Preface

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The monographic number "*The power of stigmatization and destigmatization in urban contexts. Theoretical debate and practices*" of the journal of *Sicurezza e Scienze Sociali* analyzes the issue of territorial stigmatization and destigmatization, deepening in its manifestation as a phenomenon and in its applicability as concept to interpret urban inequalities. Indeed, previous literature and empirical studies (Wacquant, 2007, 2008; Wacquant et al., 2014; Meade, 2021; Sisson, 2021) have outlined how territorial stigmatization assumes a nodal role in producing new forms of marginality, interpreting them, and questioning the decision-making processes and the right to the city. On the other hand, destigmatization refers to those bottom-up responses of the stigmatized individuals and communities to redefine spaces, obtain recognition, and tackle stigmatization (Lamont, 2018; Lamont, Mizrachi, 2012; Garbin, Millington, 2012; Slater, Anderson, 2012; Horgan, 2018; Junnilainen, 2020; Schultz Larsen, Delica, 2021).

Within this debate, the current monographic number analyzes the application of these concepts across diverse international settings. It begins with a theoretical introduction by Clerici and Ricotta, who explore how these analytical concepts enhance our understanding of urban marginalization within broader social, historical, and spatial hierarchies by combining the concept of territorial stigmatization with the one of coloniality (Quijano, 1991; 2000). Following this theoretical introduction, this monographic number reports the application of the concepts of territorial stigmatization and de-stigmatization in different empirical studies. Below, a summary of each contribution is listed.

In the first contribution, Ramos analyzes the pacification policy implemented in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) and the establishment of Pacifying Police

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Units (UPPs) in favelas. He emphasizes how territorial stigmatization has been used to legitimize military action policies in vulnerable communities. Despite a short-term reduction in crime following these interventions, this policy failed to address the underlying issues of poverty, neglecting the communities. Consequently, the stigma attached to the favelas and their residents as dangerous and criminals persisted, reinforcing both police intervention and entrenched stereotypes in the state's relationship with these areas (see also Ricotta, 2023).

The second contribution deepens in the process of territorial stigmatization by reporting a community study in the neighborhood of Nuova Ostia (Rome, Italy). Meli outlines how the outcome of combined processes of blaming, linked to criminal presence, spatial segregation, social exclusion, and institutional securitarian approaches have negatively impacted the community's capacity to mobilize. The result has been the failure of social initiatives aimed at combating crime, along with the closure of key local centers, including schools and sports facilities.

The third contribution presents a sociological study on the processes of stigmatization in the urban context of Rome, focusing on the experiences of homeless individuals and people with mental health issues living in a homeless shelter and a psychiatric emergency center. By giving voice to these marginalized groups, Do, Fassari, Pompili, and Toti explore how stigmatization shapes their experiences in the city.

The fourth contribution examines the case of Bolognina, a neighborhood in Bologna subjected to and resistant to city branding policies. In her analysis, Contessa highlights the contradictions and oppositions between institutional narratives and those of activists. This article sheds light on the dynamics of institutional stigmatization and the grassroots responses that seek to challenge it.

The fifth contribution focuses on the persistent territorial stigma in and around the Rione Sanità in Naples, despite the efforts to reduce crime and implement urban regeneration initiatives. Calicchia and Capuano report a recent controversial report by Giulio Golia, who suggested that a local solidarity package system was run by the Camorra, exacerbating the stigma. Their analyses outline the "stickiness" of territorial stigma, showing how difficult it is to dismantle it.

The sixth contribution explores the impact of territorial stigmatization in the Roman neighborhood of Tor Bella Monaca on local associations, aimed to provide alternatives to urban marginalization. Specifically, it reports on the case of the Associazione Tor Più Bella. In their analysis, Zucca and Carbone describe episodes of "discrimination by address" imposed from

both institutional and mid-level actors, highlighting the challenges these groups face in fostering capacity-building, community empowerment, and organizing.

The seventh contribution reports the implementation of the *Operação Verão* (Operation Summer) in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). Through qualitative research, they analyze the perceptions of beachgoers and law enforcement regarding the threat of *arrastão* (collective thefts). Despite the scarcity of such incidents in recent years, the persistent fear of *arrastão* has led to increased security measures, creating a climate of panic that can result in real incidents. This fear contributes to selective monitoring and increased stigmatization of suburban youth, reinforcing their criminalization under the guise of protection.

The eighth contribution focuses on how the categories we adopt to define a context influence the self-perception of the inhabitants, reproducing vicious circles of fear and punishment, mistrust, fatalism, deepening the perceived distance of the institutions. Bitetto investigates these views through the analyzes of some interviews conducted by a web radio in the Libertà district of Bari.

The ninth contribution analyses the process of marginalization and double stigmatization that affects the *temporeras*, migrant women who work in the agricultural sector in Andalusia (Spain). According to the research conducted by Forlenza and Cimagalli, at the end of their contract, if they decide to stay in Spain, they live in the *asentamientos*, shanty town located in isolated areas between the city and the country. The stigmatization of these areas multiplies women migrants' vulnerability.

The final contribution explores the civic activism practices of *Quarticciolo* residents using qualitative methods like interviews, participant observation, and workshops. Galantino and Messineo examine how territorial stigma is produced by media, focusing on two incidents involving the neighborhood: an assault on a TV reporter and a violent attack on a theft suspect. The study analyzes how these media events contribute to stigma and how different actors influence this process. Additionally, it looks at how residents respond to stigma through various strategies such as resistance and adaptation.

To summarize, this issue covers a wide range of international contexts, including Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Naples, Bologna, Bari, and Andalusia. This diversity enhances the analysis by demonstrating how territorial stigma functions across different geographical, social, and political settings. Through these empirical studies, the issue emphasizes the broad and varied

applications of the concept of territorial stigmatization and destigmatization, providing both theoretical and analytical value.

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