

VILLE

ÉPHÉ

MÈRE

**A TRANSITORY TOWN**  
DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

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Political Architecture: Critical Sustainability

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1.0

INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Prelude

*He wakes up to the familiar sound of the wind that howls between the walls. He opens the one window wide open, and lets the strong gust blow through the room. He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath of salty ocean air.*

*The year is 2029. It has been some time since Brexit happened. After years of negotiations, the UK exited the European Union, yet the British Isles haven't completely let go of the mainland; extensions of the harbor terminals in Dover and in Calais have been built. What happened to the completion of the bridge? He thinks. They said it would secure a good trade connection between the UK and the rest of Europe. Well, the bridge was never finished, but the unfinished structure has been given a new unexpected purpose: it has become the frame in which this "transitory town" takes place. His town.*

*He slurps the last sip of his coffee, picks up his briefcase, and heads to the volunteer center to help the newcomers with their paperwork.*

*The extension of the harbor opened in 2021. The expansion consisted of a new dock covering 90 hectares, a new terminal, and a 3 km-long sea-wall to protect the area. At the time of its development, this was the EU's largest maritime project and a priority infrastructure investment. The construction costed 863 million euros and was financed partly by private, partly by public investments of which EU funded 100 million euros.<sup>1</sup>*

*The idea of a physical connection across the English Channel wasn't new. Since the beginning of the 19th century there have been numerous proposals for undersea tunnels, bridges, and imaginative combinations of the two. In 1994 the first connection opened: the Channel Tunnel running underneath the Strait of Dover, but not all considered this single railway line to be sufficient. In 2018, during his time as Foreign secretary, Boris Johnson suggested that France and the UK should be connected by a 35 km long bridge. He wrote on twitter: "Our economic success depends on good infrastructure and good connections. Should the Channel Tunnel be just a first step?"<sup>2</sup>*

*At the time, the suggestion was highly criticized on social media and soon forgotten in the overshadowing Brexit debate. But Boris Johnson didn't let go of his idea. Although Johnson was one of the leading proponents for the political decoupling of the UK from the European Union, he later used his position as Prime Minister to re-advocate for another physical link connection. He found private investors from both the UK and France who were interested in an improved trade connection, and the construction began in 2024. During the bridge's construction, the project turned out to be much more expensive than first assumed, being one of the detonants that forced Johnson to step down as Prime Minister. The bridge was almost completed when the construction abruptly ceased.*

*In the meantime 100.000 new people arrived to the French port town. The people were migrants forced to flee their homelands because of changing climate conditions. As it had been the case since the beginning of the 90'ies, migrants continuously accumulated in Calais in the hope to cross the Strait of Dover. Their dream was still to reach UK soil and seek asylum in this country where they speak the language, have family relations and where they believed a better future was awaiting.*

*The worsening of the climate crisis, and the deterioration of the migrant situation in Calais, made it clear that a trans-border organization needed to be put in place with urgency. As the only organization with mandate in the region and economical capacity, the European Union decided to take responsibility and use the means of the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)<sup>3</sup> to finance a test project which potentially could start to facilitate mass migration. A coalition of locals, migrants and EU representatives was formed and a decision was made: the city of Calais was to be the first place and test ground for a new type of modular town; one that can home humans on the move, a town that can be relocated as needed. The project was named "Ville Éphémère".*

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig, "Port of Calais Expansion Begins as France Pledges to Shut down The Jungle."

<sup>2</sup> Pérez-Peña, "Boris Johnson Suggests Building a Bridge From U.K. to France."

<sup>3</sup> "Connecting Europe Facility." An official website of the European Union, European Commission

## 1.2 Programme manifesto

The inhabitants of Earth are moving. They always have been. We name this movement of people from one territory to another migration. In recent times, the term has been used occasionally in prerogative ways, often connected in politics to the word crisis; the migration crisis.

In 2019 the global number of human migrants was higher than ever before. And most likely the number will increase significantly in the coming years as the climate change will force even more people to relocate. Alongside the growing number of people on the move, there has been a simultaneous tendency towards the creation of closed borders. Many nation-states have introduced extremely strict immigration policies, and some have even put up physical barriers and controls at their borders. It is in these places that local conflicts arise.

The migration wave will continuously shift in intensity and direction, but it won't stop coming. It would therefore make sense to acknowledge the condition, plan ahead, and prepare for the changes coming up; instead of building obstacles to retain migration waves and protect territories, it is about time that we start expediting the inevitable movements.

One of the places where migrants have accumulated throughout the past decades is in the French port town Calais. The opening of the tunnel connection in 1994 called for a new type of border, and the juxtaposed border control was invented. The new system moved the border from the UK to France and vice versa, with the argument: "to ensure the safety and security of the border". Since this agreement, the fencing off of the entrance to the channel tunnel and the harbor port in Calais have increased. The border acts as a backstop for a movement of people from a much greater territory, who all accumulate in front of the physical barrier. Yet the border takes many shapes in Calais; besides the physical manifestation of the border, there is also a non-physical border which is articulated through a range of political initiatives separating the locals from the migrants and creating a hostile environment.

My intention with this project, is to imagine a fictional future scenario; Forecasting ten years ahead, the story takes place in Calais, France, where a massive migratory flock has remained stranded waiting to get passage from France to the UK. A plan to build a transitory town, *Ville Éphémère*<sup>4</sup>, has been put in place to host humans in transit. What infra-structural and practical installations would it require? How would it be organized? What would it look like?

<sup>4</sup> The name "Ville Éphémère" comes from the French language, and translates to "ephemeral" or "transitory" town.

In this project I will attempt to explore these questions, using *Ville Éphémère* as an exercise to imagine how architecture can facilitate cross-territorial human movement.

The background for the project work is an investigation on borders; the global political tendency towards more closed borders, how they are manifested and how they work. The desired outcome of this project, is to challenge the general perceptions of borders and migration through an architectural proposal.

### 1.2.1 Academic framework

This thesis project is developed within the framework of Political Architecture: Critical Sustainability, a masters program at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Architecture. The program focuses on intrusive political problematics and has a site-specific approach; every year a new place is investigated through research and fieldwork. A co-evolutionary working method is encouraged and the projects are developed between academic writing and architectural propositions.

This project has likewise taken its starting point in fieldwork, conducted in September and October 2019, on a journey from Copenhagen, through Belgium and France, ending up in the French port town Calais. This field trip and the work theme *Distintegrating Democracy* are the only pre-defined parameters for the framing of the project.

2.0  
CONTEXT

## 2.1 Migration

### 2.1.1 Description of the phenomenon

People migrate for various reasons. In the search of work or better economic opportunities, to reunite with family members or because of education. To escape conflicts such as persecution, terrorism or war. Others, run from natural disasters and the adverse effects of the changing climate, such as water shortages, bad harvests and the rise of the sea level. In the not so distant future, the migratory causes will multiply exponentially.

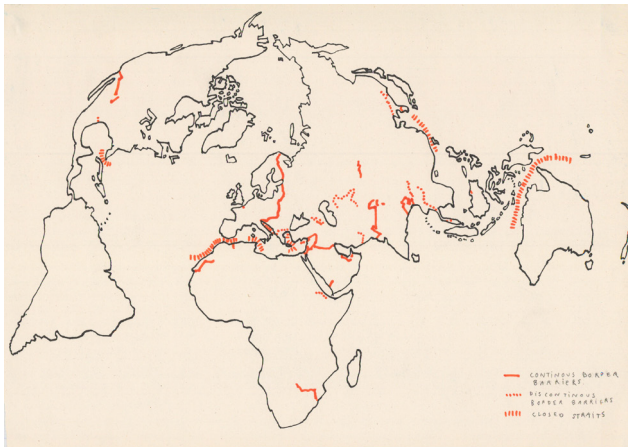
As mentioned in the *programme manifesto*, 2019 has been the year with the highest number of global migrants so far. Estimations say 272 million. This is 51 million more than in 2010. Last year the number of international migrants comprised 3.5 % of the global population. In 1980 this percentage was only 2.3.<sup>5</sup>

5 UN, "Migration."

6 and 7 Vickers and Alexander, "Why Migration Is Bigger and More Contentious Than Ever."

Large inflows of migrants largely affect local systems. Economists point out that an inflow of migrants can be beneficial for state economies.<sup>6</sup> Even though immigration critics often tell the stories of crimes committed by newly arrived migrants, this hasn't been proven to be true; In fact, a number of studies carried out in the U.S. show that migrants commit less crimes than native-born Americans.<sup>7</sup>

In Europe and in the U.S. where most migrants head towards (directions of the most significant migration waves are marked with blue on the migration route map on the previous page) a segment of the native populations are concerned that the arrival of migrants will disturb the existing conditions and order. Many nation-states have reacted to the situation by introducing extremely strict immigration policies closed off their borders or put up physical barriers and controls at their borders (see map of the different types of border barriers on the previous page).



> Top: migration routes  
Bottom: border barrier map, (2019)

## 2.2 Borders

8 The Schengen agreement: a treaty that led most of the European countries towards almost complete abolishment of their national borders

9 Rosière, "International Borders, between Materialization and Dematerialization," 1.

10 Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*, 7-8.

11 Brown, 27.

Stéphane Rosière, a French professor in geopolitics, describes the contemporary tendency regarding international borders in the journal article 'International Borders, between materialization and dematerialization'. In the article he explains how borders between nation-states were perceived in Europe after the Schengen agreement in 1985<sup>8</sup>:

*"[...] in the 1990's, borders could be considered something of the past, ultimately doomed to extinction."*<sup>9</sup>

As we celebrate the 30 years anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall, there are more physical manifestations of international borders than ever. In her book 'Walled States, Waning Sovereignty' written in 2010, Wendy Brown, American political theorist, reflects on the phenomenon of contemporary wall-building. According to Brown globalization is the tendency's root:

*"What we have come to call a globalized world harbors fundamental tensions between opening and barricading, fusion and partition, erasure and reinscription. [...] One place these tensions nest is in the new walls striating the globe,"*<sup>10</sup>

Brown names this phenomenon "new nation-state walls", and describes how they mark nation-state boundaries, but target non-state transnational actors such as individuals, groups, movements, etc. with the political purpose to prevent migration, smuggling, crime and terror. In line with this portrayal, Brown describes how the new walls work "theatrically", meaning that their actual power lies within the way they work "performatively" and via the scenery they stage.

Brown also reflects on the differences and parallels between the new nation-state walls, yet one paradoxical feature applies to every one of them:

*"All generate significant effects in excess of or even counter to their stated purposes; none really 'work' in the sense of resolving or even substantially reducing the conflicts, hostilities or traffic at which they officially aim;"*<sup>11</sup>

With this reflection, Brown points towards the discrepancy between the stated intention, and the actual effect of the walls – often being rather conflict-creating than conflict-solving.

### 2.2.1 Problematics

The wall-building is an attempt to protect and create a feeling of security within the walls. But what actually happens is that they come to mark a division between inside/outside. This division creates a perception of an "us" and a "them" - the protected people within the walls are "friends", and the people who are outside, become the "enemy".

As Wendy Brown states, the actual power of the wall-building is to perform an image of holding back a dangerous enemy. The higher and more difficult the wall; the more dangerous the enemy.



> Fence along the ferry terminal, Calais. (October, 2019)



## 2.3

### The camp

#### 2.3.1 Dealing with migration

Today we deal with migration by building refugee camps. The concept is described by UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency:

*“Refugee camps are temporary facilities built to provide immediate protection and assistance to people who have been forced to flee due to conflict, violence or persecution. While camps are not intended to provide permanent sustainable solutions, they offer a safe haven for refugees where they receive medical treatment, food, shelter; and other basic services during emergencies.”*<sup>12</sup>

When a refugee crisis occurs, the UNHCR mobilizes an emergency operation response team in charge of the planification, construction and management of a refugee camp. The camps are planned to be put up fast, and designed to host people for a short period of time, but the reality is that most of them end up being permanent. As of now, February 2020, 2.6 million people live in refugee camps around the world and most of them end up staying there for decades.

The UNCHR states that a camp should be placed within safe distance from the border, have access to water supplies, safe geographical circumstances, and waste management. It should be planned so that there are at least 480 square feet per refugee. Furthermore, the camp should be accessible for vehicles and on occasions have an air strip to be able to receive supplies from aircrafts. The organization defines a successful camp as one that lives up to these standards:

*“A well-designed camp should protect the environment and help prevent fires and outbreak of disease. Food, water points and latrines should be properly lit and close enough to homes to protect women and girls against the threat of sex and gender-based violence”*<sup>13</sup>

12 and 13 UN, “Refugee Camps.”

#### 2.3.2 Za’atari refugee camp

There are 80.000 refugees living at the Za’atari camp, making it Jordan’s fourth largest city. It has grown to the extent that the infrastructure has become insufficient. The camp hosts mainly Syrian refugees who have fled from the war in Syria. Half of the camp’s population are children. The camp has become semi-permanent and one of the major issues is for the inhabitants to create a meaningful everyday life - to find work and occupation. Like most refugee settlements, the Za’atari camp is also remotely located, forming its own enclosing enclave with very little interaction with the surrounding context.<sup>14</sup>

14 OXFAM, “Life in Za’atari Refugee Camp, Jordan’s Fourth Biggest City.”

> Top: A close-up, aerial view of the Za’atari camp in Jordan for Syrian refugees, seen from a helicopter, (2013).

Bottom: Street view from the Za’atari Refugee Camp, (2015).

Next pages: Satellite photo, the light coloured area being the Za’atari Refugee Camp, from when the settlement homed 100.000 refugees, (2014).





## 2.4 The Strait of Dover

### 2.4.1 Fortifications and connections

The short strait between UK and France has always been a key crossing point for people moving and migrating forth and back between the European countries. The place is characterized by political conflicts and fortifications but also by imaginative speculations and connections.

Since the beginning of the 19th century there have been speculations about connecting UK and France. A number of imaginative ideas haven't been proposed of how to make a physical link across the English Channel – both bridges and tunnels and various combinations of the two. The first idea for a tunnel connection between England and France was proposed by a French mining engineer in 1802.<sup>15</sup> From 1856 several English politicians came up with the idea of a tunnel connecting the two sides but neither of them went further than to the geological studies. After coming to an agreement the first attempt of digging the tunnel started in 1881. For a year they dug around 2 km from each side until the project was canceled because British politicians were concerned that the tunnel would make their defense weaker.<sup>16</sup>

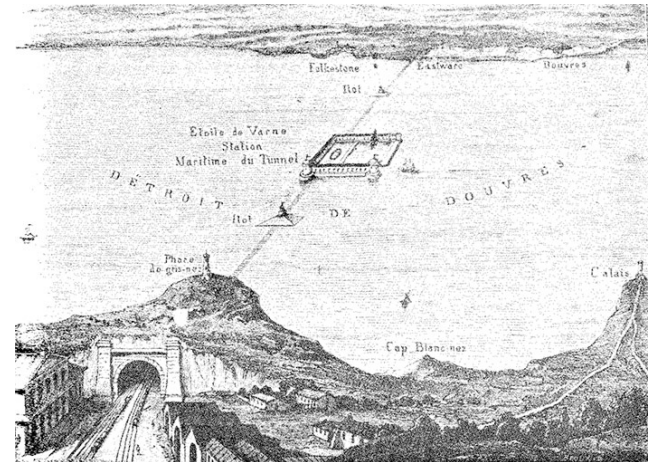
It wasn't until after both First and Second World War had ended that the idea again became relevant. An agreement was made between the British and the French governments and a construction started in 1974. After years with challenges the connection finally opened on the 6th of May 1994 and today the 50.45 km long undersea tunnel connects Folkestone near Dover in England and Coquelles near Calais in France.<sup>17</sup>

15 and 16 History of Bridges, "History of Channel Tunnel - Facts and Design," Historical knowledge webpage, History of Bridges (blog), 2019, <http://www.historyofbridges.com/facts-about-bridges/channel-tunnel/>.

17 Calais Research Network, "Mapping the Deals and Decision-Makers."



> Satellite photo of Western Europe, marking site of interest, (2009).



> Proposal for a train tunnel crossing underneath the Strait of Dover, with an artificial island on the Vame sandbank about midway between the nations, that would serve as an international port and provide ventilation for the tunnel, (1856).

## 2.5 Calais

### 2.5.1 And the border to the UK

The French port town of Calais, is one of the places where migrants have become stranded behind a closed border. Before the tunnel was dug, the border between France and the UK was a natural border separated by the sea. As a consequence of the new physical connection created by the tunnel, the border suddenly had to be rethought.

In the ‘Sangatte Protocol’ in 1991, it was decided that the juxtaposed border made the UK government responsible for the ‘EuroTunnel’ border control on the French side and vice versa. The agreement was made “*to ensure the safety and security of the border*”.<sup>x</sup> Inspired by this, a similar agreement was signed in 2003 regarding the ferry port, ‘Le Touquet treaty’, bringing another UK border area to French soil. The agreements made the UK government financially responsible for the border control and its maintenance. Since the juxtaposition, the fencing off of the two areas and the roads leading to them has increased.<sup>18</sup>

As a consequence of the hardening of the border, there has been an accumulation of people in Calais who want to seek asylum in the UK which reveals the actual aim of the fortification: to prevent illegal crossings of the border and stop migrants before they reach UK territory claiming asylum.<sup>19</sup> This means that the actual border is not only between the UK and France – but rather a border between the UK and a much greater area. The physical border acts as a backstop for a movement of people from around the World, agglomerating migrants in front of the physical barrier.

But the border takes many shapes in Calais; besides the physical manifestation of the border, there is also a non-physical border which is articulated through a range of political initiatives separating the locals from the migrants, creating a hostile environment.

There are two physical key crossing points at the border between France and the UK; the ferry port and the entrance to the Channel tunnel in Calais. The fencing off consists mainly of two layers of steel fence, varying in height from two to four meters, topped with barbed wire with electronic motion sensors placed in between. In 2016, it was decided to extend the fence protecting the ferry terminal by another kilometer of a four meter tall concrete wall named the “anti-intrusion wall” or the “great wall of Calais”.<sup>20</sup> The inside of the fortifications are patrolled by private security guards, the outside by the French riot police, and the entry points are monitored by dogs, drones, and heat and CO2 sensors.<sup>21</sup>

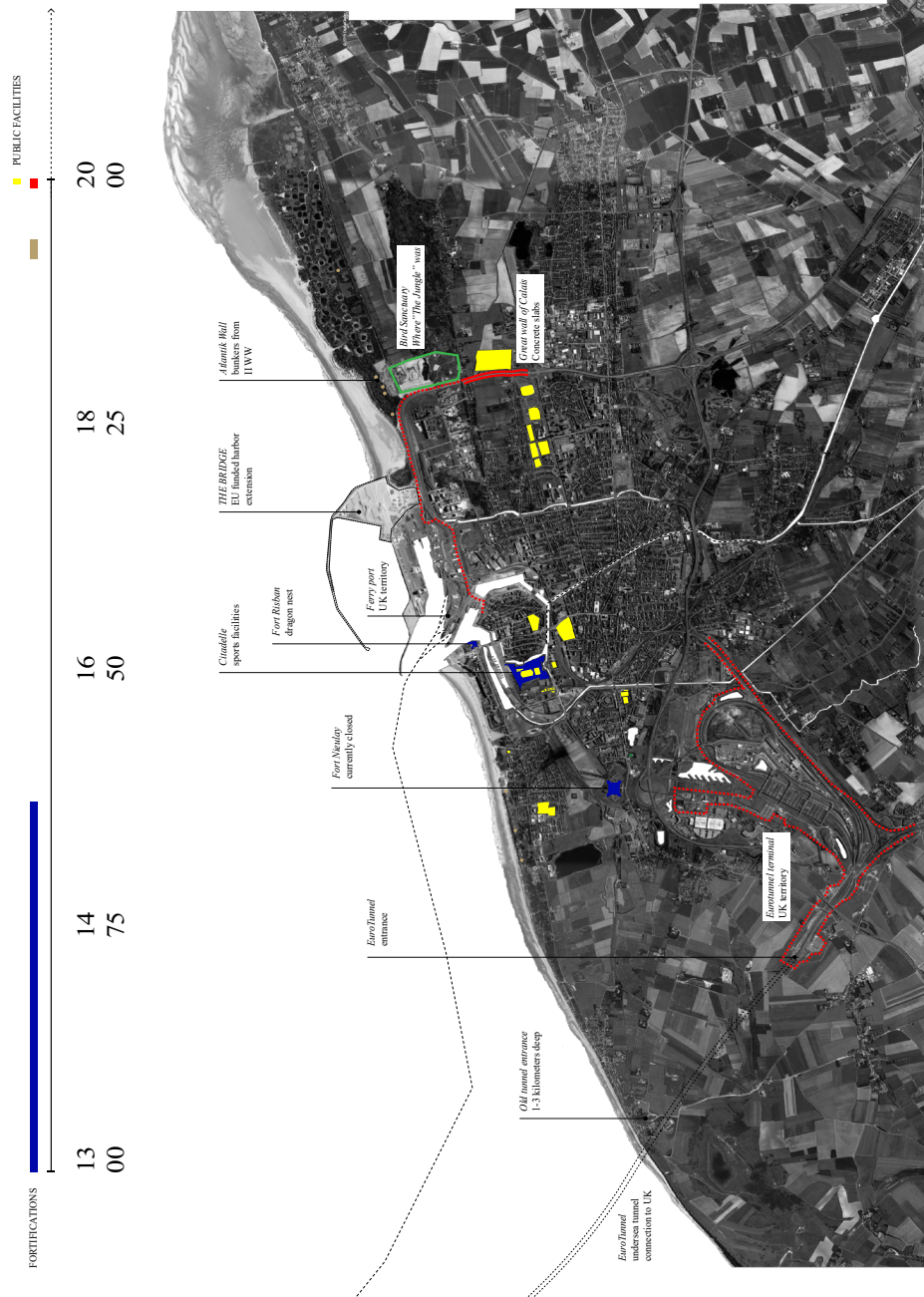
18 Calais Research Network, “Mapping the Deals and Decision-Makers.”

19 Welander, Hobbs, and Farrell, “Britain’s Juxtaposed Borders: The Human Consequences.”

20 AFP, “Everything You Need to Know about the Calais Wall.” The Local

21 Corporate Watch, “The UK Border Regime: A Critical Guide”

> Next page: Calais border regime map, (2019).



2.5.2 Registrations from fieldwork

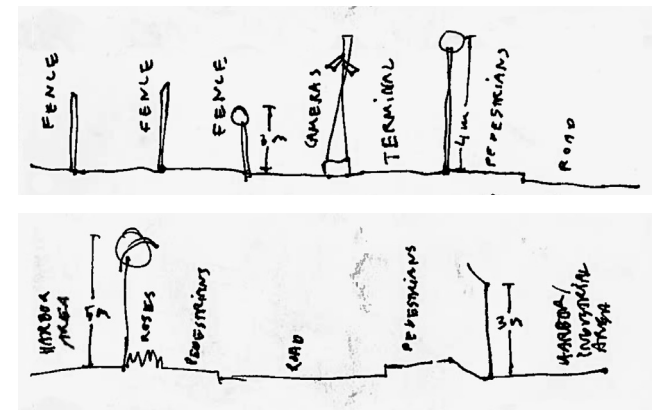
During my field trip to Calais, I went around and along the fenced off areas, having some thought-provoking observations of this contemporary fortifications:

- OBSERVATION 1** “Missing” barbed wire: along the road, by the entrance to the tunnel, I noticed how the green fence is topped with barbed wire, but as I follow the fence around the corner the barbed wire stops – as if it is only there for the visibility rather than its function.
- OBSERVATION 2** Free entrance: in the industrial area, where the road meets the highway leading to the tunnel, there is an opening in the fence for the cars to enter. Right next to the 4 meter tall white painted fences, there is a free entrance to the highway - no gate or security check to prevent intrusion.
- OBSERVATION 3** Countless layers of fences: by the train terminal I counted up to 6-7 layers of fences. In some places by the ferry terminal, there are very few layers of fences, but in other places there were many.



> Photo registrations of observation 1 and 2, Calais, (2019).

Compared to a traditional barrier, there is something paradoxical about my observations. The registrations indicate that there is more to the manifestation than its physicality; besides being barriers preventing people from crossing the border, it seems these fences are put up to create an image of an invincible obstacle.



> Selected section registrations of different fence situations by the ferry terminal, observation 3, Calais, (2019).

### 2.5.3 Political actions

Alongside the increased barricading of the border there has been a range of political actions segregating the local and the migrant communities. This has contributed to the creation of an extremely hostile environment for the refugees who are considered unwanted visitors in the area.

Since 1997 refugees have gathered around Calais and in 1999 the first organized refugee camp opened. This camp hosted around 1000 people, but only a few years later in 2002, the UK government demanded the camp closed after a negative portrayal was spread over the British media.<sup>22</sup> The same thing happened with the ‘Pashtun Jungle’ which was destroyed in 2009. After the “Arab spring”, almost 8000 migrants got stuck in Calais and a huge settlement named ‘The Jungle’ occurred. It was closed in 2016.<sup>23</sup>

The same year the regional police authorities banned demonstrations related to the migration situation. The reason was stated by the prefecture of the Pas de Calais region, which claimed that it was too dangerous due to the proximity of the two antagonist groups (pro and anti migrant groups), claiming it would cause tensions and jeopardize the public order.<sup>24</sup>

The right-wing mayor, Natacha Bouchart, has been responsible for a list of anti-migration initiatives since her election in 2008. Bouchart has been responsible for targeting squats in-town by clearing dwellings on municipal property, and by advising land owners of empty buildings to do the same. The mayor has also been responsible for the implementation of identity checks at different public facilities, such as sports facilities and libraries.<sup>25</sup> In response to the criticism of this discriminatory action, the mayor referred to the ongoing state of exception in France, and claimed that the action was needed to uphold security.<sup>26</sup>

In June 2011 the organization ‘Calais Migrant Solidarity’ compiled an analysis of what they called the “hunt for humans”, in which they describe how the police have systematically chased migrants out of Calais. The report is titled “This Border Kills” and points out three different methods used by the police: beatings and violent arrests leading to injuries and deaths, harassment with ID checks followed up by arrests, detention or deportation and at last, raids in the camps including poisoned water, tear-gassed food and water supplies, destroyed shelters and robbed belongings.<sup>27</sup>

Today there is no organized refugee camp. The migrants live in small camps spread out in the forest in the outskirts of the town. During my conversations with locals, I found that it was common knowledge that the police clear the area every morning in order to make it as inconvenient for refugees to stay there as possible.

> Top: Aerial view of the “The Jungle” settlement placed in the outskirts of Calais, (2016).

Bottom: Picture from inside “the Jungle” refugee camp, Calais, (2015).

Next pages: Aerial view of the “The Jungle”, looking towards the Strait of Dover, (2016).



22 and 23 Calais Research Network, “Mapping the Deals and Decision-Makers.”

24 rfi, “Calais Bans Pro- and Anti-Migrant Demonstrations This Weekend.”

25 The Local, “Refugees ‘barred’ from French Swimming Pool,” The Local

26 Corporate Watch, The UK Border Regime: A Critical Guide, 134.

27 Corporate Watch, The UK Border Regime: A Critical Guide, 131.



3.0

PROGRAMMING



## 3.1

### Programming:

#### Transitory town

The background for choosing migration as a topic for my diploma project stems from my experiences during the field trip to Calais in the autumn of 2019. I became frustrated witnessing the power of bureaucracy, and how policy makers purposely segregate people based on origin or ethnicity.

##### 3.1.1 Motivation

In Calais, I observed how numerous layers of fences, barbed wire and controls mark the border between France and the UK in order to keep migrants from crossing the border illegally. Through own registrations and conversations with locals, I learned that besides functioning as a physical barrier the fences also work as a theatrical gimmick; they help portray an image of an imminent dangerous threat. I also observed how policies have been implemented in regards to the migratory crisis; for instance, undocumented people can't access public facilities, demonstrations have been banned, etc. These discriminative legislations create a hidden segregation that spans beyond the physical; a separation between the local community and the refugees. Altogether, the physical and non-physical actions constitute a situation in which the freedom of the people is being compromised in the name of security.

In this project I put forward a hypothetical future scenario, imagining a planned transitory town located on a bridge that connects the UK to the continent. My proposal might seem idealistic or naive, but the intention with the project is to hopefully inspire further thoughts and investigations. The migration crisis is intensifying, and it's my belief that architects and urban planners have the responsibility to study and propose how to home humans on the move. Our capability to imagine and create alternative future scenarios, can help us tell stories that may influence the public opinion on pressing contemporary issues.

I depart from the fact that climate change will be the main cause for the upcoming migration movements, and I will take into account what possible effects it might have. For instance, a lot of infrastructure will become irrelevant as the sea level rises and the extreme conditions escalate. This and other factors have influenced my idea of projecting a city designed for transit.

##### 3.1.2 Research questions

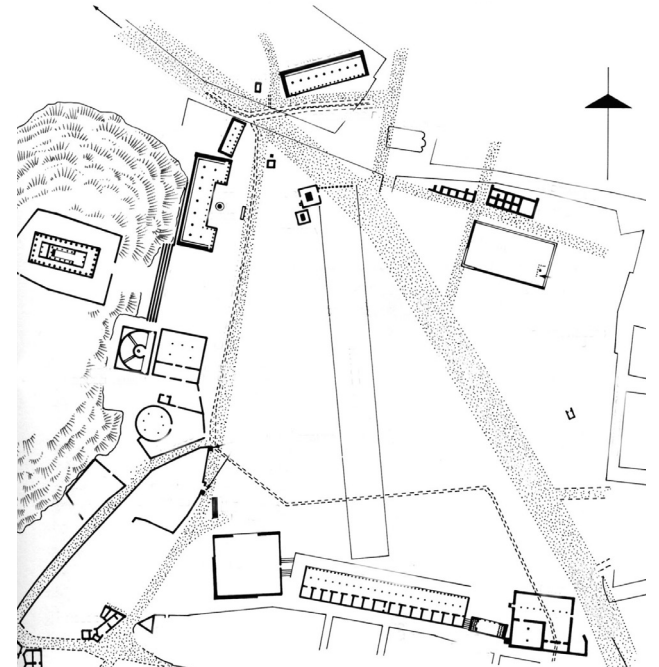
Within the framework of the imagined narrative I will investigate **how architecture and urban planning can facilitate human transit and enable migrant integration in local communities**. In order to *design for transit* I will look into the architectural, bureaucratic, and social aspects of the research questions; considering the way it is founded, if the city itself can move and who the inhabitants would be?

I will also consider how it is funded, who is building it, what are the functions that need to be in place in order to ease bureaucratic processes, how to plan infrastructures that facilitate a more humane migration, what are the minimum dimensions of a unit that can make up a home, and where can one find territory for this new purpose? In short; what are the functions and principles that makes a town transitory/ephemeral?

> "Agora in Greek literally means a place of gathering and the Agora of Athens was the heart of Athenian life in Ancient times. For centuries it served as a busy marketplace where merchants and artisans congregated to buy and sell, but it also provided a platform for the Athenian political and intellectual life. This is the place where Aristocrats and Tyrants enforced their rule on their Athenian subjects, and the place where the concept of "direct democracy" was forged in the Classical era. The Agora was the physical place where every Athenian citizen gathered to conduct their business, participate in their city's governance, decide judicial matters, express their opinion for all who cared to listen, and elect their city officials."<sup>28</sup>

The ancient agora, plan drawing, (2017).

28 Greek Landscapes, "ANCIENT AGORA – The Birthplace of Democracy."



## 3.2

### Programming:

## Ville Éphémère

The overall task is to design a transitory town for 100.000 people in Calais, and through this proposal conduct an investigation using my research questions as guiding focal points. My first step will be to critically read through the UN Refugee Agency's emergency handbook, in order to analyze the defined parameters for how to create temporary homes for migrants. Do they live up to the basic needs for creating a modular system and unit in accordance to democratic values and human rights? Could it be that a new revisited handbook on how to create transit cities needs to be created?

#### 3.2.1 Elements and scales

The development of the project will happen in different scales at the same time. At an urban level, the first step will be to calculate and lay out the square meters needed for the existing town to find space for the transitory city. Thereafter the infrastructural and organizational functions and principles need to be defined. I will zoom into selected enclaves where I imagine interesting meetings or happenings could take place, and I will use storytelling to imagine and draw such places and situations. At an architectural level, I will zoom in to design the private residence unit.

**NARRATIO** Outlines the constructed future scenario and tells short stories of specific moments from a personal perspective. As introduced in the prelude, the starting point and premise of the proposal is that Brexit has happened and a bridge is being built to secure a good trade connection between the UK and the rest of Europe. Due to the changing climate conditions, big groups of migrants are on their way to Europe. With the expectation of 100.000 migrants coming to the border town, the European Union has understood the significance of the situation, and an organization of locals, migrants and EU representatives has decided to take action; in preparation for the 100.000 new inhabitants of the border between France and UK a transitory town is built.

**HANDBOOK** Rewrites the UN Refugee Agency Emergency handbook parameters for how to plan a settlement as part of a refugee emergency response into a "Handbook for how to design transitory towns". The handbook will define overall measurements for the infrastructural elements, common facilities and private units as well as conceptual principles for organization. Unlike the existing handbook, this version will be ahead of an emergency situation, implying guidelines for how to create a sense of home (even if only temporarily), productive and social spaces such as kitchen gardens, activity halls, squares, etc.

**URBAN PLAN** Defines the scope and the overall structure of the town following the principles defined in the handbook. Draws the infrastructural system and appoints the different functions and organizations. The unfinished bridge

and the city of Calais form the frame in which the new transitory town is filled in. Contrary to the refugee settlements we know of, this transitory town consists of clusters of units that merge into different locations in the existing context. In the "transitory-ness" implies that the city itself is removable. At the moment it is needed at the border to the UK, but sooner or later the migration wave will change and the city will be needed elsewhere. Some sectors or clusters are floating inside the channels, located on land with removable foundation or hanging from the bridge structure. The planning will be investigated in plan and section in large scale drawings; the biggest scale being 1:200.000 to cover the whole strait of Dover, 1:2500 to have an overview of Calais and 1:500 to focus on specific neighborhoods.

**UNITS** Zooms into a selection of everyday situations in the transitory town. Designs how the units are constructed; How are they movable? How are they connected to bearing structures? What materials are they made of? How are they founded? Focuses on the small, movable units and showcases the design of different types of units such as "communal kitchen", "family home", "single home" together with the adjacent spaces. The designs will be made for people in transit, considering how small a unit can be and still feel like a decent home. The unit designs will be investigated through models and drawings in 1:100 and 1:50.

#### 3.2.2 Scope

The project spans over a small decade, but is told from the year of 2029. The different political decisions and events that have significance for the development of the project are marked in the sketched timeline on the following pages. The timeline is an iterative tool that can help me scope the project, likely to change throughout the different phases of its development.

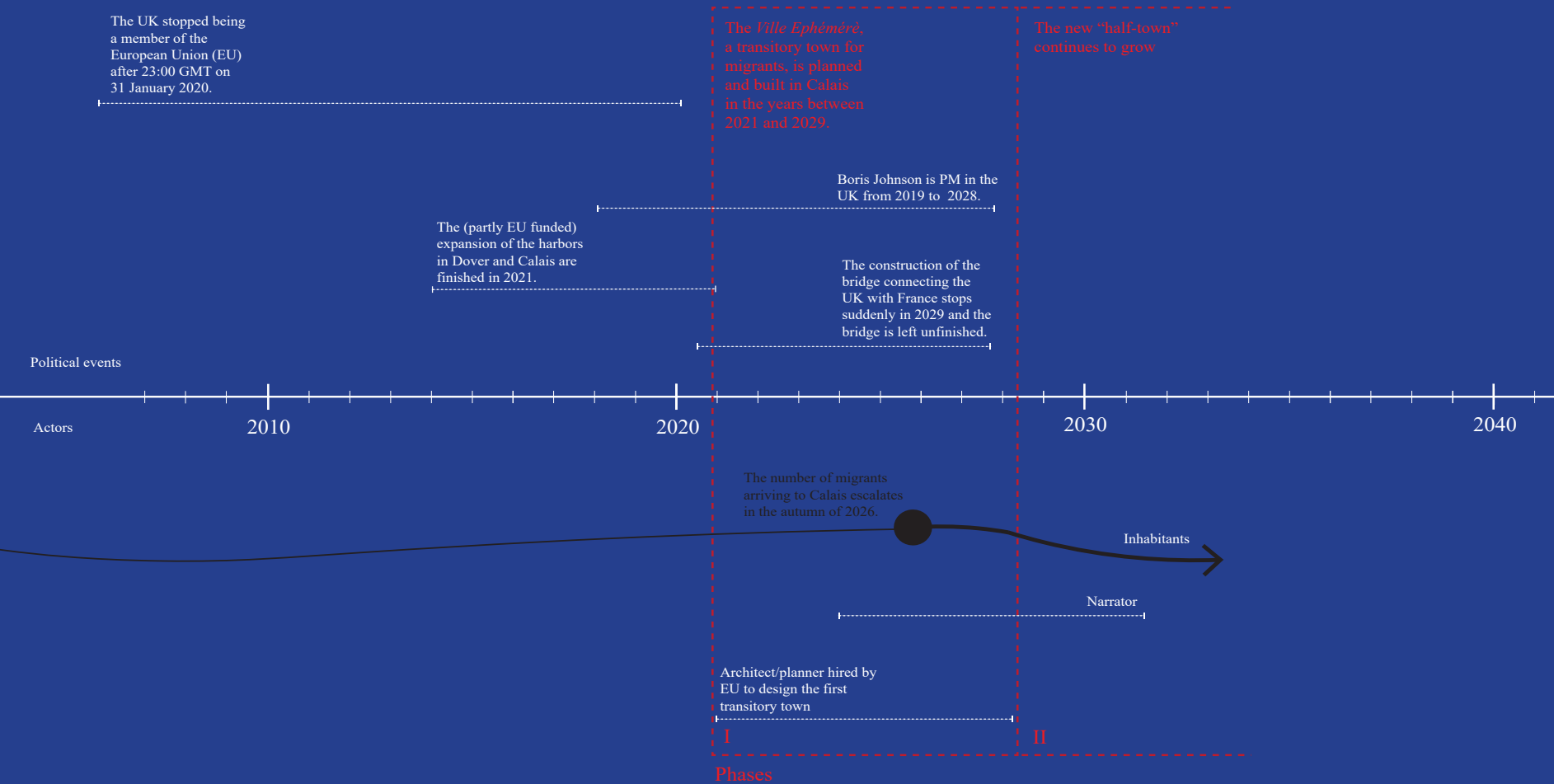
> "My father was born on a river boat. In French it is called "la batellerie". It's basically a cargo ship traversing rivers. Back then they used to carry coal, sugar and potatoes. My grandparents lived on the boat for almost 45 years. La batellerie ended in France during the late 70'ies."<sup>129</sup>

Le bassin de la Bâtellerie, Calais, (year unknown).

29 Barbage, interview\_03

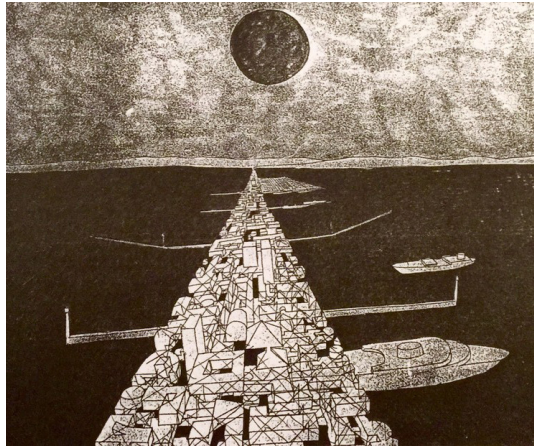


### 3.2.3 Timeline



> Timeline of current and future political events according to the narrative of the project, (2020).

> "The emergency of neo-liberalism in which the state acts (militarised borders, bailouts, wars) and yet does so in an atmosphere in which the redirecting of its energies to social democratic projects seems impossible, will doubtless continue to result in ambitious government building, in "big big walls", to quote a certain fascist American. The challenge is to overcome these restricted horizons, to redirect state activity to public use, and the work of Elemental and Assemble has been invaluable in returning architectural discourse to this end. But under their direction this discourse has remained tethered to an economy of scarcity, to small-scale, acupuncture solutions. The reappraisal of Friedman's full vision, however, suggests the contours of a possible new urbanism, blending the flexibility of these recent participatory models with the systemic ambition of more comprehensive urban planning."<sup>30</sup>



This page top: "Ville Spatiale", architectural proposal, Yona Friedman, (1958).

This page bottom: "New Babylon" or "drift city", architectural proposal by Constant Nieuwenhuys, (1960).

Next page: "The Bridge over the Channel", architectural proposal by Yona Friedman, (1963).

30 Harris, "Cities in the Sky. Re-Evaluating Yona Friedman."



### 3.3 UN Sustainable Development Goals



31 and 32 UN, "Sustainable Development Goals."

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the topic of migration is included for the first time. In fact, 11 out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) refer to migration in either targets or indicators. The most direct reference to the migration issue is in target 10.7 under the main goal, and title "Reduced Inequalities". The target recites:

*"10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies."*<sup>31</sup>

Every SDG has designated indicators for how to "check" the status of the current situation. The indicator which I believe to be the most relevant to the above target is:

*"10.7.2: Number of countries that have implemented well-managed migration policies."*<sup>32</sup>

But what does it mean and how is it investigated? According to the Migration Data Portal's, the global trends in migration policies are hard to define because available directories cover very different aspects, periods and regions. Yet some key trends in the development are described:

*"For countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), data from the International Migration Policy and Law Analysis database reveal a trend "toward more complex and, often, more restrictive regulation since the 1990's." IMPALA data also show "differential treatment of groups, such as lower requirements for highly skilled than low-skilled labor migrants"*<sup>33</sup>

33 Migration Data Portal, "Migration Policies and Governance."

On the UN's web page, I find a section written about the new focus of the SDGs:

*"The Agenda's core principle is to "leave no one behind," not even migrants."*<sup>34</sup>



34 UN, "Migration."

With this project I suggest that we delete "not even migrants" and allow ourselves to have higher expectations for the future; instead of speaking about the climate crisis as if we are in war with the Earth, we should strive for adapting to the new climate conditions in order to prevent an even bigger migratory crisis.

## 3.4 Methodology

The project will investigate a method of representing a future scenario via a projected narrative. The use of storytelling is used to create hypothetical situations that create a red thread, allowing me to explore, zoom in and zoom out; hopefully giving me the ability to go from having the overview and working in detail.

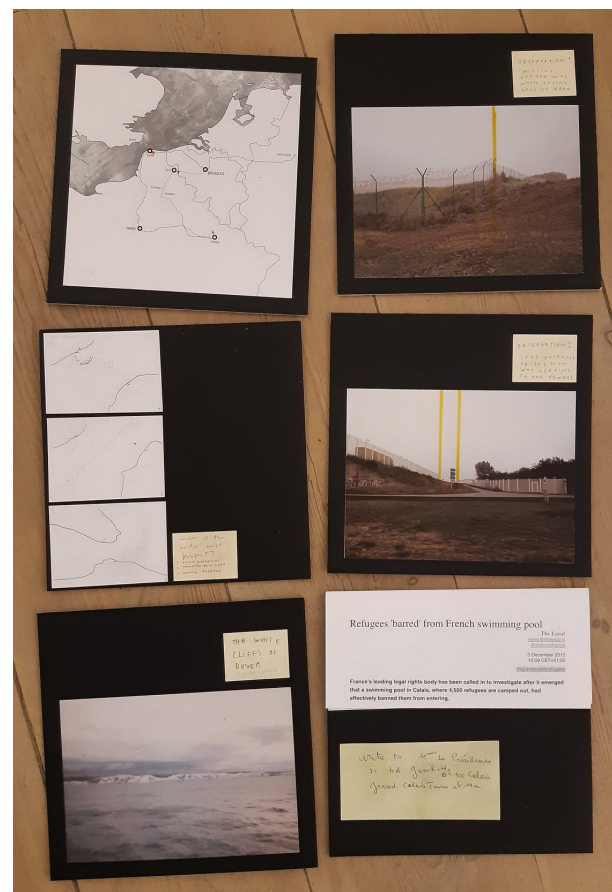
The idea to work with storytelling stems from my conversations with different artists in Calais, whose work span from writing, illustrations, animation movie-making, etc. They work with narratives in order to shed light over the migration conflict. I believe that storytelling is used as a method in these cases, because it can be a powerful media to reach out to different demographics. Storytelling can facilitate the intersection of other disciplines such as illustration, performing art, politics or sociology. I have decided to use it as a methodological backbone in my because I want to investigate how it can be combined with architecture.

**COLLABORATION** In this project I will develop a narrative, hopefully in collaboration with Veronika Boutinova, one of the artists from Calais that I became acquainted with in during the field trip. I depart from the idea that multi-disciplinary work is imperative while working with migration and other human matters, since the conflicts need to be seen and worked with from different angles in order to be able to understand the true scale of it.

**VISUAL LITERACY** I would like to work in a visual way, harvesting and clustering my research findings and insights in a physical way. In previous phases I have been using a physical archive with 21x21 cm black boards as a way storing and remembering little things that might become relevant again later in the process, shifting my exhibited research images from one to another depending on what is present or relevant at the time of my process. This method helps me have my references at hand and always in a visual way, which guides me through my research process and helps me make sense of my findings. I will work with collages as a way of visualizing my ideas because I would like to use a more sketch-like method to recreate dream scenarios. Another reason to work with analogue media is that I feel in closer contact with what I work with if I use my hands.

**SWITCHING SCALE** I hope for this project to help me learn how to think and design on a big scale, which I am not accustomed to, exploring how to use my architectural skill set in a new way. Working with different scales co-evolutionarily might be fruitful in ways that I am still to experience. My hope is that it will help me understand the context that I operate in and the issues I try to deal with in a bigger perspective.

> 6 boards from the fieldwork archive showing (from top left) field trip route, registrations of irregularities concerning fences, 3 illustrations of perceptions of where the border is strongest, a photo of a photo taken by Horace Barbage of the White Cliffs of Dover seen from the ferry, a yellow note from the manager of the swimming pool 'Piscine Rason' saying: "write Ms President" (I suppose he means the mayor) and her address in Calais (a note I received after asking how it works with the ID checks that have been put in place in order to keep migrants out of the public facilities). (2020).



### 3.5 Phases and deliverables

The development and production of the project work will constitute of 4 phases, all followed up by a critique and feedback session, and with the final thesis presentation in May/June as its termination. In each phase I will focus on different aspects and scales of the project, which is sketched in the following phase description and schedule.

**PHASE 01** The first phase will focus on the first steps from programme to project. I intend to start the project by developing a handbook for how to build a transitory town and by narrating short pieces of writing, hopefully as a collaboration. I will investigate the project through physical models from the beginning, hence why sketch models and site models are marked out as objects for production in the first weeks. Alongside the model-making, I intend to create large scale drawings to get to know the site, as well as producing collages in order to create quick propositional sketches.

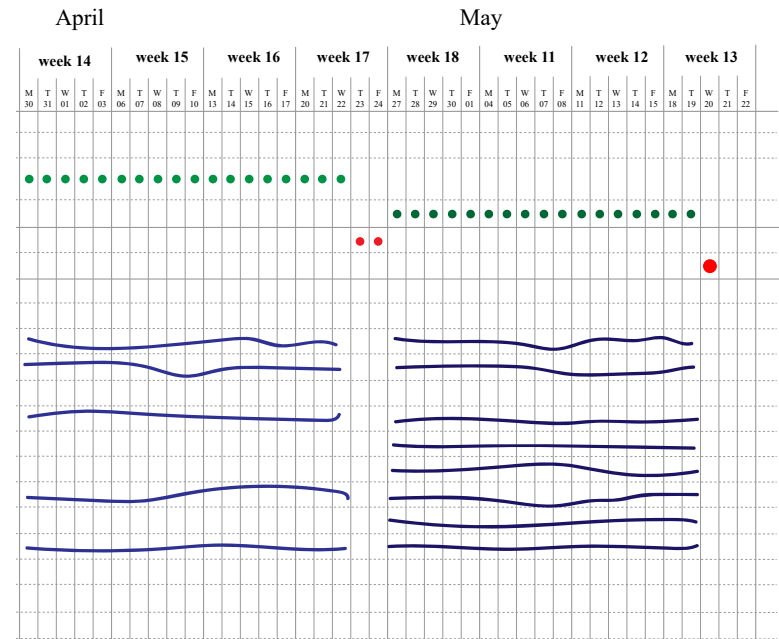
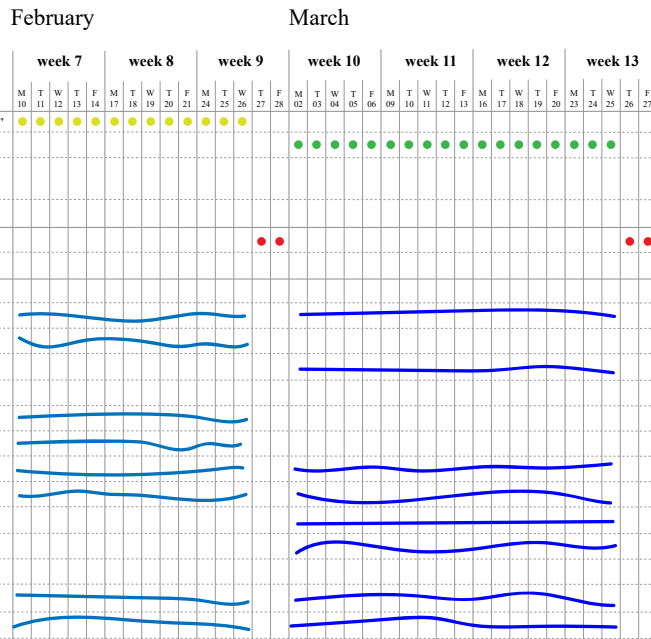
**PHASE 02** The headline for the second phase is project proposal. In this phase, my hope is to get as far with the proposal as possible. This is why I will start here most of the production objects. In this second phase, I will focus on detail models, investigating the project on a closer scale; the units.

I will simultaneously zoom out, developing the urban plan alongside with the very close scale of the units.

**PHASE 03** The third phase is about how to make the most out of the project. In this phase I intend to work with models in both small and large scale in order to define the final project by making it physical. With pictures of the models and from the actual context, I will continue with the production of collages and drawings.

**PHASE 04** In the last phase, all production objects are marked as important, but it is primarily to be understood as finishing up of the final deliverables and pick up whatever loose ends there might be.

#### 3.5.1 Schedule



# 4.0

APPENDIX

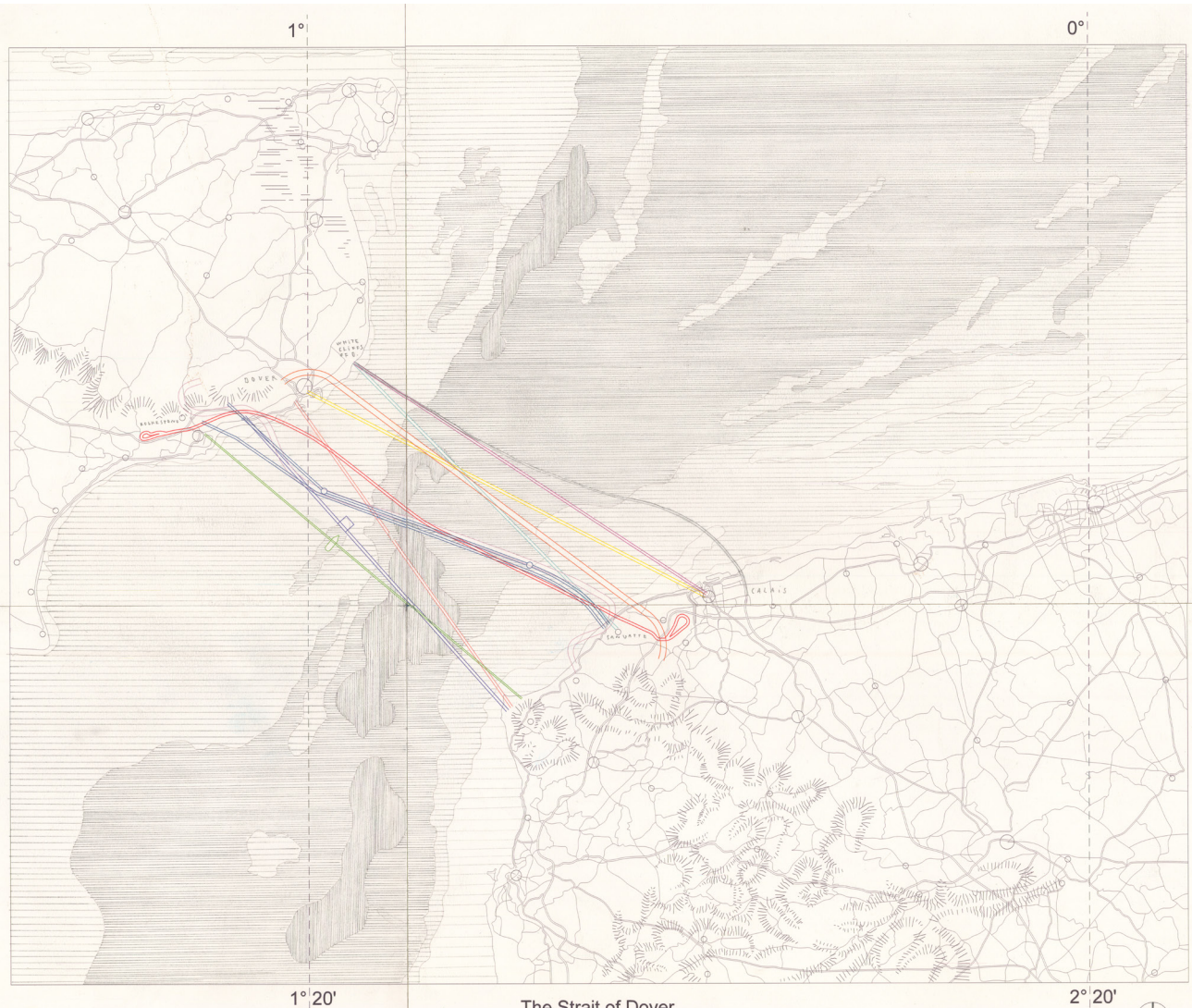


## 4.1 Investigations of a new, in-between territory

> Researching on the link connection I discovered that there have been countless proposals throughout the years. In this map I have collected them in plan – both tunnels and bridges - the image that occurs is somehow a joining of the two lands – as if they had been sown together. The list underneath shows a few more proposals that I could only find illustrations off.

The section (next page) is based on a simplified geological profile showing how the tunnel connects the two countries underneath the ground. I have added a selection of other proposals – a few tunnels, a bridge and a combination of the two. Both because of the distorted scale but also because of the many new elements inhabiting the channel it is almost as if a new "land" occurs – this in-between-land could hold potential in finding space for the transitory town - a neutral or not-yet decided territorial space.

Investigative plan, combined digital and hand drawing, (2019).

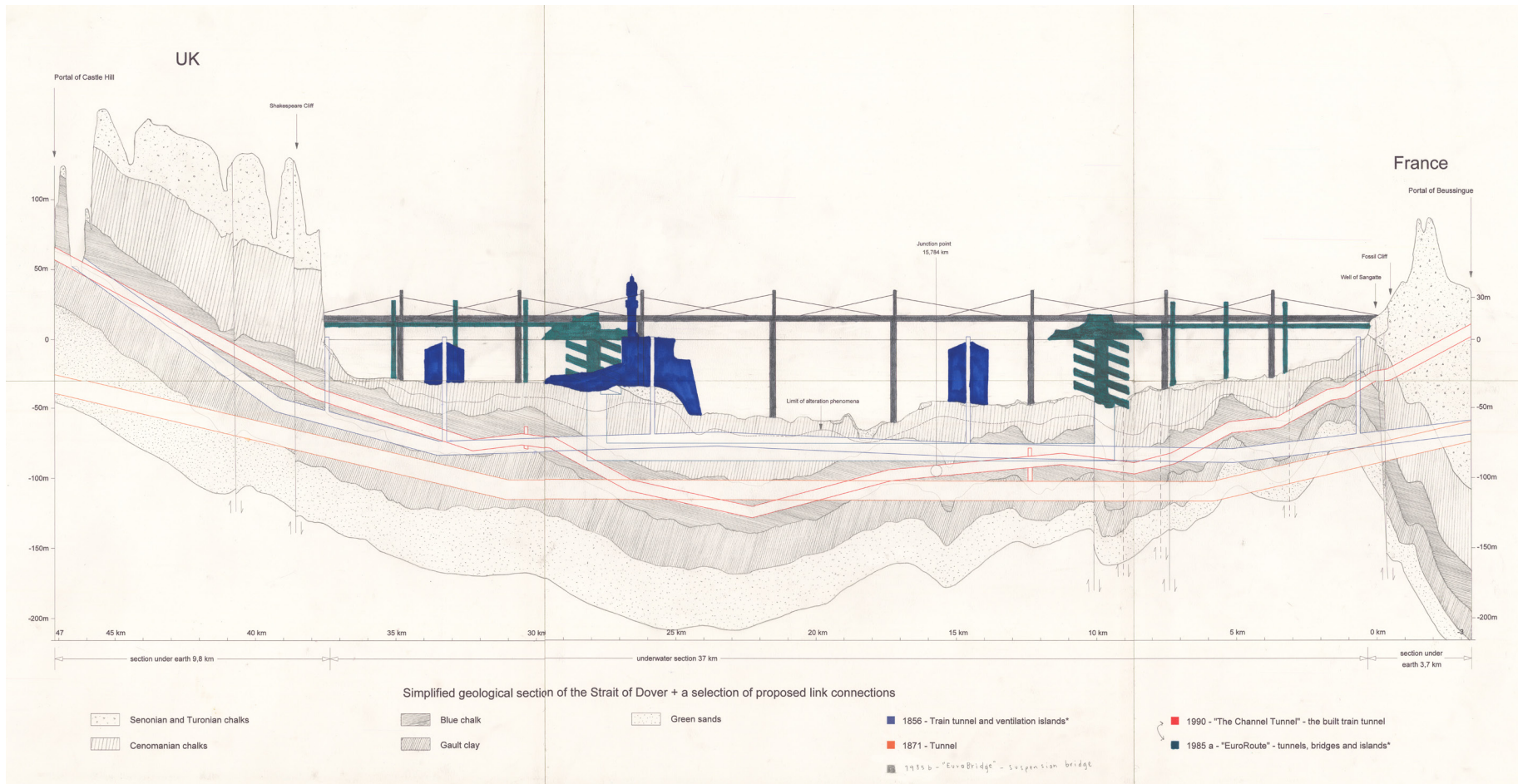


The Strait of Dover  
An incomplete map of proposed link connections  
Scale 1:200.000

- |                                 |  |                                |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| □ 1802 - Horse carriage tunnel* | ■ 1840 - Isthme                                | ■ 1885 - Train tunnel*         | ■ 1985 a - "EuroRoute" - tunnels, bridges and islands* |
| ■ 1834 - Tunnel                 | ■ 1856 - Train tunnel and ventilation islands* | □ 1889 - Hanging tramp bridge* | □ 1985 b - "EuroBridge" - suspension bridge*           |
| ■ 1836 - Pont sur le Detroit    | ■ 1866 - Tunnel and llot naviforme de Varne*   | □ 1890 - Train bridge*         | □ 1985 c - "EuroLink" - tube bridge*                   |
| ■ 1837 - Bac flottant           | ■ 1871 - Tunnel                                | □ 1961 - "The Channel Bridge"  | ■ 1990 - "The Channel Tunnel" - the built train tunnel |

\* see illustrations in catalog of link proposals between Dover and Calais

v Investigative section, combined digital and hand drawing, (2019).



## 4.2 Interviews

### 4.2.1 Introduction and short presentations

During the field trip to Calais in September and October 2019 I got in contact with local, Calaisian artists who deals with the subject of migration through various medias. I interviewed 3 of them in order to get a better understanding of how the border is experienced by the people who live next to it.

#### INTERVIEW\_01

##### **Emma Guareschi**

Date: 2019-10-17

Time: Around 4pm

Situation: At my Airbnb, Rue des Quatre Coins

Duration: 46:54 min

Short presentation: Guareschi is 25 years old and studies illustration and design in London. Her mom is British and her dad is French, so they decided to settle down in-between; Calais. The migrants have been a big part of her childhood and youth and she has been working with the problematic situation through illustrations.

#### INTERVIEW\_02

##### **Veronika Boutinova**

Date: 2019-10-17

Time: Around 6pm

Situation: At Veronika's place over a cup of tea, Rue Aristide Briand

Duration: 57:58 min

Short presentation: Boutinova is 49 years old, artist and writer. Originally from Lille, moved to Calais in the end of the 1990s – just as the first migrants arrived. She doesn't consider herself "Calaisian", because she doesn't like the place, but she has decided to stay because she has found an interesting subject for her work; the history of migration and the issues at "ville frontier". For 20 years she has been working with the issue of migration in installations, writings and performances.

#### INTERVIEW\_03

##### **Horace Barbage**

Date: 2019-10-17

Time: Around 8pm

Situation: In Horace's atelier, Avenue Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Duration: 62:58 min

Short presentation: Barbage was born in Calais in 1990 and is now 30 years old. Both sides of his family originate from the town. The reason why I talk to Barbage is because I stumbled upon some prints in his and his mom's atelier which very clearly addresses the migration issue. One print shows the strait between Dover and Calais, but the water has been painted red as blood and the title of the work is "Border thing".

4.2.2 Excerpt from writings about the border in Calais

35 Guareschi, Interview\_02

[...] One of Veronika Boutinova's recent publications is the children's book 'Waël, Roi D'Angleterre' made in collaboration with the Calaisian illustrator Emma Guareschi. One of the drawings in the book is an illustration of the strait. Guareschi describes how this particular image is supposed to show that "even though they [the refugees] are so close by there is a massive obstacle and a massive gap between both places [England and France]"<sup>35</sup>

36 Boutinova, Interview\_03

In connection with the publication of the children's book Veronika brought a group of 8 year old children, including her own daughter, to meet up with a group of children living in The Jungle. The idea was to make them aware of the situation, but also posing an "act of resistance" against the exclusion of migrants by the local community. The immediate reaction from another parent was to address a complaint to the school and to the mayor in order to get the act forbidden. The reason for the complaint was that he found it to be completely irresponsible to mix the children because "the kids from The Jungle have a lot of disease!"<sup>36</sup> The act was forbidden, so instead of bringing the kids from The Jungle to the school, Veronika brought a smaller group of kids, whose parents had confirmed the idea, into The Jungle. During an afternoon the kids played together, made drawings of their dreams and became friends. Afterwards Veronika made the act into a theater which has been playing in a number of cities in France, but the local authorities will not allow it to be performed in Calais. Veronika describes the consequences of the censorship as a part of the hostile environment created by the discriminative legislations and anti-migration policy as a "wall of inhumanity" and explains how it has become enclosing not only for the migrants but also for the locals: "According to me I am a prisoner of migration policy,"<sup>37</sup> she states.

37 Boutinova, Interview\_03

38 Boutinova, Interview\_03

To my question: "Where is the border?" Veronika's immediate response is: "For me the image of the border is that of the barbed wire around the city. It's not a border between England and France. It's a border between migrants and the railways, the ferry, the harbor. Everything is closed."<sup>38</sup>

39 Guareschi, Interview\_02

To Emma Guareschi the border is strongest at the sight of 'The white cliffs of Dover'. She explains that when you see these "impressive, massive white cliffs of chalk"<sup>39</sup> from the ferry then you know that you have reached the other side. In order to illustrate it she dots in the border as being present around the ferry terminal, along the ferry route and especially the area close to the cliffs.

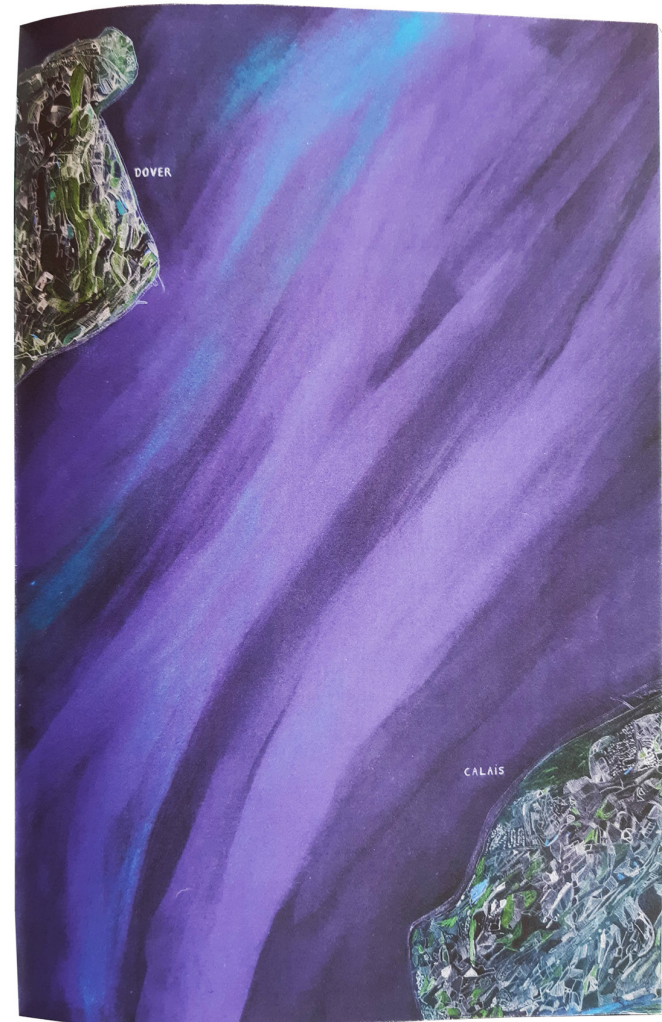
40 Barbage, Interview\_03

To the same question Horace Barbage, another Calaisian artist, answers very specifically that it is "at the highway bridge by the tunnel entrance where there are 2 or 3 sets of barriers to prevent people from jumping directly on the train tracks". It is also "the most violent place because it is where most deaths have taken place". He continues by explaining: "When you pass this bridge and you see these two holes and the barriers. You don't really see anything but you feel this England."<sup>40</sup>

41 Boutinova, Interview\_03

> Illustration of the Strait of Dover from the children's book "Waël, Roi D'Angleterre" by Emma Guareschi, (2019).

The three answers make it clear that the border takes many shapes in Calais; it is on the ferry, it is the sea, it is the barbed wire around the city and by the tunnel entrance. Veronika elaborates on how it works visually: the wall runs along the motorway and then it suddenly stops. She wonders why and comes to the conclusion: "it is just to show power. It's a metaphor!"<sup>41</sup>



## 4.3

### Image credits

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- Page 14+15:** Viewed on 06.02.2020 at; <https://refugeesmatter.blog/2017/04/30/study-syrian-refugees/>
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- Page 23:** Viewed 2020.06.02 at; <https://www.businessinsider.in/The-French-want-to-bulldoze-the-Jungle-on-Monday-and-the-Calais-migrants-are-scared-because-they-dont-know-what-is-going-to-happen/articleshow/50590451.cms>
- Page 24+25:** Viewed 2020.06.02 at; <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3766036.html>
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- Page 31:** Viewed 2020.06.02 at; <http://ronfleur.centerblog.net/rub-08-peniches-villes-c--9.html>
- Page 34(1):** Viewed on 2020.02.06 at; <https://www.archdaily.com/781065/interview-with-yona-friedman-imagine-having-improvised-volumes-floating-in-space-like-balloons>
- Page 34(2):** Viewed 2020.06.02 at; <https://www.nonarchitecture.eu/2020/01/11/constants-new-babylon-exhibition-gemeente-museum/>
- Page 35:** Viewed 2020.06.02 at; <https://www.3ammagazine.com/3am/cities-in-the-sky-re-evaluating-yona-friedman/>
- Page 36(1):** Viewed 2020.09.02 at; <https://unfoundation.org/what-we-do/issues/sustainable-development-goals/>
- Page 36(2):** Viewed 2020.09.02 at; <https://www.wbcsd.org/Programs/Circular-Economy>
- Page 36(3):** Viewed 2020.09.02 at; <https://www.uninnovation.network/>
- Page 51:** Illustration from the book “Waël, Roi D’Angleterre”, illustrated by Emma Guareschi and written by Veronika Boutinova, published in Paris, 2019

All other images and illustrations by author

## 4.4

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