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MARGINS IN THE HEART OF THE “UPPER DISTRICTS”?
REALITY AND REPRESENTATIONS OF THE POPULAR *ENCLAVE* IN
NAPLES’ WELL-OFF AREAS¹

Abstract - Most studies on urban poverty are concentrated on popular districts, but these centres of poverty can be found in the well-off areas as well. The following article focuses on Naples, describing the socio-spatial forms of poverty in the central and rich areas of the city and analyzing their “marginality”. Naples is characterized by the high number of real enclave of poverty, right in the heart of the “well-off districts”, whose presence is rooted in time. The article is based on the analysis of the quantitative data and on a qualitative investigation through the interviews to the residents of the rich districts, aimed at making the question and the representation of marginality emerge. The analysis shows how the marginality of the enclave is historically generated and accepted by the city élite in order to keep their social hegemony, and how it has lately become a matter of stigmatization to support the neo-liberal policies of standardization of some parts of the city.

Introduction. – The studies on poverty in the big European cities are generally centred on popular districts. The most impressive feature is shown by the suburban districts with their social housing and by the urban blight in the historical centres, traditionally places where the “weakest” residents from an economic and social point of view are concentrated.

Anyway, this legitimate trend should not lead to forget that poverty is a widespread phenomenon in the whole urban space. Even rich districts have their poor people (Pinçon e Pinçon-Charlot, 1989; Launay, 2011) and we might wonder whether the latter are not a real social margin, since they are often mixed to the rich residents and so isolated from those solidarity networks characterizing many popular districts, statistically hardly evident and often forgotten by the public policies addressed to the poorest ones (Tissot, 2007).

Naples and the cities of Southern Italy provide a fitting example of the persistence of pockets

of poverty in the heart of the well-off districts. The presence of degraded areas in the historical centres of Southern Italy is a well-known matter. But there are pockets of poverty also in the middle class districts, caused by the renewal and the urban sprawl in the post-unitary Italy; these show a significant socio-spatial inertia, persisting as popular areas in the centre of the already rich districts. This article describes some of these socio-spatial forms of poverty in Naples, and debates their condition of marginality. The aim is to show that only the marginality of these popular *enclave* can justify their considerable longevity. These spaces are actually real margins, that is spaces kept at distance and, at the same time, integrated in a socio-spatial system whose functioning they are basic for. Long integrated in the rich districts thanks to a nepotistic and subordinate system, these spaces are nowadays more and more stigmatized, in a context of enfeeblement of the traditional *élite* in the city that, refusing to budge for the protection of their residential areas, support some policies of urban standardization in order to remove these pockets of marginality.

From a methodological point of view, this study applies an indirect approach to discuss the question of the margin. Some data from the 2001 census² are analyzed since they outline these areas of poverty, as well as the contents of the detailed interviews to some residents of the Neapolitan aristocracy and middle class (Pfirsch, 2008)³. The approach is limited, but it is significant in showing how the margin is clearly built through a specific relationship with the rule-making centre, and how the changes in the local *élite* and the policies of urban renewal, supported by the same *élite*, can generate a process of stigmatization.

In the first part, the socio-spatial characteristics of the pockets of poverty in the well-off districts of Naples. From a methodological point of view, this study applies to an indirect approach to discuss the question of the margin. Some data from the census 2001² are analyzed since they outline these areas of poverty, as well as the contents of the detailed interviews to some residents of the Neapolitan aristocracy and middle class (Pfirsch, 2008)³. The approach is limited, but it is significant in showing how the margin is clearly built through a specific relationship with the rule-making centre, and how the changes of the local *élite* and the policies of urban renewal, supported by the same *élite*, can generate a process of stigmatization.

In the first part, the socio-spatial characteristics of the pockets of poverty in the well-off districts of Naples can be mapped and described thanks to the censal data. In the second part, the image and the role these spaces of poverty have in the rich classes' remarks, as well as their progressive identification with the urban margin, is outlined in the interviews. This stigmatization

matches the growing conflict affecting the urban policies promoted in these districts and, above all, the use of public spaces.

I – The popular *enclave* in Naples' well-off districts

The well-off districts of Naples, quite non homogeneous middle class spaces -

In the collective imagination, Naples is represented like a Mediterranean city, symbol of hospitality; little fragmented in space and characterized by the persistent pre-industrial forms of residential proximity among different social classes, as shown by the so called “vertical segregation” inside a single block of flats (Prisco, 1962).

In reality, some late studies have emphasized that Naples, since the end of XIX century, is one of the Italian cities where social segregation is stronger, consistently with what documented by the same national rates on segregation, much higher in the cities of Southern Italy than in the Northern ones (Barbagli e Pisati, 2012, p. 136). Such a difference can be first explained with the high residential concentration of the *élite* in Southern cities, much higher than in the Northern ones. In Naples, this process of “residential concentration” is a quite old phenomenon. The city *élite* actually started to group west of the historical centre since the XVI century, around the Spanish viceroy's palace, and later left the old city en masse to meet, during the urban expansion following the national unification, in “rich”, socially homogeneous districts (Guidi, 1980; Macry, 1984; Pfirsch, 2008, 2011).

The birth of well-off districts is a phenomenon that, since the second half of the XIX century, has characterized most European urban contexts⁴. In Naples, the building of these districts started soon after the Italian unity in the bay of Chiaia, a holiday resort located west of the historical (De Fusco, 1974)⁵. These districts correspond to the old areas of Chiaia and Posillipo from an administrative point of view, and definitely clash with the old town, both for their landscapes and for their social composition (fig. 1).

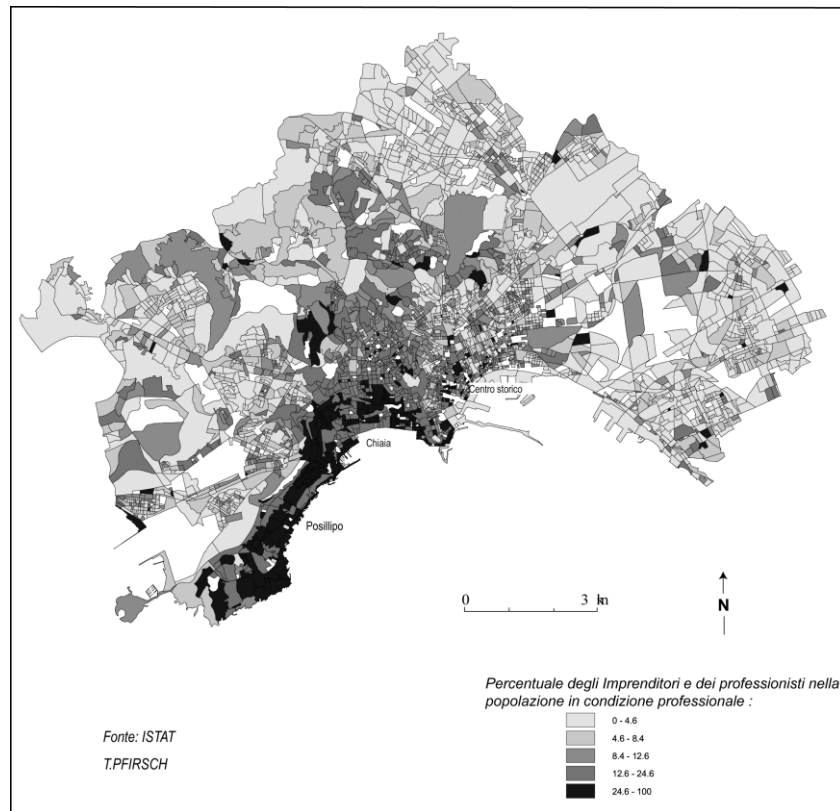


Fig. 1 – *The upper classes in Naples: a high concentration in the well-off districts.*

Source: ISTAT, 2001

In 2001, the very two districts of Chiaia and Posillipo include, at a municipal level, more than half the residents belonging to the the well-off classes ⁶ (Pfirsch, 2008; 2011). However, although these districts are on the average richer than the others, they include a considerable proportion of popular classes, that still in 2001 represent more than 30% of the population in the district (Pfirsch, 2011). If the high density of the population in these areas is taken into account – more than 41,000 inhabitants and a density higher than 15,000 inhabitants per km² in Chiaia – the figure of 30% represents lots of thousands people. Nevertheless, “scattered” in the spaces occupied by the *élite* of the city, these “poor people of the well-off districts” are often invisible in official statistics.

The pockets of poverty in the rich districts: statistic margins. - Researches on the geographical location of poverty in Naples never mention the popular pockets in the well-off districts (Morlicchio e Pratschke, 2004). They are rather focused on the two big areas of concentration of poverty in the

city: the North and East outskirts on the one hand, and the degraded areas of the historical centre on the other. However, there are still lots of popular classes in Chiaia and Posillipo, where some urban concentration can be noticed as well. The “vertical segregation” inside the blocks of flats is openly decreasing (most lower floors have been turned into business areas), but there are still some forms of micro-concentration of poverty in the streets and blocks. The typical polarization of the Southern Italian cities can be found between the elegant streets lined with the beautiful palaces (streets) and the neighbouring popular streets (alley – see Sabelberg, 1983). This is clearly visible in Chiaia, where the aristocratic palaces of the riviera oppose the more popular alleys surrounding them, perpendicular to the promenade.

But it is mostly in single blocks, made up of alleys and adjoining areas, that the popular dwellers of the Neapolitan “rich districts” are concentrated. The problem is that such blocks are not visible on the standard scale of the district, but on the more sophisticated one of the census sections. They can be localized through the papers based on the Census 2001 (fig. 2): there are four main areas, among other things clearly identified by the same inhabitants and by the rare qualitative studies on the subject (De Leo, 2008): the blocks of Santa Maria Apparente, Santa Maria in Portico and la Torretta in Chiaia, and the one of Il Casale in Posillipo⁷.

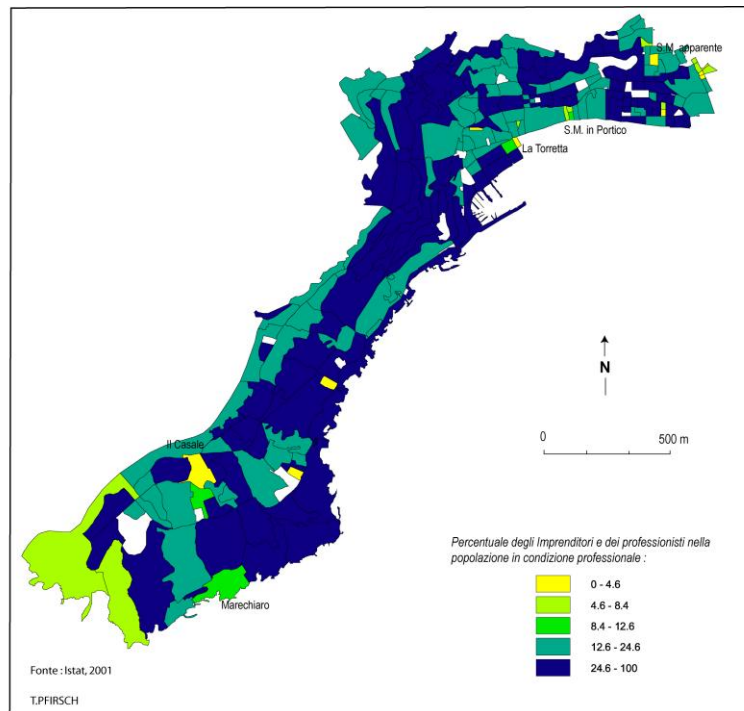


Fig. 2 – *The popular enclave in the upper districts in Naples*

Source: Istat, 2001

The data of 2001 actually show a concentration of poverty and of some social problems just in these four blocks, that include more than 4,000 inhabitants on the whole. In these blocks - where the population is quite old and where the big owned flats are prevalent – the number of entrepreneurs and professionals is definitely lower than the municipal average, while the jobless, the large families, the tenants and the small digs are highly above the average (tab. 1).

Tab. 1 – About the pockets of poverty: some socio-economic indicators (2001)

	Total population	% jobless	% upper classes	% multinuclear families
La Torretta	2 244	21,0	16,7	2,3
Santa Maria in Portico	863	49,5	10,7	3,4
Santa Maria Apparente	404	59,3	2,9	2,6
Il Casale	613	24,2	9,0	2,4
Chiaia	41 779	15,8	24,7	1,6
Posillipo	23 673	12,07	26,1	1,2
Napoli	1 004 500	31,4	9,9	3,1

Source: Istat, 2001

Nevertheless, the official records do not seem to reflect the peculiarity of these spaces, since they do not consider the role of informal practices. Similarly to other areas of Naples, many popular houses are actually illegally occupied. Furthermore, many people who are officially unemployed in reality work informally in the tertiary: peddlers in the port of Mergellina, unauthorized car park attendants on the riviera in Chiaia, and so on. These blocks are different from the districts including them in what seems to be a real socio-spatial system, more than in the simple socio-demographic profile of their inhabitants.

The territorial enclave in the heart of the well-off districts – These blocks of poverty oppose the surrounding environment, because of their architecture and their morphology. They can actually include big buildings of working class houses, built in the Fifties and Sixties without any care for their integration in the pre-existing urban context⁸. However, popular digs are not so common in the “well-off districts” or in the whole centre of Naples. As a matter of fact, most pockets of poverty in Chiaia and Posillipo correspond to some old rural boroughs (Casale a Posillipo) or to the fishing villages (La Torretta in Chiaia) that were to be swallowed by the growing city at a later stage. They are medieval historical centres or even modern ones, that could keep their

architecture despite their having been integrated in the “well-off city”. Their narrow streets, made with slabs of the Vesuvio lava, and their architectural density create a clear difference with the wide streets of the post-unitary expansions, but also with the forms of property speculation dating back to the “sack of Naples” (1950-60), that covered the hills of the rich districts with big modern blocks of flats. This situation is quite evident in Casale and in Posillipo (fig. 4).

Besides, surrounded by *chic* buildings, these popular blocks are hardly within reach, almost hidden despite their being quite close to the exclusive streets lined with elegant shops. Placed behind a dangerous coast, these blocks architecturally jut out into the inland, and turn their back to the sea, almost “crouched” on the sheer sides of the hills. They can be reached through stairs (the “slopes”, like the one of Il Casale a Posillipo), that sometimes lead to tuff walls, creating real barriers. This territorial enclosure contributes to the marginalization of these spaces, that can be easily avoided by the other residents, and ignored by tourists as well.



Fig. 4 - *Casale a Posillipo: an old rural borough surrounded by chic palaces*

Source: photo shot by the author

Finally, one of the last peculiarities of these areas refers to the use of public spaces, characterized by deterioration and by informal uses. They represent the typical features of the Neapolitan historical centre: private colonization of the streets, illegal occupation by mobile stalls for commercial purposes, “wild” parking, decay of the facades, illegally occupied buildings and neglected communal spaces, etc. These informal uses sometimes match illegal activities. Since they are near the sea, the old fishing villages in Chiaia (La Torretta and Santa Maria in Portico) used to live on activities connected to smuggling, particularly the cigarettes one, up to end of the 1990s. Smuggling attracted big criminality and Camorra too in these areas. As a matter of fact, these pockets of poverty mostly have their own clan and their own boss, and this further contributes to consolidate the identity of these spaces and their stigmatization like margins. The rich residents of Chiaia clearly oppose the rules and the “European” legality typical of the middle class streets and the “well-off” districts to the decay and the informality of public spaces in the

pockets of poverty, more properly considered as “Neapolitan”.

«Well, it is strange there, because if I go there (*to la Torretta*), I walk along the street and there is a lot of rubbish, well, even here, you know, there are all these shops selling all that stuff, all those stalls, all these plastic things, all the cars wildly parked, jamming the traffic, it is terrible...well...everything you thought you had left in the historical centre is right here, close to you, almost next door » (Tiziana, housewife, born in 1948)

«I have known Naples, the real Naples, certainly living in the historical centre. The deepest sides of Naples, the ones that make it so peculiar, so different in Europe...living in Piazza Amedeo (*Chiaia, editor's note*), in Parco Margherita you are protected, you are in a European context» (Alessandro, university student, born in 1943)

These pockets of poverty of the “well-off” districts in Naples can be compared to the enclave (Marcuse, 1997), that is to spaces of non compulsory concentration of a population sharing the same social and ethnic characteristics, thus trying to keep its cohesiveness inside a very different surrounding territory. The peculiarity of this Neapolitan popular *enclave* is that they have historically preceded the rich urban setting they are in, proving a significant socio-spatial inertia: they have remained clearly popular and have kept their uses of public spaces, without experimenting the process of middle class change or of urban development. This historical longevity is actually due to the fact that these *enclave* are also margins, that is places kept aside though being integrated in the territory. Thus these pockets of poverty are always presented as unrelated, and, at the same time, integrated places in the areas they are part of, in a tense state peculiar to marginality::

"Every district in this city has its negative side. So while the Spanish districts here have a negative reputation, being, let's say, a not very recommendable area, the Vomero has Il Petraio, as it is called, a rather ugly place, named Il Petraio...[...], and Posillipo has the area called Il Casale" (Silvana, entrepreneur, born in 1939)

This excerpt of an interview emphasizes the classical rhetoric of the “two cities”, considered a

typical element of the Neapolitan society. This rhetoric tends to neglect the complexity of a built up area currently populated by a vast majority of middle classes, and to privilege the dichotomy with the *élite* on the one side and the “common people” on the other, like opposed entities and, at the same time, complementary ones: “the city at the top can be recognized through the one you have never to meet” (Amato, 2006, p.116). In reality, these popular *enclave* have been accepted by the local *élite* for a long time, as part of a traditional system founded on nepotistic connections with the working classes, that has allowed a strong social control in time. However, the decline of the traditional *élite* of the city gentry matches a change in the question of the popular *enclave* as well.

II – From inclusion to stigmatization: the Neapolitan middle class faced with “its” poor.

The interviews to some members of the aristocracy and of the urban middle class reveal two conflicting debates on the popular *enclave*, where the tension between inclusion and exclusion, typical of the marginal spaces, seems to derive.

The traditional inclusion of the popular enclave: a declining debate. – First of all, the interviews reveal a traditional debate on Naples idealizing the residential proximity between the *élite* and the people, considered as a standard and presented like a typical element of the city (Allum, 1973):

«In the old Naples, this idea of the lords and the working class living together was very common. The separation of the working class is a typical middle class and 19th century idea. [...] that could be true, but it got lost in time, it doesn't exist anymore! By now, they are aliens. I don't like this. On the contrary, I think that society must be more united, without any arrogance» (Bruno, lawyer, born in 1946)

«There are still some lower class buildings here, but there used to be more in the past. Now they have virtually become all shops. What disappeared is actually the underground economy, the one of the people who knew you, who said hello in the morning, though going along Santa Maria in Portico there are still some of them, because this was the smuggling area in the district [...] Since Naples has always

typically had the middle class living in close contact with the common people, they were intertwined. There was a really close connection with the smuggler » (Maria, university teacher, born in 1947)

The same illegal activities of the popular *enclave* seem to be accepted (see smuggling), provided they do not join the gangs of big criminals; the people interviewed actually distinguish between good and bad illegal activities, in a surprising inversion of the standard distinction between good and bad poor people. This is a very common debate in the aristocratic and in the professionals' families, who live in the most eminent parts of the rich districts. Some of these families used to have direct links with the people living in the popular *enclave* through networks of commercial or domestic nepotism. Many of the interviewed actually talk about their maids coming from the popular alleys of Chiaia; a few have also had some maids from the same families for several generations. This is, however, an idealizing debate, that flattens out any social relationship. In reality, as Toqueville had already noticed (1848), this is typical of societies where inequality strongly predominates and social hierarchies are strictly and immovably perceived, and where social positions are neither threatened nor dimmed by the residential choices or by the spatial proximity. These debates also reflect the asymmetric lobbistic subordinate relationship between the residents of the rich districts and the ones of the popular *enclave* and show how this relationship has represented a form of social control exercised by the *élite* on their "own" margins. Anyway, it should be considered that the "inclusive debate" emerging from the interviews is also a nostalgic one, in its being aware of evoking an already lost world. Only two of the interviewed, actually, still employ a servant from the poor districts of Naples, since the majority employ immigrants from Eastern Europe, from Sri Lanka, or from the Philippines. The economic relationship between poor and rich areas of the well-off districts has thus been jumbled and the two worlds gradually tend to work according to different social and territorial systems.

Gradually stigmatized places – In the interviews, the prevailing debate tends to stigmatize the popular *enclave* as dangerous places, according to a rhetoric focused, first of all, on security. These spaces are described as ugly and undermined by micro-criminality, and are openly avoided in the daily practice:

«I never go to Il Casale, really never...it is an ugly area and a dangerous one. It's

another Posillipo, another city, common and ugly [...] but you have to go there if your car is stolen, do you know how it works here? [...] Naples is the same beautiful city where, when your car is stolen, you must go and talk to the boss of the district and not to the police » (Federico, entrepreneur, born in 1952)

«I don't stop at Il Petraio (*the funicular railway station of a popular enclave in the chic district called Vomero, editor's note*) anymore. There are still some ugly areas at Il Petraio. They say it has changed but last year Veronica was mugged her bag at seven in the evening. No, it is a really ugly area, with bad and criminal people» (Carla, entrepreneur, born in 1939)

Such stigmatized debates are mostly peculiar to the late entrepreneurial middle class living on the top of the beautiful districts. But they are also rather common in the families living close to the popular *enclave* and sharing their open spaces. The interviews tell many stories of micro-conflicts about this shared spaces, and reveal an increasing feeling of unsafety inside the districts:

«We have no power in this district (*Chiaia, editor's note*). If you want to know who has the power here you must go to Mergellina (*the touristic port of the well-to do districts, editor's note*) in the evening... so... you will see all these ugly people, all of them, and these guys are not afraid of anybody, the scooters don't let you walk on. I don't go there alone anymore. They have the city in their hands, they take it back every evening » (Emanuela, entrepreneur, born in 1958)

The woman interviewed describes the groups of young people in the *enclave* of La Torretta who, in the evening, crowd the near small touristic port of Mergellina, that is also the only space freely accessible on the promenade of the “well-off districts”, since the beaches in Posillipo have all been privatized and reserved to a very selected client list. This security point of view reflects the “objective” change of the pockets of poverty in Chiaia: the reorganization of the big gangs of criminals in the Neapolitan outskirts has caused a new fresh wave of micro-criminality in these districts (De Leo, 2008).

The remarks on security also reflect the hardening of the traditional *élite* at the ascent of the new one, and the widespread fear in the aristocracy and the old middle class to lose the control

over their traditional spaces. The fear for the working class *enclave* is further increased by the fear for the “nouveau riche” who are settling in the district and who, moreover, are often considered as “camorristi”.

«Well, this used to be the district of the rich middle class in the past (*via dei Mille*), of the professionals, now it is only partly this, but there are still a lot of new rich whose ambition is to go and live there. For instance, last year in Piazza dei Martiri a very beautiful flat was sold to a boss of the Camorra, can you fancy that? »
(Giulia, university student, born in 1952)

«In Chiaia there used to be mostly middle class people in the past, professionals and lawyers, but nowadays there are also so many new rich, a lot of *parvenu*, and a lot of ugly people who don't need to be introduced....just think that my uncle and (?) aunt rented their house in Via dell'Ascensione to a Camorra turncoat, this gives you an idea of how things are going on, that is this man would have never thought of coming to live in Via dell'Ascensione twenty years ago, he would have gone to Corso Vittorio Emanuele or to the Vomero, he would have never come to Via dell'Ascensione because it used to be a very exclusive district from this point of view» (Maria, university student, born in 1947).

In reality, the Neapolitan *élite* are characterized by their marked segmentation and constant renewal consistently with the changes in the political-nepotistic system of the city (Savonardo, 2003). The disintegration of the old families' fortunes has matched the economic ascent of the entrepreneurial or managerial *élite* linked to the politics and the public markets, that have involved the schools and the clubs of the traditional *élite* as well. Even if the debates have emphasized significant differences between these levels of the local *élite*, these seem to depend more on their position, on their increasingly sharing social spaces in the “well-off districts” of the city.

In line with the above quoted Toqueville, it is thus inevitable that in a context of growing uncertainty about the social hierarchies among the urban *élite*, the spatial proximity with “the other” is lived as a conflict and less accepted than in the past; the longer rooted families are actually trying to assess their social distinction through a harder “residential position”, stigmatizing either the poor and the “newly arrived” in their districts. At the moment, this

increasing conflict among the residents of the analyzed districts is quite evident in the policies..

III – A political integration of popular enclave? The standardization of public spaces

Long neglected by the Neapolitan politicians, the pockets of poverty in Chiaia and Posillipo have been involved in redevelopment projects since 2000 onward. But these plans of urban regeneration may look like an attempt of the middle class to regain possession of these spaces.

A recent and partial integration of the popular enclave in urban policies. – Heavily affected by the deindustrialization and the earthquake in 1980, since the beginning of the 1990s Naples has been involved in a wide plan of urban redevelopment on the model of other European cities, looking for a post Fordist reconversion. Urged by Bassolino's administration, since 1984 this regeneration has applied the well known formula of the neoliberal policies to the Neapolitan reality (Rossi, Vanolo, 2013), focusing on two clear lines of action: the restoration of the cultural heritage and the redevelopment of public spaces appealing to big international events like the G7. The aim is to change the image of the city in order to attract more tourists, to set up a "creative class", and gather the local population around the awareness of the public welfare and of the common citizenship. Nevertheless, these efforts are spatially restricted to the historical centre, that is to the XVIII century expansions, and are concentrated in the less poor districts, such as San Giuseppe, an old aristocratic district near the university, and in the sites of the urban power. The outskirts, as well as the "well-off districts" and their popular *enclave*, are still largely out of these initiatives.

Since mid 2000 the urban policies have been extended also to Chiaia and Posillipo. The procedure is the same applied to the historical centre in the 1990s: the stress is on the cultural heritage (as witnessed in 2005 by the opening of the PAN, a contemporary art museum located inside a restored historical palace), and on the redevelopment of the public spaces, sometimes exploiting the chance of big international events. The effort reaches a peak in March 2012, with the pedestrianization of the wide promenade in Chiaia, launched by the neo-elected Mayor De Magistris during the America's Cup. Like in the previous period, this is a property and not a social policy, centred on the built-up context and on the improvement of the quality of life in public spaces, rather than on the support to the weakest population. Similarly to the historical centre, these efforts involve the most exclusive parts of the "well-off districts" (the promenade,

the selected streets such as Via dei Mille), and touch the popular *enclave* only indirectly through the redevelopment of the public spaces they live close to.

Anyway, there is a substantial difference with the previous period as to the role recognized to participatory democracy, fostered by the realization of the Municipalities in 2005. Thus, the redevelopment of the port of Mergellina and the pedestrianization of the promenade become the targets of several campaigns for referendums that involve all parties concerned: the residents in the enclave of La Torretta, the well-off residents, the restaurant managers, the businessmen, the tourists (the Municipality of Naples, 2005). Nevertheless, the selected urban solutions ultimately show how the interests of the residents in the popular *enclave* have been hardly taken into account.

The two-sided effects: the standardization of the promenade. – A research on the dwellers actually reveals how the residents of the popular *enclave* and the ones of the well-off streets in the analyzed districts have quite different opinions on the meaning of public space, as well as very different expectations from the redevelopment policies. For the first ones, the space is above all a source of income, at the basis of an informal economy founded on providing minor services to the city users, taking profit of the high concentration of visitors in a communication network strategically connected to the city, as the promenade in Chiaia is. For the latter, the public space is rather a place of entertainment, of meetings and representations, for a local use first of all, that must be protected by the people who are non-residents of the district (the Municipality of Naples, 2005, p.7).

The official reports of the Municipality confirm this dualism, according to a culturalist approach that was familiar to the Neapolitan Renaissance of the 1990s (Petrillo, 2011, p.48). In these reports, the aspiration towards “normality” in the urban *élite* contrasts the “culture” of “illegality” typical of the Neapolitan lower classes, considered as being very ancient and a real impediment for the development of the city:

«The ancient fishing village of La Torretta includes the pockets of poverty of Mergellina (...) It remains unaltered in time since the residents resist to change, with many slums, many buildings in a critical condition, as well as a widespread social blight » (The Municipality of Naples, 2005, p.22)

In the same way as in the 1990s, public spaces are being redeveloped in the name of the

restoration of legality and “normality”. The emphasis on the marginality of La Torretta actually justifies the realization of policies aimed at regaining the spaces of the “well-off Naples”. Thus, the pedestrianization of the promenade matches, to all intents and purposes, a further control on the access to it, made more difficult for the people coming from the outside even because of no efficient policies of public transport and no strict regulation on its use, forbidding the unauthorized stalls held by the immigrants but also by the inhabitants of the popular *enclave*. Here are the two-sided effects associated to any redevelopment of the public spaces, and already pointed out with reference to the squares in the historical centres of Naples: «The restructuring of urban places involved drawing up boundaries around appropriate behaviour and definitions about an acceptable public» (Dines, 2012, p. 6).

As a matter of fact, the pedestrianized promenade welcomes above all the rich members of the society in Chiaia and Posillipo or the tourists. The Neapolitan working classes are quite a minority there, though having used this space as a meeting place in the past, especially during the weekend. The choice on the routes to get there should not be explicitly regulated, unfortunately the symbolic violence is sufficient. The pedestrian boundary has been actually planned to integrate the luxurious hotel Santa Lucia in the promenade extension, in order to attract international tourists; on the other hand, the symbolic choice of the America’s Cup to launch the redevelopment effort is not properly inclusive and clearly aimed at the “well-off Naples”. In Naples sailing is not a very popular sport and the main sailing clubs – located just on the promenade in the pedestrian boundary around the Castel dell’Ovo – are among the most selective ones in Europe, like the Rowing Club. Although the uses of the promenade will certainly develop in time, at the moment it is just a walking area, where the rich society can meet and symbolically assert its ambition to regain the control over the “standardized” districts.

Conclusions. – The aim of the study was to show the different forms of localization of poverty in contemporary cities, a feature that, far from being limited to popular districts, actually seems to be quite widespread in the urban space, with some forms of micro-concentration in the streets and areas that are in the heart of the rich districts as well. In France or in the North-Western European cities, these pockets of poverty often correspond to slums or to forms of vertical segregation in the same block of flats (Pinçon, Pinçon Charlot, 1989). The peculiarity of Naples is in its consisting of very ancient spaces, popular medieval villages revealing a heavy

socio-spatial inertia despite their integration in the well-off districts of the city, so that they can be considered like real *enclave* with a strong territorial identity.

The historical longevity of the Neapolitan pockets of poverty is well explained by their condition of margins. This study further aimed at showing, through an indirect approach, how the margins may have been created and exploited by the *élite* and the urban authorities. The Neapolitan middle class has actually “played with its margins” in order to reproduce and perpetuate in time the position of social dominion and its distinctive features. Up to the 1960s, when the people interviewed were still children, the popular *enclave* were “integrated margins” widely accepted by the *élite* in their living spaces. But since the 1970s onward, they have become “stigmatized margins”: the middle class in the well-off districts tends to be more and more demanding about its residential localization, in a context of growing uncertainty as for its social position, since the prestige of the families is threatened by the economic crisis of the city and by the marked change of its *élite*. The emphasis on the pockets of poverty can also explain the policies of urban redevelopment, presented like initiatives for the “standardization” of the well-off districts.

In the past, the condition of the popular *enclave*, being even characterized by a significant inequality and the policies of urban regeneration matching it cause a clear feeling and awareness of spatial injustice, for the unequal access to the public resources and the spaces in the area (Soja, 2010), as well as, and above all, for the non recognition from a political point of view of the interests of the poorest people in the use of their living spaces (Young, 1990). Through the policy of redevelopment of the “well-off districts” in Naples, the “cultural imperialism” is at the top (*Ibid*, 1990) for the attitude of the urban *élite* towards the popular *enclave*, and, at the same time, the “fair city” is gradually more and more distant as a democratic political system allowing the recognition of every group of citizens (*Ibid*, 2000).

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² Unfortunately, the data of the census 2001 are not available yet on the censal section scale, that is the unbundling level allowing a study on the distribution of the different social classes

³ Between 2005 and 2006, 93 detailed interviews were recorded from the residents in the districts of Chiaia, Vomero and Posillipo, selected according to three criteria: the longevity of the family fortune (three generations), the reputation for belonging to the “big families of the city, and the residence in the rich districts of the centre. These interviews have reconstructed the residential presence in the area of the people interviewed and of their families in a three generation’s course, and have analyzed their representations and their contemporary urban practices.

⁴ The expression well –off districts (or upper districts) can be translated in French with beaux quartiers. Giving an aesthetic connotation to these rich areas it also reminds the image and the symbolic feature of the well-to-do districts, and not only their social composition (Pinçon, Pinçon -Charlotte, 1989). These are districts where upper classes are over-represented, showing the features of the urban élite even in their landscape, in the architecture, or in the network of services, and this is overall due to the fact that these are newly built districts, originally established “by the middle class and for the middle class” (Pinçon et Pinçon-Charlot, 2000, p.54). This kind of areas started to spread in Europe through the initiatives of urban sprawl in the XIX century (Ibid, 2000)

⁵ Since the end of XVI century, after the opening of Chiaia street and the expansion plans of the cities by Don Pedro de Toledo (1532-1553) the promenade in Chiaia started to be occupied by fishing villages and by aristocratic palaces (De Seta, 1981). But for the aristocracy these palaces were just summer and holiday seats at the time. The urban élite were actually concentrated in San Giuseppe’s district and around the Royal Palace. Only when Corso Vittorio Emanuele was opened, since 1854 onward, with the building of the western district and the expansion in 1884 (around via dei Mille), the hills around the bay in Chiaia started to be urbanized and became a middle class district integrated in the city. The élite then started to leave the historical centre gradually moving to these hills (DeFusco, 1974; Macry, 1984)

⁶ Usually, well-off classes in Italy include three categories: entrepreneurs, free-lance professionals, and managers (Schizzerotto, 1993)

⁷They are delimited as follows: Santa Maria Apparente includes the hill of Santa Maria Apparente, Vico Vetreria, the Vetreria hill, and Vico Santa Maria Apparente (censual section 5202671, 5202771 and 5202781); Santa Maria in Postico corresponds to a group of alleys perpendicular to the promenade of Chiaia, via S. M. in Portico, vico Magnoni, Via Palasciano, Via della Croce Rossa (sections 5201631, 5201661 and 5201651); also La Torretta is made up of alleys crossing the promenade of Chiaia: the Y formed by Via Santa Maria della Neve, Cpa Caiafa and San Filippo (sections 5201551, 5201821, 5201831); Il Casale of Posillipo is an ancient rural borough grouped around Via Case Vecchie and the piazzetta Solofrano (sections 6522911 and 6522931)

⁸This is the case of the tower called *the mushroom* built in 1956 in the yard of the Veterans' palace, a XVII century convent on the high grounds of Chiaia

⁹ On his re-election in 2011, the new Mayor of Naples Luigi De Magistris went on with his predecessors' policies using the big international events as a spur for urban interventions. He chose the *American's cup*, hosted in Naples for two sets of competitions in April 2012 and in April 2013. At first planned in the outskirts of Naples and specifically in the bay of Bagnoli, where an industrial reconversion was necessary, the final competition was finally organized right in the centre of the city, on the promenade of the "well-off district" of Chiaia. It was necessary to justify the realization of a "pedestrian area" in the district and the whole pedestrianization of the promenade, measures thought at first as temporary ones but become permanent since Spring 2012.