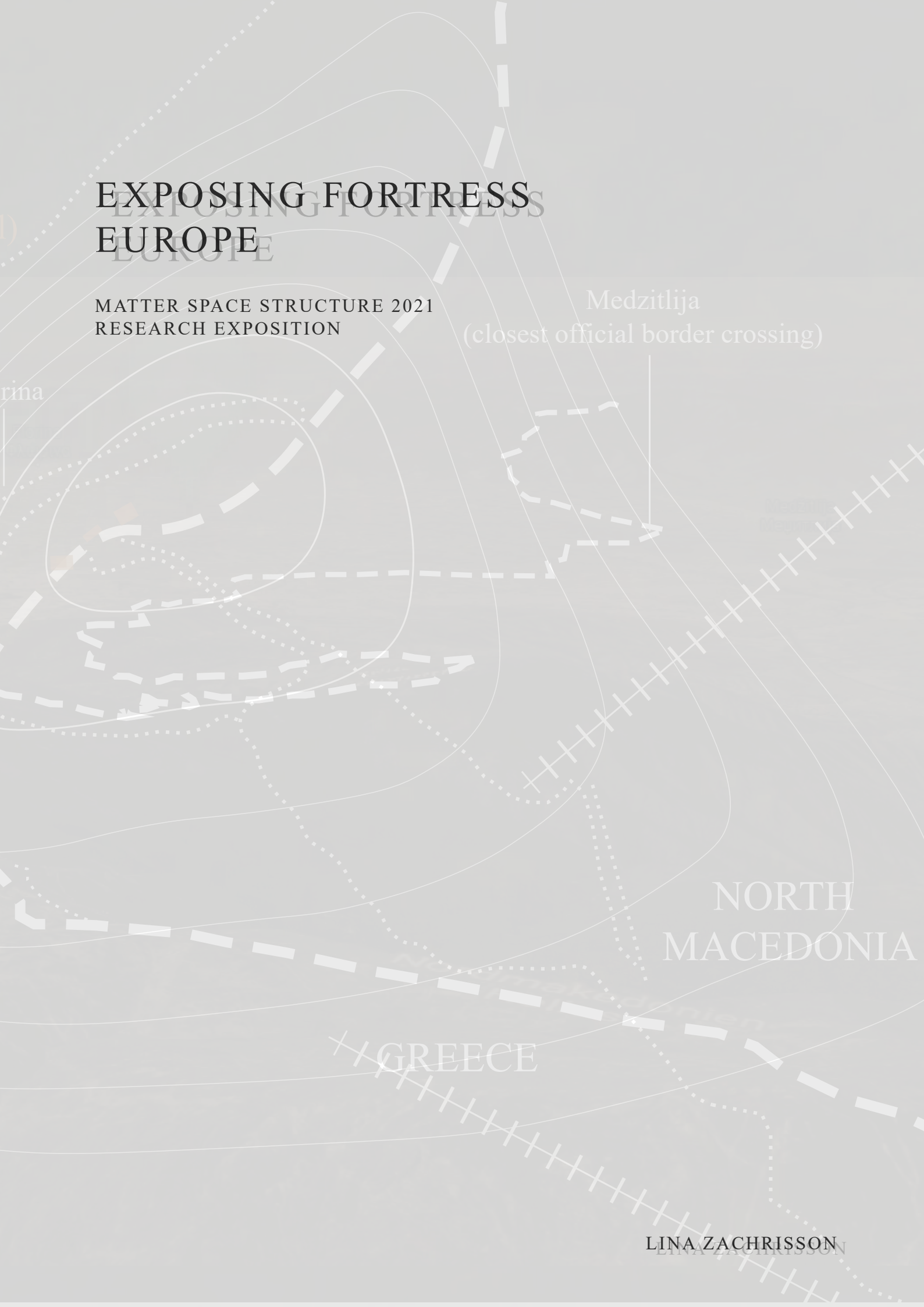
EXPOSING FORTRESS EUROPE

MATTER SPACE STRUCTURE 2021
RESEARCH EXPOSITION



LINA ZACHRISSON

DISCOURSE

This project started from an urge to investigate the architectures and infrastructures of the mediation of transnational migration. As the discourse of migration - and the processes that facilitate and condition it - is an entirely new topic for me to tackle on an academic level, and as it is so vast and touching so many aspects of modern society, I had to start at the very beginning. I felt the need to approach the discourse from a systemic level, understanding and analysing the processes of migration control, migrant territories and boundaries and how it all weaves together into a complex and intricate network. I wanted to avoid fulfilling the old tropes of how architects can and should relate to migration and borders in their professional life; designs for the refugee relief system, emergency shelters or flashy border stations. We need to expand on both our knowledge and understanding as well as reiterate our toolbox, in order to eventually expand both our realm of influence and potential for initiating change.

I wanted to learn what role architects and the built environment that we help shape can choose to assume in these complex systems, and to visualise the ways in which we may unconsciously (or otherwise) already be affecting displaced populations' experiences of flight and boundaries to and within Europe.

While first attempting to map and build an understanding of the systems and processes that shape the reality of migration, the project eventually condensed into a comparative study of Europe's external border conditions, viewed through the lens of irregular migration. As irregular migration is increasingly viewed as an external threat to the safety and identity of the nation state, so nations see the need to increasingly secure their external borders. As such measures does not remove the initial causes of migrate, it does nothing to eliminate the migrant journeys themselves. All it does is redirect and divert the routes away from ones own territory, in affect displacing the responsibility of caring for migrants to other territories.

This perilous dance of border securitisation, shifting migration flows, and the trail of border infrastructure it leaves in its wake, all happens at the expense of both risk and life of the migrant. Sovereign state governments and the EU alike, continues to promote and finanse an increasing militarisation of their border conditions - all done in the name of free movement and liberty within.

”As long as you look on migration as a problem, as something to solve, you’re not going to get anywhere. You have to look at it as a human reality that’s as old as humankind. It’s mankind’s oldest poverty reduction strategy. As citizens, we have to find a way to manage it.”

- William Lacy Swing, Director General International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2017

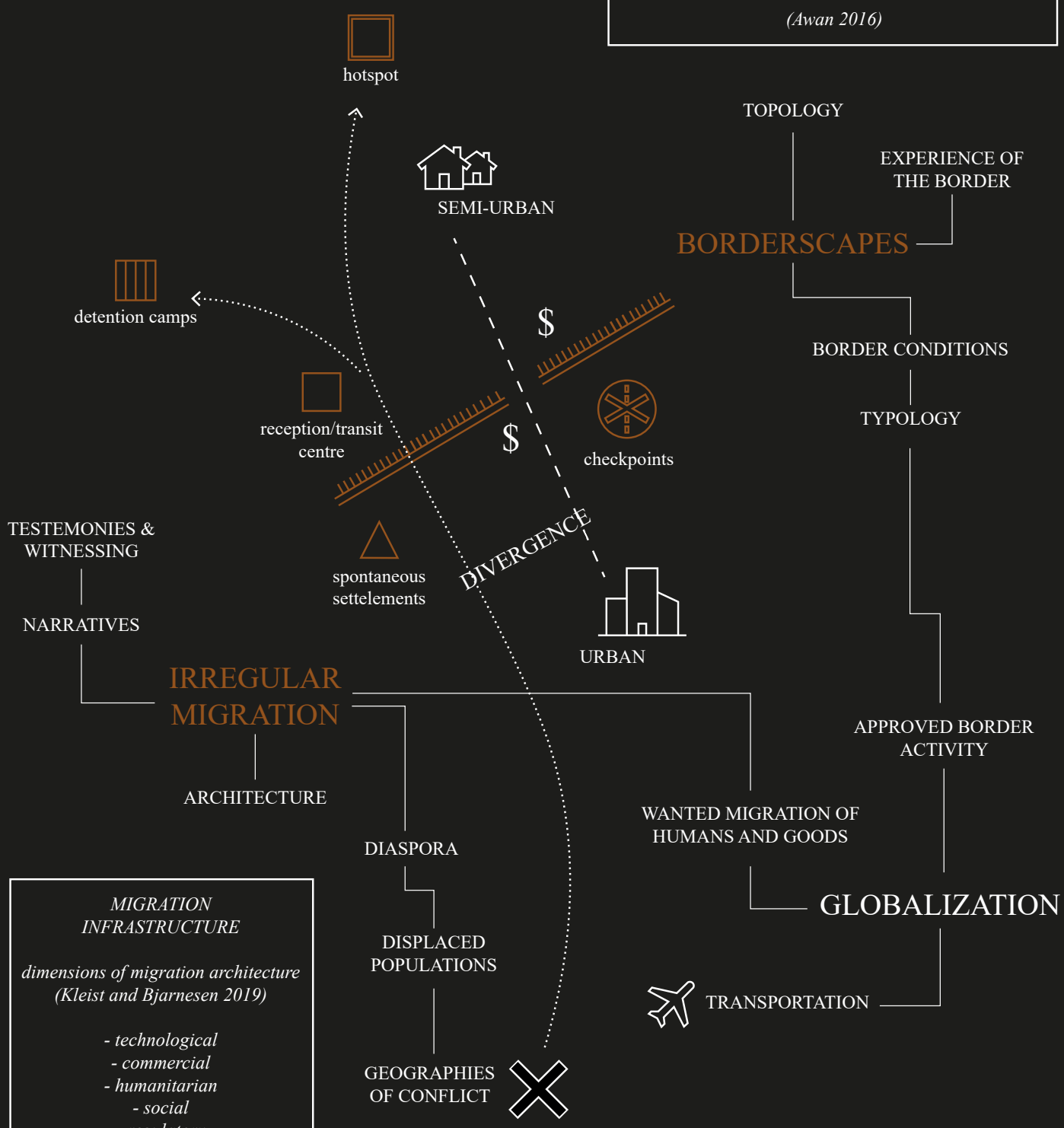
This framework attempts to map out the thesis position in relation to;

- concepts and discourse (THEORIZE)
- methods and tools of analysis (ANALYZE)
- context (SITUATE)
- experience (NARRATE)
- intervention (SPECULATE)

BORDER TOPOLOGIES

"In other words, the border is understood not as a fixed form moving across space and time, but instead in relation to bordering processes [...] These might include technologies of surveillance and dataveillance, the social and bureaucratic practices of officials and others charged with policing the border, or those entities that move across and are filtered by the border"

(Awan 2016)



MIGRATION INFRASTRUCTURE

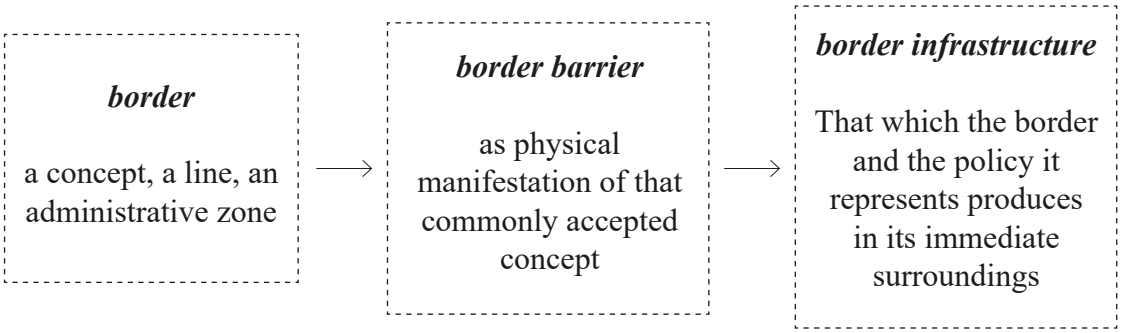
dimensions of migration architecture (Kleist and Bjarnesen 2019)

- *technological*
- *commercial*
- *humanitarian*
- *social*
- *regulatory*

BORDER TYPOLOGY & SEPARATION

The border acts as an agent for multible contradictory narratives and experiences of territory. We can consider the spatial manifestation of the border as; *barrier* - a physical obstruction of movement and a potentially oppressive instrument of power, as well as; *facilitator* - of movement and activity across its territory for the select few. For those who are allowed to move freely across the borders within Europe, the border and its instances of control and surveillance may be experienced as a mere security measure - or even a facilitator of opportunity, due to its typical attraction of commercial and recreational cross border activities.

By comparing the architectures and infrastructure that help produce these two very different experiences of moving across and existing around borders, one can start to understand and speculate on the border's inherently spatial nature and it's importance as an agent in the discourse on migration and globalization. The understanding of the border as barrier versus facilitator can come to identify separations and intersections, overlaps and divergences inherent to the contradiction. These identified situations, where vastly different experiences of the border occur either in the same territory or as actively separated, has the possibility to become test beds for new ways in which to imagine and engage with borders and the built environment in borderlands. These are the situations where one can eventually hope to speculate on possible interventions for a more inclusive and sustainable future.



MIGRATION FLOWS & BORDER SECURITISATION

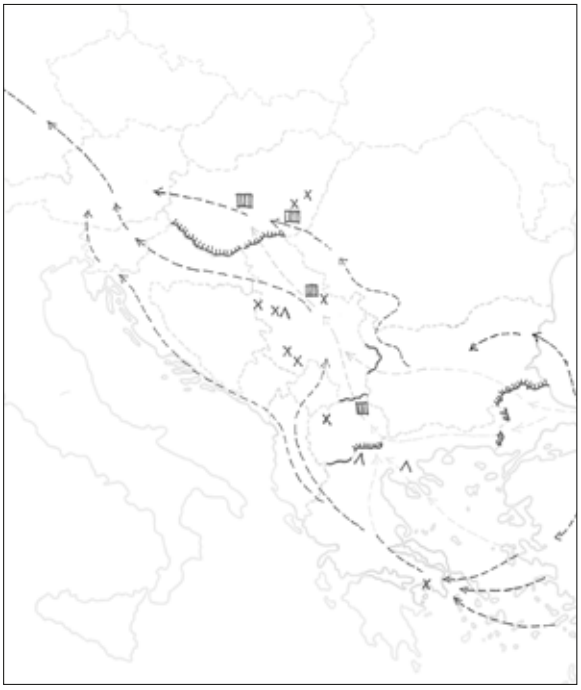
The investigation takes as its starting point the constantly shifting context of transnational migration within challenging and improvisational border conditions. Borders appear as a product of the construction of the nation state - approached by many as the ultimate human political invention (Donnan and Wilson 2010), and as such, the border plays an important role in securing the sovereign state from various external threats. Irregular migration has, by some states and by some political ideologies more than others, been identified as one such threat against state identity and security.

As migratory journeys to Europe stake out the simplest paths towards the desired destination country, various transit states along that route invests in different types of infrastructure and architecture in order to control, regulate and accommodate the influx of people across their borders. Many such measures, such as the construction of border walls and fences, have been known to be encouraged and sanctioned by the EU (Donnan and Wilson 2010) - in affect an externalization of EU border control. As borders solidify and become increasingly difficult to cross, or if the incidents of border violence, imprisonment or deportation rise, migratory routes re-direct, leading to new entry points and the corresponding increase in border infrastructural response in that region. As a result, we can see the constantly shifting migration routes and humanitarian corridors leaving behind them a trail of built border barriers and other built structures, evidence of the nation state's desperate attempt to displace the responsibility of caring for these in search of safe ground (Philippou 2020).

One example of such spatial expressions of borders and migration mediation, and its development over time, is that of the Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR) during the European refugee crisis in 2011-2016, as visualised to the right.

EMR (Eastern Mediterranean Route) in 2012: refugees reaching the EU via Turkey and Greece.

EMR in 2012-2014: Greece and Bulgaria secures their borders with Turkey against illegal immigration.



In 2015, both Hungary and North Macedonia erect fences along their southern borders, effectively redirecting the EMR to the west.

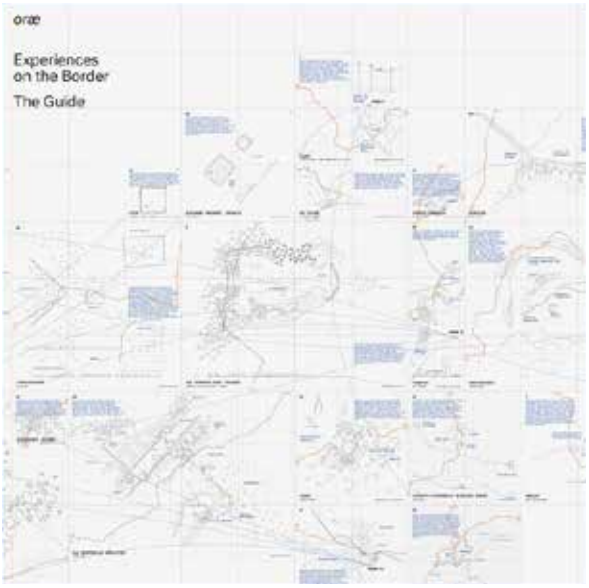
In 2016 both Slovenia and Austria introduce both fences and intensified border controls, the latter in direct violation of the Schengen agreement (Philippou 2020)

REFERENCE PROJECTS

> Migration Trail

by Killing Architects

”Follow two fictional migrants travelling to Europe in real time over ten days, via maps, social media storytelling and a podcast.”



> Orae - experiences on the border

by Vanessa Lacaille, Fabrice Aragno, Mounir Ayoub, and Pierre Szczepski, showcased at the Swiss Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2021.

”A narrative companion to the buildings, structures and infrastructures that accumulate around borders... Hotspots for migrants, barbed wire, green borders, checkpoints, go-slow for cross-border workers, crypto-currency mining farms, casinos, brothels, tax havens: all are to be found on the border.”

> Forensic Architecture

Forensic Architecture (FA) is a research agency, based at Goldsmiths, University of London, investigating human rights violations including violence committed by states, police forces, militaries, and corporations.

> Topological Atlas

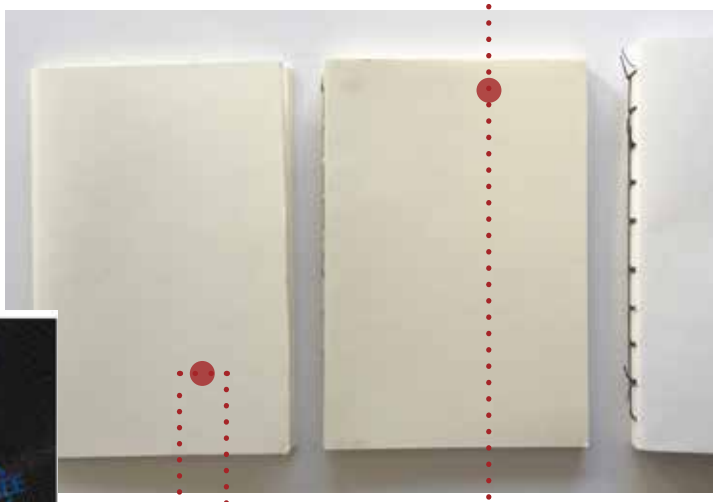
by Nishat Awan

”Topological Atlas produces visual counter-geographies of borders understood as topological entities through the experience of the undocumented. Our research investigates the relationship between technologies of border security, systems of documentation, border landscapes and the experience of crossing borders without papers. We approach migration as a system of circulation where deportation regimes, precarious lives and militarised borders keep people moving.

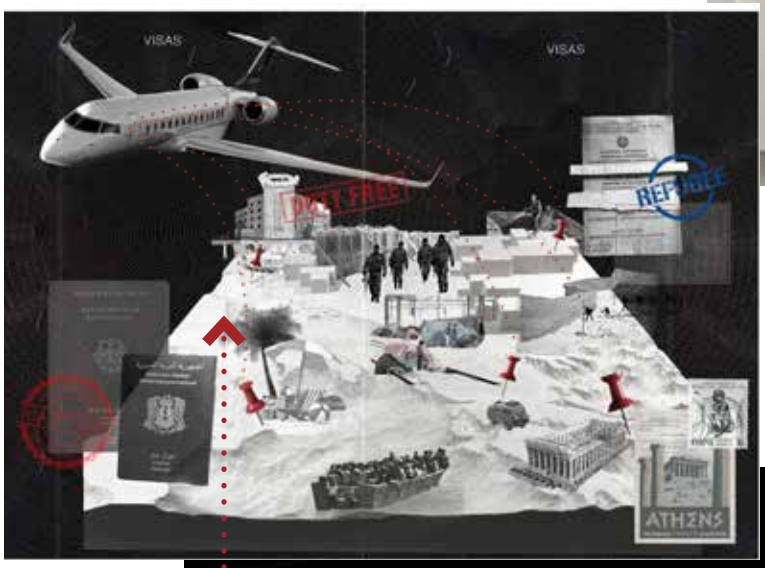
METHODS

resea

documentation



manifesto

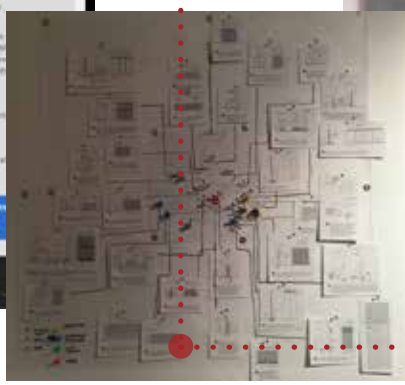


collage

journalling

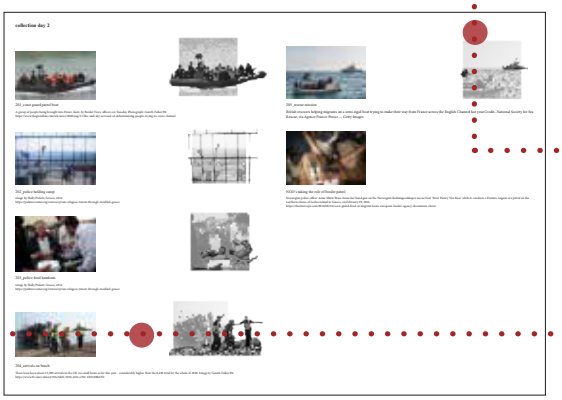
relat
map

digital context immersion



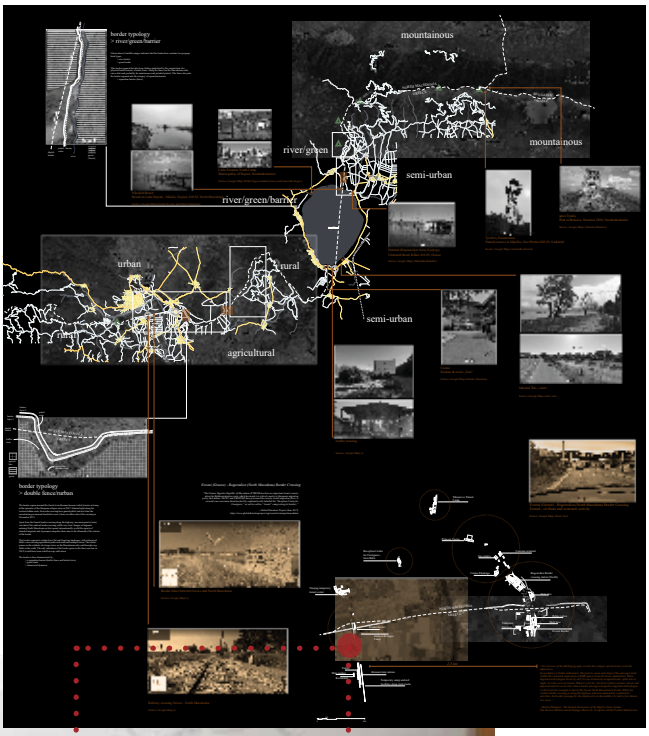
connecting the dots

decoding



archiving

arching



observations

layered drawings

mapping

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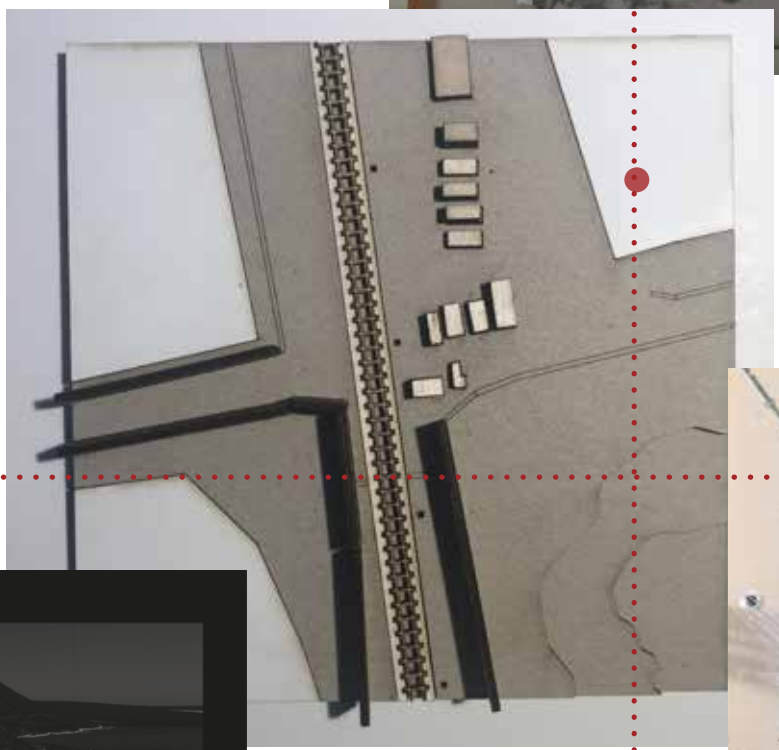
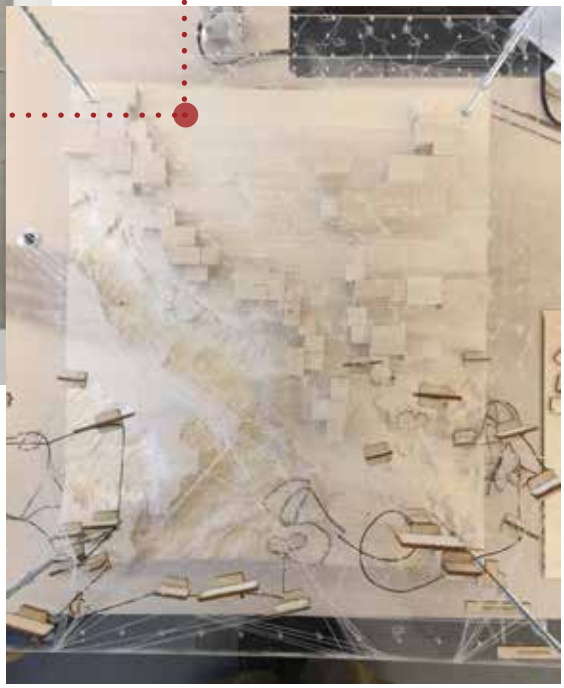
model making

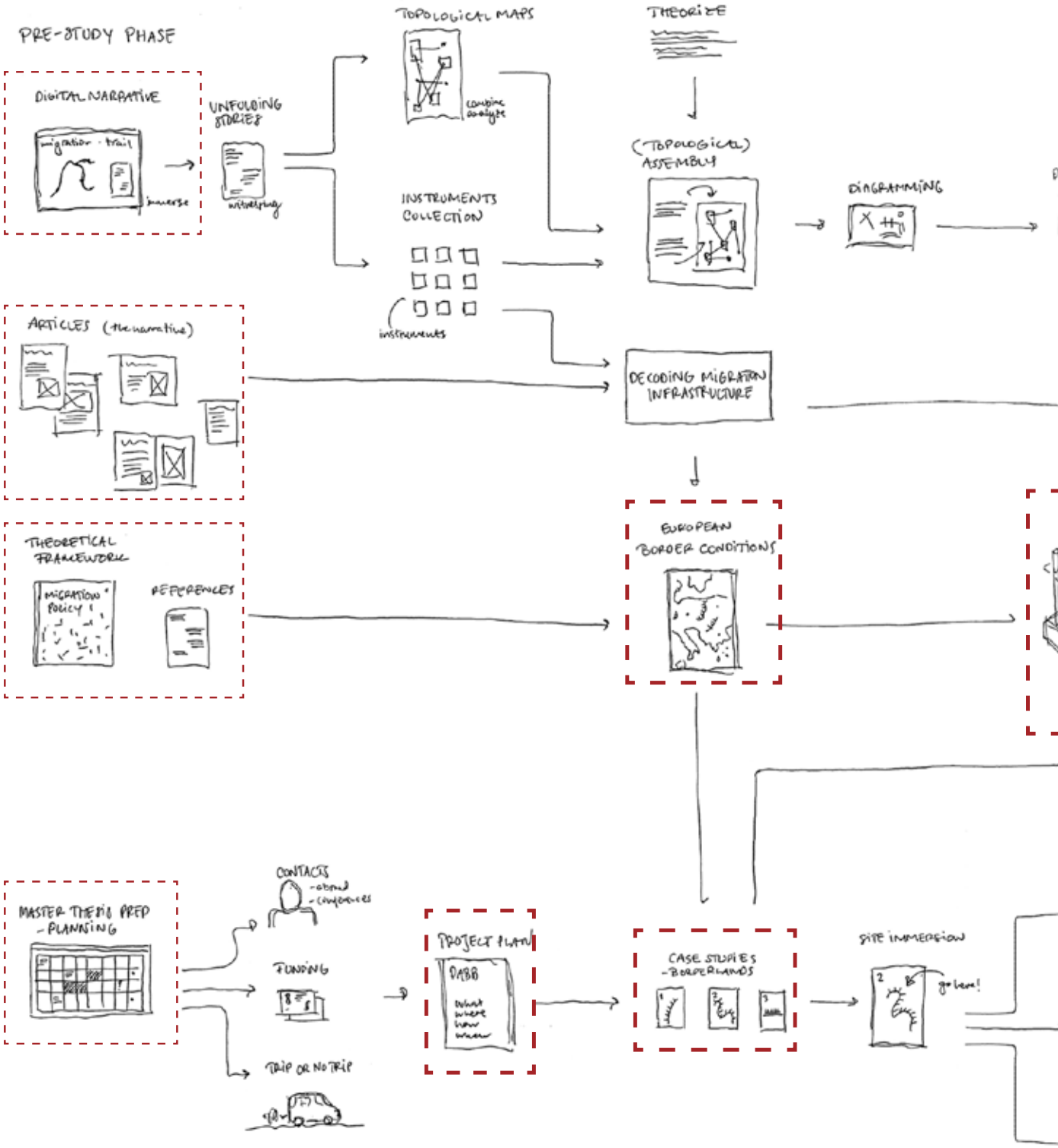


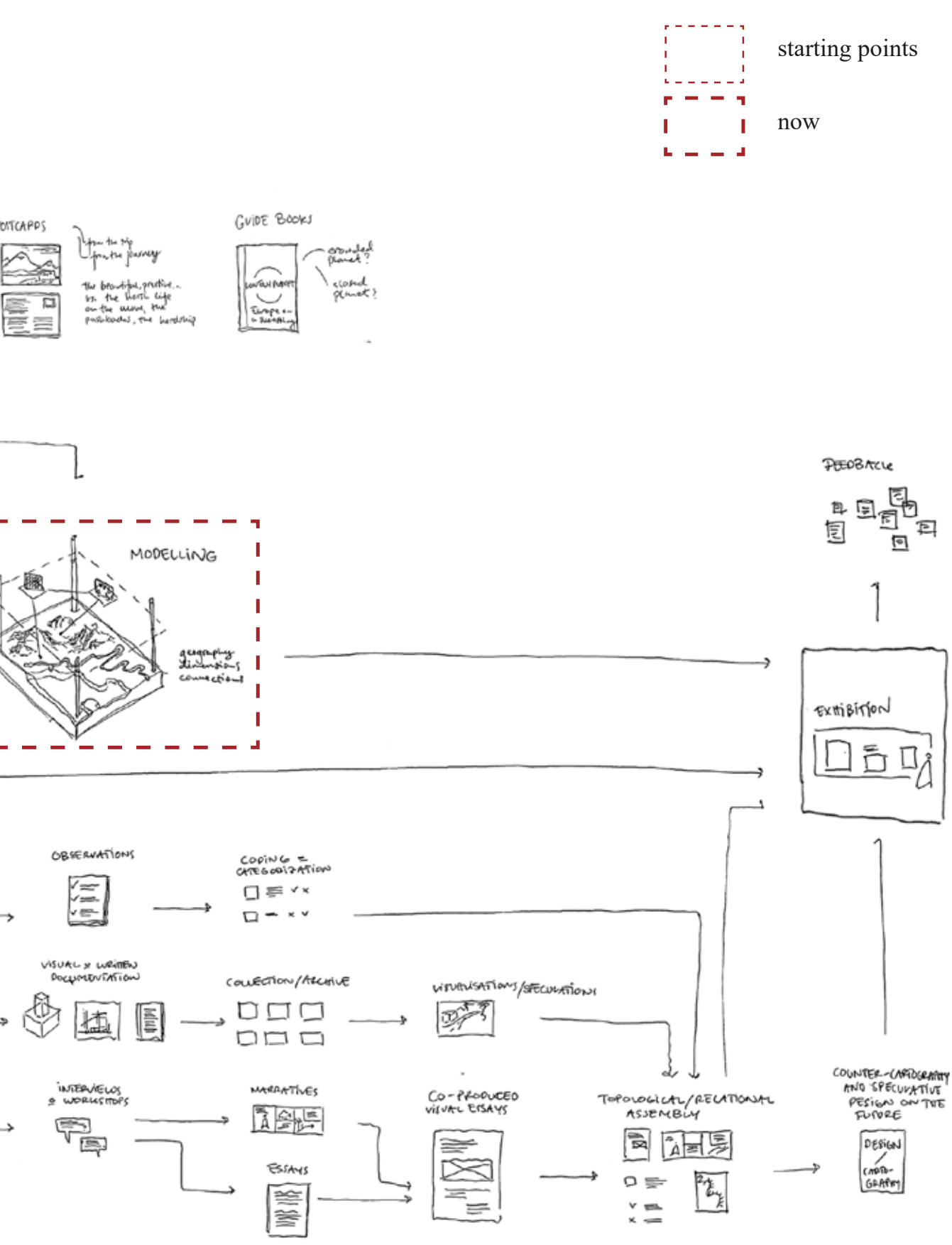
model making



spatial ethnography

METHODOLOGY




starting points
now
GUIDE BOOKS
MODELLING
geography
dimensions
connections
FEEDBACK
EXHIBITION
OBSERVATIONS
CODING = CATEGORIZATION
VISUAL & WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION
COLLECTION/ARCHIVE
VISUALISATIONS/SPECULATIONS
INTERVIEWS & WORKSHOPS
NARRATIVES
ESSAYS
CO-PRODUCED VISUAL ESSAYS
TOPOLOGICAL/RELATIONAL ASSEMBLY
COUNTER-CARTOGRAPHY AND SPECULATIVE DESIGN ON THE FUTURE
DESIGN / CARTO-GRAPHY

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

MODULE #1
SITUATIONS

an investigation into the spatiality and mediation of migration

MODULE #2
ITERATIONS

an investigation into the spatiality and mediation of migration through a topological analysis of europe's external border conditions

MODULE #3
NARRATIVE

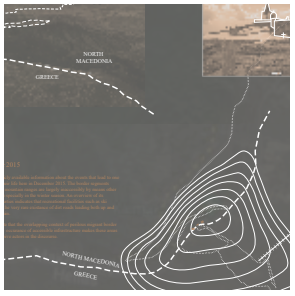
an investigation into the conditions and typologies of europe's external borders and their role as mediator of wanted and unwanted border movement and activities

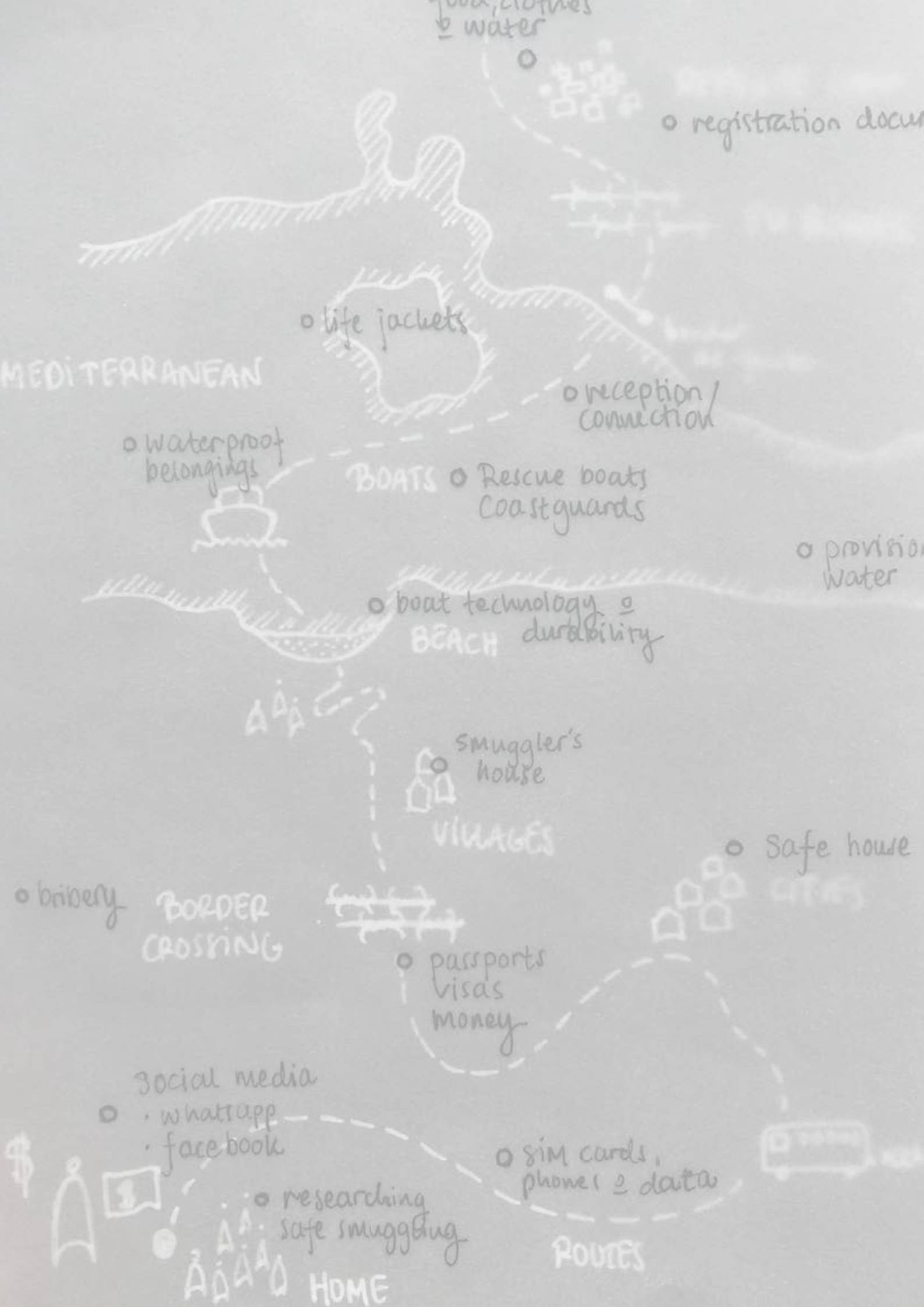
DESIGN EXPLORATION

architecture of migration mediation

geographies of borders and migration

border conditions and border typology



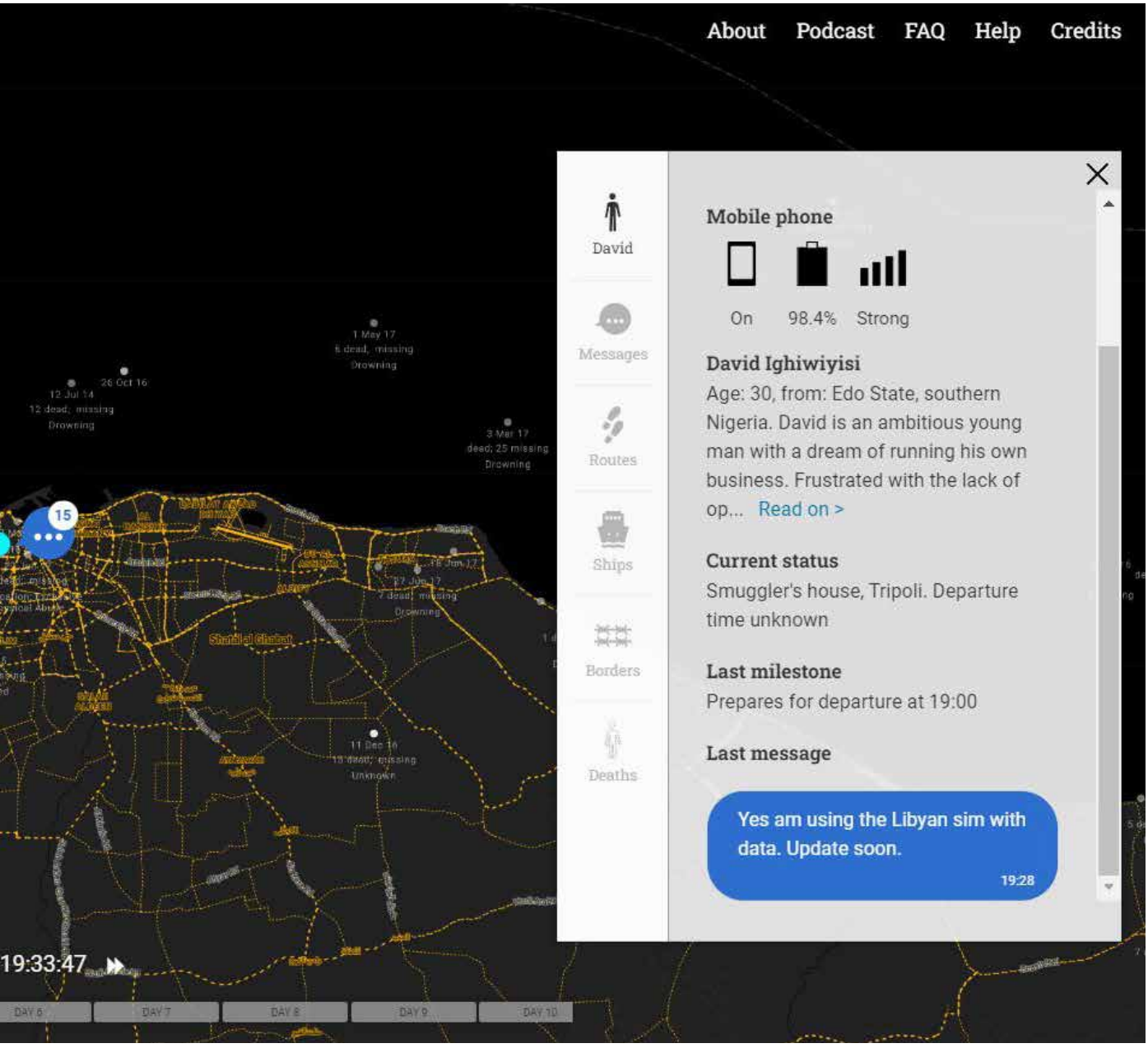

food, clothes & water
registration docu
life jackets
MEDITERRANEAN
reception / connection
waterproof belongings
BOATS
Rescue boats Coastguards
provision water
boat technology & durability
BEACH
smuggler's house
VILLAGES
Safe house
bribery
BORDER CROSSING
passports visas money
social media
· whatsapp
· facebook
SIM cards, phones & data
researching safe smuggling
ROUTES
HOME

MODULE #1
SITUATIONS

an investigation into the spatiality and mediation of migration

CONTEXT IMMERSION

I started my exploration by conducting a workshop where I situated myself within a digital context framing the topic of migration - the digital platform ”Migration Trail”, developed by Killing Architects and launched in 2017. I hoped to develop a methodology of translating these learnt experiences - the digital narratives of people on the run from conflict - into spatial reactions. I attempted to use model making, sketching and mapping ”in-situ” as I carried out these one-person workshops, immersed in a digital landscape.


About
Podcast
FAQ
Help
Credits
David
Messages
Routes
Ships
Borders
Deaths
Mobile phone
On
98.4%
Strong
David Ighiwiyisi
Age: 30, from: Edo State, southern Nigeria. David is an ambitious young man with a dream of running his own business. Frustrated with the lack of op... Read on >
Current status
Smuggler's house, Tripoli. Departure time unknown
Last milestone
Prepares for departure at 19:00
Last message
Yes am using the Libyan sim with data. Update soon.
19:28
1 May 17
6 dead, missing
Drowning
26 Oct 16
12 Jul 14
12 dead, missing
Drowning
3 Mar 17
dead; 25 missing
Drowning
15
11 Dec 16
Unknown
19:33:47
DAY 6
DAY 7
DAY 8
DAY 9
DAY 10

CRITERIA AND DAILY ROUTINE

For the duration of the context immersion (initially intended to be 10 successive days) I had to conduct a series of tasks, based on evaluation criteria established prior to the initiation of the workshop. This setup was established in order to enforce structural visual and written observations and documentation of my own knowledge development and increased understanding.

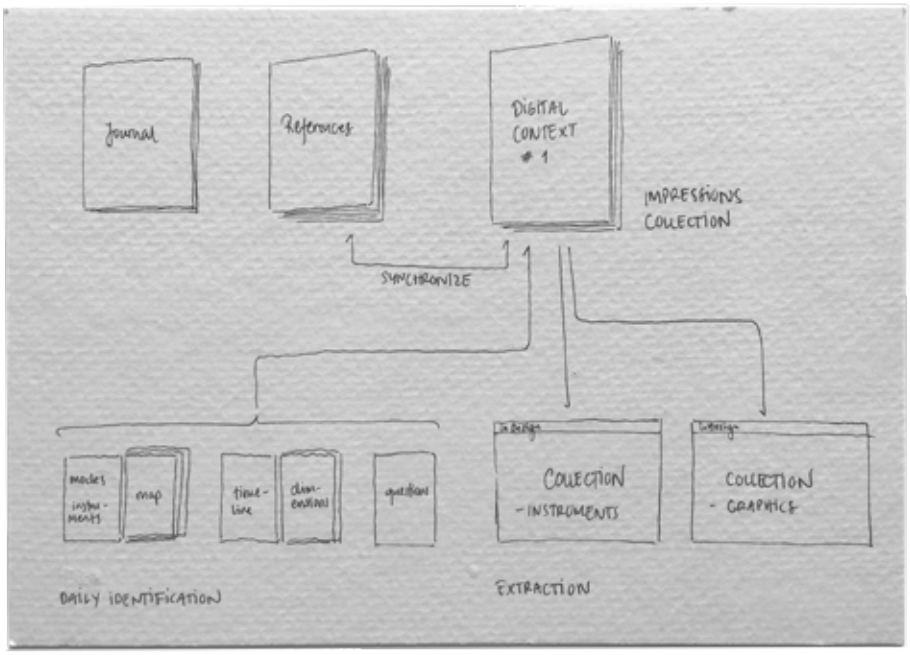
In parrallell to these criteria and documented observations I also established a routine of daily journaling and structured documentation on additional though related references and literature.

criteria for digital context immersion
(established by me prior to workshop initiation)

- *follow the journey day by day*
- *answer all pre-established questions as they become apparent*
- *identify themes and instruments and collect these in images and drawings*
- *identify dimensions (as defined by Xiang and Lindqvist 2014)*
- *identify important events and collect in a timeline*

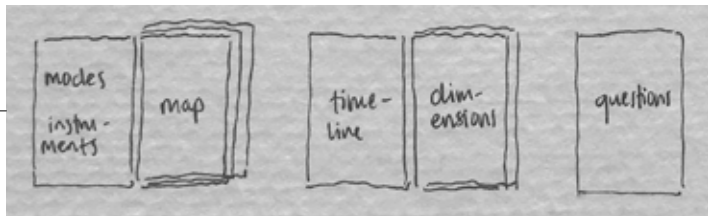
- *your choice of method for making - models, sketches, narratives, mapping*

- *summarize the day with a relational map - this can vary in scale, style and focus*
- *continuously collect and work with other references, conceps and knowledge*
- *this is to be done in allocated digital folder spaces as well as within the context sketchbook and reference notebook*



daily following of the two persona's journeys across the mediterranean and towards the european union. as i learn about their journeys, impressions are supposed to be translated into spatial reactions

layers of the context sketchbook - mode of analysis / translation



modes/themes and instruments

themes or modes that signify certain steps in the journey

topological maps

at the end of the day, map the journey relationally with respect to questions

timelines

identifying important events/steps along the journey

dimensions

technological - humanitarian - social - commercial - regulatory

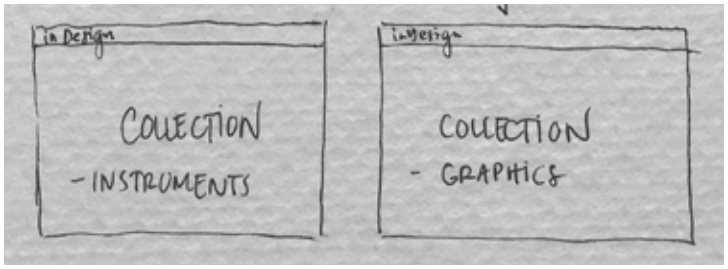
questions

who - obstacles - places - things - needs - helped and obstructed

OUTCOMES

Outcomes and learnings were documented both in a series of notebooks (dedicated to different purposes) and collections of mappings and decoded instruments of migration mediation.

collections of instruments and topological maps / networks - outputs



instruments

human and non-human actors that mediate (facilitate and condition) migration mobilities

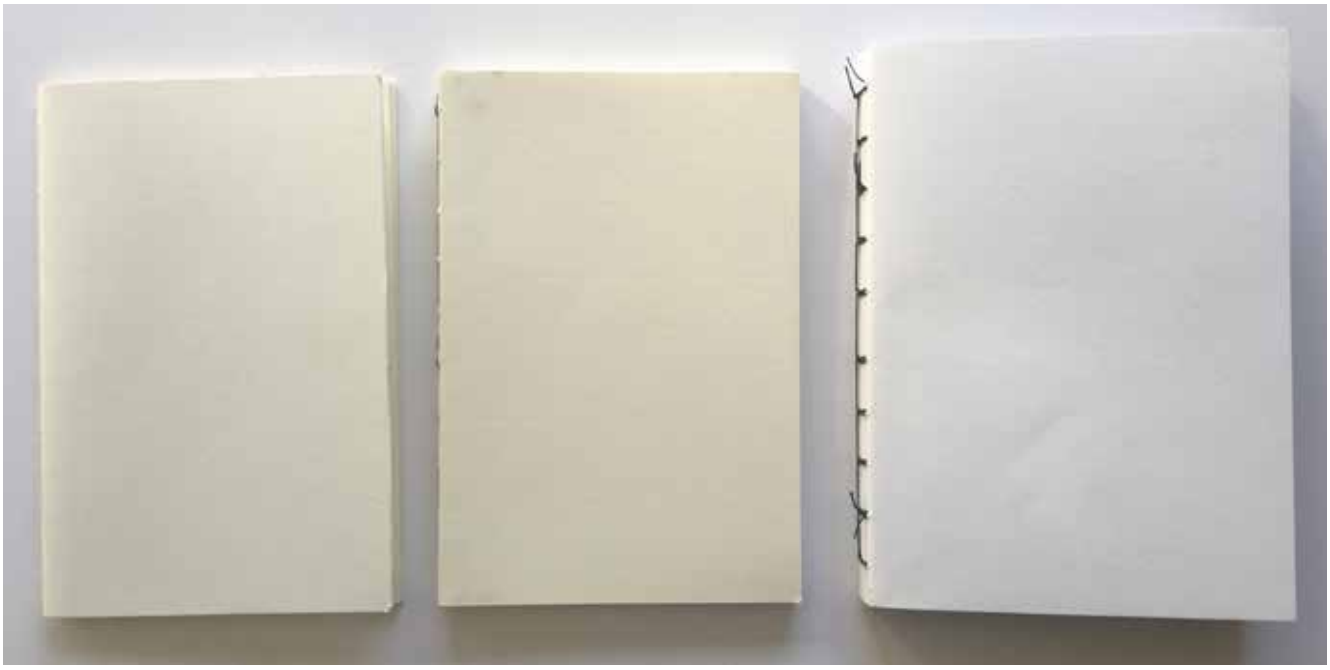
(topological) maps

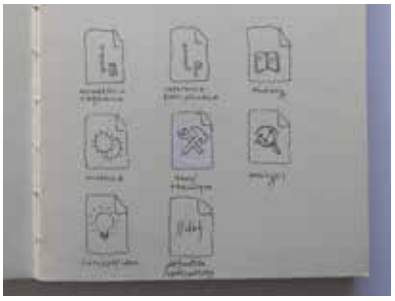
connecting the dots, mapping out the relational aspects of migration architecture

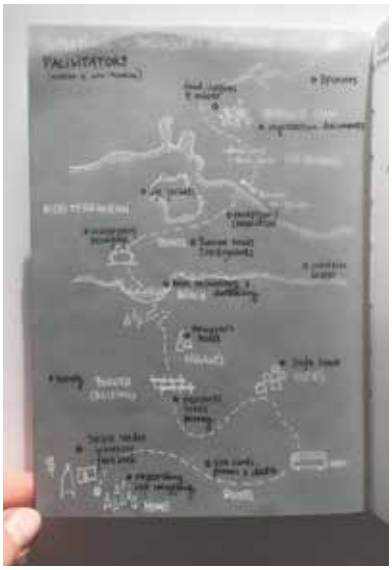
the journal

references
notebook

context
sketchbook



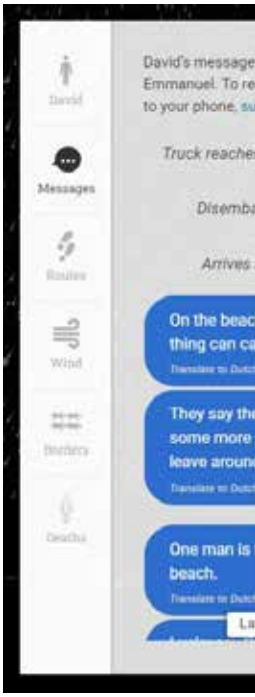




DECODING NARRATIVES - PROCESS

photography - journalism

digital narrativ



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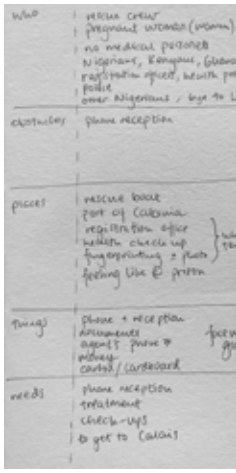
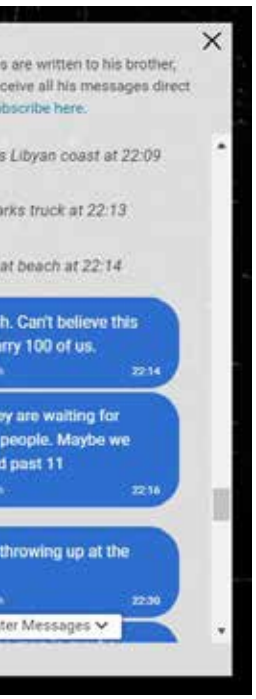
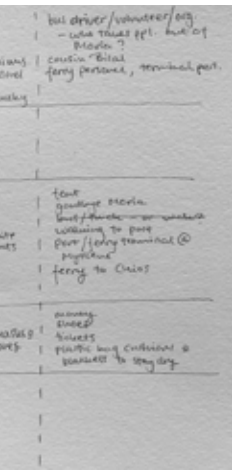
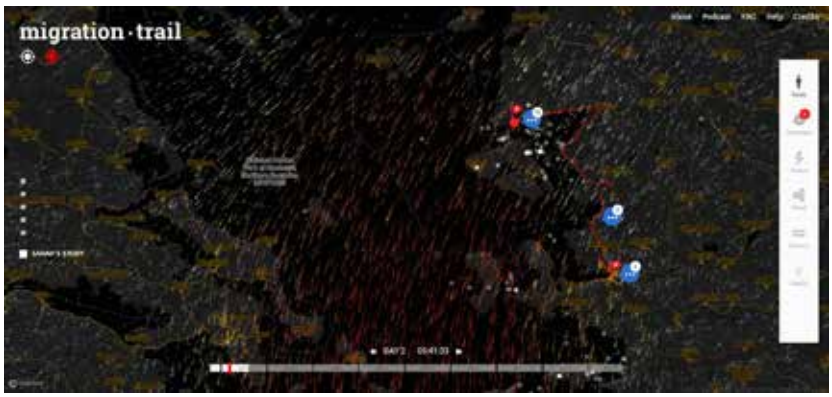


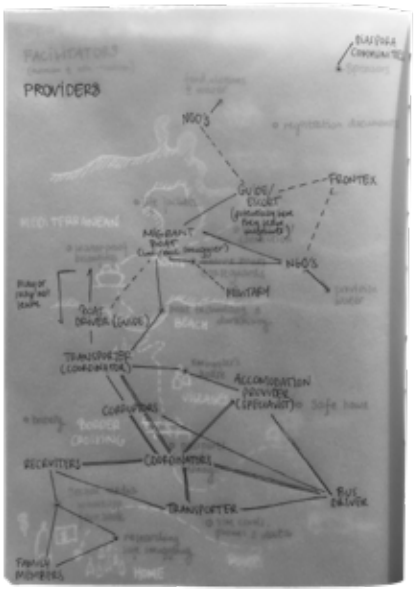
ves - testemony





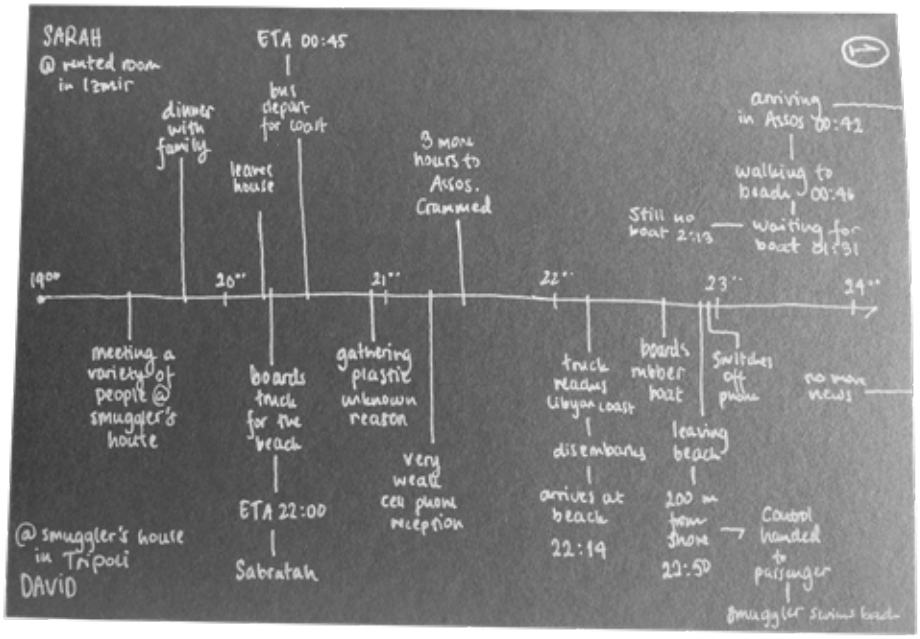
digital context - maps and knowledge

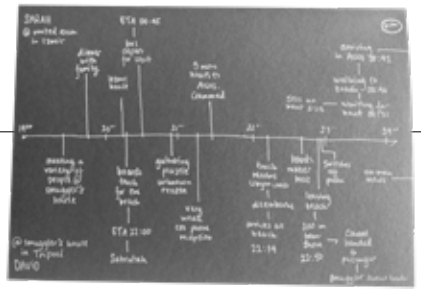




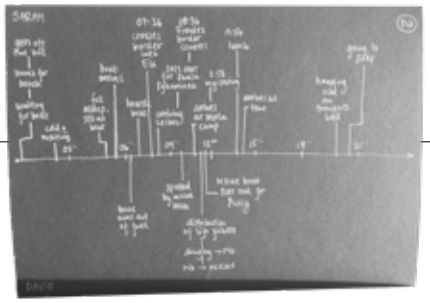
MIGRANT JOURNEY

Understanding the migrant journey through a series of time-lines help me to paint the picture of the time aspect of being on the move. It can also be translated into a space-time diagram seen to the right, which highlights the time spent in the modes or *waiting*, *on the move* (mode of transport) and *urban/rural, indoor/outdoor* spaces.





DAY 1



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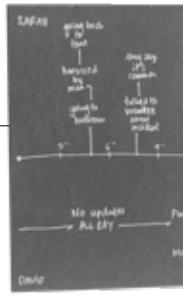

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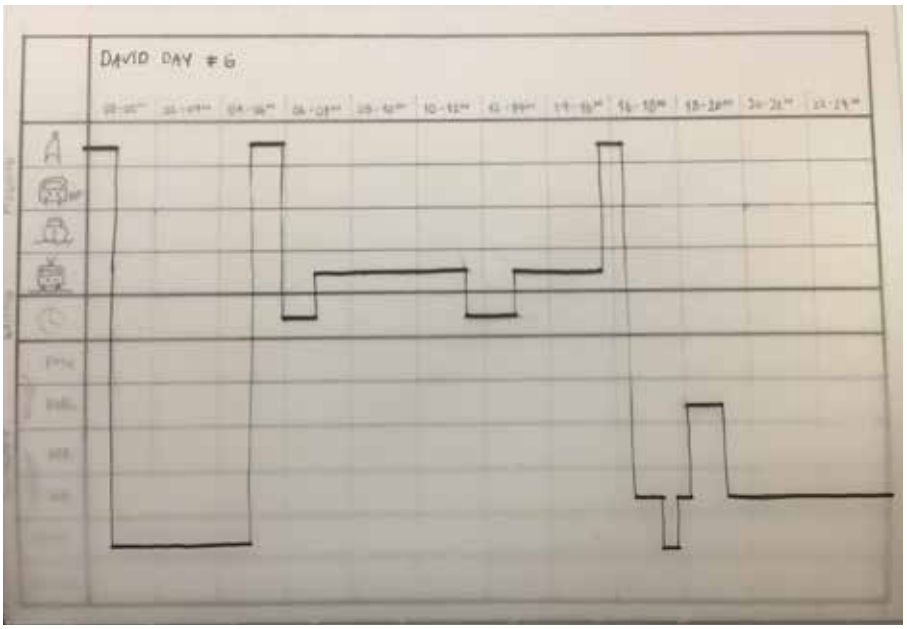
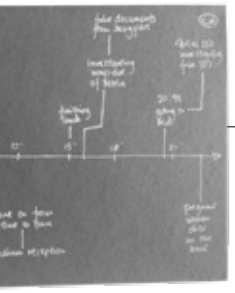
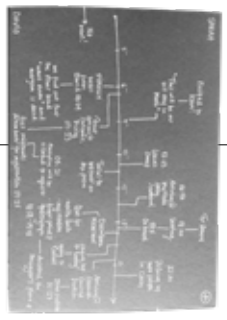




DAY 3



DAY 4

DAY 5

OUTCOMES - ARCHIVE

collection day 2

201_coast guard patrol boat

A group of people being brought into Dover, Kent, by Border Force officers on Tuesday. Photograph: Gareth Fuller/PA
https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/aug/11/bbc-and-sky-accused-of-dehumanising-people-trying-to-cross-channel

205_rescue mission

British rescuers helping migrants on a semi-rigid boat trying to make their way from France across the English Channel last year.Credit...National Society for Sea Rescue, via Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

202_police holding camp

image by Holly Pickett, Greece, 2014
https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/syrian-refugees-transit-through-troubled-greece

NGO's taking the role of border patrol

Norwegian police officer Anne Marie Bruu cleans her hand gun on the Norwegian Redningsselskapet rescue boat 'Peter Henry Von Koss' while it conducts a Frontex Aegean sea patrol on the northern shores of Lesbos island in Greece, on February 29, 2016.
https://theintercept.com/2016/08/22/coast-guard-fired-at-migrant-boats-european-border-agency-documents-show/

203_police food handouts

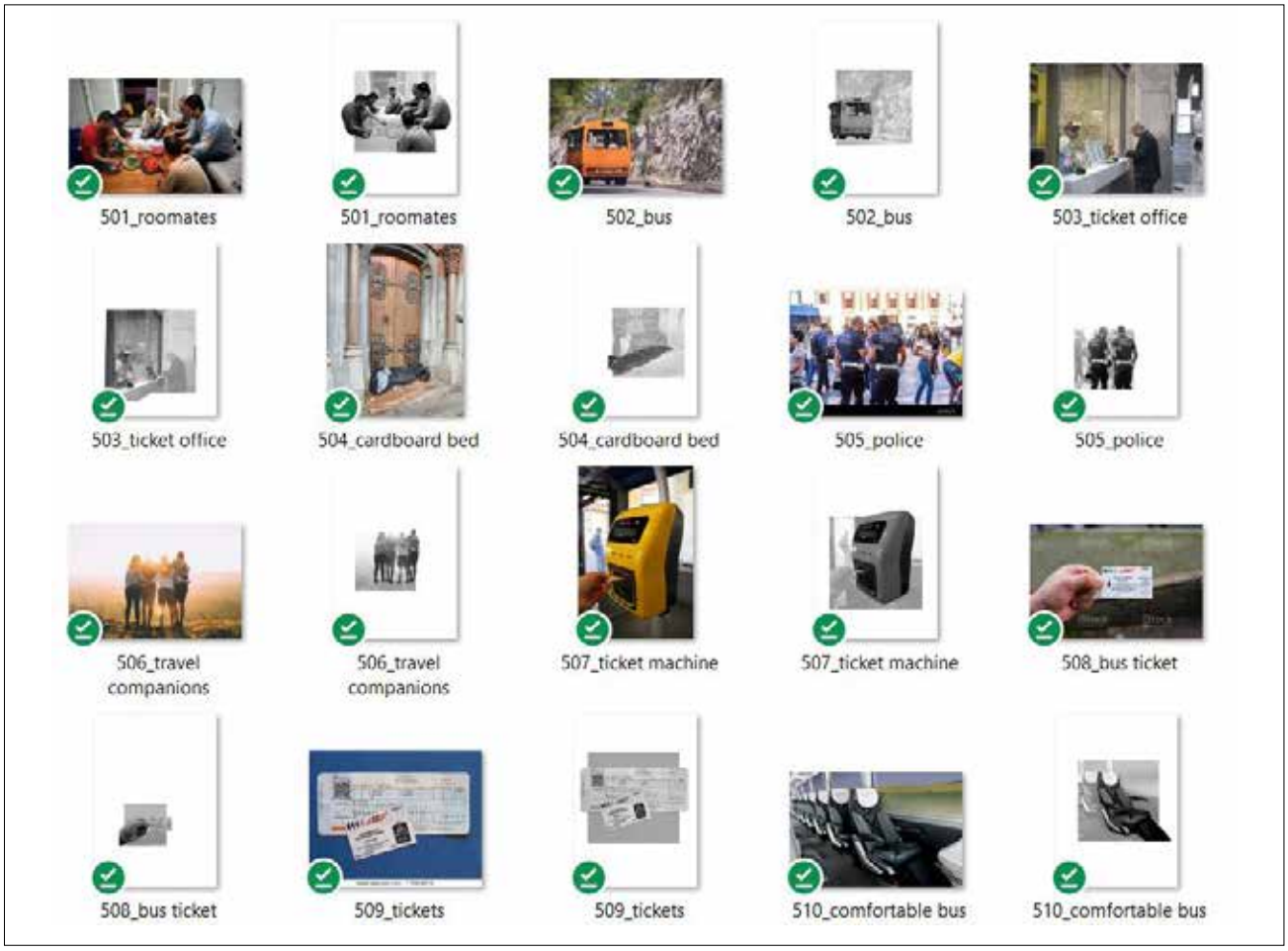
image by Holly Pickett, Greece, 2014
https://pulitzercenter.org/stories/syrian-refugees-transit-through-troubled-greece

204_arrivals on beach

There have been about 13,500 arrivals in the UK via small boats so far this year - considerably higher than the 8,420 total for the whole of 2020. Image by Gareth Fuller/PA
https://www.ft.com/content/256c5d4b-5054-4f16-a702-18c9c08b6712

display (indesign document)

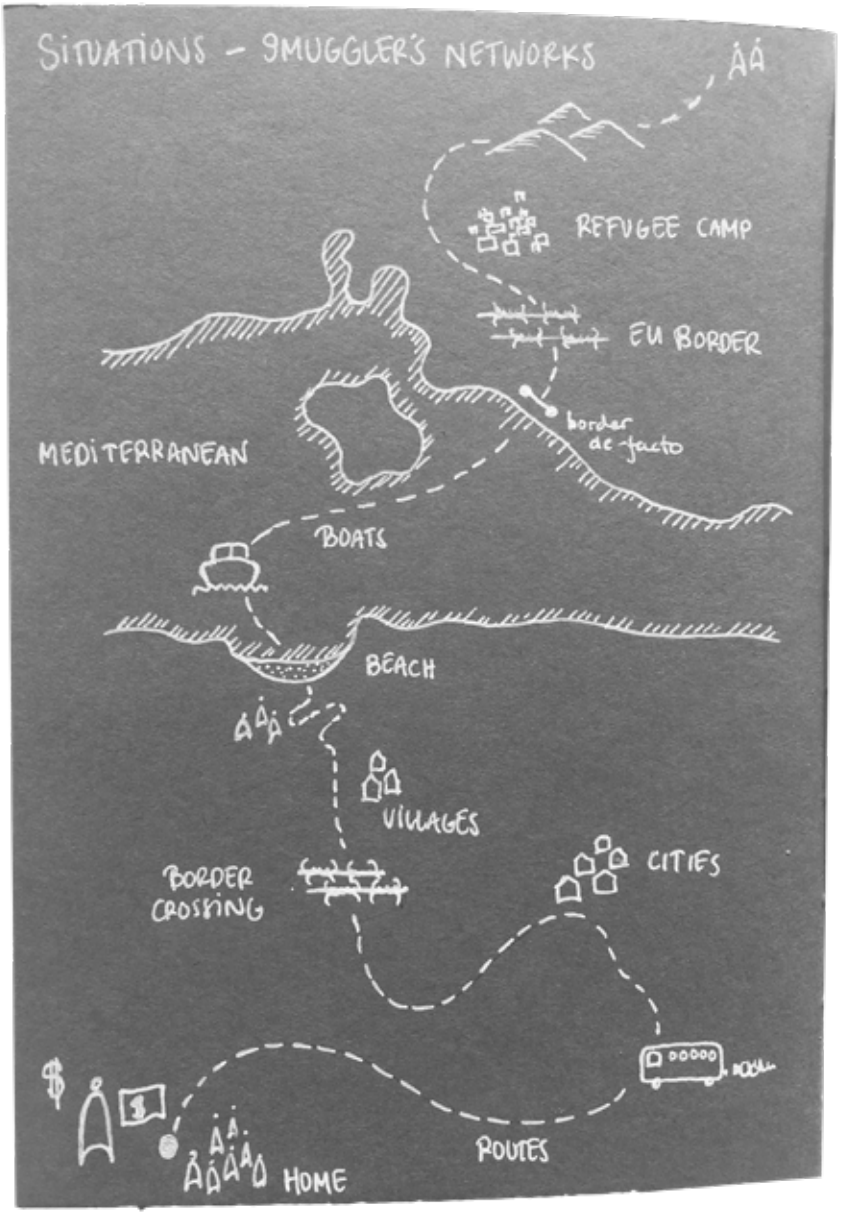
the original image as well as its cropped version are displayed with number (code) and source (author and url)



archive (folder space)

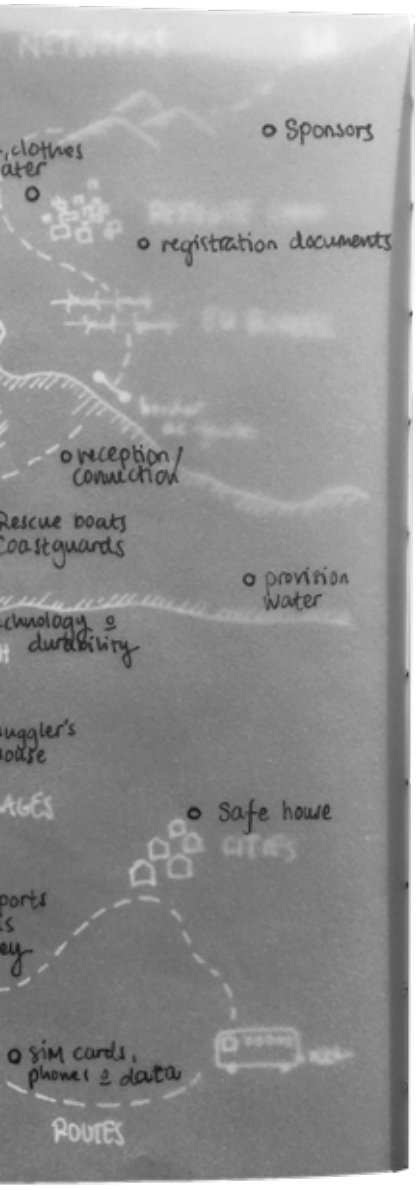
the original and altered images are saved in the same folder space, with same code and name. the folders are organized according to the day (from migration trail) that they first came to my attention

OUTCOMES - TOPOLOGICAL MAPS

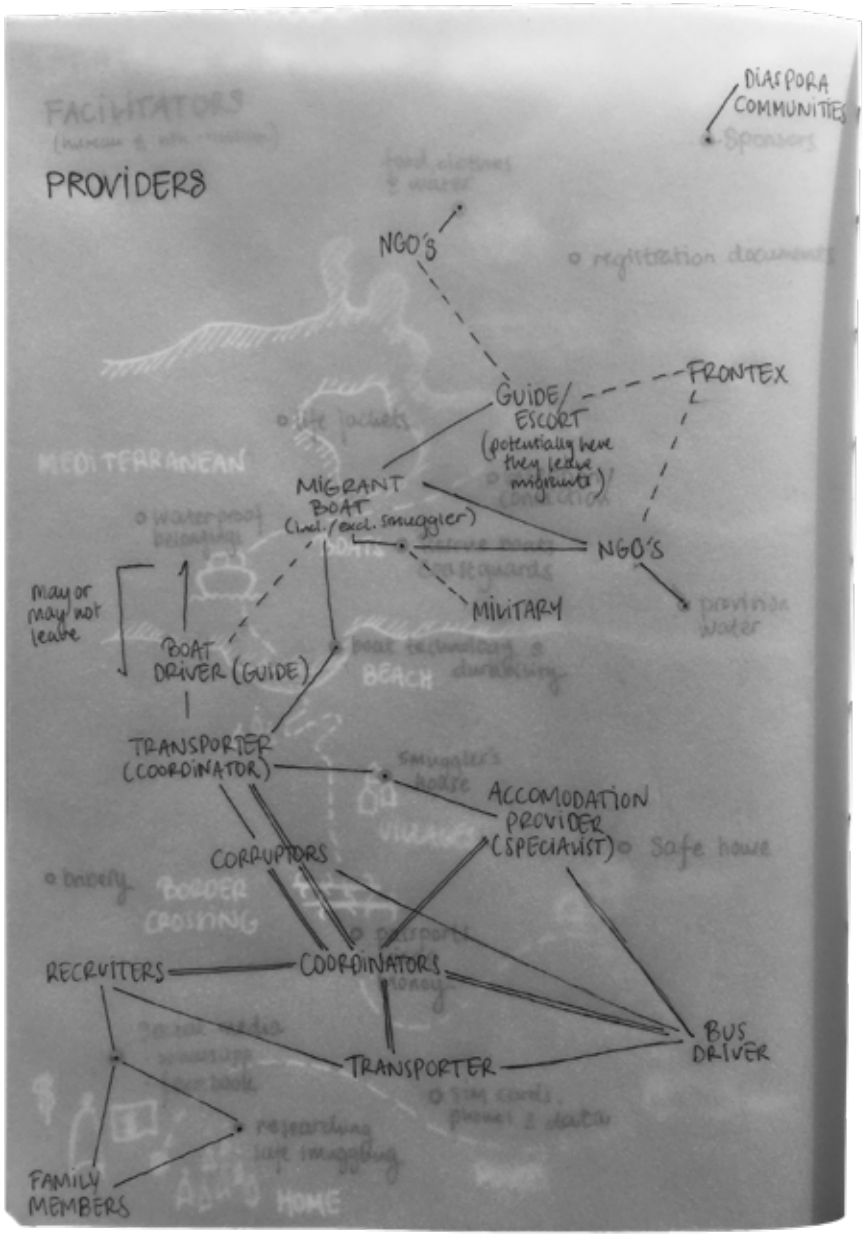


spatial dimension

techno
dime



logical
nsion



network connections
between actors

MODULE #2
ITERATIONS

an investigation into the spatiality and mediation of migration through a topological analysis of europe's external border conditions

BORDER CONDITIONS MAPPING

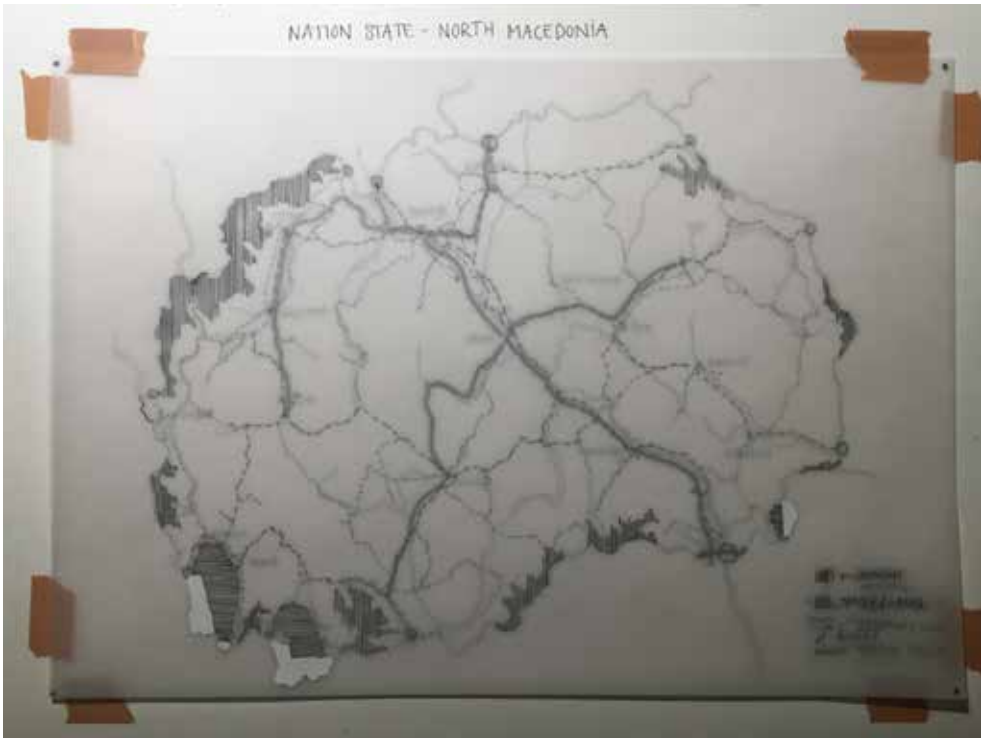
europe

the balk

- this later lay the base for p
the base map and the layers
the toppographic model base
inform

an route

hysical model iteration (both were digitalised and used for e and lasered/engraved layer nation)



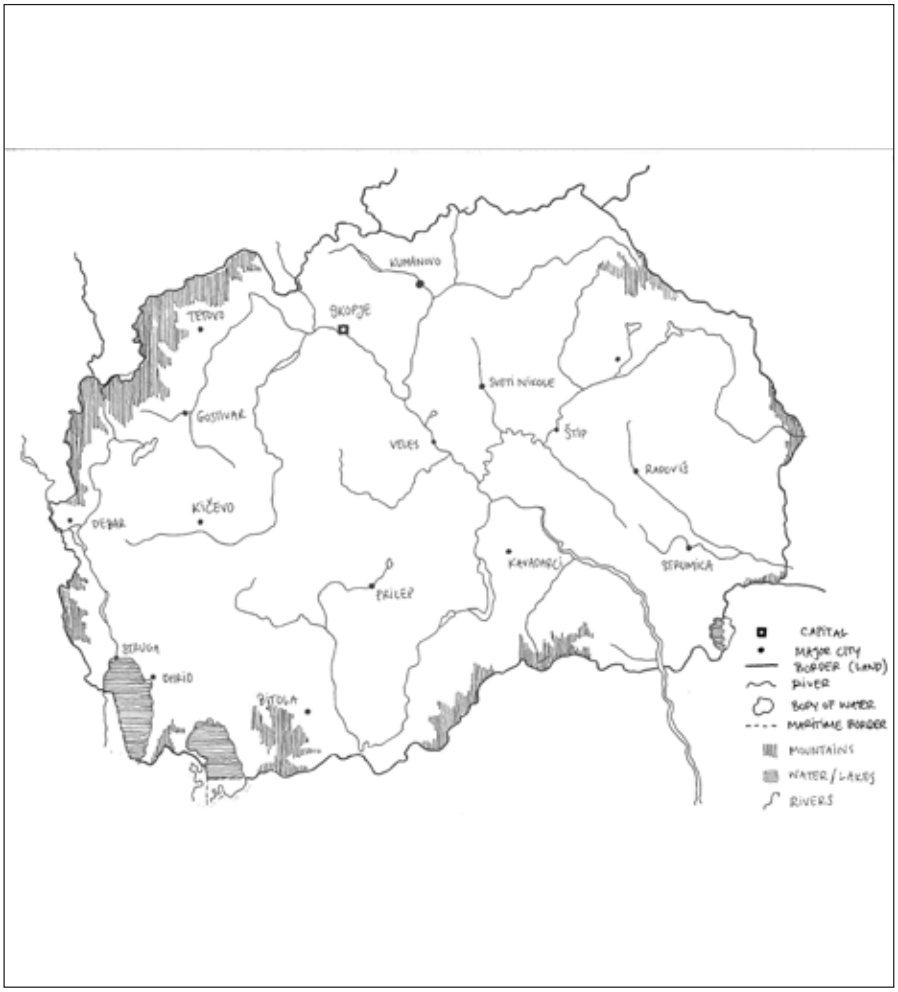
nation state (north macedonia)

ITERATION - DIGITALISATION AND REPRESENTATION

Europe
EU, Schengen and non-EU

Europe's borderlands
The Balkans a

s (’Fortress Europe’)
nd the Baltics



Nation state
i.e. North Macedonia

ITERATION - PHYSICAL MODEL

this is my first attempt to translate the analytical framework of migration infrastructure (and the decoded digital narratives of migrant journeys) into 3d space.

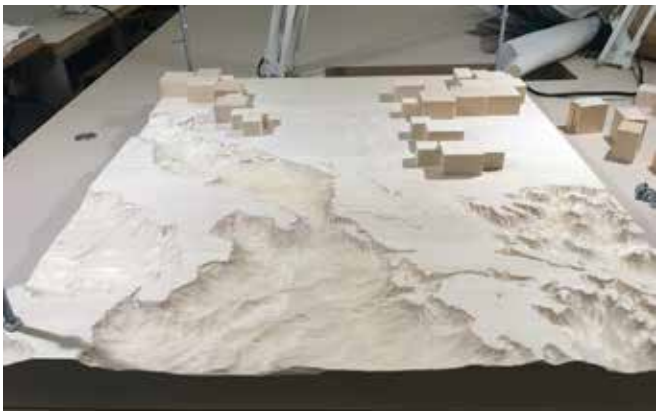
the base layer (in wood) will contain solely geographical information.

the model will be based on the mappings of border conditions, specifically a portion of the Balkan region, including a small piece of Italy and most of Greece (as they are both at the epicentre of human migration to Europe, specially during the 2015 refugee crisis).

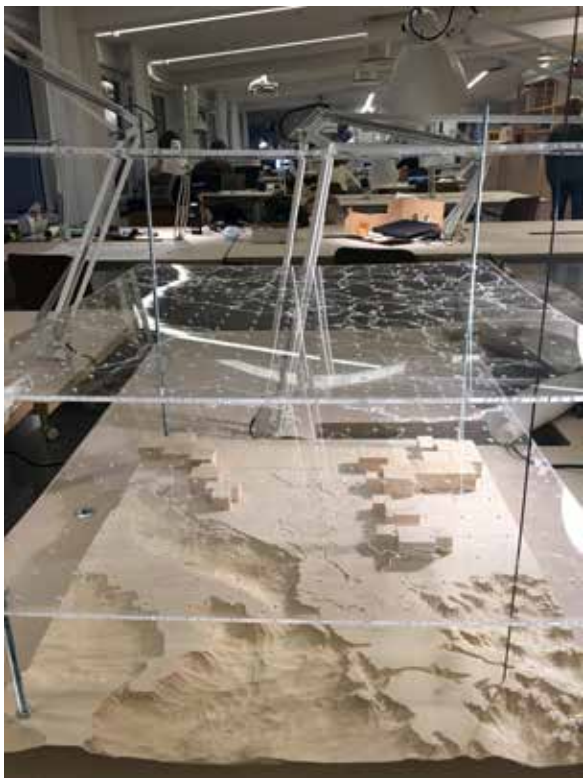
the base of the model is a solid wooden piece in which I carve out the main geographical entities of the selected area

(Greece and Balkans along the Eastern Mediterranean Migration route)

COMPONENTS



base layer - geographical



dimension layers - geographically bound

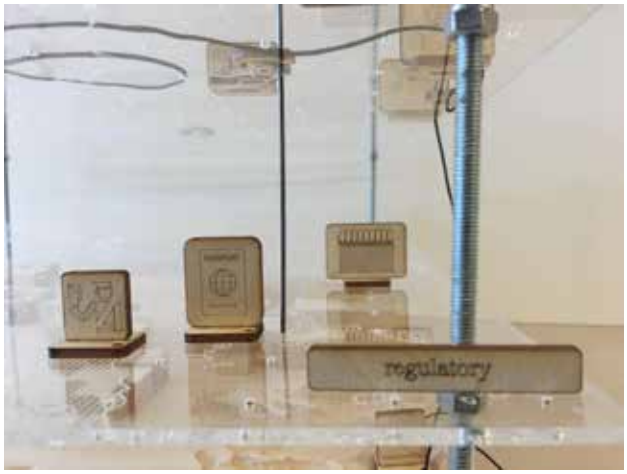
instruments - geographically independent

thread - the journey

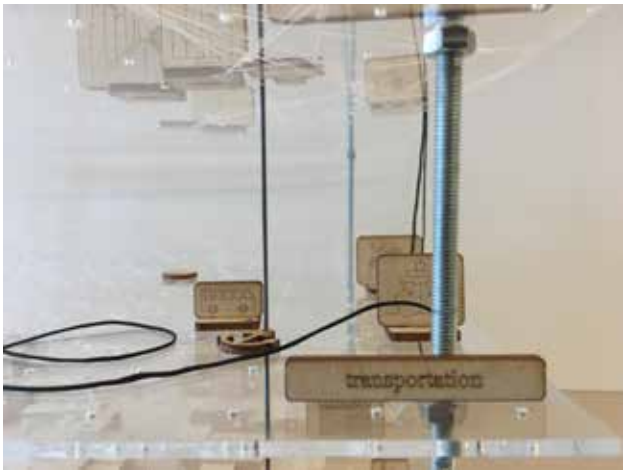
assembled - top view

DIMENSIONS

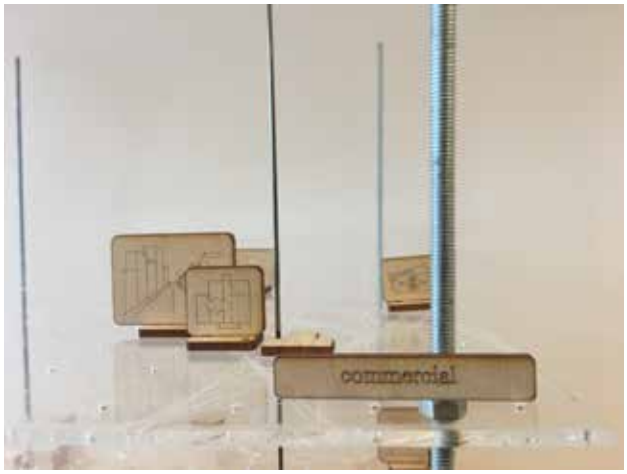
geographical base layer - bodies of water and mountains



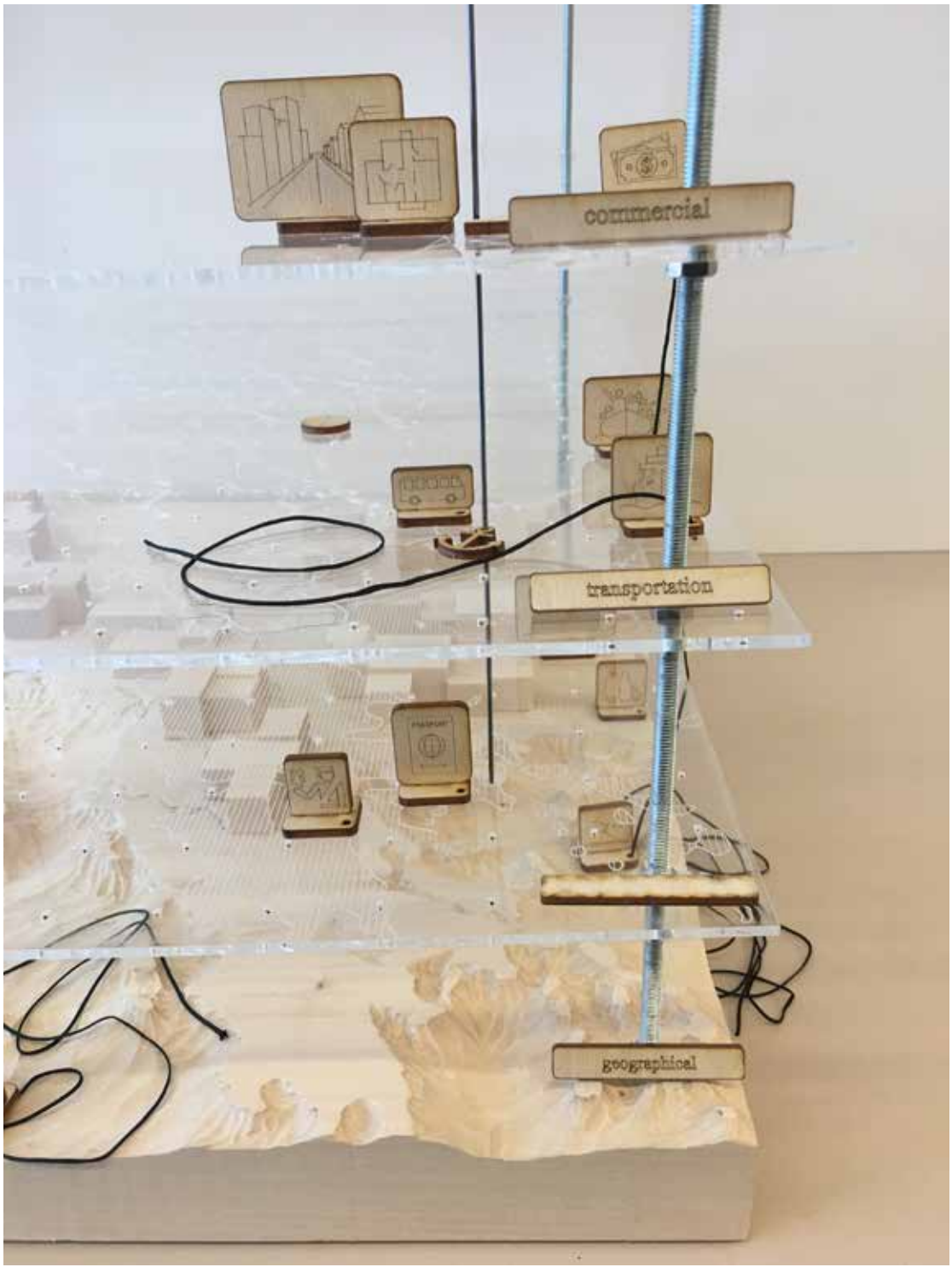
regulatory dimension



modes of transportation

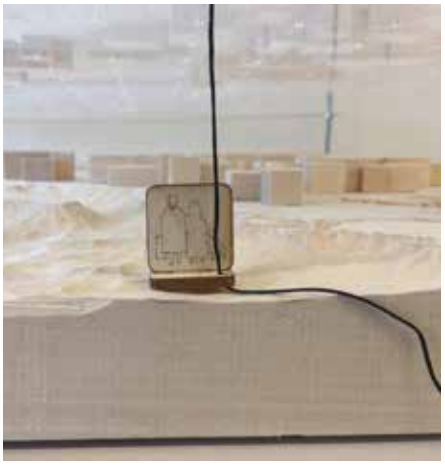


commercial dimension


commercial
transportation
geographical

NARRATIVE

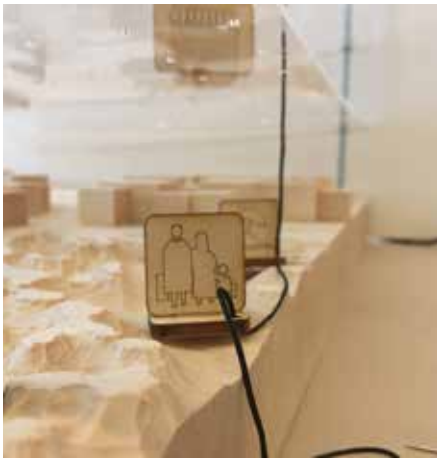
Just as geography - mountain ranges, river, deltas and deserts - have shaped the borders of nation states throughout history, so does geography help to maintain them today. They influence human movement and behaviour, and thus also plays a role in limiting and conditioning both migration flows themselves and the state policies on border control.



David

thread

symbolises the migrant narrative - the journey - the order of events and the interrelation of instruments



Sarah

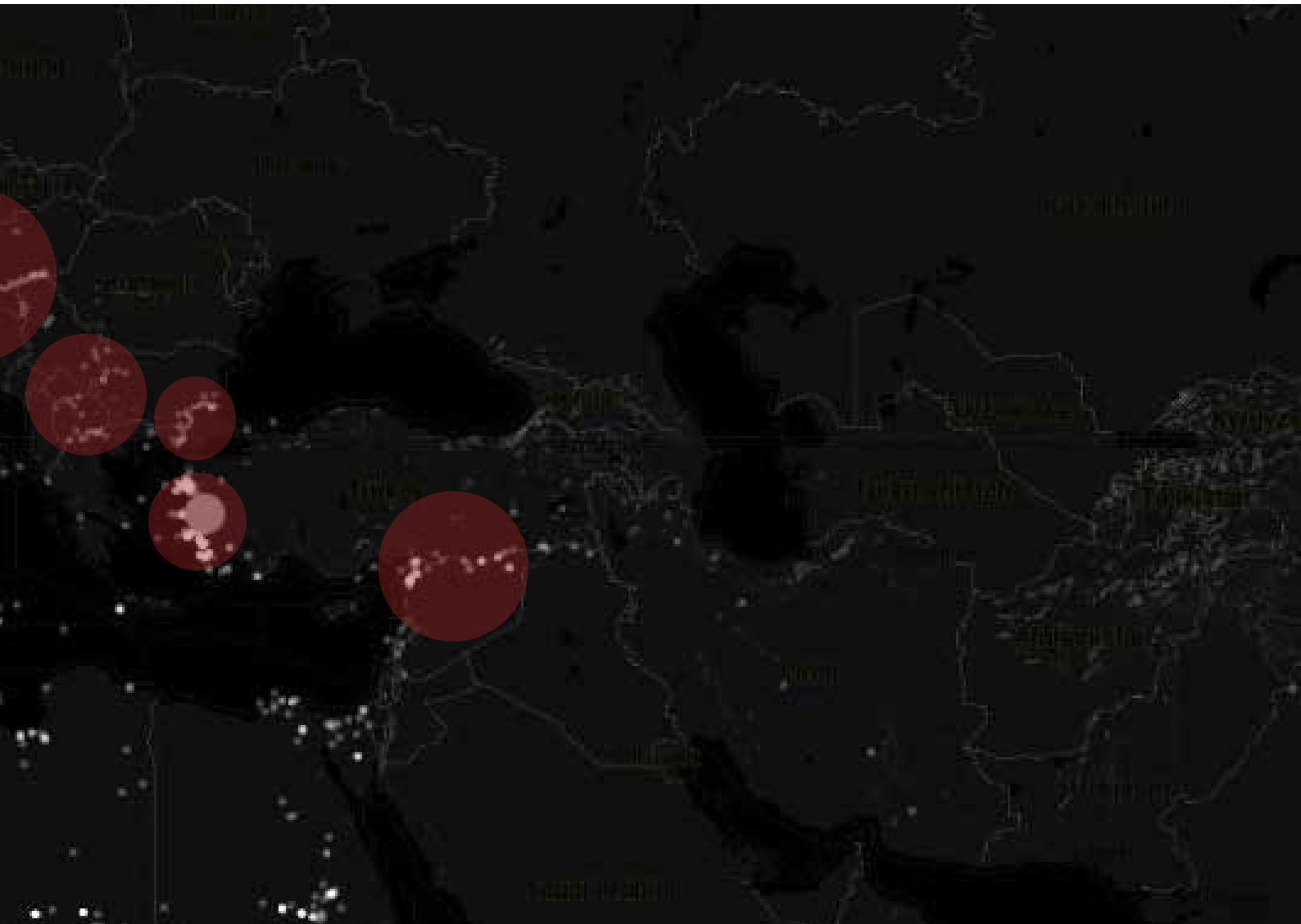
NORTH
MACEDONIA
CE
about the events that lead to one
2015. The border segments
ely inaccessibly by means other
eason. An overview of its
tional facilities such as ski
dirt roads leading both up and
ntext of perilous migrant border
infrastructure makes these areas
e.
NORTH MACEDONIA
GREECE
100 m

MODULE #3
NARRATIVE

an investigation into the conditions and typologies of europe's external borders and their role as mediator of wanted and unwanted border movement and activities

EUROPE'S DEADLY BORDERS

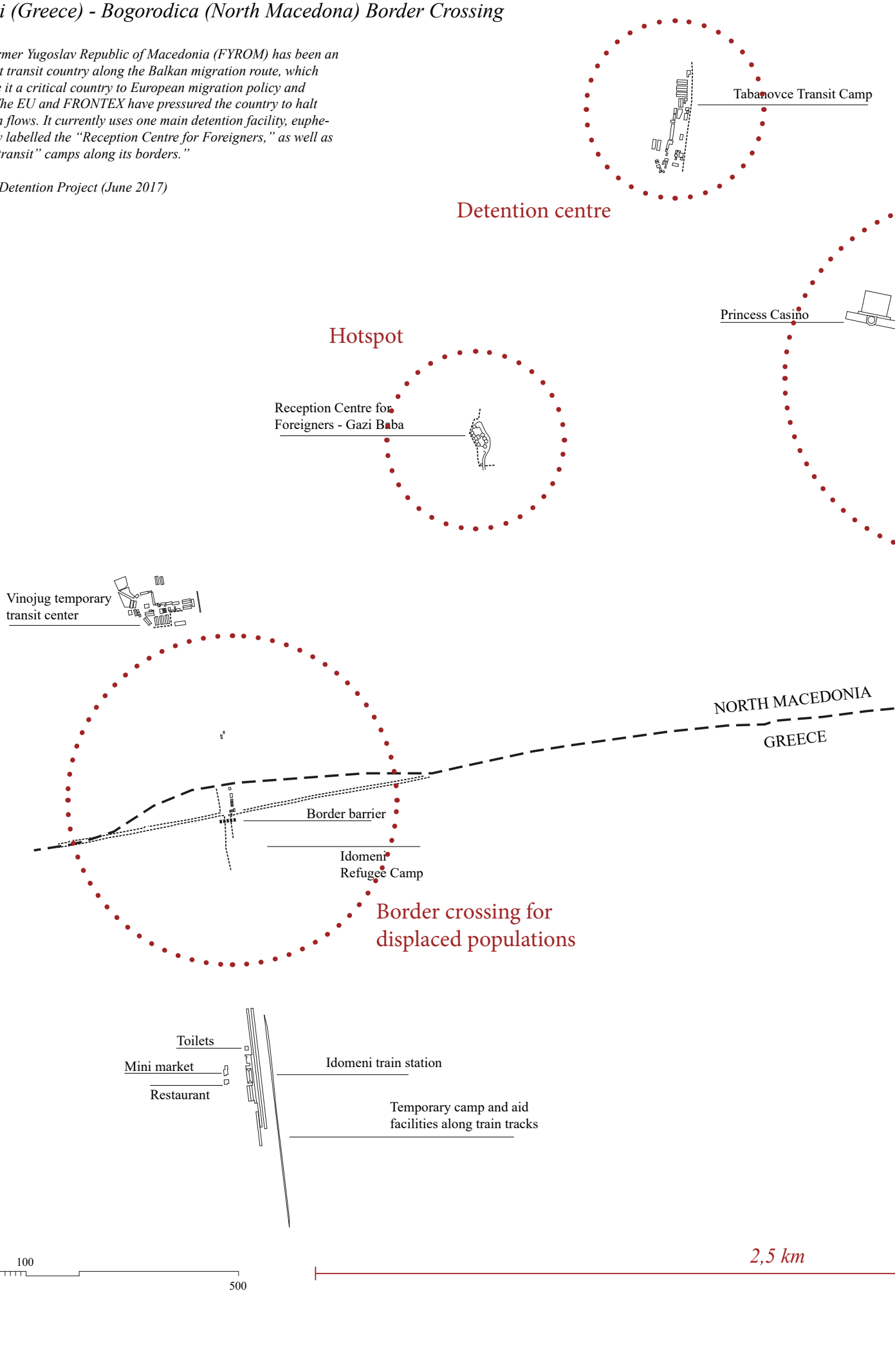
"Since 2014, more than 4,000 fatalities have been recorded annually on migratory routes worldwide. The number of deaths recorded, however, represent only a minimum estimate because the majority of migrant deaths around the world go unrecorded. Since 1996, more than 75,000 migrant deaths have been recorded globally. These data not only highlight the issue of migrant fatalities and the consequences for families left behind, but can also be used to assess the risks of irregular migration and to design policies and programmes to make migration safer."



Evzoni (Greece) - Bogorodica (North Macedona) Border Crossing

"The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has been an important transit country along the Balkan migration route, which has made it a critical country to European migration policy and debate. The EU and FRONTEX have pressured the country to halt migration flows. It currently uses one main detention facility, euphemistically labelled the "Reception Centre for Foreigners," as well as ad hoc "transit" camps along its borders."

- Global Detention Project (June 2017)



SEPARATION OF SPACES
- HUMANITARIAN CORRIDOR

"An overview of the EMR geography reveals that refugee infrastructure is mostly adjacent to the periphery's border settlements. The precise routes and stops of the passages make visible the consistent separation of EMR spaces from the local communities. When migrants and refugees travel by rail, it is on exclusively assigned trains, often late at night, as in the case of Austria. When it is by bus, the driver follows tertiary streets and unpaved roads to access the remote border passage assigned to migrants and refugees. A characteristic example is that of the Greek-North Macedonian border. While the civilian border crossing is along the highway and accompanied by commercial activities, the border passage for the displaced is in the middle of a field a few kilometres away."

- Melina Philippou: The Spatial Extensions of the Right to Seek Asylum: The Eastern Mediterranean Refugee Route (in: Footprint (2020) Conflict Mediations)

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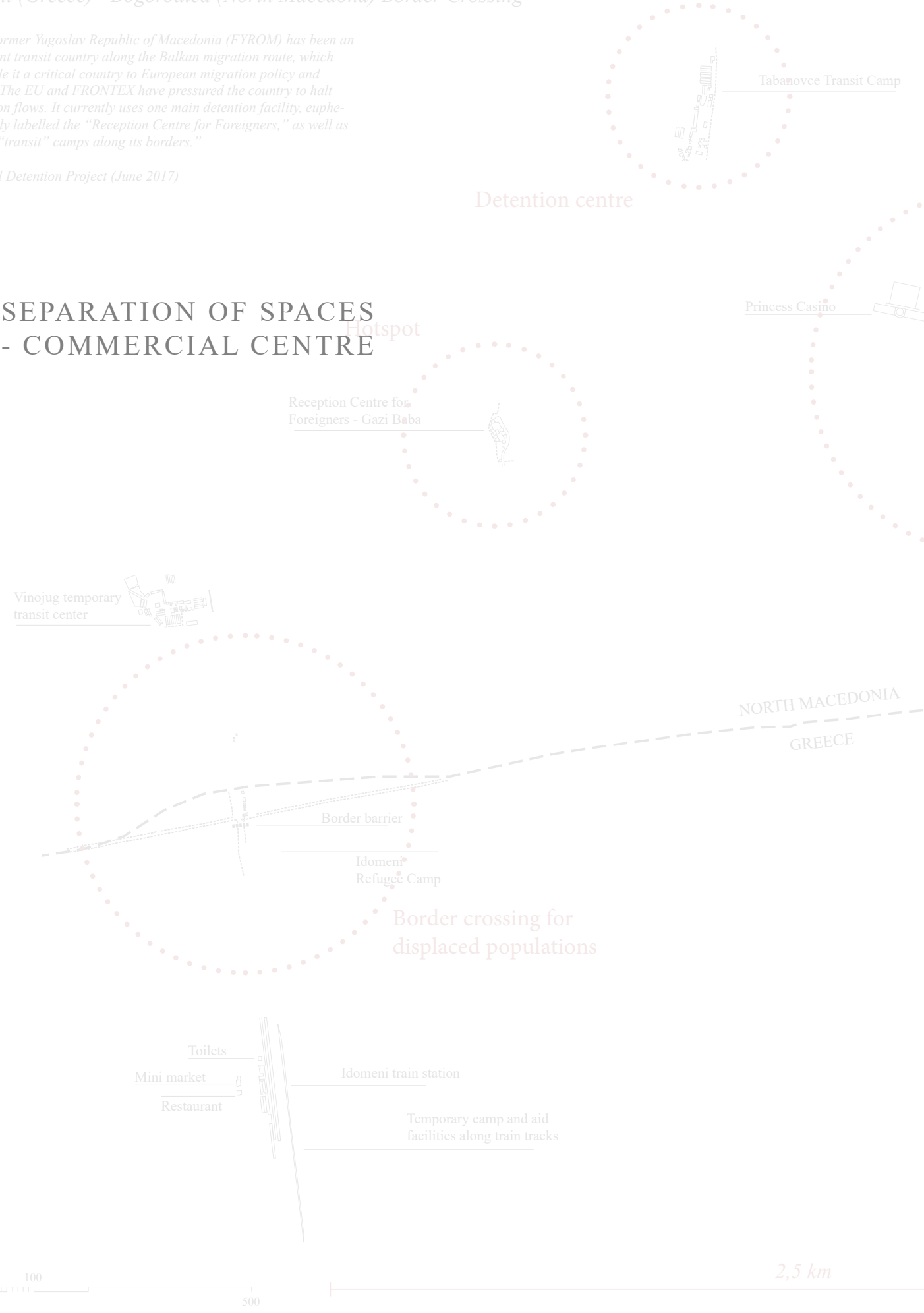
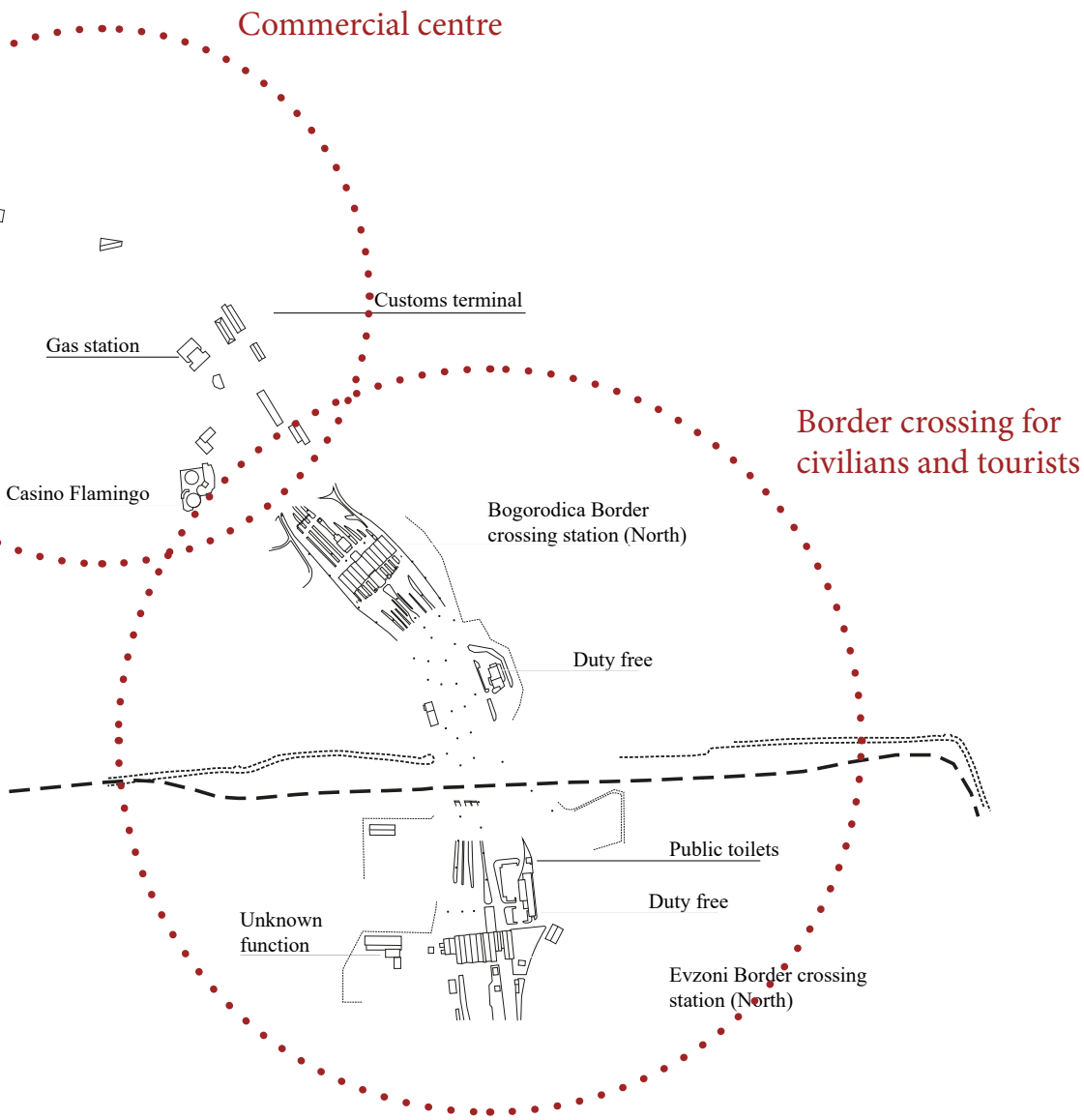
- Global Detention Project (June 2017)

SEPARATION OF SPACES - COMMERCIAL CENTRE





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GREECE - NORTH MACEDONIA

Extensive mapping of border conditions and border typologies along the border between Greece and North Macedonia. Findings lay ground for border typologies drawings and models in the next iteration.

Below map is only one portion of the whole, which is too wide to be included in this format.

Planinarski dom Golubac
North Macedonia
Source: Google Maps (jimakos)

Huma (Χυτα)
village in North Macedonia (several abandoned houses)
Source: Google Maps (dimandos dimandos)

Ski Koruf
Ski center in North Macedonia
Source: Google Maps (lukes hen ten oxy)

Ski Koruf
Restaurant/hotel in the ski center
Source: Google Maps (Sergio Jakovlev)

low-peak mountains

recreational

Корнеџ Вогуєдвегт
High peaked mountainous recreational area in Greece
Source: Google Maps (OMICRON)

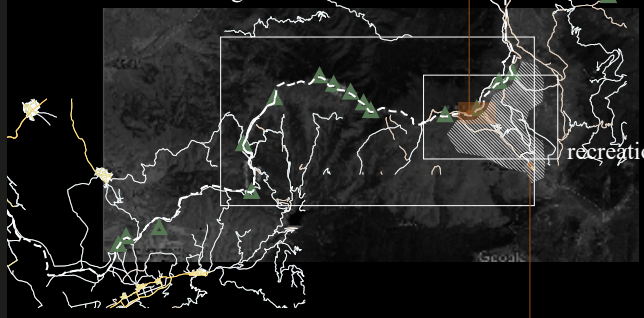
mountainous

high-peaked mountain range

Kaimaktsalan
Mountain peak with small church and refuge
Source: Google Maps (Metodi Georgiev)

Ski Kozuf
Refuge on the top of the mountain in close proximity to ski resort
Source: Google Maps (Георги Јовчевски)

mountain range



recreational

rural

3 December 2015
1 dead; Electrocution
(Source: Migration Trail)

Kaimaktsalan (mountain peak)

A small church and the remains of what may have been a pastor's r
and a graveyard top this viewpoint. The church seems to be a popu
for contemplating the wide horizon.

Voras - Kaimaktsalan ski center
(Source: Google Maps (photo by Anargyros Sprintzios))

3 December 2015

There is no publicly available information about the events that lead to one migrant losing their life here in December 2015. The border segments characterized by mountain ranges are largely inaccessible by means other than private car, especially in the winter season. An overview of its surroundings also reveals that recreational functions and tourist centers were growing very near existence of that tends leading buildings and hotels in the winter.

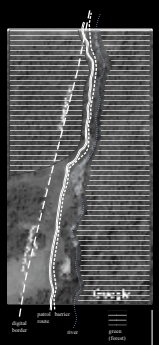
This may speculate that the overlapping context of previous migrant border crossings and the occurrence of accessible infrastructure makes these areas vulnerable as passive actors in border routes.

border typology
> mountainous/established recreational area

The section of the border is characterized by high-altitude mountain ranges, making the border mostly inaccessible by road and public transport. There are no formal border crossings in this region, rendering inaccessible by any means other than by foot. The mountains thus operates as an effective natural barrier to informal border crossings. The area is also a recreational area in that it houses a ski center and several hiking trails, and is so characterized by:

> high altitude mountains
> recreational area

The remote location of these areas does not necessarily mean they are not used by migrants to cross the border from Greece. As reports witness a migrant death in this area in 2015 you do still to assume it may prove to be an active factor in the purchase journeys people take to cross borders unnoticed. It may well be that areas such as this, where mountains are made accessible through the development of ski centers etc. are the most accessible parts of a long stretch of largely inaccessible border.



border typology
> river/green/barrier

Observation of satellite images indicates that the border here contains two geographical types:
- > river border
- > green border

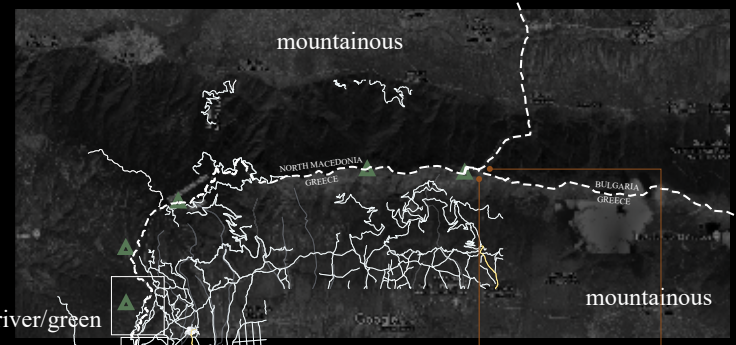
This border segment has also been further spatialized by the construction of a physical border barrier, a border fence. Along the fence (on the Macedonian side) runs a dirt road, probably for maintenance and potential patrols. This fence also puts the border segment into the category of separation barrier:
- > separation barrier (fence)

Little Pioneers Youth Camp
Municipality of Dojran, Nordmakedonien

Source: Google Maps (Erika Fegyverneková Csécsi and Aaron De Jaeger)

Nikolich Beach
Beach on Lake Dojran - Nikolic, Dojran, 610 03, North Macedonia

Source: Google Maps (Gabyka Ferenc and Nitro Computers)



river/green

semi-urban

river/green/barrier

Doïráni (Περιοχή)ρη Αγίας Ειρήνης)
Unnamed Road, Kilkis 610 03, Greece

Source: Google Maps (Marianthi Kalafati)

Τρωάνες, Πλατανάκια
Natural reserve in Mpelles, Neo Petritsi 620 43, Grekland

Source: Google Maps (Anastasiia Zatsarin)

αρκ Τυπέα
Park in Belasica, Strumica 2898, Nordmakedonien

Source: Google Maps (Valentin Zlatanov)

urban

rural

rural

agricultural

semi-urban

Casino
Kazsino & soreca „Xirt"

Source: Google Maps (Stanko Oparnica)

Marshal Tito - street

Source: Google Maps street view

border crossing

Source: Google Maps ()

border typology
> double fence/rurban

The border region around the Greek town Idomeni became widely known as being at the epicentre of the European refugee crisis in 2015. Situated right along the western balkan route, the border crossing here gained public interest when the macedonian government decided to erect a fence on either side of the crossing in November 2015.

Apart from the formal border crossing along the highway, one main point of entry was that of the railroad border crossing a little way west. Images of migrants entering North Macedonia on foot spread internationally, as did the reports of stranded migrants and ill-prompte campsites that came in the aftermath of the closure of the border.

This border segment is situated in a flat and forgiving landscape, with widespread fields, criss-crossing agricultural paths and roads and multiple towns. The border passes on the outskirts of a larger town on the Macedonian side, and through crop fields to the south. The only indication of the border (prior to the fence erection in 2015) would have been a shift in crop cultivation.

The border is here characterized by;
- + a separation barrier (double fence and barbed wire)
- - patrol route
- + urban/rural dynamics

Evzoni (Greece) - Bogorodica (North Macedona) Border Crossing
Formal - civilians and economic activity

Source: Google Maps Street View

Evzoni (Greece) - Bogorodica (North Macedona) Border Crossing

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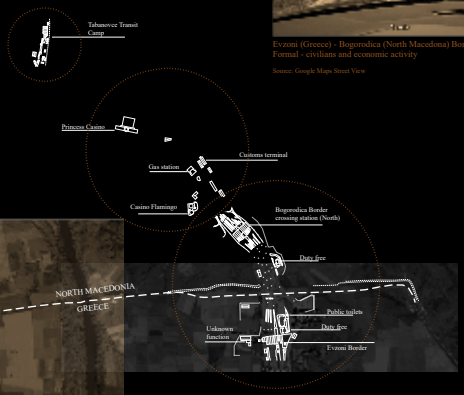
- Global Detention Project (June 2017)
https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/countries/europe/macedonia

Border fence between Greece and North Macedonia

Source: Google Maps ()



Railway crossing Greece - North Macedonia

Source: Google Maps ()

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- Melina Philippou, The Spatial Extensions of the Right to Seek Asylum: The Eastern Mediterranean Refugee Route (in: Footprint (2020) Conflict Mediations)

BORDER TYPOLOGIES

Idomeni refugee border crossing (Greece-North Macedonia) (unofficial)

> double fence/r-urban

Kaimaktsalan ski center (Greece-North Macedonia)

> mountainous/recreational area

Nikolic beach (Greece-North Macedonia)

> river/green/barrier

Nikolic beach (Greece-North Macedonia)

> green/gate

border typology
> double fence/rurban/transport infrastructure

The border region arround the Greek town Idomeni became widely known as being at the epicentre of the European refugee crisis in 2015. Situated right along the western balkan route, the border crossing here gained public intetest when the macedonian government decided to erect a fence on either side of the crossing in November 2015.

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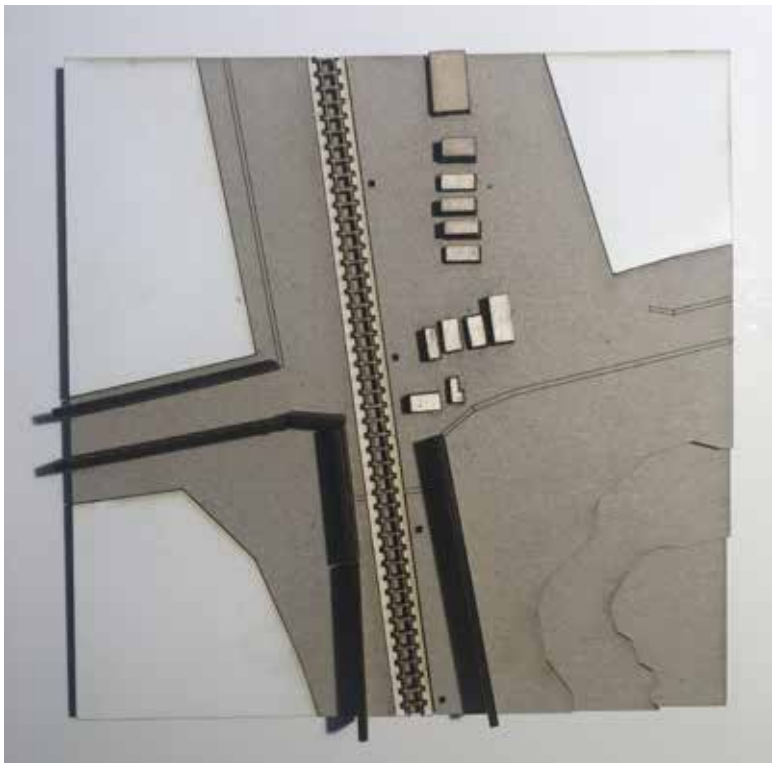
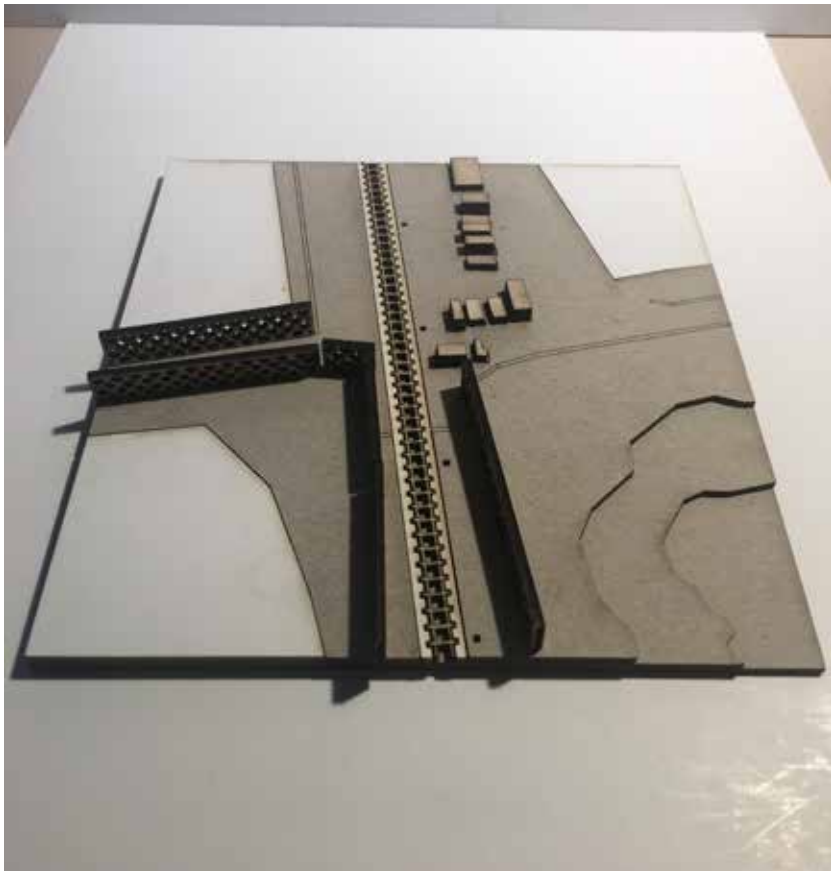
This border segment is situated in a flat and forgiving landscape, with widespread fields, criss-crossing agricultural paths and roads and multiple towns. The border passes on the outskirts of the larger town of Gevgelija on the Macedonian side, and through crop fields to the south. The only indication of the border (prior to the fence erection in 2015) would have been a shift in crop cultivation.

The border is here characterized by;

> a separation barrier (double fence, barbed wire)
> patrol route
> urban/rural dynamics

Notable to this border crossing is the clear separation between the formal - desired and well integrated border territory, dense with economic activity and cross border exchange - and the informal, humanitarian border crossing. Since the closing of the border in the end of 2015 the amount of migrants crossing the border to North Macedonia on this particular stretch have gone down drastically.

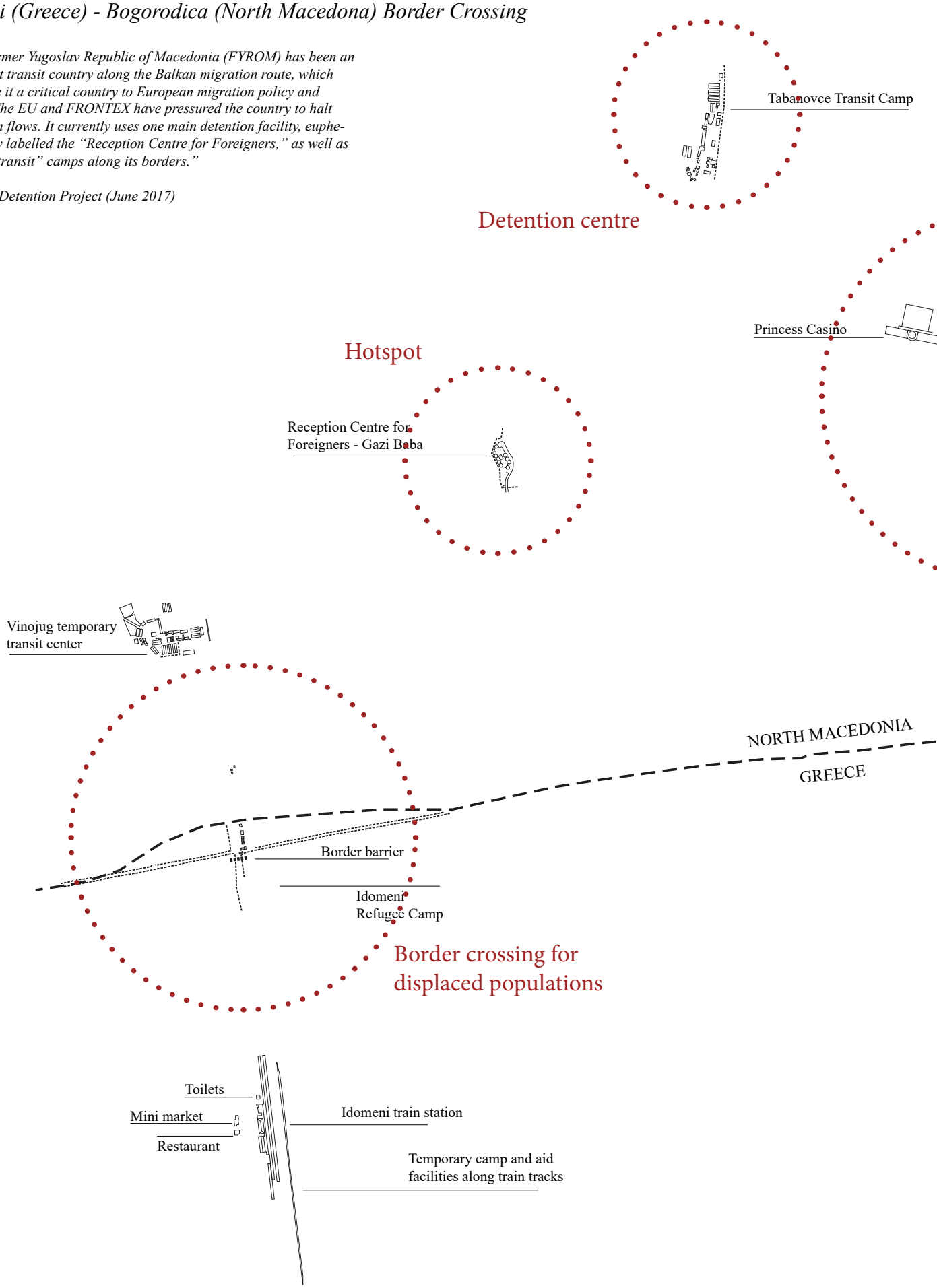


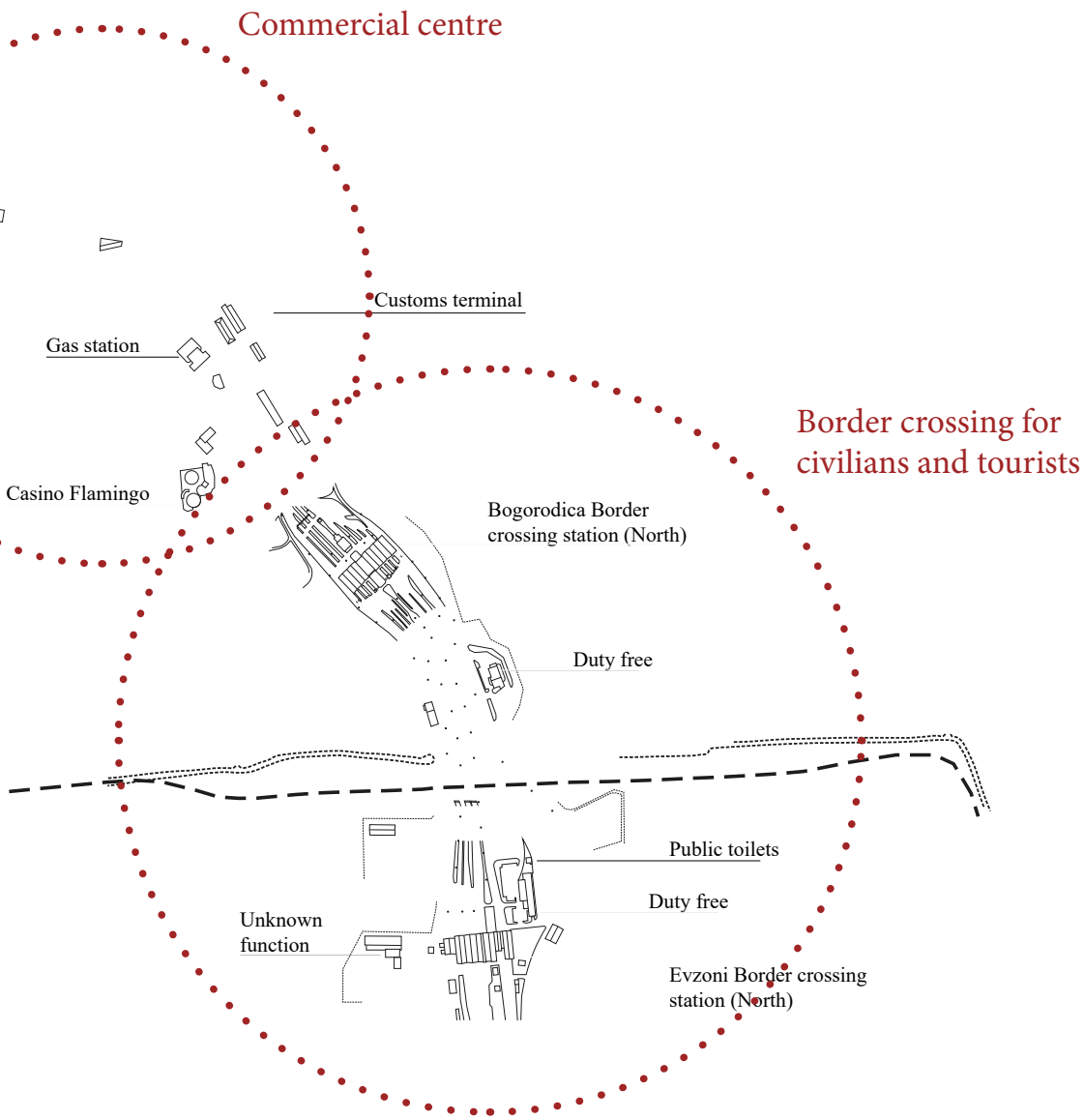


Evzoni (Greece) - Bogorodica (North Macedona) Border Crossing

"The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has been an important transit country along the Balkan migration route, which has made it a critical country to European migration policy and debate. The EU and FRONTEX have pressured the country to halt migration flows. It currently uses one main detention facility, euphemistically labelled the "Reception Centre for Foreigners," as well as ad hoc "transit" camps along its borders."

- Global Detention Project (June 2017)





"An overview of the EMR geography reveals that refugee infrastructure is mostly adjacent to the periphery's border settlements. The precise routes and stops of the passages make visible the consistent separation of EMR spaces from the local communities. When migrants and refugees travel by rail, it is on exclusively assigned trains, often late at night, as in the case of Austria. When it is by bus, the driver follows tertiary streets and unpaved roads to access the remote border passage assigned to migrants and refugees. A characteristic example is that of the Greek-North Macedonian border. While the civilian border crossing is along the highway and accompanied by commercial activities, the border passage for the displaced is in the middle of a field a few kilometres away."

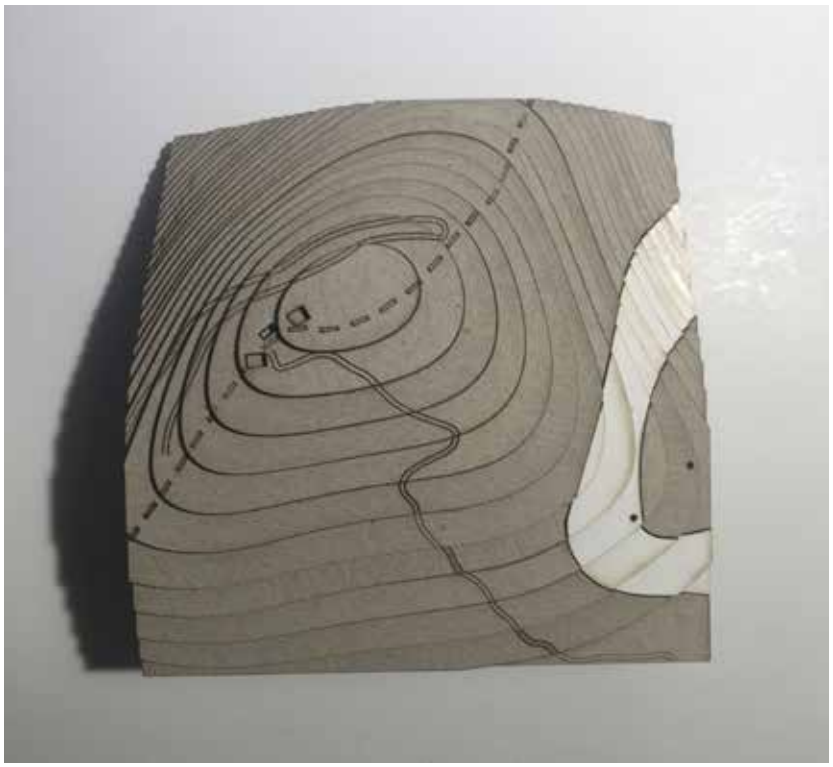
- Melina Philippou: The Spatial Extensions of the Right to Seek Asylum: The Eastern Mediterranean Refugee Route (in: Footprint (2020) Conflict Mediations)

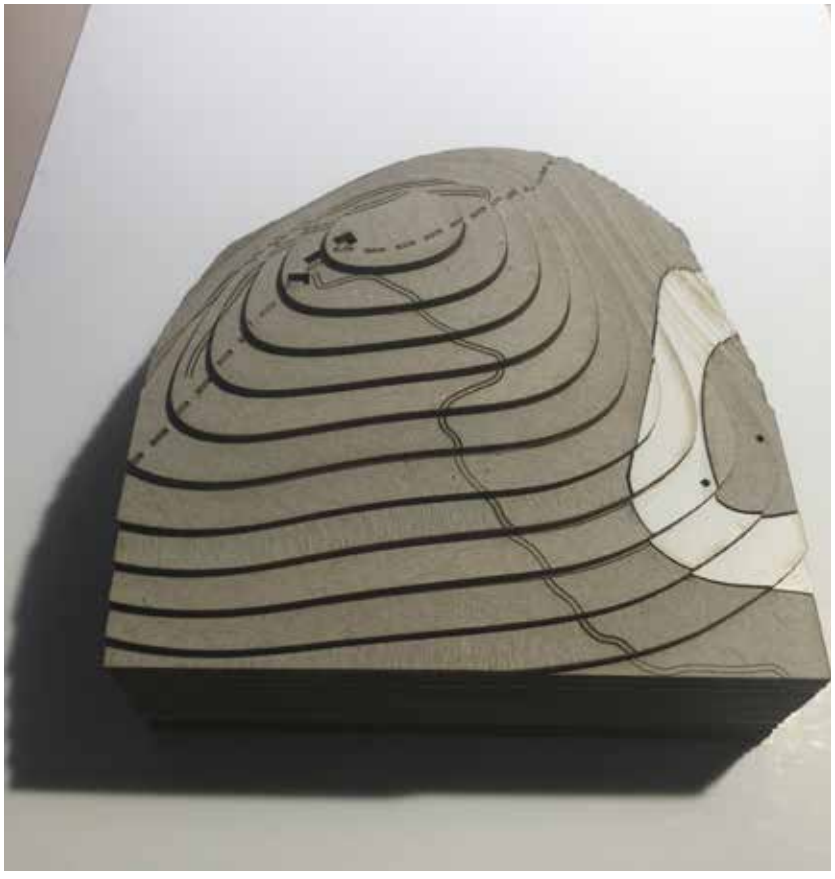
border typology
> mountainous/established recreational area

The section of the border is characterized by high-altitude mountain ranges, making the border mostly inaccessible by road and public transport. There are no formal border crossings in this region, rendering inaccessible by any means other than by foot. The mountain thus operates as an effective natural barrier to informal border crossings. The area is also a recreational area in that it houses a ski center and several hiking trails, and is so characterised by;

> high altitude mountains
> recreational area

The remote location of these areas does not necessarily mean they are not used by migrants to cross the border from Greece. As reports witness a migrant death in this area in 2015, it is safe to assume it may prove to be an active factor in the perilous journeys people take to cross borders unnoticed. It may well be that areas such as this, where mountains are made accessible through the development of ski centers etc. are the most accessible parts of a long stratch of largely inaccessible border.





3 December 2015
1 dead; Electrocution
(Source: Migration Trail)

Voras - Kaimaktsalan ski center
(Source: Google Maps (photo by Anargyros Sprintzios))

3 December 2015

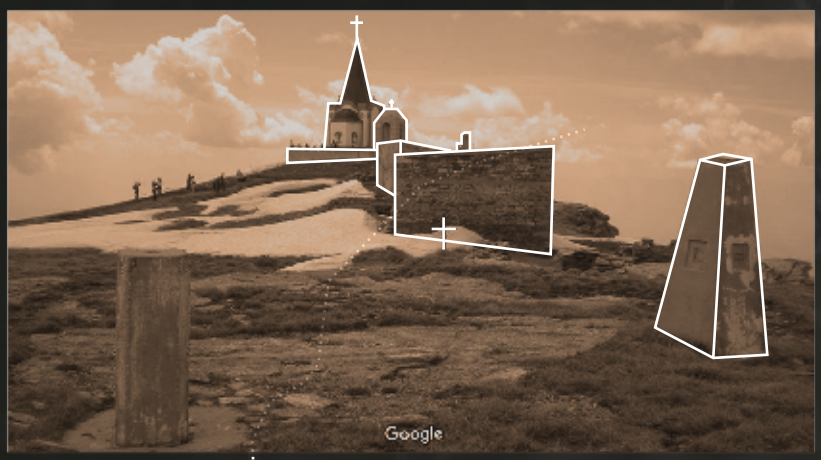
There is no publicly available information about migrant losing their life here in December 2015. characterized by mountain ranges are largely ina than private car, especially in the winter season. geographic properties indicates that recreational centers, provide the very rare existance of dirt ro down the mountain.

One can speculate that the overlapping context o crossings and the occurance of accessible infrast important as passive actors in the discourse.

0

Kaimaktsalan (mountain peak)

A small church and the remains of what may have been a pastor's refuge and a graveyard top this viewpoint. The church seem to be a popular spot for contemplating the wide horizon.



Medzitlija
cial border crossing)

NORTH
MACEDONIA

the events that lead to one
The border segments
ccessibly by means other
An overview of its
facilities such as ski
ads leading both up and

f perilous migrant border
ructure makes these areas

ORTH MACEDONIA

GREECE

100 m

border typology
> river/green/barrier

Observation of satellite images indicates that the border here contains two geographical types;

> river border
> green border

This border segment has also been further spatialized by the construction of a physical border barrier, a border fence. Along the fence (on the Macedonian side) runs a dirt road, probably for maintenence and potential patrols. This fence also puts the border segment into the category of separation barrier;

> separation barrier (fence)

NORTH
MACEDONIA
GREECE

border typology
> double fence/rurban

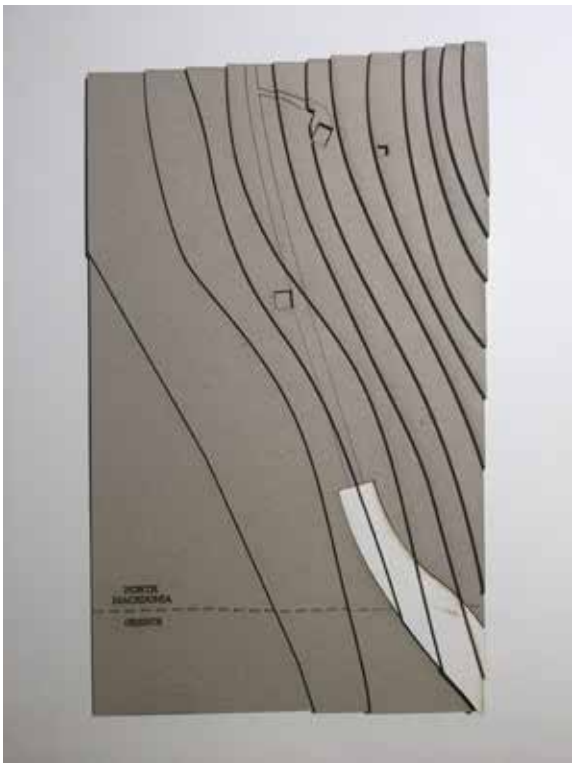
The border region arround the Greek town Idomeni became widely known as being at the epicentre of the European refugee crisis in 2015. Situated right along the western balkan route, the border crossing here gained public intetest when the macedonian government decided to erect a fence on either side of the crossing in November 2015.

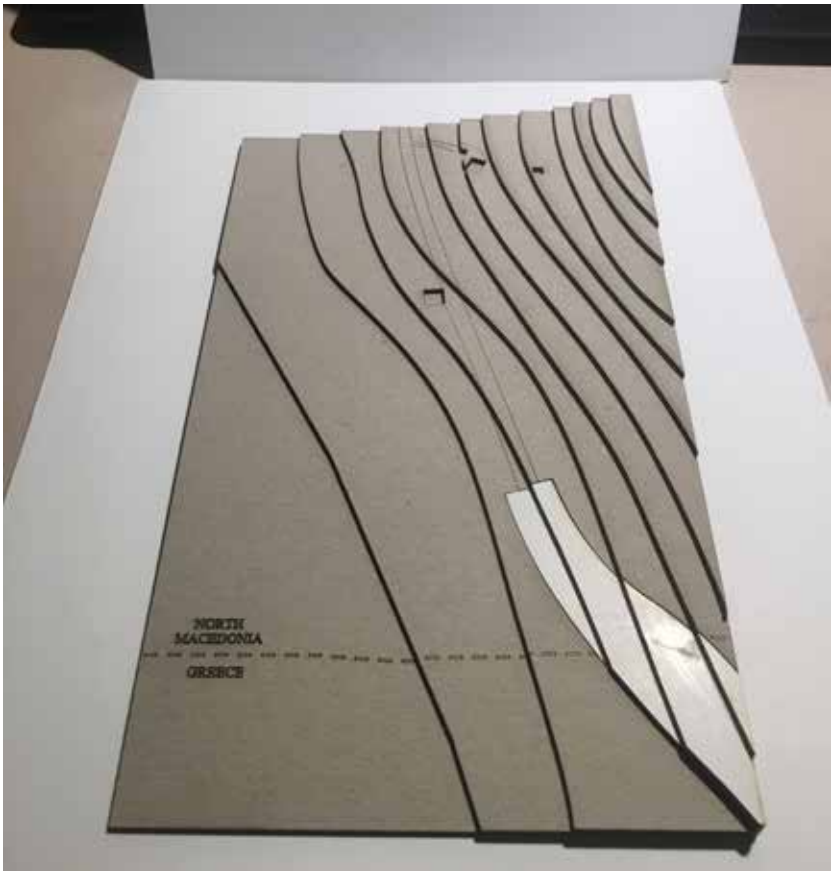
Apart from the formal border crossing along the highway, one main point of entry was that of the railroad border crossing a little way west. Images of migrants entering North Macedonia on foot spread internationally, as did the reports of stranded migrants and il-prompto campsites that came in the aftermath of the closure of the border.

This border segment is situated in a flat and forgiving landscape, with widespread fields, criss-crossing agricultural paths and roads and multiple towns. The border passes on the outskirts of a larger town on the Macedonian side, and through crop fields to the south. The only indication of the border (prior to the fence erection in 2015) would have been a shift in crop cultivation.

The border is here characterized by;

> a separation barrier (double fence and barbed wire)
> patrol route
> urban/rural dynamics




NORTH
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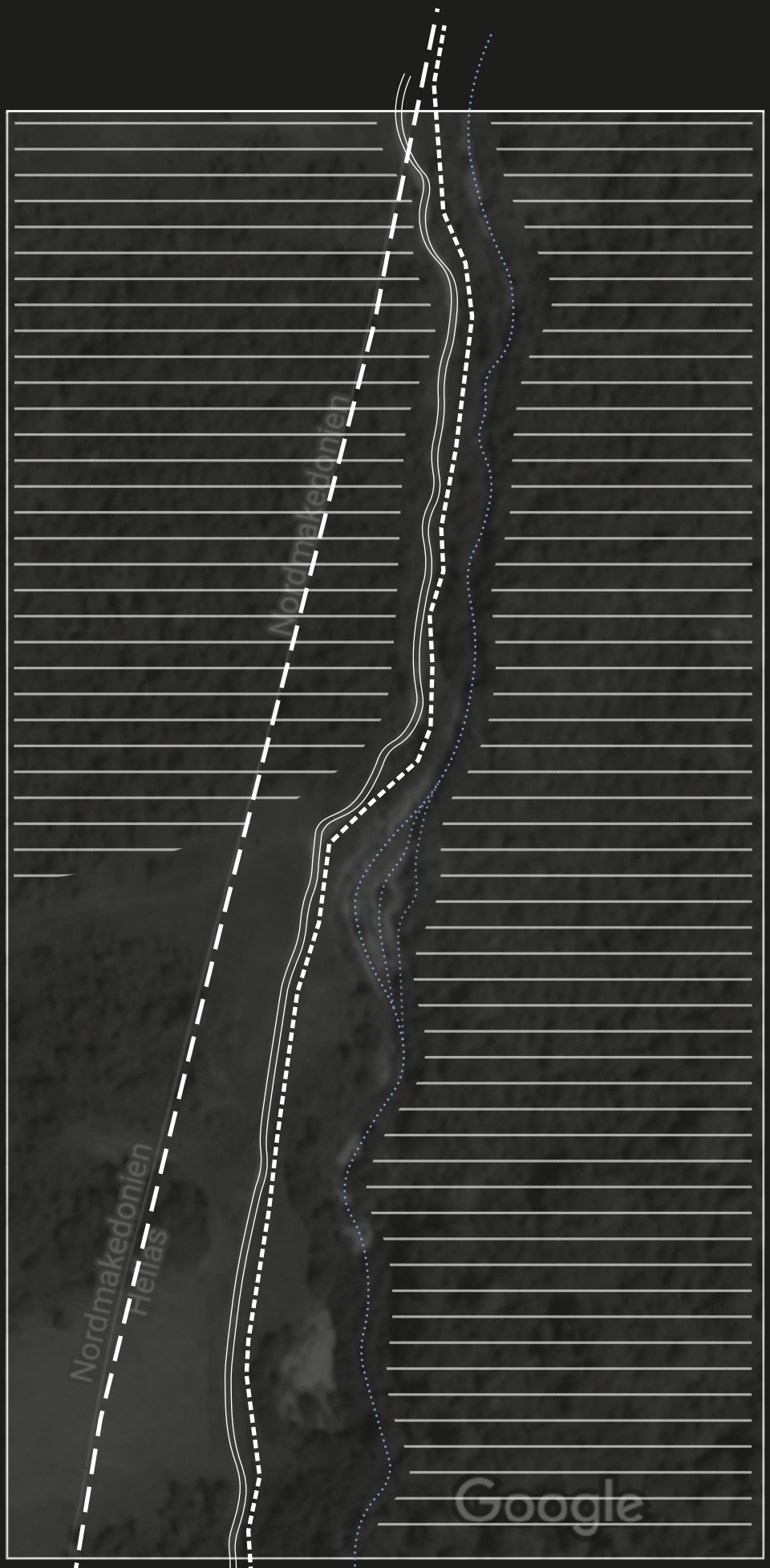
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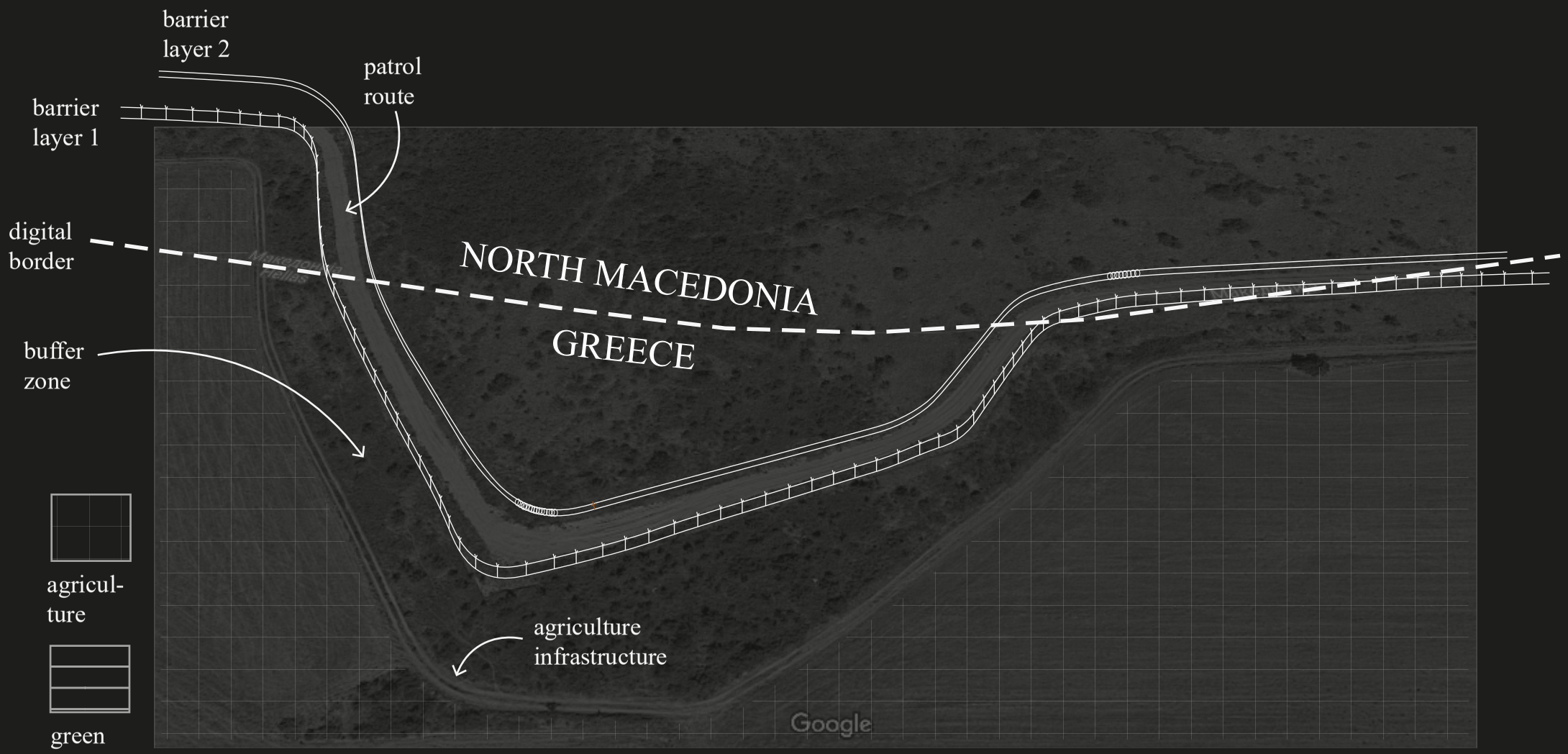
Nordmakedonien
Hellas
Google
digital
border
patrol
route
barrier
river
green
(forest)


barrier
layer 2
patrol
route
barrier
layer 1
digital
border
NORTH MACEDONIA
GREECE
buffer
zone
agricul-
ture
agriculture
infrastructure
green
Google