

# **“This life is like a prison”**

The carceral logic of exile dispossession  
in Calais, France

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**The French asylum system as a threatening space of  
containment**

**The carcerality of ephemeral encampment at the border**

“If the migrants don't accept the propositions for shelter made to them by state services, if they refuse to have their fingerprints taken according to the Dublin regulation, if they commit offenses [...] they do so actively and are held responsible. We owe them this truth: to stay in Calais, building makeshift homes in the undergrowth and marshlands, sometimes squats, is a dead end. The alternative is clear and open: to be hosted in accommodation centres where each person's situation will be examined with great attention”

**Emmanuel Macron**

16.01.18 Calais

“All the police do is encourage us to fight them. It is a strategy. We understand the logic. Treat us as criminals. Encourage us to fight and if they catch us that’s it, we have to go with them to the station. They get angry because we understand their trick. They spray us [with tear gas] while we sleep and they expect feedback. But we give them nothing. At the parking they come running at us, so we go peacefully. If we run away they can run after us, so instead we stand. Our main problem is not nature here. It’s not living outside. It is police. Since I left my country they do not let me rest.”

**Tesfa**

01.02.18 Calais

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