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## Of Other Global Cities: Frontiers, Zones, Camps

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*Introduction*

There are new kinds of spaces emerging across the world. We do not yet recognize them as 'urban' spaces. We do not as yet name them. These unnamed spaces are patchworks of arrangements nestled within existing and recognizable spaces yet forming interstitial territories that are literally neither here nor there. These spaces are inexistent insofar as they aim to create spaces of exception that become regular, routine and invisible. It is impossible to estimate how many people are caught in such spaces and how extensive they are. It is also very difficult to investigate these spaces, precisely because they are neither here nor there. Yet they are everywhere. That these spaces emerged in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries tells us more about the movement and flow of peoples, commodities and capital across the world than does the literature, growing up around the same period, on global cities. The literature on global cities has relentlessly focused on describing, analyzing and constituting the global city as an object of analysis, an object, which, caught in these movements and flows, has developed various policies and agencies for dealing with them.<sup>2</sup>

We would like to approach the subject of global cities from an entirely different perspective, that of another kind of space emerging across the world which we call 'other global cities.' The otherness of other global cities here cannot be captured by the already known and understood categories such as the numbered worlds (first, second, third) or geographic descriptions such as the North and the South. These other spaces are abject spaces insofar as they aim to render their inhabitants and occupants as being neither subjects nor objects but abjects. Since these spaces can be found nestled within existing territories and boundaries that constitute cities and states, they are immanent within these known spaces but they constitute their otherness insofar as they render other subjects as abjects. We wish to call these spaces 'other global cities' not only because they make global cities (as commonly understood) possible and, hence, are internally

connected to them, but also because these spaces internalize certain aspects and characteristics of global cities. What are these spaces? These abject spaces as other global cities conglomerate and accumulate in three different forms: frontiers, zones and camps.

### *Frontiers*

Frontiers are those spaces designed to regulate the mobility of people, where national and international laws are temporarily suspended, and buffer zones, through which people can be processed, created. This section exemplifies the emerging frontiers in which various subjects are not only stripped of their citizenship rights but also given ostensibly differentiated citizenship rights. Such spaces are created with the intent of 'housing' the abject in extraterritorial spaces. These extraterritorial spaces keep the abject from accessing state and city spaces in which they have the opportunity to exercise social, political and economic rights, recognizing that the ability to do so is a first step in becoming political and claiming legal citizenship status. Paradoxically, however, this is done by appealing to a governmental logic of human rights, and more specifically that of protection. The claim is that by creating such abject spaces new rights are being extended to those who would otherwise remain rightless.

How can such spaces be viewed as other global cities? Closer examination below of some specific examples of these frontier spaces reveals that, while the idea behind them may be to create temporary living spaces, they increasingly come to take on a certain permanence, providing the conditions for people to live increasingly more 'settled' lives such that these supposedly temporary spaces become permanent spaces of transience.<sup>3</sup> More than this though, such spaces come to take on a certain permanency as increasing numbers of abject subjects (refugees, non-status peoples, 'illegal' and economic migrants) are forced to reside in them. Rather than being isolated exceptions, however, they perform as part of a network of spaces that are also well integrated with other more cosmopolitan spaces like the global city with which we are more familiar. For it is only by creating spaces through which to regulate the abject that the current regime of global mobility and capital can be maintained. In other words, the experience for some of living in the cosmopolitan global city is increasingly dependent on the

creation of what we are calling here other global cities – spaces in which the subject increasingly find themselves forced to live.

*‘Zones of Protection’: ‘Regional Protection Areas’ and ‘Transit Processing Centers’*

Most recent governmental thought has focused on the idea of creating ‘zones of protection.’ Former UK Home Secretary, David Blunkett, introduced the idea of zones of protection as part of a new vision for a global asylum system ‘fit for the 21st century’ claiming that ‘we need a radically new approach to delivering the reduction of asylum numbers that we need’.<sup>4</sup> Although plans were put on hold after the proposal received much public criticism, different articulations of this same vision continue to reappear. For example, in 2004 German Interior Minister Otto Schily in agreement with Italian Interior Minister Giuseppe Pisanu attempted to push forward a proposal very similar to the UK’s to create transit or holding centres in North Africa to prevent asylum seekers from travelling and making claims within the EU.<sup>5</sup> In other words, despite being put on hold for the moment, the vision put forth here on zones of protection is of interest for it reflects current rationalities about how to devise new ways of using extraterritorial forms of detention to govern asylum seekers.

In a report entitled ‘A New Vision for Refugees’, the UK Government outlined its proposal for creating a new system of asylum management in coordination with other EU partners and international organizations like the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).<sup>6</sup> Funding for the initiative would come from a coalition of participating western nations, including ‘fellow English speaking nations such as the US, Canada and Australia’.<sup>7</sup> The proposal suggests the creation of two types of zones: ‘Regional Protection Areas’ (RPAs) and ‘Off-territory Transit Processing Centres’.<sup>8</sup>

Regional Protection Areas (RPAs) are areas to be set up near conflict zones producing major flows of people and are to be under UNHCR responsibility. Regional Protection Areas are supposed to provide protection or safe haven to those fleeing conflict or persecution in their home countries and to help them resettle back to their home countries, or countries nearby, rather than seeking asylum and resettlement in EU

countries. These buffer areas would also be used as areas to which those claiming asylum in the UK or other participating countries could be returned. The proposal notes

‘returning asylum seekers that spontaneously arrive in the UK to a Regional Protection Area for protection is a key part of the vision. It works on a principle similar to that of safe third countries. We would be saying that asylum seekers do not need protection in the UK because there is another safe third area where they can access adequate protection’.<sup>9</sup>

Regional Protection Areas would be located in such countries as Turkey, Iran, northern Somalia and Morocco that are part of migration routes and near major refugee-producing areas.<sup>10</sup> While the description of RPAs suggests that these spaces are temporary arrangements, in fact just the opposite is the case. The proposal differentiates RPAs from refugee camps by claiming that they should offer long-term settlement with ‘the opportunity for refugees to live as normal lives as possible’.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, Transit Processing Centres are to be located along the external borders of the EU in countries such as Romania, Croatia, Albania and Ukraine.<sup>12</sup> The idea of transit centres is to create extraterritorial processing areas where people’s asylum claims can be processed without having to travel to the countries in which they are seeking asylum. In other words, it prevents asylum seekers from relocating to certain EU countries by keeping them in buffer zones while they await news of their claims.<sup>13</sup> These zones would be used primarily for the return of economic migrants seeking refuge in the UK while waiting for the processing of their asylum claims.<sup>14</sup>

What is the governmental logic of these Regional Protection Areas and Transit Processing Centres? Critics of the UK’s proposal, like Amnesty International, have argued that, ‘the real goal behind the UK proposal appears to be to reduce the number of spontaneous arrivals to the UK and other EU states by denying access to territory, and shifting asylum-seekers to processing zones outside the EU where responsibility, enforceability and accountability for refugee protection would be weak and unclear’.<sup>15</sup>

This can be seen as part of a larger strategy of preventing people from claiming citizenship rights by keeping them away from state and city spaces. By virtue of belonging to a state and city, a person becomes entitled to certain citizenship rights (civil, political, and social) or at least the right to claim such rights. By creating these

extraterritorial spaces, states are making it impossible to claim such rights. What is denied to them is the right to have rights. The idea then is to create parallel spaces, like zones of protection, in which subjects live in a permanent state of transition for extended periods of time until they are possibly resettled. But more than this, these spaces perform a regulatory function of managing who has access to the rights and resources within EU countries and thus they are integral to the existence of the more cosmopolitan global city with which we are more familiar.

*'Excised offshore places' and 'offshore processing centres' (Australia's 'Pacific Solution')*

Another example of frontier spaces can be found in Australia's proposal to create excised offshore places and processing centres. Like the UK proposal, Australia's plans are founded upon a similar logic of creating extraterritorial spaces in which to settle asylum seekers and other migrants in spaces of social isolation away from the rest of Australian society and off its territory where they might more easily be able to exercise certain social, political and civil citizenship rights.

On 26 September 2001 the Australian government passed legislation designed to deter refugees, especially those without valid documents or those smuggled in, from reaching its shores. The same logic of creating buffer zones is also at work here. As part of this legislation, Australia removed certain territories from its 'migration zone' as a way of circumventing international refugee law and its own national immigration law and its responsibility to process asylum seekers. These territories called 'excised offshore places' include Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean; Ashmore and Cartier Island in the Timor Sea; and 'any Australian sea installation' or 'offshore resource' (such as an oil rig).<sup>16</sup> These territories act as spaces where indefinite detention is permitted and provided with limited judicial review as a way of bypassing normal judicial procedures that would normally apply on the Australian mainland. Detention centres, such as the one on Christmas Island, have been constructed to hold recognized refugees as well as asylum seekers and rejected asylum seekers in mandatory detention without the right to appeal and prohibited from access to legal counsel.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to ‘excised offshore places’, the Australian government has also made arrangements with several Pacific islands to establish ‘offshore processing centres’, essentially amounting to the ‘subcontracting of detention to poorer neighbouring states (the so-called ‘Pacific Solution).’<sup>18</sup> Here asylum seekers, especially those who enter ‘illegally’ or are expelled by the Australian government, such as those who arrive by boat, may be turned away to these places and held in facilities similar to detention centres and refugee camps to await the processing of their asylum claims. The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs notes that the turning away of an ‘offshore entry person’ depends upon her ‘declaring a country for this purpose’.<sup>19</sup> For example, Nauru and Papua New Guinea (Manus Island) have made arrangements with the Australian government to establish processing centres and have thus been deemed a ‘declared country’.<sup>20</sup> As of August 2002, at least 1,800 asylum seekers had been transferred to these islands.<sup>21</sup> Such arrangements often involve Australia paying these nearby Pacific nations to accept and ‘house’ its unwanted migrants in these off-shore processing centres or camps. For example, it paid 10 million dollars in August 2001 to the island of Nauru to accept and house refused asylum seekers in makeshift camps.<sup>22</sup> It has also made similar deals with Papua New Guinea, Kiribati and in November 2001 with Tuvalu. In November 2001 Australia also took some 300 Vietnamese and Middle Eastern refugees to its Christmas Island as well as to Ashmore Reef.<sup>23</sup> Critics note that this policy of ‘diverting boats to other countries in exchange for aid and money amounts to a trade in human misery’.<sup>24</sup>

Like zones of protection, these off-shore places interrupt the process of citizenship and rights-making by removing abject subjects like asylum seekers into social isolation in detention centres where they are less likely to be able to exercise citizenship rights like the right to legal council, speech, and access to social services and community networks. Human Rights Watch has documented how persons detained in these camps are denied what we consider as civil and political rights such as contact with the outside world, freedom of movement, and due process guarantees like independent legal counsel.<sup>25</sup> Yet, despite the denial of such basic rights, these spaces increasingly provide alternative living arrangements for asylum seekers and other abject subjects, some for several years, as they wait a decision to be made about their asylum

claims. Despite the fact that such off-shore arrangements may have been introduced as a short term method of deterrence and a temporary solution to reducing the numbers of asylum claimants arriving on Australia's shores, it is clear, almost five years later, that these alternative arrangements are becoming more permanent. In a recent announcement on 13 April 2006, the Australian government reaffirmed its commitment to its 2001 policy and noted its intentions to make the policy stricter, mandating that all asylum claimants arriving to Australia by ship, regardless of whether or not that boat makes it to the mainland, must now have their asylum claims assessed and processed at an offshore location.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the Australian government has removed itself from the daily governing of these spaces, placing the IOM, instead, as being responsible for the processing of claims and the administration of the centres. The fact that an international organization is running these off-shore places and providing basic services such as counselling also suggests a certain permanency in the operation of these centres.<sup>27</sup> Whereas zones of protection operate by creating extraterritorial spaces that function as buffer zones, off-shore places work through a redefinition of state territory. Territory is redefined as either no longer falling under state jurisdiction (e.g., excised off-shore places) or as extraterritorial space purchased on a second territory and under the responsibility of a third party such as an international organization like the IOM. This redefinition of territory thus makes it harder for subjects to make claims to citizenship rights as they would if they were 'housed' within spaces in the city. As such, these off-shore arrangements keep asylum seekers in abject spaces away from state and city spaces where they might have a chance of participating in social and economic networks and Australian society.

#### *Border zones: The USA-Mexico Border*

A third example of a buffer zone type of abject space is the border zones created between certain countries such as between the United States and Mexico. Border zones regulate the movement of millions of people with one recent IOM study estimating that globally there may be as many as 15-30 million 'irregular migrants'.<sup>28</sup> It is in this context that border zones can be understood as abject spaces.



The USA-Mexico border, running about 3,300 km long from San Diego, California to Brownsville, Texas provides one of the most poignant cases of such abject spaces.<sup>29</sup> Here, the border is enforced through ‘border control strategies’ like the 1994 ‘Southwest Border Strategy, consisting of four programs: ‘Operation Hold the Line’ in El Paso, Texas; ‘Operation Gatekeeper’ in San Diego; ‘Operation Safeguard’ in Arizona and ‘Operation Rio Grande’ in South Texas’.<sup>30</sup> Such border strategies are designed to ‘funnel northbound migration through open areas, such as mountains and deserts where migrants can be more easily apprehended by the US Border Patrol’.<sup>31</sup> But such border strategies also make crossing the border much more dangerous. Since their implementation in 1994, about 2,000 people have died crossing the border with 2001 figures in California estimating an average 140 deaths per year compared to the 23-24 deaths per year before the implementation of Operation Gatekeeper.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, as border enforcement is tightened, people increasingly turn to other mechanisms, including using so-called ‘coyotes’, or ‘people smugglers’, in order to cross, in addition to other responses such as building underground tunnels like the mile-long Otay Mesa tunnel.<sup>33</sup>

Different border strategies have also been adapted to deal with varying terrain. For example, Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego is designed to deal with migrant crossings through valleys and canyons. The strategy uses ‘three tiers of agents at the border’ with ‘a row of agents along the border fence, another one a few hundred yards behind, and another several hundred yards behind’.<sup>34</sup> In addition to using border agents, border strategies depend on the building of a physical wall between the US and Mexico. Since 9/11, for example, the US Government has proposed to build a 260-mile long fence along the Arizona state borders. This follows other fence-building projects along the border that intensified with the Southwest Border Strategy. For example, Operation Gatekeeper proposed plans for the construction of a triple fence. This triple fence, now near completion, consists of a first wall made of steel, a second fifteen-foot high wall, and a third ten-foot chain link fence.<sup>35</sup> Most border fences, like the San Diego Operation Gatekeeper fence, are also increasingly militarized with ‘stadium-style lighting that keeps the fence lit twenty-four hours a day and surveillance cameras to monitor activity around the fence’.<sup>36</sup> The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) notes that as

of 1998, Operation Gatekeeper had installed ‘six miles of permanent high-intensity lighting’, fifty-nine infrared scopes, 1,214 underground sensors and had installed computer systems to track migrants such as IDENT and ICAD Systems (USCIS, 1998).<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the US-Mexican border was enforced as of 2002 by approximately 9,150 border patrol agents, a number which contrasts to the mere 334 agents that police the 4,000 mile US-Canada border.<sup>38</sup> Border areas are thus highly militarized and policed zones. The logic is to render these spaces ‘secure’ by discouraging travel and settlement and essentially ridding these spaces of people.

Yet, if border zones have become places that invite dangerous crossings through inhospitable terrain like deserts, as well as militarized zones with border guards, light sensors and motion detectors, they have despite all of these strategies nevertheless become spaces of settlement but within abject conditions. The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) notes that about 10 million people live on the border area and that a significant proportion of the populations on both sides live at or below the poverty line.<sup>39</sup> Unemployment rates along the border are also 200-300 percent higher than in the rest of the USA.<sup>40</sup> On the Mexican side, MPI notes that the border areas have become Export Processing Zones (EPZs) where some 1,700 *maquiladoras* employ over 730,000 workers.<sup>41</sup> *Maquiladoras* have encouraged the migration of more than a million Mexicans to the border areas to work for as little as fifty cents per hour.<sup>42</sup> In addition to below minimum wage salaries, *maquiladoras* are also notorious for exploiting other labour rights including forced pregnancy testing for women, harassment, and exposure to toxic chemicals without proper warning or protection. In addition, export processing zones have also given rise to cities like Ciudad Juárez, made up of shanty towns and lacking basic infrastructure and services, where more than 400 women have by now been murdered since 1993, often on their way to or from work in the *maquiladoras*.<sup>43</sup> Irregular early morning and late night shifts leave women vulnerable as they are forced to make their way home without public transportation and community networks, in a city where a message has now been sent, due to the failure to seriously prosecute the murders, that violence against women is acceptable whether it be drug, police or domestic related.<sup>44</sup> As Esther Chávez, founder of the only battered women and rape crisis centre in Juárez, explains:

This city has become a place to murder and dump women. ... [Authorities] are not interested in solving these cases because these women are young and poor and dispensable. A woman goes to work so she can support her family. She works hard, but when she is killed, people say she was a prostitute that isn't worth anything'.<sup>45</sup>

In other words, border zones give rise to abject places of settlement like EPZs and makeshift cities like Juárez that emerge around the notion of disposable bodies of (often feminized) cheap labour. It should not surprise us then that such spaces grow up alongside more wealthy settlements across the border as both are intimately connected as part of the same network of global production.

As abject spaces, border zones operate like buffer zones but unlike zones of protection the logic is not to protect people but the opposite: to render these spaces inhospitable and treacherous to people to deter mobility or belonging along the border. They are thus spaces of extreme militarization, violence and poverty, spaces designed to encourage permanent transience by making living in community extremely difficult. However, despite this, these spaces inevitably become places of settlement in border towns and *maquiladoras* for the millions of migrants attempting to cross borders like the US-Mexico border. It is these abject spaces – the other global cities like Juárez – that become integral to the migration of cheap labour and the functioning of a global regime of capital accumulation that depends on such expendable labour. As such, these border zone frontier spaces must be seen as part of a larger network of abject spaces that are integral to the functioning of other more cosmopolitan spaces like the global city with which we are more familiar. For such border and *maquiladora* towns, which exist as abject spaces of poverty alongside more wealthier towns and cities across the border, serve as reserve areas to where abject subjects migrate in order to seek out an existence, hoping eventually to one day access the resources and rights across the border in the wealthier cities of the USA and Canada.

What then is the logic behind all of these zones of protection, regional protection areas, excised offshore places, offshore protection areas and protection borderlands that we call frontiers? It is not that there is an inexorable logic enacted through these diverse forms of population control and regulation but that they are assembled together to create

frontiers in and through which subjects are denied possibilities of constituting themselves as political subjects without being reduced to objects. These frontiers, through which people are constituted as abject, have become spaces with their own logic. These spaces attempt to render subjects with an inexistent status that is without voice, without speech, without presence, without reason — in effect, without the capacity of becoming political — by preventing access to certain state and city spaces to which abject subjects can make claims to rights. Yet, at the same time, it is through these abject spaces that the dominant regime of a global regulation of movement of peoples and capital by democratic states is made visible for what it is — and rendered so by the very same abjects they have tried to constitute. For the abjects begin to act as political subjects through various forms of resistance whether it be in acts of suturing mouths to protest detention, setting boats on fire in order to be picked up and brought to the Australian shores, or attempting dangerous border crossings. It is through these acts that the abjects render themselves existent and present while simultaneously exposing the web of strategies and technologies of otherness enacted in these abject spaces — these other global cities — that attempt to render them inexistent.

### *Zones*

The logic that assembles frontiers can also be found in various zones. These zones of exception are spaces where subjects live under suspended rules of freedom. Unlike frontiers, whose logic is to keep out and away via extraterritorial arrangements, these zones are spaces nestled within state and city territories. These include zones within global cities to which various subjects are dispersed but then live under some form of conditional freedom and surveillance. These are zones of exception insofar as subjects who inhabit them are constituted as exceptions and kept from fully making claims to the city by being ‘housed’ in these other abject spaces of the city.

#### *A. Detention Centres*

Over the past decade, democratic states have introduced increasingly restrictive means to deal with refugees and migrants including the growing use of detention centres. In a November 2002 statement to the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, noted that there was a ‘worrying more general trend towards increased use of detention – often on a discriminatory basis’.<sup>46</sup> The US Committee for Refugees (USCR) notes that in 1996, with changes to its immigration laws, detention of certain immigrants and refugees became mandatory in the USA such that the ‘INS now detains more than 200,000 people annually at more than 900 sites, the majority of which are county and local jails’.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, ‘Immigration detainees have become the fastest growing segment of the incarcerated population in the United States’.<sup>48</sup> Like the USA, Australia has also implemented laws imposing mandatory detention ranging from months to years for all refugees and migrants who arrive without proper identification<sup>49</sup> while in Europe, there has been a similar growing trend in the use of detention centres across Europe.<sup>50</sup> There are different forms of detention centres ranging from ‘asylum hotels’ or ‘induction centres’ to ‘accommodation centres’ to ‘removal centres.’ There are also detention camps, such as the infamous Woomera camp in Australia or Sangatte in France, but this form of detention facility will be discussed in the section on camps. We are interested here in discussing those abject spaces that are nestled within cities and regions.

#### *B. Asylum hotels as induction or reception centres*

In its 2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum (NIA) Act, the UK government announced plans to build new reception or induction centres to house asylum seekers for the first week, giving them a physical exam and providing information on asylum procedures, before moving them to large-scale accommodation centres where they would be housed while they wait for their claims to be processed.<sup>51</sup> The plan was to use various hotels (popularly referred to in the press as ‘asylum hotels’) as induction centres. One such example was Sittingbourne’s Coniston Hotel in Kent. However, protest from neighbourhood residents led to the eventual government decision to abandon the project because of a lack of proper public consultation.<sup>52</sup>

#### *C. Accommodation centres*

In its 2002 NIA Act, the UK government also proposed to build a network of accommodation centres to house incoming asylum seekers waiting for their claims to be

processed. The act proposed to build these centres in rural communities such as in South Glamorgan, near Edinburgh, Lincolnshire and Bicester, Oxfordshire. Former Home Office Minister Des Browne explained that ‘At present, inner city dispersal areas take on virtually all responsibility for asylum seekers and it is only fair that all parts of the country share responsibility’.<sup>53</sup> While it is expressed as sharing responsibility, the act was clearly designed to mitigate against protests by inner city neighbourhoods for the location of such centres. The Home Office notes that such centres would be an improvement to current practice where the government ‘accommodates most asylum seekers around the country in houses, flats or hostels provided by Local Authorities or private landlords’ because it will enable the government to process cases faster, have less impact on social services and ‘make it easier to stay in close contact with asylum seekers’.<sup>54</sup> The centres are designed with the idea of providing all the basic services to asylum seekers in one spot so that they ‘will not be dependent on local services’, including education, health, ‘purposeful activities and voluntary work’, transport, and interpretation and legal services.<sup>55</sup> Rather than having access to such services within the city proper, new spaces of ‘accommodation’ are created in which to provide the services required for daily living but in a controlled space removed from the social networks of the city. These euphemisms, in other words, are designed to mask the fact that the authorities want to control asylum seekers and make it impossible for them to become subjects by becoming part of the daily hustle and bustle of city life. These detention centres are a new form of a ghetto that goes back to medieval cities: it is a segregation technology whereby subjects are constituted as strangers and outsiders rather than subjects who can claim ‘a right to have rights’.<sup>56</sup> Interestingly, plans for the creation of such centres have still met with resistance from local residents. For example, plans to convert a former naval base into a centre to house 400 asylum seekers were recently dropped, in part, because of local protest that the centre would lead to increased crime in the area and concerns about incoming numbers of foreigners to rural communities.<sup>57</sup>

#### *D. Removal centres*

‘Closed centres’: These removal centres are often privately run, prison-like holding centres where people are kept behind barbed wire and denied rights of movement, with

limited access to legal rights and limited access to time spent outdoors as in prison. In the UK as of June 2003, there were 1,355 people being held in removal centres.<sup>58</sup> One well-known example is Scotland's Dungavel Immigration and Asylum Centre in Lanarkshire; a removal centre that holds failed asylum seekers until they are deported. Formerly a prison, Dungavel is surrounded by a 20 feet wall, guards and barbed wire.<sup>59</sup> Dungavel has been referred by some as a Scottish Guantánamo Bay.<sup>60</sup> Critics argue that 'those held have less rights than suspected criminals because they cannot rely on an automatic review of their detention by the courts' and 'the centres unfairly restrict an individual's right to fight a case because of limited access to legal advice'.<sup>61</sup> Moreover, people are held often for lengthy periods of time. Out of 150, government statistics in 2002 showed that fifty-five people were held for over a year.<sup>62</sup>

On the other hand, unlike in closed removal centres, asylum seekers housed in so-called 'Open Centres' are permitted the right to freedom of movement, to come and go as they please. Open centres house both 'illegal' immigrants as well as asylum seekers waiting either their deportation or claims to be processed. One well-known example is Belgium's Le Petit Chateau in Brussels, which houses up to 850 immigrants and refugees, many for more than a year.<sup>63</sup> Le Petit Chateau makes arrangements for the children to receive an education in nearby schools. Families live in limbo however waiting for news of their claims and those considered as 'illegal' or whose claims have been rejected are periodically visited by the police and removed to closed centres until they are deported.<sup>64</sup>

#### E. *'Departure and Closed Expulsion Centres'*

On 16 February 2004, the Dutch government passed a law to deport 26,000 asylum seekers, whose claims had been rejected, over the next three years. It also proposed to build departure and expulsion centres to hold those who are to be deported.<sup>65</sup> This represents a shift in policy as rejected applicants were not normally forcibly removed in the past, and thus often remained illegally.<sup>66</sup> Critics have referred to this process as creating an 'expulsion factory'.<sup>67</sup> Failed asylum seekers would initially be sent to open departure centres but if their deportation cannot be arranged within a certain time (due to their home countries being unable or unwilling to provide travel documents for example)

then they would be sent to closed expulsion centres.<sup>68</sup> Finally, in cases where people can not be deported within the allowable time limit set then they will be released, and effectively made homeless, as they will be without status and the right to claim social services and housing.<sup>69</sup> The law has been criticized by international organization like Human Rights Watch for violating international refugee law and has met with mass protest and hunger strikes; with one Iranian asylum seeker even sewing closed his eyes and mouth in a statement of protest.<sup>70</sup>

Detention centres represent a continuum of holding spaces for asylum claimants where the logic is initially one of protection and welcoming by the state. This logic shifts to one of transition where claimants' lives are put on hold in accommodation centres that 'accommodate' refugees by providing basic services all in one spot as they wait for a decision to be rendered on their status. Finally, at the other end of the continuum are removal and expulsion centres where the logic is one of incarceration with the state now seeking to punish the 'bad' failed claimants now no longer deserving of state protection and its human rights. Detention centres reveal that if the creation of abject spaces is justified through a logic of human rights, that is to give rights to asylum seekers by granting them protection, then the flip side of this logic is to remove these rights through removal and expulsion centres. In both situations, however, these centres are supposed to be temporary spaces of detention designed to facilitate the transition of status of asylum seekers into either one of integration within the larger host society and city life or one of expediting their removal. Yet, the very fact that many asylum claimants are held for extended periods of time and that the centres are capable as a result of providing all of the amenities and social services necessary for day-to-day living belies a different reality. Such 'accommodation' speaks to the more permanent character of such detention centres as alternative city spaces in which asylum claimants increasingly find themselves forced to live.

#### *Other Abject Spaces within Cities*

While refugees living in many cities of the world have been called 'an invisible population' whose needs are often overlooked even under UNHCR programmes, we will focus here on the plight of refugees in European cities (HRW, 2003).<sup>71</sup> As with



detention centres, other abject spaces nestled within cities, such as ‘informal transit camps’ and ‘drop houses’, essentially ‘disappear’ failed asylum claimants and ‘illegal’ migrants into the streets, rendering them invisible, inaudible and in effect inexistent. This happens by rendering abject subjects with an insecure status, turning them out into the streets, and then making it difficult for them to access from their clandestine positions as ‘illegals’ many of the citizenship rights (such as access to various social services like health care, education and employment) that become available by virtue of being in and of the city.

#### *A. Informal Transit Camps*

In Paris, squatter camps have emerged in downtown centres like Alban-Satragne and near the Channel ports. These ‘unofficial open-air transit camps’ are referred to as ‘mini-Sangatte’s’ after the infamous, and now closed, Sangatte detention centre.<sup>72</sup> Young men gather around these sites by day and disperse to nearby building sites to sleep at night.<sup>73</sup> As one refugee aid worker explained ‘There are hundreds of asylum seekers who have been forced to fall back on the Paris region after being told to leave Calais and other ports and are now living rough’.<sup>74</sup> These growing transit camps are, in part, the response of migrants to the crackdown by France and Britain on refugees crossing the Channel to seek asylum in Britain. The asylum seekers find an occasional meal through the Salvation Army but fear staying overnight in hostels for fear of police harassment.<sup>75</sup>

In Britain, rejected asylum seekers find themselves in similar situations, suddenly turned out onto and left to sleep in the streets, without access to social services. The UK government provides housing to some asylum seekers awaiting their claims to be processed. Once a negative decision has been reached, however, they may find themselves suddenly turned out overnight onto the street without a place to sleep, benefits, and even the right to work (Observer, 2004).<sup>76</sup> In these cases, asylum seekers are literally turned into the homeless without rights to social services and the right to work (Willis, 2004).<sup>77</sup> In other words, growing numbers of asylum seekers are rendered ‘illegal’ by state policies, forced to eek out an existence as the homeless without access to even the most basic citizenship rights. They find themselves residing in various abject city spaces, living in the city but yet not of the city.

### *B. Drop Houses*

In the United States, private homes, leased by ‘coyotes’ or ‘people smugglers’, are increasingly being turned into ‘drop-houses,’ or spaces where migrants smuggled into the USA can be ‘warehoused’ while they wait for further transportation or for trafficking fees to be paid up by relatives. Migrants frequently spend months living in these houses under very poor and cramped living conditions with very little besides a sleeping bag. There has been a proliferation of drop houses in the last few years especially in Arizona and the Phoenix region. In February 2004 twenty-five drop houses holding over 500 people were found in Phoenix while other numbers suggest that in early 2001 over 100 drop houses holding some 1,800 people had been discovered by police.<sup>78</sup> As border controls between Mexico and the USA become increasingly policed, migrants turn towards the help of people smugglers to help navigate the border and the dangerous desert crossings. Given this, it is not surprising to see drop houses also on the rise. While drop houses were traditionally found in lower income and Latino neighbourhoods in the past, they are now also increasingly found in wealthier neighbourhoods, as suggested, for example, by the recent arrests made in a country-club area in northeast Phoenix on 11 February 2004.<sup>79</sup> These types of spaces are essentially abject spaces hidden in residential areas where abject subjects are held at the mercy of smugglers and state policies that render them illegal. Again, as with other abject spaces of the city, while drop houses might spring up as temporary living arrangements, the fact is that they have become more permanent alternative living situations for those who are forced to live a clandestine life underground in society. Further, just as in the case of border zones, as abject spaces, drop houses exist as part of a larger network of regulatory spaces that are integral to the functioning of what can be seen as a growing global mobility regime, which enables cosmopolitan citizens of the global city greater mobility and access to resources while at the same time restricting the access of others to these same rights and resources by forcing them to live a life in hiding.

Like frontiers, zones also govern then by restricting the ability of people to enact certain citizenship rights that they may have access to by making claims to the city, in spite of not having formal citizenship status and rights. Unlike frontiers, however, which work through the creation of extraterritorial spaces, zones are nestled within cities. What

is particular to these spaces and their city location is that cities are spaces where abject subjects have been more successfully able to make claims to rights to the city (as compared to the state) by virtue of being able to practice many citizenship rights despite not having formal citizenship status. Thus the logic of zones is to act as a filter in the citizenship-making process, ‘weeding out’ the ‘bad’ or illegitimate (i.e. ‘illegal’) asylum claimants by segregating them in enclosed spaces where their rights and access to social networks can be severely curtailed. Failing deportation, abject subjects experience a transition in subjecthood in these spaces from a claimant deserving of being given human rights under the protection of the state to a criminal with limited rights to finally being rendered invisible by being made homeless.

### *C. Camps*

Here we illustrate different kinds of camps than those Agamben<sup>80</sup> considered as paradigmatic: rather than focusing on camps that reduce subjects to bare life, we consider camps that function as reserves in which subjects and their rights are suspended temporarily, in transition from one subjecthood to another. As examples of other global cities, camps are always established, as Agamben has noted,<sup>81</sup> with the argument that they are exceptional and temporary spaces, but in reality, they become the normal order of things and permanent spaces of transience.<sup>82</sup> As Bülent Diken explains,

The camp is officially a transitory, so to say, ‘exceptional’ space, in which the refugee is supposed to spend only a limited amount of time. Yet, everywhere the refugee camp has today become a ‘permanent’ location and the transient condition of the refugee extends indefinitely, becoming an irrevocable and permanent situation, freezing into non-negotiable, rigid structures’.<sup>83</sup>

Moreover, it is by creating these exceptional abject spaces like the camp that the impending crisis is hidden of a system in which increasingly more and more peoples are without a state and its protection.

### *D. Refugee Camps*

One particular example of the camp that has become a permanent feature of life in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is the refugee camp. The number of people kept in

such reservation zones is staggering. As many as 39 million people may now be living in some form of refugee camp according to Médecins Sans Frontières.<sup>84</sup> The UNHCR, the international organization largely responsible for overseeing refugees, notes that approximately 20 million of the world's refugees currently receive its assistance with approximately 12 million living in UNHCR-run camps.<sup>85</sup> The UNHCR operates camps in approximately 115 countries ranging in size from 3,000 to 800,000 people.<sup>86</sup>

Camps set up along the borders of conflict zones are particularly precarious spaces. As UNHCR spokesperson Joung-Ah Ghedini notes,

So many borders are porous, and it makes it that much easier for undesirable elements to come in either to hide, to use civilian populations as a human shield, or to recruit soldiers, often forcibly. Camps close to the border are also extremely vulnerable to attack.<sup>87</sup>

For example, in Guinea, those living in border camps, set up to deal with the influx of refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia in 2000-2001, found themselves under attack, their camps burned down with refugees killed and abducted, by rebels from the Sierra Leonean Revolutionary United Front and by Liberian forces.<sup>88</sup> In Afghanistan, in response to an estimated four million out of a population of twenty-seven million turned refugees, refugee camps were set up along the Iran-Afghanistan border but inside Afghanistan. These camps included Mile-46 camp in the Northern Alliance run-area which held 1,000 displaced Afghans, Makai camp in the Taliban area, which held another 6,000 and the Spin Boldak camp near the Pakistan border, where 3,000 displaced Afghans resided.<sup>89</sup> Because these camps were set up in a war zone, relief agencies had limited access and workers and civilians were placed in precarious situations. Some 150,000 refugees ended up crossing through the mountains into Pakistan often paying large smuggling fees.<sup>90</sup>

In contrast to these more temporary examples of camps, more than half of Palestinians today are registered as refugees under the responsibility of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), many of whom live in refugee camps under the responsibility of UNRWA. Although UNRWA was established in 1949, after the Arab-Israeli conflict, as a temporary organization, after decades of war, refugee life has now become a permanent way of life for many

Palestinian refugees with the UNRWA providing a range of basic services ranging from education and vocational training to health and sanitation services. While some two-thirds of the registered refugees ‘live in and around the cities and towns of the host countries, and in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, often in the environs of official camps’ a third of registered Palestinian refugees (1.3 million) live in fifty-nine recognized refugee camps in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.<sup>91</sup> UNRWA 2003 figures indicate that there are ten camps in Jordan with some 307,785 registered refugees; twelve camps in Lebanon with 223,956 registered refugees, ten camps in Syria with 120,865, nineteen camps in the West Bank with 179,541 and in the Gaza Strip, eight camps holding 484,563 registered refugees.<sup>92</sup> As UNRWA notes, camp land is usually leased such that refugees cannot ‘own’ land but rather only have the right to ‘use’ the land. Moreover, ‘[s]ocio-economic conditions in the camps are generally poor with a high population density, cramped living conditions and inadequate basic infrastructure such as roads and sewers’.<sup>93</sup> In contrast to the more make-shift camps set up in response to the recent conflict in Afghanistan, these Palestinian refugee camps show how camps that may be set up during times of war as temporary solutions can evolve into permanent settlements with these camps now being permanent homes to many Palestinian refugees.

Yet even in the case of more temporary camps, refugee camps routinely show the presence of various facets of daily living required for longer-term settlement similar to that which exists in city spaces. For example, MSF notes that in creating camp spaces ‘short-term site planning should be avoided, as so-called temporary camps may well have to remain much longer than expected (e.g. some Palestinian refugee camps have been in existence since 1947).’<sup>94</sup> As part of this longer-term planning, MSF notes that, in establishing a camp, site planning is crucial and ‘must ensure the most rational organization of space, shelters and the facilities required for the provision of essential goods and services’.<sup>95</sup> Such goods and services include the provision of food and water, sanitation and latrines, health and clinic services. Other factors in creating camp space include security and protection, environmental conditions, readily available energy sources and accessibility (for trucks for example). In an in-depth profile by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) entitled ‘Anatomy of a refugee camp,’ the resemblance

of refugee camps to city spaces becomes even more apparent with the site providing a flash point presentation of the elements that make up a camp including various characteristics similar to cities such as a vehicle entrance, a reception centre, a food storage warehouse and food distribution point, a feeding centre, health centre, hospital, meeting place, school, market and cemetery.<sup>96</sup> The very ability to outline this anatomy of a camp reveals a similar rationality to that of city planning, with the flash point presentation also indicative of the increasing normalcy with which the refugee camp is regarded as a permanent feature of alternative living arrangements for millions of people in the twenty-first century.

### *Detention camps*

#### *A. Australia's Woomera Camp*

Perhaps one of the more infamous examples of abject camp spaces is that of Woomera detention camp. As part of the Australian government's 1994 policy of mandatory detention of asylum seekers, Australia opened several large-scale detention centres, run by the Australian Correctional Management (ACM) company, a subsidiary of the private American prison company, Wackenhut Corrections Corporation. One of the better known centres was the desert asylum camp, Woomera Detention Centre, in the South Australian outback, which ran from 1999 until it was closed in April 2003. Built to hold only around 400 people, at some point Woomera held as many as 1,400 asylum-seekers<sup>97</sup> with many detainees being held for over a year and some for as many as three (CNN, 2002).<sup>98</sup> The United Nations severely criticized camp conditions with an Australian parliamentary committee in 2001 declaring it the worst of the country's seven detention centres.<sup>99</sup> Conditions in the camp were so desperate that 370 asylum seekers went on hunger strikes, with 40 of them stitching closed their lips while others cut themselves or attempted suicide by throwing themselves into the barb wire surrounding the camp or by swallowing shampoo and sleeping pills.<sup>100</sup> One Iraqi man described how they were only identified in the camp by number, exclaiming, 'I came here with nothing. Now I am taking four tablets, one of them for depression. I am a civil engineer and I don't know where all the information has gone from my mind. They are dealing with us as animals, not as human beings'.<sup>101</sup> Camps like Woomera hold asylum seekers in extremely

inhospitable conditions with the idea of turning refugee claimants into abject subjects unable to properly access the rights that should be theirs by virtue of being a refugee.

In a 2002 report, 'By Invitation Only' Human Rights Watch criticized the use of 'remote, desert locations' for several of the centres like Woomera because the isolated location was used as a way of hindering access to lawyers, family, and community support networks that would be more easily accessed were the asylum seekers to be housed in city centres rather than the remote desert.<sup>102</sup> Human Rights Watch also criticized the 'prison-like' conditions of Woomera and other centres like it. For example, a description of a similar facility still in operation, Baxter Immigration Detention Facility in Port Augusta, was described as having 'a 1,200-volt outer electric fence', 'movement detectors between the fences', 'a perimeter fence and steel gates' and 'no windows, so detainees can only see the sky from the central courtyard'.<sup>103</sup> In addition they note that detainees 'are locked in their rooms every night from 9:00 p.m. to 8:00 am'.<sup>104</sup> These prison-like conditions reveal that, like border zones, detention camps are often extremely militarized and heavily policed spaces, with the intention being to send the message that asylum seekers are like criminals and should be treated as such – or worse. In detention camps like Woomera, refugee claimants are not even considered to be deserving of the rights afforded to criminals since the point of creating alternative detention facilities in remote locations is precisely to prevent asylum claimants from accessing many of the rights, such as legal counsel, that would be made readily available to criminals.

#### *B. France's Sangatte Camp*

France's Sangatte asylum camp near Calais port was opened in 1999 in a warehouse that was used during the Eurotunnel construction, and turned over to be run by the French Red Cross. Sangatte was opened as an emergency camp to house growing numbers of asylum seekers found sleeping on the streets in Calais as they tried to cross to Britain through the Channel to seek asylum.<sup>105</sup> The camp was designed to hold around 800 people but often held between 1,300 and 1,900. Again, like with Woomera, such abject spaces often generate overcrowded conditions with minimal facilities and with as many as 67,000 asylum seekers passing through Sangatte before it was closed in December

2002.<sup>106</sup> The French government closed Sangatte after it received significant pressure from the UK government which saw the camp as acting as a base for illegal immigration into the UK. Critics have noted, however, that closing the camp simply forces people back onto the streets. Sangatte, in other words, is part of a larger problem of the disparities between how countries in the EU provide protection to refugees and of the type of living situation that results as increasing numbers of people find themselves living in a state of temporary permanence that is becoming a prevalent feature of the global system.<sup>107</sup>

### *C. The Other Dubai: The Desert Labour Camps*

Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), is one of the fastest growing cities in the region and has recently become one of the top most popular tourist destinations, with some 700,000 British tourists visiting annually and other foreigners now investing in real estate.<sup>108</sup> In keeping with its new status as a globalizing city, Dubai is also fast becoming home to the largest hotels and shopping malls.<sup>109</sup> Yet its emerging status as a global city is dependent upon another type of global city – that of desert labour camps where migrants provide some 90 percent of the private workforce and the necessary cheap labour for Dubai’s construction boom.<sup>110</sup> As critics like Human Rights Watch note, ‘One of the world’s largest construction booms is feeding off of workers in Dubai, but they are treated as less than human’.<sup>111</sup> Conditions in these labour camps are harsh with labourers ‘crammed into tiny pre-fabricated huts, twelve men to a room, forced to wash themselves in filthy brown water and cook in kitchens next to overflowing toilets’.<sup>112</sup> Working conditions are also extremely poor with workers being denied basic human rights such as the right to voice their opinion, freedom of association, and the right to unionize, and forced to work long working hours (sometimes 70 hours a week seven days a week) at very low pay.<sup>113</sup> Moreover, workers often come to the UAE by taking a loan from recruiting agencies in their home countries but then find themselves in a condition of ‘virtual debt bondage’ constantly needing to work in order to repay the loan.<sup>114</sup> As well, commonly reported is the fact that employers often withhold wages with some 20,000 workers filing complaints with the UAE government in 2005 alone.<sup>115</sup> With such abject conditions, many migrants are now engaging in various forms of



resistance including filing complaints to government officials, frequent ‘illegal’ strikes, unionizing, and holding protests. In April 2006, one of Dubai’s largest protests took place at the construction site for the Burj Dubai Tower [the world’s tallest building, to be completed by 2008] involving some 2,500 workers. Causing over one million in damages as a result of their protest, workers raised awareness about their poor working conditions, even generating other sympathy strikes, such as the one which took place at the same time by workers at Dubai’s International Airport.<sup>116</sup>

Labour camps, like Dubai’s desert camp, are other forms of abject spaces where abject subjects find themselves living in what was originally supposed to be a temporary living arrangement for temporary work in order to be able to send some money to families back home. These camps, however, have become permanent transient spaces for many as they find themselves working for years in abject conditions in order to pay back their debt and make enough money for their families back home to live. These labour camps illustrate the other global cities, abject spaces in which to maintain reserves of cheap labour needed for the construction boom of globalizing cities like Dubai that cater to the ‘other’ cosmopolitan citizens like tourists and investors from wealthier countries in the North.

#### *D. Guantánamo Bay*

We could not end this chapter without briefly discussing that most infamous, if not paradigmatic, abject space, Guantánamo Bay. Since 2002, Guantánamo Bay, a US naval base leased from Cuba, has been used for military detention camps, like Camp X-Ray, Camp Delta and Camp Echo, that imprison suspected al-Qaeda and Taliban ‘terrorists’. The US Government claims that those being held are beyond US law and the constitutional rights they would be afforded as prisoners on American soil. Guantánamo is currently holding some 650 foreign nationals from over forty different countries, many arrested in Afghanistan in 2002. These men (and some children) are being held without charge or trial, denied the right to legal counsel, and subject to degrading and cruel conditions like solitary confinement and intensive interrogation without the presence of a lawyer<sup>117</sup>. In an autobiographical account of his ordeal of being falsely detained as an enemy combatant, Moazzam Begg describes being kept in virtual

isolation in an eight foot by six foot steel cage with mesh sides and steel roof, floor, bed and toilet, only to be let out twice a week for ‘shower and rec’, meaning a fifteen minute walk around a caged-in yard.<sup>118</sup> Yet at the same time as describing his abjection, Begg also reveals how a certain normalcy consisting of daily routines becomes necessary even amidst such abject conditions of the camp. Begg describes, for example, how his daily conversations (and even the occasional sharing of poetry) with his guards, along with daily prayer, the reading of ‘brain-numbing suspense novels (and) courtroom dramas’ and frequent letter writing are all part of his fight against ‘the dreary monotony of daily existence’.<sup>119</sup>

Like Moazzam Begg, most men have also not been charged. Yet, the US refuses to clarify the legal status of these men, referring to them as ‘enemy combatants’, a designation which, as Amnesty International notes, ‘has been used to justify detention without any recourse to the courts, on the decision of the executive, for an apparently indefinite period’.<sup>120</sup> The American Government refused to grant the detainees prisoner of war (POW) status as required under Article 4 of the Third Geneva Convention nor clarify their legal status in front of a tribunal as they are obligated to do under Article 5 of the Third Geneva Convention.<sup>121</sup> Failing to clarify their status, the US is trying these men by military commissions. Amnesty International has argued, however, that these commissions ‘do not meet international standards for a fair trial’ as they are ‘not independent and impartial courts’, and ‘curtail the right of appeal’ and ‘allow a lower standard of evidence than ordinary civilian courts in the USA’.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, the military commissions are capable of handing down the death sentence. Given the lack of legal rights and due legal process, a few countries, such as England, Denmark and Spain, have negotiated for the rights of their nationals to be repatriated to their respective national countries for trial. However, in some cases, repatriation may not be an option since it would put individuals at risk of torture and execution as in the cases of China, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Russia.<sup>123</sup>

As in other cases of abject detention, detainees have continued to resist their abject conditions. On 20 April 2004, the US Supreme Court heard *Rasul v. Bush*, a case brought forth by the Centre for Constitutional Rights (CCR) on behalf of detainees at Guantánamo Bay. The case was based on the principle of habeas corpus or the idea that

no one may be imprisoned without a clear basis for it in the law.<sup>124</sup> The case argued that Guantánamo detainees have the right to know the charges against them and to a fair trial to defend themselves against those charges.<sup>125</sup> In June 2004, the US Supreme Court ruled in favour of the detainees that Guantánamo falls under US civilian court jurisdiction and as such, detainees now have the right to challenge the lawfulness of their detention in a US court of law.

Camps function as reservations where the rights of subjects can be suspended as a first step toward stripping away their status as political subjects in order to render them as abjects. In contrast with both frontiers and zones, camps intervene in the process of rights-making especially by revoking status, that is by changing the political subjecthood of people from political to abject subjects rather than focusing on ways to hinder the practice of claims-making (although this too is obviously restricted in such spaces). The logic of refugee camps is one of giving human rights and protection to those who have lost their rights. Yet, this logic condemns these refugees to living in varying degrees of impermanency in inhospitable conditions. Camps halt the political subjectivization of refugees as a political identity that has certain rights attached to it (like the right to protection and resettlement) by transforming this group's status to one of waiting as not-quite refugees or refugees-in-waiting. Similarly, detention camps like Guantánamo are used to remove individuals from their political communities into holding areas, where they are kept in legal limbo, without recourse to appeal either as citizens or on the grounds of human rights, except in exceptional circumstances where their own countries intervene on their behalf. Despite the different types and functions of camps, their numbers continue to grow as ever more people find themselves living for extended periods of times from months to years in these abject spaces, spaces which now perform as substitutes to state and city spaces - as other global city spaces.

### *Conclusion*

We wanted to illustrate the kinds of politics and the kinds of new political subjects that are emerging in these other global cities that render humans neither as subjects nor objects but as abjects — condemned to inexistent states of ‘transient permanency’ in which they are made inaudible and invisible.<sup>126</sup> Yet abject spaces also expose and render visible and audible various strategies and technologies of otherness that attempt to produce such states of inexistence. However, the exposure of this logic by abject subjects becomes a significant act of resistance. For example, various initiatives are currently being undertaken to make global cities more hospitable to non-status peoples. These include ‘Don’t Ask Don’t Tell’ campaigns that forbid city workers to ask about a person’s status, or reveal it to other government officials, to ensure that all residents of the city, regardless of status, are able to access essential services without fear of arrest and/or deportation.<sup>127</sup> Residents of these other global cities now include more than 10.4 million refugees, one million asylum seekers, nine million stateless peoples and twenty to twenty-five million internally displaced people worldwide.

As we have shown, the increasing number and novelty of kinds of frontiers, zones and camps as abject spaces certainly suggest that it may be time to investigate global cities from the vantage point of the abject as more appropriately being a much more complex picture than we have so far recognized. Many such spaces come into existence as temporary holding spaces for those whose status is also supposed to be temporary. And yet these temporary spaces have acquired permanent characteristics that for all intents and purposes make them function as cities: agglomerations with associations, sociability and differentiation. The inability or unwillingness to recognize these spaces condemns those caught in them to an abject status that can be described as ‘transient citizens’ – transient because temporary, citizen because permanent.<sup>128</sup> We are witnessing the emergence of a patchwork of overlapping spaces nestled within each other of greater and lesser degrees of rights and rightlessness, abject spaces and spaces of citizenship.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> This chapter builds upon another chapter we published as ‘Abject Spaces: Frontiers, Zones, Camps’, in Elizabeth Dauphinee and Cristina Masters, eds., *Living, Dying, Surviving: The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire 2006. There we developed the concept ‘abject spaces’ in reference to a body of work that emerged in relation to Hannah Arendt’s critique of human rights. Here we deploy the concept to reflect upon these spaces as ‘other global cities’ and expand on various such spaces as border zones, drop houses, labour camps in Dubai and refugee camps and with other examples such as the Woomera camp in Australia and the Sangatte camp in France.

<sup>2</sup> Allen Scott, *Global City-Regions: Trends, Theory, Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>3</sup> Bülent Diken, ‘From Refugee Camps to Gated Communities: Biopolitics and the End of the City’, in *Citizenship Studies*, 8 (1), 2004, pp. 93-94.

<sup>4</sup> Home Office, UK Government (HO/UK), Home Secretary’s Statement on Zones of Protection: Press Release, 29 March, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> BBC News, ‘EU Split over Migrant Camp Plan’, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3750420.stm>, 18 October 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Government of the United Kingdom - Cabinet Office and Home Office (CO/HO), ‘A New Vision for Refugees’, [www.proasyl.info/texte/europe/union/2003/UK\\_NewVision.pdf](http://www.proasyl.info/texte/europe/union/2003/UK_NewVision.pdf), 7 March, 2003, pp. 1-31.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Amnesty International (AI), *Britain’s Refugee ‘Regional Protection’ Zones Proposals Deeply Flawed*, [http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news\\_details.asp?NewsID=14427](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=14427) 27 March 2003b.

<sup>9</sup> Government of the United Kingdom, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>12</sup> *Strengthening Fortress Europe in Times of War: Amnesty International commentary on UK Proposals for External processing and responsibility sharing arrangements with third countries*, JHA Informal Council, Veria 28-29 March, Brussels, Belgium: Amnesty International EU, 27 March, 2003

<sup>13</sup> AI, *UK/EU/UNHCR Unlawful and Unworkable- Extra-Territorial Processing of Asylum Claims*, London: Amnesty International Secretariat, [AI Index IOR 61/004/2003], 18 June 2002, pp.1-38.

<sup>14</sup> Travis, A., ‘Shifting a Problem Back to Its Source: Would-be Refugees May be Sent to Protected Zones Near Homeland’, in *The Guardian*, [http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk\\_news/story/0,3604,888990,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,3604,888990,00.html), 5 February 2003.

<sup>15</sup> AI, *Strengthening Fortress Europe*.

<sup>16</sup> Australian Government. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. *Fact Sheet 81. Australia’s Excised Offshore Places*. <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/81excised.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Human Rights Watch (HRW), *Not for Export: Why the International Community Should Reject Australia’s Refugee Policies*, 2002e, A Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper [September]. New York: Human Rights Watch, p. 4. Available from <http://www.hrw.org/press/2002/09/ausbrf0926.htm> p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Australian Government. Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs. *Fact Sheet 76. Offshore Processing Arrangements*, <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/76offshore.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Australia-Pacific: Offending Human Dignity - the Pacific Solution [AI Index: ASA 12/009/2002], 26 August 2002a, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> BBC News, ‘Australia’s Offshore Camps Are “Hellish”’, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/1695930.stm>, 6 December 2001b.

<sup>23</sup> BBC News, ‘Sinking Island Urged to Accept Migrants’, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/1653472.stm>, 13 November 2001a.

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- <sup>27</sup> Vanstone.
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- <sup>29</sup> AI, *Crossing the Line: Human Rights Abuses on the US-Mexico Border*, <http://www.amnesty.ca/usa/border.php>.
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- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup> R. L. Martinez, ‘US Border Patrol in Southern California Developing Deadly but Ineffective Operation Gatekeeper: Interview With Roberto Martinez’, in *Motion Magazine*, <http://www.inmotionmagazine.com/rm99.html>, 1999.
- <sup>34</sup> Martinez, ‘US Border Patrol in Southern California’.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Latin America Working Group (LAWG), *Fencing Off America*, <http://www.lawg.org/countries/Mexico/mexfence.htm>, Washington 2004.
- <sup>37</sup> USCIS, Fact Sheet: Operation Gatekeeper: New Resources, Enhanced Results, [http://www.rapidimmigration.com/usa/1\\_eng\\_news\\_keyword.html](http://www.rapidimmigration.com/usa/1_eng_news_keyword.html), 1998.
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