

Movements of Migration

The Frassanito Network

at the European Social Forum / London 2004

Editorial

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Here we are: London, October 2004, third European Social Forum. We are here as we were in Genoa, in July 2001, where for the first time the global movement met migrants' struggles, during that beautiful demonstration on the evening of the 19th, before the unprecedented repression of the two following days. We are here as we were in Florence 2002 and in Paris last year, where a European Day of Action against detention centers and for the legalization of migrants was organized. The day which was held on January 31st this year, with demonstrations and actions in more than forty European cities. We are here as we were in Bari Palese, in Southern Italy, where in the summer of 2003 a direct action against a detention center created the conditions for the escape of dozens of migrants. We are here bringing with us the experiences of the struggles of migration all over the world, from the mobilization of the sans papiers in Europe to the Freedom Ride of Migrant Workers in the US last year, from the "Justice for Janitors" campaign to the upsurge of Woomera, in Australia.

In the last years, these struggles have forged new political languages and practices. The days are gone when it was possible to talk of migrants as mere victims of global economic devastation. Sure, this kind of political discourse, that was for example hegemonic in the first two meetings of the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, still survives within a left which is unable to overcome the melancholic plea for a supposed "golden age" of a social State and tamed capitalism. It is possible that many of the people attending the European Social Forum in London, even many of those who are critical towards the official organization of the forum itself, still share this view. But, on the other hand, we have the reality of the constant mobilization of migrants, of their challenge to the borders of

Europe and to other borders in the world, of their refusal to submit their mobility to the supposed "laws" of the labor market. We have the reality of migration as a social movement which is not merely produced by the action of "objective" forces, but which is also driven by a number of subjective needs, desires and behaviors.

To say this, even to speak of an autonomy of migration, doesn't mean to remove from the center of the political debate the mechanisms of domination and exploitation which determine the migrants' life. Rather, it suggests a shift in perspective that allows us to analyze (and to criticize, both theoretically and practically) those mechanisms and to continuously confront them with a set of social practices that contain the possibility for their overcoming. It is with this shift in perspective that we want to frame our discussion of the topics addressed in this newspaper; namely racism and border regime, citizenship and camps.

Our time is a "global" one not only because of the strategies of neo-liberalism, financial capital, and capitalist corporations. It is global also because the mobility of labor cannot be governed within the framework of national borders anymore. The geopolitical architecture of the fordist age has been challenged by transnational migration on a global scale, as the discipline of the fordist factory has been challenged by the refusal of work and the sabotage of the working class in the "core" countries of capitalism. Detention centers and deportations are as much the answers to this challenge, as the precariousness of labor and life is. But in the subjective side of labor mobility, we can even say in its subjective flexibility, lies the main productive force of our age. There is no possible subversive cooperation, no possible radical change without this productive force. This is our standpoint. But we also add that there is no possible "progressive" reform without

taking it into account. There is no way back to the national Welfare state because the mobility of labor had blown its material conditions up long before the neo-liberal counterrevolution.

In these days we will participate in a lot of workshops, assemblies and meetings in the "autonomous spaces" created by the movement in London. We are interested in the development of new networks of activists centered upon the new reality of work, the struggles for housing, the experiences of mediaactivism, and so on. We are especially interested in a discussion on the perspective of a generalization of the experience of Euromayday, which was a very successful event in Milan and Barcelona this year. But we will also be inside the official framework of the European Social Forum. There is a battle to be engaged and to be won there. Europe is our nearest political space, and the migrants themselves remind us that it is not merely a continental space, but rather a global space. Its institutional framework, the new European citizenship, and the Constitutional Treaties which will be signed in Rome on October 29th are built upon what French philosopher Etienne Balibar has called a new apartheid: That is, on a new hierarchy of rights, and of legal and political positions, which finds in the condition of migrants its seal. Can the European Social Forum accept a European citizenship that is built upon the reality of detention centers within and beyond the European borders?

We think that the claim of "freedom of movement", just as the refusal of war, should be one of the founding tenets of any social movement that tries to imagine and to build in the everyday life a different Europe. This is the reason why we propose to organize on April 2nd 2005 a second European day of action for migrants' rights, centered on this claim.

journey the binding of outdated national state agreements and conventions, as well as the rights of legal subjects, have literally and metaphorically been thrown over board.

Right now, the European Union would like to come up with a *final solution* that confronts the challenge posed by the autonomy of migration within a 'humanitarian war'.

Our response is universal: access to public services, freedom of movement and communication, and the right to have rights. And these must be won by any means necessary.

KICK OUT THE JAMS.



Autonomy of Migration

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The Frassanito Network...

Lager World Tour

What do you think of a government that is unable to provide hospitality to a few thousand people but instead deports them handcuffed to a country where they never wanted to go? Nothing.

What do you think of a government that sinks both the right to asylum and the Geneva convention on refugees with its gunboats? Nothing.

What do you think of the partners of this government which remain silent, agree or even join up to these plans? Nothing.

What do you think of a European Union which elects such a practice as the backing chorus to its constitution? Nothing.

Jack Straw and Otto Schily, the British and German Home Secretaries, found a buffer in their Italian counterpart Mr. Pisanu and a fool in Mr Gheddafi, the Libyan president. A really nice story about matchmakers and a postcolonial - colonial arrangement. The Regional Protection Areas, better understood as externalised *lagers* (concentration camps), have in fact now been established in Libya. For over a year these plans circulated the corridors of European bureaucracies. Last year a 12-month study was commissioned at the EU Summit in Thessaloniki. And this year, with due punctuality, the North African lagers were

placed onto the European political agenda by the German Home Secretary.

The short term arrest of some activists, a slander media campaign and the seizure of the ship Cap Anamur sent a clear message to human right organizations that they were cruising in stormy waters. Both migrants and the European public were informed in no uncertain terms that their rights, in such emergency circumstances, had been terminated.

The external lagers and the global migration management regime were accelerated in Macedonia in 1999 during the NATO war against the former Yugoslavia. The camps have circumnavigated the globe, stopping in Nauru in the Pacific (on the behalf of Australia), sidestepping to Guantanamo and now coming ashore in Libya. During this

Saturday, 2 April 2005 - Second Day of Europeanwide Actions: For Freedom of Movement and The Right To Stay

Decided during the last ESF in Paris, the first day of migrant struggles took place in more than 40 cities all over Europe on 31 January 04. In September 04, the Frassanito network called for a preparation meeting about the European Social Forum in London. Groups from Uk, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Slovenia and Finland evaluated this first coordinated day of action as an important step in networking and strengthening migration-related issues. It was agreed to plan and organise a follow-up, the proposed date is 2 April 2005. A number of meetings inside, outside and beyond the ESF can be used to confirm the date, to create a call and to start mobilising.

Taking into consideration the variety of realities in different countries, the more general and positive demand "For Freedom of Movement and The Right To Stay" has been accepted as main slogan for next years synchronised European action-day. Additionally, it was proposed (and welcomed by most) to put the mobilisation into the context of a practical challenge of the ongoing process to a new "european constitution" and its exclusive citizenship...

All groups and networks are invited now to participate and to contribute to a strong mobilisation and to get involved various parts of the global movement.

Borders Are There To Be Undermined...

PARTITION

... Shut up in a lonely mansion, with police night and day
Patrolling the gardens to keep the assassins away,
He got down to work, to the task of settling the fate
Of millions. The maps at his disposal were out of date
And the Census Returns almost certainly incorrect,
But there was no time to check them, no time to inspect
Contested areas. The weather was frightfully hot,
And a bout of dysentery kept him constantly on the trot,
But in seven weeks it was done, the frontiers decided,
A continent for better or worse divided.

The next day he sailed for England, where he could quickly forget
The case, as a good lawyer must. Return he would not,
Afraid, as he told his Club, that he might get shot.

W. H. Auden (on Sir Radcliffe portioning out India in 1947)

The transformation of borders reflects the shift in political strategies towards the management of migration. Nevertheless, it also mirrors the fact that neither physical nor legal barriers can stop people's movement. Migrants are not just the collateral damage of global capitalism; they are active agents of free movement who represent a subverting power in respect to the sovereignty of the nation states as well as the new regimes of hyper-exploitation on a global level. The depiction of national and supranational borders as instruments whose function is simply to stop unwanted migrants is misleading because it fails both to understand migration as a social movement and to consider the struggles against borders. The main function of global border regimes and migration control strategies is not only to keep people outside, but rather to direct their actions and behaviour across space, leading to what can be described as a system of selective inclusion through the illegalization of the migrants. Borders assign people to differentiated social, political and legal spaces which extend inwards and outwards across national and supranational territories. Expulsions and detention camps reserved to foreigners represent a differentiated system of justice aimed at administrating the actions of foreigners outside of the guarantees of civil rights and general legal principles. In the same way, legal mechanisms which limit the free circulation of people define a de facto differentiated regime for migrant workers aimed at expropriating the inner value of peoples' mobility. In contrast to this world's partition, migration itself is a contestation of the distribution of rights and privileges according to the hierarchical allocation of social and political space. While the globalization of border regimes is a symptom of the increasing difficulty with which to contain the violence of the commodification process of labour within the framework of national borders, the everyday challenge to the borders by migrants at the same time shows the weakness of this globalizing process. The demolishing of borders is not a political utopia. It is a struggle that migrants fight every day when they conquer the "European fortress" - or any other regime built upon the institution of borders - and when they fight for their social, political and civil rights.

In November 2003 the European Council established the concept of a "virtual sea border" in order to overcome the limitations when carrying out controls at sea. The general principle of freedom at high sea, rather than portioning it out among states, literally meant that the sea was a common and free space which "belonged" to - and could be used by - everybody. In contrast, every vessel suspected of transporting illegal migrants is now considered a "virtual border" subject to controls conducted through the most advanced military equipment. On the one hand, this example demonstrates how borders are not only constituted by physical barriers but become increasingly "virtual" by spreading across spaces previously considered "free". At the same time, it reveals a function of borders which is often overlooked: the very act of dividing the earth and the sea surface by tracing borders whether they are physical, virtual or legal also allows for the appropriation of its resources. However, the resource which borders

appropriate is not simply the portioned territory. Rather, it is also the subjective claim of people to freely choose the territory in which to settle and the kind of relation they wish to establish with this territory. In other words, borders transform people's claims to movement into a resource which can be appropriated and exchanged. EU migration policies appropriate and exchange people's mobility through agreements which reserve quotas of legal entry for nationals of those states which collaborate in combating illegal migration. The International Organisation for Migration's projects for "controlling illegal migration" appropriate and exchange people's mobility through programmes which filter and select the recruitment of migrant workers in their countries of origin according to the needs of the sponsoring states' labour market. Legal requirements according to which migrants' right of residence is under the condition of possessing a valid work contract, delegate to employers a high degree of power over the lives of migrant workers. These mechanisms effectively transform employers into "privatised" agents of border controls. These are only a few examples of the way in which border regimes exploit and profit from the partition which borders themselves create between people.

The significance of the autonomous flows of migration is now also acknowledged in the most recent strategies of border management. The new agreements with Libya and other southern Mediterranean countries - primarily the result of pressure from the Italian and German governments - are also aimed at establishing an international network of "European Union mobility service points". These service points will constitute a sort of stop over for migrants and asylum seekers who intend to come to Europe. Asylum seeker's applications and the following duty of protection will be managed in shelter centres located outside Europe. The same centres will host voluntary migrants whose plans

Nobordercamp 2005 in Greece ...

As a European citizen you will probably have the idea of holidays, beaches, sun and no problem of crossing the greek borders. But this is not a reality for everyone? If you heard any state advertisement during the Olympic games about traditional greek hospitality, do not believe a word. Hundreds of people die in the greek borders trying to find better living conditions. As a frontline of the European Union, thousands refugees try to enter every year the greek borders.

The ones that survive sinking in the Aegean or getting killed by the mines or the border guards in Evros (the Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria) are usually kept in detention camps until they are deported - very often illegally. But even if they achieve to get into the country, they have very little chance to have a better life: for 2002 more than 6.000 people asked for asylum but only 36 were accepted as refugees. In 2004 only 3 applications were accepted, a percentage of 0.07%. Thousands of people live without papers or in total insecurity and with the every day fear of deportation and racist treatment or attacks.

For these reasons we invite all of you to participate to a NO BORDER camp that is going to be held in greece the summer of 2005.

For contact: noborderproject@yahoogroups.com

which had already been established within the Schengen framework. The 'Europeanization' of the domestic legislation of new member states and candidate countries (such as Romania and Bulgaria) has implied the introduction of legal institutions such as the administrative detention of aliens. It has widened the preconditions for the expulsion of foreigners and has strengthened its implementation system through the construction of guarded and shelter centres for migrants and asylum seekers. European external borders preserve and even reinforce defensive tools of the old 'iron curtain' that, through the PHARE programmes (Pologne-Hongrie: Assistance à la reconstruction économique), will be relocated along the eastern frontier. For example, fortified border watchtowers are planned to be built every 15 to 20 kilometres, each equipped with the most advanced and expensive electronic and optical tools. Differing from conventional geopolitical borders, the new European external frontiers are not fortified against the threat of military invasions. Instead, the new border regime represents a socio-technological attack on the informal cross-border economy and on transit migration. As a consequence, all these measures have led to a massive 'illegalization' of movements. For example, new visa requirements between Poland, Ukraine, Russia and Belarus illegalized movements of population which were formerly considered lawful. After the collapse of the 'iron curtain' a new curtain of entry visas and administrative procedures has been erected with the purpose not only of limiting admission to European member states but also to candidate countries and neighbouring states, frustrating the promise of a freedom of movement that had only recently been acquired. Furthermore, the illegalization of movements also corresponds to the illegalization of migrant work. In fact, the introduction of the EU standard of migration policies in Central and Eastern European Countries precludes the free access of migrant workers to the official labour market unless they enter the country already possessing a visa for working purpose and a job contract. Although the first wave of enlargement was completed on May 1st 2004, citizens of the new eight post-communist member states do not immediately benefit from the Schengen lifting of national borders. During a transitional period that will last from two to seven years workers will not be able to freely circulate. During this time migration movements for employment purposes will be regulated according to communitarian and national policies, even though different conditions may be agreed on the basis of bilateral relations between single member states and candidate countries. UK, Ireland and Sweden are the only countries which did not implement the ban for the free circulation of workers coming from new member states. Another border has thus been erected within Europe, confirming that frontiers do not lie at its periphery. Rather, the partition and hierarchization of the social and political space is an inner method of government of the new institutionalized European citizenship.

In order to understand to what extent borders exert their effects, we need to follow them beyond the territory of the EU and candidate countries. We need to follow the trajectories of readmission agreements and the "flows of expulsion" which they produce; as well as the cartography of differential systems of justice which detention camps for migrants draw inside and outside the EU. Borders are increasingly virtual and their repressive character is often hardly recognizable. This repressive character can occur anywhere, for one reason or another, and with a series of different consequences. Borders fold and shift inwards or outwards, they advance into "safe" third states and expand into the hinterland through diffuse mechanism of control such as SIS (Schengen Information System for the exchange of personal data) and Eurodac (EU system for the exchange of biometrical data). Controls have long since stopped being limited to nation states but cover the inner cities' traffic junctions and supra-regional traffic routes to the same extent as they do with respect to non-public spheres - the most prominent of these being the workplace.

Freedom of movement is not only a claim against the visible and militarized frontiers of Europe. When migrants force and conquer European borders through their everyday struggles they also exercise an alternative constituent power which contrasts to the material constitution of Europe built upon the hierarchization of social and political spaces. Autonomy of migration is a subversive movement against a racialised vision of the world according to which everyone should stay in his or her "own" place.



www.noborder.org

is the website-presentation of noborder-network, a grassroots- and activistsnetwork, which was founded 1999 with a first actionday against the Tampere EU-summit. Noborder-projects and anti-deportation-campaigns are the main issues on this platform for mutual exchange and inspiration, and the following quotation from the call to the nobordercamp in Strasbourg 2002 can be seen as central hallmark:

"Freedom of movement and settlement are basic human needs. Migration is a fact, its autonomy cannot be regulated, as states and transnational organisations would want. Migration is a consequence of economic exploitation, political repression and war but also of the legitimate interest of people to find better or different living-conditions. Free movement for everyone must become a reality which we have to fight for by any means necessary."

to migrate will be re-directed by EU authorities according to the needs of hosting countries and global migration management. Commentators and supporters of this plan also recommend that assistance should be repaid through the work of migrants and asylum seekers or should be assured in exchange of "low rate" loans. Behind the declared intention of reducing illegal migration, border regimes refine their strategies in view of administrating the autonomous migration drives in "constructive" and profitable ways for the hosting countries.

The growing tendency of externalizing migration management - which is at present being implemented on the southern coast of the Mediterranean sea - have already been employed along the eastern borders of Europe. Long before the enlargement of the European Union, applicant states were required to fully implement the EU standard of migration and asylum policies despite the fact they took no part whatsoever in the negotiations and decision process. In order to benefit from visa exemption for their citizens, candidate countries had to implement measures to prevent the transit of illegal migrants through their territory, guarantee the readmission of migrants returned from member states and progressively implement a tighter system of visa regulation, the basis of

A l'interieur de l'exterieur, et inversement

Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie A l'Age classique*

Detention and deportation camps for foreigners have been in function in Europe for several decades. Today, with the externalisation projects and the degradation of asylum and migration policies, they become a major tool for these policies, and a place for migrants struggles and resistance.

In February 2003, Tony Blair sends to his European partners a project for delocalized Transit Processing Centers, camps outside EU borders to confine asylum seekers during the processing of their claims by UNHCR, while IOM takes care of the management. Hungary, Morocco, Ukraine and Albania are mentioned. At Veria informal JHA Council (march 2003), the English project is favorably welcomed by several countries, and above all by UNHCR Lubbers. But Thessaloniki European Council (june 2003) temporarily postpones it without rejecting it: UK is invited to proceed to "small-scale experimentations" with other countries, and a few months later negotiates with Tanzania, of course in exchange of an increase of financial help, the opening of camps for Somalians denied asylum in UK (Tanzania declined). Denmark has considered sending its asylum seekers in East Africa.

What is at stake here is to export beyond European borders the responsibility European member states have towards their international commitments - here concerning refugees protection - and towards the consequences of their immigration policies. Management of the camps, under IOM, will be more and more subcontracted to multinational security companies such as Group4 Falk, which managed Woomera before it was closed, and Yarlswood in UK (employees of these companies are also active in Irak).

These projects have taken a new upward turn during the summer of 2004. Even if they are not immediately implemented, or if their design remains obscure, they represent a capital turning point, a qualitative leap in European lingo and projects. All this in a quite widespread indifference (except for Italian activists and very few associations).

Two tragedies served as pretext, while the European Commission was renewed and Libya became everyone's darling (especially high-tech firms).

On July 11th, Cap Anamur, a ship belonging to a German NGO, is authorized for "humanitarian" reasons to dock in Sicily, 20 days after having rescued, in the international waters between Libya and Sicily, the 37 passengers of a sinking ship; the Italian authorities had been forbidding the docking since July 1st, scorning the non turning back principle. Italy, Malta (where the ship had stopped) and Germany handed the responsibility to one another, while scorning Geneva Convention, Nice Carta and Italian Constitution. These three EU member states, with the conniving silence of the European institutions, insisted on the fact that "humanitarian urgency" was impossible to meet for fear of creating a "dangerous precedent which would lead to numerous abuses". They also misinterpreted for their benefice Dublin II, which says that in order to determine the state responsible for examining the asylum request, the request must first be presented in a EU member state.

The refugees are sent from one CPT to another, then eventually deported to Ghana (although ECHR had forbidden their deportation); three members of the NGO are put into jail (then released) for "helping illegal immigration". Roberto Castelli, Italian minister of Justice and member of the Lega del Nord talks of terrorism. Otto Schily, German minister of the Interior, reactivates the English project by asking that EU opens camps for asylum seekers in North Africa.

A few weeks later, on August 2nd, the German cargo ship *Zuiderdiep* saves the 72 surviving passengers of a small boat which had left Libya a week earlier (with food and supplies for 2 days); they had had to throw to sea the corpses of 28 others. After the docking in Sicily the migrants are imprisoned in CPTs then deported. While Italian extreme right (by the voice of two Lega ministers, Castelli and Calderoli) asks for the strengthening of military interventions at sea, and that illegal entrance becomes a criminal offense, a new "consensus" appears. Beppe Pisanu, Italian minister of the Interior (UDC), asks Europe to help Italy fight migratory invasion, of course for the sake of the migrants themselves, and with the goal of fulfilling



Europe's "historical duty towards the third world".

Romano Prodi, still officially UE Commission president until Nov. 1st, supports Pisanu: Europe is ready, but there is no agreement between the member states (thus no means), the competent instances must be put in motion (JAI and European Councils).

The Libyan minister of Interior "reveals" that his country is at risk to disappear with the arrival of millions of illegal migrants, most of them terrorists, and appeals to Europe (Libya had just eliminated the last obstacle to the shifting of the embargo by accepting to pay the victims of a bombing in Berlin).

On August 12th, the Italian Director of immigration visits his Libyan homologue; an agreement is signed (mixed sea patrols, now enforced, training, high technologies). Prodi pays a phone call to Gheddafi to congratulate him.

On the same day, Pisanu and Schily advocate the opening of camps in Libya and North Africa for asylum seekers, immediately supported by Rocco Buttiglione (former Berlusconi minister of European Affairs, UDC), newly appointed vice-president of the Commission and Commissioner for "Justice, Liberty and Safety", who qualifies illegal immigration "a time bomb". He also indicates that European firms will be encouraged to visit these "portals" (the official denomination for the camps in Libya and North Africa).

Meanwhile the Italians reactivate a 2003 proposal: the building in Malta of a "super jail" for all the migrants illegally staying in Europe for whom it can be proved they had transited via Malta.

An "unofficial" UNHCR position seems to indicate that it will be more or less involved in the management of the externalized camps.

At the informal JHA meeting (Sept 30th-Oct.1st), France, Sweden and Belgium voiced their opposition to the project, while it was backed by Italy, UK, The Netherlands and Germany. Antonio Vitorino announced that the European executive, backed by the Dutch presidency, will finance five projects for refugees pilot agencies in North Africa, in order to modernize the facilities in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania (what the European lingo calls "capacity building").

In each of these steps, no precise information is given, and official press releases remain vague (a prefiguration of the Constitution "operational cooperation", where JAI matters will be processed by experts). It would be no surprise that externalisation, with or without explicit camps (or rather behind euphemisms such as "active cooperation with countries of origin" or the implementation of "protection systems in countries of origin" and "procedures for crossing protected borders") be at the agenda of the november European Council which must define (with an emphasis on migrations and asylum) the main axes of EU policy for 2005-2010, a period already called "Tampere II", in reference to the 1999 Tampere meeting which launched a five years programme achieved in 2004.

"The map is not the territory", Borges wrote: as Europe borders cast their shadow beyond EU

limits, "Europe" camps are far more than camps "in Europe".

Far from being all circled by walls with barbed-wire, camps are often delimited by invisible technological networks. A camp is also a process (control, filtering), not only a physical space.

Whatever their names, we call "camps" these "present time Lagers" which evoke German camps for "asocial" in the 30's or the "camps on the beach" that France opened for the Spanish Republican army. Camps are not as exceptional as has been said: the domination logic which functions there is also to be found in society at large, as an administrative mechanism to control migrants mobility and to assess a national sovereignty shattered by the making of Europe.

Camps have common characteristics, in spite of their differences (size, duration of stay, status, functioning): their inmates are exclusively extracommunitarian foreigners, whose only crime is to have infringed (or tried to infringe) the rules States determine for the crossing of their borders; they are considered not as subjects but as categories, or even numbers; the violation of fundamental rights is frequent, as well as physical and moral violences.

They have common functions: as well as a place for confinement, they act as a deterrent towards migrants, and serve as a filter for illegal work (the only issue for those who escape or are released).

They can be official or informal, built for asylum seekers, sans-papiers, foreigners awaiting deportation or a decision which will allow them (or not) to cross a border. The internal regime, the average duration (fixed by a law or arbitrary, reminding of the "indefinite detention" in Guantanamo), the status of the foreigners inside vary. There are border-camps, waiting zones for asylum seekers near airports, harbours and international railway stations, such as French "zones d'attente", some Italian Centri di Permanenza Temporanea e d'Accoglienza (CPT) or the Spanish Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros (CIE - Internement Centers for Foreigners). In the Belgian "centres fermes" (closed centers) and the French "centres et locaux de retention", foreigners await deportation. There are sieve-camps where arrive migrants trying to reach Europe from East or South: 20-some in the Greek islands, 5 or 6 in Malta, others in Canary Islands, Sicily, Hungary, Slovenia. In Ceuta and Melilla, Spanish towns enclosed in Moroccan territory, steel walls more than 3m high have been erected, with barbed-wire, captors, cameras, searchlights, along a no-man's land 5m wide.

Camps localisations vary: in the heart of the towns or in their peripheries (via Corelli in Milano, Zapi3 in Roissy); on the national territory but more remote than if they were on another planet (Woomera, now closed, in the Australian desert, 400km from the nearest town; Lampedusa, on an island surrounded by a dangerous sea).

In Italy, CPT were created by a "left" government (Turco-Napolitano law, 1998), and their functioning settled by Berlusconi government

(Bossi-Fini law, 2001).

In France, the legal concept of administrative retention goes back to 1810 ; the centres de retention (detention centers for foreigners waiting to be deported) were created in 1981 by the socialist loi Questiaux. Some of them already existed in the 30's or the 50's, as a proof of the permanence of the administration.

In French, Italian and English camps, there are riots and escapes, there are scarce and hectic communications between the inmates and the activists outside. "Ne qui, ne altrove" ("neither here nor elsewhere"): the motto of the Torino demonstration against CPT (Nov 30th, 2002) is indissociable from freedom of movement, "here and everywhere".

Migreurop

<http://www.migreurop.org/>

is an initiative of European activists (individuals, researchers or from associations) who want to provide information for discussion and action against foreigners camps, asylum policies and externalization projects. A first output is a map of foreigners camps in Europe, regularly updated and stemming from the collaboration of several European groups (for the time being in French, English and Italian)

Not simply a job. Does Migrant Labour make political sense?

Contemporary migration is characterised by a relatively autonomous search by migrants for places where they are able to build, either temporarily or permanently, a better existence. We know that migrants are put everywhere at work. They often have to carry out very precise tasks in the worst conditions, but it is equally true that they are willing, also after migrating, to work to a degree of mobility that allows, in some cases, to compensate for the rigidity of labour supply, thanks to their capacity to go in search of work.

The rhetoric which describes migrants simply as a necessity for the most advanced economic systems ends up corroborating the demands of the labour market, and thus completely taking for granted the subjective decision to adapt to the needs of capital. When this point of view is adopted, we are only a short step away from norms such as those proposed today in Europe by EU guidelines which all start from the assumption that the labour market offers only one 'actor' with the realistic ability to assert its own demands: capital. The underlying fact is that the labour market is not a market and it can only exist thanks to a political authorization in the form of norms which institutionalise it by denying legitimacy to any claim other than the basic contract in force where one's labour is exchanged for pay. On the other hand, implicit in this process, is the awareness that the level of pay can neither be really negotiated, because, as an expression of a political relationship of power and therefore not determined by mere individual negotiation, this tends to be imposed by whoever supplies labour.

For migrants, this institutionally authorised 'labour' market therefore means the continual reproduction of the conditions surrounding their expulsion, and so the passing through administrative detention centres it is ultimately tied to the position that the labour 'market' allows them to occupy. Inside Europe, detention centres cease being places of 'legal exceptions' to become social institutions, which are delegated a significant role in the regulation of the presence of migrants. This is even more evident if one thinks that these centres are increasingly packed during regional or sectorial economic crises, and become the destination for migrants who dare raise questions over their jobs.

When not dominated by racism and security issues, the debate on the movement of migrants becomes a debate over the migrant

question, the response to which is above all integration: migrants ought to be recognized as citizens, albeit a particular kind, who should enjoy the rights assigned to every citizen as well as others which would guarantee the continuity of their history and their "culture". We do not want to deny here that integration makes the life of migrants more tolerable, supporting and valorizing the subsistence networks provided by the various communities as well as acknowledging them ways of accessing rights. But any communitarian integration is the administrative assignment of individuals to assumed communities, with the conviction that who is not European necessarily belongs to a community, to a culture, to an ethnicity. This forced identity has many material effects in the possibility of accessing particular services. Moreover, the integration of separate communities confirms the presence of women and men as foreign bodies, collected in communities, which are ultimately placed in competition with each other, and it legitimises the mechanisms of 'precarious-ization' 'illegalisation' that today characterises the social governing of immigration. The contradiction is striking: not only should rights reintegrate what is materially denied in labour, i.e. Other rights, but the very instrument chosen to obtain this compensation - i.e. rights - are attacked and increasingly eroded by the capitalist offensive and the reordering of internal relationships within the workplace.

As a result, the acknowledgement that labour is not (and can no longer be) the terrain that establishes the criteria of legitimacy for the claiming and the assertion of the threshold of citizenship is at the same time compounded by an indifference to the limits posed by the labour situation itself. Thus, the dissolution of the specific levels of social citizenship that work had previously guaranteed, also affects those generally included in civil and political citizenship.

We therefore need to analyse and start from the conditions and strategies of migrant's mobility and labour and to avoid conceiving them either as abstractions that are to be endowed with rights or as weak subjects incapable of autonomously taking action. We do not believe that migrants, as in the case of precarious workers in general, are a priori subjects connoted by a particular political persuasion and by nature destined to subvert the order of labour. Migrants are a specific presence in the constellation of contemporary labour. And it is from this last point that we must begin if we want to capture the



contradictions and possibilities.

Migrant labour means acknowledging that however shackled to labour, migrants anticipate a number of general conditions that regard contemporary labour as a whole. Migrants are not nomadic subjects which satisfy the image of someone who is more or less permanently present in western societies. They cross borders not to assert some abstract right of movement: in doing so they pay the price for the devaluation of their labour capacity, but at the same time they connect labour conditions and forms of existence which exist in spite of borders and barriers.

Migrant labour is therefore directly implicated in contemporary social production. It can represent the possibility of overturning the usual way of thinking about and conducting political work with migrants, at the same time as allowing us to peruse the general forms which social production is assuming. We believe that considering migrants a "a weak" subject, only on the basis of the condition of daily social and work privation, risks neglecting the claim for freedom which is central to the decision to migrate and which also persists, in spite of all the adverse conditions, on arrival. Moreover, viewing migrants merely as subjects deprived of rights and citizenship means to still think that there is a condition of full enjoyment of those rights that they must obtain. This route of integration carries the indelible mark of the national construction of systems of rights, and it also involves the demand to be integrated into the national framework of the recognition of labour. Secondly, it takes for certain that this recognition exists and that it provides a space where labour can politically count. It is obviously a different matter when rights and citizenship act as the arena of political communication between individuals who, in a common search for freedom, place into question, first of all, their differences without ever letting themselves be homologated and enclosed within legal and national boundaries.

Talking about migrant labour means first of all commencing from the concrete conditions of the distribution of the migrant labour force, from factories of varying sizes to families who employ domestic workers and home helpers, to the "green factories" of Italy and Spain, to forms of self-employment. It is clear that different conditions of pay and control correspond to these various forms of work. What unites them is the fact that the migrant worker is forced to endure a condition of social and job insecurity that is neither occasional nor temporary. We believe that migrant labour today is a condition that anticipates and shares the general conditions under which contemporary labour as a whole is distributed. In this sense it can be said that all of contemporary labour is becoming migrant. It is certainly true that the jobs of migrants are generally carried out under conditions of precariousness, flexibility and under the continual threat of blackmail and that this is on the way to becoming, and for most parts already is, the hallmarks of all contemporary labour. This very condition has shown that by

now the limit is not only weak if one considers legal guarantees, but ultimately it does not exist if one considers the elements of social and employment precariousness which are intrinsic to both permanent contracts in both the private and public sector. There are certainly specificities which should not be forgotten. The jobs of migrants run the risk of being branded as "black skinned work" and, even when skin colour makes no difference, as a job through which they may be discriminated, imprisoned and expelled only on the grounds of being foreign.

The very fact that migrant labour, by anticipating the general condition of contemporary labour, demonstrates the specific tendencies of crisis of this regulation of social production.

A clearly visible tendency is the tension that migrant labour imposes on trade union regulations of conflicts. We are witnessing a strong demand for unionization on the part of migrants. However, migrants in the world of employment are considered "workers like all the others" whose particular problems should be resolved at a different level. Although a large part of European laws on migrants establish the forms of control and command over the labour market, the limits that these laws impose on the movement of migrants are never treated as "limits" on their labour activity, but as seriously damaging their general rights. The sense of solitude of migrants reflects and highlights the tension between the increasing individuality of contemporary labour and the difficulty of finding general avenues of political communication between struggles. What migrant labour underlines, like workers on short-term contracts or the case of female labour, is the impossibility of organising workers' struggles on the premise of a unitary subject which is no other than a citizen at work. The political sense they are making cannot be reduced to a job or to a citizenship. They are looking for something more.



This Tuesday

Logs on migration, labor, transnational organizing

THIS TUESDAY - logs on migration, labor, transnational organizing - gathers best-practice information about organizations, projects and campaigns mobilizing and researching contingent and migrant labor.

Migration represents more than the mere economic growth potential and ensuing collateral damage of global capitalism. Migration is also a social movement of appropriation, and the political power of exodus and refusal subverts the sovereignty of both the nation state as well as the globalized regimes of hyper-exploitation. Migrant movements are a "globalization from below" which, viewed as a whole, constitute a globalized grassroots resistance against exploitative economies and their modes of exclusion, division and selection.

Over the last 20 years, the organization of migrant labor power has burst forth in a myriad of creative and cutting edge expressions: within traditional labor unions as well as in new independent grass-root unions, in the many autonomous workers centers as well as in the self organized initiatives of migrant, precarious workers or in on-going research projects.

The integration of pro-union, pro-migrant, community and anti-racist approaches represent new challenges and opportunities to building worker power!

Taking into consideration the different conditions in the various countries and continents on one hand, and appreciating the variety of experiences and approaches of initiatives on the other hand, this tuesday aims to contribute to create a platform for exchange and communication around the field of precarious work and migration on a global level. Sharing experiences and inspiring the multiplicity of struggle, no matter if local, regional or nation-wide, a transnational organizing process will build our power.

<http://thistuesday.org>

The Claim for Rights & The Right for Legalisation

Strawberry Picking in Andalusia Transnational Initiative

One of the most important centres of strawberry-production is in Spain, in the Andalusian province of Huelva and one of the crucial advantages of this sector is the low cost of labour. Around 55.000 workers are employed every year in this one region and increasingly migrant workers. Confronted by the high level of organisation of the immigrants in 2001, the Spanish authorities have since sought to encourage labour migration from other countries and in particular central and eastern Europe. Maroccans and Subsaharians are more and more replaced by polish and romanian workers (mainly women), and a transnational campaign seems to be necessary to break the ethnical splits and the attempt of the big companies and the peasants to play one group against each other. Moreover the proposal for the campaign, which should also be discussed in the frame of coming European Social Forum in London, includes the idea to make actions against the endprofiteurs of this chain of exploitation: the big supermarkets all over Europe.

Contact: frassainfo@kein.org

Euro MayDay 05

MayDay, MayDay, MayDay

Brainworkers, Chainworkers, Immigrants, Low-wage workers Unemployed people, working-poor Flexworkers of Europe let's unite! There's a World of Rights to Fight for: Steady Income & Paid Vacation, Access to Housing, Loving, Hacking!

Even this year, like the previous years, almost 100.000 precarious workers have joined the Euro MayDay 04 across the streets of Milan and 15.000 in Barcelona, a bloc of 800 Sans Papiers in front! Since a couple of years, the Milanese MayDay has represented the most important parade to denounce the worse and worse labour conditions after 15 year of deregulation in Italy and in whole Europe. A new way to protest with direct actions, creative parade, to denounce the new forms of exploitation and social control, against the agencies of permatemp works,

- able to put together the different subjectivities;
- able to highlight an identity of precariousness, which is normally hidden
- able to build counter-imaginaries against the individualistic and conformist ideas of dominant society
- able to promote autonomous virtual and physical space for a new trade-unionist activity
- able to networking hack-activism and horizontal ways of communications.

Let's spread out: 1st of May 2005 - Euro MayDay all over Europe!

Model Spain let the foreigners in! was the headline of Germany's leftist daily newspaper The Taz some weeks ago. The Taz was praising the latest plan by the new Social Democrats Spanish Government for a new round of regularisation. One Million "sin papeles" should get the chance to regularize their status. But the Taz wrote nothing about the ridiculous conditions governing this initiative. It omitted that the migrants sin papeles will have to show a one year employment contract in order to get a residence permit. Also the latest Italian regularisation law from November 2002 links residence permit and work. It demands migrants to provide evidence of social insurance for the last three months at least. If, as in most cases, the work was done irregularly then the employer could retroactively pay the social insurance in order to legalize the work contract. However, as employers are rarely charity organizations they later demand repayment from the employee. This in turn reinforces the dependence on the employer and hence results in even more precarious living conditions for migrants. As soon as the employer cancels the contract, the employee also loses her/his residence permit.

Against this background the Spanish movement "papeles para todos y todas" rejects the governmental plan of regularisation because of the institutional linking of a work contract and residence permit. They occupied the cathedral of Barcelona with 200 people this summer demanding "papers and the same rights and obligations like everybody". (www.barcelona.indymedia.org/newswire/display/120206/index.php).

Also in Italy numerous protests took place the last months criticizing the absurd conditions. First and foremost, the demands were advanced for separating the residency status from the labour contract demanding papers independent from the employee-employer relationship and independent from a work contract. The continuing actions - such as this year occupation of the Square Severine in Paris by 600 sans papiers of the sans papiers movement in France which 5 years ago have forced the last government to enact a regularisation program demonstrate that the governmental regularisation laws are far too limited. As Andre Gorz said: "The right to have rights has to be disconnected from "labour". We have to recognise that neither the right of income nor citizenship rights nor the development and identity formation can any longer be based on the exercise of a paid job. The task is to change society in this regard.

However, The Taz is right in one thing. In contrast to Southern European immigration and transmigration countries which periodically use regularisations as central instrument of their migration policy, Germany refuses any regularisation up to now. Even under the contemporary red-green coalition government only few speak about the need of regularization. Also the leftist movements in Germany rejected the claim for regularization in the last twenty years of anti-racist struggles with the argumentation that the demands for regularization is too state centred and too legalistic.

The Autonomy of migration

In contrast to the rhetoric of fortress Europe thousands of people daily transgress and infiltrate the external borders of the EU-Schengen Countries in search of happiness, work, and security. Quite often at the cost of illegalization and bodily and psychological damage. They practice what can be called "autonomy of migration", a social movement which can not be controlled by various state's policies of sealing-off of borders and which cannot be reduced to economical cost-benefit-calculations. These so called "irregular" migrations - a genuine feature of the new European migration regime - are nowadays construed as one of the central targets of the migration policies of the EU and its member states. The official documents which are released at every EU summit demand to take an increasingly tough stance in the "fight against irregular migration".

The most recent Study on the connection between legal and illegal migration (4.6.2004; KOM(2004)412) by the EU Commission even

rejects the policy of regularization because in their view it does not lead to a reduction of the number of irregular migrants. Rather governmental regularization programs are seen as additional "pull-factors": The study firmly underscores the assumption that regularizations can not be interpreted as a possibility to control global migratory movements. Hence, the study recommends a community based approach so as to "avoid large scale regularization programs of the member states." As this example show, it is clear that on the issues of regularization, the common EU migration policy will once again follow the most restrictive model.

In spite of all these state attempts to restrict migratory movements migration takes and will take place every day. The only question is: under which conditions?! And here the claim for rights - the right to have rights - becomes relevant and gains not only political strength but also the potential for a general change of the basic mechanisms of capitalist societies organized in nation states. By transcending national borders migration challenges conventional notions of citizenship as well as national legal frameworks and opens up a new space for a practice of rights which reach far beyond the historically known constitutional settings.

The claim for rights translates the notion of autonomy of migration into a concrete political agenda. It reformulates the abstract demand for open borders by connecting it to the everyday life of migratory struggles of survival in Schengenland: the right to housing, education, health services, work etc.

Thereby the claim for rights does not concern only the sans papiers. The lack of rights marks the basic relationship of the European nation states to the social movement of migration in general. Gradually all migrants are affected by this lack of rights. In Germany, for example, also migrants who managed to get an unrestricted residence permit after many years of living in the country are endangered to suddenly lose it in case they apply for welfare aid or when they are convicted of a crime.

Regularisation is not enough! Reaching for the unknown

Many leftists and anti-racists activists consider of little relevance a fight for rights because of the limits of the existing regularization policies. In contrast to this, at a recent European wide networking meeting in preparation of the ESF in London delegates from the movement of the sans papiers (France), of the sin papeles (Spain), of the comitato immigranti (Italy), and the association for the rights of legalisation and kanak attack (Germany) took a different stance of regularization policies on the basis of their experiences. Legalisation or regularization are not enough. However, without them the situation would be worse. The existing regularization policies open up more chances and spaces for our migratory daily lives and struggles. Precisely the limits of the regularization policies mark an endless space of struggles which edges can be constantly questioned and widened by regular and irregular means. Above all, these struggles open up the political and social realm to construct and negotiate our political subjectivity. The regularizations are highly differentiated in regard to the rights they offer, their conditions and prerequisites. For example: Do they give only temporary or durable work and/or residence permits? Do they provide far-reaching social and political citizenship rights and the recognition of migrants as legal subjects?

The concurring believe was that these governmental procedures of regularization, however diverse they might be, have to be distinguished from the struggle for the right to have rights in its broadest sense. But there was quite a big confusion at the European networking meeting how this struggle should be called and how to name the essential claim. The confusion was not only because the notions of rights or citizenship have such a divergent history with different connotations in the different European countries but also because the aim is to transcend the historically known outcome of national or European citizenship rights. We have to think of something new - something between cosmopolitan rights and rights deriving from the residence. Since migration as a

transnational movement transcends the historical formation of national societies, citizenship rights have to be transnationally redefined.

Proposal: Right of Legalisation

Two years ago the association for the right for legalisation was founded in Germany as a network of different migration related groups. The right of legalisation proposes a common horizon for the different migration and refugee related groups beyond the established division of work between them.

But what should the right of legalisation mean in the broad sense of a struggle for the right to have rights?

The perspectives of citizens and migrants are structured by racism which in turn regulates the access and exclusion to resources. Migrants are constantly confronted with this situation and are struggling for the everyday necessities, which are not given to them as rights.

The right of legalisation takes up these daily mostly invisible, individualized and illegalized struggles and locates them in the core of the social and political agenda: who has the right to access social resources and political spaces?

Former nation state services and tasks are being taken over and redefined by trans- and multinational institutions. In this process of privatisation, transnational companies become gatekeepers of the access to education, medical care, labour markets, housing, and public services. In transnational agreements such as MAI and GATTs, these companies try to fix their access as rights. Accordingly, the social claims and rights of citizens are hollowed out. The idea of collective protection of individual emancipation is opposed to the idea of society which is fixed in transnational agreements. Hence, the fight for the right to have rights has to be forged on a global level against the concepts of society brought forward by the transnational institutions and companies. To approach this matter from the perspective of migration and of those who are excluded from the existing legal frameworks of nation states broadens our glance freed from nation state romanticism on the contemporary political situation.

It is this perspective which allows to radically question the social and political rights laid down in the forthcoming constitution of the European Union. The connection between social and political rights on the one hand, and citizenship and the nation state on the other, is challenged when we take into account the global movement of migration and the processes of globalization. Everybody has to have the right to have all rights at her/his place of residence.

Speaking of Autonomy of Migration...

Racism and Struggles of Migration



No one right in his or her mind would argue that migration takes place in a realm of peace and freedom. No one imagines a migrant calculating the degree of utilization on the global labour market in the morning, deciding on a country of immigration in the afternoon and enjoying the fruits of mobility ever since. That's how racist and fascists would like to see it when they call us the parasites of the European welfare system. The opposite is true: The process of privileging certain migrants goes together with the exclusion of others. Whether they appear as Acts and policy statements or through checks in pedestrian precincts, in train stations and on the streets, they all steal time and space from the people. To say nothing of the attacks on life and limb, that are an increasingly everyday reality everywhere in Europe. This is not only the business of jungle law on the streets, but also one of state asylum and deportation centres. Recently it has been criticized that the concept of Autonomy of migration ignores this misery and the conditions of migration. Is this true? Can we not criticize racist, postcolonial and capitalist structures when we talk about Autonomy of Migration? How can we fight those who white wash and tell us that racism has watered down in modern societies? What role does racism play in Europe today?

Throughout Europe, for quite some time, the current configuration of European racism is an anti-immigrant racism. Of course, we find different aspects and traditions in European states. But they ground - more or less - on two ideological schemes: the colonial and the antisemitic. This Anti-immigrant-racism, also known as Neo-Racism, is far more flexible than the traditional racism that grounds on absolute categories of race and segregation. Through Neo-Racism ethnic groups are being gradually differentiated and hierarchised in everyday life practices and discourses. Far from working purely on culturalist grounds it shifts between biological and cultural patterns of explanation, ascriptions and stigmatisations. Superiority and inferiority, inclusion and exclusion are being aligned on cultural norms and then biologically essentialised - and vice versa. In this sense any configuration of racism in history is a projective conception that attempts to explain social differences, social hierarchies and domination. These 'explanations' are inscribed in everyday life practices or in state regulations of populations.

In the case of anti-Islamism the colonial and the antisemitic scheme join perfectly: here notions of racist superiority flash in with cultural and religious rivalry. Of course, Anti-Islamism is not a new phenomenon. For quite some decades, even centuries, it has its base in Europe. Cultural ascriptions are central here as they are aiming at the immediate visibilisation of racist defined differences. Since 9/11 the veil has become the visible sign

of talk about immigration, of talk about terrorism and when they fuse one with the other. One might add that whilst Islam historically was Europe's outside enemy, Jews represented the inner. In both cases the conjunction of religion and citizenship helped drawing the line between inclusion and exclusion.

But racism doesn't exist without its counterpart, the struggles against it. This is not to downplay the dreadful impacts of racism, but to understand both the way racism changes throughout history and the way it constitutes the subjects of the struggles against racism.

Migrants and their descendants always resisted discrimination and disfranchisement. They still do. Whether it was the struggles of housing and labour in the 1960ies and 70ies in Britain, Germany and France or struggles for payment for "sans papiers", against deportation and for Legalization from the 1990ies until today. Often, new forms of oppression against migrants can be seen as reactions to these struggles, like the administrative regulations in the 1970ies in Germany that would ban migrants from moving to certain neighbourhoods, just because these neighbourhoods were considered to be uncontrollable due to their big migrant communities. When after the end of guest-worker-recruitment in the 1970ies legal entry to Europe seemed impossible, migrants organized it nonetheless through marriage and family reunion. Migrants fake their papers, states invent new alleged fraud-resistance documents and so on. These struggles imply a certain concept of autonomy, although not in the traditional, emphatic sense. Autonomy of migration is not supposed to mean sovereignty of migrants, but rather that migrants are not simply objects of state control - that migrants defy controls and resist racist discrimination. Autonomy of migration represents the rather complicated fact that struggles of migration constitute a specific level of the political.

Autonomy is thus not a tale about the new revolutionary subject called migrants, but tries to handle the contradictions related to racism and migration. By doing so we can perhaps create a third option beyond universalism and difference. Let us exemplify. One of the problems we face when fighting against racism are our own communities and identity politics. After the (re)unification of the two Germanies in 1990, the uprise of nationalism and racist attacks - hundreds of migrants or their offspring were killed, even more were injured - led to a trauma within the migrant communities. The attacks also provoked nationalist attitudes within these communities. More recently, the effects of Anti-Islamism on our communities and struggles can not be brushed aside. To cut a long story short: How

to deal with veils or e.g. Turkish flags, if they are part of a struggle against discrimination? In our struggles against racism we have to aim the criticism at both sides: at the racist regime of those in power and at the ethnic identity policy of those ruled over. Since racism and ethnicising have always had the function of supporting an authoritarian, homogenising formation of collectives. Would it not be possible to find a link between the autonomous tactics and struggles we have listed and an extended social, individual and collective Autonomy in this perspective of double criticism?

This can not be an abstract critic from behind a desk as to how people may or may not conduct their lives. The identity policy of those ruled over always is a strategy of self-authorisation under the conditions of a misery stratified in consequence of racism. When we refer to migrant communities, we are well aware that they provide migrants with protection under the conditions of the racist regime, and that this improves their conditions of survival. This aspect is often withheld, but it is very important. However, it does not mean that everything should remain as it is in these communities.

By autonomous tactics we understand something which takes place in everyday life anyway. The tactics can never be fully reduced to identity politics. Rather they have materiality in the concrete political and social living conditions. The shaping of identity and its fetters can only be set aside if internal aspects in the reproduction of living conditions are altered. That's why we plead in favour of practical criticism which uses what is already inherent in the present practices and articulates this use politically and in favour of a better life.

When we talk of the Autonomy of Migration we point to the transgression of borders and a life on the base and by means of networks of migration. Just as racism can not be fought directly, we can only gain autonomy by fighting for changes in our everyday lives and against the patronising and killing at or between the borders. Be it the combat for payment of illegalized workers on a construction site in Berlin and Hamburg, be it the campaigning against racist and anti-Islamic laws in Paris, be it the disappearance of a whole handball team in the south of Germany, be it the struggle for better housing conditions in Trieste, be it the support for health care of illegalized migrants in Barcelona and Tel Aviv, be it the contesting of disenfranchisement and detention camps in Ljubljana, be it the fight for insurance of houseworkers in London, be it the squatting of churches or embassies for papers in Brussels and Paris.

Thus for the Autonomy of Migration an understanding of historical and current Struggles of Migration is inevitable.

Claiming the Freedoms of Movement and Knowledge / Tactical Alliance Or one single Process?

Tavolo Migranti dei Social Forum Italiani

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Since Genoa G8 until today, Tavolo Migranti has connected a wide and differentiated network of subjects fighting against the Italian immigration Law (Bossi-Fini Law), and the conditions of living into which migrants are forced by the progressive dismantling of work and social guarantees. We are not an unitary structure. We comprehend a large spectrum of organizations and groups coming from different parts of Italy, but during the last three years we promoted some political initiatives moving from a common political assumption: a radical rejection of the Bossi-Fini Law and of the connection which it institutes between the visa and the job contract. The "contratto di soggiorno per lavoro" forces migrants into the acceptance of every kind of work condition to avoid clandestinity and detention. For these reasons, Tavolo Migranti's political initiatives have been always concentrated around the musts of a radical NO to "Contratto di soggiorno per lavoro"; NO to detention centres. The first issue has been the core of one of the most important mobilisation organized in the frame of Tavolo, the Vicenza Migrant Work Strike, on May 2002: more than 30.000 migrants were in strike and 10.000 were on the streets against the Bossi-Fini law project. The struggle against detention centres knew its most important moment during the "invasion", by the people of the Frassanito no-border camp promoted by Tavolo, of the Bari Palese detention centre, inside which hundreds of asylum seekers were forced. After two days the center has been closed. Three months ago, several subjects with Tavolo "invaded" the centre that Italian authorities are building near the city of Gradisca, on the Italian eastern border. The action determined the adoption of a position favourable to the closure by the local government, and the centre is still not open. After January 31st European demonstration against detention centres, we connected in Italy a wide migrants' movement of protest against the visas-renews policies of territorial Police. The local demonstrations contributed to determine the revision of the Bossi-Fini law by the Italian central Government, but the struggle is still open to obtain the abrogation of the law.

Geneva, May 2003. The protests against the G8 summit begin with a loud and colourful demo in bright sunlight. The cheerful crowd stops at three highly symbolic landmarks: The offices of the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Three large banners in bright pink and yellow illustrate the theme of the march, demanding "Freedom of Movement and Freedom of Information", "Free Movement and Opensource" and "For Freedom of Movement and against Global Migration Management."

The symbolic message is clear: A claim for free access to the virtual commons of knowledge and the physical commons of geography. While profoundly globalised themselves, global movements are opposing the enclosure of these commons through global governance. In Geneva, we challenged a global migration management which caters for the needs of the global and exploitative labour markets at the IOM and proclaimed the autonomy of migration. We protested against the regulation of patents, copyrights and licences at the WIPO in solidarity with free software geeks and indigenous farmers and for ourselves. We showed once again our dissent with the neoliberal trade regulations pushed by the WTO.

However: Is the connection between free movement and free communication on the global protest circuit more than an addition of claims? More than a tactical link between movements as different as migration, activism and hacking/coding? Can it be seen as a powerful combination of specific everyday practices and political struggles?

The temporary association "everyone is an expert" suggests to see the fights for freedom of movement and informational self-determination "as driving forces in the process of shaping an emancipative multitude." Optimistically, the website claims that movements of migrants in autonomy are undermining the global hierarchies of the labour market and the technologically enhanced border-regimes, constituting "a catalyst for a globalisation from below." Equally, insisting on freedom of communication is seen as an attack against the enclosure of knowledge through intellectual property rights, licences and patents, undermining the "global hierarchies of knowledge and question the logic of valuation and paid labour."

A year earlier, at the European bordercamp in Strasbourg, a diverse crowd of geeks, artists, media-activists and anti-racists constructed similar parallels and juxtaposed the use of ICT by Multitudes and Empire: "People move across physical and virtual borders. People push the electronic frontiers through digital and physical communication. States and multinationals are enforcing control of both flows. Information

technology is part of the freefloating culture of resistance and a tool to develop a society of seamless control". A deeply worrying picture was conjured: "The border regime is imploding, turning into a flexible system of Red Zones. Detention Centers and restricted residency for migrants, stop and search for black youth, robocops for global protestors, surveillance for muslims, databases for all." (d.sec call).

On a practical level, both freedoms are merging already: Global movements rely heavily on freedom of communication in their practices within a communication space opened up through internet, free software, peer to peer technologies etc. Grassroots activism wouldn't be what it is today without the myriads of email-lists, web-platforms, audio- and videostreams, as well as handheld devices from mobile phones to PDAs. Based on free software, many of these tools can be adapted to the needs of the moment and don't cost money. No wonder that the day-to-day communications are leading to political struggles against the wider issue of digital rights management and so-called intellectual property rights in the fields of biotechnology, music industry and more. At the same time, the free software community enters the political stage not only with online demos and practical support, but also by lobbying and taking to the streets. Within the wider social movement of migrants, access to all these fancy tools can not be taken for granted. However, a look at the internet-cafes and long-distance-phone shops in any metropolis reveals that migrants are finding ways to access the digital communication channels.

Fadaiat/Hackitectura are extending the claim from "freedom of communication/information" to "freedom of knowledge", and they insert "work" in their analysis. In this framework, the connections appear more organic. Re-appropriation and sharing of knowledge constitutes the nucleus of (not entirely) new and immaterial forms of production: from the organization of networks to information and production management. The free software model, based on social cooperation, collective intelligence and communal property, constitutes a powerful referent for thinking about liberating forms of producing and their emancipatory, even revolutionary potentials.

Production is happening globally, its networks are distributed beyond local and national borders. The reappropriation of work and its products implies freedom of movement, to achieve equal access to oportunities and wealth.

Control of knowledge and control of mobility (through borders, visa, work permits, digital rights management, copyrights etc) are two of the main modes of postmodern capitalism to capture social wealth.

Since all of us, to a certain degree, are global

and immaterial workers, these two freedoms are fusing into a single one: The freedom and the right to live a full life. Our task is to find the commons and fight the battle in a thousand asssembled fronts.

An activist from indymedia estrecho sums it up: Knowledge can't survive, and can't evolve, without movement – this is one single demand that affects the worlds we live in, physical spaces, geopolitical spaces, and the way we want to construct them.

For digital and physical bordercrossing! Or, as the Zapatistas say... ¡Para Todos Todo!

Indymedia Estrecho / Madiag Disobeying the Border

To Construct An_Other Territory / <http://estrecho.indymedia.org>

Indymedia Estrecho / Madiag, Indymedia of the Straits of Gibraltar, part of the indymedia global network and founded in 2003, is involved in the process of defining a new territory, with undefined limits, to provide the basis for bottom-up cooperation between movements challenging the existing order. An-other territory that is experimental, alternative, multicultural, and politically diverse, while at the same time immensely common. The idea is to create a transnational, transcontinental space, ready to meet the demands of resistance to global capitalism in our age.

The Indymedia of the Straits project has arisen from the need to create a space for communication, encounter, and contagion, so that movements that hardly know each other can begin to work together. We plan to provide a space to hack into the virtual, cultural, and political frontiers that keep us apart, separates emerging processes and new forms of conflict, and to produce a new sphere, encompassing both in the Andalusia / Southern Border of Europe and the Maghreb. We think of the project as a political-communicational space crossing the border, over which to build bridges of cooperation and grassroots

democracy across the two shores. It is a project of political anthropology, of mutual diplomacy from below, creating synergies among rebellious realities; rather than a website, Indymedia Madiag aims to be a catalyzer within the biopolitical networks of precarious, immaterial and migrant workers traversing the Straits

The geo-strategic realignment that neoliberal globalisation involves, makes the Straits a critical enclave in the imperial project. The southern frontier prevents, controls and distributes access to Fortress Europe; that feeds off the multinational migrant workforce and submits migrants to a dynamic of subjugation by daily controls, the blackmail of residence permits, exploits their total defencelessness in labour issues, and denies fundamental rights.

The Straits is a contrived frontier that makes use of the most sophisticated European information, control and security systems (such as the SIS - Schengen Information System), from which migrants daily exercise their rights to escape in search of dignity. A frontier that year after year is traversed by thousands of persons.

A frontier worthy of disobeying!



RELATED PROJECTS:

Indymedia Canarias: <http://canarias.indymedia.org>

Red / Chabaka "Dos Orillas": <http://www.redasociativa.org/dosorillas/>

Recent projects by indymedia estrecho:

Fadaiat: freedom of movement-freedom of knowledge: <http://fadaiat.org>

Mapping madiag territory: <http://mcs.hackitectura.net/> >> cartografia

Program @ ESF London October 2004 Migration Related Events



Thursday 14th



Autonomie der Migration

15.45 - 16.45 h | Session on freedom of movement and freedom of communication | European Forum on Communication Rights / Camden Center

18.00h | Solidarity demonstration with asylum seekers | Calais

Saturday 16th



Autonomie der Migration

All day event | Life Despite Capitalism | London School of Economics

11.00 - 13.00 h | Precarious work - common struggle of migrants and nationals | Life Despite Capitalism / London School of Economics

11.30 - 18.00 h | One day workshop of voice refugee forum | Wombles Space / Middlesex University

14.00 - 16.00 h | Freedom of movement as a common | Life Despite Capitalism / London School of Economics

16.30 - 18.30 h | Barbed wire workshop - against detentions and camps | Bloomsbury [inside the ESF]

Friday 15th



Autonomie der Migration

09.30 - 12.00 h | Opening migration-related plenary | Wombles Space / Middlesex university

15.00 - 17.00 h | Workshop: anti-iom-campaign, film and debate | Wombles Space / Middlesex University

17.00 - 19.00 h | Presentation and debate about www.thisuesday.org | European Forum on Communication Rights / Camden Center

19.00 - 21.00 h | **Seminar: Migration as a Social Movement** | Alexandra Palace / Gleneagles [inside the ESF]

Sunday 17th



Autonomie der Migration

19.00 - 21.00 h | Final migration-related plenary | Wombles Space / Middlesex University

Web Updates



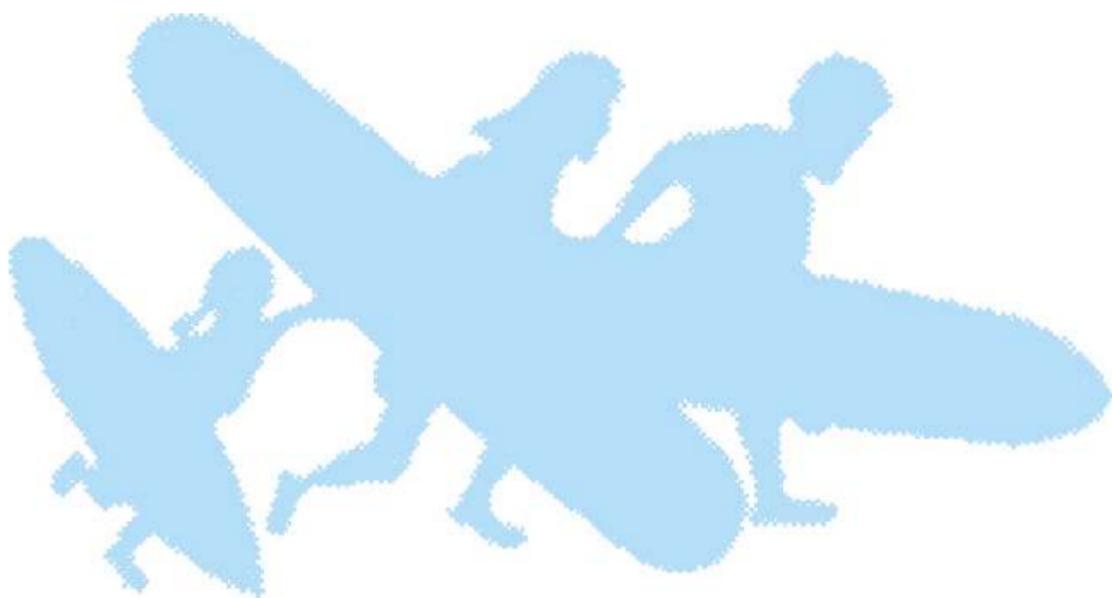
Autonomie der Migration

Note: an updated version of this calendar can be found at <http://www.noborder.org/esf04/calendar.php>

Seminar: Migration as a Social Movement

The seminar will include contributions about new borders of the EU and the struggles against, about the right for legalisation and about migrant labor.

Speakers: Sandro Mezzadra [Tavolo dei Migranti, Bologna / Italy]; Manuela Bojadzijev [Kanak Attak, Frankfurt / Germany]; Nico Sguiglia [Indymedia Estrecho, Malaga / Spain]; Isabelle Saint_Saens [Act Up-Paris / France]; and as special guest: Valery Alzaga [Justice fo Janitors, Denver / US]



Autonomy of Migration

The Frassanito Network

Frassanito-network is composed by people from:

Tavolo Migranti dei social forum italiani; Immigrati in Movimento Napoli / Italy; Act Up-Paris / France; noborder London / Britain; indymedia estrecho / madiq / Spain; Network for social support to immigrants and refugees / Greece; Kanak Attak / Germany; no one is illegal-amplitude / Germany; Association for Legalisation / Germany ...

Following people have contributed to this newspaper:

Teresa Arozena, Manuela Bojadzijev, Nicholas Dines, Marion Hamm, Sabine Hess, Frank John, Serhat Karakayali, Paul Keller, Hagen Kopp, Olga Lafazani, Sandro Mezzadra, Jose Perez de Lama, osfa, Maurizio Ricciardi, Enrica Rigo, Paola Rudan, Isabelle Saint-Saens, Nico Sguiglia.

The Frassanito Network on ESF

The name of the frassanito-network has been taken from a place in Puglia, in the south of Italy, where a "NoBorder" camp was held last summer. During seven days we have organized many debates and workshops, but also some actions, most notably an action against a detention center close to Bari (Bari Palese). This action created conditions which allowed some migrants to escape.

The idea of this camp was discussed among activists, mainly from Germany and Italy, who had organized a meeting on migration during the first European Social Forum in Florence.

After the camp, we decided to build a very loose network, sharing a common approach: We consider migration as a social movement and see the role of migrants' struggles as crucial for the further development of the entire global movement.

Many of us were among the organizers of workshops and assemblies at the ESF in Paris, where we met many other groups and networks.

After the experience of the 1st day of europeanwide actions on 31st of January 2004, we began to discuss about a follow-up of this initiative and the ESF in London. We felt that it would be very important to organize a preliminary meeting in September, to exchange ideas and to further and deepen the process of networking.

As a practical result of this meeting we made many appointments for activities inside the ESF as well as in the various autonomous spaces (see the calendar on this page). Based on these preconditions, debates, projects and actions related to migration can gain another level of awareness in the global movement on one hand, and a much more transnational character on the other hand. Both seems to be necessary, if we want to go further in the struggle for freedom of movement.

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Photos by Ad Van Dederen