Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders

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Abstract
The research hypothesis that we call *border as method* offers a fertile ground upon which to test the potentiality and the limits of the topological approach. In this article we present our hypothesis and address three questions relevant for topology. First, we ask how the topological approach can be applied within the heterogeneous space of globalization, which we argue does not obey the dialectic of inclusion and exclusion. Second, we address the claim of neutrality that is often linked to the topological approach. Our point is that in mapping a space of flows and porous borders, the topological approach must be grasped in its ambivalence; it can become a tool for control as well as a tool for the expansion of freedom and equality. Finally, we argue that it is useful, perhaps even necessary, to locate the topological approach on the border, investigating concrete practices of border crossing that challenge the very possibility of a neutral mapping.

Keywords
borderzones, cultural theory, migration

The research hypothesis that we call *border as method* (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2008) offers a fertile ground upon which to test the potentiality and limits of the topological approach. In recent years this approach has provided an extremely rich series of theoretical and empirical elaborations that blur the boundaries between humanities, natural sciences

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and social sciences. Crossing mathematical insights with philosophical investigations, proponents of the topological approach have questioned the binary between transformation and invariance. This has allowed an analysis of emerging operations of control that account for new relations of connectivity across discrete spaces and organizations of data. From architecture (Massumi, 1998) to research on networks and virtual space (Terranova, 2004) to social and cultural theory (Lash and Lury, 2007), the topological approach has occasioned a rethinking of questions about the constitution of disciplines, the uses of knowledge and the changing status of research objects. The topic of borders and boundaries is crucial in these investigations, even if this question is not explicitly theorized by proponents of the topological approach. No matter how much topology draws our attention to unexpected forms of connection and continuity, it must also account for processes of partition, filtering and hierarchization. The image of topological space has been particularly useful for grasping some of the characteristics of the so-called space of flows associated with globalization as well as with neoliberal social *milieus* reshaped by market rationality (Collier, 2009; Terranova, 2009). Our analysis points also to the usefulness of topology for understanding the mobility and elusiveness of spatial formations within geographies of globalization that are marked as much by differentiation as by connection. We try to grasp this predicament by developing the concept of the heterogeneity of global space. This means at once thinking through the dynamics of flows and focusing on violent processes of articulation, division and interruption that cross contemporary elaborations of space and subjectivity. We are particularly interested in the political implications of this predicament.

Our approach to borders seeks to trace and track the relevance of their current proliferation from the point of view of the articulation of global processes. This means we do not see borders as devices that obstruct or block global flows. Rather we see them as parameters that enable the channelling of flows and provide coordinates within which flows can be joined or segmented, connected or disconnected. It is important to consider the world-making function of borders, as a number of important scholars from Carl Schmitt (2003) to Étienne Balibar (2002) have emphasized. Once we see borders as making a world rather than dividing an already-made world, their topological functioning becomes clear. Traditional images and theories of borders are predicated upon a methodological nationalism that at one point held a monopoly on different and even conflicting branches of social, political and even cultural thought. The existence of a bounded space was taken for granted and the border was the line that established the limits of extension while also defining the perimeter within which intensive interactions could be observed and compared to those occurring in other supposedly bounded spaces. When we speak of 'border as method' we take stock of the material and epistemological endgame of such methodological nationalism and

of the related image of borders. This has strong resonance with the emphasis placed by proponents of the topological approach on moving beyond the surface of the Euclidean plane and the Cartesian grid to introduce a new spatial thinking that identifies fields of relation rather than discontinuous points and lines. The bordering processes that we investigate criss-cross the apparently bounded and discrete spaces that borders were once considered to establish through processes of exclusion and division. This opens up the possibility of new 'fields of relation', such as the virtual proximity of borders that are separated across geographical space or different kinds of folding and filtering that challenge the rigidity of the distinction between inclusion and exclusion. The calculus of these relations is played out against a political edge. The analysis we pursue thus pushes the topological approach to come to grips with some of the most challenging problems in contemporary political debates, from the ongoing crisis of citizenship to the rethinking of political representation, from the changing valences of territory to the invention of new forms of political action.

In this article we ask how border thinking and the material confrontation and proliferation of borders in today's world invites a rethinking and reconfiguration of topological figures, properties and arrangements. When topological relations are held to the political edge of the border the strange forms of recursion, correlation and invariance that they generate must be interrogated in ways that reach beyond the importation of a mathematical heuristic into social thought. At the border there is a certain intensification of political and even existential stakes that crystallize relations of domination and exploitation, subjection and subjectivation, power and resistance. Looking through this crystal implies a different optic of analysis, one which shows how these complex relations are invested with clashes and dissonances, manipulations and deceptions that leap off the surface of the topological manifold no matter how it is submitted to deformation or curvature. From this point of view we argue that it is useful, perhaps even necessary, to locate the topological approach *on the border*, investigating concrete practices of *border crossing* that embody the elements of constituent excess present in every scene of border making or border contestation. This is why we focus on the subjective dimensions of migration and the ways in which bodies in motion challenge border regimes across diverse geographical scales. It is also why we emphasize the making and unmaking of social worlds.

The Challenges of Contemporary Migration

Whether or not it is possible to define our age as 'the age of migration' (Castles and Miller, 2003), it is a matter of fact that migration posits fundamental challenges that are signal of our times. This is particularly the case in a situation such as the one we are living in, which has been

deeply shaped since 2007/8 by the global economic crisis. The inquiry into the multifarious ways in which migration has figured in the genealogy of this crisis, into how the crisis has affected the condition of migrants worldwide, and into migrants' reactions to this economic turmoil seems to us one of the most urgent tasks we are confronted with as critical migration and border scholars. Movements and struggles of migration have in any case been central to the production of new transnational social spaces (Rouse, 1991), which have greatly contributed to the cultural, economic and political shape of globalization. The specific angle from which we investigate these emerging transnational social spaces is that provided by the relations between migration, citizenship and labour markets.

Many scholars and activists have analysed, in the last decade, movements across borders and border struggles that are profoundly changing both labour markets and the shape and composition of citizenship across diverse global spaces. 'Precarious employment', 'differential inclusion' and the 'proliferation of borders' are some of the concepts that have been crucial to both our individual and collective research and political engagement with migration. These are also notions that have echoes within topological discussions that move beyond familiar figures of spatial and social stability. Focusing on movements across borders and border struggles opens up an original and productive perspective on the debates on the constitution of labour markets, the social composition of workforces as well as on the production and reproduction of the very fabric of citizenship. One important strain of these debates has focused on 'precarity', which has been a particularly virulent political concern in continental Europe in the last decade but has also emerged as an important topic of debate in other locations (Neilson and Rossiter, 2008; Ross, 2009; Vosko, 2006). Movements and struggles of migration highlight the tensions, subjective claims and conflictual dynamics that criss-cross the field of precarity, contrasting the tendency to provide anodyne and neutral sociological descriptions of the 'neoliberal' flexibilization of labour markets and the disarticulation of citizenship.

In a general sense, precarity refers to the explosion of the dyad citizen-worker that after the Second World War assumed dominance – whether in the Stakhanov moment of the USSR, the heyday of US industrial towns such as Flint, Michigan, or the disciplined working subject of the Nehru plans in India. Soon after the Second World War, T.H. Marshall (1950) provided a kind of formal conceptualization of this dyadic figure of the citizen-worker, conceiving the social rights of citizenship to be intimately connected to the dynamics of the national labour market. It is not that now this connection has been fully ruptured. There is still, undeniably, a nexus of citizenship and labour, whether manifest in paths to citizenship that pass coercively through the labour contract, regular forms of collective bargaining and arbitration that are

still practised through nationally organized trade union systems, or the newer forms of Anglo-Saxon 'mutual obligation' that mandate third-way schemes such as 'work for the dole'.

What has changed is that this citizenship–labour nexus can no longer be fully captured by the dyadic subject citizen-worker and the gendered division of labour that sustained its reproduction. Both citizen and worker have been invested by diffuse processes of division and multiplication; and migration has played crucial roles within these processes. Consequently, the subjective positions of both citizens and workers need to be rethought outside the dyadic structure of citizen-worker that can no longer be taken for granted and which underlies the construct of the national labour market. What we would like to emphasize here is that the specific connection between labour and citizenship that culminated in social citizenship has played a very important role in shaping the whole imaginary of western sociology, including its 'methodological nationalism' and basic sociological concepts that were formulated in ways that take for granted the existence of bounded social and political spaces. We understand topology as an attempt to come to terms with the problematic undoing of these bounded spaces. This is what makes the topological approach particularly challenging and productive from the point of view of our research perspective of *border as method*.

Immanent Outsiders at the Border

The processes of the proliferation of borders and the multiplication of labour that we analyse in our work are crucial to the disarticulation of the dyad citizen-worker and to the production of new, flexible and mobile assemblages of labour markets and citizenship. Contrary to the dominant tendency in border studies, even more pronounced after September 11, to stress dynamics of *exclusion*, we focus on the changing shape of *inclusion* that can be analysed assuming the perspective of the border. It is from this point of view that we share one of the basic points of the topological approach to social and cultural processes. As Celia Lury writes, the topological thinking of multiplicity maintains that 'the parts that comprise the whole (in relations of multiplicity) are always more than the elements in which it consists'. This leads her to pick up an evocative phrase from Alain Badiou, and to explain that in the topological space 'there is an excess of inclusion over belonging' (Lury, 2009: 80). This fits nicely both with our emphasis on the constituent excess evident at the border and with our attempt to move beyond the binary inclusion/exclusion, pointing to the proliferation of subject positions that are neither fully included nor fully excluded from the space of citizenship and from labour markets, of subjectivities that are neither fully insiders nor fully outsiders. So-called 'irregular migrants' are a perfect illustration of the condition described by Badiou, since while they are

included in the space of labour markets and citizenship, and indeed contribute to the production and reproduction of those very spaces, they do not share the 'belonging' (the legal status) to which a whole set of rights correspond.

Observing these conditions, Anne McNevin suggests the term 'immanent outsiders' to describe 'irregular' migrants (2006: 141). Such a definition clearly points to a process that blurs the very existence of a clear-cut border between inside and outside. Taking account of this process entails a critical questioning of the basic condition around which the history of the modern state, the global political geography it organized, as well as sociological imaginary it generated revolved. Far from considering such figures as the 'irregular' migrant as 'marginal', we approach them as central to the fundamental transformations that have reshaped citizenship and labour, culture and space over the last two decades. We agree with Étienne Balibar when he draws his own conclusion from an analysis of these transformations and contends that one of their most important consequences is that processes of bordering proliferate across political space. As he says:

> Whereas traditionally and in conformity with both their juridical definition and 'cartographical' representation as incorporated in national memory, they should be *at the edge of the territory*, marking the point where it ends, it seems that borders and the institutional practices corresponding to them have been transported *into the middle of political space*. (Balibar, 2004: 109)

In this important and often discussed quote we can say that Balibar pursues a kind of topological approach to contemporary political space. Borders, in his perspective, could be said to work as topological functions, which at once connect and divide, cross and cut political space, include and exclude.

The approach we call *border as method* has been developed taking these transformations and analyses such as the one proposed by Balibar as points of departure. More generally our engagement with borders acknowledges and reflects the growing relevance borders have acquired in research, political and artistic practices in recent years. One of the reasons for this heightened interest can definitely be found in the fact that borders nowadays are what Achille Mbembe (2003) would call 'necropolitical' sites *par excellence*. Wendy Brown writes in her recent book on new walls that in the past 13 years there have been at least 5000 deaths along the US–Mexico border (Brown, 2010: 91). According to independent assessment, since the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 at least 17,738 people have died along the so-called 'external frontiers' of the European Union.[1] Needless to say these figures would be higher once unreported deaths on the way to borders (for instance in the Sahara)

were added. While we share with many scholars, activists and artists rage and indignation about this permanent war against migrants staged at borders, we take our distance from the widespread reading of contemporary borders in terms of a unilateral emphasis on 'exclusion', conveyed for instance by the use of metaphors such as 'Fortress Europe' and by the reference to the iconic image of the wall. Such an image of the border seems to us precisely to discount the insights that can be gained from the topological approach. The image of the wall, for instance, tends to pose a form of invariance that resists the operation of transformations, deformations and modulations.

We are much more interested in an analysis of the multifarious struggles and tensions between practices of border crossing and practices of border reinforcing (Vila, 2000) that constitute the border as a social institution. Our point is that the violence that plays itself out at the border must be understood and criticized from the point of view of these struggles and these tensions. The topological approach is close to our own research practice since it facilitates a mapping of the shifting configurations of space and time that result from such conflictual encounters. However, the emphasis we put on tensions and struggles challenges any possible neutrality of analysis. It further brings us to stress not only the elements of connectedness that are so crucial to topology, but also the multiple factors of disconnection associated with the very existence of borders. More generally, we are convinced that connectedness and disconnection have to be taken and reflected upon together if we are to gain an accurate picture of the emerging heterogeneity of global space.

Border as Method

A further important aspect of our project needs to be highlighted. While we emphasize the strategic importance of borders in the contemporary world, we do not intend to join the chorus that in recent years and from many different points of view has celebrated the 'return' of the nation-state on the world stage, dismissing the debates on globalization as mere ideological distortion. To the contrary, one of our central theses is that borders, far from serving simply to block or obstruct global flows, have become essential devices for their articulation. Just as Wendy Brown (2010) reads the proliferation of walls across diverse geographical scales as a sign of the 'waning of sovereignty', so we take the proliferation of borders as a distinctive feature of contemporary globalization. From this point of view the border becomes for us a strategic angle on *actually existing global processes*. We contend that, rather than organizing a stable map of the world, the processes of proliferation and transformation of borders aim to manage the 'creative destruction' and constant recombination of spaces and times that lie at the heart of contemporary capitalist globalization.

The multiplication of borders in the global world implies deep transformations in their very nature. From the path-breaking work of Eyal Weizman (2007) on the wall between Israel and the Palestinian occupied territories (that is, precisely on the most intimidating wall that is often taken as example of the rigidity of borders), we draw the idea of a fundamental flexibility of contemporary borders and of the territories they are meant to circumscribe. Allowing Weizman's analysis to resonate in other 'borderscapes' (Perera, 2009), without losing the sense of the peculiarity of each instance, we trace processes of the doing and undoing of borders and boundaries, for instance analysing the new border regime that is emerging in Europe (Hess and Kasparak, 2010). We also try to map from the point of view of subjects in motion the elusive geography resulting from these processes. The deep instability of the traditional 'geopolitical' border requires, moreover, a careful analysis of the new configurations that emerge from its intertwining with other lines of distinction, with internal social and cultural boundaries.

Our aim is to bring into view a series of problems, processes and concepts that allow us to elaborate a new theoretical paradigm that differs from that constructed about the image of the wall or the theme of security. But we also depart from the classical paradigm of border studies (Kolossov, 2005), which tends to proceed by the comparison of discrete case studies, assuming clear and distinct differences between the various situations and contexts under investigation. Our primary interest is not in comparing different instances or techniques of bordering but rather in interlacing, juxtaposing and superimposing the practices, techniques and sites in question, highlighting their mutual implications and consonances as well as their differences and dissonances, their commonalities and their singularities. The result is a different means of knowledge production, one which resonates again with topological thought, highlighting the fact that geographical distance does not necessarily separate different practices and experiences of bordering in the conceptual or political sense. Part of our approach involves discerning these kinds of propinquity between various material instantiations of borders, keeping in mind that these instantiations are themselves made possible by the cognitive operation of border devices.

It is important to note here that borders are also essential to cognitive processes, since they allow both the establishment of taxonomies and conceptual hierarchies that structure the movement of thought. In so far as it serves at once to make divisions and establish connections, the border is an epistemological device, which is at work whenever a distinction between subject and object is established. As again Balibar notes, this is the reason why it is so difficult to provide a *definition* of the border, since 'the very representation of the border is the precondition for any definition' (2002: 76). Furthermore, borders establish the scientific division of labour associated with the sectioning of knowledge into different disciplinary zones. Cognitive borders, in this sense, often intertwine with

geographical borders – just think for example of comparative literature or of so-called area studies (Chow, 2006). In any case, it should be clear that cognitive borders have great philosophical relevance, since they describe a general, perhaps one could even say a universal, dimension of human thought.

A thinker who has for many years studied the violence and border conflicts in regions such as the Balkans and the Indian subcontinent, Rada Iveković (2010), has recently proposed rethinking the 'politics of philosophy' in relation to what she calls *la partage de la raison*. The French term *partage*, which combines the sense of both division and connection, has no straightforward English translation. Nominating at once the act of division and the act of connection, the two actions constitutive of the border, *la partage de la raison*, in Iveković's formulation, highlights the crucial role of translation as a social, cultural and political practice that enables the elaboration of a new concept of the common. Here, the reference to Iveković's work allows us to clarify the somewhat paradoxical sense in which we write of *border as method*. On the one hand, we refer to a process of producing knowledge that holds open the tension between empirical research and the invention of concepts that orient it. On the other hand, to approach the border as a method means to suspend, to recall a phenomenological category, the set of disciplinary practices that present the objects of knowledge as already given, and to investigate rather the processes by which these objects are constituted.

Just as we want to question the vision of the border as a neutral line, then, so we also question the notion that method is a set of pre-given, neutral techniques that can be applied to diverse objects without fundamentally altering the ways in which they are constructed and understood. At stake in border as method, however, is something more than what John Law (2004) calls the performativity of method. That is to say, while we accept that methods tend to produce, often in contradictory and unexpected ways, the worlds they claim to describe, the question of border as method is for us something more than methodological. It is above all a question of politics, about the kinds of social worlds and subjectivities produced at the border and the way our work plays into and intervenes in these practices. To put this differently we could say that method for us is as much about acting on the world as it is about knowing it. More accurately it is about the relation of action to knowledge in a situation where many different knowledge regimes and practices come into conflict. Border as method involves negotiating the boundaries between the different kinds of knowledges that come to bear on the border and, in so doing, aims to throw light on the subjectivities that come into being through such regime conflicts. For all of these reasons, the border for us is not so much a research object as an epistemological viewpoint that allows an acute critical analysis not only of how relations of domination and exploitation are being redefined at the

present time but also of the struggles that take shape around these changing relations.

Differential Inclusion

We can now return to our discussion of what Lury, following Badiou, calls 'an excess of inclusion over belonging'. It is again from the point of view of migration that we would like to develop this important insight. 'Porous boundaries and multiple identities', Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson wrote at the turn of the century, 'undermine ideas of cultural belonging as a necessary accompaniment to political membership. There are increasing numbers of *citizens who do not belong*' (2000: viii). It is important that Castles and Davidson refer here not merely to 'irregular migrants' but to citizens who do not 'belong'. We see the analysis of the production of such subjectivities that are included but do not 'belong' as strategic. On the one hand, it provides a new angle on mechanisms of exclusion. On the other hand, it facilitates a critical approach to programmes of social inclusion, which are almost always seen as unambiguously benevolent but which also function as devices of hierarchization and control. What we need is a new theoretical framework capable of coming to terms with the shifting modalities of this elusiveness and the myriad systems of *differential inclusion* that we see taking shape in various borderscapes across the globe. Contrary for instance to Chantal Mouffe (2005) and Ernesto Laclau (2005), who argue that it is only through exclusion that a society can construct itself as a totality, the analysis of the multifarious mechanisms that filter and stratify subjects in motion leads us to rethink political processes and conflicts *on the border* between inclusion and exclusion. It is within this framework that we wish to rethink the topological approach.

The concept of differential inclusion has a complex and multiform genealogy that crosses the borders of migration studies and feminist thought. Although it has assumed many names, this concept has long provided a means for describing and analysing how inclusion in a sphere or realm can be subject to varying degrees of subordination, rule, discrimination and segmentation. More recently, the concept of differential inclusion has been deployed in an attempt to move beyond what we consider to be the blind spots in the widespread notion of Fortress Europe, which fails to account for the prodigious and increasing presence of migrants in the European space (Mezzadra, 2011). In this context, the concept was introduced to account for the actual operation of the migration regime in the making in Europe. Quite interestingly, an important point of reference for the deployment of the concept of differential inclusion was ethnographic analyses of the ways in which the US–Mexican border is managed (De Genova, 2002). In both the European and US instances, there is a legal production of illegality and a corresponding

process of migrant inclusion through illegalization that creates the conditions under which a racial divide is inscribed within the composition of labour and citizenship. From this perspective, the devices and practices of border reinforcing shape the conditions under which border crossing is possible and actually practised and experienced. From a topological point of view one could say that the concept of differential inclusion points to a substitution of the binary distinction between inclusion and exclusion with continuous parametric modulations – that is, processes of filtering and selecting that refer to multiple and shifting scales, ratings and evaluations.

This is a point of view that emerges from the angle of subjects in motion and an attempt to point out the multifarious tensions that criss-cross contemporary practices of mobility far beyond the so-called global North. The analysis of the *hukou* system of household registration in contemporary China (Pun, 2005), the investigation of the complex systems of bordering that internally divide the Indian labour market (Samaddar, 2009) as well as of the vast panoply of South–South migration (Malecki and Ewers, 2007; Oishi, 2005; Xiang, 2008) – all highlight similar devices and regimes of selective filtering of labour mobilities. In each of these cases, despite the many empirical and geographical differences that must be taken into account, the border provides a nodal point of crystallization where tensions of labour and capital, as well as transformations of citizenship and the potentialities inherent in them, become visible. This is the optic provided by the border.

To fully understand the processes of differential inclusion, however, it is useful to mention a couple of technical devices of changing border and migration regimes that make the selective filtering of mobility possible. The first of these is externalization, which involves the displacement of border control and its technologies beyond the territorial edges of formally unified political spaces. This is evident in the management of the 'external frontiers of Europe' as well as in Australia's 'Pacific Solution' (Byrne, 2004; Geiger and Pécoud, 2010; Hess and Kasparak, 2010). In both cases, third countries are involved in the border regime, whether this implies the offshore outsourcing of detention facilities, cooperation in deportation procedures, visa policing or the surveillance of routes and so-called carriers of migration. What tends to emerge, as we argued above, are different degrees of internality and externality, which substitute and blur the clear-cut distinction between inside and outside that was produced by the traditional border of the nation-state. These techniques and measures of externalization facilitate the processes of filtering and differential inclusion by creating waiting zones through which the timing and tempo of migration can be more precisely regulated. At stake is also a certain folding of space, which brings remote and forgotten locations – islands, deserts, metropolitan peripheries, hidden parts of airports and ports – into topological proximity with the conspicuous

and visible heartlands of nation-states and political regions. Migratory and refugee movements are thus channelled through holding zones and funnels, where the procedures of selection can be exercised, whether in entirely technocratic ways or through violent interventions (Bigo and Gould, 2005; Cuttitta, 2007; Neilson and Mitropoulos, 2007; Rigo, 2007).

These complex transformations of border regimes correspond to the dream of a 'just-in-time' and 'to-the-point' migration that is increasingly shaping migratory policies across diverse geographic scales (Xiang, 2008). Confronted with the unpredictability and 'turbulence' of contemporary migratory movements, this dream is compelled to come to terms with the impossibility of its full realization. This is the gap between dream and reality that produces the nightmare we mentioned above; that is, the deaths that are continuously occurring across borderscapes worldwide. Nevertheless, the fantasy of eliminating the gap between dream and reality continues to spur innovations in migration policies that attempt to react to the crisis of traditional quota systems, which are increasingly recognized as inadequate to the new flexibility and interpenetration of labour markets and economic systems.

It is to confront this crisis that points-based-systems of migration control have experienced a revival and a great diffusion in recent years. These highly technocratic but also quite arbitrary means of instituting differential inclusion involve the submission of migratory subjects to different and ever more highly calibrated parameters that purport to measure their worthiness and suitability to enter certain political spaces: education, health, religion, language, savings and readiness to 'integrate' figure prominently in these systems, alongside classical economic criteria such as labour skills. These systems tend to multiply and increasingly stratify the legal statuses of subjects inhabiting the same political space, while at the same time allowing an effective policing of the borders and boundaries between these different subject positions.

Despite this multiplication of control devices, there appear tensions and contradictions within points-based migration systems, not least due to the increasingly complicated landscape of transnational migration. The fault lines within such migration regimes are opened up not only by the inventiveness of migrants themselves, who continuously find tactics to negotiate and move through the hierarchized terms of these systems, but also by myriad other actors including labour brokers, migration agencies and middlemen working along the boundaries between legality and illegality. The question of what constitutes 'labour skills' is one that is particularly pressed by these actors at a time when 'grey zones' between 'skilled' and 'unskilled' labour proliferate within contemporary regimes of flexible production, especially in the cognitive and service sectors (Anderson and Ruhs, 2008). Here we see a proliferation of borders not as the separating lines between discrete spaces but as

the production of multiple parameters that in combination determine the vectors of movement across an increasingly heterogenized social space. This can be considered as a kind of topological network of control. But the forms of flexibility and modulation involved in the two examples of externalization and points-systems are no less violent or discriminating than more traditional forms of topographical bordering. Moreover, they are criss-crossed by practices of struggle and contestation in each and every node of the network.

Mapping a Shifting Political Landscape

The blurring of patterns of internality and externality implicit in the increasingly prevalent migration regimes of differential inclusion also has important ramifications, as we already stressed, for the issues surrounding political subjectivity, not least the changing nature and forms of citizenship. Behind the rapid diffusion of points-based migration policies there is a fast-growing worldwide competition for skilled migrants. Such systems allow a preferential path to permanent residency and eventually to citizenship for subjects who perform appropriately in the intricate obstacle race instituted by these measures. The consequences for traditional theories of citizenship are huge. Ayelet Shachar discusses the spread of such 'talent-for-citizenship exchange' as well as its 'mirror image' in emigrant-sending countries, which increasingly encourage dual citizenship, investments in the national economy and return migration. This involves manifold processes of the flexibilization of citizenship as well as the overlapping and alteration of the traditional nation-state logic of political membership and identity with a 'more market-oriented and calculated rationale' (Shachar, 2006: 199).

Here we see another manifestation of the multiplication of citizenship statuses, but it is important to note that its effects are not merely restricted to an elite of globally mobile talented workers. Citizenship, under these circumstances, is not only a site of multiplicity but also of conflict. Unskilled workers too have a multiplicity of citizenship and residency statuses, among them the condition of being undocumented or clandestine. Taken together these transformations exhibit a disarticulation of the space of citizenship. Not only does 'Who is the citizen?' (Isin and Turner, 2008: 8) become an increasingly problematic question for contemporary theories of citizenship, but it is also necessary to ask 'What makes the citizen?' (Isin, 2009: 383). Under these conditions, Saskia Sassen (2006) argues, a full understanding of the tensions and conflicts that mark contemporary citizenship can emerge only from an analysis that works from the edges of the space of citizenship and not from one that operates from the legal plenitude of its center. That political subject who is 'unauthorized yet recognized' (Sassen, 2006: 294) or, in other words, the 'irregular' migrant, the 'immanent outsider' we

considered above, is not only subject to exclusion but also becomes a key actor in reshaping, contesting and redefining the borders of citizenship.

The multitudinous claims articulated by movements of undocumented migrants, including the *sans papiers* in Europe and an important element of the US Latinos movement of 2006, attest the potentialities of such citizenship conflicts and practices (Suárez-Navaz et al., 2008). Contrary to the usual tendency in migration studies to place a firm border between analyses of skilled and undocumented migration, we contend it is necessary to take account of both of these, as well as of the overlappings and grey zones between them, to arrive at an adequate analysis of the contemporary contours of citizenship. Border struggles such as the ones we evoke in this article are to be understood as a flipside of the processes of flexibilization of migration management and citizenship we have also been describing. They challenge our imagination to invent new models of political action and a new theoretical language beyond the dyad of the citizen-worker.

To conclude: the image of the wall could not possibly explain the new processes of border construction. Nonetheless the factors that make it necessary to question this dominant image of the border as a wall do not signal the disappearance of processes of hierarchization and control. On the contrary, they point in many ways to the proliferation or multiplication of walls and borders of various kinds, not merely to mark the distinction between internal and external spaces, but also within the space and time of global capital and the borders of differential inclusion. The image of flows has been key both to the development of the topological approach and, more generally, to the discussion of globalization (Castells, 2001). It has also shaped (and continues to shape) projects of mapping that are part and parcel of the establishment of new assemblages and regimes of control. To get an idea of this one has only to look at the 'interactive map' developed by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) within the framework of the so-called 'Dialogue on Mediterranean Trans-Migration'. The aim of this map is to track the increasing unpredictability and autonomy of migration in the Mediterranean area (Tsianos, 2008). Scholars trained in the topological approach (but also activists) can easily recognize in this map, which has multiple points of entry and does not represent a stable geography of mobility and control, a cartographic language and gaze they have concurred to produce.

In recent years, the prevalence of the image of flows in critical analysis of the making of global space has been challenged by several anthropologists, who have pointed to the importance of the 'carving of channels' (Tsing, 2000, 2005), of 'zoning technologies' (Ong, 2006) as well as of 'enclaves' and 'global hops' that can efficiently connect 'the enclaved points in the network while excluding (with equal efficiency) the spaces that lie between the points' (Ferguson, 2006: 47). Our own work is

consistent with these approaches, which do not mean to disqualify the image of flows as such, but rather to deepen our knowledge of the actual processes of production of and conditions of possibility for flows themselves. We think that the 'continuity of transformation' with which topology deals (Massumi, 1998) has to be understood against this background, following both the lines of channels that 'striate' the 'smooth space' of flows and the movements of subjects that struggle on a daily basis against the new hierarchies and domination devices that the multiplication of borders produces in the global present.

Note

1. See: fortresseurope.blogspot.com (accessed 19 September 2011).

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