

“We have to live a quiet life.”

The Voice of the *Sans Papiers*

Conversations with Fany Flores & Bea Schwager by Mariana Bonilla Rojas, Cordelia Oppliger, Silvia Savoldi

The first interview was conducted in Spanish on 1 December 2015 with Fany Flores; the second one was held in German on 9 December 2015 with Bea Schwager, prior to the Swiss poll regarding the law enforcement initiative (Durchsetzungsinitiative) on 28 February 2016 (which was rejected).

We arrive on time for our meeting at the *Sans Papiers* office in Zurich (SPAZ) at the Kalkbreite complex. It is 2pm sharp. We are on a quest to interview Bea Schwager, the head of the organization, as well as a woman, a so-called “*sans papiers*”, named as such because of the lack of a resident permit in the country. We are well aware it is an assignment, but for us it has always been much more than that. It is a personal journey of understanding and the opportunity to work on human connections.

A woman with a very strong presence and a soft and caring, yet decisive voice comes towards us. She is around sixty years old, small in stature, short grey hair, open and honest smile, and thick hands that express with delicate movements. She apologises on behalf of Bea, who is sick and therefore unable to attend. At the beginning we are unsure of who she is. Does she work at SPAZ? Nevertheless, she is well informed, so we are tempted to follow her lead. However, we wonder, could she be the woman we came to talk to with so much interest but also with so much fright?

Yes, she is the right one. So we follow her to the coffee shop as she suggests, “because the office is going to get very crowded”. We choose a comfy corner right beside the entrance, and just like that, we are ready to start.

Interview with Fany Flores:

Q: Can you tell us your story? Where are you from? What made you decide to move to another country?

FF: I was born in La Paz, Bolivia. I come from a family of eight siblings, a hard-working family; that is why I have never been afraid of working. I have four children. When I decided to come to Switzerland, in 2002, they were twenty, fifteen, eleven, and nine years old respectively. I was also married. My ex-husband was abusive, and he is still, sadly, an alcoholic. I endured until I could not take it any longer, and then I knew I had to make a choice. I did not want my children to keep on witnessing the mistreatment I was bearing, and I realized I needed to save my own life. Suddenly, I found myself in a situation where I had to provide for my kids. That is why I chose to leave. I was committed to give them a better future no matter what it took.

Q: Why Switzerland? How did you manage to come to Zurich in the first place?

FF: I had no clue where Switzerland was. Sweden yes, Germany also, but about Switzerland I knew nothing, because in Bolivia very little or nothing is heard concerning this country. It was a twist of faith. In La Paz, I used to have a bakery shop. That is how I got to know a woman, one of my customers, who turned out to be Swiss. I heard her speak to her kids in a foreign language and I got curious, so I asked where she was from. I started asking about the possibility of coming to Switzerland. From the very beginning, she told me it was really hard to find a way to stay there; she was unable to provide any guarantee, so I was unaware if I was going to be able to stay

once I got in the country. Nevertheless, I sold everything in my possession, all the equipment from the bakery shop. Of course, I did not get their real worth, money-wise, but I did not mind.

Immediately after I got the tourist visa, I followed the Swiss woman and her family to Zurich, and I left my kids in the care of my mother. I stayed at a hotel and I worked for the family, doing all the house chores from my arrival until my tourist visa expired. We are talking about twenty days in total. Once I became a *Sans Papiers*, unfortunately, I was unable to keep on working with them. They were afraid of the risks of providing a job for someone like me, so all of a sudden I was on my own. Nevertheless I was grateful, they gave me an opportunity.

Q: What happened then?

FF: I want you to understand that anyone in a condition of illegality in this country lives a very difficult life. As a *Sans Papiers*, you have a very hard time trying to figure out where to work, where to eat, where to sleep. I mean, everyone will desert you. So for the first year I did everything I could to survive. I slept under bridges, on staircases, at people's places as a guest. I earn as little as two hundred Swiss francs per month, so I was in a very difficult situation myself, and I was unable to send any money for my kids.

I realized very quickly this was a situation I was not experiencing alone. I met others living under the same conditions because of the lack of "the paper". I got to know them at the *Misión Católica de Lengua Española* through the priest Ángel Sanz. He built up a collective of people in Zurich advocating for those of us without papers. I can tell you that, for me, to suddenly learn that there were others in my position and that there was a will to help came as a great relief.

Furthermore, a tiny light of hope grew on me when I heard through some people from the *Misión* that after living as a *Sans Papiers* for four years in the country, it was possible to present yourself to the Migration office explaining your situation in order to become a legal citizen. Sadly, it turned out to be a scam. I learned about families that were here in Zurich in an irregular situation for fifteen or even twenty years, who have never been legitimized. I even knew from cases of such families and single people who approached the Migration Office, looking forward to applying for the residency with all the legal procedures, and were instead deported right after their voluntary approach. The authorities came at six in the morning, took them away from their

houses, and sent them back to their country of origin—families with kids that were born here, in Zurich.

Q: How long have you been in Switzerland? Were you aware of the challenges to overcome as result of not having "the paper" before making the decision to come here?

FF: I travelled to Zurich in December 2002; I have been here for almost twelve, no thirteen years. Yes, it will be thirteen years this December. Now I have acquired the right to live here legally. Two years ago I fell in love and I got married, that is how I got the document. You know, I would have liked to earn it by my own accord. I would have loved that they had told me: You deserved it because of all the hard work you have done since you arrived, for all the love you have given to the families you have met and have worked with. Fany, here is your permit!

You know, this is what gives me the liberty to speak; I wouldn't have dared to speak so freely about my situation before. You develop a lot of traumas as a *Sans Papiers* because you experience a lot of distressing situations due to the limitations you are submitted to. I can tell you that in my case, I still feel in my body fear and anguish when I encounter myself in situation of control by the authorities. It is now unfounded and I know it; but living like this, with so many limitations, restrictions and difficulties, leaves a mark on you.

Q: How did you feel once you had the document in your hand?

FF: That day I cried a lot, and I could not believe it, I was sitting in front of my door looking at the tag. I could not stop looking, I could not believe when I saw my name beside my doorstep, right there in the entrance. It was always the name of someone else; never before my name had been exposed on the door of the places I lived. But this time it was my name on the tag. I felt much more that moment than the moment when I got the document. Now I can sleep in peace, I have a roof over my head, I can breathe, I can go out, I can laugh, and I can hear music as loud as I want.

Beforehand I could not do it, even less if I was living in a family home. You may expose yourself and put the family at risk. In this condition, you have your corner and you should be unnoticed. But to have your name on your front door means to regain your identity, and it is just like winning the lottery. It was for me something beautiful, really beautiful. So I sat and cried. I did not know if I should scream

or run. Then I saw my husband, he was looking at me and he came towards me. He hugged me and said: "There you are!" He is a man with a great heart.

Q: What do you think about the fact that Switzerland does not give *Sans Papiers* the possibility to legalize their situation?

FF: People call us "Illegals" or "*Sans Papiers*", but that is not the truth. We own a passport, we have a nationality: I am Bolivian. But people get confused about it and are mistaken about our condition. We do not have the resident permit to be able to legally stay in this country, that is why we have no chances. The person who is in a situation of illegality here in Switzerland is in a very vulnerable state, completely unprotected.

Some people think we are taking advantage because we do not pay taxes, but we would pay them gladly if we were given the chance. We are very hard-working people, and we live very respectful and honest lives. It is exactly because of the lack of the document that give us the right to reside, that we do not have the possibility to do it. Without this paper you are not even allowed to open a bank account, you are not able to rent a place in your own name, you are submitted to the mercy of those around you.

Q: You have overcome many difficulties. Was your previous status as a *Sans Papiers* a risk for those who surrounded you?

FF: The risks for the families that help us are real: they can be fined. That's why you have to be very careful, you have to be almost invisible, it's as if you weren't there. You are even told to answer that you are visiting the family if by chance you are asked. But I always worked hard and got new jobs through the word of mouth. Families, which were happy with my work, suggested my name to new families. They had to be outspoken about my illegal position, but they also underlined how loyal and dedicated I was. Then it was never a problem. When you do something good in your life, you get something back, at least.

Q: Do you feel it is possible to be outspoken about the fact of not having "the paper"?

FF: It is impossible to be outspoken, it represents a huge risk to tell anyone about your condition. You have to be very careful all the time, very aware of your surroundings. Needless to say you are not entitled to do much, from work to house, from house

to work. God forbid you want to lie in the grass and enjoy the sun on a summer day by the lake. There is always the dreadful possibility of a control. We have to live a quiet life.

Q: How did you keep in contact with your kids? How did they feel about your decision?

FF: I used to buy calling cards. Ten Francs allowed me to speak with them for sixty minutes. I used to call them ten minutes everyday to ask them if they had eaten. So many times I wished I was there to take care of them, when they were sick or had a birthday party. I missed so many things: my daughter's fifteenth birthday party, my sons' graduations. But they get it now. When I left, the oldest two were already adults, they understood and supported my decision; but for the youngest it was hard. They did not realize that I was doing it for them. Then in 2008 I had the chance to show them what I was enduring. They came to visit me in the winter, and this season is very different in the country where we come from. I decided to make them go through my routine and my "compañeras" one.

My normal workday was from six until nine and it implied two to three jobs per day. This meant approximately ten jobs per week. I spent a lot of time moving from one place to the other because I could not say no to a job offer. So, if it implied a three-hour train ride, I would do it. I became very organized, very Swiss in this respect. So, we woke up at five and went out in the cold with our jackets to reach the first working place of the day. At some point, my daughter couldn't bear the cold any more and fell sick. They experienced how hard it had been for me. I also brought them to the meetings of the "*Coletivo sin papeles*" for them to hear the stories of other people in my condition. They cried after each report. It was hard, but they needed to know that I hadn't fled from them; I was just trying to build a future for them.

You know, when I first came here I had an idea of what I would encounter job-wise, because I worked for a while as a housekeeper in Argentina when I was younger. But the truth is I would have gone wherever. I would have gone to China, I would have gone to Sweden, I would have gone wherever just to be able to provide for my kids.

Q: What has been the biggest challenge you have had to overcome as a *Sans Papiers* since you arrived in this country?

FF: Everything is a challenge. The language, the culture is very different, even the food takes time to

get used to. Nevertheless, Switzerland is very beautiful. The hardest part was when people tried to take advantage of me, in a dishonest way, because they were aware of my condition. At the beginning, when I arrived in Zurich, I was homeless; but after a while I was offered a room for 600 CHF per month. The moment I arrived at the place I saw that beside my bed there were many mattresses on the floor. Suddenly a man came in, I asked him what he was doing in my room, to which he replied: "I live here!" I discovered that the same room was rented to a lot of different people at random prices. One paid 200 CHF, the other 400 CHF, and we all shared the same space.

On the other hand, I am aware there are people who offer you to marry you, for you to get Swiss citizenship in exchange for a fee. I know of a man who married a Swiss woman that asked for 15,000 CHF. They don't even live together, she has her own partner, but you have to stay married for five years to get citizenship. Now it's the second year of marriage and she's already asking for 30,000 CHF. He is working hard, he is taking three jobs at the same time to save money, but the fact that the amount doubled makes the situation much harder. I am afraid for him, I fear that the next year she will ask for 45,000 CHF. How is he going to manage that? The worst thing is he can't report this extortion to the police.

In the end we would do anything to stay here. We are forced to never look back, even if it is hard. I regret not being able to go to my mother's funeral when she died. I just couldn't go back. This is still a source of great anguish and sadness for me.

Q: While you were a *Sans Papiers*, were you ever approached by any legal authority and asked for "the paper"?

FF: I was once deported, it happened in 2007. I was on a train, I was going from one work to the other, when someone came and asked for the ticket. I did have a halbtax (half fare) card, but it was not mine—a friend loaned it to me. So I tried to show it very quickly; I was nervous and therefore clumsy and it was noticed, so the card was taken from my hands for further inspection. It was obvious that the picture in the card was not of me. Then I was asked to sign as in the document, and I could not do it. At that moment I was completely certain of the implications of what just had happened.

Since I did not have any documents I was put into custody and handed in to a policeman and a policewoman. The man was gentle, but the woman was very rough. She kept my head low so I couldn't

see where they were bringing me, I just knew we were in Winterthur, somewhere. It was a terrible and frightening experience. I cannot tell, not even now, where they took me. When we got to the police station, they started questioning me. I kept answering that I didn't remember where I lived and where my documents were; I could not give a straight answer because at that time a compañera and I were living together and I could not hand her over. I was allowed to make a phone call and I rang the priest of the "Mision Catolica", to whom I explained my situation. He brought my passport. From then on my deportation was quick. If I didn't hand in the passport, they wouldn't have known where to send me and it would have been a very exhausting and long process for me. It would have taken months or even never happened.

When I arrived in La Paz, I saw that the situation hadn't changed, not even a bit, since I left in 2002. I realized I couldn't stay there; I had to come back to Switzerland. Fortunately, there were good people willing to help me. I can't tell you exactly how without compromising the lives of those angels, but there is a way to get here through the mountains. I came back through Italy.

Interview with Bea Schwager

We are profoundly shaken by this experience, and perhaps it turned out well that we couldn't interview Bea Schwager on the same day. We have some time to elaborate Fany's story and to ask Bea more accurate questions. The next time we arrive at the contact point of SPAZ just before its president does. The office lies within the very new and self-governed housing complex "Kalkbreite" whose credo is to establish inhabitants of different backgrounds as well as a certain number of non-profit organisations. She comes by bike even though she is still sick. We try to conduct the interview in the common room of the office, but it is where *Sans Papiers* kids can play, so we move to the cafeteria again. Bea is very calm and her voice is dry and professional, but gets lower when asked about her feelings towards the people who come to the organisation for help.

Q: How long have you worked with SPAZ?

BS: Since it came into existence, for 10 years now. *Sans Papiers AZ* was founded mainly by the unions, the Vereinigung unabhängiger Ärztinnen und Ärzte und Medizinstudierender, the democratic lawyers, and the Colectivo Sin papeles, a self-help organisation of women from Latin America. They

were looking for a manager, and I applied for the job. I was really into this *Sans Papiers* topic for a long time. I used to work as a volunteer for the legal advice for asylum seekers, where I taught myself all the questions in the asylum field as well as the Foreign Nationals Act¹. I disliked the fact that there are people in our society who are excluded and discriminated against: I found it important to engage for them. I also worked in the development cooperation and fought for their rights on a political level. Therefore, I felt that the position of manager of the contact point of *Sans Papiers*² was exactly my job—and I got it. It started as a part-time job of 30% to build up the contact point, located at the Volkshaus in Zurich, together with the UNIA. Today we have 150% working time per position³, also one lawyer as a consultant on a voluntary basis and two legal experts liable for compulsory community service.

Q: What has changed in these ten years regarding the situation of *Sans Papiers* in Switzerland? What were the main goals of SPAZ?

BS: Not much. The law has been tightened. For example, in 2008 the Foreign Nationals Act went into effect. Subsequently, the situation for the *Sans Papiers* became even more difficult; for example, the conditions for family reunification has been narrowed, which has led to more *Sans Papiers*. Then in 2014, the initiative against mass immigration was accepted⁴. We fear that consequently the number of the *Sans Papiers* will increase. Migration takes place, but we only have a shift from a legal status to an illegal status, with devastating consequences for the people concerned.

But there were also some small improvements: in 2013 we gained access for young *Sans Papiers* to apprenticeship⁵. Unfortunately, because of strong limitations, we only have three apprenticed *Sans Papiers* in the Canton of Zurich. Still, from a political perspective, it is a step in the right direction. And we managed to obtain a constant discussion with the State Secretariat for Migration⁶ in order to loosen these conditions a bit and also to apply the regulations of hardship cases⁷, actually most often the only “door” for *Sans Papiers*.

Q: What are the main questions or major concerns of the *Sans Papiers* when they come to SPAZ?

BS: “Is there a possibility of getting a legal status?” In most cases, there is none. Apart from that, they ask very specific questions regarding school enrolment, or school in general, about the health

system, how to get insurance and advantages in payment, on acknowledgement of paternity and about marriage⁸—as a *Sans Papiers* you are not allowed to marry because you need a regulated stay through a resident permit. Repression, psychological problems, habitation problems, work-related problems are questions of everyday life for a *Sans Papiers*. And as a *Sans Papiers*, everything is complicated.

Q: How exactly does SPAZ help, e.g. if a *Sans Papiers* needs a room to stay?

BS: We cannot provide *Sans Papiers* with a bedroom—that would be illegal. What we do is to mediate with the landlords if some problems occur. Having a room is one of the biggest problems in Zurich, because they are not allowed to rent a flat and as a flat owner you’re not allowed to let anything to *Sans Papiers*. So they depend on people who just offer their rooms at some risk. It happens sometimes during the winter that women with children and their suitcases come to our office and ask us for a room where they can sleep. They don’t know where else to go. We haven’t found a solution to that yet. There used to be a religious institution offering rooms for single women, but then a denunciation occurred. The emergency overnight accommodation is no option either, as they are so crowded and mostly available for one night only. The holding company of the cooperatives in the Canton of Zurich⁹ initiated a program to sensitise members to offering vacant rooms to *Sans Papiers*, e.g. during holidays. We, the board of SPAZ, created a task force that cares for questions on habitation. But it remains difficult because at the end of the day whoever offers a room to a *Sans Papiers* makes him- or herself chargeable.

Q: How do you deal with the fact that you act in a field where you might be punished for helping?

BS: Somehow I got used to it (she laughs). What does it mean, chargeable? In the end, we risk a derisory accusation in relation to the situation of the *Sans Papiers*. We are mainly talking about a conditional fine. I consider the fear far too big. I would rather vote for the courage to stand up for one’s beliefs. The risks for people in an illegal situation are much bigger than for the Swiss people helping them. Don’t look at the risk, be brave and cross the border. For example, we once had a person who nursed her dying *Sans Papiers* mother, and she was worried about what could happen to her if her mother died. We told her to care about her mother now and not

worry about her status. I think most people are just unable to cope with this situation: that is why they worry about a possible fine. But we should be courageous—and help.

Q: As a legal Swiss person you help illegal people: how does that affect you? How do you deal with all these serious problems and sad stories?

BS: I don't consider them "illegal". They are human beings who need help. But through this work I realise how privileged we are. And the luck we have to be born here. It is a huge injustice; it's exasperating. I feel more angry than desperate, and that produces the energy I need to help these people, but it's not easy to cope with the sad stories. The worst thing is if you can't achieve anything, when there is no solution. We learn a professional conduct to keep a certain distance, but still, you take some stories home with you.

Q: What are the reasons against a collective regulation of *Sans Papiers*?

BS: They fear a pull—that many foreigners would come to Switzerland. But in countries that already have this collective regulation, there is a study¹⁰ that shows that this is not going to happen. We hope to reduce the prejudice. Another argument is that "illegality" shouldn't be rewarded. And also, that the law doesn't allow it.

They—and we are talking about the majority of Switzerland—simply refuse the reality. Their idea is to minimise migration and therefore to close the borders. So the law is getting more and more restricted. But it's totally irrational and people keep on coming. The only thing we gain is a shift from a regular status to an irregular status.

Q: Can you tell us something about strategies for *Sans Papiers* to achieve work?

BS: Most have friends or relatives who act as a door opener to work. This is important, because already asking someone for a job might be a risk! Therefore, only a few are actively looking for a job, e.g. by checking the job ads with at the largest food wholesaler Migros or Coop.

Because *Sans Papiers* have no access to social welfare, they are forced to work and so they are where the work is. In other words: the number of jobs defines the number of the *Sans Papiers*. Without work, they wouldn't be here.

Mostly, they work in private households, on farms, on construction sites (although these are

increasingly controlled), in cleaning companies, or as freelancers who offer any kind of services. But they work in superior sectors as well, e.g. I know of a large company that hires qualified *Sans Papiers* on a temporary basis because they need workers for a short time and very fast. With the lack of time they don't care about permits, they just take the risk. It's interesting that nobody talks about those people, the debate runs only about the low-income level.

Q: Do you offer psychological treatment?

BS: If psychological treatment is needed, we refer them to Meditrina¹¹, a low-threshold medical contact point for *Sans Papiers* run by the Swiss Red Cross¹². Further, a psychiatrist nearby offers a monthly pro bono treatment especially for children. But schoolchildren might be counselled by the School Psychological Service.

Q: How do they get to Switzerland?

BS: Most people come to Switzerland as tourists with or without a visa and stay longer than they are allowed to. They belong to the so-called primary *Sans Papiers* category: they never had a permit to stay. To the "secondary *Sans Papiers* category" belong those people whose permit has expired. To this category belong also asylum seekers who were rejected but don't return to their home country because of war or economic reasons. Although the group of the asylum seekers is relatively small in relation to other *Sans Papiers*, it is the one that is the most discussed.

Q: What are the reasons to live as a *Sans Papiers* in Switzerland?

BS: There are various. They might be children whose parents have a legal permit but without permission of family reunification. They might be children, born in Switzerland, of a *Sans Papiers* mother and a legal father who doesn't acknowledge paternity. Therefore, the child would be Swiss but is without a legal status. Actually, due to the implementation of the initiative against mass immigration, it is in discussions to limit the permits for family reunification even for EU citizens. Subsequently, the numbers of *Sans Papiers* would increase. This puts us back to the situation we had with the status of seasonal workers, where a lot of their children had no permission to stay. I thought we had overcome this situation.

Q: How long do *Sans Papiers* stay in general?

BS: We had a woman who lived in Switzerland for forty years until she got a permit to stay¹³. But that is very long. It can be also only a couple of weeks...or anything in between. Many come here just for a couple of months to earn some money and intend to go back. But mostly this dream does not come true, so they stay for years. They also remain because of the Schengen Area: it is getting more and more difficult to leave Switzerland and come back. If they are caught, they risk a ban on entry to the whole zone. So they stay here. In other words, the Schengen Area was supposed to keep *Sans Papiers* away—among other reasons—but instead it makes them stay.

Q: What about permit controls at the office of SPAZ?

BS: Before we opened the office in 2005 we got in contact with the city police and asked them for a special agreement on not controlling the area for residence permits. We obtained an informal confirmation. So far, this has worked pretty well. Still, a lot of *Sans Papiers* at first send their relatives or friends with a legal status to make sure they will be safe. It's a real concern.

Q: What is SPAZ currently working on?

BS: I am involved in the project “Urban Citizenship”¹⁴. We are in discussion with Richard Wolff, the head of the police department, to achieve that the police will no longer impose controls on people due to their residency status¹⁵. We discussed also the launch of a city card on the model of the already existing one in New York City that identifies all the people living in town as citizens. A national residence permit status would no longer be in effect, and that would offer anybody the access of all services of a city. The City of Zurich is quite open to discussing this question but, of course, implementation is another story. Since the whole discussion about the situation of *Sans Papiers* is blocked on a national and cantonal level, this city card would be a possible pragmatic next step to improve the situation of the *Sans Papiers* living in Zurich.

Q: What would be a great next step, or what is the main claim of SPAZ?

BS: We demand a collective regulation. Switzerland shall—like other European countries¹⁶ already do—not only apply the hardship case article on an individual level (an exit from *Sans Papiers*

status) but to provide for all who work and live here (collective) permission. That is, of course, a rather utopian request—but also the only one that would solve the problems of the *Sans Papiers*. A regular status would also have advantages for the city—e.g. the *Sans Papiers* would pay taxes.

The European countries that implemented it did it not for humanitarian but for economic reasons. Accompanying aspects like the ability to control working conditions, legal means against repression or exploitation, access to social security and the health system are achievements on the humanitarian level.

Captions

1–2 Fany while sharing her story, Zurich, 1 December 2015. Photograph by: Cordelia Oppliger.

3 *Sans Papiers* are among us, yet often invisible. Photograph by: Cordelia Oppliger.

4 Doorbell of the *Sans Papier* Anlaufstelle Zürich. Photograph by: Cordelia Oppliger.

5 Entrance to the office of the *Sans Papier* Anlaufstelle Zürich. Photograph by: Cordelia Oppliger.

Notes

1 Federal Act on Foreign Nationals. <https://www.admin.ch/opc/en/classified-compilation/20020232/index.html/>. Accessed 05.03.2016.

2 *Sans-Papiers* Anlaufstelle Zürich SPAZ. <http://www.sans-papiers.ch/index.php?id=184/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

3 In Switzerland, more than one person can work at the same position.

4 Eidgenössische Volksinitiative ‘Gegen Masseneinwanderung’. Switzerland’s direct democracy allows the people to launch an initiative. 100,000 signatures by Swiss citizens are needed. See <https://www.admin.ch/ch/d/pore/vi/vis413.html/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

5 Under certain conditions, *Sans Papiers* can do an apprenticeship. In the Canton of Zurich there are four apprenticeships.

6 State Secretariat for Migration SEM. <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/en/home.html/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

7 With serious personal hardship cases, an exception from automatic deportation can be made (Härtefallklausel). See <https://www.sem.admin.ch/sem/de/home/publiservice/statistik/auslaenderstatistik/haertefaele.html/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

8 "Marriage between *Sans Papiers* is not possible. A *Sans Papiers* can only marry a Swiss person, or a person with C permit and when they are not living on social assistance. Or with a B permit, but then the person must provide an income of at least 5,000 CHF and an adequate flat. De facto, we have a prohibition of marriage." Bea Schwager, Interview of 09.12.2015.

9 Plattform Genossenschaften. <http://plattform-genossenschaften.ch/ueber-uns/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

10 Albert Kraler, "Regularisation: A misguided option or part and parcel of a comprehensive policy response to irregular migration?" IMISCOE Working Paper Nr. 24 (2009). Accessed 05.03.2016. <http://www.imiscoe.org/publications/workingpapers/documents/WP24-regularisation.pdf>

11 See <https://www.srk-zuerich.ch/srk/Was-wir-tun/Migration-Asyl/Meditrina/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

12 See <http://www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/where-we-work/europe/swiss-red-cross/> Accessed 05.03.2016.

13 This is because of the hardship case article.

14 See Shedhalle feat. Stadtforum. WIR ALLE SIND ZÜRICH. ALLE DIE HIER SIND UND NOCH KOMMEN WERDEN. http://www.shedhalle.ch/2016/de/363/Wir_alle_sind_Zürich/ Accessed 4.3.2016.

15 Matthias Rodatz, Lecture on urban citizenship, 6 February 2016, Shedhalle, Zurich during "Wir alle sind Zürich".

16 Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, France.

The association *Sans Papiers Anlaufstelle Zürich* (Zurich/CH) was initiated in April 2005 by unions, migrant organisations, and individual persons. The executive committee consists of representatives of unions and relief organisations, the *Colectivo sin Papeles*, the Democratic Lawyers, the Association of Independent Doctors, and private persons. The goal of SPAZ is that all human beings, independently of their residence permit status, should be allowed to get their elementary basic rights, such as education, health, legal hearing, protection from exploitation, and social security, as well as the right of leading a human life. In order to achieve this goal, SPAZ runs a drop-in centre in Zurich that offers consulting to any interested person, either *Sans Papiers* or not, free of charge.

Fany Flores (La Paz/BO) lives and works in Zurich.

Bea Schwager (b. 1961), is an interpreter and bookseller and previously volunteered at a legal advice service for asylum seekers. Since August 2005, she has been head of the association *Sans Papier Anlaufstelle Zürich* (SPAZ). Her tasks are: coordination, campaigning, public relations, lobbying, and fundraising. She speaks German, English, Italian, French, and Spanish. She also operated as co-president of an association for rights of children in illegal situations.

Mariana Bonilla Rojas (b. 1984, Bogotá/CO) has a background in architecture and further education in arts. As a student of the Postgraduate Programme in Curating ZHdK, she immersed herself in the world of curating films, developing a growing interest in the Latin American scene, with a particular focus in Colombia. She is currently living in Zurich and developing curatorial projects, both in Colombia and Switzerland.

Cordelia Oppliger (b. 1968) has an apprenticeship as commercial employee and further education in public relations, fundraising, and creative writing. As a student of the Postgraduate Programme in Curating ZHdK, she is researching aspects of perception and is interested in combining communication and curating. She works as head of marketing, public relations, and fundraising at a museum and lives in Zurich.

Silvia Savoldi (b. 1987, Brescia/IT) studied architecture in Ferrara and Porto. During her academic years, she developed an interest in contemporary art and photography that led her to take part in the Postgraduate Programme in Curating ZHdK. Her curatorial research focuses mainly on digitality, sexuality, and semiotics. Currently based in Zurich, she is curating an exhibition about Davide Trabucco's work at the gallery da Mihi in Bern.

