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On the Cover. Photo by Marco Abram: This photo captures the precise point where the Pyrenees mountain range meets the Mediterranean Sea, marking the border between Spain and France. On one side lies the small village of Portbou, where Walter Benjamin took his own life in 1940 while attempting to flee Nazi persecution. On the other side is Cerbère, the first French village encountered by many supporters of the Spanish Republic who fled Franco's advancing forces in 1939. Although memorialization practices have shaped the landscape on both sides of the border and in the proximity of the former official crossing point, the guard post remains isolated and abandoned. Still labelled on some maps as "the German casemate" - a reminder of World War II - it has lost its function in Schengen Europe. A large graffiti, nevertheless, highlights the contested issues of this territory. It reads: "L'Albera no és frontera" -"The Albera is not a border." The message refers to the Serra de l'Albera, the Catalan name for this section of the Pyrenees, and most probably intends to emphasize the cross-border common Catalan identity of the territories on both sides of the mountain range. It challenges the traditional notion of mountains as "natural borders" separating different national communities and the "watershed" doctrine that influenced the drawing of state borders in Europe. The graffiti seems to bear the signature of Arran (in red), a youth organization of the Catalan Pro-Independence Left. The interpretation as a pro-migrant and open-borders statement appears significantly less convincing - even considering the possibility that the red graffiti was added later - but it may still resonate with the casual observer, given also the significant history of migration across this border in the twentieth century.

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