March 25th – 2006, Los Angeles. A multitude of migrants took over the streets and claimed their rights in this biggest demonstration ever seen in the history of the city. This was not an isolated event but rather the culmination of hundreds of other mobilizations taking place in every corner of the US. Millions were involved and they raised simple questions: Can you imagine the US without its migrant population? Can you imagine the impact on the US economy of a single-day strike of all migrant workers? The answer to both: No, you can’t. But consider this: migrants are not recognized as citizens. They are discriminated in their access to social services. They are territorially, socially and economically segregated. They are haunted by racism and police brutality.

The situation in Europe may not be comparable to the US. The difference is made above all by different histories of migration. It is nevertheless worth to raise the same questions in Europe. In fact, it is migrants and struggles of migration that are raising these questions in Europe. We believe the answer on the both sides of the Atlantic to be the same.

**Movements and struggles of migration** have been and continue to be a political challenge for the left and for the social movements in Europe. We, the Frassanito Network, a transnational network made up of collectives working all over Europe within the movements and the struggles of migration, are convinced that migration should not be perceived as one among many political concerns/issues. We do not claim that migrants should be seen as the new political or even »revolutionary« subject. Far from it! What we do claim is a perspective that social and political stratiﬁcation, frontiers within citizenship and precarization of labour reveal the brutality of the transformations that have reshaped citizenship and labour relations in the last two decades. These transformations are partly a result of a successful capitalistic response to the struggles that in the 1960s and 1970s criticized social state and forsedism. Racism and sexism. They revealed and attacked the nightmare of factory discipline and social domination hidden beneath the rhetoric dream of »integration«. These struggles undermine, crisscross and attack this perspective. From outside, from within and in between:

**We didn’t cross the border, the border crossed us.**

**The Frassanito Network**

**Movements and Struggles of Migration in and around Europe**

October 2005 – Challenge from »outside«. Coordinated groups made up of 100 to 500 refugees and migrants mainly from sub-Saharan African countries stormed the border-fences of the Spanish enclave of Ceuta and Melilla. The response: death shootings and mass deportations to the desert by Spanish and Moroccan authorities as henchmen of the European migration regime. Migrants’ demand to access the wealthy zones of the city and to move freely caught public attention for several weeks.

November 2005 – Challenge from »within«. After the police hunted to death two young men, the suburbs of French cities, the heart of Europe, rose up in a new wave of intense uprisings. Young men from the suburbs, many of them sons and nephews of the migrants, who came to France after decolonisation and most of them French citizens, fought back the police night by night. The result: from December 2005 to January 2006 a multitude of migrants stormed the Paris suburbs for several weeks. Young men in Athens where they demanded legalisation of their social and economic segregation most migrants live in. Young men from the suburbs, many of them sons and nephews of the migrants, who came to France after decolonisation and most of them French citizens, fought back the police night by night. The result: from December 2005 to January 2006 a multitude of migrants stormed the Paris suburbs for several weeks. The response: death shootings and mass deportations to the desert by Spanish and Moroccan authorities as henchmen of the European migration regime. Migrants’ demand to access the wealthy zones of the city and to move freely caught public attention for several weeks.

**Ceuta / Melilla – French suburbs – Rome / Athens / Spain:**

These are just three current spots of confrontations and events, each of them rooted in their social roots, forms of protest and confrontations. The result: a certain sense of an icecberg: a wide spectrum of social struggles, often with no political articulation, often necessarily hidden due to their illegal nature. These are the struggles that can not be easily be represented politically by the traditional concepts of social conflicts. The lack of representational models becomes apparent with the widespread image of migrants as either perpetrators or victims of smuggling, trafficking or slavery. Yet, migration struggles challenge the ruling order and continuously change the societies of Europe.

»From outside, from within and in between«: We are convinced that the impact of these migration-related social and political struggles is deeply interconnected with the so-called European migration regime aimed not simply at keeping refugees and migrants out of Europe but especially at promoting a process of selective inclusion, also through illegalization, of the migrants. Migrants’ struggles undermine, crosssress and attack this expressions of a complex cartography of struggles of migration. They reveal the intensity and the radical character of the challenges they pose. Let’s recall these events.
The struggle against the externalization and the flexible migration management must become a strategic task for the social movements in Europe. We could frame this struggle in terms of political communication. The externalization of the European border regime fosters a kind of global apartheid that delineates new imperial relation between the tu and its peripheries. We therefore need to intensify the relations between tu and beyond the European borders The »Bamako call« for a Euro-African joint day of action is an example. At the same time, we need to recognize the new flexible model of migration management in terms of a control machine that produces hierarchies and differences within Europe. These in turn shape the European citizenship in the making and the composition of the living labour. This control machine makes the conquest of a common ground of struggle and of social cooperation ever more difficult. Whether concerning an undocumented or a migrant with full citizen rights, a refugee or a so-called »highly-qualified« migrants to the programs such as the British »points system«, that range from the flexible model of migration management. There is a general tendency to ban the possibility of legalization from the European space and instead produce a much more selective and hierarchical models of recruitment of migrants, such as the British »points system«, that range from the so-called »highly-qualified« migrants to the programs for seasonal labourers. What is bound to remain a key feature of this model is the chaining of labour contract and residence permit. As a result this structural link radiates against which we struggled and continue to struggle all over Europe. The external camps anticipate a new flexible model of migration management. There is a general tendency to ban the possibility of legalization from the European space and instead produce a much more selective and hierarchical models of recruitment of migrants, such as the British »points system«, that range from the so-called »highly-qualified« migrants to the programs for seasonal labourers. What is bound to remain a key feature of this model is the chaining of labour contract and residence permit. As a result this structural link radiates.

The Frassanito Network, May 2006

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The name of the Frassanito Network has been taken from a place in Puglia, in the south of Italy, where a »NoBorder« camp was held in summer 2003. During seven days we have organized many debates and workshops, but also some actions, most notably an action against a detention center close to Bari (Bari Palese). This action created conditions which allowed some migrants to escape. After the camp, we decided to build a very loose network, sharing a common approach: We consider migration as a social movement and see the role struggles of migration as crucial for the further development of the entire global movement. These struggles a new social model. The elimination of the internal hierarchies that grew out of various sorts of integration policies and migratory regimes are the basis for the emergence of this new social model. We are convinced that this is the challenge we are confronted with in Europe today. Movements and struggles of migration are key to every attempt to politically address this challenge because they point to the tension between practices of mobility as potential foundations of a new mode of social cooperation and a capital list system of domination / exploitation based on selective inclusion via mobile borders and hierarchies. The institutional project of a new European constitution is blocked by its internal limits and contradictions. After the referendums in France and the Netherlands, we can say that we have a dream. We dream for the movements and struggles of migration to become the perspective from which to conceive, imagine and construct, through struggles and a constant reinvention of practices of cooperation and political communication, a new European space of freedom and equality.

During these days we will be in Athens, participating in workshops, assemblies and informal meetings both within the official programme of the 1st and in the autonomous spaces. We are interested in discussing and networking with migrant’s self-organized groups, initiatives that fight racism and support migrants. We wish to establish a link with the manifold groups and experiences that are developing around the issue of precariousness within the process of the EuroMayday. But most importantly, we need to take decisions concerning further steps for mobilization at the European level. On January 31st 2004 and on April 2nd 2004, we held the first and the second European day of action on migration. These were important dates for deepening of our networking process and putting the issue of migration at the centre of the agenda of social movements in Europe. We think it is possible to imagine a further step in our action this year. We think it is time to start a discussion about a large European demonstration to be held in Brussels in the second half of 2006. A demonstration that would echo and amplify the march of Los Angeles on this side of the globe. A demonstration that will give us a constituent moment of the new kind of European space we are struggling for.

From our point of view, we propose a couple of slogans that are radical and that at the same time allow for a wide participation: the freedom of movements, the right to organize and in the autonomous spaces. We are interested in discussing and networking with migrant’s self-organized groups, initiatives that fight racism and support migrants. We wish to establish a link with the manifold groups and experiences that are developing around the issue of precariousness within the process of the EuroMayday. But most importantly, we need to take decisions concerning further steps for mobilization at the European level. On January 31st 2004 and on April 2nd 2004, we held the first and the second European day of action on migration. These were important dates for deepening of our networking process and putting the issue of migration at the centre of the agenda of social movements in Europe. We think it is possible to imagine a further step in our action this year. We think it is time to start a discussion about a large European demonstration to be held in Brussels in the second half of 2006. A demonstration that would echo and amplify the march of Los Angeles on this side of the globe. A demonstration that will give us a constituent moment of the new kind of European space we are struggling for.

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