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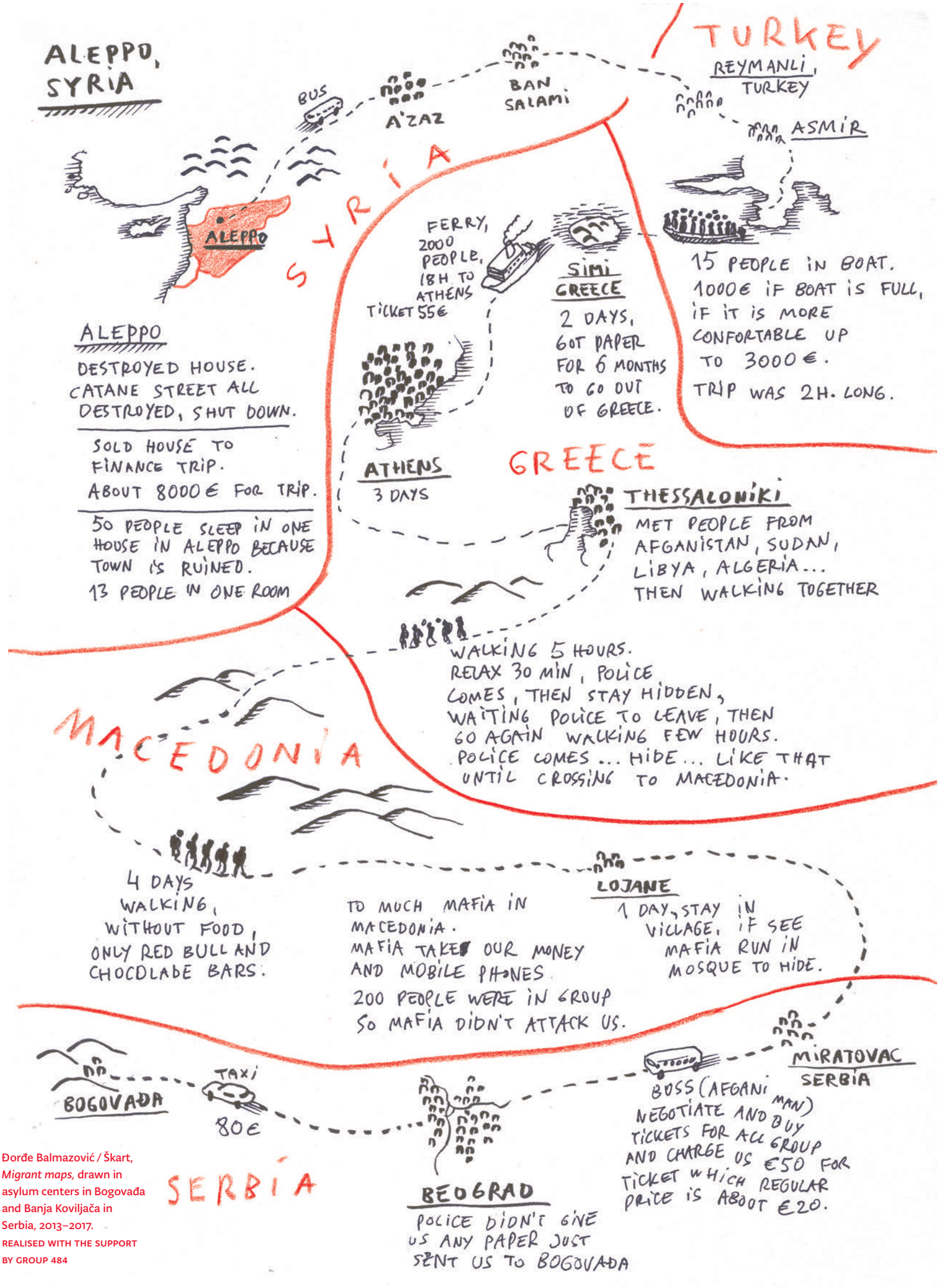
Gastarbeiters & migrants №3

The same **Airplanes** that white European tourists take on their vacations are used for the deportation of racialised migrants and **Asylum** seekers. During the expulsions the **Authorities** use a lot of violence. It's like an **Apartheid** regime in the **Airports**.



Đorđe Balmazović / Škart, *Migrant maps*, drawn in asylum centers in Bogovađa and Banja Koviljača in Serbia, 2013–2017.

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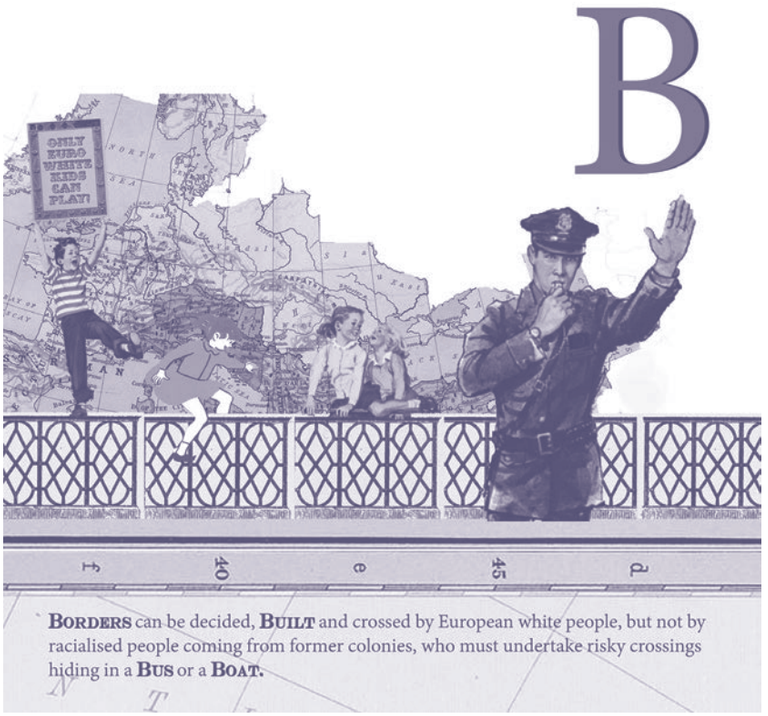
We're on the Road to Nowhere

Antonija Letinić



Daniela Ortiz, *ABC of racist Europe,* 2017

Though freedom of movement is one of the social and political imperatives of the twenty-first century, the recent mass migrations and refugee crisis have shown that it isn't as free as is politically proclaimed and praised. We periodically have heard cries about deaths in the Mediterranean since the end of the last decade, but in general politicians have remained more or less silent on the issue. They maintained this silence until 2015, when huge numbers of people started entering territories of the European Union in search of a safe place to build a new lifescape, with the hope for a better future for themselves and their families. At first, the strongest nations in the EU reacted with openness and welcome, while peripheral members started building fences and demonizing the strangers seeking safety.

Of course, this assessment of the EU's response to migration sounds blunt and shallow, disregarding the many dimensions and stratifications of the issue. There is a huge amount of material on this topic, encompassing numerous layers. For **What, How & for Whom/WHW** and **Kulturpunkt**, the current discussions have presented an opportunity for us to take a look at the history of migration, specifically in relation to worker migration. The main parallel, or rather opposition, is set up between the historical figure of the *gastarbajter* (guest worker) of the 1960s and the contemporary migrant worker. What were the conditions that gave rise to and also defined the *gastarbajters,* workers from ex-Yugoslav countries, in comparison to contemporary migrants, who are mainly worker migrants but also refugees? What is the image of the contemporary Western state today, and what are its structural deficiencies in dealing with the influx of people from different countries? In this publication we don't have space to deal with every aspect of this vast topic, but in future we aim to tackle other issues too, especially the relation between contemporary migration and climate change, as the theme of climate change continues to take up more and more space in current debates. We will also continue to put more focus on the stereotypes that define past and contemporary newcomers.

Our purpose with this project is to sketch out varying insights on the theme of work and migration. Thus we begin with **Mario Kikaš**'s text *Upended Europe: On Labor and Migration,* in which he takes us on a ride through the history of worker migrations in Europe, tracing paths of movement all the way back to the roots of modern Europe, in the sixteenth century. **Stipe Ćurković**, in his essay *Migrants, Gastarbajters, Proletarians,* focuses on the conditions that enabled *gastarbajter* migrations, specifically the political and economic frameworks that created them, but also the impact they had on workers' movements, rights, and regulations, as well as on the future of workers' movements, which would ultimately be narrowed down for the next generation of migrants—a future we live in now. **Vesna Vuković**'s text, *On the Periphery of the Art World—A Short Look Back,* attempts to define the role that is given to the arts today, in an environment where working conditions for artists are defined by funding schemes and the interests outlined through them. How does this affect the proclaimed autonomy of the art world? **The Earth Group** provides a radical example of artistic engagement, focused on the migrant workers who moved from villages to the city in the early twentieth century and remaining critical toward both migrant workers and the role of the arts in socializing them. **Jana Dolečki** in her text *Home, Foreign Home* offers an overview of the celebration program that marked fifty years of the *gastarbajters* in Austria. Through mapping the subtextual points of this celebration, she uncovers the blind spots of the position of the *gastarbajters* and the failures of their integration, which provides interesting insight into contemporary failures of integration.

From her sociological perspective in the article *Migrant Workers: The Light Infantry of Global Capitalism,* **Jelena Ostojić** sketches current conditions of the European workforce, including market demands in contrast to social capacities to accommodate them, as well as the further dismantling of workers' rights and their capacity to self-organize and change the shape of the contemporary labor landscape. How can we address the insecurity of the precariat, and what comes after the atypical work engagements that are coming to dominate our present? These are some of the questions **Ostojić** poses in her article. The thematic cycle is concluded with an article by **Nebojša Zelić** called *Secularism, Populism, and Migration,* in which he examines what the contemporary secular state looks like today and how it should be designed in future to assure the equality it aims to give all its members. We have chosen this article to conclude the series because we see it as a benchmark for looking toward a better future for all.

We hope you will find some interesting insights in this thematic issue of ***Gallery Nova Newspapers***. The articles we have commissioned are meant to encourage further discussion as well as incite debate through which we will conceive of a different future—one where borders are not crossed through razor wire but with valid documents, and where migrants are not met with bludgeons but welcoming gestures. As a colleague once said, Europe has lived in undeserved peace for more than seventy years—undeserved in the sense that during this period it has participated in numerous wars ignited in other parts of the world. Many migrations to Europe take root in its colonial history. Acknowledging and taking a responsible attitude toward our deeds and misdeeds represents a starting point for a better future. Such courage should be fiercely expressed, as it is something we all need. ✖

Upended Europe: On Labor and Migration

Mario Kikaš

The worker migrations of the 1960s radically changed Europe, giving it a new emancipatory potential and disrupting its ethnonational narrowmindedness. But at the same time, they turned it into a place where reactionary and parochial political forces began to fester, feeding on the contradictions inherent to labor and migration

The appositive "crisis," in various morphological expressions, has become entrenched in the geographic, cultural, economic, and political topos of Europe to such an extent that it is difficult to say what this topos even means nowadays. More importantly, it is difficult to say whether and in what ways it is worth advocating, if not fighting, for. During the first years of this crisis, the EU political elites had some kind of lowest common denominator of "Europeanness" to stand by (or at least to take protocolar photos with), giving the impression of a sort of consistency of the "European," but today, during a time of "sub-crisis"—namely, the refugee crisis—this lowest common denominator has come apart at the seams. In this wider geopolitical story, various spheres of interest have been affected, to the point that the refugee crisis is becoming ever more tangible in even the everyday lives of the European people. However, it cannot be said that at this time of (crisis-induced) melancholy, it is not interesting to observe the tumbling down, to say the least, of once stable institutions that had a dominant role in filling in the meanings of "Europeanness" and that had authority over the official, elite, monolithic discourse on Europe. Thus, through the interesting—but no less dangerous and uncertain—destruction of these institutions, the central, official, bureaucratic speech of Brussels is being destabilized, revealing in the process some other stories and mechanisms that have driven Europe over the past half-millennium. These other sources come from the time when Europe was an emancipatory, humanist utopia—that is, when it was the source of the ideas of republicanism, secularism, solidarity, and democracy—but also when it was the harborer of colonial ambitions, under which military and missionary powers pillaged the world, as well as when it was a fortress that imploded under the stress of various periodic crises and explosions of violence. In these different configurations, somebody always had to be impressed upon to reconstruct the walls of the fortress, to power ship expeditions, and to join the military squadrons, or, on the other side of the equation, to be provoked into tearing them down, setting them on fire, and liberating *us* from *them*.

In this five-hundred-year history of Europe, the continent's engine has been fueled by the work of its masses, that is, its peoples, but also those peoples beyond its borders, those "without a past," as described by the American anthropologist **Eric R. Wolf**, who came to Europe via different routes and under various circumstances, setting out on a historical journey not less intense or ominous than those of present-day migrants. I am here referring to the layer of European history experienced by the great majority of those who work, enter the final balance sheet of productivity, leave nobility estates and households for the "freedoms" of the industrial demand for labor, flee landscapes torn up by war and fencing, or head toward urban centers from the (semi)periphery, which has been plundered by privatization in the new millennium. In this respect, labor and migration—or, to use a more encompassing term, mobility—have simultaneously been "disruptors" of parochial, premodern, ethnocentric concepts as well as "triggers" for closing down the borders of those very protectionist frameworks, fearing foreign workers, migrant waves, and "different" cultures. In other words, Europe has been built on labor and migration, but what was built and to what purpose are questions that for a great part of this history have not been asked of those who are physically doing the building and moving. Nevertheless, throughout history, the pace of European growth has been set by precisely those Polish day laborers on German fields, Irish and Welsh workers in English factories, Scandinavian sailors in Dutch port inns, and present-day *badante* (caregivers) from "New Europe" in Italian households, as well as generations of people from the Global South and colonized territories who have joined their voices with local peoples in creating the bottom-up story of labor and migration and all their contradictions.

ANOTHER VIOLENCE

From one such contradiction, modern Europe was conceived. Its progress and development started with a major profit crisis and the stagnation that followed it, which consequently resulted in long and extensive plundering, ultimately forcing its peasants into mass migration, either due to wars or seizure of their common lands, which fed the mostly rural population of then feudal Europe. That moment of European history, placed by historians between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, separated laborers from their former means of production, that is, from their homes and land, which provided the basic conditions for survival. They were then forced to "move," but not necessarily in any one direction, often ending up wandering and merely surviving. The crisis turned lost "non-laborers" into unseemly characters of the cultural imaginary, such as "scapegraces" and "buffoons," and also into the targets of the increasing criminalization of survival behaviors of migrants, directly related to circumstances of very low costs of labor, war, hunger, and the destruction of former social structures and institutions. "Processions of the poor," as historian **Silvia Federici** calls them, wandered throughout Europe. In Spain, wanderers used to overcrowd the roads, stopping in every town, according to the French historian **Fernand Braudel**. Frequent rebellions, wars, and other forms of violence only caused this huge army of wanderers to grow, becoming emblematic of the transformation Europe experienced at this time. It was an aimless mass migration.

As part of this process, a new division of labor formed, as did ways to discipline and moralize it. For example, any

slowdown of the pace of the social mechanisms mentioned at the beginning of this essay was strictly forbidden. For women, whose work was "paced" in the household factory of the new labor force, mobility was strictly regulated and controlled, and transgressions and stepping outside the boundaries of the *oikos* resulted in stigmatizations that led to the persecution of "witches," torture, and murder.

In parallel, far from the continent, sped the engine of a new machine powered by a new labor force, which would accumulate capital and start a revolution that would first transform Europe, building its cities and supplying its factories with raw materials, and then push the rest of the world toward industrial progress and modernization. With the colonization of the "New World," European powers discovered new resources, and many aimless wanderers and discharged soldiers found their way to the colonies to escape a life on the edge. In the New World, as folk songs record, these people found new jobs to fill and very simply demanded payment of their wages, which the English folklorist and historian **Peter Burke** notes in relation to his research on Prussian hussars.

Soon, the most widespread and longest lasting migration in history was set in motion—one that would completely change global demographics, and consequently the demographics of Europe. This migration, to put it neutrally, is simultaneously the story of the enslavement of African populations. That is, the earlier story of violence and pillaging of the land—of bodies of water, forests, pastures, and ore deposits—was next aimed at people, who were perceived by colonial powers as mere living labor to feed the machine of constant development and to clear the path of progress. Thus, once again, labor and migration—the foundational pillars of European modernity, technological progress, and enlightenment—feature in a larger picture of coercion, violence, land dispossession, and oppression. The ghosts that permanently follow Europe.

BLUE ISLAND OF BLUE COLLARS

The disciplining of work and workers (women, slaves, former wanderers), the extraction of resources from all over the world (no longer exclusively Europe), the spread of trade, and the destruction of the putting-out system founded the new spatial organization of life in Europe. With the development of industry comes the development of cities, which also marks the beginning of a type of migration that is a primary attribute of modernization: the move from the countryside to the city, that is, the differentiation between one's place of work and one's place of residence. That economic, technological, social, and spatial transformation created not only a new class, but also its specific experience and culture, in which migration is an everyday and planned practice. To make this everyday migration easier, it is necessary to create infrastructure that leads to the development of mass transportation, followed by more intensive international migrations of workers as well as labor regulations that are largely dependent on national demands for additional workers, which makes the exact experience differ from country to country. Cities are quickly developed, and their construction is undertaken largely by temporarily employed foreign workers, as the historian **Leslie Page Moch** notes. The nineteenth century was the era of the sudden expansion of Europe's population, but also of the most intensive migration of Europeans to New World countries, which experienced even quicker growth. Ireland and Central and Eastern Europe as such become a labor reservoir for the farms and cities of North America and the coffee and sugar cane plantations of South America, which in turn became places that imported "indentured laborers" upon the abolition of slavery. The cross-Atlantic migration of Europeans was additionally stimulated by the various crises, hunger, and poor development of the European (semi)periphery countries.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, these processes continued, as did the more intensive labor migration within Europe, which eventually began to be more strictly regulated—particularly during the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s, which we nowadays often make situational comparisons against. During that period, France had the most liberal worker immigration policies and was also a country that accepted refugees fleeing fascism in Italy and Spain and Nazism in Germany. Alongside the "normalization" of foreign labor in the first half of the twentieth century, the two World Wars were the events that most significantly altered and upended Europe. The war industry used workers from occupied nations on a mass scale, especially Nazi Germany in World War II. To continue the comparison, it remains to note that as many as 30 million refugees, in the greatest refugee crisis on the European continent, were displaced during and after World War II.

DIALOGICAL OPPOSITION

The sudden postwar development of Western Europe, resulting in compromise between trade unions (that is, workers) and capitalists, with the state as mediator, created relatively favorable conditions for workers. Such progress demanded the import of new labor forces, which presented an existential opportunity for many migrant workers, particularly those who were less or lower qualified, from the European south (that is, the Mediterranean) and southeast from the 1950s onward. Even though originally conceived as temporary workers brought in to participate in building the infrastructure of the Marshall Plan, up until the 1960s and 1970s those temporary workers created new lives in new contexts, and together with their families turned from temporary workers into migrant communities. That process radically changed Europe, where, today, migration and labor are two of the most crucial political issues, surrounded by hegemonic struggle on several fronts.

Daniela Ortiz, *ABC of racist Europe,* 2017

The radical change wrought by worker migrations imbued Europe with a new emancipatory potential, disrupting its ethnonational narrowmindedness. But at the same time, these migrations turned it into a place where reactionary and parochial political forces fester, feeding on the contradictions inherent to labor and migration. Although in our era trade unions are only a pale version of their historical incarnation, they remain the only institution of organized labor; unfortunately, they can barely cope with new forms of labor organization and the pressures of capitalism. The political left, in its historical role as the agent of ideology and of working-class interests, seems only to be looking for an adequate formula for its own organization, while the term "migratory labor" has become co-opted by the political right, causing strife between domestic and migrant workers. Regardless of their historical contradictions, migration and labor still, understandably, belong to informal, non-elite, emancipatory, internationalist—that is, dialogical—language, as stated by the "forced Siberian migrant" **Mikhail Bakhtin**. It is precisely the encouragement and maintenance of dialogue between local and migrant workers that is the first step to confronting any racist, anti-immigration, conservative, or nationalistic policies. How to achieve this in practice and at the level of the European Union is a question that we should be racking our brains every day to answer. ✖

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Migrants, Gastarbajters, Proletarians

Stipe Ćurković

At the zenith of the Western European welfare state, the gastarbajter, or guest worker, was not only a worker imported due to a lacking domestic labor force but also a marker of the return to the radically proletarianized worker, at a moment when capitalism had assumed its most socially inclusive historical form, at least in that part of the world.

Over the past two decades, we have witnessed the development of different discourses that strive to free migrant workers from the narrow criteria that define them according to the abstract economic role of imported labor forces. Migrants (and migrant workers) as relatively passive objects in a comprehensive logic of economic "rules" and state policies are replaced by the figure of the migrant as a (pro)active subject who permanently escapes the reduction to passive object by using strategies to autonomously cross state borders and formally and informally prescribed social positions. Under the conceptual aegis of the "autonomy of migration," newer theorists of migration[01] point out the subversive and creative potential of migratory practices to constitute new transnational identities and spaces that transcend old binaries of place and belonging, and thus change the societies to which migrants move. The contrast of this discourse to ones that situate migrants as objects and victims is emphasized as an affirmation of the emancipatory perspective that is allegedly inherent in the figure of the migrant itself.

According to labor migration scholars **Martina Benz** and **Helen Schwenken**, "The perspective of the autonomy of migration has its theoretical foundation in Italian operaismo, where both its strengths and problems lie."[02] These "problems" certainly include the danger of romanticizing the migrant as a subject of resistance[03] and neglecting the fact that, notwithstanding their willingness to cross the border, "laws [for foreigners] remain on the other side of the crossed border too, and migrants, even those with relatively secure residency statuses, move in permanently precarious political and social space."[04] The space that migrants enter is always already structured, and all their strategies of navigation ultimately mean moving only within the structurally provided and limited range of possibilities. As non-citizens, they are stripped of many political and social rights. This defines their economic outlook. If they do not have residency or work permits, they are condemned to illegal work, without legal and social protection and in circumstances of hyper-exploitation and low wages, and they live under constant threat of state sanctions, including the possibility of deportation. Theorists of the

01 For example, see Rutvica Andrijašević, Manuela Bojadžijev, Sabine Hess, Serhat Karakayalı, Efthimia Panagiotidis, and Vassilis Tsianos, "Turbulente Ränder. Konturen eines neuen Migrationsregimes im Südosten Europas," *PROKLA*, no. 140 (2005): 345–62.

02 Martina Benz and Helen Schwenken, "Jenseits von Autonomie und Kontrolle: Migration als eigensinnige Praxis," *PROKLA*, no. 140 (2005): 367.

03 Ibid., 372, 375.

04 Ibid., 365.

05 Critical reflections on the perspective of the autonomy of migration stated here are not new, and responses to them are not lacking. However, the purpose of this outline is not—and cannot

Maps by Maribel Casas-Cortes & Sebastian Cobarrubias, within the research by Thomas Keenan & Sohrab Mohebbi *It Is Obvious from the Map,* Gallery Nova, 2017. PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ

be—a complete review of subsequent discussions and all arguing points of the responses to criticism; rather, it is an attempt to point out some problematic implications of the central theses, which represented a theoretical novum, particularly in their original, strong form, and which influenced discussions on migration on the left. That discussion has to be postponed for another occasion. For the recent attempt to renew the perspective of the autonomy of migration through the integration of some earlier criticism, see Stephan Scheel, "Das Konzept der Autonomie der Migration überdenken? Yes, Please!," *Movements: Journal für kritische Migrations- und Grenzregimeforschung* 1, no. 2 (2015): http://movements-journal.org/issues/02.kaempfe/14.scheel-autonomie-der-migration.html.

autonomy of migration[05] often point out illegal work as proof that state control of migrant behavior is impossible. It also provides testimony of the subversive resourcefulness of the migrant, whose everyday practices make porous the rigid borders of state regulation, or even expose them as legal fiction. But these types of transgressions do not place migrants outside structural coercion, specifically that of capitalism of selling their own labor as the condition for their own reproduction; rather, they confirm it. Even though they may not (or will not) be consistently applied,[06] laws that regulate access to a certain (national) labor market have indirect effects on migrants, inasmuch as they leave migrants with access only to the informal sector of the market, also known as the grey economy. However, even a migrant with residency or a work permit does not necessarily have equal status with a "domestic" laborer. When, as is still often the case,[07] employment is a condition of residency, it represents a strong mechanism of discipline and weakens the position of the migrant worker in relation to employers, which results in the migrant usually being forced to accept wages, jobs, and conditions that are unacceptable to domestic workers. Labor markets are thus stratified. And not only because of differences of legal status or qualifications and competencies (which are, in themselves, exclusion mechanisms for most migrants, due to their lack of linguistic, social, and cultural knowledge or the new country's refusal of formal qualifications gained in their countries of origin). This stratification is additionally caused by informal or tacit mechanisms of hierarchy, based on for example ethnicity and gender, which can act both vertically (state institutions and employers) and horizontally (treatment of migrant workers by the domestic labor force).

DISCONTINUITY BETWEEN THE FIGURES OF THE MIGRANT AND THE GASTARBAJTER

The autonomy of migration discourse, with its emphasis on the transgressive, willful practices of the migrant, implies in its various articulations a more or less radical discontinuity between the figure of the contemporary (often illegal) migrant and that of the *gastarbajter*. The migration of historical *gastarbajters* from the late 1950s to the 1970s was regulated by bilateral agreements between states, which often included protocols and processes of selection controlled by the institutions of the country of immigration, which took place prior to immigration in recruitment centers in the countries of origin of potential migrant workers. In contrast to this, contemporary migrants start their journeys of their own free will and frequently cross borders illegally by using informal networks or creating them in the process, both on the way to and within the country of immigration, thus escaping state control and regulation.

The contrast and discontinuity between contemporary migrants and *gastarbajters* increases when looking through purely anthropological and ethnographic lenses. The rich possibilities of this new perspective to intervene in the migrant

06 On the functional link between the "wall" of border regimes, which nominally has to "prevent" uncontrolled migration, and the "hole" of their real permeability as the "selection filter" or "mechanism," see Albert Kraler and Christoph Parneiter, "Migration theoretisieren," *PROKLA,* no.140 (2005): 337. The same argument could be applied to the issue of the prohibition of work, where de jure prohibition would de facto represent the "mechanism of the allocation" of migrant labor to the informal sector.

07 See Karin Scherchel,

narrative come at the potential expense of negligent or hasty negations of structural continuities, which can be revealed only through structural analysis. There is a hesitation to conduct such an analysis due to its tendency to reduce migrants to objects of economic or state forces, which misses the point; the analysis that reveals heteronomy and its restrictions to be the characteristic living conditions of all workers under capitalism, as well as the specific, sharpened forms that heteronomy assumes for migrant workers, should not be mistaken for an affirmation of such a state of affairs. Contrary to this, criticism that affirms an emancipatory perspective, by affirming autonomy in the circumstances of real structural heteronomy, risks unintentionally mystifying and/or underestimating the violence inherent to it. Paraphrasing **Karl Marx**'s famous sentence from *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon,* we can say that migrants make their own practices, but they do not make them under self-selected circumstances. Theorists of the autonomy of migration could, with a certain amount of correctness, point out that neglecting the first part of the sentence produces a distorted image of the migrants' lived reality. However, theoretical perspectives that casually overlook its second half can be objected to in the same way, or at least with the same correctness.

Despite the differences in their living conditions, the present-day migrant worker and the historical *gastarbajter* share the same position in the labor market: at the bottom or on the margins. This position is characterized by a narrow set of political, social, and economic rights as well as limited freedom of movement on the labor market. However, the "excess" migrants' rights represent in comparison to the rights and working conditions of the domestic labor force, but also in relation to the understanding of "free labor" as a capitalist norm, reveals something of the central logic of the capitalist mode of production and the different ways it has been historically realized.

EXCLUSION FROM THE RIGHTS AND MECHANISMS OF PROTECTION

The profit imperative is the core characteristic of the capitalist mode of production and the sole purpose and immanent criterion of success that it knows and accepts. Organizing production in a capitalist mode means organizing it in such a way that all decisions lead to maximized profits. Eventually, the source of profit is the surplus value that capital manages to draw from laborers. This surplus value is the remainder between the value of labor-power (paid by capitalists in the form of wages) and the new value that laborers produce. This is a summary of **Marx**'s definition of exploitation. Exploitation may occur at any level of wages (i.e. any value of labor-power) as long as laborers produce surplus value. But the rate of exploitation rises if the value of labor-power is lower; that is, the less labor-time that is needed to produce the value of labor-power, the more surplus value is produced. Therefore, capitalism has an inherent tendency to reduce the value of labor-power to the minimum necessary for its "normal" reproduction.[08] **Marx** defines "normal reproduction" in the following way:

> His means of subsistence must therefore be sufficient to maintain him in his normal state as a labouring individual. His natural wants, such as food, clothing, fuel, and housing, vary according to the climatic and other physical conditions of his country. On the other hand, the number and extent of his so-called necessary wants, as also the modes of satisfying them, are themselves the product of historical development, and depend therefore to a great extent on the degree of civilisation of a country, more particularly on the conditions under which, and consequently on the habits and degree of comfort in which, the class of free labourers has been formed. In contradistinction therefore to the case of other commodities, there enters into the determination of the value of labour-power a historical and moral element. Nevertheless, in a given country, at a given period, the average quantity of the means of subsistence necessary for the labourer is practically known.[09]

"A historical and moral element" in determining the value of labor-power implies, however, class struggle as an important factor. Just like the conditions in which the struggle occurs, its historical results are codified in the state legislation relating to labor and the social and other rights of laborers. But the last sentence of the quote, referring to the "known" standard of the reproduction of labor-power in a given country, becomes problematic if it is understood as an expression of the inevitability of that standard or—which is even more important in this context—as a claim that the standard is necessarily identical for all laborers in that country. Since political and social rights are related to citizenship to a large extent, it means that migrants are excluded from a large portion of the rights and mechanisms of protection, which, as a result of historical class struggles, not only regulate the conditions of the labor force on the labor market and in relation to capital but also determine the standard of "normal" reproduction for the "domestic" labor force. In other words, for migrant workers, the allegedly universal historical standard of reproduction is not inevitably known, for the determination of the value of their labor-power depends on another "moral" standard. From the perspective of capitalists, this specific position of the migrant worker means the availability of labor-power whose value is lower, meaning the employment of migrant workers is therefore more profitable (providing that their qualifications correspond to the required work tasks). The fact that, for instance, some German capitalists advocated for a "liberal" policy of accepting refugees in the context of the current "refugee crisis" should be interpreted from that perspective.

PRIVILEGED COMMUNITIES

It would be wrong, therefore, to interpret the specific position of migrant workers, that is, the conditions in which they live and work, as an extrinsic deviation from the norm of capitalism. The very fact that these "deviations" exist, that legal mechanisms and state policies make them possible, reflects capitalism's inherent tendency to lower the value of labor-power, not only to the level of the existing historical and moral standard, but even below it. It also shows to what extent the alleged universality of certain rights and

"Citizenship by Work? Arbeitsmarktpolitik im Flüchtlingsschutz zwischen Öffnung und Selektion," *PROKLA,* no. 183 (2016): 245–65.

08 Here, we ignore Marx's difference between the production of absolute and relative surplus value, where the former rests on the intensification of labor and/or extension of labor-time, while the latter is derived from a general increase in productivity, to the extent that it lowers the value of goods necessary for the laborer's subsistence, and thus lowers the value of labor-power itself. See Karl Marx, *Kapital: Kritika političke ekonomije,* Prvi tom, MED 21 (Beograd: Institut za izučavanje radničkog pokreta/ Prosveta, 1974), 163–469. For a critique of Marx's assumption in *Capital* that the gain from the increase in productivity is automatically made by capitalists, that is, that it automatically leads to the lowering of the value of labor-power, see Michael Lebowitz, *Beyond 'Capital': Marx's Political Economy of the Working Class,* 2nd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003).

09 Marx, *Kapital,* 158. English translation from *Karl Marx: A Reader,* ed. Jon Elster, *Capital I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 141.

Maps by Maribel Casas-Cortes & Sebastian Cobarrubias, within the research by Thomas Keenan & Sohrab Mohebbi *It Is Obvious from the Map,* Gallery Nova, 2017. PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ

standards is always porous and subject to revision, in situations where these rights and standards collide with the interests of capital, which is then revealed as an obstacle to making them actually universal. The division of the working class into groups with different sets of rights is beneficial to capitalism inasmuch as it allows the radical re-proletarianization of its parts. And since financing of the state and its social policies largely depends on taxes and incomes, the mass of which increases and decreases depending on total economic activity (which is taxed in different ways), the state will usually institute policies that advocate the interests of capital, which is the key organizing agent of economic activity in capitalism. The division of the working class according to this criterion, along with the corresponding differences in the legal statuses of the "domestic" and migrant labor forces, is therefore also desirable from the perspective of state policy or "domestic interest," because it spurs the creation of a labor force to which the state has no or significantly less social and financial responsibility. Besides, these divisions within the working class act (as has been repeatedly confirmed throughout history) as an obstacle for its political homogenization and thus is an important factor in the regulation of class struggle.

Étienne Balibar radicalized the implication of this insight by claiming that "the regulation of class struggles, or more generally social conflicts, would never be possible without the process of mobilization of the form of nation, that form of privileged community which is simultaneously sacralized and secularized,"[10] and consequently calling the welfare state a "social-national state." Taking his cue from this line of thinking, **Fabian Georgi** points out:

> [The] national-social regulation of class struggles can function only when the scope of compromises established in that way is limited, both spatially-territorially and "personally." Since the costs of compromise are eventually deducted from capitalist surplus value, unlimited expansion through open borders and equal rights would have a tendency to lead to the fall of profit rates to zero. Social-national welfare states are thus fundamentally oriented to secure the conditions of their existence through violent exclusion of those who do not belong, and create hierarchical access to their territory and social rights. Supported and mediated by racist patterns emerging from colonialism, that imperative of exclusion is expressed to a certain degree in national chauvinism, which is institutionally realized in migration and border regimes and, at that, connected with racist tendencies in societies that follow independent-interdependent dynamics.[11]

DESTRUCTIVE IMPLICATIONS OF THE SYSTEM

Under the above circumstances, national chauvinism and racism would hence be phenomena whose structural anchor is the state-organized regulation of class relations under capitalism. The experience of the nationalistic and racist exclusion of contemporary migrant workers, just like that of the *gastarbajters* before them, would thus also represent the experience of the structural boundaries of inclusion and universalism of capitalist societies and states. The reflection on the position of migrant workers, therefore, should take a prominent place in attempts to understand these boundaries, just like the analysis of the systemic logic of capitalism and its social and political implications is an important precondition for understanding hard-core nationalism and racism as social and political phenomena.[12]

The second important insight such analysis brings forth is that of the tendency inherent to capitalism to re-proletarianize labor-power and the dynamic of its historical reaffirmation. At the zenith of the Western European welfare state, the *gastarbajter* was not only a worker imported due to a lacking domestic labor force but also a marker of the return to the radically proleterianized worker, at a moment when capitalism had assumed its most socially inclusive historical form, at least in that part of the world. But the *gastarbajter* was also the harbinger of the coming normalization of re-proletarianization as a common characteristic of the neoliberal period, manifested in a long and coordinated attack on the "historical and moral" standards of the reproduction of labor-power during the era of the welfare state. Only through the optics of the tendency to universalize precariousness (which is just another word for re-proletarianization) does the phenomenon of the *gastarbajter* reveal its full historical and social significance. Illegal migrant workers represent a consequential further radicalization of that experience: devoid even of the right to work, reduced to an informal standby labor army, pushed into the grey economy, their very reproduction criminalized. As such, the illegal migrant worker is a figure of warning of the ultimately destructive implications of a social system based on the imperative of profitability and its logic. ✖

10 Étienne Balibar, "Kommunismus und (Staats-)Bürgerschaft. Überlegungen zur emanzipatorischen Politik," in *Das Staatsverständnis von Nicos Poulantzas. Der Staat als gesellschaftliches Verhältnis,* ed. Alex Demirović, Stephan Adolphs, and Serdar Karakayali (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010), 25.

11 Fabian Georgi, "Widersprüche im langen Sommer der Migration. Ansätze einer materialistischen Grenzregimeanalyse," *PROKLA,* no. 183 (2016): 200.

12 Which, however, does not mean that they can be reduced to capitalist logic or that they do not have other sources and motives.

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Art World Periphery: A Short Look Back

Vesna Vuković

Exhibition *The Art of the Collective*, 2016 / 2017, BAZA, Zagreb • PHOTO: SRĐAN KOVAČEVIĆ

Many artworks, exhibitions, and even entire festivals and biennials are dedicated to the topic of migration, mostly from a humanitarian perspective. But by putting themselves in service of the welfare state, artistic practices actually replace the state's services, forgetting too soon the trap of their own autonomy: art's role in subsuming emancipatory values into the values of the ruling class.

The concept of the "art world" is the last step in realizing the project of the autonomy of art, which has earned this human activity a specific status within capitalist production. Contrary to wage labor, artistic labor is considered free labor not motivated by money, and the creative process itself is focused on personal gratification and self-affirmation whereby the creator maintains their own autonomy. Finally, the production of art is not quantified or valued using financial measures. Hence, the idea of the art world as an oasis implies a domain completely free from the social divisions of labor, and thus from the political and economic rationality that determines all other aspects of sociability.

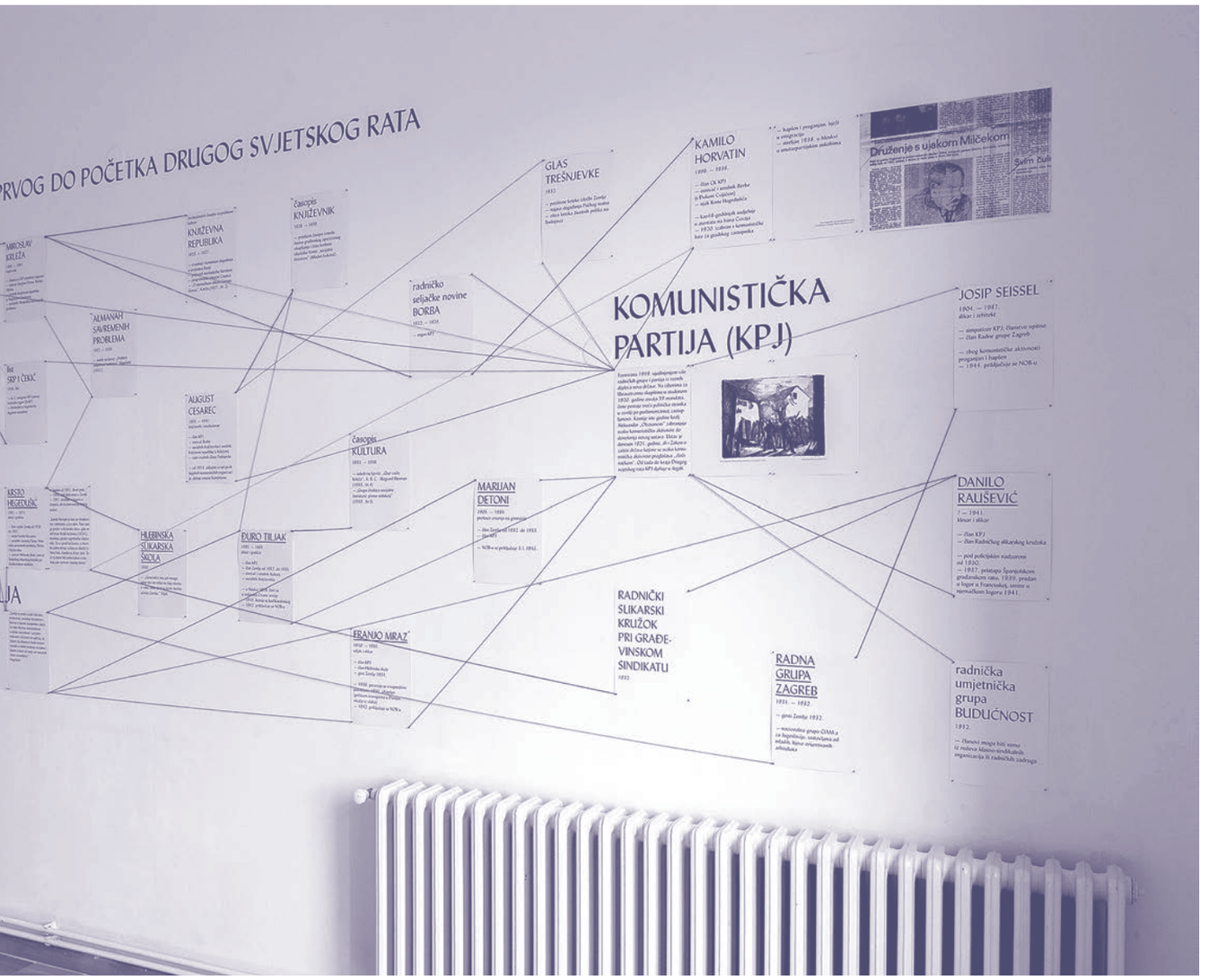
THE LACK OF SELF-REFLECTION AND TRAPS OF AUTONOMY

The art world is thus conceived as a harmonious enclave that gathers together artists as people with a common interest (art), which overcomes any opposing interests that divide the surrounding world. The problems of the non–art world are often the topics of artworks, but they cross the threshold of the art world as external, or "otherworldly," problems, as if their political and economic causes do not divide and structure the art world too. One such topic from the non–art world, the issue of migration, has recently, on the wave of the refugee crisis, gained a central place in artistic production, particularly that which aspires to be socially engaged. Many artworks, exhibitions, and even entire festivals and biennials are dedicated to this topic, mostly from a humanitarian perspective—from works documenting or representing inhumane circumstances along migration routes, to works that provide very concrete social services, sometimes risking even direct conflict with state policies. Thus, by putting themselves in service of the welfare state, artistic practices actually replace the state's services, forgetting too soon the trap of their own autonomy. That is to say, art, at least since the nation-state was established and people were freed from feudal institutions, does not have to exhaust itself in direct representation of politics and the values of the ruling class, but rather its role can be to subsume emancipatory values into the values of the ruling class.

On the other hand, the art world itself is free of those questions, that is, it rejects posing them to itself. For instance, economic migration within its borders is not considered even remotely important. It is in fact quite the opposite, where artists as freely moving creators inhabit the cosmopolitan art world, which knows neither borders nor divisions. In such an ideal world, artistic centers are seen as the meeting places of professionals, as centers of creativity and creative people, which are separated from geopolitical issues such as the relationship between the center and the periphery, which largely determines contemporary population movements.

BERLIN AS A CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLE

While it is not subject to "regular" geopolitical concerns, the art world has its own geography. That geography may not completely overlap with political and economic geography, but in some places imbrication definitely occurs, and migration is one such point. For instance, in the art world, over the past three decades Berlin has assumed the position of a mythical artists' capital, created precisely for artists. In such a highly competitive world, chances for success are low, but the German capital raised itself above former art meccas such as New York and Paris, primarily due to a large number of work (mostly deindustrialized) spaces, relatively low rents and living costs, and social services that centrist states such as Germany still offer. Many artists—particularly those from European (semi)periphery countries, where austerity politics have brutally crippled artistic production and distribution—have fled to this artistic center. In their search for a better life and a place in the art world, they have helped in creating the image of Berlin as a center of creativity and openness, and thus have helped its growing economic development, ushering in an explosion of the real estate market, tourism, and cultural and creative industries. Nevertheless, this rapid development has not had a knock-on effect on the art world itself; in fact, quite the opposite: the gap between the economic reality and life style of the super-rich and that of the majority of Berlin's inhabitants, including artists and cultural workers, is increasing. The issue has reached such a height that it is provoking reactions from official political institutions. The city's secretary for cultural affairs, **Tim Renner**, warns that city policy threatens to fully expel culture from Berlin, which



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In their search for a better life and a place in the art world, artists have helped in creating the image of Berlin as a center of creativity and openness, and thus have helped its growing economic development, ushering in an explosion of the real estate market, tourism, and cultural and creative industries

exists in close symbiosis with real estate and tourism as a generator of development in the city. Berlin's comparative advantages in the race with other international metropolitan centers, warns Renner, will disappear, and with them, the steady flow of creative people.

Such an idea of culture, and art as culture in the strictest sense, as the generator of economic development certainly recognizes art's role in the non–art world; but it does not recognize the role and effects of the non-art world on art. Pooling a large number of artists and creative people in one creative center intensifies their mutual competitiveness, and it also increases the standby labor army, consequently influencing the cost of labor. The globalized art world as a world without borders and divisions thus reveals its other, not-so-bright side. Additionally, the distribution of artistic works themselves, even those that are socially engaged, occurs either within a very professionalized circle or a somewhat wider tourism framework, but it never leaves the sphere of privileged groups and their reception and consumption.

THE COUNTRY IN THE CENTER OF THE PERIPHERY

As discussed above, during the formation of capitalist society, art gained a specific status within its framework, and as such it is pertinent to look back in search of artistic responses at the time when capitalist relations began dominating industry and production in a local context. The local context in this case is the space of the European (semi) periphery, the specificities of which result from its geographic, historical, and economic position. After World War I, in the territory of the Balkans and the newly dissolved Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes emerged. It is still a mostly agrarian area, where as much as 80 percent of the inhabitants live in the countryside. An unsuccessful attempt at agrarian reform, which left the peasantry with an obligation to continue to pay rent, not only failed to solve the problems of the rural population, but actually encouraged expropriation of peasants' property and forced them to emigrate abroad or to big cities, such as Zagreb, which was undergoing rapid industrialization in the 1920s and 1930s. Already industrialized countries of the European center found in such (semi)periphery countries cheap raw materials and labor, resources that also eventually turning Zagreb into an industrial center within the newly formed state. The city attracted migrant workers from the surrounding countryside, but also from other parts of the kingdom. The population boom—increasing from around 50,000 in 1860 to over 200,000 in 1930—was not accompanied by adequate housing policies, and so the migrant workers ended up living in slums erected on the city's periphery. The living conditions in these "houses" became the source of disease, especially tuberculosis, which caused the death of one in four of Zagreb's citizens.

01 Krsto Hegedušić, quoted in Josip Depolo, "Zemlja 1929–1935," in *Revolucionarno slikarstvo* ([illegible]: Spektar, 19[illegible].

02 See, for example, Matko Meštrović, "Socijalne tendencije u hrvatskom slikarstvu između dva rata," *Od pojedinačnog općem* (Zagreb: Mladost, 1967).

03 Đuro Tiljak writes in "The Earth Group Exhibition," *Književnik*, October 1933, no.1: "This exhibition has once again shown that contemporary graphics, developed in an organic connection with the needs and movements of the masses, gains, as one of the instruments of that struggle, an increasing importance, and it permanently creates new artistic expressions and forms under the dictate of its task."

04 "There are many more Generalićs, it is just that no one gives them the pencil, as the Earth Group did in this case." Đuro Tiljak, "The Earth Group Exhibition," *Književnik*, October 1931, no. 10.

12

In the midst of these circumstances appeared the **Grupa Zemlja** (Earth Group), one of the first "organized and program-focused gatherings" of artists in this part of the world. Initial ideas for an association of (visual) artists arose, not by chance, due to relations between Zagreb and Paris. The visual arts at that time were dominated by European modern painting, with its center in Paris. Therefore, visual artists from (semi)periphery countries, including future members of the **Earth Group**, spent some time there during their postgraduate studies. Upon "absorbing" the spirit of the "European" art of the time, they incorporated it into their own practices, giving rise to bourgeois salons and galleries in Zagreb. Even in that early phase of their development, the **Earth Group** was critical of how art displayed the ruling ideology in its production, and they exhibited avant-garde tendencies in their resistance to the bourgeois institution of art. In a letter to the art critic **Oto Bihalji Merin**, Earth Group co-founder **Krsto Hegedušić** explained:

> I was a comrade (in Paris) of the painter Junek, and I was looking to form a revolutionary group of young artists that could fight against our dependence and epigonism in painting. I was developing a theory that it should introduce to our painting the idea of the worker and peasant. ... At the same time, in Zagreb, **Postružnik** and **Tabaković** were discussing the need to form a group of young people. As I returned home for good, in the second half of 1929, these two aspirations were joined. We started discussing the formation of a group, which in the first half of 1929 was formed as the **Earth Group**.[01]

The association's program was defined at a meeting on May 22, 1929, and the first lines outline the aim or purpose of the **Earth Group** as being to emphasize "independence of our expression in painting," which was to be achieved by "the struggle against tendencies from abroad," especially through "the struggle against l'art pour l'art" and by "raising the level of arts." How profoundly the "struggle against tendencies from abroad" informed the **Earth Group**'s activity can be gleaned from the minutes of a meetings during which they discussed their second exhibition, in Paris in 1931. **Antun Augustinčić** suggested that a so-called "dumping department" be formed: painters would be invited to create paintings in the manner of impressionism or colorism, and to exhibit them and sell them at low prices.

This sort of anti-Europeanism has thus far been interpreted as a reflection of the national, even nationalistic, and certainly anti-cosmopolitan orientation of the group. Such interpretations of the **Earth Group** were made even during Yugoslavia's socialist period.[02] However, it is wrong to push the group's rejection of "international tendencies" and the search for their own individual artistic expression into narrow stylistic analyses. The ideological direction of the association should instead be examined both in the framework of the group's foundational program, which was emancipatory in relation to the institution of art in bourgeois society, and as an example of artistic practice in close relation to political activity as part of wider efforts to form a socialist society. Therefore, it can be said that these later interpretations remained imprisoned in the idea of the "art world," unable to find any adequate apparatus for the valorization of a collectivistic approach to art.

ON THE VILLAGE AND THE CITY

How did the rejection of the European style reflect in the **Earth Group**'s aesthetics? On the level of content, it was reflected in the choice to depict the everyday life of the disempowered classes, both in the city and the village. The members of the **Earth Group** portrayed life in the village in all its dimensions, from hard work in the fields, expropriation of land, and taxes paid as holdovers of the feudal system, to church processions and village festivities. They equally thoroughly portrayed the life of the urban proletariat in Zagreb at the time. The juxtaposition of these two motifs indicates how integrated the processes that seized the urban and rural contexts were, and it also shows the choice of the **Earth Group** to take a materialistic approach to society and the position of art within it.

The art of the **Earth Group** was basically an attack on the institution of bourgeois art: the themes of the group's works are usually openly political, and there is a prevalent use of cheap and mass media graphic elements.[03] However, what makes the **Earth Group** especially interesting is their "integral program," that is, their creative work with all members of society: peasants, workers, and children. At a time when artistic education was reserved for the select few from the upper classes, the Earth Group organized painting workshops (**Krsto Hegedušić** established the Hlebin School of Painting for peasants in 1930, and a painting workshop in the Trade Union of Construction Workers in 1932) and circles (such as **Pučki teatar**, established in 1932), where they encouraged the classes excluded from the art world to translate their own reality, with all its problems and contradictions, into visual language.[04]

The connection between the city and the village within capitalist production is most clearly expressed in the works of the group's architects, as exhibited in the sections "House and Life," in the fourth exhibition of the **Earth Group** in 1932, and "Village," in the fifth exhibition in 1934, both held at the Art Pavilion, Zagreb. The first section, "House and Life," examined the relation between housing and socioeconomic factors in the city, and "Village," assembled by **Stjepan Planić** and **Ernest Tomašević**, exhibited housing conditions in the villages, including their socioeconomic cause—that is, the crisis that caused the peasantry to move to the city. Alongside the panels by **Stjepan Planić**, which were displayed most prominently, the section exhibited drawings by **Zdenka Sertić**, photographs of the Hygienic Institute and Ethnographic Museum by **Planić**, and reports from Podravina by **Krsto Hegedušić** and from Bosnia, Posavina, Zagorje, and the area of Ozalj by **Ernest Tomašević**. The simple panels contain drawings and blueprints of village houses and slogans written in handwriting, which reveal the processes of proletarianization of the peasantry:

> "Public squares are brimming with cheap labor. Unemployment. For a man who fled the countryside, there is no return. In such circumstances emerge unplanned, poor suburbs."

Exhibition *The Art of the Collective*, 2016/2017, BAZA, Zagreb • PHOTO: SRĐAN KOVAČEVIĆ

"From poor, economically destroyed villages move masses of people searching for bread and work in the city."

"Houses are commercial goods dependent on profit made on the invested capital. Maximal exploitation."

"By renting plots of arable land, peasants earn twice as much as what they can earn from the best wheat crops. On those plots, workers build barracks."

Certainly, this historical example cannot be applied formulaically to the contemporary situation. While the aim of the Earth Group was to participate in the socialist revolution and later in building a socialist society with a wide network of public institutions, by contrast contemporary artistic practices that are socially engaged and undertake the political agenda of and/or service the welfare state, without a political aim of resisting capitalism, are more a part of the system that dismantles the types of social institutions the **Earth Group** helped to build.

However, at the same time, the interwar period is often invoked today in connection with the rise of anti-immigrant policies in Europe, particularly in a defeatist tone that connects the crisis with rising fascism. Therefore, we should be reminded that in that interwar period there was a political project that strove to change social relations, and in that context there was in particular a notable emergence of engaged art that operated in close relation with anti-fascist and socialist movements. This historical lesson speaks of the need to break away from the idea of the "art world" as a necessary step in opening up socialist perspectives in all worlds. ✖

VESNA VUKOVIĆ is a curator and researcher, member of the Zagreb-based collective [BLOK], and a freelance translator and author. She was an associate and guest lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts of the University of Zagreb from 2007 to 2011 and at the Arts Academy of the University of Split from 2012 to 2014. She regularly contributes to Croatian Radio 3, where she, since 2013, has co-edited the program Stvarnost prostora, which deals with the social processes that produce city space beyond its buildings. Vuković's work is dedicated to art in public space and its relation to the politics of public domain. Her curatorial practice explores the in-between spaces of generation, production, and representation of contemporary art as a form of expanded exhibition, as well as the spatial organization of the public sphere. As a researcher, she delves into the role of the curator within art in public space and the possibilities and limitations of this specific curatorial practice.

Goran Dević, *The Steel Mill Cafe*, 2017
(movie stills)

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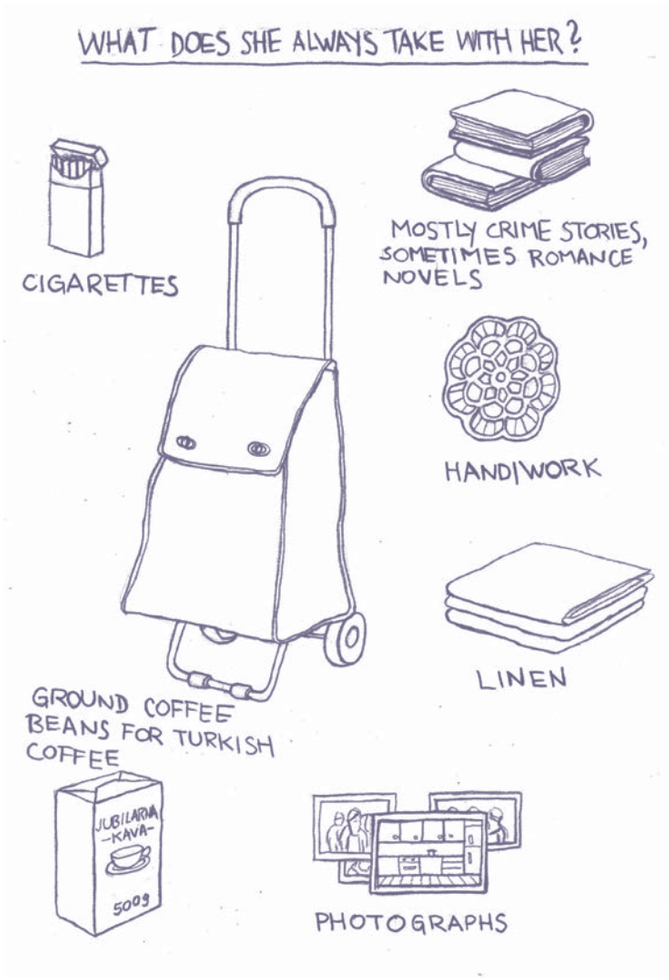
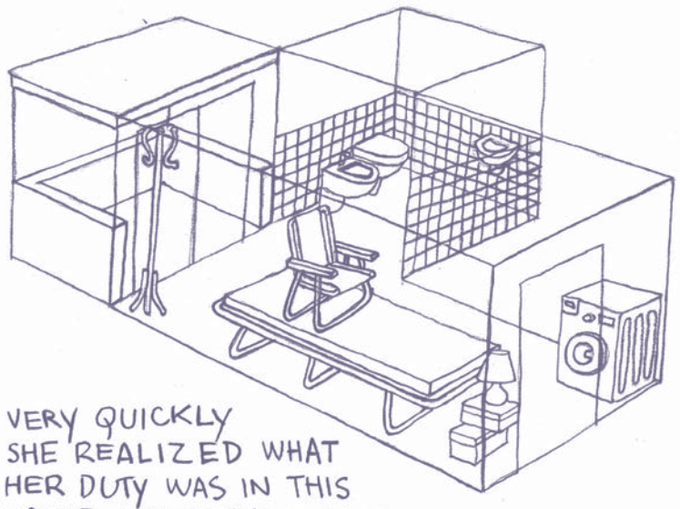
Božena Končić Badurina: from artist book *Here and There*, part of installation *Will Do, Will do... But How?!*, Duga Mavrinac and Božena Končić Badurina, 2017.



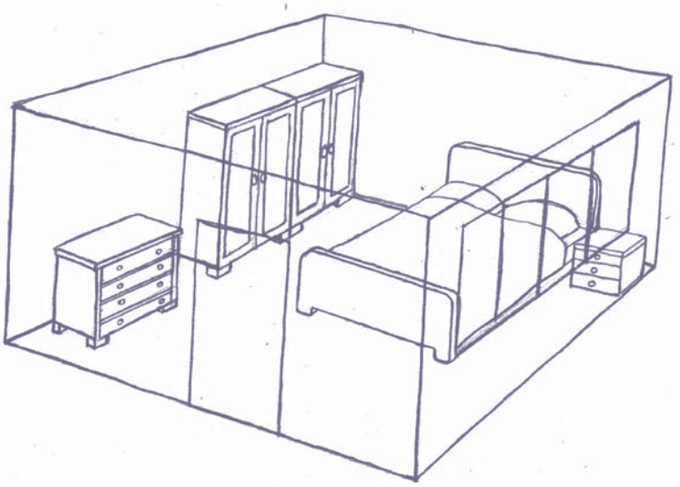
Here and There

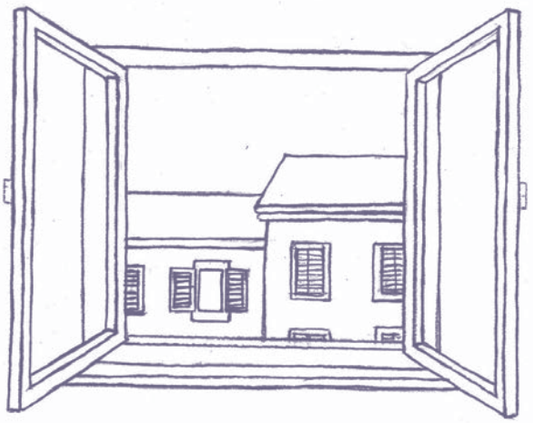
SHE WORKS 15 DAYS AND SPENDS 15 DAYS AT HOME. THAT WAY IT'S EASIER TO ENDURE.



VERY QUICKLY SHE REALIZED WHAT HER DUTY WAS IN THIS HOUSE. WHEN SHE WASN'T BUSY IN THE KITCHEN, SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE INVISIBLE, IN HER ROOM, BUT READY TO RESPOND AT ANY MOMENT SHOULD THE MADAM NEED HER. THAT'S WHY SHE ALWAYS HAD THE FEELING OF BEING IN A WAITING ROOM, LIKE AT

WITH THE MADAM IN UDINE SHE GOT A BIG ROOM WITH A DOUBLE BED, TWO WARDROBES, A DRESSER AND WINDOWS OVERLOOKING THE TOWN.



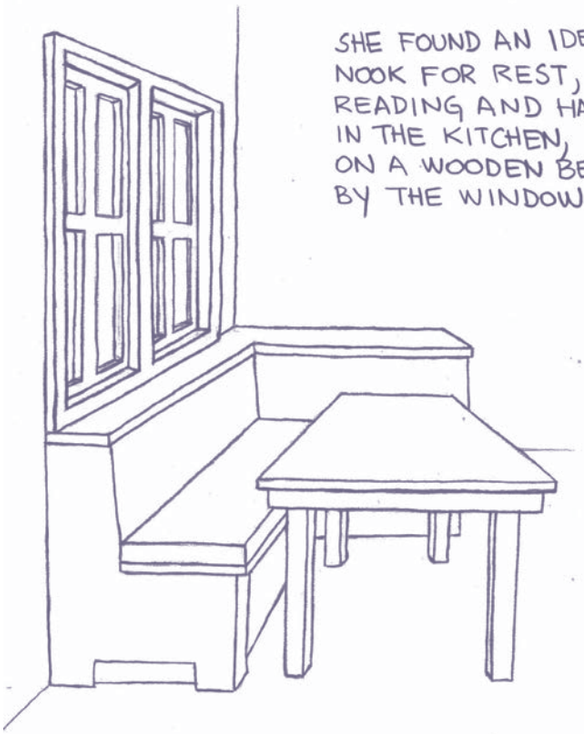


WHEN SHE OPENED HER BEDROOM WINDOW THE FIRST MORNING IN FELETTO, THE SUN WAS ON THE WRONG SIDE. THAT THREW HER OFF COMPLETELY.

COFFEE AND CIGARETTES

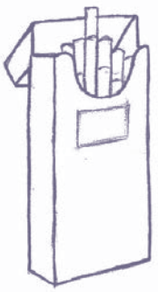
TWICE A DAY, IN THE MORNING AND AFTERNOON, SHE MAKES TURKISH COFFEE. SHE CAN'T STAND ESPRESSO, NEITHER THE TASTE NOR THE SMELL. THAT'S WHY SHE TAKES AT LEAST A POUND OF GROUND COFFEE BEANS FOR TURKISH COFFEE EVERY TIME SHE GOES TO ITALY. SHE ALSO TAKES A FEW PACKS OF CIGARETTES.

A PLACE IN ANOTHER'S HOME



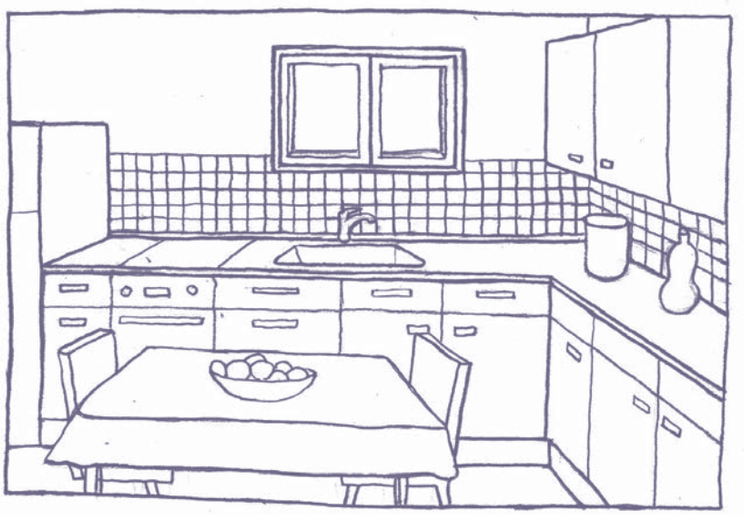
SHE FOUND AN IDEAL NOOK FOR REST, READING AND HANDIWORK IN THE KITCHEN, ON A WOODEN BENCH BY THE WINDOW.

IN THE EARLY MORNING, BEFORE THE START OF THE DAY'S ACTIVITIES, IT'S IMPORTANT TO PUT ASIDE FIVE MINUTES JUST FOR YOURSELF.



SHE HAS NEVER BOUGHT CIGARETTES IN ITALY. SHE ONLY SMOKES HER OWN. AND VERY LITTLE, TWO WITH MORNING COFFEE AND TWO WITH THE AFTERNOON ONE.

THE KITCHEN PHOTOGRAPH



BESIDES THE FAMILY PHOTOS, SHE ALWAYS CARRIES A PHOTO OF HER KITCHEN WITH HER. SOME PEOPLE DON'T MISS THEIR HOME AT ALL. SOME WOMEN SAY, "I DON'T GET ANY REST UNTIL I GO AWAY!" BUT NOT HER, SHE'S NOT LIKE THAT. SHE MISSES HER HOUSE.

SHE: "HOW WILL WE PAY THE BILLS, COVER OUR EXPENSES?"

HE: "DON'T WORRY, WE WILL, WE WILL..."

SHE: "BUT YOU GET TWO THOUSAND, I GET TWO THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED. WHAT ABOUT THE GIRLS, THE MORTGAGE...? HOW WILL WE MANAGE?"

HE: "OH, WE WILL, WE WILL."

SHE: "YEAH, BUT HOW?"

Home, Foreign Home—commemorating the fifty-year anniversary of the signing of the agreement on labor migration between Austria and Yugoslavia

Jana Dolečki

TRANSLATED BY
Tijana Gojić Topolnik

The official modes of commemorating the anniversary completely ignored the fact that the multigenerational integration and transformation of temporary workers into permanent ones was based on state directives and documents whose practical implementation precisely prioritized their temporariness

The fifty-year anniversary of the signing of the agreement on labor force recruitment from former Yugoslavia for temporary work in Austria was commemorated through numerous manifestations, including exhibitions, conferences, and other events organized by both state and independent initiatives. This all took place within the overwhelming atmosphere of the 2016 Austrian presidential election, which was marked by scandals and unprecedented court-ordered re-elections. The issue of the *gastarbajters*, to which Austria does not officially assign any concrete significance, other than specific dates, is thus more or less left to socially conscious Austrian migration initiatives as well as their predominantly academically affiliated sympathizers.[01] In 2016, however, this historical event took on greater referential value, which, in a sense, was able to rip it from its historical context and inscribe it into the contemporary reality of both the aforementioned political turmoil and the acute migration crisis — be it in an explicit or openly suppressed way. Throughout the commemoration year, the *gastarbajter* was thus mostly referred to in official public discourse on migrants as a model of *successful integration*. "It is very important that the second and third generations of migrants from former Yugoslavia are integrated well in Austrian society. The example of people from former Yugoslavia shows that integration can succeed, but that it also takes a lot of time, even more than one generation," claimed **Sebastian Kurz**, the Austrian federal minister for Europe, integration, and foreign affairs.[02] He forgot to mention, however, what the precise criteria for good and bad integration is. The reasoning is in the timing. At the very moment that the minister suggested regulating the migrant crisis along the Australian model and threatened to punish school children's "unwillingness to integrate" (*Integrationsunwilligkeit*) with a fine of 1,000 euros, Yugoslav migrants were drawn out of Austria's dusty cabinet of social welfare wonders and celebrated as a great success of national politics — usurped from all angles as a social experiment right in the middle of the election year and the implementing of controversial migration policies. Each of the larger and more established political parties (with the exception of the radical right-wing Freedom Party of Austria, or FPÖ, whose non-participation needs no explanation), and every state office or agency with "integration," "minority," or both in its name, organized its own celebration of the anniversary of the migrant worker agreement with a predictable lineup of official speeches, minority-themed entertainment programs, and buffets featuring Balkan specialties.

In their glorifying of the success of the Austrian integration model, which has been developing for several generations (in the official discourse, migration is still ranked by numbers — first generation, second generation, etc. — as if a grandfather's or grandmother's surname is more important than someone having lived in Austria for decades), the official modes of commemorating the anniversary completely ignored the fact that the multigenerational integration and transformation of temporary workers into permanent ones was based on state directives and documents whose practical implementation precisely prioritized their temporariness. In other words, the government did not project or plan for guest workers to remain. This happened in spite of the government. The very text of the 1966 agreement is evidence of this. Its language is based on similar contractual documents that the Republic of Austria drafted with Spain (1962) and Turkey (1964), which emerged from projections of strong postwar economic growth and the pressure to find facilitators for that growth. Along with the regulating mechanisms for the systematic employment of Yugoslav workers in Austria (Austrian employers had to announce job vacancies to the Yugoslav Employment Bureau, through which workers could then apply for certain jobs, to which, after a compulsory health check, they would travel at the employer's

01 Jana Dolečki, "Čuvanje i stvaranje nove povijesti Austrije," *Kulturpunkt.hr*, July 29, 2014, http://www.kulturpunkt.hr/content/cuvanje-i-stvaranje-nove-povijesti-austrije.

02 Sebastian Kurz, quoted in "Ajnhajtclub offiziell eröffnet!," *Kosmo*, July 6, 2016, http://www.kosmo.at/ajnhajtclub-offiziell-eroeffnet.

Bosiljka Schedlich's project *The Trip. Women from Yugoslavia in Berlin* (1987), exhibition *They Were Some Kind of a Solution*, Gallery Nova, 2017 • PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ

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expense) and the regulations regarding the rights of Yugoslav workers to benefit from having equal status in relation to their Austrian colleagues, the basic driving force behind the agreement was its rotational work plan—the additional labor force was conceived as a *guest* labor force, in the full sense of the word. The *gastarbajters* were predominantly employed in waves, limited by short-term contracts. The importance of the notion of the temporariness of their labor was further confirmed by the first major economic crisis in Austria (1975–1984), when more than a third of Yugoslav workers were sent back to their country of domicile as a technical surplus.

However, that system of temporary work—conceived, approved, and normalized—already began to collapse after just a few years in practice, but from *within* and in spite of official regulations. Many of the seasonal workers decided to stay. They switched jobs to get around the regulation of one-off employment and brought their families over, expanding the possibilities of their stay. At the same time, many Austrian employers started extending contracts of their own accord to avoid training another new wave of workers. It is precisely this diversity of the process of transforming guests into full-fledged, active subjects of the Austrian state, of "them" into "us," that was entirely missing from the state-initiated anniversary celebrations of the 1966 agreement—which only subverted its historical conditionality (imposed top-down) and its completely predictable forms of representation on rare occasion.

Along with the appropriate festivities organized by official bodies (most of which were not public in character), the few events that did not fall under the aforementioned programming schemes were most commonly held in municipal cultural institutions, such as museums, galleries, and cinemas, as part of the programs of independent cultural centers, or in spaces influenced by temporary guest work like abandoned factories. Regardless of the structure of support for the programs themselves (be it state, city, political party, or independent patronage), the remaining models of representation for the highly complex topic of labor migration that we saw in 2016, could, given the character of the material itself, be reduced to two forms. The first deals with displaying the sociopolitical context, that is, the mechanisms of controlling and managing migrant labor "from above," including questioning and presenting the administrative conditions, relations of control and management, political decisions, and so on. These were critically examined only at a minimal level by any of the programs visited and analyzed for this essay. The questions were instead presented merely symbolically as some sort of starting point.

The second form of representational material overwhelmingly prevailed. This referred to the model of representation "from below," that is, the reduction of the phenomenon to a basic common denominator, characterized by the personal testimonies of pioneering *gastarbajters*. This kind of individual archival material, whether in material or living form, has comprised the largest part of the commemorative exhibitions and other manifestations in Austria thus far; these include, for example, the exhibition *Under a Foreign Sky,* at the Vienna Ethnographic Museum, and the traveling exhibition *We Have Come to Stay,* in Linz. Also included are segments of other projects on the same topic, such as of the project *Langer Weg der Gastarbajt* (The long journey of guest work), dedicated to the topos of Yugoslav migration in Vienna's 16th and 17th districts and the organization of the Viennese independent initiative Platform. At first glance, it seems praiseworthy to give visibility to and empower the individual actors of these stories, who have, until now, remained largely submerged in the concept of *gastarbajt*. However, the overall reliance on the representation of the phenomenon through its particular examples, and without any theoretical interpretation, likely risks missing the point of the whole concept.

Regarding labor itself, the vast majority of the statements used by such projects, given by workers with very demanding manual jobs, are rarely presented with enough context to qualify as critical contributions to understanding that highly qualified jobs in Austria were mostly intended for the domestic population. Testimonies thereby remain minimally critical of the host country and its official policies, and are thus all too easily reduced to the level of individual cases. Similarly, in the spirit of such dominant discourse—which tells the history of the *gastarbajters* as a story with a happy ending—official annual programs have primarily presented positive examples of people who have become "full members of Austrian society" through nothing more than their committed, hard work. This principle of "montage" of the model of success is more apparent when the state becomes more present in supporting the program; critical considerations of, for instance, highly uncertain housing and living conditions, linguistic barriers, difficult structural progress, and the exposure to everyday social discrimination are generally suppressed, explained away as results of the "unpreparedness of the system," or labeled as temporary or individual cases. However, some programs, mostly those that are self-organized in nature, such as the aforementioned *Langer Weg der Gastarbajt,* have attempted to avoid such one-dimensionality through a careful selection of interlocutors. This was the case when first-generation *gastarbajters,* who were included in a tour of Viennese districts marked by the lives and work of temporary workers, broke away from the prevailing presentation models by exposing even the negative aspects of life on the edge of temporariness and uncertainty.

The first bigger event dedicated to *gastarbajters* from former Yugoslavia, in which the organizers tried to intertwine both models of representation in order to achieve a more inclusive exploration of the topic, took place in April 2016 in Vienna as a manifestation entitled "…because I could not imagine Vienna without our Yugoslav friends…" (a quote taken from an address by the mayor of Vienna, **Helmut Zilk**, at the opening of the sports games of the **Yugoslav Workers' Clubs** in 1989). This event, organized by the University of Innsbruck, the independent platform for minorities **Initiative Minderheiten**, and the association **Archiv der Migration**, consisted of an exhibition and a mini-conference that took place at the former club Jugoslaven, the **Yugoslav Workers' Club** of Vienna, and the **Filmcasino** (the archival materials that show photographs of **Tito** flaunted in a space that today serves as one of Vienna's most

important art cinemas seem almost surreal). The theoretical framework laid out in the first part of the event corresponded perfectly with the second part of the event, in which leading functionaries of former Yugoslav Workers' Clubs presented their testimonies as living witnesses and facilitators of particular political agendas in a lively panel discussion. Their testimonies about how these clubs were established and run (there were twenty such clubs at one point in Vienna) very clearly revealed the mechanisms and methods behind the official relations between their home country and Austria. That event was rounded out by screenings of several documentary films on *gastarbajters*, by **Krsto Papić**, **Želimir Žilnik**, and **Goran Rebić**, which opened up the question not only of how Yugoslav cinema approached this phenomenon but also how it "used it" to present a sort of critique of the perception of *gastarbajters* in Yugoslavia itself.

The third, nearly bastardized, model of representation presents the topic of worker migration through contemporary art production. Despite lacking contextual, theoretical, and historical references, that model still has some advantages regarding the actualization of its critical potential, because it reflects a phenomenon of the past through the relevance of the personal sociopolitical context of the artist.

Along with numerous individual art projects presented through various programs,[03] the Ajnhajtklub exhibition at frei_raum Q21 — which exhibited both international artists as well as artists from former Yugoslavia working more or less "temporarily" in Austria — was the clearest and certainly the most representative example of an artistic approach to the topic of *gastarbajters*. Even though the anniversary was once again the main reference point for the curatorial concept, the exhibition surpassed the specific narrative of Yugoslav workers at some points, bringing the topic of guest and temporary work into the broader current socioeconomic context.[04] However, what was missing in the exhibition was an activation of the political potential of the exhibited content, which would have been accomplished by shifting the topic to the reality of the present-day political situation in Austria, which is distinctly marked by the migrant crisis. Not one of the displayed works scratched the surface of the correlation between those historical working conditions and today's "economic" migration or how the state tries to deal with it.

Nevertheless, however conceptually and substantively withdrawn it may have been, the political potential of the Ajnhajtklub exhibition existed to some degree, although only through a few "external" facts that marked it. Firstly, the exhibition was negotiated and produced under the auspices of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Integration, headed by Minister **Kurz**, which certainly had an effect on the concept of the exhibition. The second external "scandal" concerns **Tanja Ostojić**'s withdrawal of her work.[05] Regardless of the nature and range of the event itself, Ostojić's withdrawal revealed an interesting symptom, that is, the question of censorship or the existence of "designated guidelines" not only for that exhibition but also for similar art projects financed by the state that question Austria's "sacred cows."

Furthermore, as both **Ostojić** and the exhibition's curator, **Bogomir Doringer**, share a geographically common migrant background, the issue of different approaches to the idea of integration and its political actualization became more complex, albeit outside the realm of public discussion. Although a public critical examination of these contextual problems was completely absent (aside from the somewhat sidelined public statements by **Ostojić** and the Viennese artist and activist **Aleksandar Nikolić**),[06] the more informed Austrian and broader public could see not only the mechanisms that impose control over cultural and artistic production but also a clear position that shows how the topic of the *gastarbajter* and its public representation still require official control. In other words, we can surmise that the persistence of the narrative about Yugoslav labor migration as an example of "successful integration" likely lies in the fact that the dominant political system generally does not allow any divergence from such a narrative.

What became visible through these various examples is the fact that the majority of the manifestations, which honored historical processes of labor migration in various ways over the course of 2016, have not yet articulated a deconstruction of how official discourse attempts to relegate the notion of the *gastarbajter* to the past or how it interprets the positive outcomes of its "destiny." Likewise, and perhaps more importantly, none of the mentioned programs placed the historical phenomenon of the guest workforce into a direct correlation with the present moment, thus failing to activate its broader political and social significance in relation to the current migratory flows that have had a decisive impact on Austria over the last few years.

Even though there has been an analysis of the relationship between the phenomenon of the *gastarbajter* and current migratory movements in the media and in the public to some degree, this has mostly been done with the aim of distinguishing and separating them. The focus on differentiation most commonly lies in the primary motivations of the migrants, so that one generally compares the initial positions of these groups of guest workers, ranging from the desire for economic prosperity to the necessity of preserving bare life. By placing guest work in a sort of direct comparison with the newly labeled "economic migration," official narratives can link a large portion of the current migrant flows to economic premises, thus limiting their mobility as well as their stay in Austria to market conditions. Therefore, it is clarified in several places — without any awareness of the position's blatant "economic racism" — there was a time when the Austrian market generated the demand for a new workforce, whereas today that same market, due to processes of globalization and automation, simply no longer offers jobs in the service sector, traditionally intended for guests workers. An additional distinction arises in the conditions and requirements that Austria imposes on newcomers: compare the ease of obtaining work permits as part of the historical "from

03 For example, the performance *Pozdrav* (*Greetings!*) by Marko Marković (which was a part of *Langer Weg der Gastarbajt*), the premiere of Đorđe Čengić's film *Unten* (*Below*), and a video by the artist duo Doplgenger at the Krems Museum.

04 For example, Addie Wagenknecht's *Optimization of Parenthood*, Part 2, in which a robotic arm reacts to each cry of a child by swinging a cradle, thus invoking the issue of working parents absent from the home and their children, then and now.

05 The withdrawal of Ostojić's work from the original exhibition and her public statement on the systematic censorship of her planned work should have critically addressed the position of the BCS language within the framework of public cultural institutions. See "Censorship of Tanja Ostojić's Art project at the Q21 Exhibition Space in MQ (Vienna, Austria)," *Art Leaks*, June 9, 2016, https://art-leaks.org/2016/06/09/censorship-of-tanja-ostojics-art-project-at-the-q21-exhibition-space-in-mq-vienna-austria.

06 See "Tanja Ostojić: Cenzura u Beču," *SEECult.org*, May 28, 2016, http://www.seecult.org/vest/tanja-ostojic-cenzura-u-becu.

Bosiljka Schedlich's project *The Trip. Women from Yugoslavia in Berlin* (1987), exhibition *They Were Some Kind of a Solution*, Gallery Nova, 2017 • PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ

If social diversity is is presented as one of the most prominent achievements of modern Austria, why does this trend of "enriching" Austria's social landscape through the arrival of others not simply continue today?

train to job" employment system to the current, almost Kafkaesque mechanisms for acquiring the right to work, which includes a certain command of the German language, the attendance of "integration" courses, the transferral of diplomas and licenses, and so on.

There is no need to further emphasize how much these and similar differential inferences blur the view on much more important issues, such as those that question systemic mechanisms or the global political and economic contexts that have led to such drastic changes in the regulation of labor conditions for incoming workers. In the official narrative of the Austrian state, *gastarbajters* are regarded as an example of the success of a state system and its integration processes. However, the chance of gaining equal status when it comes to "social welfare" within that same state is not given to current job seekers in Austria. Although reasons for this should certainly be sought in trends in the global market as well as in prevalent ideological currents, one may get the impression that these reasons are still related to the specific historical experience of Austria itself and its systematic reaction to it. In other words, if the phenomenon of the *gastarbajter* is perceived as a model of successful labor migration on an official level, why should that change now? If social diversity is one of the most prominent achievements of modern Austria, and is presented as such by the state itself, why does this trend of "enriching" Austria's social landscape through the arrival of others not simply continue today?

Instead of a situation where the state learns from historical facts by adapting its mechanisms of control and permeability, migrants themselves — regardless of the particular historical moment that defines them — will likely learn the most from these experiences. And it is in exactly this direction that an emancipatory approach to presenting and producing cultural material that deals with the phenomenon of a guest workforce should go. The publication and presentation of personal historical narratives that deviate from the official "happy ending" storyline of historical labor migration have hardly been inscribed into the official annals, either of the host or of the home country, thus far. Presentation of these narratives is therefore extremely important, especially in light of the fact that such programs communicate effectively not only with a general audience but also with an audience of migrants, who can recognize themselves in such experiences and thus concretely build affiliations, or maybe even veer away from that notion altogether.

The "*gastarbajter* audience," if it can even be referred to in this way, is a very heterogeneous community with a specific set of varied experiences, which generally lacks its own form of autonomous political articulation. By not questioning the guest workforce and its inscribed position as a fixed and generalized event, we not only open up possibilities for official manipulation but, on a much more concrete level, also make possible the generation of new forms of political potential and articulated engagement — both in direct relation to the current state system as well as to all the aforementioned contemporary sociopolitical problems in which this phenomenon is reflected. ✖

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Migrant Workers: The Light Infantry of Global Capitalism

Jelena Ostojić

Foreign workers comprise a very vulnerable group, particularly in view of the impossibility to realize labor rights in the event they are violated or to undertake struggles for better working conditions. Trade union organization, which is commonly a problem for all workers without permanent employment contracts, is not a practical option.

Labor migration is a phenomenon with a long history, and in the industrial period it has featured mass waves of migration toward developed countries. This complex narrative precisely outlines the socioeconomic geography of the industrial and post-industrial world. But if we limit the time frame to the period since the enlargement of the European Union with the addition of twelve new countries (2004–07) and subsequently Croatia (2013), we will narrow down the discussion to what is colloquially called the European periphery. This is the space occupied by Croatia, which is characterized on the one hand by a strong workforce drain to the countries of the European center and, on the other, by an increasing need for influxes of new workers from so-called third countries.[01]

For most of the last decade, Croatia has been characterized by very unfavorable indicators in the labor and employment sector. Particularly high unemployment rates and their ongoing rise were interrupted in 2014, the year that marks the beginning of, so to speak, economic recovery after the global economic crisis of 2008. Despite this recent improvement, Croatia remains among the countries with the highest unemployment rates. But at the same time, it also has recorded the largest decrease of unemployment in the post-crisis period. However, behind these seemingly positive trends, there has been strong labor migration from Croatia to other EU countries, which has greatly contributed to the decrease of unemployment but also simultaneously to the decrease of job opportunities. Estimates on how many unemployed people left the country searching for work abroad overshadow the data that show that emigration from Croatia includes workers who had been employed before they left. According to employer estimates released by the Croatian Employment Service last year, in 2016 alone more than 22,000 employed people left Croatia with the purpose of finding a better job elsewhere. It should be kept in mind that the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Slovenia have removed quotas for Croatian workers, while Austria will remove quotas very soon, at latest by June 30, 2020. Therefore, it can hardly be expected that the intensity of emigration from Croatia, which is already comparable to emigration levels at the beginning of the twentieth century, will decrease.

LABOR MIGRATION AND ITS SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES

These processes cannot be considered separately from the large proportion of insecure work, which has remained steady throughout the years of so-called economic recovery, and which affects more than a fifth of those who are temporarily employed or engaged in various types of short-term employment, of which Croatia has one of the largest shares in the European Union. It is precisely working conditions that have been the most cited reason for labor emigration from Croatia, which has consequently led to labor immigration from third countries, with such workers so far modestly present in the Croatian labor market.

When we speak of labor migration, with an emphasis on the migrations from third countries to European Union countries, we mostly refer to workers with lower qualifications who fill positions that are not attractive to domestic workers.[02] The procedure of setting quotas for workers from third countries for the period of one year is precisely governed by the needs of the country that sets the quotas, while all labor rights are connected to the work permit. This procedure clearly indicates the lack of interest for the welfare of the workers, their integration, or their protection. With these characteristics of foreign labor in mind, it is clear that this is a very precarious form of work. It is likewise difficult to miss the potential benefit that employers gain from this type of labor and the social vulnerability of workers in this position, thanks to which they can be more easily managed and their wages lowered.[03] They represent a kind of light infantry of global capitalism, as pointed out by the economist **Guy Standing**, which is not connected to local traditions of solidarity and class identity, and therefore weakens the regulations and negotiation power of local workers' groups.[04]

When it comes to the usefulness of labor migration at the level of the country of origin, commonly discussed benefits relate to money orders sent home and the lowering of unemployment pressure. These arguments have been used by the World Bank to consider the benefits for underdeveloped countries from which workers emigrate.[05] This is a rough depiction of the current dynamic in Croatia, if we take into account the record influx of money from abroad as well as the record low of registered unemployed noted in the past few years. But this is an approach that is often criticized because it does not take into account devastating consequences for the countries of origin in the form of useless investment in education infrastructure, which becomes unsustainable if it serves as fuel for the development of work in other parts of the world, or in the form of the loss of the working population as a generator of sustainability. In such a context, the issue of labor rights and the position of labor in general is becoming a kind of race to the bottom, whether we speak of those who leave or those who arrive.

THE ORGANIZATION OF LABOR OF FOREIGN WORKERS IN CROATIA

The labor of foreign workers in Croatia is regulated by the Foreigners Act (*Official Gazette* 130/11, 74/13 and 69/17) and refers to persons from so-called third countries. Work and residency permits are issued on the basis of an annual quota, and beyond the annual quota issuance is determined by the Government of

01 "Third-country citizens" is a term used in the context of European migrations for people who are not citizens of the EU, Ísland, Lichtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland, and it mostly refers to migrants from less developed or emigration countries.

02 Mojca Pajnik, "Migranti kao jeftini radnici u Europi: prema kritičkoj ocjeni integracije," *Migracijske i etničke teme* 28, no. 2 (2012).

03 Vlado Puljiz, "NN tekst," in *Migracije i razvoj Hrvatske : podloga za hrvatsku migracijsku strategiju* (Zagreb: Hrvatska gospodarska komora, 2014).

04 Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011).

05 Puljiz, "NN tekst."

Daniela Ortiz, *ABC of Racist Europe*, 2017; installation view, exhibition *Signs and Whispers*, Gallery Nova, 2017. • PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ

the Republic of Croatia. The quotas for foreign workers are set every year for the following one-year period, and the worker is limited to work in the year for which the permit is issued. The permit is granted on the basis of an employment contract with a specified employer. There is stipulation for the possibility of extension of the work residency, but a glance at the numbers of extended permits (FIGURE 1) suggests that across the years extensions have been issued to very few workers. Therefore, permanent residency, which is conditioned on five years of continuous employment, does not seem to be a possibility ever realized by foreign workers in Croatia.

Foreign workers, therefore, comprise a very vulnerable group, particularly in view of the impossibility to realize labor rights in the event they are violated or to undertake struggles for better working conditions. Trade union organization, which is commonly a problem for all workers without permanent employment contracts, is not a practical option. Considering that an employment contract is the basis for a residency permit in the country of work, the termination of the contract implies mechanisms that enable the employer to render the worker illegal, by which the worker's status in the country becomes dire. This permanent threat acts as a means of pacification in the event of the need for any sort of workers' organization, in which the role of trade unions could be of crucial relevance.

This connection is precisely what invokes the subject of the relation of trade unions to this type of work, which in many cases poses a great challenge for trade unions. If we leave aside the fact that trade unions have been losing their influence, and also membership, throughout the entire post-Fordist era,[06] it still remains that their focus has been mainly on workers with permanent employment, while the tackling other forms of work only ultimately serves to protect the acquired rights of permanent employees. This approach is part of an agenda that recognizes permanent employment as the only acceptable type of employment. Simultaneously, due to the economic crisis, the percentage of insecure of work has increased in the post-crisis period, and thus indirectly influenced the decrease of secure forms of work. The rise of insecure work took place under the pretense of a long-lasting and deep recession, but the trend has not reversed with the recovery of the market. Foreign labor is yet another form of precarious and insecure employment, and the lack of initiative on the part of trade unions to find a way to organize this segment of workers is further deepening their crisis and questioning their existing labor rights.[07]

The current year can be considered a milestone when it comes to this issue within labor organization in Croatia. If we take a look back to the pre-crisis period to 2008, labor migration was characterized by very favorable indicators, with Croatia accepting around 10,000 foreign workers, which is by far the largest number until 2018. The reason for the lack of wider discussion on this topic can be found in the small quotas for foreign workers that have been set so far. In light of the discussions on precarious work being reignited due to the record spread of this type of work in Croatia in the past few years, it is necessary to consider the possible increased influence of this extremely insecure form of work in 2018 due to the opening of 30,000 jobs for foreign workers. To best illustrate this number, let us consider it in this context: it represents around 2 percent of the total number of employed workers in Croatia. In other words, according to this quota, the number of foreign workers has significantly surpassed, for example, the total number of workers employed through temp agencies; this is yet another form of precarious work, but in comparison, foreign labor is significantly more insecure. It should be reiterated that Croatia is already among the countries with the highest share of temporary work in the European Union, and the current foreign worker quota it wants to achieve would increase this share by an additional tenth.

INSECURE AND EVEN MORE INSECURE WORK

Labor migration in Croatia is mainly concentrated in male-dominated and labor-intensive sectors, primarily construction. The demand for this type of labor force is very similar in Slovenia, and post-socialist countries in general are dominated by labor migrations of men.[08] Besides construction, tourism and hospitality is the next most saturated sector, even though seasonal labor in tourism is not necessarily regulated by annual quotas, since there are other legal pathways that provide seasonal employment for three months. The other sectors that are expected to take a significant share of the expected influx of foreign workers are the metal industry and shipbuilding (FIGURE 2).

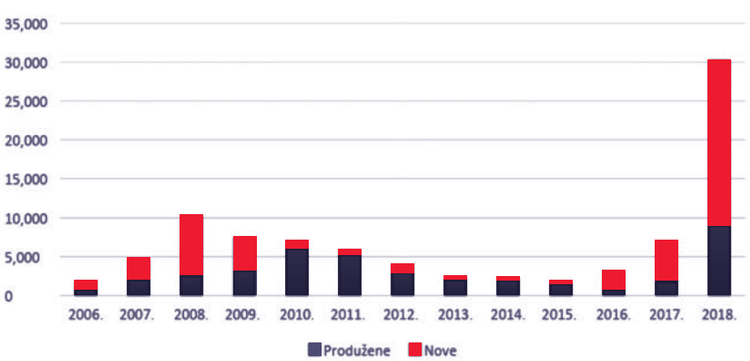

FIGURE 1. Work permits for foreign workers (Official Gazette), author's illustration. (Produžene = Extended permits. Nove = New permits.)

06 An exception are Scandinavian countries, where trade union density is higher than in the rest of European and OECD countries. However, a slight decrease in the density of representation of trade unions in Scandinavian countries began after the 2000s. Dragan Bagić, paper at the annual conference of the Croatian Sociological Association, Zagreb, 2017.

07 Sandra Kasunić's text "(Prisilna) Migracija – tema za sindikate?" is informative with respect to the relation of trade unions to migrant work in Germany. It is available online at http://www.maz.hr/2017/01/15/prisilna-migracija-tema-za-sindikate.

08 Pajnik, "Migranti kao jeftini radnici u Europi."

Daniela Ortiz, *ABC of racist Europe*, 2017

Dividing the quota by sector brings the discussion on foreign workers back to the discussion on insecure work, because it reveals the sectors that are experiencing a steady rise of insecure work or temporary work. The increased share of temporary work in construction is only part of the problem of insecure work, because, according to the research of **Hrvoje Butković** et al. on precarious forms of work in Croatia,[09] overtime is common in this sector, and about one-third of such work is not paid. Unreported violations of labor laws are frequent and outsourcing is widespread, as is work in the informal economy, all of which is occurring alongside workers being sent to work abroad for nonexistent wages.

SECTOR	2018
CONSTRUCTION	35.7%
TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY	15.4%
METAL INDUSTRY	5.3%
SHIPBUILDING	4.7%
FOOD INDUSTRY	2.5%
TRANSPORTATION	2.5%
PROCESSING INDUSTRY	1.9%
INFORMATICS	1.0%
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY	0.9%
HEALTH	0.2%
CULTURE	0.1%
Extended work permits	29.8%

FIGURE 2. Work permits allocated in 2018.

Tourism and hospitality is a sector characterized by seasonality, which by definition employs mainly temporary workers, features extended working hours, and is physically demanding and emotionally exhausting. The metal industry and shipbuilding are sectors similar in some ways to construction, but they are to a certain degree organized in terms of trade unions, albeit while still featuring relatively low wages[10] and suffering effects of the rising trend of insecure work.

This outline of the precariousness and working conditions in sectors with the highest demand for foreign labor should be considered in light of the characteristics of foreign labor, which is by definition temporary and, due to its lack of potential for organization, puts workers in a significantly worse position in comparison to the rest of the workforce of the country to which they migrate.

RACE TO THE BOTTOM

The topic of foreign labor and the problems connected to it are not in any sense new, but in the Croatian context they are becoming a harsh reality. The sudden increase in the planned number of foreign workers is the result of a long period of lobbying on the part of employers, who have been pointing out the lack of labor force since the first decrease of the unemployment rate and intensified emigration from Croatia. This is especially emphasized in certain sectors where labor emigrants from Croatia may find better working conditions in other EU countries where jobs have recently been made accessible to them. At the same time, this is the dynamic that will occur following increased labor immigration to Croatia. Workers searching for better working conditions than the ones in their countries of origin and for whom jobs in other European countries are not accessible will move in.

One should not operate under the illusion that discussion on the various forms of insecure work and stimulation of labor immigration from so-called third countries takes place outside the discussion on secure work. This race to the bottom weakens the position of all labor forces, and such an atmosphere has already indirectly influenced the total share of secure work, and consequently the working conditions of this segment of the labor force. Soon all discussion on labor will be intensified due to the forthcoming legal changes. Considering the ban on employment in the public sector (one of the economic crisis measures that generated waves of temporary and project-based employment) and already existing arrangements regarding the employment of young people (decreasing the rate of pay for their first job), the influx of foreign workers will undoubtedly additionally influence the negotiating position of domestic workers. With this in mind, it is difficult to resist thinking that this is precisely the desired outcome of those who actively lobby for this dynamic. Paradoxically for local defenders of the current economic relations, a major obstacle on the path to minimizing the cost of work could be a low response from third-country workers to the local labor market, which has already been suggested as a possibility.

This double dynamic, with the emigration of the local population on the one hand and the attraction of migrant workers on the other, is evidence of the race to the bottom that is taking place under the cloak of economic recovery. The creation of an "investment climate" at the expense of labor rights and permanent lobbying of the private sector for tax relief is encouraged by fragmented workforces and a media barrage over remaining labor rights—that is, for the workers who still have rights. This is the economic reality in Croatia, the entire economic and development strategy of which boils down to auctioning off the cost of work. ✖

09 Hrvoje Butković et al., Nestandardni rad u Hrvatskoj: izazovi i perspektive u odabranim sektorima (Zagreb: Institut za razvoj i međunarodne odnose, 2018).

10 Ibid.

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Secularism, Populism, and Migration

Nebojša Zelić

In various ways, European countries have always privileged Christianity over other religions, and even though they guarantee non-Christian citizens' rights and liberties, these countries have not succeeded in achieving the basic premise of secularism, namely the absence of religious domination.

The migrant crises occasionally faced by Europe are primarily crises of humanitarianism and justice. In other words, they are crises of our humanitarian duties and our duties of justice. Even though not all theorists would agree with this classification, it is generally accepted that duties of justice are weightier than humanitarian duties, and that the former may be legally imposed. Humanitarian duties tell us what would be morally good to do, but we may not be forced into doing it, while duties of justice tell us what we should do, and a third party may force us into doing it. A good example of this distinction is donating for humanitarian causes versus paying taxes. The former is a humanitarian duty and the latter a duty of justice. Further, the humanitarian duty is also the one we owe to other people as such, notwithstanding the (non)existence of any relationship between us, while the duty of justice requires a certain form of relationship among people. Due to Europe's colonial past, contemporary global connectedness, rules of trade for natural resources, and political and economic connections with various regimes in Africa and the Middle East, the current migrant crisis is, hence, not only a crisis of humanitarianism but also a crisis of justice for European countries. By erecting barbwire and various other obstacles that cost migrants their lives, European countries act unjustly and do harm, as opposed to merely not acting good enough.

Rawandos, 45 years old, Syria

AVOIDING THE DOMINATION OF ONE RELIGION

But migrant crises also reveal a crisis of understanding of an important feature of European liberal democracies, namely secularism. Secularism is not an unambiguous term and can refer to different things. Secularism may be understood as a normative or ethical doctrine that tells us that meaning and purpose can be found in a life devoid of the transcendental; that is, that man can live a fulfilled and meaningful single life in a single world independent of God, gods, or any other worlds. This understanding of secularism is actually only one among several conceptions of "good life" that exist in a plural society, along with religious conceptions of good life. When we talk about the secular state, we talk not about this understanding of secularism, but rather about secularism as a political principle.

Political secularism does not presuppose or imply ethical secularism. In the foundations of political secularism lie the idea of the neutral state and the principle of equal treatment of all citizens, regardless of the particular conceptions of good life they believe in. The objective of political secularism is to provide a political order free of religious domination and to secure interreligious equality, the equality of believers and nonbelievers, and a certain aspect of common belonging to a political community, one that is wider than the type of narrow moral communities entered into by people with common ideas of good life. Drawing on a famous motto from 1789, the objective of political secularism is to provide equality, liberty, and fraternity. Equality is realized in the fact that the law is equally applied to all, and therefore it must be above the rules of individual religions that exist in society; liberty is realized in the fact that no one is in the position of (religious) domination; and fra-

ternity is realized in the fact that all people are members of one community, which is beyond different particular identities, and in that community they are first and foremost citizens. Political secularism is not anti-religious any more than it is anti-atheistic. In fact, the secular state refuses to side with either theism or atheism. It may well be true that it is easier for atheists to avoid referring to God than for religious people, but this asymmetry cannot be avoided and must not be understood as making secularism closer to atheism. Historically speaking, secularism has not survived this long and become the main feature of the majority of democratic countries because it suited atheists, who have in most secular countries always been a minority. On the contrary, secularism primarily has suited believers because it ensures the state is neutral toward all religions, which avoids conflicts and the domination of one religion over another.

THE PRIVATIZATION OF RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

An important aspect of secularism is accepting that there is a political space that we share with others in our capacity as citizens with rights, obligations, and responsibilities according to common political institutions, and hence a responsibility to other citizens. Such a space requires that it is devoid of the domination of any identity that is not common and cannot be common in a plural society. In the context of secularism, we speak of religious identities, of course. The point of the privatization of religious identity, a term that gained an equally bad reputation among progressive theologians, multiculturalists, and conservative traditionalist, is exactly to position religious identity in the private sphere, by which individuals can enter wider social space completely. But they cannot ask that political institutions be shaped on the basis of that identity.

From the civil perspective, a person can change identities as much as wanted, and it does not alter the person's political status. Religious identity is in one aspect different from some other identities because it very often implies a belief in the transcendental, and the transcendent order is given priority over the worldly or political order. Secularism allows believers to live in a community without being subordinated to somebody else's understanding of the transcendental, but it also does not allow them to impose their own understanding of the transcendental on others. The understanding of a religion that conditions the legitimacy of the political order on its own theological postulates can hardly be completely a part of a secular plural society. The objective of secularism is not to accept all ways of religious life; some it simply cannot accept, some must be suspiciously monitored all the time, and some it is even allowed to prohibit or legally regulate in different ways.

EUROPEAN MODERATE SECULARISM?

Certainly, it is one thing to describe secularism as a part of political theory, and yet another to describe how it functions in political practice. European secularism has never fully existed in compliance with its theoretical postulates. In various ways, European countries have always privileged Christianity over other religions, and even though they guarantee non-Christian citizens' rights and liberties, these countries have not succeeded in achieving the basic premise of secularism, namely the absence of religious domination. Some coun-

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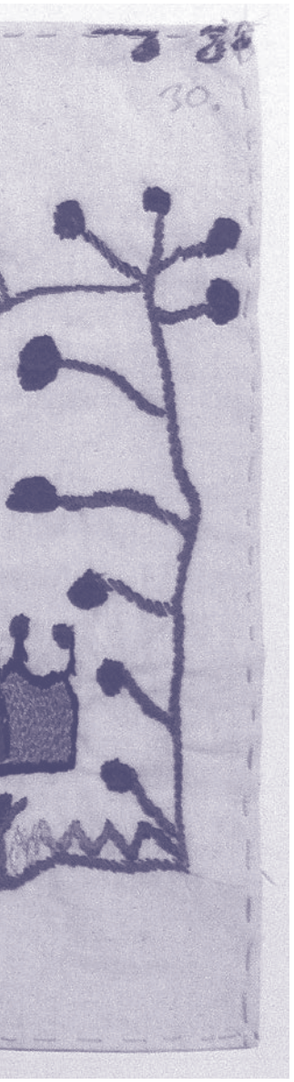
Anifa, 50 years old, Afganistan

Exhibition *Stories, temporary,* Gallery Nova, 2018 • project *I'm Telling You a Story... with Needle and Thread* / Tonči Vladislavić, Lea Vene and Ivana Čuljak, 2017–2018 • PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ



tries that are secular in their policies have state churches (for example Great Britain, where bishops of the Anglican Church are members of the House of Lords); largely finance Christian schools but not Islamic; have state holidays that are also Christian holidays; and adjust business hours to Christian holidays and customs. In some countries (and regions, such as Alsace-Lorraine in France), Christian clergy is paid by the state and political institutions appoint bishops. Recent mass influxes of migrants, who are mostly Muslim, cast anew a sharp light on these facts of European moderate secularism.

The response to religious pluralism, which is much more profound than the one among Christian denominations, is often a demand that Muslims accept secularism and the values that lie in the foundations of this political principle. However, that response is problematic. Namely, because European countries directly or indirectly support Christian religious institutions, it seems unjust to demand that Muslims contribute to maintaining the ideal secular state, if such a state is only a myth and not a reality. This is a form of "status quo secularism," which is a combination of abstract values and insensitivity to the reality of political practice. Thus, Muslims should accept the ideals of the separation of state and religion, while the state itself does not respect those ideals when it comes to Christianity.

A great threat to secularism, even status quo secularism, comes from populist movements that abuse secularism to justify opinions that are openly anti-Islamic or that are openly anti-secular. Thus, we witness Hungarian Prime Minister **Viktor Orbán** defending barbwire borders, invoking a Christian identity, and thanking Orthodox brothers in Serbia for preventing the crossing of refugees; the German right-wing party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) openly branding itself as an anti-Islamic party, claiming that Germany is a Christian-secular country; and French politician **Marine Le Pen** simultaneously asking for discrimination against the Islamic community and claiming that she is the only defender of secularism. In Croatia, populist movements talk about the differences in nature between Christians and Muslims (though they are openly anti-secular too). The language of secularism in political discourse has gained a clear anti-Islamic tone and completely lost any foundation in the values on which it is based. This is not merely down to the failure of its application by means of laws and policies, as is the case in status quo secularism. A particularly interesting example of this is **Le Pen**'s Front National,[01] a party that for twenty years openly advocated for Catholic traditionalism and national Catholicism and attacked the basic postulates of secularism in the French republican tradition, and that has now co-opted the term "secularism" and uses it to exclude a certain community from the republic. Despite the fact that status quo secularism is already not successful in creating interreligious equality or integrating members of different religions into one civil community devoid of systemic domination, populist movements use secularism for blatant exclusion of those groups, most often Muslims, that do not conform to their ideas of national identity. Therefore, we can talk about the creation of openly anti-secular secularism. Even though it sounds paradoxical, this is something that should be expected when populists start using the term "secularism."

ANTI-SECULAR SECULARISM

As pointed out by **Jan-Werner Müller**, the main characteristic of populism is not demagogy or irresponsible sweet talking to voters (to a certain degree this characterizes all political parties). Rather, it is evident anti-pluralism and the demand to morally represent a people. At the same time, populist movements form a unique and simplified identity of "the people," depicted as homogeneous and most of all moral. The rest, who do not fit this image, are the "enemy of the people" and morally defective. Populists can openly exclude other communities because it is they who represent the will of the people and have a moral right to defend the people and the country from their enemies. Also, populism likes clear order. Therefore, it is important that collective affiliation is clearly demarcated—by ethnicity, religion, gender. Any plurality of individual identities blurs the image of the people that is morally represented. Populists base their policies on what Amartya Sen calls the two illusions of identity: the first illusion is that identity is singular and not plural, and the second illusion is that identity is revealed and not constructed. Individuals, therefore, have to reveal their true identity, which is determined by collective belonging, and which, then, populists have the moral right to represent in the political domain and to form state institutions in compliance with. As emphasized by **Regina Ammicht-Quinn**, this particularly pertains to women's bodies, which represent a metaphor of the state that engenders progeny and therefore particularly must be controlled. From outlawing abortion, to making it difficult to divorce, all the way to banning head coverings for Muslim women, populist policies have always been particularly prone to controlling women's bodies. Populism is a perverted shadow of liberal democracy, and that is why it often uses its language and perverts the real meaning of the terms it uses. Thus, the term "democracy" is connected to a freedom of conscience in the enforcing of populists' religious opinions by a sheer majority and to a disregard for the freedom of conscience of others. Populism will use the term "pluralism" to give legitimacy to its political goals, which are directed precisely at curbing pluralism, and the term "secularism" is used to exclude those religious communities that populists do not perceive as being part of the people.

Religious identity is particularly important for populists, because religion is not merely an affiliation, such as ethnic affiliation, but also a set of moral rules and a loyalty to the ultimate permanent order set above the political order. To be a people morally and not only descriptively requires that the people contains some moral characteristics within its identity. Religion fulfills this function perfectly. That is why it is important that other characteristics of liberal democracy, which populists do not want to relinquish, are connected to this moral aspect. One of them is secularism. In the populists' terms (unless they are openly anti-secular), Christian secularism is the only morally worthy secularism, as it has its moral postulates in the Christian tradition. But religion is also part of our cultural identity, and, if needed, it can be devoid of its metaphysical aspect. For

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01 After the last party congress in March 2018, the party name was officially changed to Rassemblement national (National Rally), even though the older name of the party has remained more popular and prominent with the people and the media.

example, when populists demand that crosses be placed in public institutions, as happened recently in Bavaria, this policy is defended by claiming that it is not a symbol of the only true religion to the exclusion of other religions, but a symbol of cultural identity, which in and of itself is not an obstacle to integration and pluralism. It is then a bit like a local language or folk dress. For populists, religion can change its role from being the basic moral norm to a mere cultural feature. However, in all aspects, it has one single goal—to show who does not belong to the people and who does not share the identity of the people.

In whatever ways populists use the language of secularism, their insistence on defining the identity of the people according to predetermined characteristics, which should be defined by state institutions, clearly goes against the basic postulates of secularism. Equality among citizens, regardless of their religious affiliation, does not exist, since the citizen has to be defined by the citizen's religious identity. Liberty is significantly limited because the domination of a certain religious identity is clear and the rest depend on the goodwill of the majority. Fraternity is seriously disrupted because it primarily exists among those who share the dominant identity, and not among the entire political community. Thus, all three values on which secularism is based are undermined by populist policies.

TOWARD CRITICAL SECULARISM

Just as liberal democracies ought to critically question and change their economic and democratic institutions to survive and oppose populism, it is likewise necessary to critically question and change status quo secularism. Mere bans, like the ones against fully covering women's bodies, or even the refusal of citizenship to a covered Muslim woman because it is evident that she displays radical religious belief, as is the case in France, must be questioned particularly from the perspective of the main characteristic of secularism, namely, the privatization of religion.

Cécile Laborde thus suggests for France the establishment of a "fundamentalist Catholic test," according to which a secular state cannot deny citizenship to a woman who wears a burka, and who as such follows "a radical form of her religion," if it does not deny citizenship to a Catholic nun on the same basis. We need critical secularism that in political practice can either abolish current practices of privileges or bring all religious communities to the level of majority Christian communities, achieved through the equal financing of schools, positioning of clergy, and other legal regulations, for the sake of equality, liberty, and fraternity. But it should be particularly emphasized that the basis for all policies should be the individual and not the group. Before political institutions, group identity cannot overpower willingly selected individual identity. The aspiration for interreligious equality cannot be realized at the expense of the protection of an individual within the religious group itself. The secular state is the one that has jurisdiction to determine the border between private and public, and it also has the right to determine the degree of autonomy of an individual religious group.

Ana Dana Beroš and Matija Kralj, *Notes from Greece, 2016–2017,* exhibition *Stories, Temporarily,* Gallery Nova, 2018. • PHOTO: IVAN KUHARIĆ

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The separation of state and religion can be understood in different ways, one of which is to publicly accept a certain religious group, grant a certain legal accommodation to its practices, and enact the provision of a certain protection from the majority religion. However, this separation does not mean in any way the subordination of individuals to religious groups. The gravest mistake of some multiculturalists is the insistence on group identities, the protection of which extends to providing full autonomy to a group. If the group employs practices that violate individual rights, the secular state has every right to ban such practices, regardless of how much such practices are important for the religious identity of the group. Assertion of group identity is equally dangerous whether it comes from leftist multiculturalists on behalf of minority groups or from rightist populists on behalf of the majority group. So, it is one thing to, for example, grant Muslims the right to not work on their religious holidays and to display their religious symbols while working as public servants, if the majority Christians have the same right, or to adjust and balance the financing of religious schools; but it is a completely different thing to allow parents to not send their daughters to school, to punish apostasy or homosexuality, to

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deny women the right to own property, to arrange child marriages, and so on. The secular state has not only the right but the obligation to sanction the latter type of behavior.

For the purpose of providing equal opportunities to all citizens, there is nothing wrong with certain practices of integration, such as compulsory civil education in religious schools, if they exist, or education in the majority language. Problematic religious practices, such as discrimination against LGBTQI populations or women, either in Islam or Christianity, may be justified only on the basis of freedom of association—that is, on the basis of the fact that these persons chose of their own free will to be a part of such a community and that they have the choice to stop being a member of the religious community. But the state also has the right, within legitimate limitations of course, to take care that such association is as free as possible by means of compulsory education. Also, if there is prescribed discrimination, religious communities are obliged to clearly indicate on which basis they discriminate, and this practice may and should be publicly called discrimination (they can naturally provide their theological justification, as the Catholic Church does in relation to the banning of women priests). The secular state has the right to articulate its disagreement with such practices (even though it ought to tolerate them for the purpose of the freedom of association) and to provide protection for citizens if they choose to leave such a religious community. In relation to discrimination, it is important to preserve equal opportunity when it comes to employment in public institutions where they are organized by religious communities. For example, in schools organized by religious communities, it can be permitted that teachers teaching religious subjects are not members of any LGBTQI population, if it is clearly stated that the religious community discriminates against citizens on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, but teachers of other subjects or administrative staff must not be discriminated against on that basis. When an institution enters the public domain or is financed by public funds, then it has to conform to the same rules as all other public institutions.

Critical questioning of the existing secularism may, thus, allow for some practices that the existing secularism does not allow for, but may also put stricter limitations on some practices deemed customary. But we should not ask too much of secularism. Secularism cannot respond to all questions related to religious practices. Religious practices are the issue of not only the secular state, but also of the state based on equality, inclusivity, and protection of the individual. Even though secularism can accept, for example, the covering of women, there are other bases by which this practice can be limited, such as autonomy, gender equality, or the fight against patriarchy. However, in that case, that basis should be stated as the reason, and not secularism. Without assessing the value of those arguments here, I would like to point out that evoking local religious tradition can also be questioned on the basis of those identical values. Certain religious-cultural practices of migrants emphasized by populists may indeed be problematic, and we should not turn a blind eye to them. However, we should question with equally open eyes the local religious-cultural traditions often invoked by populists as being morally right. ✖

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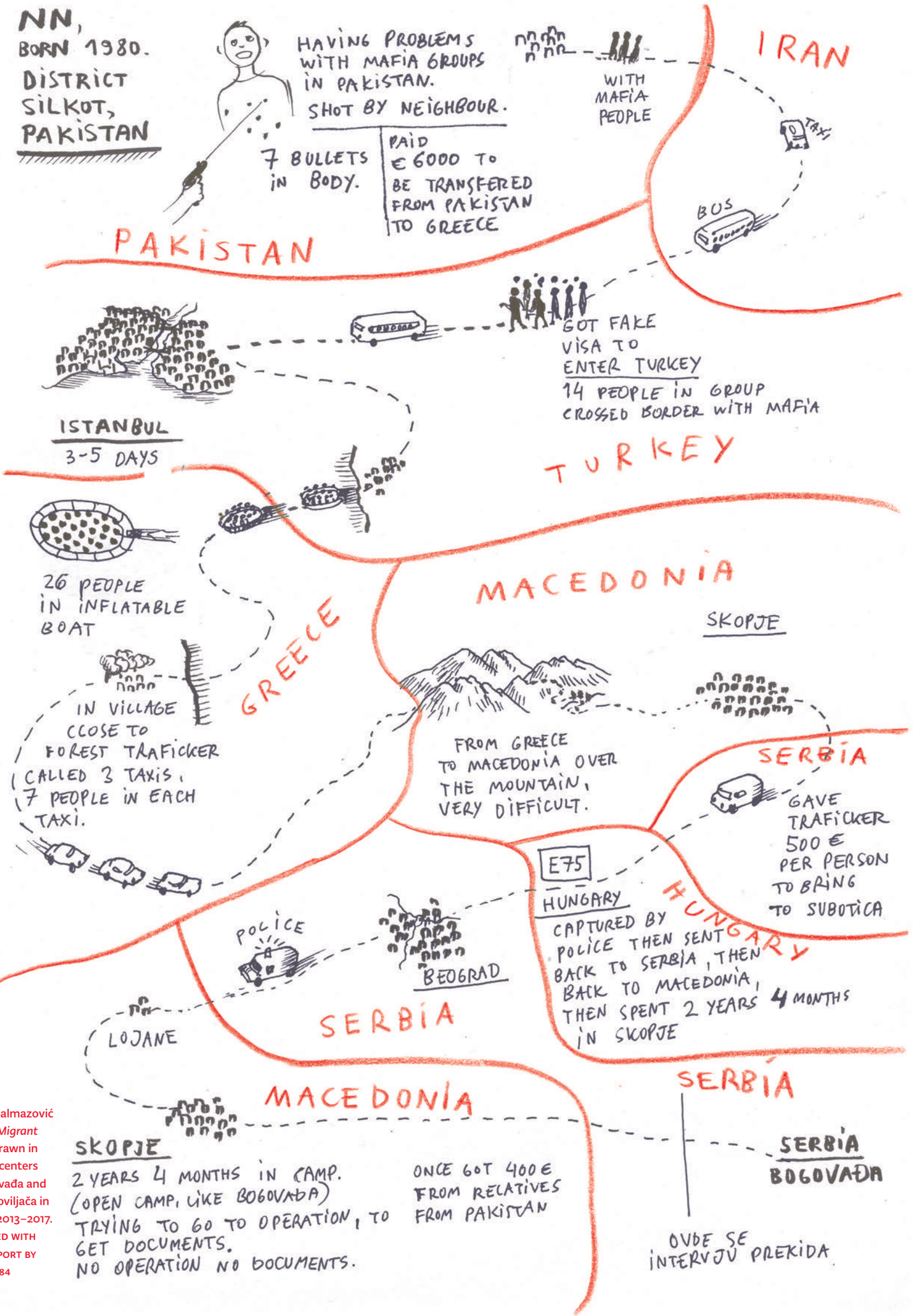

Đorđe Balmazović / Škart, *Migrant maps*, drawn in asylum centers in Bogovađa and Banja Koviljača in Serbia, 2013–2017.

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FRONT PAGE: Daniela Ortiz, *ABC of racist Europe*, 2017