

R
UMZINE

The letter 'A' is rendered as a solid black silhouette of a teepee. It has a triangular shape with a smaller white triangle cut out from the bottom center. Three lines extend from the top vertex, representing the poles of the teepee.

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Migration, Europa und der Kampf um Bürgerschaft

„Mauern und Zäune sind nicht stärker als Meere und Ozeane, deshalb werden sie die Menschen nicht aufhalten. Sie können die Zäune noch so hochziehen, die Menschen werden weiterhin nach Europa kommen, sie lassen sich davon nicht abhalten“ erklärt der Kameruner Emile Bekolo in einem Interview mit Blick auf die militärisch aufgerüsteten Grenzanlagen um die spanischen Exklaven Ceuta und Melilla auf marokkanischem Boden. Mit ihrer spezifischen geographischen Lage sind die Exklaven ein Brennpunkt für Auseinandersetzungen und Konflikte um Grenzen und Bewegungsfreiheit im Zuge der sich immer mehr verschärfenden europäischen Migrationspolitik. Fast täglich versuchen Migrant_innen die Grenzzäune zu überwinden, während die marokkanische und spanische Grenzpolizei dies verhindern will.

Dabei wird deutlich, dass selbst die hoch aufgerüsteten Grenzzäune nicht undurchlässig sind. Sie stellen eher ein komplexes System mit Schlupflöchern dar. Die Auswüchse der prekären europäischen Einwanderungspolitik manifestieren sich aber nicht nur an den europäischen Außengrenzen, sondern auch mitten in Europa. Von der an der nordfranzösischen Küste gelegenen Stadt Calais überblickt man die engste und stark befahrene Seestraße des Ärmelkanals. Von hier aus hoffen fast jede Nacht zahlreiche Migrant_innen auf eine Gelegenheit, versteckt in oder unter einem LKW nach Großbritannien übersetzen zu können, um sich dort ein neues Leben aufzubauen. Trotz modernster Kontrollmechanismen gelingt einigen von ihnen regelmäßig die heimliche Einreise in das Vereinigte Königreich. Doch bis es soweit ist, vergehen oft mehrere Monate, in denen sie starker Polizei-repression ausgesetzt sind. Regelmäßig werden die Migrant_innen von der Polizei verfolgt und festgenommen, um dann außerhalb der Stadt wieder frei gelassen zu werden.

Auch in Berlin werden die Kämpfe um Bewegungsfreiheit, Zuweisung und Aneignung all-täglich sichtbar. So findet auch hier die Verschränkung von Stigmatisierung und Ausgrenzung von Migration in vielfacher Weise ihren Ausdruck. Die Unterbringung in Containerlagern ist eine unwürdige, aber gewollte Sonderbehandlung. Sie markiert die Trennung der Exkludierten von den Inkludierten. Mit dieser Selektion wird Migration skandalisiert. Gleichzeitig trugen Geflüchtete in den vergangenen Jahren zunehmend ihre Forderungen nach Bleiberecht oder der Abschaffung der Dublin III Verordnung mit Demonstrationen, Besetzungen oder Hungerstreiks in den urbanen Raum.

Die materiellen und praktischen Technologien des gegenwärtigen europäischen Grenzregimes sind schließlich nur in Verbindung mit einer anderen Realität verstehbar: der des undokumentierten Migrant, der trotz aller Widerstände versucht die Grenzen zu überwinden und um die Bürgerrechte kämpft.

Migration, Europe's borders and the fight for citizenship

“Walls and fences are not stronger than the sea and oceans. Therefore they cannot stop the people. However high they will raise the fences, the people will still come to Europe. They will not be deterred by them,” explained the Cameroonian migrant Emilie Bekolo in an interview regarding the increasingly militarized border installations encompassing the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Owing to their geographic location along the northern coast of Africa, the exclaves are a focal point for conflict over borders and freedom of movement in the wake of increasingly severe European migration politics. Almost daily, migrants attempt to overcome the border fences, while the Moroccan and Spanish border patrols try to block them. It is becoming increasingly obvious that even highly upgraded borders do not work as impenetrable barriers, but rather as a complex system with cracks in it.

The excesses of precarious European migration politics appear not only at its external borders, but also within Europe. On the northern coast of France in the city of Calais, one can see the cliffs of Dover visible across the narrow English Channel. From the busy port, migrants attempt nearly every night to hide themselves on transport trucks, and thereby cross to Great Britain in the hopes of building a new life. Despite ultramodern security mechanisms, some migrants succeed in making the clandestine crossing. Often such crossings require several months of preparations and numerous failed attempts before finally luck prevails. In this time the migrants live in overcrowded self-constructed camps, the so-called “jungles”, and face violent harassment from the police. Constantly migrants are pursued and arrested by the police, only to be driven outside city-limits and then set free.

In Berlin the struggles over freedom of movement, allocation and appropriation are also becoming increasingly visible; stigmatization combined with exclusion are manifested in the way the city deals with its migrants. The accommodation of asylum-seekers in container camps is an ignoble but volitional special treatment. It marks the distinction of the excluded from the included. With this selection, migration is scandalized. At the same time local protests from the refugees themselves have become more frequent, with sit-ins or hunger strikes in their demands (claims) for the right to residency and/or the abolition of the Dublin III regulation. Due to the pressures of the non-citizens from the protest camp at Oranienplatz as well in the squatted Gerhard Hauptmann School on Ohlauer Straße, Berlin politicians were forced last year to negotiate with the refugees and their supporters.

The material and practical technologies of the current European border regime are finally only understandable in relation to another palpable reality: the embodied materiality of the undocumented migrant; who tries despite obstacles to overcome the borders and to fight for civil rights.

Städte sind Versammlungsorte. Städte sind Knotenpunkte. Städte sind Zentrum und Peripherie. Sie sind in ständiger Bewegung und wandeln sich permanent. Seit jeher sind es vor allem Migranten, Zugezogene und Neuankömmlinge, die durch ihre Alltagspraktiken die Stadt verändern. Durch das Aufeinandertreffen von Fremden, von individuellen Erfahrungen und kollektiven Wissen entstehen neue Räume aber auch Vorstellungen von Stadt. Urbanität wird praktiziert und immer wieder neu produziert. Angesichts der sich ständig weiter ausdifferenzierenden Grenzregime kommt Städten eine neue Rolle als Zufluchtsorte und Möglichkeitsräume zu. Städte sind Orte des Versprechens, des Begehrens und der Hoffnung.

Es sind auch die Aktionen der Geflüchteten und Ankommenden der Peripherien, ihre Kämpfe um ein Aufenthalt- und Arbeitsrecht im Zentrum, um Teilhabe und Mitbestimmung, die im öffentlichen Raum den Resonanzraum einer kosmopolitischen Gesellschaft produzieren. Diese Aktionen können temporäre Situationen, konkrete Forderungen nach Lebensorten, aber auch Erzählungen sein, die in all ihren Formen Kompetenzen und Strategien eines städtischen Handelns erfordern und die Notwendigkeit der Anerkennung einer Urban Citizenship im Sinne des Rechts auf Stadt deutlich machen. Dabei ist keinesfalls nur eine vorgegebene Rolle im politischen Regime gemeint, sondern es geht vor allem darum jene zu erfindenden Räume (Miraftab 2004), die im Sinne einer *activist citizenship* vorgeformte Ordnungen in Frage stellen, mit einer Normalität des alltäglichen Lebens brechen (Isin 2009) und eigene Praktiken des sich Einmischens erfinden.

Stadt ist demnach ein kontinuierlicher Prozess von Aushandlung, Einmischung und Neuerfindung. Gleichmaßen prägt dieser den materiellen Raum. Im Zuge von kapitalistischen Verwertungslogiken wird der urbane Raum zu einer Ware, die im globalen Wettbewerb um Immobilienmärkte und Lifestyle-Rankings konkurriert. Auch hier werden aktive und kreative Praktiken eines kollektiven Engagements gefordert, die sich gerade in den urbanen Zentren leicht einer räumlichen Inwertsetzung und dem „Imperativ der Kreativität“ (Peck 2008) unterordnen lassen. Die ambivalenten Positionen von Künstler_innen als „Culture Class“ einer *Artistic Mode of Production* (Rosler 2013) erfordert eine kontinuierliche kritische Auseinandersetzung mit den Momenten hegemonialer Strukturen der metropolitenen Zentren.

Welche Möglichkeiten der Entschleunigung dieser permanenten Inwertsetzung der urbanen Innovationsmaschinen lassen sich denken? Oder gibt es gar Strategien diesen Prozessen entgegenzuwirken? Etwa an den Peripherien von Stadt? Oder aber als eine Umlenkung und Umdefinierung der Prozesse, in andere Arten von Strömen? Das entspräche wohlmöglichst einem Verschwinden der Peripherie an den Rändern der Stadt wie wir sie kennen und ihrem Wiederauftauchen in jedem Winkel, jeder Situation und damit als Stadt selbst (Simone 2007).

Mit dem ersten **Raumzine** zeigen wir Ausschnitte aktueller Arbeiten der Studierenden der Raumstrategien. Es sind Ansätze von Beschreibungen und Erfahrungen von sehr unterschiedlichen Orten, die am Rand von Berlin für einen Moment in diesem Heft zusammenkommen. Die Beiträge widmen sich Fragen nach Räumen, Grenzen, Identitäten, Mobilität und Teilhabe. Sie experimentieren mit Formen der Beobachtungen, Erzählungen und ihren künstlerischen Übersetzungen.

Cities are meeting places. Cities are hubs. Cities are center and periphery. They are constantly in movement and transforming. From the beginning it has been particularly migrants and newcomers who change the city through their daily practices. Through the converging of strangers, individual experiences and collective knowledge, new spaces but also imaginations of the city emerge. Urbanity is exercised and permanently reproduced. Given the constant differentiating border regimes, cities have gained a new role as places of refuge and spaces of possibilities. Cities are spaces of promise, desire and aspiration.

The political campaigns of the refugees and newcomers in the periphery, and their fights for the right of residence and to work in the center, for participation and equal access, are also producing public spheres of a cosmopolitan society. These activities can be temporary situations, concrete claims for spaces to live, but also narrations, which in all their shapes demand skills and strategies of urban acting and the need to acknowledge an urban citizenship as a right to the city. Thereby urban citizenship is in no case supposed to be just a predetermined role in a political regime. It is rather more about inventing spaces (Miraftab 2004), which are in terms of an activist citizenship contesting the predetermined order, breaking with the normality of daily life (Isin 2009) and inventing new practices of intervention.

“City” is thus a continuous process of negotiation, intervention and reinvention. Equally this process affects the material space. In the course of capitalist utilitarian logic urban space is turned into a commodity, which competes in real estate markets and lifestyle rankings in a global contest. Again, active and creative practices of a collective commitment are required, which can - especially in urban centers - easily lead to the valorization of the “imperative of creativity” (Peck 2008). The ambivalent position of artists as a “culture class” in an “artistic mode of production” (Rosler 2013) requires continuous critical reflection in the context of hegemonic structures of metropolitan centres.

Which possibilities would exist for slowing down this constant valorization of the urban innovation machine? Are there strategies to counteract these processes? Maybe at the periphery of the city? Or as a diversion and redefinition of processes, in other shapes of streams? That might correspond with the disappearance of the periphery at the edges of the city as we know it, and its reappearance in every corner, every situation, and therefore as the city itself. (Simone 2007).

With the first **Raumzine** we show excerpts from the recent works of the students in the Spatial Strategies program. There are a variety of working approaches from very different places and experiences, which have come together in the periphery of Berlin for this issue. The contributions are following questions of space, boundaries, identities, mobility and participation. They experiment with forms of observation, narrations and artistic translation.

Isin, Engin 2009: *Citizenship in flux: The figure of the activist citizen*, *Subjectivity Issue 29*

Miraftab, Faranak 2004: *Invited and invented spaces of participation: Neoliberal citizenship and feminists' expanded notion of politics*, *Wagadu Volume 1*

Peck, Jamie 2008: *The creativity fix*, *eurozine*, www.eurozine.com/articles/2007-06-28-peck-en.html

Rosler, Martha 2013: *Culture class, eflux*

Simone, AbduMalique 2007: *At the frontier of the urban periphery*, *Sarai Reader 2007: Frontiers*



The Daily Life of Calais

About "SALAM"

"Salam" is the name of the camp where some of the refugees are on hunger strike. Furthermore, some refugees live there full-time.

I went to Salam everyday, and I recorded what I saw using a "Camera Obscura." Some people living in Salam do not like to be recorded on film which influenced my decision to employ the Camera Obscura as a less intrusive technology.

* The Camera Obscura is an optical device that projects an image of its surroundings on a screen; I use this projection to make a drawing.

The refugees came to me, while I was recording images of Salam, and they asked me "What is that? Can I look it?" We made communication through the Camera Obscura, and I recorded the appearance of Salam. The communication with the Camera Obscura gave me a very interesting experience.

What struck me was the encounter with one particular man.

One day while recording in Salam, I met a man who was part of the hunger strike. He told me about many experiences of his stay in the Salam camp. I remember two impressive things from our conversation:

First - "Human Rights"

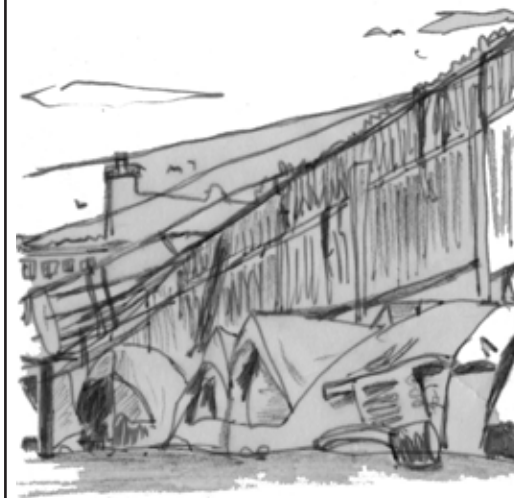
The man had lost so much weight since the start of the hunger strike. I could not understand how he could continue the hunger strike because the police and the French government didn't care about it. I asked him: "How can you continue the hunger strike? Are you convinced that the situation will change by doing it?"

*Looking back, the question was so stupid for him. I could not imagine the concept of the people who are on the hunger strike, because I have never seen a hunger strike in Japan.

He answered my, perhaps naive question: "For human rights!"

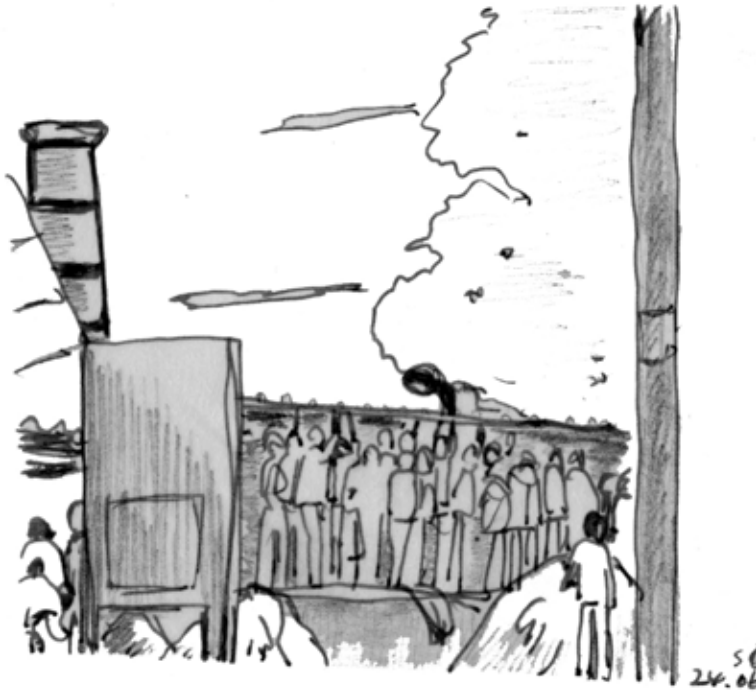
I was shocked by the answer. Throughout all the complicated political contexts, he just needed his rights. He also knows that the French government doesn't care about them. I heard another unbelievable story from him: the police sometimes hit the refugees. For example, one day a refugee walking out from Salam was stopped by the police, and then forced to fight with them in a boxing match on the streets. He could not say: "no", because they were police officers. I saw the scars on some refugees faces and foreheads.

The man on hunger strike said: "The police don't care about us." At that moment, I saw the violence and the power dynamics of the situation.



Second - "How can you help us?"

The man on hunger strike said that he gave many interviews with journalist from abroad. This is because, he really wants the situation in Calais to become published more widely. He said: "To inform is the first step to change the situation." I agree with him. And that was the plan for me, too. However, the man also said "Almost all journalists and media just came here, and talked with us, and went back to their safe land. They just report the situation, but our situation has not changed yet.



We need concrete help. I am tired of just talking about us with them. Well, how can you help me? Do you have a concrete idea for this situation?" I got a shock here, because I recognised that I have no concrete ideas for them, and furthermore, the refugees have no concrete ideas either. They think that we should help them.

In addition, here, I would like to mention the issue of media and awareness, which is also familiar to me from Japan. After the massive 2011 earthquake in Japan, which caused a tsunami and the disaster at the Fukushima power plant, I have been trying to get involved in criticism against mass media with my art practice. I recognised that in Japan mass media exerts a powerful influence over public opinion, but there is a lack of media criticism especially in regards to the independence of media organisations from political parties. Japanese mass media exercises a monopoly over domestic news coverage that traps Japan in the world where nobody knows the truth. Under the this situation, photography remains the most important medium in Japanese media coverage, and the supremacy of the photograph as "truth" brings us back to this problem of the conceptual overshadowing perception.



Looking back, I might have resisted the above situation of Japan by using the Camera Obscura. I also might dislike making photos of the refugees with a digital camera. How will more pictures help if the media context is still so problematic? It is clear, I have been feeling hatred toward the consumption of meaningless photographic images 2011. So many generic photographs merely desensitise us- and this is an ongoing problem.

Two Reflections from the Trip to Calais

First

I recognised that the situation in Calais is just the tip of the iceberg. The basic causes are so deep. In this situation, what can I do? I am rethinking the relationship between violence and power because I discovered the relationship between violence and power in the current Japanese situation as well. In other words, these are universal problems. This is why I would like to get involved in researching this issue of violence and power. By doing so, I believe that I am able to discover a way in which I can help situations such as that in Salam.

Second

Discrimination is made by borders that exist everywhere. I recognised that refugees are no different than me. The difference is our place of birth, because some of them graduated from university, and have a family, friends, and kids. I was prejudiced against the refugees, before I made contact with them. However my prejudice has vanished since making contact. I believe that the situation will change if we can make an opportunity for people to enter into communication with refugees. In short, we should not regard them as peculiar beings. On the other hand, I felt that the refugees also make a border themselves, while we were talking. Sometimes they said "You are safe, but we are not safe. You can go back to the house, but we have no house. You will forget about us." The border makes this discrimination.



In the end, I hope that I am able to lend a hand and generate an opportunity through which the refugees become more visible and accepted into society.



A Container Home for Refugees in Berlin-Buch

What is to be done when an imminent need for urban refugee housing finds no answer in the real estate market? What if affordable housing in general has become so scarce that the existing welfare-based asylum model begins to crumble under the weight of rising rents? Two forms of citizenship emerge: in a bottom-up, self-organized mode, refugees respond to their own precarious condition by building communities and homes of their own, claiming the right to the city; in a top-down, deterministic mode, the state responds to preexisting legal and economic conditions to provide an official solution to the problem of homeless refugees. In each case, citizenship is a process.

For refugees, who, as political subjects, have been reduced to bare life¹, that is, the basis of human existence that precedes political life², citizenship must be claimed individually. For the state, which

recognizes the refugee as a constituent of its exteriority, citizenship is enforced upon the refugee through expulsion or a sponsored process of integration³.

The term 'citizenship' falls back on its Latin root *civitas*—which referred to the city as a political institution, in contrast to *urbe*, which defined the city as its material organization⁴—emphasizing citizenship's multiple interpretations. In an age of mass human migration to cities, urban citizenship has become an agonistic process of continuous negotiation, a process reflected in the built structures that arise. Both self-organized and deterministic modes of urban citizenship are characterized by a notion of permanent temporariness.

In the case of Berlin, where demand for refugee housing outstrips supply, refugees, many who are undocumented immigrants, have self-organized to claim living space for themselves. At the same time, due to their centrally located settlements, refugees have been given a voice in the public sphere. For close two years, from 2012 to 2014, refugees

Permanent

Temporariness

camped and protested at Oranienplatz, a public square in the heart of Kreuzberg. The refugees, who mostly lacked the legal right to live in Berlin, were able to negotiate for their rights with local citizens in public space. Yet, even though the refugees earned political support from neighborhood residents, activists and the district government, the camp was eventually demolished by the city's police. A parallel settlement was founded in December 2012, when a group of more than one hundred refugees began squatting the Gerhart-Hauptmann-Schule, a former junior high school, also in Kreuzberg. Its fate has been more fortunate than the camp at Oranienplatz, as refugees have been allowed to live there, but not without struggle. The majority of the residents of the Gerhart-Hauptmann-Schule lack legal residency status, and their claimed right to stay in Berlin remains without guarantee. Such forms of refugee housing as the camp at Oranienplatz or the squatted Gerhart-Hauptmann-Schule, due to their unofficial status and refusal of preexisting political structures, tend

to be evacuated by the police in favor of state-sponsored housing projects that conform to national citizenship.

The top-down approach to the refugee question is exemplified in Berlin by a recent strategy taken by the Senate of Berlin, the executive body governing the city-state. As a way to 'share the load' among the city's districts, refugees, who officially have been granted asylum, are currently being dispersed throughout the city proportionately to population. The problem: not all districts have immediately available residential space for refugee accommodations. The solution: build temporary container homes in those districts. An organ of the Senate of Berlin responsible for providing services to residents in need, the Landesamt für Gesundheit und Soziales Berlin (LAGeSo), or the 'Department for Health and Social Services', was granted permission by the Senate to build six container homes for refugees in various peripheral areas of the city. With a political rhetoric citing urgency as the principle motivation, the Senate, LAGeSo and the constituent district governments of Berlin

have all justified their construction. One such container home was recently built in the neighborhood of Buch, part of the District of Pankow, located in the far north of the city.







Yet, while refugees are being resettled far from the city center, they are not the only residents of Berlin being pushed out to the periphery. Outlying neighborhoods are receiving new attention, and, in the face of rising rents in the city center, they hope to attract new residents through redevelopment. Buch, a former neighborhood of East Berlin characterized by modern housing blocks, is one of them. The urban and spatial planning office Planergemeinschaft eG, in cooperation with the District of Pankow and the Senate of Berlin, is currently working on an update to the integrated urban development concept of Buch (ISEK Buch). In March 2015, months after the construction of the local container home for refugees began, the District of Pankow invited the citizens of Buch to a forum, where the ISEK Buch was to be discussed.

At the forum, in the company of local government officials, the planning office presented their latest work, which considered suggestions made by local residents from a participatory process in Summer 2014. Mysteriously absent from available documentation of the forum is any reference to the container home. It would have been highly visible at the time for several reasons: residents were generally concerned about its construction, school students had already begun seminars with social workers to prepare them for the integration of young refugees into their classes and neo-Nazis had held several demonstrations protesting the construction of the container home. In the following month, neo-Nazis would attract attention for entering violent altercations with the container home's security guards.

The 480-person container home in Buch, built from mobile, modular container units, was planted on a site still known to this day as the Brunnengalerie (gallery of wells), which was a drinking water catchment area up until it was deemed undrinkable in 2009. According to the updated development plan, which lacks any mention of the container home, the Brunnengalerie should be transformed into a mixed-use area with residential use for diverse types of housing as well as commercial use. Additionally, an existing pathway through the Brunnengalerie should be renewed to better connect the neighborhood, serving all its residents. The fenced-off container home, constituted by three separate container buildings and a common green space, was built directly over the pathway, severing the existing connection. Ironically, the container home is neither mixed-use, as it serves but one purpose, nor public, as guards control incoming and outgoing individuals who either live or work there. How is it, then, that such a built structure, which contradicts the currently unfolding development concept, could be built in Buch? Precisely, because it is 'temporary'.

However, the temporariness of the container home in Buch may not be so sure. The Arbeiterwohlfahrt (AWO), a German organization for welfare services, was given a two-year contract by the LAGeSo to operate the container home. What happens to the site after the AWO's contract expires remains unclear, and it may be possible that a new contract will be drawn up to perpetuate the refugee program or that an entirely new use for the container home will be introduced down the road—presuming that the temporary structure will not be dismantled after two years. The cited urgency that led to the construction of the container home as a solution to an impenetrable real estate market may be, in actuality, a permanent condition, not a temporary one. In this regard, the container home could set precedent not only for refugee housing in Berlin, but also for social housing for welfare recipients, students and other low-income individuals and families in Berlin. Still, in light of its serious design flaws, remote location and symbolic character, it is difficult to imagine the container home taking on any use other than emergency housing.

Container buildings, often seen on construction sites as temporary offices for planners, symbolically prefigure architecture. The container home for refugees in Buch prefigures no architecture: it is in itself a crystallization of the language of law; it is a materialization of the legal infrastructure of the civitas with no apparent outlook for 'permanence'. Additionally, while container buildings have great potential to provide rapid-response housing in emergency situations, their ability to be perceived as something more than a camp requires provisions that were clearly not taken in the construction of the container home in Buch. With container building construction, basic components of human dignity, like privacy and security, become luxurious options that, when money is tight, inevitably end up on the chopping block. While meeting the minimum quantitative requirements for social housing in Berlin (9 m²

for the first person in a bedroom, 6 m² for the second, one shower/sink/stove per 10 people), the rooms have no sound insulation: neighboring conversations come in loud and clear. What's more, there is no possibility for women or men to lock the doors to their showers. With two communal four-stall shower rooms on each floor, one for women and one for men, the only separation between a woman in the shower and a male aggressor is a closed (but not locked) hallway door and a plastic shower curtain. One begins to question the advantage of such conditions over the self-organized settlements they inevitably replace—especially taking into account that the container home is located in a neighborhood where neo-Nazis show increasingly aggressive tendencies.

When considering urban citizenship through the lens of contemporary modes of refugee housing in Berlin, both bottom-up and top-down, the notion of permanent temporariness remains a constant. Whether refugees construct settlements on their own that face imminent police destruction; whether refugees are granted provisional legal status and resettled in temporary container homes at the edge of the city: their existence is permanently temporary. The container itself speaks volumes. Originally conceived as a simple solution for shipping across various modes of transport, the intermodal container has proliferated as a definitive spatial element of global trade infrastructure. The container home in Buch exemplifies the quantification of living space by the global real estate market par excellence. Refugees' bodies, now conforming to the cramped space of the container, are physically and psychologically converted into transportable commodities, logistically positioned throughout the city by the bureaucratic control of an optimized database. Perhaps, in a dream or a nightmare, the refugees will be picked up by cranes while sleeping in their containers, placed on trucks and shipped away, only to find themselves in an alternate reality where the container home has finally become a paradigm of the disadvantaged.



¹Diken, Bülent. "From Refugee Camps to Gated Communities: Biopolitics and the End of the City." *Citizenship Studies* 8, no. 1 (2004): 83–106.

²Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998. "The fundamental categorical pair of Western politics is not that of friend/enemy but that of bare life/political existence, *zoë/bios*, exclusion/inclusion. There is politics because man is the living being who, in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion."

³Holston, James and Arjun Appadurai. "Cities and Citizenship," In *Cities and Citizenship*, edited by James Holston, 1–18. Durham [N.C.]: Duke University Press, 1999.

⁴Aureli, Pier Vittorio. "Intangible and Concrete: Notes on Architecture and Abstraction." *E-flux Journal* 64 (2015). Accessed June 3, 2015. <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/intangible-and-concrete-notes-on-architecture-and-abstraction/>.

Tehran is loading ...

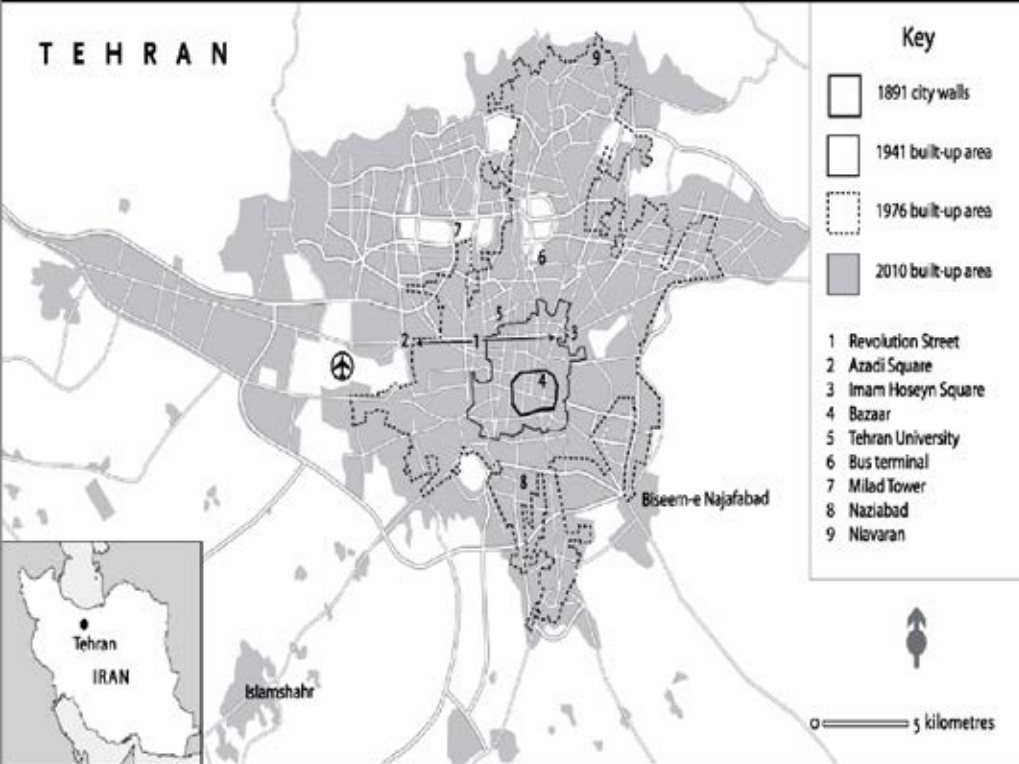
Tehran, like many other developing cities in the Global South*, is facing widespread urban transformation, which leads one to consider it as a never-ending construction project. Over two hundred years, decreasing mortality rates and an influx of migrants have transformed Tehran from a walled city of 19 km² with an estimated 230,000 inhabitants in 1900 into a mega-city of 12 million (2011), sprawling over 600 km². It had by 2010 evolved into a metropolis housing almost a sixth of the country's population. Due to the arrival of newcomers and the expansion of Tehran, in addition to the emergence of new neighborhoods, streets and satellite towns, the small population cells turned into population poles. Therefore by a series of socio-economic and political developments, the spatial order in Tehran and its outskirts has changed dramatically to reorganise them.

The city's traditional social fabric was defined by the *mahalleh* or quarter system, which organised urban space, not along class lines, but according to ethno-religious divisions, clustering citizens together of the same ethnicity or religion, whether rich or poor, within particular quarters. This pattern remained unchanged until the second half of the 19th century, when Naser Eddin Shah extended the city walls and ditches. The main motivation for this was the need to integrate the growing number of "outsiders" - not only migrant poor but also elite Persians and foreigners - and to control riots. But the works

were also partly inspired by the vision of a "modern city" derived from Baron Haussmann**, whose ideas spread at this time from Paris to the Middle East.

While early changes included the destruction of the old city's gates and fortifications, these were replaced with the new symbols of modern governance; massive ministerial and military buildings. Some universities, banks, boulevards and large public squares were built in this period. Architects were either brought in from Europe and the United States, or they were Iranians who had studied abroad. Tehran was built to different architectural tastes without a cohesive urban plan and attempts were then made in the 1920s to end the *mahalleh* system, through the adoption of a zoning pattern, based largely on class segregation.





Nevertheless, many aspects of the older urban structure and social organisation persisted, now juxtaposed with the emerging realities of the city of petro-dollars.

In 1951 the oil industry was nationalised. Following the defeat of the nationalist Prime Minister Dr Mohammad Mossadeq, the royal tendency was to channel oil wealth to the urban areas, particularly Tehran, at the expense of infrastructure for agriculture and industry. Oil income financed extensive programs of industrialization, national education, and urban development, while land reforms were taking away the power of feudal lords and turning the peasantry into smallholders or rural proletarians, many of whom subsequently migrated to the cities.

Tehran became the spatial embodiment of this surging accumulation process. In and around the city, industry, commerce, services, and foreign enterprises mushroomed and around 3 million landless peasants from the countryside came to Tehran. The new arrivals were predominantly poor, but it was urban planning and the zoning policy that turned them into “marginals”, *hashiyenishinan*. The free market for land and its high price, as well as problems of cost and the restrictive construction standards set by planners, pushed poor newcomers to put up their shelters informally,

outside of the city limits, producing “underdog neighborhoods”; slums, squatter settlements, and satellite communities were expanded around the city. These newcomers were mostly Azeri from the Turkic region in north-west Iran. They were known by the westernised urban rich as *dahati* (rural, backward), *amaleh* or *hammal* (labourer, inferior), which reinforced their lowly status on the periphery of urban life.

In 1979, the Islamic Revolution shook the city. Two measures were of prime importance in forming the face of the city in the years to come. One was an oral decree by Imam Khomeini, that all Tehranis had the right to possess a house. This ignored the city limits and small houses were built on the outskirts of the city. The second was the government's decree in 1989, after the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), in which different sectors of the government had to become economically self-sufficient. With the end of war in 1988 a “reconstruction era” began. The main characteristics of this era were the economic reforms, the transformation of state ownership to individual owners and institutions, the expansion of the private sector in terms of the economy, the facilitation of foreign investments and cooperation with foreign capitals. This encouraged the municipality to allow and then fine illegal buildings.



Old gardens and mansions were destroyed to clear space for massive new apartment blocks and fines for cutting down trees or building high-rises brought colossal amounts of money to the municipality. In modernising the city, the municipality was in the paradoxical situation of planting trees and flowers to make small parks while benefiting from the destruction of the “lungs of Tehran”, the gardened northern section of the city.

In the city, people launched a takeover of mainly public land, which led to the rapid expansion of Tehran's urban outskirts. Hundreds of satellite villages around the city turned into urban townships, becoming part of greater Tehran. In addition to the rural migrants, there was an influx of 2.5 million Iran-Iraq War refugees and 2 million Afghans.

Tehran has engaged in a process of "re-development" of the old neighborhoods in the central part of the city, both through the individual renovation of the older buildings, encouraged by an intensification policy, as well as through the building of the new high-ways, parks, mosques and cultural centres by the Tehran municipality to modernise the city. These transformations have changed the socio-spatial structure of the city, causing out-migration. People are no longer out-migrating from the South in such large numbers and are modifying the perceptions and practices of everyday life in the central city neighborhoods.

Land and housing shortage in the city led to some other projects; Mehr Housing Project, designed in 2007, aimed to cover part of the housing shortage through the building of around 2 million housing units within 5 years. Under this scheme, real estate developers are offered free land in return for building cheap residential units for first-time buyers on 99-year lease contracts. Readymade communities were erected in barren deserts, often with little regard for on-the-ground ecological conditions. The plan was to equip each community with a range of amenities: public transportation, parks, hospitals, schools, mosques, but after a short period of time, problems regarding lack of utilities, access to water, power, gas, and sewerage lines have been reported.

Some other projects such as establishing district-22 with massive housing construction and a man-made lake or equipping the satellite villages around the city and encouraging people to live there are some efforts by municipality to settle down people. Over 200 years this small village in the shadow of the Alborz Mountains with nice weather has turned to a polluted metropolitan. Several waves of immigration and not having a concrete master plan and applying negotiable laws have made an uncontrollable giant, which nowadays is among the ten worst cities in the world. Three decades into the



Islamic revolution, Tehran remains a troubled and troubling city, wounded and yet defiant. It still keeps the structural and architectural signs of the Shah's time, but this is overlaid with a post-revolutionary ideology, some significant redevelopment, and the footprints of globalisation. More dramatically, it has been transformed from below by population growth, immigration, and informal development. Most of these processes are not peculiar to Tehran, of course; they are a feature of many other mega-cities of the global south.

** The North-South divide is broadly considered a socio-economic and political divide. Generally, definitions of the Global North include North America, Western Europe and developed parts of East Asia. The Global South is made up of Africa, Latin America, and developing Asia including the Middle East. The North is home to four of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.*

***Baron Georges Eugene Haussmann (1809-1892) was appointed by Napoleon III on June 22, 1853 to "modernise" Paris. In this way, Napoleon III hoped to better control the flow of traffic, encourage economic growth, and make the city "revolution-proof" by making it harder to build barricades. Haussmann accomplished all this by tearing up many of the old, twisting streets and dilapidated apartment houses, and replacing them with the wide, tree-lined boulevards and expansive gardens which Paris is famous for today.*

Photos & Plan: Internet



On the Negation of the Stunde Null

To celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the Berliner Senat organized a series of events under the name “Frühling in Berlin”, promoted with billboard posters in U-Bahn stations displaying pictures from the first days after the liberation, the so-called Stunde null, or “zero hour”.

One of the promotional posters shows the skeleton of a devastated Alexanderplatz with its Stadtbahnhof completely destroyed. When I first saw this image, I was not yet aware of the event series, and just by googling it I found out about these planned open air exhibitions which were to take place in several locations, from Alexanderplatz, to the Reichstag to Potsdamerplatz. In each location large panoramic prints were placed like billboards, so that the historical images would overlap with the real landscape of today’s Berlin; the destruction of May 1945 in confrontation to the present city.

On the 1st of May 2015, I saw a group of young Italians in the U-Bahn station Kottbusser Tor discussing the archive photo of Alexanderplatz as it looked exactly 70 years ago; to them it was not surprising how industrious German folks managed to rebuild a square out of that mess.

Actually in 1945 serious consideration was given to leaving the city ruined as it was, and making Berlin a monumental memorial to the tragedy of the war.

I still sometimes imagine if that would have taken place, without even touristic infrastructure: no souvenir museums, sight seeing buses or services nor food-im-

bisses, not even a trash can, just a drastic giant ready-made installation. A dramatic abandoned monster in the form of a city would be available for hours-long walks: Berlin as it was right after the last bomb for history-flaneurs.

That would be a place that you could visit only at your own risk, you would be required to sign a waiver, and could still today experience that non-city in the eyes of a tourist.

Negation tourism.

The Stunde null is about negation. What is a city? What is not a city? Is the ruin of a city a city or its opposite? What can be then the opposite of a city?

We can easily represent a city, or better the sentence “this is a city” through figurative language, we even invented a word for it: cityscape.

But what if, thinking back to René Magritte and his correspondence with Michel Foucault about a pipe, we would like to represent its opposite, its negation: the sentence “this is not a city”?

A not-city could perhaps be a picture of a natural landscape that shows emptiness, like a desert, a field or the North Pole, but if we take then a look at this picture, it signifies more something positive than negative: it says “desert”, “field”, “North Pole”, and it does not say “this is not a city”, actually it does not refer to the city at all.

Negation is always controversial when it comes to representation*, and the idea to represent the sentence “this is not a city” through images is both impossible and auto-referential, but I have the feeling that those pictures of Berlin in 1945 are naturally very close to reaching this goal.

The Stunde null is (extremely close to) the opposite of a city, in a way not even a cornfield would be.

This is also because the city itself has been rebuilt and restructured, there was the need for the city to be rebuilt to create the definitive negation of the Stunde null, a negation of the negation cannot produce anything other than a positive assumption, so after May 1945, after having been cut in sectors, then shared by two nations and eventually unified, it is finally back to its status of... city: Berlin. We have a positive enunciation.

From the interactive images on the website of the BBC to the countless books dedicated to this visual trick, the juxtaposition of historical images beside their contemporary re-photographing has become in the last years a trend, so it is no surprise that Berlin has decided to use this powerful tool to celebrate the anniversary.

For the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Berlin, the city wants to show its inhabitants its darkest moment, or rather the first light after the darkness: May 1945.

The open air exhibition of course is the core of the events organized by the city, but because of what could be called a coincidence, I find that the posters in the U-Bahn stations deserve an autonomous reflection.

This strategy of displaying historical images of the city in the U-Bahn stations is not new: many stations like Jannowitzbrücke, Bayerischerplatz or Rathaus Neukölln are already showing their “ghosts”: the way the surroundings of the U-Bahn station used to look like historically. Those are not temporary posters, but permanently installed archive images. Often they are printed directly on the tile-walls, showing daily to citizens and visitors a very particular city, a very specific Berlin, the one before the war: a bourgeois, fancy and rich city full of carriages, shops and restaurants.

This began already a few years ago with the systematic renovation of many train stations, but the concept holds: the newly renovated Boddinstraße is a good example with its pictures of the edification of the Kindl Brauerei in front of a wild Tempelhofer Feld, or with some images of the beginning of the century in Boddinkiez.

It could be said that more or less all the archive pictures chosen for the U-Bahn stations in Berlin have been taken from a specific historical period within 2 or 3 decades, with a focus on the “Goldenen Zwanziger”, the 1920’s and the Weimar Republik, a golden age for the city. The feeling of surprise while seeing them in the U-Bahn, images of that Berlin,

makes me suddenly realise how curious it is that none of them depict neither the fall of Nazism nor the following decades.

The Berliner senat seems to be obsessed with this “positive” representation of the pre-war city, they surely consider that moment in the history a “peak”, something we should work to get back. The fact that this old Berlin was laying the groundwork for one the greatest tragedies in human history doesn’t seem to worry them. It is in any case way better than whatever happen afterwards.

But what does better mean?

The history-scape in Alexanderplatz forces the viewer to a point of view that faces the Galeria Kaufhof shopping mall, but not the gigantic abandoned and no-entry DDR buildings still visible from the center of the square just looking in the direction of the Karl-Marx-allee. Now, I understand, or do my best to understand the struggle of the berliner senat in giving Berlin a higher ranking in the world competition of best cities, under the pressure of a questionable when not meaningless global race. Nonetheless this reduction of remembrance (especially the “holy” Stunde-null, the “reset” moment in the history of Germany) to a mere tool to thrill simple minded tourists, in the attempt to sell the city as a product for possible investors, doesn’t really fit with what I imagined the German post-war perception was.

Besides moral objections, the ruins of the Stunde null are transformed in those screens into ruins of the ruins, in images definitely and irrevocably emptied of the meanings that the whole post-war discussion and the anti-fascist culture gave them: the Stunde null has become a commodity.



Jannowitzbrücke um 1895

K. 14. Berlin
Jannowitzbrücke

The pattern is the same as the one being the whole Humboldt-forum project, the (re)construction of the Berliner Schloß: to destroy the Palast der Republik and rebuild (a copy of) what was there before just because that building “doesn’t match” with the Museumsinsel and its charm of the old days. As if the DDR would not be at all part of the historical patrimony of this city but something that occurred, a crack that we have to repair. As if Berlin would be a city where buildings match.

The website of the Humboldt-forum explains very clearly their intentions: “Die Museumsinsel, Berliner Dom sowie der Prachtboulevard „Unter den Linden“ erhalten durch die Wiedererrichtung des Berliner Schlosses ihren städtebaulichen Bezugspunkt zurück”

“The Museumsinsel, the Berliner Dome as well as the boulevard “Unter den Linden” get back through the reconstruction of the Berliner Schloß their urban reference point.” A reference point taken away by a meaningless phase, another of the many uninteresting, non-phase in the history of the city: the DDR. Images of life in the DDR are never displayed in U-Bahn stations the same way the Stunde null is. They do not belong exactly to the same space of negation, but are similar in that neither fits with the post-wall political discourse.

I believe that the case of Berlin can be a strong example to underline polar dynamics in the discussion about the city, since no other city built its “hype” using the negation as a powerful tool to “recover” the urban territory as the post-wall Berlin did. The dream of Berlin in my generation, this huge flux of migrants (or expats, depending on their background) have been coming to Berlin in order to find free spaces: vacant industrial buildings to open a club, an art space, a bar, an alternative to high rents, possibilities to create something from nothing.

The Berlin dream is a naive dream for many of these new Berliners, who still believe in a sustainable city where low finances can give access to high offers. But those are at the same time the same Berliners who stopped the edification of the Tempelhofer Feld. How many of the “Neuberliner” came here attracted and fascinated by the evolving, capitalistic “positive city” and how many by the controversial, impossible, utopic “negative” one?

Who came here to help the “Western Ride” on eastern territories, and who just attracted by the idea of an alternative to Europe’s exclusive (in the sense of exclusion) metropolitan life? Or maybe even better by the possibility of an exclusion in the metropolitan life, an exclusion and a renunciation controversially combined with a claim to the right to urban life, not to make the city, but to experience it. Bohème.

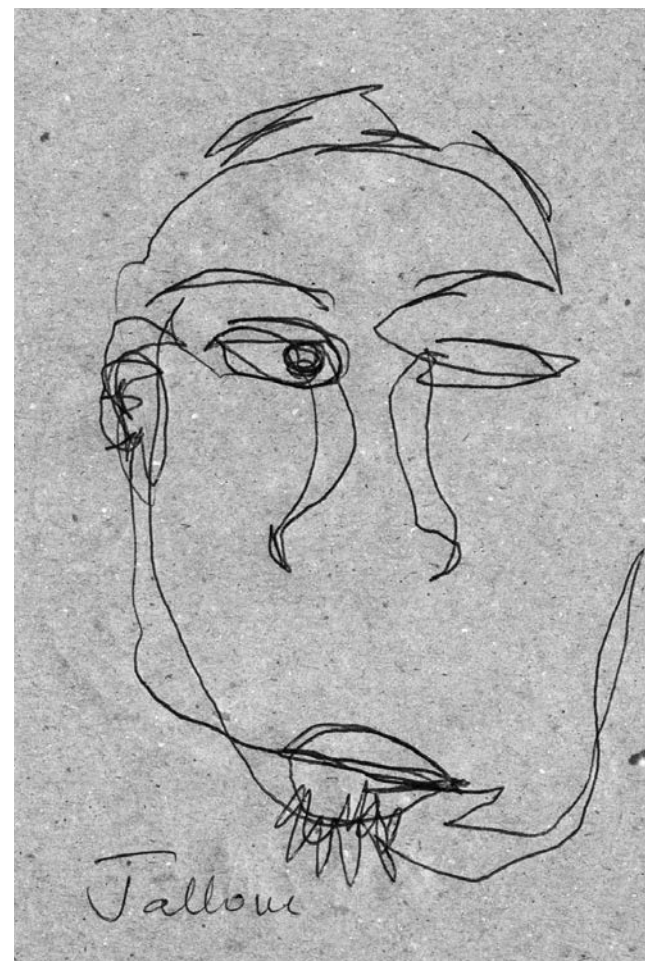


Such contradictions produce mainly questions, but I guess the answers could reflect just partially Berlin’s politics and the pictures chosen for the subway stations. The city can’t be a stable nostalgic unit and is sometimes forced to delete, erase and rewrite.

On the other hand this rewriting produces social struggles, exclusions, expressing more the need of a bunch of investors than of the inhabitants themselves. Personally, I would have liked to be a guest of the Palast des Zweifels, from Lars Ø Ramberg, but it has been already destroyed.



Mira



Tallone

Blind Drawings

Blind drawings of Mira, Mazan and Jalloue of the Refugee Club Impulse held each week at the youth theatre, Jugend Theater Büro (JTB), Berlin-Moabit. In 2015 Head has been joining the group in the re-development of their work Letters Home as part of a long-term project between the Wasteland Twinning Network (WTN) and the JTB titled Homey Island. The Homey Island project derives its concept from two opposing uses of the word Homey: from the American street use of the term implying trust, friend and kinship to the more domestic meaning cosy, comfortable or gemütlich in German.

Through proposing Homey Island as an opportunity to examine highly contrasting domestic sphere's – from the luxury flats typically developed on urban wastelands to the makeshift slums that foreshadow them – the project will seek to examine issues around immigration, national identity, home and the problematic concept of Homeland.

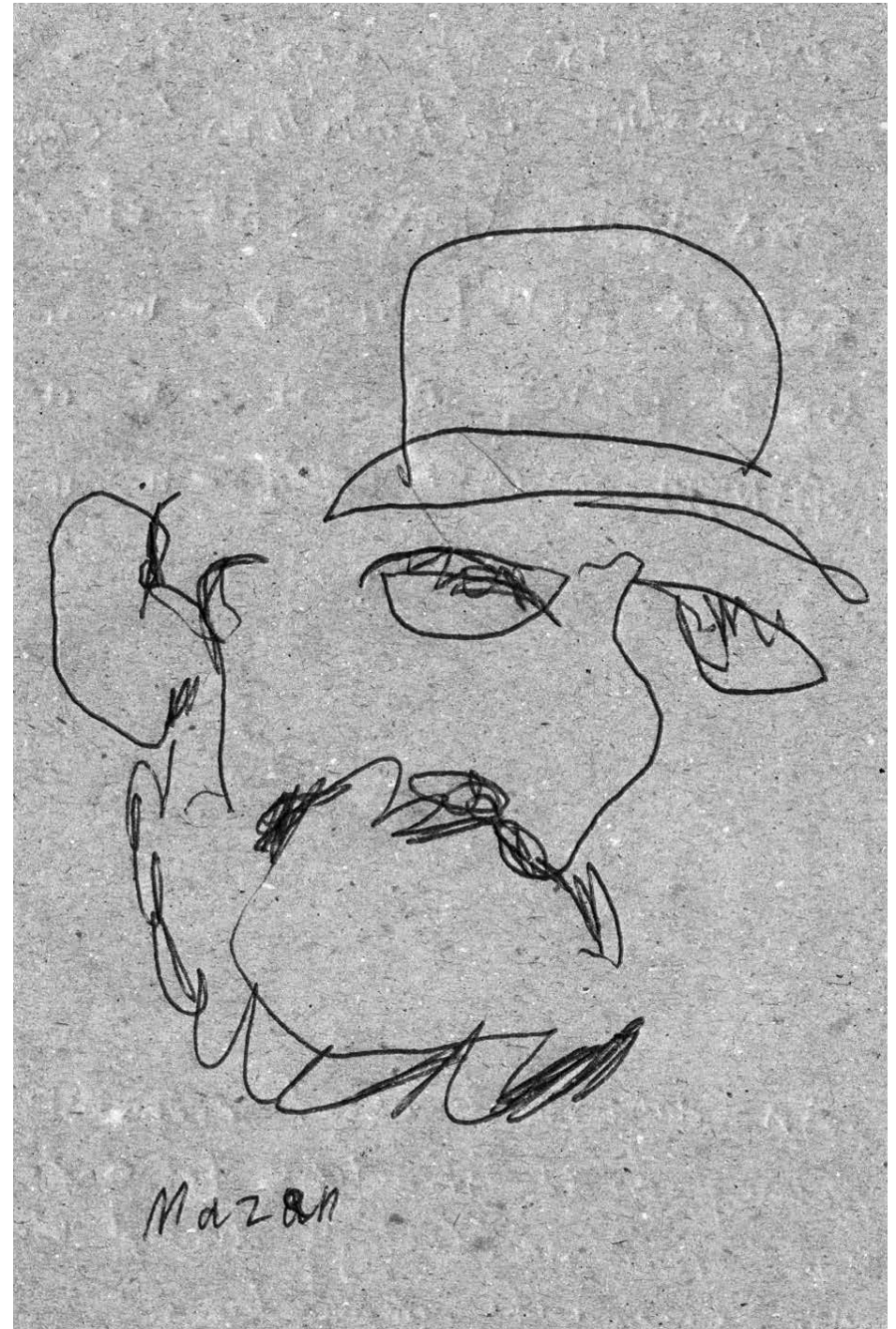
The project is partnered by collectives based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Bucharest, Romania; Plovdiv, Bulgaria; Manchester, UK; Helsinki, Finland and Berlin, Germany. In participating in the creative process of the Refugee Club Impulse (RCI), Head has sought to learn from the skills, techniques and political awareness of the group who's slogan states: "Nobody gives us a voice. We take it!"

Methodology of the Gap

During 2015 Head has become increasingly interested in performative contradictions – what I say I will do, and that you know I will not, and what I actually do – as a means to explore power and the instructive force of language. This led him to an approach that can be described as the Methodology of the Gap: a series of lies, deliberate mis-truths and credible fictions typical of the belief structures needed for the day to day function of human society such as credit-money.

In working with the RCI Head is not interested in bridging the gap between his own experiences and those of the group, but is interested rather in the gap itself. This could be the gap when doing the trust exercise which involves falling and being caught, in the moment before you know if the other person is going to catch you. Or it could actually be the space of theatre itself, the stage as the place, if anywhere, where our experiences are momentarily bridged. Spatially the gap could also be thought of as the wasteland – the break in the city where speculation can occur.

Zeichnungen: Alex Head



Inhaling while Speaking

Occurrence and events have different time spans of exhalation and inhalation. When singing, breathing is controlled, the exclusion and inclusion of bodily functions, border control.

14.05.2015 in Turkey, NATO foreign ministers sang: “We Are the World”. One of them was the foreign minister of Iceland, Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson.

14.01.2015 in New York, Mr. Sveinsson organized the “Barbershop Conference”. The conference was a commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the 1995 U.N. Women’s Conference, in which world leaders declared, “Women’s Rights are Human Rights”. In 2013 the *Global Gender Gap Report* compiled by the World Economic Forum, ranked Iceland as being the world leader for gender equality in economics, healthcare and several other categories. As an exemplar of equality, Iceland decided to share its knowledge by using the Barbershop Conference to partner with the small South American country of Suriname, which only ranked 110th on the report.

Only men and boys were invited to attend.

Iceland and its representatives seem to have the need to outwardly display that the dichotomy between exclusion and inclusion is at least contested on a small island state, enclosed by its own borders. In the urban landscape of the capital city Reykjavik, women and the battles they partake are honored once a year by flushing major institutions with pink light. Pink and its color, being a valid representative of women and their kind. The benevolent act of imposing rouge on surfaces in public space, was recently contested by the Chilean artist Marco Evaristti.

24.04.2015 in Iceland, Evaristti dyed the only active geyser on the island with a harmless fruit color resulting in the geyser erupting with pink excrement. The action was apart of Evaristti ongoing artwork the *Pink State*, where the artist colors different landscapes in various countries to mark the declaration of the independent “Pink State” and its Constitution. The state is temporary and only lasts as long as the color itself stains nature. As the result of the artwork, death threats were made by Icelanders against the artist, and Evaristti was charged with vandalism.

HE was not to say if SHE was to be intact.

“If only he had asked for permission”, responded the head of the Association of Icelandic Visual Artists, thus implying that it is for authorities to decide who addresses what and in which color, even when the subject matter is a state of fluid temporariness. Just as with women and humanhood, it is through official permissions, commemorations, formal reports and rankings that their bare existence is made evident. Evaristti’s remarks that “nature belonging to no one” is an ideal that has long been lost as the smooth space of nature has been striated by national entitlement of exploitation and privatization. Still it is

an ideal held in high regard parallel to the image of the pure nature of Iceland. In a state of exception, double standards have long become the rule in Iceland. standards have long become the rule in Iceland.

“Live and let live”, is the motto of a new state arising with about the same number of inhabitants as the small state in the north.

13.04.2015, Liberland is a sovereign state located between Croatia and Serbia on the west bank of the Danube River, where personal economic freedom is guaranteed. The motto holds on to the naivety that the young person loses in the Wings song “Live and Let Die”. Liberland recently posted an open call for new citizens that will follow criteria which reflect the hypocritical nature of the small state. It is Baudrillard’s desert, where the desert is its soil as the map of the state of exception has disappeared. It is now stated clearly in the declaration of this new free republic that the distinction between inclusion/exclusion is not in the least vague:

Liberland currently needs people who:

- have respect for other people and respect the opinions of others, regardless of their race, ethnicity, orientation, or religion
 - have respect for private ownership which is untouchable
 - do not have a communist, nazi or other extremist past
 - were not punished for past criminal offences
-

The motto of the Icelandic Coast Guard resonates with the motto of Liberland. “Do or Die” is the motto of the Icelandic Coast Guard, which set out to protect the waters of the Mediterranean. The urgency not being in the lives that are maybe risked at sea, but in the need to lease their workforce and the ship Týr to the private agency of European border control: Frontex. Without these leases, the Icelandic Coast Guard would go out of business. Iceland’s horizon is broadened by continuing to diligently serve Schengen and Dublin III. Last year Iceland only accepted thirty-three refugees. Portrayed in the media as the saviors of the sea, Iceland has not fully shown its true colors as Liberland has, and its double standards as a small state of exception.

A symbolic order denoting Iceland’s proclaimed equality supremacy is challenged when met by bare life. The characteristics of the micro border control of bodily functions, such as speaking, mirrors the enclaved nature of Iceland. Inhaling while speaking is a typical characteristic of Icelandic utterances. The rhythm of exhale/inhale, the border control of the body, meant to display near osmotic natural occurrences, exhibits instead an act of hyperventilation.

17.03.2015, Somewhere in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea on Týr

H: Halldór Nellett –
Captain of the Icelandic
Coast Guard ship Týr

E: Ewa Moncure -
Frontex spokeswoman

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: Because they also reported that the crew left.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: YES.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: Which was sort of unusual.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah

E: But it was enormous, it was, Al Jazeera, I mean everybody, I mean EVERYBODY.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E:wanted to talk about it to find out more...

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, I was very surprised, about all this, eaah...

E: It was incredible, two days non-stop. TWO DAYS!

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: ...and this was the first time when I got it, you know we're not an emergency service, Frontex is an agency.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: ...but this was like when journalist started to call at six in the morning on a holiday. Because you know we were still on a holiday. We were not working.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: So it was HUGE, but it was also interesting you know and nobody DIED. It was positive story because people were saved.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: Because a lot of these stories are sad.

H: (inhaling:) Yeah, yeah.

E: You know that many bodies, you had bodies on board eh? Did you have?

H: No, not yet.

E: Not yet.

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RÜTLISTRABE

No. 41-45:
The Rütli-Schule gained notoriety in 2006 as one of the most deprived schools in Germany, with a high percentage of pupils from a migrant background. The school underwent a transformation and is now called the 1. Gemeinschaftsschule.
berlinopoly.wordpress.com

RICHARDPLATZ

In 1737 Frederick Wilhelm I allowed a group of 350 Moravian Protestants, who had been expelled from Bohemia, to settle in Rixdorf.

berlinopoly.wordpress.com

SONNENALLEE

No. 124:
Located in the Turkish/Arabic area of Neukölln is the SPD - AG Migration Neukölln, which seeks to integrate the migrant populations of Neukölln.

berlinopoly.wordpress.com

Discover the many migration hotspots through an interactive game.

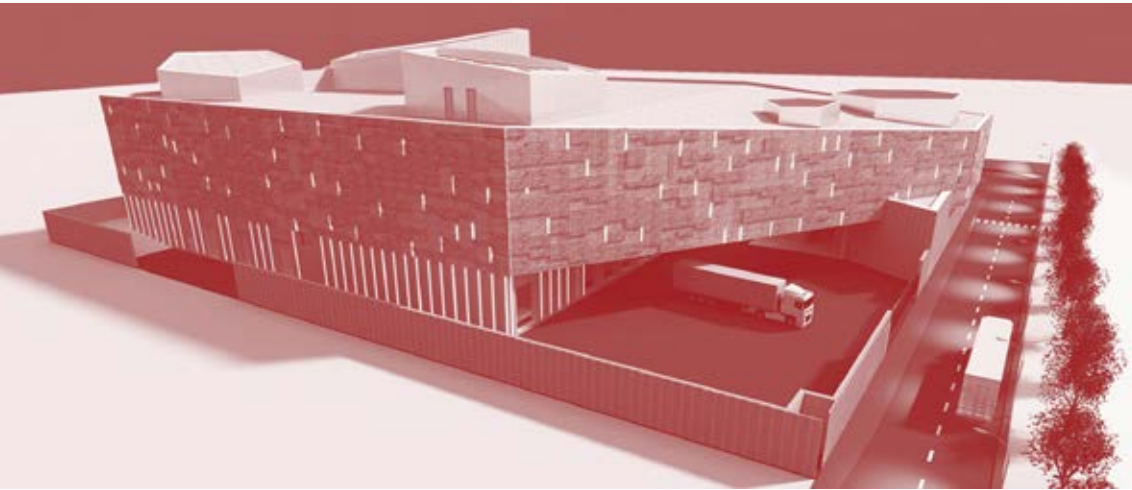
More information at:

berlinopoly.wordpress.com



Cage without borders

To visit the Luxembourg Freeport, you need to catch the bus number 16 northeast through the valley and away from the city – through the forest in full green, the village stone walls and buildings all crumbling charm – and into the free-trade zone near the airport. Some of the corporate castles up here are older, modernist buildings, but most are glossy new glassy things, gleaming in the trees: Deutsche Bank, KPMG, Ernst & Young, Deloitte, Credit Suisse, Allen & Overy, Deutsche Borse Group, TD Direct Investing, BlackRock, JP Morgan. The Luxembourg Freeport is surrounded by the territories of corporate kings.



Freeports are a particular type of Export Processing Zone (EPZ). In the 1970s, EPZs were heavily promoted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation as a jumpstart for developing nations looking to boost their international trade and attract investors. The labour conditions of Foxconn and Rana Plaza, the extravagant duty-free wealth of Dubai and Singapore, and the environmental degradation of Shenzhen are all manifestations of the types of exceptions to normal trade regulation granted to such zones – not to mention the clump of corporate palaces in Luxembourg. It is estimated that over half of all bank assets, and a third of foreign direct investment by multinational corporations, are fed into EPZs of one form or another (Easterling 2014, 33).

Recently, two factors have led to a shift in the EPZ landscape. First, since the 2008-9 economic crisis, corporate tax avoidance is now increasingly under the scrutiny of local governments and international bodies such as the OECD. Secondly, within Europe, the expansion of the EU zone has rendered certain types of EPZs redundant. Typically, freeports are tariff-free zone where foodstuffs or bulky products are stored before being imported, sold or moved to another location. Just last year the Luxembourg branch of professional services giant Deloitte released its third annual *Art & Finance* report. The report reveals that 76% of art buyers acquire expensive works with the view of investing, a clear increase from 53% of those surveyed in 2011. The very rich are looking increasingly to art as a place to park their cash. In keeping with this trend, some freeports are now built or adapted to

run on an entirely confidential basis for the top-security, tax-free storage of luxury goods, in particular of fine art. Le Freeport Luxembourg, recently opened in 2014, is the fruit of these circumstances.

I made it from London to the freeport in Luxembourg without sleeping. My plan was simply to drop in – to pay a visit and see what would happen. However, unexpectedly rough weather conditions on the British Channel, mean that I arrived in Brussels only to discover that, to my dismay, my connection to Luxembourg had already left an hour ago. Eventually I found a map and a bus that took me to the edge of Brussels and the start of the E411 highway. I put on my backpack, crossed to the right-hand side of the road, stuck out my thumb and began walking south-east.

In freeport zones, sealed inside packaging crates, artworks can be shunted from hand to hand around the world. The “global freeport ecosystem”, as one service provider describes it, maintains a well-oiled corporate online appearance. Embedded videos and impressive splash pages reveal steel-plated lobbies filled with reflective surfaces and vast, scaly lobby sculptures: myriad corridors and cameras, double-locked airlocks, clicking doors, shiny floors and windowless vaults, always empty. You can click your way through freeports in Luxembourg and Monaco, from Geneva to Singapore, to Shanghai’s “West Bund” and Eurasia’s “Beijing Freeport of Culture”, soon to be opened. A freeport is sometimes also referred to as a bonded area, raising a curious set of contradictions between freedom and constraint. Here is a globe riddled with chambers and corridors, a heavily protected space where items might slip between tariff zones smoothly. In this space, items are not only bought and sold, but simply traded – Picassos for cigars, Porsches for Lichtensteins, ship it to Lichtenstein, keep the tax break working...

It was late afternoon by the time I had hitched a ride from Brussels to Luxembourg and arrived at a hostel amidst the forts and skyscrapers, the high bridges and black jackdaws of the Luxembourg mountains. By this stage I was moving through a thick, sleepless haze. I dumped my backpack, brushed my teeth and went back to the bus stop.

Urbanist Keller Easterling defines EPZs as spaces of exception. They might be privately operated, but they are born out of legislative exemptions put in place by the state: “...the zone authority frequently has the power, in individual deals [with the state], to grant exception from any law” (Keller 2014, 33). The projected vision of a “free” market in operation behind such schemes does not emerge spontaneously, but is conjured up by nation-states acting in partnership with specific private stakeholders. In late 2011, Luxembourg altered Article 56 of its VAT law, creating a suspension of tax for specific supplies of goods, their storage, and goods or services provided or performed on these goods. The legislation underscores its “temporary” nature: the VAT exemption applies to items in storage only. However, Luxembourg’s freshly minted freeport offers indefinite storage to its clients, and in 2014, a second law was passed reducing tax payable on works sold by public auction in the freeport. Optimum conditions. Such activities can have their complications, however. Yves Bouvier, the co-owner of Le Freeport and CEO of Natural Le Coultre, the fine art logistics company servicing most freeports, is currently in jail facing charges of fraud. Freeports providing tax-free access to art conservation, logistics networks and, perhaps unsurprisingly, specialised legal advice have the “competitive edge” in guiding investors without a hitch through their adventures.

In contrast, all I had to guide me was a scribbled map in my sketchbook with some landmarks I had copied by hand from Google Maps the day before. I got off at the Ibis hotel I had marked, the golf course on my left. On the spot of land where I had marked “JP Morgan” there was only an empty space and some bits of concrete. But the airport was where it should have been and on the other side, a group of elite hotels. I followed my nose. Behind the carpark, some straggly plastic chainlink fence and over this, a grassy embankment, wild things growing on it.

From the top of the embankment, there it awaited me: below my feet, a huge construction site nestling the newly completed Freeport. A sandy brown building, two decorative, hexagonal roofs, a few black, narrow windows: a fort, an inverted museum. I noted the fence, razor wire, security cameras on every corner. Five parked cars, one motorbike. A turnstile entry door. A block of a building that betrayed nothing. Its contents? I could only speculate. I sat down on the hill for a bit to think.

What I have always found fascinating about closed spaces is that, so long as they remain closed, anything is possible inside. It's simply a matter of speculation. Take Marcel Duchamp's *With Hidden Noise*. In 1916, he compiled a riddle: a ball of twine, its hollow centre clamped shut on both ends with two specially designed metal plates inscribed with acronyms of ambiguous meaning. Before screwing the plates tight, he asked his collector, Walter Arensburg, to secretly place an object inside the hollow of the ball of twine. Nobody except for Arensburg himself knows what is inside the ball of twine: a diamond? A tooth? A coin? The work retains value due to the secret pact between object and collector. And yet: can the art object withheld from the public still be recognised as art?

In response to the accusation that freeports withhold art from the public, freeport operators sometimes describe their businesses as a private extension of public collections. Due to the temporary suspension regime, in the EU it is possible for museums to loan works in freeport storage from their private collectors and exhibit them outside the freeport zone without taxes applying at any point. Kunsthaus Zurich recently exhibited 100 works from the collection of the Monaco-based Nahmad family, which keeps 90% of their collection in freeports. The incentive to integrate art into a museum exhibition comes in the form of co-benefits and pay-offs. While the “win-win!” pact of the public-private partnership profits off the idea of the public, it is not formed in the public's interest. It is a way to secure the status of the investment as art, which can ultimately be legitimised only by the public eye. Exhibiting a work in a public institution is simply another way to add to its investment value.

The freeport is a giant *With Hidden Noise* decorated not with obscure acronyms, but with postmodern architecture bristling with security precautions. I wondered what to do next. Circling down towards the building, I was soon in front of the fence, the building looming above, facing the razor wire and a line of cameras, an unlabelled turnstile door ahead of me. To the right-hand side of the door, a doorbell. Next to the doorbell, a camera. Next to the camera a blank space where a name should be. What was to be done? Watched by my audience of security cameras, I rang the doorbell.

“Bonjour?”
“Hello?”
“Bonjour, somethingsomethingsomething something?”
“Sorry, desolee, je ne parlez la Francais pas, I don't speak French.”
“Oh.” / pause/
Me: “Sprechen Sie Deutsch? English?”
“Ein bisschen.”

“Hi, I came to see the art here. Ich möchte die Kunst sehen.”
“Haben Sie rendezvous?”
“No, I read there is art here, I came to see it.”
/ pause / “Ein Moment.” The intercom cut off. 2 minutes of silence and then the buzzer rang again of its own accord.
“Er...Bitte Sie rufen Herr Hermann an.”
“Herr Hermann?”
“Ja, bitte rufen Sie Herr Herrmann an.”“Ich habe seine Nummer nicht.”
“Oh.”
“Ich bin hier, um die Kunst zu sehen.”
“Kunst?”
“Kunst, art – you know, art. Here.”
“Kunst, art, empty art.”
“Empty art?”
“Empty.”

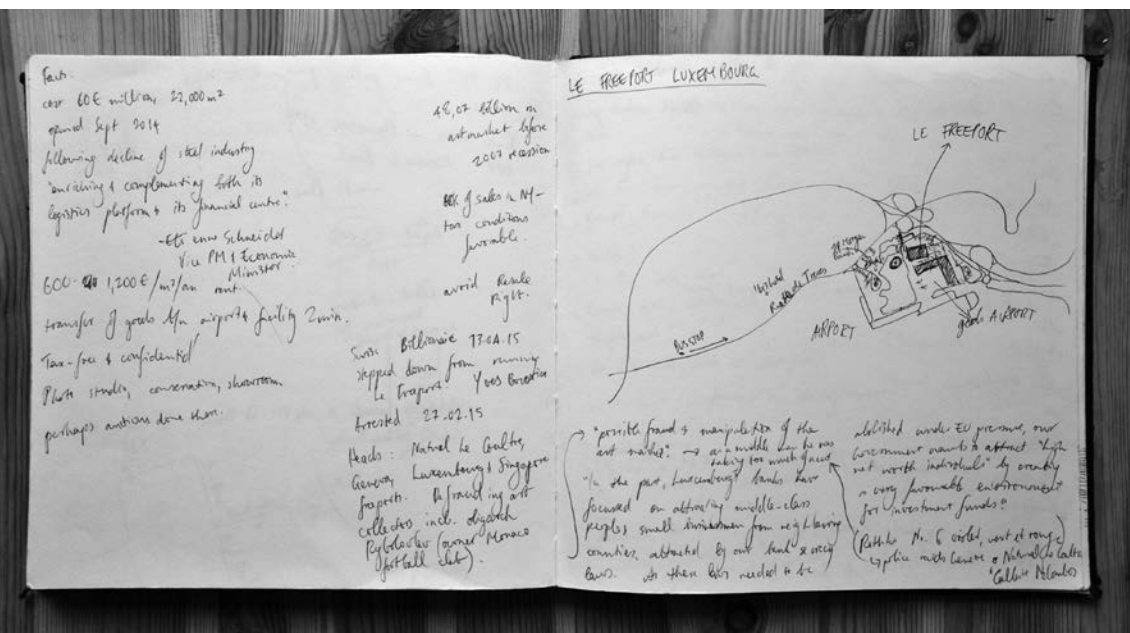
“Eine Moment bitte.” Muffled, animated conversation in the background. I stepped back and waited a bit, tried to stay composed. Then: “Kommen Sie rein!”

The turnstile clicked open. I was on the other side of the razor wire. I took my time, looked around, felt the difference. All the cameras facing inwards at me. Where to next? A grey door, next to it, a swipecard machine blinking from red to green. In I went, the door – smooth and heavy – clicking shut behind me. The airlock: dark, long and narrow, a high ceiling – led me to another door, another camera, another swipecard machine. On the other side, a kind of lobby area. A male security guard appeared, along with a second man wearing a keychain with an I.D. card.

“Hallo, guten Tag.” I smiled at them.
“Guten Tag”, replied the man, looking perplexed.
“Ich habe gehört, dass es Kunst an diesem Ort gibt, und bin gekommen, um die Kunst zu sehen.”
“Kunst?”
I tried again. “Ich bin Sonja Hornung.” I put forward my hand, since he didn't return the introduction.
“Herr Herrmann”. We shook hands. He was really very confused, poor man.
“Haben Sie ein Termin?”
“Nein.”
Pause. He didn't seem to know what to do next.
“Kennen wir uns, eigentlich?”
“Nein, wir kennen uns nicht.”
“Also hier ist kein öffentlicher Ort. Dieser Ort ist nicht für die Öffentlichkeit.” Said with gravity, and absolutely no trace of humour.
“Ja, dass habe ich nun eingesehen.” I tried not to make it sound like a joke and sort of peered over his shoulder. Joking was a mistake. Now he knew what to say.
“Sind Sie eine Kunde?”
“Nein, ich bin keine Kunde.”
“Na gut, wenn Sie keine Kunde oder potentielle Kunde sind, dann kommen Sie auch hier nicht weiter.”
“Ach so. Dann weiß ich Bescheid, sozusagen.”
“Genau”, he smiled coldly. “Dann wissen Sie also Bescheid.”
The security guard still hovered in the background, clearly entertained. It was time to go.
“Also dann hat es mich trotzdem gefreut,” I said, and then, in the absence of anything else to fill the silence: “Vielen Dank.” I nodded to Herr Hermann and let the security guard see

me out. I left the way I came – up the road, over the bulldozed dirt, up the green escarpment and through the elite carpark of the elite hotel. I didn't look back. I found the bus stop, found the hostel, showered – finally – and slept for nine-and-a-half hours straight.

What did my visit to the freeport achieve? Did Claude Herrmann, who is Executive Manager of Natural Le Coultre, think twice about my visit? It's possible. Will it make a difference? Of course not. The monetisation of border systems offers up a circular logic where access is granted only if you can buy ("Sind Sie eine Kunde?") or sell. In the face of this logic, uttering the demand "I am here to see the art" appears to be a rather absurd claim to a public, common space and a public, shared identity that has no space in this system. Yet why should such a claim be absurd? Rather, it is a system that keeps money in and humans out, a system that empties the world of art, that is absurd. If you are passing by a freeport, please pay it a visit.



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Photo: Internet
 Skizze: Sonja Hornung





Restaurant Titanic

Das Restaurant Titanic ist ein türkischer Imbiss im Stadtzentrum von Calais. Nicht weit davon entfernt campierten während unserer Reise die Durchreisenden auf ihrem Weg nach England auf einem Platz, an dem auch die örtliche Hilfsorganisation Salam täglich Essen an die Migrant_innen verteilte.

Unter den Campierenden war der Imbiss sehr beliebt, da der Kebab, obwohl immer noch sehr teuer dort am günstigsten war und gut genährt stehen die Chancen besser, den Sprung nach England zu schaffen. Viele kamen auch nur auf eine Tasse Tee oder Kaffee vorbei um ihr Handy aufladen zu können. Wiederum andere zog es in den Imbiss um die Fußballweltmeisterschaft anzuschauen und um vielleicht kurz einmal das Leben zwischen LKWs, der Polizei und dem „Jungle“ zu vergessen. Groß ist das Restaurant Titanic nicht, aber jeden Tag treffen sich hier Menschen unterschiedlichster Herkunft. Vielleicht ein Kaleidoskop voller Melancholie.

Zeichnungen: Xiaopeng Zhou





Conversation on the *Berlin Fence Memorial*

In June 2015, Benjamin Busch produced a flyer for the “Berlin Fence Memorial”, a project inspired by a quotation in “Die Tageszeitung” from Juan José Imbroda, mayor-president of Melilla: “This fence is not just the fence of Melilla. It is the fence of the whole of Europe. This here is also the fence of Berlin” (translated from German). Ceuta and Melilla are Spanish exclaves on the northern coast of Africa, and both are surrounded by security fences that materialize the EU-Morocco border. The following is a conversation of his project with Alejandro Strus.

What are the points of comparison that led you to choose the site of the Berlin Wall Memorial at Bernauer Strasse for this project? Why the flyer format?

The Berlin Wall is present, even in its absence. The Berlin Wall Memorial, a popular destination for visitors that inhabits the former death strip, presents an incomplete historical narrative. In the context of the Memorial, the Berlin Wall is historicized as a crystalline symbol of dead totalitarianism, finally overcome by liberal democratic struggle. It has become a site for the free touristic consumption of a divided past, now unified under the free market. The *Berlin Fence Memorial* updates the obsolete Berlin Wall to the latest border security hardware of the EU, to which Germany belongs, by conceptually projecting the fence of Melilla into the former death strip in Berlin. By adopting the format of the Memorial's official flyer, my work creates an alternative space for individual contemplation of contemporary border security practices without the need for institutional affiliation. The original flyer's design was sufficient. Only the text and images had to be swapped. The format of the flyer allows for the dissemination of information through a tactile, participatory process in public space.

You've discussed in your work the concept of 'passive safety', where fortifications like barbed wire fences attempt to shift the responsibility for injuries (or death) away from the person who installed them. There's an interesting parallel I think there in how EU policy is shifting towards ending rescues of migrant boats in the Mediterranean: “You knew the risks and you did this to yourself” kind of thinking. Can you elaborate more perhaps on this?

In the eye of Spanish law, individuals put their own lives at risk by attempting to scale the deadly Ceuta and Melilla border fences to illegally enter the EU. If, in this act of transgression, a migrant loses his or her life, that death is legally registered as a suicide. In theory, the EU intends to deter illegal immigration through intimidation by employing so-called passive safety elements such as lethal-grade razor wire, rotating panels, tear gas dispensers and wire traps. In practice, the migrants, many of whom are estranged refugees, are not deterred. They are determined to enter the EU, where they are eligible to apply for asylum, and they do not end their pursuit in Morocco. In search of a better life, the migrants become subject to the condoned violence of a catatonic physical structure. Can objects murder?

Have people carried out studies about the effectiveness of fences in places like Melilla? Presumably it does act as a deterrent in some ways, but of course there are always other options or other channels for people to go through.

Considering the greater flow of human migration to the EU, Ceuta and Melilla are essentially bottlenecks where migrants and refugees from diverse origins converge. Despite the gruesome fence and active police brutality toward migrants and nearby self-organized migrant camps, the flow of migrants has not stopped. Between Ceuta and Melilla migrants are waiting for the opportunity to enter Europe. Migrants continue to suffer injury from and succumb to the EU border fences despite continuous, sophisticated, self-organized crossing attempts. Their self-made tools and strategies for climbing the fence are thought out and effective, but deaths brought on by blood loss are not uncommon. On February 6th 2014, a group of migrants attempted to swim from the coast of Morocco into the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, and fifteen of them drowned after being shot with rubber bullets by Spanish police. Some migrants attempt to swim from the coast of Morocco to into the Spanish enclave of Ceuta—there are drownings and there were also incidents where police shot them with rubber bullets and they drowned.

The Berlin Wall is also an interesting point of comparison, and we've seen groups like Zentrum für Politische Schönheit evoke this parallel as well. Beyond the sort of bigger narrative and historical iconography that we all know – is there a local response to this comparison?

GEDENKSTÄTTE BERLINER ZAUN BERLIN FENCE MEMORIAL



With their project *Erster Europäischer Mauerfall*, the Zentrum für Politische Schönheit produced a spectacle. Their symbolic attempt to tear down the EU border fence in Bulgaria succeeded in gaining media attention and political responses, but it failed to leave a lasting effect, underlining the role that governmental authorities play in such theatrical acts of disobedience. In a way, the *Berlin Fence Memorial* is an indirect continuation of the discussion started by the Zentrum für Politische Schönheit, based upon the critique that it is seemingly hypocritical to commemorate the fall of the Berlin Wall with knowledge of the EU border fence, which perpetuates the violation of human rights. Rather than personally going to the EU border fence, my approach has been to materialize the fence in Berlin – to bring it home. The *Berlin Fence Memorial* continues the discussion in public space by highlighting the scale and materiality of the Melilla fence from a local perspective.

Short of boycotting or refusing to work on projects with questionable ethical grounds, how do you see an opportunity for architects to intervene? Is this intervention effective – or do you have to leave the field of architecture?

At the present moment, the *Berlin Fence Memorial* is merely an artistic concept, an architectural proposal. One way to intervene as an architect would be to realize the project in public space, to materialize it physically in Berlin. Would it be insane to think it possible? After all, the “Berlin Fence” already exists – in Ceuta and Melilla. Finding a way to build the fence in Berlin would be a serious challenge outside the scope of traditional architectural practice, and the pursuit of governmental approval and ethical funding would undoubtedly expose the violence of participation. However, whether or not the project is built does not diminish the alternative space opened by the flyer: With an update to the Memorial, there is now room for a multitude of singular migration histories. The historical term ‘refugee’ receives a contemporary meaning that reflects the diversity of asylum-seekers in Germany and the EU today.

You’ve studied in both the United States and Germany – and traveled quite a bit for work and education: is there a consistent discussion of professional ethics in field of architecture?

To my knowledge, architects are in the business of providing a professional service. To whom that service is provided, for what purpose that service is employed – these factors are consequential. Ethics seem to be secondary to survival in a highly competitive and generally undervalued profession. Consistency is not typically a feature of the architectural discussions I’ve encountered – unless you count dissatisfaction.

We’ve seen criticism in the press in recent years of high-profile architects working in countries where political and labour conditions surrounding their projects are questionable, and while architecture as a field has always had some negotiation with power, the media landscape today is unprecedented alongside stronger feelings of social consciousness. On the other hand we’ve seen things like the Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmith doing human-rights work, and of course many sustainability-minded projects – I’m thinking of projects such as the local group Raumlabor – do you see a big historical shift coming to architecture as a discipline, or perhaps increased fragmentation of the discipline?

While I agree that the media landscape today is unprecedented, I would generally disagree that there are stronger feelings of social consciousness. In a perverse way, we are led to



believe that the social media we engage with daily contribute to a greater sense of social consciousness. While digital communication opens new avenues for research and practice, social media networks like Facebook and Google tend to reduce the scope of our liquid crystal vision to a constricted realm of media transmissions that maintain our attention. Does an attention economy have the capacity to produce social consciousness? Moving on to architecture, it's natural to observe what appears to be a split between theory and practice in the discipline. Probing further, the reality is that theory, or rather a dominant theory of cooperation with power, is integral to most practice. The value of theory is, then, that it's not contaminated by ethical violation (although, this too should be questioned). Of course, the true value of practice is that, even in its contamination, it accomplishes what theory cannot: usable, built architecture. New forms of theory and practice are necessary if architecture as a discipline is to have a future. In my current master's work, to which the *Berlin Fence Memorial* belongs, I'm researching and developing methods of critical architectural production within the field of spatial practice. For the discipline of architecture to survive the unprecedented global crises to come, in all their social, economic and environmental complexity, alternative tools for critical practice must be developed and employed.

R a í c e s



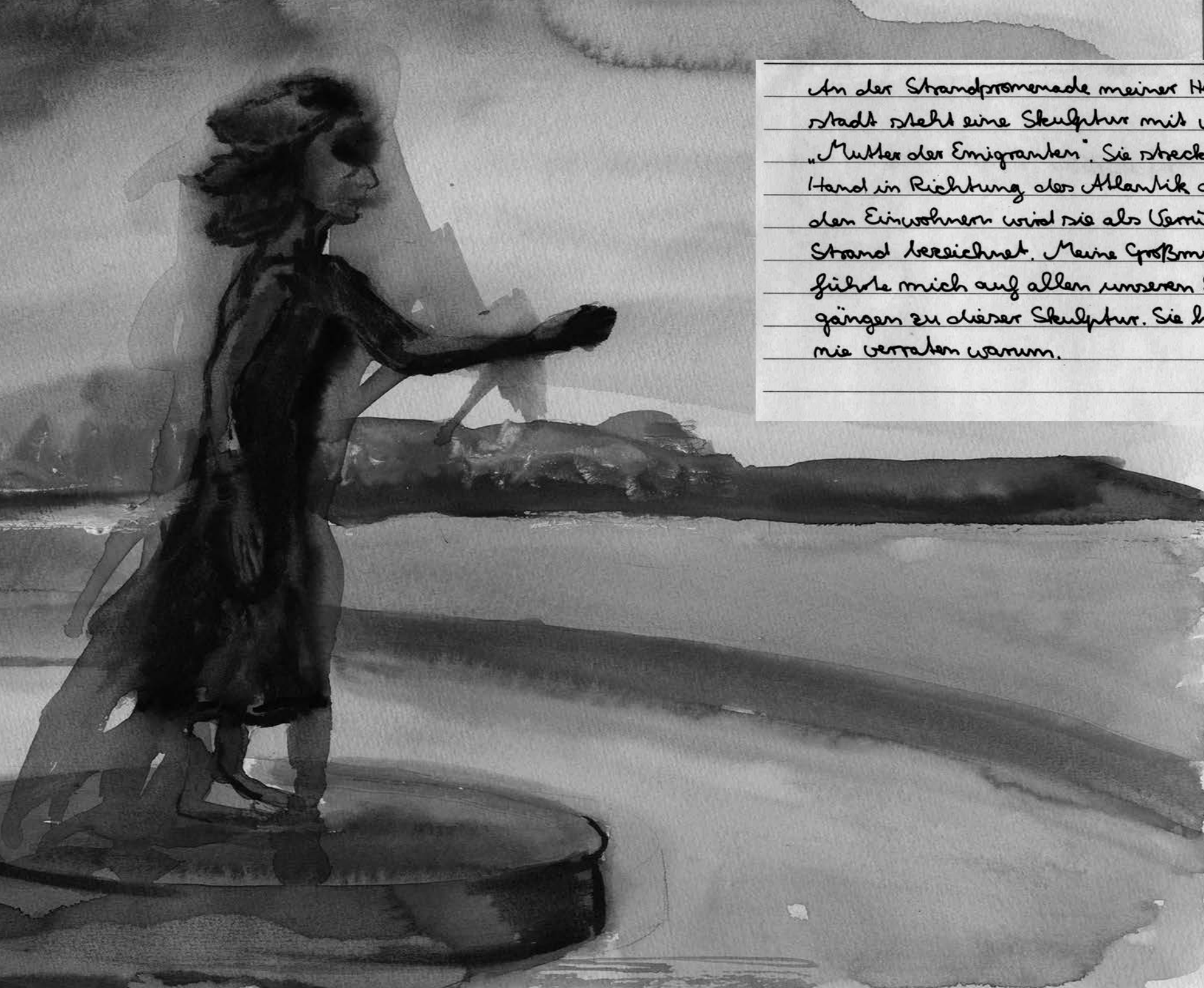


Meine Urgroßeltern haben 13 Kinder
ans Licht der Welt gebracht. Im ärmlichen
Verhältnissen lebend musste die Familie
oft Hunger erleiden. Um Geld zu verdienen
entschied sich mein Urgroßvater nach
Argentinien auszuwandern und nahm
seine drei ältesten Söhne mit sich. Zur
damaligen Zeit versuchten viele Astorianer
ihre Glück in Übersee, und kamen nach
Jahren als erfolgreiche „Indianos“ wieder
zurück in die Heimat. Im Gegensatz dazu
kamen die vier Männer meiner Familie
nie zurück. Nur eine einzige Kiste schickten
sie aus dem fernen Land, gefüllt mit
verschiedenen Produkten aus Argentinien
und Tischlerwerkzeugen. Die Kiste ist
das einzige was mir von diesem Teil der
Familie geblieben ist.



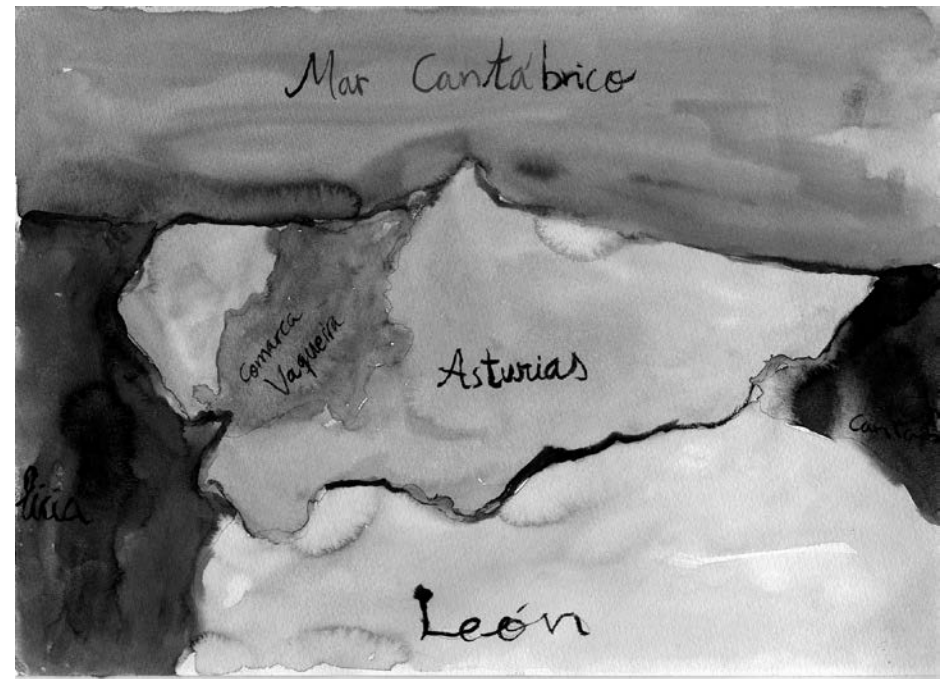
Die drei Schwestern meines Großvaters waren sehr schön. Sie mussten während des Bürgerkriegs aus Spanien fliehen. Eine Schwester ging nach Mexiko und verschwand. Die zweite Schwester versteckte sich in London, heiratete einen Engländer und kam 40 Jahre Exil wieder nach Spanien. Die dritte Schwester hatte einen angeborenen Herzfehler. Als sie versuchte über die Pyrenäen nach Frankreich zu reisen um sich dort operieren zu lassen, wurde sie an der Grenze als Angehörige einer „roten“ Familie identifiziert. Sie durfte die Grenze nicht passieren und starb im Baskenland.





An der Strandpromenade meiner Heimatstadt steht eine Skulptur mit Namen „Mutter der Emigranten“. Sie streckt ihre Hand in Richtung des Atlantik aus. Von den Einwohnern wird sie als Verrückte vom Strand bezeichnet. Meine Großmutter führte mich auf allen unseren Spaziergängen zu dieser Skulptur. Sie hat mir nie verraten warum.

Eine Tradition der nomadischen Vaqueiros die mir immer prägnant erschien ist verbunden mit der Eheschließung. Wenn eine Vaqueira sich verheiratet wird ihr Bett auf einem Karren zum Haus ihres Mannes gefahren. Die Prozession wird von ihrem Vater oder Großvater angeführt, gefolgt von dem Gespann der von zwei Kühen gezogen wird, und die Familie der Frau folgt hintereinander. Ihr Bett und eine Truhe die mit diversen Haushaltsgegenständen gefüllt ist, sind die einzigen Besitztümer mit denen die Frau in den Ehestand einzieht. Sie zieht wie eine Nomadin in ihr neues Leben ein.





Mein Großvater ist im Wald erfroren.
Als Teil der „Maquis“ Widerstands-
bewegung während des Bürgerkriegs ver-
steckt er sich vor den „Nationalen“, Truppen
Franco. Die „Guardia Civil“, eine para-
militärische Polizeieinheit, fanden seinen
gefrorenen Leichnam und entzogen ihn.
Der Verbleib seiner sterblichen Überreste
ist daher nicht geklärt. Meine Familie
konnte ihn nie richtig begraben.



Die Eltern meiner Mutter starben sehr früh.
Mein Großvater war selbstgelehrter Spreng-
meister, schon in jungen Jahren ging er
dieser Arbeit in den Minen von Asturias
nach. Immer wenn wir einen Film mit
John Wayne sahen, sagte meine Mutter:
„Er sieht genauso aus wie mein Großvater.
Der hat auch gern geritten. Das hat die
gleichen Augen wie er.“ Ich war immer etwas
irritiert, immerhin ist es nicht das
schönste Kompliment für ein kleines
Mädchen, die gleichen Augen wie John
Wayne zu haben.

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