subsidiarity whereby the needs of the community must be met by the authority closest to the population. So in our case, it is the Municipality of Rome, divided into municipalities, that is responsible for providing social services to citizens in need.

However, the mere fact that Nonna Roma ensures basic services such as the distribution of food, or assistance to the weakest also in the area of the right to housing, following eviction procedures and acting as an intermediary between individuals and institutions, can be seen even more as a progressive delegation of the municipality to the association in the implementation of these services. Nonna Roma, through its volunteers, identifies social priorities and interventions to be implemented through the resources it possesses to provide public assistance that in other circumstances would have to be offered by local public authorities. Sometimes it is precisely the social services that send the association the requests of citizens in need of help, as the volunteers mentioned during our interview.

As an informal activity, Nonna Roma was first hosted by the Todomodo Library.

The Municipality of Rome has only committed itself to this situation by providing a place for Nonna Roma's informal activity. The space where Nonna Roma can carry out its activities in the fifth municipality was granted by the municipality thanks to the state of emergency during the Covid-19

pandemic, but when we interviewed the members of the association, they could not tell us whether the municipality would renew the concession for future years. Picking up on Professor Giglioni's theories, among the models he describes in his paper, the one that seems most suitable and similar to the situation of Nonna Roma is the recognition model, according to which:

“There are situations in which informality has transited within a framework of weak legality. Such are those conditions in which the public authorities have formally recognized the value of certain social experiences, but which, after the transitional period has expired, have continued without these initial conditions being definitively resolved and formalised.”¹⁰

At first it seemed to us that the informality of Nonna Roma's activity was “less” informal than experiences like Scomodo and Lab!Puzzle, since there is certainly some kind of recognition given by the Roman authority to the association's work, especially through its social services, but also by the region which provides since 2021 funds for the social market of the association. The space was not forcibly taken by Nonna Roma, but it is uncertain how long this concession will last.

Consequently, Nonna Roma could be recognised as an informal activity in a “formal” space.

Comparing it to other social experiences such as Scomodo or Lab!Puzzle, Nonna Roma seems to be “less” political. By 'less' political, we mean a 'non-obvious claim', whereas Lab!Puzzle immediately identified itself “as an anti-fascist, anti-racist and feminist association” or even Scomodo which claimed the occupation of the building as a political act, Nonna Roma was generally presented to us as an association committed to the fight against poverty. Due to Nonna Roma's choice not to present itself directly as an activist association and the fact that it has never experienced a striking conflict with public authorities, as in the case of Scomodo which risked being expelled due to the occupation of the building, we are tempted at first to question the 'political' aspects of Nonna Roma. Their political engagement is more “silent” than that of the other projects, but what is really interesting about Nonna Roma is the fact that the municipality does not seem to feel the need to engage in a pact with the association, and the municipality informally depends on the association's work to 'replace' its lack of action.

But since the beginning of 2022, Nonna Roma has committed itself to the defence of homeless people, a project that is concretely changing is “non-obvious political claim” now literally exposed on the public place as we are going to see.

Although this first description seems not to imply a direct political claim, Nonna Roma, by providing “material answers to precarious conditions with social and economic services”, acts directly for the interest of the territory and its government through the provision of essential services. This commitment is a political act and participates in the constitution of new public spaces, more or less autonomous, that are reinterrogating local governance and thus the role of public authorities in providing these services. Indeed, the diversification of the actions and services provided by Nonna Roma as a political act is embodied by the simple mantra “We want people to be back on their feet”¹¹. Nonna Roma can certainly be recognised as a political association only by taking into account its mantra and the provision of diverse social and economic services.

Indeed, thanks to the perspectives outlined above, we can now argue that Nonna Roma is strongly politically engaged and can be seen as an actor of local governance in its action districts. The identification and even more so the recognition of Nonna Roma as a governance actor is indeed evidence

¹⁰ Giglioni, F. (2017). Order without Law in the Experience of Italian Cities. *Italian J. Pub. L.*, 9, 291.

¹¹ Extract from the interview of the 24 of May 2022 with the association Nonna Roma.

of its central role in the urban regeneration of Rome. The association is identified as an actor of change first of all by the families, by the citizens themselves. Identification as a new 'governance' actor through the provision of social services is also conferred by the relationship between the association and institutions such as social services.

4.2. Engagement for homeless people

With cynicism Nonna Roma is calling the city of Rome “Rhomeless” to emphasise the problems people are facing living on the streets.

They are describing the situation in Rome as followed: “Rhomeless is the city where 16,000 people are forced to sleep on the pavement or in informal camps. Rhomeless is the city with 35 000 empty houses and 200.000 people in housing emergency.”¹²

Nonna Roma is trying to address qualitative and quantitative aspects in their report “Dalla Strada alla casa” to change these precarious situations by suggesting 5 concrete proposals to modify the reception model. One important issue is the allocation for fictitious residences, the reduction of waiting times for meetings with social workers and for registration at the town halls. Every step influences one another and can be a huge obstacle in regaining a stable life apart from the streets, especially when excluded from services and assistance because of a lacking residence permit which is connected to an address or rather a residence. That's why fictitious residences can facilitate these processes. This commitment led the association to even question the law by proposing to change the general rule “you don't owe a house you can't be eligible for nothing... school, insurance, work..”¹³.

As it's difficult to survey homeless people to organise appropriate policies in their interest, the organisation proposes direct surveys through street units to ensure information of the population. Especially the role of the municipalities and that on a national level are criticised for denying rights to homeless and the Urban Police Regulations get addressed as homeless receive often highly repressive measures. The creation of a permanent reception system shall help people in need, to not just get help in special seasons, but through all the year to get access to offered services (e.g. canteen/shower/distribution of clothing) that respond to material needs.

Not only on a political aspect, the engagement of the association for the defence of Homeless people is also participating in the rehabilitation of these “invisibles” into the public spaces whereas the authorities have tried to erase them: it is again an eminent political act.

The new commitment for the defence of homelesses is drawing a new perspective in terms of political engagement at different scales.

5. Critical analysis and questioning the action's lever of Nonna Roma

We can first be concerned by the fact the association has grown really fast since the crisis of the covid and ask ourselves about the level of the association's involvement for the help of people since more centres have been opened.

In fact, is the association ready to provide services for all the different communities since the number of the people in need has increased with the covid? (Does it lead at the end as some deficiency, for example less food provided, a selection according to the profile of the people, not enough time to offer

¹² PDF report “Dalla strada alla casa”, homepage of Nonna Roma

¹³ Extract from the interview of the 24 of May 2022 with the association Nonna Roma.

as much as services today provide?) Do they have the same level of activity that they had during the pandemic?

Also, we can be a bit worried about the fact that the institutions/ local authorities of the different municipalities (or even the municipality of Rome) can, due to the display of the expansion of the locations of Nonna Roma, take in account the needs of the communities and start a create a formal service that will compete with Nonna Roma or generate a complete reverse situation, a total delegation.

Moreover, will the model of Nonna Roma be sustainable in space and time as it is today? And is the scale of action for the activities the most pertinent for the association of Nonna Roma?

Are the diversification of the activities and the opening of new spots compatible together?

Would it be more efficient to concentrate their activities in only one place as we have seen for the other experiences and then have maybe a "bigger" social, economic and cultural impact on the community or otherwise choose to help the greatest number of people in need?

This could lead in this case to make a choice to eventually invest more funds in the food distribution in order to "honour" their commitment in the first place?

Frankly we can ask ourselves if there is a frame of their priorities and which is their way to deal with challenges?

Finally, can the diversification of their activities in order to make people "back on their feet" be leading after all to a certain form of "dependence". During our meeting the volunteer specified "we are not charity work" but could the diversification of their activities in order to provide services because of governance lacks could interrogate this idea?

According to our chapter about the production cycle and the recycling, we can wonder how long this activity will be sustainable, especially regarding the case of food distribution.

Indeed, even though it is hard to quantify its impact, the culture of the "too good to go" application trend is relevant in urban spaces even more in big cities such as Rome. Even though this trend is an informal way to mitigate food waste, the fact that it is available for everyone thanks to an application can led to a "form of competition" with the association.

In fact, it could be more interesting in the long term for the stores because the cumulative sums of the "too good to go" might in the overtime be "lucrative" for them whereas in the case of Nonna Roma the food is freely given away so "not-profitable" in terms of economy. So we can be wondering if this source of supply for Nonna Roma will be sustainable according to the "competition" and how it could affect after all its activity in the long term.

But we have to stress the fact that, for the distribution stores depending on the amount of expired food, working with associations such as Nonna Roma, who "take whatever they are giving to [them]" could be more profitable in time's economy to evacuate at one time a certain amount of food.

Thus, this supply source is frankly dependent on the stores, their stock, their "willingness" to work with Nonna Roma and we easily think that it is variable in terms of time, quantity and quality.

Moreover, we have to take in account the human factor, the volunteers. In fact, in order to collect the food, the association is only relying on the generosity of its volunteers thanks to their personal transportation, and even though the association has grown since the last two years, we can easily imagine how fragile and inconsistent this source of providing can be.

As an example, depending on the periods of the year, such as the scholar or summer vacation periods, the number of volunteers might be lower and if the demand is similar as it is the rest of the year, it might

be difficult to satisfy all the needs of the families for the association. (there are 200 volunteers in the association but only 80 active ones so less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total number of volunteers).
Therefore, we can be wondering once again how this source of providing can be reliable in the long term.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can see through the different topics reached in the paper how the boundaries between formal and informal are blurred in the specific case of Nonna Roma.

Alongside, even if there is a case of formal recognition of the association and its activity implying material proof (funds and public goods), Nonna is conserving an informal status that is really relying on the complementary of its own skills but as well on its collaboration network that is building an alternate governance of the city based on the providence of social and economical of the community's needs.

This alternate governance, built on the bottom up initiatives such as Nonna Roma can be related as concrete manifestations of vulnerabilities of the society as well as tangible and practical solutions that are devoted through urban informality to counterbalance the deficiencies of the State or local authorities. In other terms, if informal activities are a manifestation of vulnerability, the activity contributes to mitigating it. Secondly, it is this informality that builds new relationships between citizens and local authorities in urban spaces at different scales to interrogate local governments of the cities.



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Interview

Interview on the 24 of May 2022 with the association Nonna Roma.