THE THING

When we look at the concept of citizenship in Ancient Greece, we come across a group of people who do not know either the sedentary life or agriculture; being basically nomadic, they stand against everything that is settled. As the main reason behind the collapse of each civilization until 6 BCE lies the disastrous effect of nomadic invasions. At the origin of what we know as cities today shines the Greek “polis” which grants ultimately selective rights of citizenship to its inhabitants. For example, according to Aristotle, slaves in Ancient Greek cities should be considered as “things” because they don’t have souls (psukhē). Until Plato, psukhē is imagined as something which can return, revisiting the living at any time even after the death of the body. The clarity and precision of thought starts only when the return of the psukhē is prohibited by Plato. Now, if we consider not only the Syrian immigrants but also the ones who, in broader terms, appropriated the nomadic way of life as their raison d’être, we can start to see that the real problem arises not fundamentally from racism but also from the fear of risking our safe lives based on the prohibition of the return of the uncanny. One thing to be realized here is how ready we are to forget, to lose our concept of citizenship at the cost of getting rid of our sedentary, settled lives? What if all things — i.e., all of us are things under Neanderthal Capitalism — decide to return? What happens if we all return?