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ARTICLE

Holey Union: Contested European Frontier Zones

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Abstract

Especially since the creation of the Schengen Area (1985; 1995; 2005), the establishment of the European agency Frontex in October 2004 and the successive implementation of integrated border patrol missions, the European Union and allied states manifests itself to irregular migrants as a maneuverable body of relatively loosely interrelated, treacherous, *frontier zones*. In consideration of the current trend to diffuse two major elements of the liberal rule-of-law, that is, *jurisdiction* and *accountability*, also as a result of the European Union's Integrated Border Management, this article sets out to explore a variety of options to make such zones of post-Westphalian *governmentality* public, and to engage with the passion for democracy other than in a managerial sense. More specifically, this article outlines prevalent elements of Europe's governmental operations in frontier zones and then looks at the question: what acts of dissent are becoming visible that not only cut through former national borders, but also traverse and subvert frontier zones while exposing chances for political association and responsiveness that are not those legitimated by the liberal democratic state? In order to exemplify such acts of dissent, this article refers to the contemporary *Refugee Protest Camp Vienna* movement, to the *Forensic Architecture* research project, and also to the *Hotel Gelem* artistic project. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate and argue in favor of the different possibilities of challenging the increasing institution of European frontier zones by waging acts of dissent that are elicitive.

Keywords

INTRODUCTION

Fortress Europe – this loaded term has become the preferred slogan of "No Border" activists to contest recent efforts by the European and allied states, to manage irregular migration. As appealing as such a re-signification of the term *fortress* in conjunction with Europe may at first seem for denouncing the disastrous consequences of the European Union's Integrated Border Management (or Integrated Management of External Borders as it was formerly called, see European Commission, 2002), it is epistemologically and politically misleading. Not least when it is contrasted with those operations that are effectively enforced by major European agents in order to govern the movement of irregular migrants. Whereas the concept of

"Fortress Europe" remains linked to a Euclidian vision of exclusion as a principally sovereign act based on a territorially fortified order, the most contested areas of irregular migration to and within Europe are all but clearly fortified "*striated* (metric) space", nor do they constitute what may be alternatively phrased as a genuinely nomadic "smooth (vectorial, projective, or topological) space", to borrow two key expressions from Deleuze and Guattari's seminal treatise *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 399).

Be it the various sea, land or air routes, geographic inflows of irregular migrants into the European Union are regularly countered with temporary, dynamic and makeshift maneuvers, with lightweight, sophisticated technologies as well as with the aid of inter- or even non-governmental agents. These tendencies hold equally true

for the flexible *apparatus* of monitoring systems, risk assessment tools, segregation procedures, deportation centers etc. with which the different demographic, status-related and geographic "flows" (cf. Vogl and Jandl, 2008, pp. 9-10) of the irregular migrant population already living in the European Union are currently managed. For those who do not have a valid entry or residence permit, the suspension of national border controls following the creation of the Schengen Area (1985; 1995; 2005) is thus resulting in an amplification and ubiquity of the possibility of biometric identification, preventive detention or deportation, that is, in an extreme dilatation of former borderlines to what may be called veritable *frontier zones*. In particular, since the establishment of the European agency Frontex in October 2004 and the successive implementation of integrated border patrol missions, the European Union has manifested itself to irregular migrants as a maneuverable body of relatively loosely interrelated, treacherous, frontier zones, as a "[h]oley space [… that] communicates with smooth space and striated space" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p. 458) insofar as it folds the striated space of its allied states into the smooth space of extra-territoriality to allow for *plastic* governmental operations, such as the deployment of Rapid Border Intervention Teams (see European Union 2007).

The increasing institution of frontier zones throughout Europe and its adjacent spaces poses a wide range of serious threats, not only to the European Union's compliance to international law and safeguarding human rights that are generally at stake during integrated border patrol missions, but also to the future of democratic aspirations all too often compromised in the name of "our" security, as well as to the possibility of addressing conflicts without resorting to violent means. In consideration of these threats, this article is a contribution to make such zones of post-Westphalian *governmentality* public and to engage with the passion for democracy other than in a managerial sense, while illustrating possibilities for elicitive acts of dissent.

THE POLITICAL LOGIC OF FRONTIER ZONES

In the final part of his book *The Nomos of the Earth*, published a few years after World War II, the legal theorist and political observer Carl Schmitt, notorious for his changeable proximity to the Third Reich, made a rather provocative observation. He remarked that once "the freedom of internal land-appropriation in the United States ended […], the meaning of the fundamental order of the United States, the *radical title*, changed. The open doors to the old refuge of unlimited freedom closed when laws were introduced that limited immigration and became discriminatory,

in part for racial and in part for economic reasons. Keen observers immediately recognized the change. One great philosopher and typical thinker of American pragmatism, John Dewey, seems to me to be particularly noteworthy. He took the end of the *frontier* as the starting point of his consideration of the concrete social situation of America." (Schmitt, 2006, p. 293) Schmitt's observation is provocative for at least two reasons. To begin with, his argument signals, without a doubt, that the United States was built on what, according to Roman Law, should be considered as *terra nullius*, land belonging to no one (in particular) and thus free for appropriation – according to Schmitt's premises such an act is "the archetype of a constitutive legal process" (Schmitt, 2006, p. 47) – as if the various peoples living in this part of the world well before the arrival of the European settlers would not or could not possibly count. But his observation is provocative for another reason too, because it suggests that the successive limitation of immigration (or even refuge), in terms of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 for example (see Akers Chacón and Davis, 2006, pp. 27-31), is an inevitable effect of the land-appropriation process in the United States coming to its end, which makes a dreamy social situation like the American, as Schmitt puts it with a hint of irony, eventually "concrete".

It is important to note that Schmitt wrote these lines and indeed the entire book under the impression of a new *nomos* that had been gradually emerging since the end of the nineteenth century and that was quite different from the territorially ordered *nomos* of the *jus publicum europaeum*, Schmitt's normative and somewhat nostalgic point of reference. In view of the geopolitical forces of his time, he argued in fact that "[t]oday, it no longer is possible to abide by traditional spatial concepts" (Schmitt, 2006, p. 319), especially not by the classical distinction of *land* versus *sea* invested in the European legal order (see also Schmitt, 1997). Not least, because the "horizon of air war differs from that of land war or sea war; it is even a question of to what extent one can speak of a *horizon* of air war. The structural transformation is all the greater because, from the air and with respect to air raids, the surfaces of both land and sea are indiscriminate. However, the lives of people on the ground or on the water are at risk equally from the air." (Schmitt, 2006, p. 320)

In an impressive study that was published four years after the English edition of *The Nomos of the Earth* was made available in 2003, the architectural theorist Eyal Weizman seems to attempt a critical analysis of those spatial concepts that are currently defining theaters of land-appropriation and land-control after the age of imperialism and colonialism has officially ended. More precisely, Weizman's focus of research in *Israel's Architecture of Occupation* is highly significant for exploring a more widespread de-regulation and re-codification of spaces. While Schmitt is not mentioned once in Weizman's book, possibly due to the late translation of Schmitt's work, the conclusions are strikingly familiar. In

fact, Weizman illustrates, in vivid terms, that what happens in and with the contested territories of Israel and Palestine also amounts to a "[r]evisioning [of] the traditional geopolitical imagination" (Weizman, 2007, p. 12), which is again putting the "horizon" at disposition. When contrasted with the traditional geopolitical imaginary of territorial unity, the territories occupied by Israel seem more like a "hologramatized 'hollow land' that seemed spawned of the imaginary world of seventeenth-century British astronomer Edmund Halley, or the nineteenth-century novels of Edgar Allan Poe and Jules Verne, who themselves foresaw a hollow earth inhabited in layers. With it, the imaginary of spaces of conflict have seemingly fully adopted the scale of a building, resembling a complex architectural construction, perhaps an airport, with its separate inbound and outbound levels, security corridors and many checkpoints. Cut apart and enclosed by its many barriers, gutted by underground tunnels, threaded together by overpasses and bombed from its militarized skies, the hollow land emerges as the physical embodiment of the many and varied attempts to partition it." (Weizman, 2007, p. 15)

In the context of Weizman's multidimensional dissection, it is hardly surprising that eventually he turns his attention to that iridescent term, which for Schmitt predates the concrete social situation of the United States as much as it prepares it: the frontier as a complex arrangement of space that is not fixed territorially, but shifting at the very threshold of "unsettled open land free for appropriation" (Schmitt, 2003, p. 293) and settled land. While Schmitt shows no further interest in discussing the political implications of the frontier as a rather un-concrete and unstable space, Weizman uses exactly this to indicate a comprehensive de-regulation and re-codification of modes of land-appropriation and land-control at the beginning of the 21st century. What is of particular interest in this context is Weizman's argument that frontiers are "zones", whose logic differs significantly from the sense of location which political theory has inherited from the spatial imagination invested in the Westphalian state-based system. While the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 imagined a Europe (and not necessarily an entire world) consisting of equally sovereign, but clearly distinct territories, with infinitesimally thin border lines separating one country from all the surrounding others, contemporary geopolitical space is evidently governed otherwise. As Weizman puts it in his article *Principles of Frontier Geography*, probably the last "fortified line to have entertained the fantasy of solid defense was the Israeli Bar-Lev Line" of 1973 (Weizman, 2006, p. 84). Since then and especially since the collapse of the Iron Curtain, contested space appears to be a highly fragmented, multi-dimensional space that does not correspond to the idea of clearly defined, fortified territories on which states may be built and battles fought. When compared with the political logic of borders, frontiers resemble rather "deep, shifting, fragmented and elastic territories"

(Weizman 2007, p. 4) that resist, diffuse or even neutralize most, if not all those dualisms that the territorial state claims to represent. Most importantly, not least for what this article tries to give evidence, frontiers seem to be elastic to the extent that they "respond to a multiple and diffused rather than a single source of power" (Weizman, 2007, p. 5), thus actualizing what Weizman calls a kind of post-modern "political plastic" (that corresponds with the plasticity of financial capitalism, see Weizman, 2010, p. 280): viscous zones of insecurity in which two major elements of the liberal rule-of-law, *jurisdiction* and *accountability*, seem to be suspended.

EUROPE'S GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS IN FRONTIER ZONES

Along Weizman's lines that echo Schmitt's conjecture of a new *nomos* of the earth, it becomes possible to contend that the European Union and its allied states are also actively involved in the creation and maintenance of frontier zones, especially when it comes to governing the movement of irregular migrants. According to the latest estimates of the European Union, provided by the EU-funded research project Clandestino – Undocumented Migration: Counting the Uncountable (2007-2009), it is plausible to assume that, in 2008, between 1.8 and 3.3 million people were residing and working in the EU-15 countries without the required permits. This makes it indeed necessary to realize that Europe is not really a defensive fortress, as the slogan of "No Border" activists suggests, but rather a semipermeable, that is, holey union characterized by "differential inclusion" (see Mezzadra and Neilson, 2012). Similarly to Mike Davis and Justin Akers Chacón's remark that it is the (working) irregular migrants who "comprise the vast connective tissue that allows the American economy to function" (Davis and Akers Chacón, 2006, p. 157), in Europe, too, there is apparently a widespread interest in having a deprived and thus relatively disposable labor force at one's command. In this sense, it is hardly a coincidence that the prevailing discourse in those programs, strategy papers and instruments that were issued and implemented by the European Union in the last two decades to give rise to a Integrated Border Management, prefers the economic vocabulary of "managing" the diverse population of irregular migrants while advocating a neo-liberal combination of risk assessment tools, public-private partnerships (with the company European Homecare for example), administrative measures (like biometric verification, preventive detention or deportation) etc. And consequently, the contemporary governmentality of the European Union cannot be defined by referring to the *dispositif* of the *panopticon* imagined by

Jeremy Bentham. As Didier Bigo argues, it is more like "a ban-opticon. It depends no longer on immobilizing bodies under the analytic gaze of the watcher but on profiles that signify differences, on exceptionalism with respect to norms and on the rapidity with which one 'evacuates'. [...] Where, previously, people had been assigned places of residence, they are now placed in 'waiting zones' and assigned identities not even lived as such. A skin colour, an accent, an attitude and one is slotted, extracted from the unmarked masses and, if necessary, evacuated. Policing is thus an affair of the margin, of clean-up, and needs concern itself only minimally with 'norms'. These new logics of control and surveillance are not necessarily much more effective, or more rational. The advantage for the unmarked masses is that they have the impression of being free, to the benefit of the institution, and since control only bears on a few, it is more economical." (Bigo, 2008, pp. 37-38)

Probably the best exemplification of how the movement of irregular migrants is efficiently managed in viscous zones of insecurity, are the operations of the European agency Frontex, established in 2004 (see Official Journal of the European Union, 2004). According to the Frontex website and its Executive Director, Ilkka Laitinen, this exceptional agency of the European Union officially defines itself as a "key player in the implementation of the concept of EU Integrated Border Management". Its "operational activities are intelligence driven" with the main purpose of promoting "the cooperation among border related law enforcement bodies responsible for the internal security at EU level" and thus to strengthen "the freedom and the security of the citizens of the EU" (Laitinen, 2007, p. 128). Contrary to this sober managerial discourse of security, a first survey of the Sea Border Joint Operations that were coordinated by Frontex from 2006 onwards has already revealed a comprehensive twilight of gods. Almost the whole Greek and Roman pantheon has been invoked: Hera, Nautilus, Poseidon, Minerva, Hermes, Zeus. Other operations are exposing a perhaps even more sinister meaning of the Frontex mission. In 2006, an operation called *Agios*, holy, was carried out along the Spanish and Western Mediterranean coasts, and in 2007, *Indalo*, a prehistoric magical symbol that is considered to be a divine totem, was started. Apart from these operations, Frontex also engages in a variety of Land Border and Air Border Joint Operations named, for example, after Heracles, Jupiter, Mars and Agelaus. Since November 2010, it has deployed its Rapid Border Intervention Team units along the Greek-Turkish land border in order to manage the irregular border crossings in the Evros zone – a deployment which Human Rights Watch quickly denounced for the seriousness of the human rights abuses in this Frontex operation (see Human Rights Watch, 2011).

In Giorgio Agamben's understanding of the Greek term *paradigme* as something that "shows itself beside" (Agamben, 2002), Frontex has indeed become a paradigmatic agent of Europe's Integrated Border Management,

to the extent that it supplements the participating states' traditional border patrols by diffusing their responsibilities while managing complex and shifting frontier zones. Human Rights Watch also refers to Frontex as "a specter-like coordinating manager as well as an actor with legal autonomy" (Human Rights Watch, 2011, p. 13). The strategic *surplus*-value of such an Integrated Border Management, which supersedes the simple surveillance of rigid state-borders and is invested in all Frontex operations, becomes readily visible when considering one of the rare documents of a parliamentary confrontation that occurred between politicians of an elected government with regard to their state's involvement in Frontex joint operations. On 1 July, 2008, the German parliamentarians Josef Philip Winkler, Omid Nouripour, Silke Stokar von Neuforn and others of the Green Party presented critical questions to the German government that all addressed the repeated involvement of the German border police in Frontex operations (see Deutscher Bundestag, 2008). Question 4 of the parliamentary inquiry reads as follows:

> Are efforts being made to determine whether there are people in particular need of protection according to Chapter IV of the directives for the temporary admission of refugees among those who are rescued, seized or diverted during operations coordinated by Frontex (like pregnant women, elderly or disabled people, or minors)? [Author's translation]

The Cabinet responded:

> The European Agency for the Protection of Borders has its own information-and data-sovereignty and is not obliged to pass on information to Member States. It is not part of the jurisdiction of the Cabinet of Germany to collect data during common operations under the aegis of Frontex. [Author's translation]

Exactly the same answer was given with regard to the question whether dead bodies were detected and if a body count had been made. In line with the official position of the German Cabinet, each European state is only responsible for the protection of its sovereign territory. What happens in frontier zones like international waters or airports, and during operations under the regime of Frontex, does not constitute an affair of state jurisdiction or accountability. The answer to the question: "What happened to those 359 unaccompanied minors who were detected in the course of the operation Agelaus, but neither admitted to the asylum procedure nor deported, or accommodated in a special institution?" [Author's translation] comes as no surprise therefore. The Cabinet is not aware what happened with (or to) these minors, and very likely it is also not motivated to find out.

ELICITIVE ACTS OF DISSENT

In a prominent passage of his first volume of *The History of Sexuality,* Foucault insists that "[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power." (Foucault, 1978, p. 95). Which in turn implies that "there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous savage, solitary, concerted, rampant, or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested, or sacrificial; by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations." (Foucault, 1978, pp. 95-6) It is indeed critical to realize that the political logic of frontier zones is all but an unfortunate or even inevitable *destiny*, and that irregular migrants as well as the other actors involved in the contemporary contestation of the European Union's Integrated Border Management are indeed capable of resisting. They are resisting not in one uniform fashion though, but by expressing their dissent in an incommensurable plurality of moments that, in one way or another, challenge the various tendencies of suspending responsibilities. It is equally important, however, to be aware that Foucault's insistence is not necessarily an inference. Otherwise put, what would it mean if the aforementioned quote was inverted, so as to argue that where there is resistance, there is power too? What kind of power relations are enacted by those who are contesting Europe's governmental operations in frontier zones that are all too often preventing people without valid documentation from eventually becoming citizens, that is, political subjects in a state-based sense?

As long as democratic passions remain chained to an imagination of political *subjectification* inherited from a Westphalian vision of Europe, it is almost impossible to recognize or value something other than a more or less legitimate demand for being granted political asylum or the right of residence in all those episodes of dissent that are traversing and subverting contemporary frontier zones. In other words, a territorial delimitation of democratic theory, as benevolent as it may be, runs the risk of inadvertently confirming or even reproducing Schmitt's malicious historical reading, according to which a social situation can only become concrete if there is a collective willingness to secure borders. Accordingly, the actual tendency of Europe's Integrated Border Management to diffuse major elements of the liberal rule-of-law requires 'us' to carefully question what it may mean and what it could take to democratize frontiers without at the same time resorting to a limited vision of politics. Perhaps the following three scenarios illustrate chances for re-enacting and re-imagining democratic passions in a creative elicitive sense.

First scenario: Refugee Protest Camp Vienna

At the time of writing, different European cities are witnessing what repeatedly has been staged as *refugee strikes* – self-conscious, distributed, but interconnected and sometimes also desperate acts of dissent by people who usually risk more than any citizen will ever face at a demonstration: *deportation*. The Refugee Protest Camp Vienna, resulting from the 35-kilometer protest march of a hundred people who decided to leave the processing center for asylum seekers in Traiskirchen behind and set up a protest camp in the Sigmund Freud Park in Vienna, exemplifies the precarious dynamics of such strikes in vivid colors. For several weeks, a multitude of people without valid residence permits went on hunger strike in the Votiv church, after the protest camp in the park was violently disbanded at the end of December 2012 by the Viennese police, who claimed that it did not comply with Vienna's "camping regulations". Eventually, the protestors decided to leave the Votiv church and to relocate to alternative accommodation, the Serviten abbey, from where they are continuing their multifaceted protests these days, but where they are also facing the increasing risk of being deported one by one.

While there is widespread sympathy for the efforts of Austrian citizens to protect those families from deportation whose asylum application or right-to-abide application has been rejected, the acts of dissent staged by irregular migrants without the benevolent consent of local sponsors are generally dismissed. Or, as the Austrian president Heinz Fischer himself put it in his letter of condolence to one of the refugee activists:

> "[w]hat we can do and would like to do is to help within the boundaries of the prevailing law and ameliorate your current situation, which is harmful to your health and highly unsatisfactory to everyone involved. […] I ask you to have confidence in Mrs. Home Secretary's assurance that for each one of you a speedy clarification of the individual legal situation and individual perspectives will be conducted. But for this to happen it is necessary that you leave the church." (Fischer, 2013)

As much as the Austrian president's position does not come as a surprise and between the lines prepares the ground for deportation procedures, it is also indicative of a more common tendency: that of assessing the refugee's dissent primarily in humanitarian aid terms and of individualizing "perspectives".

Against this de-politicized sense, it is important to realize that the term *refugees* – as it is pronounced by those who are actively dissenting – indeed signals an elicitive dynamic of subjectivation that exceeds the territorial limits of the state. It refuses to be identified with the actual asylum procedures while demanding freedom of movement and

residence as well as an immediate stop to Europe's regime of deportation. Such refugees have repeatedly staged their dissent by "[…] placing in common a wrong that is nothing more than this very confrontation, the contradiction of two worlds in a single world: the world where they are and the world where they are not, the world where there is something 'between' them and those who do not acknowledge them as speaking beings who count and the world where there is nothing." (Rancière, 1999, p. 27) It is in fact imperative to acknowledge that another space that subverts the citizen/non-citizen asymmetry is already in the creation. Throughout Europe, irregular migrants are visibly demonstrating that they are not only capable of questioning "us", but also of expressing democratic passions that frequently interrupt the various tendencies to suspend responsibilities and challenge the *limbo* to which administrative procedures usually confine them.

Second scenario: Forensic Architecture

In an urgent report presented to the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Union, the Dutch rapporteur Tineke Strik, of the Socialist Group, addressed the very sensitive case of the thousands of *Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea* by addressing the question: who is responsible for the many deaths of irregular migrants? Her discussion includes one particularly severe incident that occurred between March and April 2011 and that has become known as the "Left-to-Die-Boat" – an incident involving the slow death of 63 irregular migrants trapped on a tiny inflatable boat that was adrift for 14 days in the midst of the Mediterranean Sea without receiving assistance (Strik, 2012, pp. 6-10). At this point Strik warned against a "[v]oid of responsibility" (Strik, 2012, p. 12) that is also resulting from the European Union's disastrous efforts to govern the movement of irregular migrants by making this migration insecure. One of the epistemic consequences of this void is that, as Strik points out "there exists a number of information gaps and certain questions remain unanswered" (Strik, 2012, p. 20).

Another report was published soon after Strik's, addressing the questions she had raised. The two London-based researchers Charles Heller and Lorenzo Pezzani engaged with the Situ Studio in what they characterize as Forensic Oceanography – an ensemble of maritime spatial analyses that, funded by the European Research Council, are part of the larger project Forensic Architecture, directed by Weizman at Goldsmiths. By integrating a wide variety of methods, from image analysis via actor-centered interviews to drift models and more, the two researchers were indeed able to substantiate Strike's general claim that the inflatable boat and its distress signal could *not* have passed unnoticed. In fact they concluded that "[r]eviewing the different degrees of involvement on the part of all the actors involved in the 'left-to-die boat' case, what emerges beyond individual acts or modes of inaction is a generalized reluctance on the part of all parties involved to assist the people on board this vessel." (Heller and Pezzani, 2012, p. 48)

Furthermore, Heller and Pezzani were also exemplifying to what extent Forensic Architecture is a radical political project that generates solid evidence for establishing responsibilities. As Weizman outlines, Forensic Architecture combines two basic elements: *field* work and *forum* work (see Weizman, 2012, p. 10). Whereas "field" refers to all those research activities that examine sites of violence, "forum" refers to a variety of efforts to make the findings public and to constitute novel spaces for critical discussion and interaction. In this sense, Weizman argues that Forensic Architecture is "the archaeology of the very recent past, but it must also be a form of assembling for the future. The latter is a projective practice engaged with inventing and constructing the forums yet to come." (Weizman, 2012, pp. 10-11) Inasmuch as Forensic Oceanography in the larger framework of Forensic Architecture is not just reproducing traditional fora, but rather preparing the ground for new modes of responsibility, it is also fair to say that this project shares an elicitive democratic aspiration.

Third scenario: Hotel Gelem

At the end of a short essay that was published approximately fifty years after Hannah Arendt's article *We Refugees* (see Arendt, 1943), Agamben argues that "[i]t is only in a land where the spaces of states will have been perforated and topologically deformed, and the citizen will have learned to acknowledge the refugee that he himself is, that man's political survival today is imaginable." (Agamben, 1995) In a way, this is also what one of the community projects of the two artists Christoph Wachter and Mathias Jud proposes. With Hotel Gelem, an art project that presents a different version of "embedded tourism", Wachter and Jud invite citizens to visit, to experience, but also to question a variety of spaces that recall specters of Europe's recent history. At times of increased mobility, when tourists long for ever more fantastic or seemingly "authentic" *non-places* (see Augé, 2000), and while those living and working under precarious conditions are forced to be on the move, Hotel Gelem recalls the Roma song *Gelem, Gelem*, "we will go on", while deforming established senses of location and belonging and opening up other moments of interaction.

Hotel Gelem offers the chance to meet the inhabitants of six Roma camps and villages at the margins of the world known to most citizens: a camp in Montreuil, France; a village and refugee camp in Freiburg, Germany; the largest settlement in Europe, situated in Shutka, Macedonia, to which some Roma refugees have returned; the refugee camp in Osterode, Kosovo, where the inhabitants have been aban-

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doned; Görlitzer Park; and Waldeck near Berlin, Germany, with temporary settlers (see Wachter and Jud, 2011-).

One of the specific artistic and political principles of the project is that it requires potential visitors to *apply* to stay, which, in turn, makes it possible for the inhabitants to re-define the very logic of hospitality. By doing so, Hotel Gelem does not intend to offer any definite answer to the persistent dislocation and stigmatization experienced by the Roma, yet it involves opportunities for taking part in the alteration of precarious situations and for sharing affections that may be unexpected and possibly elicitive too, in all cases different from those resulting from a much more prevalent gypsy romanticism or patronizing attitude.

POSSIBILITIES

What is especially at stake in these scenarios of resistance, that all demonstrate the power to articulate political agency and responsiveness other than in a territorial sense, is that space which Arendt emphatically called the *space of appearance*. This is a space that does not exist *per se* and that is changing as much as the field of power relations is actually appearing as rather insecure frontier zones. If it is true that jurisdiction and accountability are becoming increasingly plastic legal terms, and that irregular migrants in particular are abandoned in spaces of exception and confronted with indifference, it is also important to realize that numerous public spaces are already in creation, be it all the spaces where subjects are appearing who present themselves as refugees (to citizens) and who insist on freedom of movement, be it the critical spaces that are becoming possible on the very threshold of "field" and "forum", of evidence and argumentation, or be it those spaces, in which location and belonging are perforated and deformed so as to subvert the laws of hospitality. In whatever case, it is plausible to assume that the moment when frontier zones make social situations less concrete is also the moment that holds unprecedented possibilities for elicitive acts of dissent and democratic passions. ■

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