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### **Border Studies**

Theoretical approaches, themes of inquiry,  
and suggestions for future work

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## **Abstract**

In the last two decades, a novel interdisciplinary field of inquiry has emerged under the label of Border Studies. This area of research has mainly reflected on the nature and functionalities of borders and boundaries, bringing up discussions on space, politics, economics, and culture. In particular, Border Studies have significantly contributed to the understanding of the role of borders in shaping migratory movements. In order to map this very large field of investigation, numerous state of the art reviews have been published. However, none of the reviews encountered has addressed the following issues: first, the main assumptions informing different theoretical perspectives in Border Studies; second, the application of Border Studies to analyse human mobility in the Global South. Thus, in order to participate in producing a more complete understanding of the knowledge produced in this field, the present paper pursues a pair of objectives. One objective is to critically present the main theoretical approaches employed in the field of Border Studies, reflecting on their heuristic possibilities and limitations as well as their political implications. The other objective is to explore the intertwining of Border and Migration Studies with a specific focus on Africa, Asia and Latin America, devoting particular attention to the way this body of research has analysed the condition of migrant women workers. Overall, the essay generates suggestions for future significant investigations.

## **Keywords**

Borders, boundaries, migration, Global South, migrant women workers.

# Border Studies

## Theoretical approaches, themes of inquiry, and suggestions for future work <sup>1</sup>

### 1 INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, borders and boundaries have increasingly captured scholars' attention, creating a novel field of inquiry under the label of Border Studies. This research area has developed in reaction to multiple and heterogeneous phenomena, events and processes, that ensued after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. In the context of a deeply modified global landscape, statements about the obsolescence of state borders as well as arguments on their proliferation and reterritorialization have opened a space for the analysis of practices and discourses of bordering. Along this same line, other contradictions charactering the present time have fuelled this literature: for example, tensions existing between increasing mobility of capital and commodities and growing selective limitations to the circulation of people. Similarly, processes of securitization and neoliberal discourses on the limitations of state boundaries have diverted attention to borders. However, geopolitical changes have not been the only humus on which Border Studies have grown. Black, Chicana and Third World feminists have differently reasoned on the concepts of territorial borders and social boundaries. Anzaldúa's "La Frontera/Borderland" (1987) and Crenshaw's (1989) concept of internationality are two exemplary reflections, contributing to structuring this field.

More specifically, Border Studies have focused on two interrelated and overlapping areas:

- firstly, *borders, frontiers and borderlands*, both as specific sites of research in their own right and as key features through which to comprehend major processes of societal transformation;

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<sup>1</sup> A study commissioned by the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague (Erasmus University Rotterdam), within the project on 'Migration, Gender and Social Justice', funded by the International Development Research Centre (Canada). The author, Stefania Donzelli, holds a BA with distinction in Political Science (University of Bologna) and a MA with distinction in Development Studies (International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam). She is currently a PhD researcher at ISS. She would like to thank Dr. Des Gasper and Dr. Thanh Dam Truong for the attentive comments and critical suggestions on previous versions of this essay. Thanks also to Glenda Garelli and Martina Tazzioli for their bibliographic suggestions.

- secondly, political, economic, social and cultural boundaries as elements to understand the formation, contestation and negotiation of gendered, sexual, ethnic, racial and classed differences.<sup>2</sup>

In all cases, reflections on the nature and functionalities of borders and boundaries have been central, bringing up discussions on space, territory, agency, power, politics, governance, economics, and cultural processes. In order to grasp the richness of this scholarship, it is important to highlight that this has grown with a strong multidisciplinary character, calling for contributions from a wide range of disciplines: from geography, history and politics to sociology, anthropology and social psychology. This multiplicity of disciplinary perspectives has made it difficult to develop a general theory of borders and boundaries. Such an attempt has been considered unattainable by many due to the strongly contextual nature of borders and their complex relations to issues of governance, politics and economics; in most of the cases, it has been considered preferable to stimulate discussions on the main concepts and categories employed by scholars in this field rather than advocate a general theory (Anderson et al., 2002; Lamont, 2002; Newman, 2003; Paasi, 2005; Fassin, 2011; Johnson et al., 2011; Kolossov, 2012; Wastl-Walters, 2012; Wilson and Donnan, 2012).

Given the extent of this academic production and its relevance to contemporary dynamics of social change, numerous state of the art reviews have been published lately.<sup>3</sup> These works have attempted both to develop a genealogy of Border Studies and to propose future research agendas. However, none of the reviews encountered has attempted to critically compare the main assumptions informing different perspectives in Border Studies. Thus, relying on theoretical pieces of research as well as on selected case studies, the first objective of this essay is to produce *a critical overview of Border Studies by presenting the principal theoretical approaches employed, their heuristic possibilities and limitations as well as their political implications.*

Further, this paper aims also at exploring *the encounter between Border Studies and Migration Studies.* In doing so, another elements of reflection is proposed – that is, the geographical focus of studies exploring this connection. In fact, as has been recognised by other authors, Border Studies as a sub-area of investigation has mainly focused on the Western world, with a Western oriented conceptual approach (Anderson et al., 2010; Fassin, 2011; Wilson and Donnan, 2012). Thus, in order to identify possible lines for future research,

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<sup>2</sup> Semantic distinctions between borders and boundaries depends on the vocabularies adopted by each discipline or sub-discipline. For example, political geographers employ the term border to point to “a site at and through which socio-spatial differences are communicated” and the term boundary to indicate a “territorial line”; whereas, “in anthropology, the definition is usually precisely opposite, here a boundary generally means the socio-spatially constructed differences between cultures/categories and a border generally stands for a line demarcated in space” (Van Houtum, 2005: 672). For the sake of clarification, it is important to state that this essay makes use of the anthropological interpretation of these terms.

<sup>3</sup> Among the most recent ones: Fassin (2011), Wilson and Donnan (2012) and Kolossov (2012).

this work explores *the existing state of the art on borders and migrations in Africa, Asia and Latin America*. Particular attention will be channelled in the following directions:

- comparative studies on how borders are produced, organised and experienced – with a focus on migrants' agency;
- genealogical studies to understand the development of migration policies in the Global South;
- problematizations of the connections between borders and transnational forms of activism and social mobilization;
- investigations of the conditions of female migrant workers and on migrants' identities and subjectivities.

The selection of these themes was done by an international working group on contemporary borders' transformation which met at the Migration, Gender and Social Justice Workshop held at the Centre for Development Studies in Kerala, India, in February 2013.

Overall, the essay will outline those research areas relatively little examined by scholars, in order to suggest directions for future significant investigations.

## **2 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN BORDER STUDIES**

The mushrooming of Border Studies, initiated by the end of the Cold War and the consolidation of neoliberal globalization, has its antecedents in geographical research. During the 1960s and 1970s, many scholars in this discipline developed “empirical analysis of concrete border cases or the application of perspectives used to problem solving” from a state-centred perspective<sup>4</sup> (Paasi, 2005: 665). To highlight the strong political character of research on borders, it is worth to mention that studies on different “typologies of boundaries [were] widely applied to the allocation and the delimitation of the colonial possessions” of European empires (Kolossoff, 2005: 611). Today, Border Studies have moved in the direction of “theorising upon borders empirically, [but] within the context of key social and political categories” – globalization and governance being among the most significant (Paasi, 2005: 665; Van Houtum, 2005). This shift does indicate that the extent to which interrogations about the perspective from which borders are studied and about the objectives of this sort of knowledge production remain central.

Looking for similarities between different strands in Border Studies is not difficult. At the present, all approaches have clearly broadened their set of research questions: besides traditional queries such as “where is the border?”, others have gained primacy, like “how is the border socially constructed?”, “how does the border construct social reality?”, or “how is the border experienced?” (Newman, 2003; Van Houtum, 2005; Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2009). This trend allows us to register that, if a widely accepted

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<sup>4</sup> See for example Prescott (1965) and Minghi (1963).

starting point can be identified in this field, this is the recognised human made nature of borders/boundaries, that constitutes them as both products and producers of contextual social practices and discourses.

Additionally, given the acknowledgement that besides territorial lines many other borders exist, the focus of many investigations has moved away from the boundary or border *per se* to the process of bordering, so as to bring “diverse types of borders within a single frame of analysis” (Kolossoff et al., 2012: 3). In this regard, scholars from different strands in Border Studies have started employing intersectional analysis<sup>5</sup> as a tool to further comprehend the making of differences through borders and boundaries as historical relations of domination and processes of categorization (Naples, 2008; Kron, 2012). The essay will later discuss this type of analyses in section 3.2, when reviewing the literature of borders, boundaries and female migrant workers, where intersectionality will emerge as an important instrument of research.

In order to provide an overview of Border Studies, this section of the essay attempts to sketch different theoretical perspectives in the field. In this regard, drawing clear-cut lines between approaches is inevitably somewhat artificial as some of their underpinnings more often than not overlap each other; further, scholars themselves cross the boundaries of these theoretical trends – thus bringing into their work various approaches, sometime supplementing each other. Yet, emphasising their differences can serve to highlight diverse heuristic possibilities and normative implications. The selected theoretical perspectives which will be presented are: postmodernism, governmentality and political economy approaches. To conduct a comparison, different points for reflection have been identified: borders' epistemology and ontology, the political agenda of specific research trends, methodologies, and main topics of interest.

## 2.1 The postmodern approach

To begin, I would like to focus on what can be defined a *postmodern approach* (Kolossoff, 2005). This label has clear limits considering that it is used to refer to various very different research agendas.<sup>6</sup> However, the body of research in

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<sup>5</sup> Intersectional analysis aims at understanding how the position and constitution of subjects is shaped by intertwining and contextual conditions, discourses and social practices (Yuval-Davis, 2006). The term intersectionality was coined by Crenshaw in 1989 to avoid conflation of intra-group differences (Kron, 2012: 105).

<sup>6</sup> In general, there is no consensus in the literature on the definition of this trend as postmodern. While some scholars use this label (Kolossoff, 2005; Van Houtum, 2005), others prefer to speak about a social constructionist approach (Kramsh, 2006). In this essay, it has been chosen to employ the adjective postmodern as it is argued that the socially constructed nature of borders and boundaries is a common element crossing different theoretical perspectives. However, it is also important to acknowledge that there is not only one version of postmodern epistemology. For example Rosenau (1991) speaks about sceptical and affirmative postmodern strands. To orientate the reader of this review, I here specify that the choice of the term 'postmodernism' aims at emphasising some elements of this epistemological stream, such as anti-essentialist



Border Studies I would like to gather under this label has centred mostly, even if not solely, on “how borders are made in terms of symbols, signs, identifications, representations, performances and stories” (Van Houtum, 2005; Wilson and Donnan, 2012). This slant, representing the mainstream in Border Studies, proceeds from the assumption that the essence of borders relies on their capacity to operate a partition between an inside and an outside and thus to establish Self-and-Other binaries. From this premise the study of borders configures itself as the study of “human practices that constitute and represent differences in space” (Van Houtum, 2005: 672). In this perspective, scholars pay attention to borders' functions both in terms of ordering and Othering – thus raising issues of belonging, inclusion/exclusion and control – and in terms of cross border interactions and transgression of borders – including especially attention to reasoning on borderlands and on human mobility (Anderson et al., 2010; Newman, 2003; Van Houtum and Van Naerssen, 2001).

Generally, the production of borders and boundaries as well as their effects are the main object of research for postmodernists in Border Studies. Within this stream, two main assumptions on the nature of borders confront each other: first, borders as intrinsic, persistent, but ever-changing elements of human life; second, borders as expression of specific and historically situated social, political and economic systems which do not necessarily respond to essential human needs (Fassin, 2011; Kolossov, 2012). These assumptions leads to different research agendas: in the first case, scholars orient their reflection to the search for 'good borders', enabling coexistence in spite of difference; in the second case, they tend to carefully consider the history and contemporary function of states and to de-naturalise current political, economic, social and cultural arrangements or highlight irreducible difficulties of bordering practices. Generally, these reflections are strongly oriented to understand issues of sovereignty (Newman, 2003; Johnson et al., 2011; O'Leary, 2012; Wilson and Donnan, 2012). From these different assumptions, two research agendas have developed: first, a “pragmatic” approach interested in “deriving generalizable knowledge from practices of border transcendence and confirmation”; second, a more “critical” approach aimed at “theorising and questioning the conditions that give rise to border-generating categories” (Kolossov et al., 2012: 4).

From a methodological perspective most postmodernists rely on case studies and comparative approaches, combining a varied range of methods of data collection and analysis – from ethnographic accounts to literary criticism. They can look for evidence of bordering practices and their impacts on particular places (Johnson et al., 2011). For examples, borders have been treated as discursive and emotional landscapes of social power as well as technical landscapes of control and surveillance. Attention has also been given to sites of security and domains of dissidence (Amoore in Johnson et al., 2011). These works also consider borders as performative practices characterised by

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and anti-positivist stances, attention to language and meanings' fluidity, questions of identity and relations between the subject's position and her/his truth claims.

various dimensions: formal performances, as described in accounts of specific territorial borders; practical performances, as concrete acts of admission/expulsion/filtering at the border; and popular performances, as public and political negotiations of the meaning of borders (Salter in Johnson et al., 2011). Lately, reflections on the perspective from which to look at borders are emerging: tendencies to “see like a state” have been contested with calls for orientations to “see like borders” (Rumford in Johnson et al., 2011).

Example of recent postmodern publications on borders are many chapters of two comprehensive collections: the Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies edited by Doris Wastl-Walter (2012) and the Wiley Companion to Border Studies edited by Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (2012). In these publications, researchers look at a wide range of issues:

- cultures from borderlands which can reveal both hybridity/resistance to and polarization/embracing of state boundaries (Heyman, 2012);
- relations between nations, nationalisms and bordering in the Southern Cone (Grimson, 2012);
- national minorities in Europe (Markusse, 2012);
- experiences of female migrants with border-crossing migration and gendered border geographies in Asia (Raghuram and Piper, 2012).

More examples could be given, but for the sake of brevity the reader is referred to the introductions of the Ashgate and Wiley Companions whose previews are available online.<sup>7</sup>

Further, an important case of ongoing research in Border Studies is the Borderscapes project financed by the European Union FP7 framework for the period 2012-2016.<sup>8</sup> Different networks or research institutions have been established, including among the main cases: the Association for Borderland Studies<sup>9</sup>, the Nijmegen Centre for Border Research<sup>10</sup>, the School of Transborder Studies at the Arizona State University<sup>11</sup> and the Critical Border Studies Network.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies is available here:

<http://books.google.it/books?id=GVLuEFSdvVAC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false>

The Wiley Companion to Border Studies is available here:

[http://books.google.it/books?id=PeVi8\\_NagIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.it/books?id=PeVi8_NagIC&printsec=frontcover&hl=it#v=onepage&q&f=false)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.euborderscapes.eu/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.absborderlands.org/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.ru.nl/nibr/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://sts.asu.edu/>

<sup>12</sup>

[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/people/vaughanwilliams/critical\\_border\\_studies/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/people/vaughanwilliams/critical_border_studies/)

## 2.2 The governmentality approach

Turning to the *governmentality approach*, this shifts the research focus from the configurations that borders take in different contexts to the *mechanisms* that make possible the emergence of these configurations, their effects and dynamics. This perspective derives from the application of the Foucaultian concept of governmentality to the study of processes of spatial and functional redefinition of borders. The possibility to connect discourses and practices of government to borders derives from the assumption that the demarcation of frontiers, allowing for the production of territories, is a *sine qua non* condition for the government of populations (Walters, 2011). As a consequence, this literature, even if recognising the role played by borders in producing differences, does not consider these differences *per se*, but in relation to techniques, programmes and strategies shaping the conduct of populations – that is, the essence of government from a Foucaultian perspective (Fassin, 2011; Andrijasevic and Walters, 2010; Brockling et al., 2010). Then, the production of differences is understood in relation to multiple and interconnected ways of government, from processes of subjectification to processes of institutions' formation (Brockling et al., 2010; Walters, 2012). Thus, while postmodern scholars have explained “the character of borders substantively by referring them to a set of more primary transformations” such as globalization, governmentality authors seek to affirm the importance of analysing different forms of government in their own right and independently from already existing universals, in order to avoid reifying these primary transformations (Andrijasevic and Walters, 2010; Walters, 2011). For instance, recent critiques of reification of migration can be understood in this direction (De Genova, 2013).

In synthesis, in the governmentality work, borders are seen as the concretization and product of government processes which can be studied by focusing on “practical activities” (Walters, 2012). In this regard, local, national and international policy are made into objects of research. Further, exceeding issues of sovereignty, not only the practices of nation states, but also – among others – those of post-national formations, international agencies, non-governmental organizations, private companies and fields of experts' knowledge are scrutinized (Bigo, 2002; Andrijasevic and Walters, 2010). In sum, this literature “examine[s all those] particular rationalities, technologies and strategies which rationalise and invest the space of border” (Walters, 2011: 141). In this context, interpretations in terms of governmentality aim at revealing contradictions between claimed functionalities of borders and their actualization, thus showing and “establish[ing] the functionality of the apparent dysfunctions” (Fassin, 2011: 217; Rudnyckyj, 2004).

From this observation, the central objective of most of this literature emerges, that is the acknowledgement of inconsistencies, escapes from and crises of the governance of borders. This is particularly evident when centrality is accorded to practices of transgression of the processes of control and filtering enacted at borders. As a result, these works tend to show not only the possibility of social transformation, but its actualization in the present – creating a space to think beyond deterministic points of view (Papadopoulos et

al., 2008; Sossi, 2012). Having said this, it should be important also to acknowledge that the governmentality approach can also be implemented to highlight the possibility to constantly govern spaces through the synergistic actions of different actors – thus invisibilising forms of resistance and escape (Walters, 2012). In this sense, the adoption of a governmentality perspective does not constitute in itself an operationalization of a critical posture.

In terms of methods for data gathering and analysis, the governmentality approach does not distance itself much from the postmodern framework. In both cases, empirical studies—whether based on ethnographic fieldwork or document and discourse analysis—are the main basis for theorizations, while their main difference consists in the focus of their research questions as has already been pointed out.

Generally, the analysis of borders has involved analysis of “borders and boundaries, temporality and spatiality, states and bureaucracies, detention and deportation, asylum and humanitarianism” (Fassin, 2011: 214). For instance, securitization of immigration is explained as emerging “from the correlation between some successful speech acts of political leaders, the mobilization they create for and against some groups of people, and the specific field of security professionals” (Bigo, 2002: 65). Further, analysis of the border as a locus of control has also brought attention to the types of subjectivity this form of power presupposes (Walters, 2006). Notions of humanitarian borders have been employed to delineate emerging forms of power (Walters, 2006). Reasoning on dysfunctionalities, it has been argued that spectacles of borders enforcement naturalise migrants' illegality, while the partial and subordinated inclusion of those who are targeted in large part for exclusion proceeds through their subordination in the labour market (De Genova, 2012). In general, most investigations have connected borders to security and securitization, migration and new forms of surveillance – especially in Western contexts (Walters, 2012). Less attention has instead been given to international governance and questions of capitalism (Walters, 2012; Andrijasevic and Walters, 2010).

In terms of institutions carrying on this perspective two main points of reference are the Goldsmith's College (University of London) Politics Department and the Departments of Political Science and Sociology/Anthropology at Carleton University in Ottawa.

### **2.3 The political economy approach**

Now I will consider a third and last main perspective in Border Studies: the *political economy approach*. Seeking to move beyond discussions on identity and security, it attempts to trace the relation between the current proliferation of borders and “the constitution of labour markets, the social composition of workforce as well as the production and reproduction of citizenship” (Balibar, 2004; De Genova, 2008; Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2012: 61). The establishment of this link assumes that borders are not simply objects of investigation, but rather epistemological devices that enable the making of certain forms of labour, mobility and subjectivity. In fact, accepting that by establishing

taxonomies and conceptual hierarchies, borders are the precondition of any definition, they can also constitute a privileged viewpoint in research on the very production of space and time that, in turn, contribute to define any process and activity – from subjectification and subjection through to labour markets formation (Mignolo, 2000; Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2008 and 2012).

In this perspective, the nature of border is not understood simply as a division producing binaries, but as a locus of tension among coexisting processes of separation and connection. It follows that borders concern “fields of relations rather than discontinuous points and lines” (Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2012: 60). In other words, this approach argues for looking at the inherent functional flexibility of borders so as to comprehend the production of multiple factors that together shape direction and timing of movements across space. This interpretative entry point has been defined *border as method*. According to Mezzadra and Neilsen (2012: 66), this “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” (Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2012: 66).

In terms of a political economy research agenda in Border Studies, assuming the border perspective has meant, for example, to overcome the binary of inclusion/exclusion, by highlighting the multiplication of subject positions of those on the move. From studies in Europe and the US, migrants and workers are never fully inserted in *or* banned from labour markets and citizenship (De Genova, 2010; Mezzadra, 2006). This recognition of differential forms of filtering mobility – made possible by a focus on borders as processes and not as givens – enables us to see borders functioning as means of stratification, thus to reconsider inclusion not merely as an abstract social good, but as in practice a process of hierarchization (Mezzadra and Nielsen, 2008 and 2012).

Further, this approach has not only allowed questioning of dichotomies of inclusion and exclusion by referring to dynamics of differential inclusion; it has also enabled reconsideration of the functionalities of different control mechanisms at the border. For instance, analysing the role of detention centres through the subjective experiences of migrants has led to the understanding that detention does not work to prevent or block migrations, but to regulate their time and speed, functioning as a “decompression chamber” (Panagiotidis and Tsianos, 2007; Rigo, 2007; Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2008). Also reconceptualization of notions of labour power and international division of labour have been undertaken from this perspective (Mezzadra and Nielsen, 2008).

From these and other examples, it follows that the main objective of this slant of Border Studies is to develop critical analysis on “how relations of domination and exploitation are being redefined at the present time [as well as on] the struggles that take shape around these changing relations” so as to invent new forms of political action through the elaboration of new understanding of the political (Mezzadra and Neilson, 2012: 67).

Thinking about methodologies, this perspective is also strongly oriented towards empirical studies. More specifically, the political economy work is mainly interested 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” (Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2012: 65). Under this aspect clear differences between this approach and the postmodern one emerge. The postmodern approach’s greater interest in comparing case studies reflects assumptions about geographical distance as implying separate practices and experiences of bordering; whereas the political economy approach’s emphasis on borders as connected elements underlies beliefs about “propinquity between various material instantiations of borders” (Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2012: 65).

Since the political economy approach is a relatively recent branch of Border Studies, few completed research studies can yet be pointed out as indicative of this field. In fact, the most representative monograph of this perspective, “Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor” by Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, at the moment of writing is still forthcoming (Duke University Press). Yet, some examples of works taking *border as method* as a privileged interpretative standpoint can be given: first, the ongoing research project “Transit Labour: Regions, Borders, Circuits”<sup>13</sup> studying changing patterns of labour and mobility in the contemporary Asian capitalist transformation; second, the book edited by the Edufactory Collective (2009) analysing the transformation of contemporary universities at a global scale; third, the work of the Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group focusing on South Asian borders – especially stimulated by Ranabir Samaddar. The workshop “Borders in South Asia: territories, identities, mobilizations” held in Kolkata, India, at the beginning of March 2013 offers some examples of what it means to operationalise the border-as-method perspective.<sup>14</sup> Institutions that can be taken as main points of reference for this approach are the Department of Political and Social Science at the University of Bologna and the Institute for Culture and Society at the University of Western Sydney. Further, from the workshop “Migrations and militant research: borders, migrants’ practices and the critique of the migratory regime”, held at Goldsmith’s College, London in January 2013<sup>15</sup>, a research network combining governmentality and political economy approaches to issues of borders and migration is in the process of being organised.

## 2.4 Final remarks

As already anticipated, many fruitful encounters between the different streams identified have occurred. In this regard, highlighting the importance of

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<sup>13</sup> The research project website is <http://transitlabour.asia/>

<sup>14</sup> For more details on this workshop, see: <http://f.hypotheses.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/729/files/2013/01/Provisional-programme-AJEI2013.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> For more details on the workshop: <http://www.gold.ac.uk/politics/calendar/?id=6160>

exchanges among different perspectives becomes crucial in order to avoid what Walters (2012) has called applicationism. This term indicates the tendency “to regard governmentality as a fully formed perspective that one simply applies to a particular empirical area or topic” (Walters, 2012: 5). It points out the risk of turning an “analytical toolbox into a self-contained theoretical system”, unable to grasp “new empirical domains and unexpected social transformations” (Walters, 2012: 5). Even if Walters only refers to governmentality, the same can be commented for any type of theoretical perspective. Again recalling Walters' terminology (2012: 5), it can be added that “critical encounters” are what should be fostered to produce analysis allowing us to “revise and amend existing concepts, and in some cases fashion new analytical tools” (Walters, 2012: 5).

Another limitation of this first section of the essay needs to be acknowledged. It concerns the small number of approaches taken into consideration. In fact, although those identified are main standpoints in the field of Border Studies, others exist. Just to mention one, the human security perspective has been recently combined with reflections on borders, mixing some elements of postmodern and governmentality approaches. This can be observed in two recent volumes published by Springer (Truong and Gasper, 2011; Truong et al., 2013). In both cases, the governmentality approach has been employed to study practices of governing at the interface between States and society, while a certain postmodern sensibility has been deployed in attention to borders as producers of identities and subjectivities (various chapters in: Truong and Gasper, 2011; Truong et al. 2013). Further, a multiplicity of tendencies can be identified as exemplified in the recent volume “Gendering Border Studies” (Aaron et al., 2010) focusing on the many manifestations of borders and boundaries and their intersection with varied forms of gender (Barrick and Sundberg, 2013). Thus, far from considering this essay exhaustive, the attempt has been to provide elements of reflection that can be applied also to consider heuristic limitations and possibilities as well as political implications of other approaches.

### **3 BORDER STUDIES AND MIGRATION STUDIES**

From the first part of this essay, the close link existing between Border Studies and Migration Studies clearly emerges: people's movements take place in space, and borders are important elements contributing to their shaping. As a result, both phenomena are inextricably connected. Obviously, this nexus can be differently approached depending on the way in which both borders and human mobility are comprehended. As we have already seen, borders can be conceptualised as dynamic elements constructing migrants as Others, diverse devices governing human mobility, or complex determinants of migrant workers' differential positions in labour markets. Proposing a similar interpretative scheme to look at human mobility, this can be differently addressed depending on the favourite perspective chosen. Through post-modern lenses, human mobility can appear as a polysemic phenomenon – whose meanings are negotiated between different actors in different contexts

(Findlay, 1999). From the governmentality perspective, people's mobility has to be understood as a movement governed through different devices but that, at the same time, constitutes a practice of freedom in Foucaultian terms (Ong, 2003). Finally, in a political economy approach, human mobility has been conceptualised as a force greatly contributing to the transformation of labour markets in contemporary capitalism and, at the same time, strongly moulded by the latter (Mezzadra and Neilsen, 2008 and 2012). Yet, whichever predominant perspective is adopted, human mobility is a core issue at the centre of Border Studies while at the same time borders are centrally relevant to the field of Migration Studies. Exploring their intersections appears thus extremely useful for the development of both research areas.

As already pointed out, most works on borders, boundaries and migrations have privileged a geographical focus on the Western world, although great attention has been given to borders located at the frontiers with non-Western areas – with the US-Mexico border constituting the most exemplary and intensively studied case. This dynamic can be understood considering that since the 1980s structural adjustment programmes in the Global South and Northern demand for cheap labour forces in non-outsourcable sectors – such as care, agriculture and construction – have been among the principal factors triggering mass migratory movements towards the Global North.<sup>16</sup> In this context, Northern public debates have strongly politicised migration – often represented in the mainstream as a risk factor in relation to labour markets, criminality, human trafficking and terrorism as well as for local identities and values (Huysman, 1995; De Genova, 2010). Both as precondition of and reaction to such politicization of migration, academic knowledge production on migrants, migratory movements and borders has been a main research interest for scholars based in the Global North and Northern funding agencies (Bigo, 2002).

Recognising this tendency, the question of what has been left out arises spontaneously – especially considering the present flourishing of Border Studies and the publication of many reviews suggesting possible research agendas to be developed. Thus, I here intend to explore academic works situated at the intersection of Border Studies and Migration Studies, with a focus on African, Asian and Latin American contexts. In fact, it has been repeatedly mentioned that this sort of geographical frame has not been elaborated consistently and only lately a few studies have been published – some of which have been indicated in the first section of the essay. However, the recognition of this gap has often gone unexplained, thus risking to

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<sup>16</sup> Terms such as 'Global South' and 'Global North' have undoubtedly some limitations: the same recognition of processes of proliferation of borders in the contemporary context invite us to challenge dichotomous perspectives. In this regard, Mezzadra and Neilsen's (2008) critique of the concept of 'international division of labour' is exemplary in revealing the limits of any binarism. However, it is considered that a self-conscious use of this vocabulary – aware of its pitfalls – remains useful to point out the effects of Western colonialism and imperialism in the present. In fact, as will be shown later, a recurrent theme in Border Studies focused on Africa, Asia and Latin America consists in the colonial origin of today's state borders.



reproduce a narrative in which the Global South is located in a backward position in respect to Western academia, where the former is always trying to catch up with the latter.

Thus, to avoid the pitfalls of this unilinear vision of knowledge production, section 3 of this essay does not only look at how studies on borders, boundaries and human mobility in Africa, Asia and Latin America have been elaborated, but also it questions why this is mostly a recent object of investigation and what is the contemporary significance of this sort of research trajectory. More specifically, sub-section 3.1 delineates emerging thematic connections between Border Studies and Migration Studies in Southern contexts – providing some suggestions for future research. Later, sub-section 3.2 reviews academic works on the condition of female migrant workers both in the field of Migration Studies and in that of Border Studies, arguing for the importance of gender analyses. Again, some possible lines for future investigations will be suggested.

### **3.1 Emerging line of research on the Global South**

Reviewing what is considered a gap poses major problems, including first of all the absence of journals and research institutes to be taken as points of reference. Thus, to escape from the simple recognition of a vacuum<sup>17</sup>, I here identify three thematic areas where connections between borders and migrations in the Global South are emerging, although often in a limited or implicit manner:

- the colonial origin of borders in the Global South and its effects in the present;
- South-South migratory movements<sup>18</sup>;
- increasing securitization of borders at the global level and the international governance of human mobility.

The objective is not to offer a detailed literature review on these topics: that would be too pretentious considering that the term Global South indicates a very diversified range of socio-historical contexts. Instead, the aim is that of mapping how reflections on borders and on migrations do or may intersect within these thematic areas and to verify whether the research lines pointed out in the introduction to this essay have already been scrutinised or are in need of more in-depth examination. In particular, I will propose some directions for future research directed at comprehending how – in the Global South – borders are produced, organised and experienced, migration policies are

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<sup>17</sup> Here I do not intend to ignore the many research studies on borders and migration in the South, some of which have already been referenced or discussed in the first part of the essay. Instead, what I would like to highlight is the absence of a general view on the South that goes beyond particular case studies.

<sup>18</sup> Clearly, this is not the only terrain for a perspective on migration and the Global South: South-North migration continues to constitute an important area to be explored. However, I here consider South-South migration as it obliges us to give specific attention to borders and boundaries between Southern states.

developed and enforced, and resistance to oppressive aspects of these policies is carried on across borders and boundaries.

### ***The colonial origin of borders***

To begin, if a common denominator among borders and boundaries in Africa, Asia and Latin America exists in the literature considered, this is undoubtedly the acknowledgement of the colonial origin of contemporary borders<sup>19</sup> and the effects of this genealogy in the present (Kramash, 2006; Bakewell, 2009; Diener and Hagen, 2012). Notwithstanding obvious contextual peculiarities, two recurrent and somewhat complementary elements have been at the centre of academic research: borders' porosity and borders' fixity. First, scholars have connected the strongly arbitrary nature of colonial borders inherited by postcolonial states to borders' porosity. This feature characterises postcolonial borderlands as spaces of extremely blurred national distinctions and sites of diverse and intense activities. Specifically, it has been noted that this porousness makes borderlands loci of unique border-crossing practices, thus bringing up the theme of human mobility. Second, the literature has linked the fixity of the colonial demarcations that were transferred to postcolonial states to geopolitical frictions as well as internal and external conflicts. In particular, borders are seen as imposed irrespective of geography and people, thus creating important internal diversity within states that, when coupled with the inheritance of intergroup competitions fomented by colonial policies, lays the ground for today's tensions. In this regard, human mobility emerges as an interconnected theme of research, especially in relation to refugee flows.

Research on the porosity and fixity of postcolonial borders has treated a great variety of themes. For example, the literature approaching borders' porosity in the African, Asian and Latin American contexts has focused on the following topics: construction of different forms of belonging and social boundaries, sense-making narratives of border-related social worlds, informal sector cross-border trade, changing interfaces of state and markets in borderlands, economic investments leading to unsustainable exploitation of natural and human resources, performances of new regionalism from below, criminal and terrorist networks and so on (Lentz, 2003; Soderbaum and Taylor, 2008; Asiwaju, 2010; Coplan, 2010; Peberdy, 2010; Doevenspeck, 2011; Cons, 2012; Ghosh, 2011; Pangsapa and Smith, 2008; Tagliacozzo, 2001; Baud, 2000). In terms of border fixity and conflicts the literature has examined, among other topics, the dimensions and policy directions taken to deal with cross-border forced displacement, conflicting modes of border regulation, transnationalism from below of mass refugee influx, nation building and security dilemmas, state interventions directed at controlling goods flows, drug trafficking and revolutionary guerilla movements (Raeymaekers, 2011; Atzili,

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<sup>19</sup> I here refer to the fact that European state colonialism was accompanied by “the extension of the European territorial state model to colonial territories and subsequently the need to create clear borders” (Diener and Hagen, 2012: 49).

2011; Brees, 2010; Mahmud, 2010; Manero, 2012; Trinkunas et al., 2012; Baud, 2000).

In general and with diverse nuances, the border in the Global South tends to be analysed in terms of the “fragmented and contradictory character” of postcolonial nation building processes (Baud, 2000: 45). In many studies, the multiple effects of borders on people's mobility tend to be recognised; however, more often than not, this sort of reflection is not explicitly located at the intersection between Border Studies and Migration Studies.<sup>20</sup> Instead, the main research fields of reference result to be Development Studies and Area Studies.

### ***South-South migration***

As investigations on borders in the Global South tend to linger over different forms of human mobility, similarly pieces of research on migratory movements in and from the South<sup>21</sup> have brought up discussions on borders. To locate this debate in context, it is worth noting that only lately have investigations on South-South mobility been promoted, although the extent of migratory movements in this direction has long almost equalled and may now exceed that of South-North migration (UN, 2012; Ratha and Shaw, 2007). Generally, scholars have connected South-South migration to the intensification of interregional movements triggered by globalization. In particular, they have focused on specific aspects of globalization understood as triggering migratory movements such as difficult economic conditions following economic restructuring, environmental disasters, and regional agreements operating to facilitate inter-regional mobility. Further, the literature has highlighted that continuous and uneven processes of urbanization make internal migration very significant for many countries in the South like India and China, opening novel sub-areas of research. Beside, both the emergence of rising economies in the South and the economic slowdown of Northern countries, related to the 2008 economic crises, have suggested that both South-North and South-South relationships are likely to be recalibrated (Kofman and Raghuram, 2012; Ratha and Shaw, 2007). However, even if the acknowledgement of diverse dynamics in the recent period have established migratory movements in the South as relevant object of investigation, it should also be noted that “South-South migration is not new. It [has] just [been] ignored by economists” (Hatton and Williamson, 2002: 25). This observation calls for further reflections to understand the ongoing shift in the geographical focus of Migration Studies. In this regard, Border Studies can contribute to further explain such change, for example reflecting on global processes of border securitization.

Thus, coming back to the link between borders and migration, it can be noted that investigations on South-South mobility have not treated borders

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<sup>20</sup> A remarkable exception is a special dossier in the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* titled “From empiricism to theory in African Border Studies” (2010).

<sup>21</sup> I here refer to all types of migratory movement – internal, regional, continental or intercontinental.

directly or systematically, but as a topic for passing general comments which tend to frame borders as “set of constraints and opportunities” with important effects in people's lives (Bakewell, 2009: 42). Still, all the different themes treated by this literature on South-South movement allow for connections to the study of borders and boundaries. Determinants of South-South migrations, immigration, integration and emigration policies, regional free movement agreements, transnational networks, relations between human mobility and development are all issues that in one way or another strongly relate to the making of borders and boundaries (Hujo and Piper, 2007; Ratha and Shaw, 2007; Bakewell, 2009). In particular, in regard to the migration-development nexus in the Global South, six areas of research have been identified: income; poverty and inequality; human capital formation; social and cultural change; migrants' civic and political participation; and migrants' contributions to the national economy (Bakewell, 2009; de Haas, 2009). Important to observe is that the most comprehensive pieces of research on South-South migration have concentrated on remittances, due to underlying strongly economic assumptions. In other respects too, the bulk of South-South migration research has been criticised: many commentators question the grounds of an homogeneous approach to migratory movements in deeply heterogeneous regions; and others consider it misleading to argue for intrinsic diversities between South-South and South-North mobility (Bakewell, 2009). Still, this branch of research has enabled knowledge production on geographical areas that were before only insufficiently considered by Migration Studies.<sup>22</sup>

### ***Securitization and the international governance of borders***

In order to connect reflections on migrations and borders in the South, global processes of securitization and the international governance of human mobility constitute important phenomena to be considered and their relative novelty partly explains growing interest in this research field. For instance:

- Concerns on borders in relation to human trafficking practices, smuggling of goods, and criminal networks interact with securitizing processes (Bassey and Oshita, 2010).
- Recent studies have highlighted that, although policing of migration has not been a primary concern for many African states, in the past few years North African countries such as Libya, Tunisia and Morocco and sub-Saharan states like Nigeria have shifted towards more restrictive immigration policies responding to European pressures for externalising control mechanisms (Bakewell, 2009; Adepoju and et al., 2010; Bradeloup and Pliez, 2011; Brachet, 2011). Further, the shift experienced by diverse countries in the South from being points of transit to destination sites of migratory movements leads one to observe how the securitization of borders is expanding. In this regard, the Southern frontier of Mexico is an exemplary case (Verduzco and de Lozano, 2011).

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<sup>22</sup> Notable exceptions are two recent volumes: Truong et al. (2011 and 2013).

- Questions of trade and socio-economic development have brought many Asian countries not only to put in place restrictive immigration policies, but also to converge with Northern models based on selective restrictions facilitating high skilled workers' mobility (Bakewell, 2009; Rahman and Ullah, 2012).
- The relationship between human mobility, securitization of borders and the emergence of racism and xenophobia in many Southern states like Libya, South Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Costa Rica, Argentina, India, Malaysia and Thailand has been analysed by scholars (Bakewell, 2009; Sandoval-Garcia, 2013).
- Further, links between the making of borders and human mobility in the Global South have been touched on by studies on the emerging international governance of migration. These works, quite limited in number, have mainly looked at the role of international agencies such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and their diverse practices, like hosting of training seminars for local security organizations and migrants' voluntary return programmes (Duvell, 2003; Andrijasevic and Walters, 2010).

### ***Suggestions for future work***

Altogether, section 3.1 of the essay has provided a basis to think about borders, boundaries and human mobility in the Global South as a promising field of investigation. Firstly, it has indicated some points of convergence between studies on borders and people's movements in the South that might constitute a starting point for future research. For instance, considering that studies on postcolonial borders have mainly focused on border-crossing practices in borderlands, postcolonial borders' effects on migrants covering longer distances remain a major terrain to explore. Secondly, this section of the review has enabled recognition of how many aspects of the intersections between boundaries, borders and migration in the South are ignored. A clear example is the limited material available on the making of borders through migration policies. In this regard, the application of the governmentality approach to cases in the Global North can be a useful example to look at (Fassin, 2011). Thus, in order to bring to the forefront research directions that would be worthwhile to examine, I here make some proposals, relying on some of the reflections that emerged in part 2 of the essay.

Overall, a more diversified set of research questions can be combined and put forward to stimulate further developments in this research area. In this regard, variegated approaches able to combine empirical studies with theoretical contributions are very much required. For instance, *genealogical studies* on policies governing borders and migratory movements can allow us to sharpen the understanding of South-South migration. Further, through the identification of specific dynamics differently affecting borders in the Global South today, genealogical investigations can also serve to more deeply comprehend the limits and potentials of a specific focus on the South,

connecting knowledge production to wide political, social and economic processes.

Second, as most studies on South-South migration tend to privilege state and/or economic perspectives, *multiple standpoints* are clearly welcome. That principle can translate into paying attention to areas such as biometric data, surveillance technologies, and the detention and deportation industries. Also study of transnational forms of resistance to the oppressive effects of migration policing can be useful to comprehend how global securitization and the international governance of migration are experienced on the ground. In fact, the literature has mainly concentrated on transnational migrants' networks and migrants' resistance in destination places, but the two elements have been rarely brought together. Moreover, different forms of resistance have been mainly analysed focusing on the forms of migrants' organising and the role of human rights organizations. To further expand this area of investigation, it might be interesting to research how coalitions with migrant groups are formed and through which boundaries are crossed.

Finally, *combining diverse scales of research* might enable one to identify novel processes of transformation. For example, understanding relationships between global processes of securitization, international forms of governance, national policies and local approaches to borders would help one to develop complex pictures of the power relations operating today in processes of border making in the South.

To further comprehend how research on borders, boundaries and migration in the South is developed at the present, some leading research institutions on Borders in the South can be taken as points of reference: particularly, the [African Borderlands Research Network \(ABORNE\)](http://www.aborne.org/)<sup>23</sup>, the [Centre for African Regional Integration and Border Studies \(CARIBS\)](http://www.caribs.org/) at the University of Lagos<sup>24</sup>, Nigeria, the [Asian Borderlands Research Network](http://www.asianborderlands.net/)<sup>25</sup>, and the [Center for Latin American and Border Studies](http://www.clabs.nmsu.edu/) at the New Mexico State University<sup>26</sup>.

### **3.2 The condition of female migrant workers**

Both Migration Studies and Border Studies have dedicated attention to gendered power relations. In fact, as any other phenomenon, the circulation of people and making of borders cannot be considered gender-neutral. In order to examine how connections between these two fields of research have been and may be done – paying attention to gender elements –, this sub-section of the paper focuses on the literature discussing the conditions of female migrant workers. This choice responds to a constant growing interest in the so called

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<sup>23</sup> <http://www.aborne.org/>

<sup>24</sup> This research Centre has no website, that might suggest that is not active at the present. However, the founder, Professor Asiwaju, can be considered as a point of reference for future collaborations.

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.asianborderlands.net/>

<sup>26</sup> <http://clabs.nmsu.edu/>

feminization of migration, especially the increasing number of women moving across borders (Beneria et al., 2012; Kofman and Raghuram, 2012). In fact, in 2010, according to the International Labour Organization, women accounted for 51,6% of the total international migrant population around the globe (ILO, 2010). Further, while in the past women mostly migrated as family members, women's independent patterns of mobility and high participation in the labour market have led to an inversion of this trend (ILO, 2010).

As a main line of investigation, Migration Studies' scholarship has connected women's migration to increasing labour demand in the services sectors of different regions of the world – including demand for both domestic and sexual services, with the latter directed to satisfy requests for pleasure and/or biological reproduction. As a result, many studies on gender and migration have been mainly connected to issues of care. Recently also investigations on South-South human mobility have been developed in this direction (Sainsbury, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2012; Beneria et al., 2012; Gasper and Truong, 2013). This scholarship will be now reviewed in order to set the stage to later comprehend how Border Studies do or may contribute to investigate the condition of female migrant workers. At the end, suggestions for future work will be provided.

### ***Migration Studies on female migrant workers***

The literature on female migrant workers in Migration Studies has been particularly attentive to the care labour dimension. That has been an intensive area of investigation and many contributions have been elaborated in the last two decades. To explain scholars' attention to women's migration and care labour demand, two elements can be recalled. First, increasing care deficits in countries characterised by ageing populations, growth of women's entry into the paid workforce, lack of male engagement in care labour, and declining welfare states all generate growing care labour demand. This dynamic has been recognised in Western industrialised countries, but also in high or middle income countries in the South, such as Chile, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates and South Africa (Sainsbury, 2013; Kofman and Raghuram, 2012; Beneria et al., 2012). Second, changes in the sexual service sector drive women's mobility (Truong, 2013). These have been differently explained according to the context. For example, studies on Asia and especially South East Asia have acknowledged that growth of the tourism industry, combined with political interests to enable commercial sexual services as tourism's auxiliary, has been an important factor (Truong, 2013).

Theorizations on migration, gender and care have departed from the recognition that no “production system operates without a reproduction system and it should not be surprising that the globalisation of production is accompanied by its intimate Other”, that is the globalization of reproduction (Truong, 1996: 47). Within this frame, the concept of global care chain has been coined and employed to address the series of “personal links between people across the globe based on the paid and unpaid work of caring” (Hochschild, 2000: 131). In other words, the global care chain refers to

processes of transfer of care from the Global South to the Global North, which extend multiple unequal relations of power involving women from poorer countries serving adults and children in rich destination countries (Yeates, 2012 and 2005). Further, these inequalities are often coupled with those proceeding from the precarious migration status of care workers as well as from the racialization of migrant labourers (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, 2010). On the other side, studies have highlighted the emotional inequalities deriving from the extraction of care resources and affect from poorer countries, mostly “borne by migrant mothers and their children who [remain in the country of origin and] experience intense loss and deprivation” (Yeates, 2012: 137-138, 2005).

In recent years, scholars have broadened the scope of inquiry in diverse directions. For instance, the literature has widened understanding of care work, by focusing on diverse occupational sectors beyond the context of nuclear household: from cleaning and cooking to laundry and childcare work in diverse settings such as nurseries, hospitals, care homes, schools, hotels, etcetera (Yeates, 2012). Further, care issues have also been taken into consideration when analysing migrant women's work in factories and Export Processing Zones (Pearson and Kusakabe, 2012). Moreover, attention has been paid also to the effects and implications of human mobility for gender and care regimes in diverse regions of the Global South – shifting the research focus to South-South migration. In particular, care giving and receiving practices and institutional arrangements influencing care provision have been considered through the notion of the care diamond<sup>27</sup> (Kofman and Raghuram, 2009 and 2012). Emphasis on the condition of women as care bearer has also been accompanied with attention to male migrant care labourers and regimes of masculinities (Scrinzi, 2010; Haile and Siegmann, 2013). Overall, the international division of reproductive labour has remained at the centre of this literature, emphasising gender as an underlying and persistent social structure neglecting and/or undervaluing the reproductive side of the economy (Parreñas, 2001; Truong 2013).

Within this literature, it is worth recalling the different ways in which gender and sexuality have been considered as elements determining State regulation of migratory movements, thus influencing the conditions of movement and stay of female migrant workers. For example, studies on the control of human mobility to the Global North have highlighted that family reunification policies and labour recruitment schemes enforce migrants' dependency on heteropatriarchal relations and regulatory structures. In this sense, it has been highlighted that migrant women tend to work in the care sector – characterised by high degrees of informality and low wages –, and so face difficulties in making demands for family reunification, thus reinforcing gendered forms of discrimination (Lister, 2004; Andrijasevic, 2009). Another example, relying on a case study of South-South migration, points out quite

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<sup>27</sup> The care diamond is a conceptual model allowing the examination of how welfare processes are articulated across different institutional arrangements (families, markets, communities, and states).



similar dynamics. Irianto and Truong's (2013) study on Indonesian migrant domestic workers in the United Arab Emirates reflects on the absence of any legal recognition of domestic work, which puts migrant women in a transnational chain of relations of structural dependency.

Certainly a debate on the condition of female migrant workers cannot be exhausted by the discussion of global care chains: the service sector, in which most women are employed, is not reducible only to care work. Still, this literature offers interesting insights that may be inspiring for studying other types of labour undertaken by migrant women – especially in light of some recent reflections. In fact, as some scholars have pointed out, in contexts characterised by post-Fordist economies, the expansion of the service sector has coincided with a qualitative transformation of the type of labour demanded in the market. In a few words, work has become increasingly “subjective, affective, relational and communicative” (Andrijasevic, 2009, 397; Morini, 2007). This phenomenon has been defined as “feminization of labour” (Morini, 2007). Specifically, this terminology indicates the incorporation within the category of productive work of a model of labour previously undervalued and delegated to women under the heading of reproductive (Andrijasevic, 2009). Recognising this trend, it appears interesting to explore the ways in which scholarship on care work has been developed and how it relates to Border Studies, acknowledging that, in the future, research on female migrant workers could be extended to other sectors of the labour market, maintaining attention to the element of care.

### ***Border Studies on female migrant workers***

In general, the branch of Migration Studies focusing on female migrant workers in the service sector has touched borders and boundaries just tangentially. However, behind some recent proposals for future research agendas on global care chains, the influence of Border Studies can be distinguished. Taking as a point of reference Yeates' (2012) state of the art review, her suggestion to *multiply scales of research in global care chain investigations* – so as to avoid an involuntary naturalisation of nation-state borders – indicates a growing interest in the spatial dimension that is so central to Border Studies. Specifically, this scholar seems to echo feminist geographers' contributions to Border Studies that question dominant scales of research as profoundly gendered (Silvey, 2006). Besides, Yeates (2012) too seems to show interest in the *social and spatial production of boundaries* – again very important to Border Studies. She invites us to combine transnational analysis with reflections on the complex intersections of gender with other axes of social differentiation (race, ethnicity, religion, class, age, disability, sexuality, etcetera). These indications have already been partly developed in other disciplinary areas. Thus, I will now examine discussions of scales in feminist geography and feminist studies on intersectionality in their relation to Border Studies.

First, *feminist* geography is a primary field to take into account to provide a complete picture on the present state of the encounter between Border Studies and Migration Studies researching the condition of female migrant workers.

This area of investigation has addressed spatial mobility as being connected at a symbolic and material level to transformations in cultural and economic landscapes. Reflecting on gendered social relations, it has asked how they are developed and steered through spatial mobility, while intersecting with race, class, and other axes of difference (Silvey, 2006; Aaron et al., 2013). In particular, feminist geography has elaborated insights into “the gender dimensions of the social construction of scale, the politics of inter-linkages between place and identity, and the socio-spatial production of borders” (Silvey, 2006: 66). In this regard, critical analyses of dominant scales of research have highlighted the gendered material consequences of particular constructions of scales reflecting tensions between the public-private divide and often translating into the underestimation of feminised work. Further, the examination of places as coming into being as a result of gender and its intersections with other relations of power is believed to contribute to the understanding of the social costs of mobility as a transgressive practice that is differently experienced by women and men. Finally, the study of borders and boundaries is considered key for exploring, on one side, how bordering processes influence the gendering of migration; and on the other side, how bordering processes are shaped by migratory movements, political actions and knowledge production on borders, as also organised by gender and difference (Silvey, 2006).

Second, reflecting more in depth on intersectional theories, it is worth observing that Border Studies always implicitly engage intersectionality while discussing social boundaries. In fact, intersectionality calls for the study of multiple and intertwining axes of difference, whose existence necessarily depends on the establishment of boundaries between categories. Given that, it is interesting to see how the intertwining of differences is comprehended and analysed in Border Studies. In this regard, Kron<sup>28</sup> (2012 and 2013) has explicitly reflected on the relations between the use of categories in intersectionality and the investigation of social boundaries in the field of Border Studies. She has argued, following what McCall (2005) has defined an anti-categorical approach, that social life is too complex to employ fixed categories of analysis. These result to be nothing other than social fictions, whose use can contribute to reproduce inequalities, while trying to address mechanisms producing differences. Thus, Kron (2013) has suggested to affirm the multiple identifications of those at the border, while also acknowledging the role of social structures and histories in the making of subjects. Furthermore, she argued for the importance of adopting this approach to intersectionality while studying migrants' experiences of exclusion and violence at the border as important elements for the construction of subjectivities.

Attention to migrant women's experiences of borders in an intersectional perspective is at the centre of various case studies. For example, a recent

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<sup>28</sup> Her paper titled “The Border as Method; Towards an Analysis of Political Subjectivities in Transmigrant Spaces” is the only work explicitly addressing intersectionality in the two Companions to Border Studies discussed in section 2 of this essay .

examination of the re-scaling of border control and processes of securitization of migration at the Southern frontier of Mexico investigates experiences of insecurity of migrants of Mayan origin at the border (Rojas-Wiesner and De Vargas, 2013). However, reflections on the ontological status of social boundaries are not directly addressed. To do so might be an interesting possibility, to further develop this sort of studies.

Finally, one more element can be taken into consideration as a potential ground for bridging research on migration, gender and borders: regulations of human mobility as a factor impacting female migrants' labour. This has already been acknowledged as an important terrain for investigating global care chains (Kofman and Raghuram, 2009). An example of what this might mean in practice is offered by Adrijasevic (2009). Her discussion on sex trafficking and asylum has demonstrated that Border Studies can lead to important contributions to migration research on heterosexuality and patriarchal arrangements built within regulations of migratory movements. In fact, such reflections from within the political economy approach on the current transformation of borders – exemplified in concepts such as deterritorialization of borders and multiplication of labour (statuses) – have the potential to challenge dominant interpretations of borders in terms of inclusion and exclusion. Then, regarding future research directions, Andrijasevic (2009: 403) suggests to problematise understandings of agency as resistance to normative structures, attempting to comprehend “what makes individuals identify and/or resist certain subject positions and construct a sense of self through them”. This type of encounter could allow – among other things – to comprehend in detail the affective and emotional productive effects of diverse border control regimes and resistance to them.

### ***Suggestions for future work***

As proposed above, encounters between Migration Studies and Border Studies can contribute to investigate the condition of female migrant workers in multiple directions. Some indications for future research have been pointed out:

- First, the application of insights from the global care chain literature to understand the relevance of care within the service sector as an element structuring female migrant worker participation in the labour market.
- Second, the integration of discussions on the ontological status of analytical categories and their effects, which have been already developed in the field of intersectionality, to studies on social boundaries within Border Studies.
- Third, attention to regulatory norms and practices of human mobility as a way to comprehend the affective and emotional productive consequences of discourses and practices of border governments as well as of discourses and practices of resistance and freedom.

Moreover, feminist philosophy can offer elements to integrate and systematise contributions from feminist geography, intersectionality and

migration studies. Following Harding's (1986) discussion on symbolic, structural and individual aspects of gender, three directions of analysis can be identified in order to further explore how the intertwining of Border and Migration Studies helps one to understand the condition of female migrant workers (Winker and Degele, 2011).

- First, looking at the symbolic level, media, institutional and popular representations of migrant female workers can be made objects of analysis. Combining this possibility with previous observations coming from the field of feminist geography, also representations of border-crossing practices and different forms of border control as gendered activities can be investigated. This might contribute to understand how structural power relations are normalised and legitimised in societies (Winker and Degele, 2011).
- Second, departing from the structural level, analysis of regulations of cross-border human mobility as producers of highly gendered norms can be developed. The same could be said about another structural aspect: the gendered construction of labour markets. In practice, that might mean to analyse how legal differentiation of various forms of mobility and different types of free trade agreement affect circulation and labour conditions of female migrant workers in the South. Also the gendered aspects of environmental migration in the South can stimulate reflection on structural forms of relations. In fact, as noted by the Migration Studies literature, legal differentiation of human mobility, modes of inclusion in the labour market, and environmental contexts are all important structural factors influencing women's movements and stay (Kofman and Raghuram, 2012).
- Finally, lingering over individual aspects of gender might translate into exploring identity construction of female migrant workers. That might be done in relation to their practices of border crossing, their relations to border controls and enforcement, Reasoning on identities might be particularly relevant to what has been previously said on the ontological status of analytical categories and the necessity to maintain open the type and number of variables taken into account (Winker and Degele, 2011).

### **3.3 Final remarks**

Section 3 of this essay has aimed to map the encounter between Migration Studies and Border Studies onto two specific sub-areas of research: migration in the Global South and the condition of female migrant workers. In order to do so, existing investigations have been reviewed and indications for future research lines have been proposed. However, it is important to bear in mind that the extension of these fields of study as well as their richness make it difficult to elaborate any complete review. Furthermore, the great variety of stimuli offered by each theoretical approach we have considered makes virtually infinite the list of future research directions that can be taken. Thus,

distant from any pretension of completeness, this section of the essay can be considered as providing illustrative suggestions.

## 4 CONCLUSION

Overall this essay has attempted to address two main objectives. First, it has aimed at elaborating a critical overview of Border Studies by historically locating the emergence of this field of research and presenting three main theoretical perspectives: the postmodern, governmentality, and political economy approaches. In doing so, it has reflected on a series of elements in order to characterise each theoretical trend: the ontological status given to borders, the epistemological stance adopted, underlying political agendas, most common methodologies, and main topics of interest. Further, the paper has indicated research projects and institutes to take as points of reference for each perspective.

Second, this review has addressed explanations regarding the encounter between Border Studies and Migration Studies, which is of particular relevance considering the wide range of investigation it has given rise to in the last few years. Within this broad area of academic production, two main areas of research have been addressed: studies specifically focusing on the Global South and studies on the condition of female migrant workers. Both areas are considered of particular interest for future research. In the former case, a gap in the borders literature has been recognised, especially in regard to investigations addressing South-South migration as well as the influence of processes of securitization and global governance on Southern borders. This gap has been partially explained acknowledging specific historical conditions. In the latter case, the relevance of processes of migration and labour feminization have been discussed to justify the importance of further fostering studies in this field.

Because the area of Border Studies is characterised by a global aspiration, that is an ambition to connect itself to global processes of transformation and overcome methodological nationalism, this essay has not focused on local dynamics and peculiarities. This has undoubtedly meant some sacrifice of attention to some important elements. Reasoning on world macro regions, such as the Global South and the Global North, is a choice charged with both limitations and potentialities. On one hand, it runs the risk to fall into generalizations and simplifications that reinforce dichotomies and hierarchies. On the other hand, it helps one to recognise in the present the effects of historical phenomena such as colonialism and new forms of imperialism. To address the limits mentioned, the field has tried to constantly acknowledge them and to highlight the interconnections of different scales of research.

In order to further deepen this review and provide information useful to the elaboration of future research projects, an annotated bibliography is attached. This will discuss some of the works cited in this essay and present others which – notwithstanding their value – have not found a space in this limited review. Moreover, research programs and funding opportunities are listed, as relevant for future work.

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# Appendices

## APPENDIX 1:

### ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON BORDER STUDIES

#### Table of Contents

- Introduction
- Significant theoretical reviews
- The postmodern approach
- The governmentality approach
- The political economy approach
- South-South migration and Border Studies
- Female migrant workers and Border Studies

#### Introduction

This annotated bibliography aims at orientating the reader in the broad field of Border Studies – which in the last twenty years has experienced an exceptional growth. This bibliography is intended to complement in a twofold way the review essay 'Migration, the Global South, and migrant women workers in the field of Border Studies: theoretical approaches, themes of inquiry and suggestions for future works'. First, it has been chosen to present more in details key publications that have been cited in the paper. Second, other academic works are indicated, in order to give a broader overview of research in the field of Border Studies.<sup>29</sup> In general, the references proposed have been selected in order to provide a sense of the different tendencies crossing the field of Border Studies.

The bibliography is arranged in six sections. The first one proposes relevant theoretical reviews of the field of Border Studies that have focused on different aspects of this wide area of investigation. Sections 2, 3, 4 present case studies particularly representative of three theoretical trends in Border Studies: the post-modern, governmentality and political economy approaches. Sections further develop research on borders, boundaries and South-South migration. Finally, the last section indicates relevant studies for fostering reflections on 5 points out significant works that can be taken as points of departure to the

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<sup>29</sup> References marked with an asterisk (\*) have not been included in the review essay.

conditions of female migrant workers with attention to borders and boundaries.

This annotated bibliography concludes with an annex listing relevant fora for collaboration and research programmes that will help to carry forward the objectives of the project 'Migration, Gender and Social Justice'.

## **Significant theoretical reviews on Border Studies**

**Fassin, D. (2011) 'Policing Borders, Producing Boundaries. The Governmentality of Immigration in Dark Times', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40: 213-226**

This paper provides a detailed overview on the application of the Governmentality perspective to the field of Border Studies, paying attention to how it intertwines with Migration Studies within three pillars of government: economy, police and humanitarianism. The author highlights the importance of moving beyond analysis centred on issues of sovereignty and present pieces of research organised along five macro-thematic areas. First, investigations that combine a focus both on borders and boundaries. Second, academic works that reflect on the temporality and spatiality of borders and boundaries. Third, studies on the role of states and bureaucracies in the production and enforcement of borders. Fourth, research focusing on detention and deportation as an extension of people's movements at the border. Finally, research on asylum practices and regulation as well as humanitarianism as a significant and recent character of the government of borders. In general, the case studies presented focus mostly but not solely on the Global North.

**Johnson, C., R. Jones, A. Paasi, L. Amoore, A. Mounts, M. Salter, and C. Rumford (2011) 'Interventions on rethinking “the border” in border studies', *Political Geography* 30: 61-69**

This paper collects contributions of different scholars proceeding from the field of Political Geography to develop more sophisticated conceptualizations of borders. In this context, Paasi reflects on the challenges that relational thinking has posed to Border Studies. Amoore develops a geography of the virtual border, reflecting on the application of new technologies for border control.

Mounts explores how borders are moving and how this movement can be conceptualised as political. Salter focuses on the performative effects of borders. Rumford questions states' perspectives on borders, suggesting new lenses to look at them. Overall, these scholars aim at offering reflections on the disjuncture between the notion of a borderless world and a reality of increased border securitization.

**Kolossov, V. (ed) (2012) EUBORDERSCAPES. State of the Debate Report I.<sup>30</sup>**

This text is the first report of the research project EUBORDERSCAPES financed by the European Union FP7 framework for the period 2012-2016.<sup>31</sup> It offers a picture of the state of the art in Border Studies with a distinct focus on Europe, the European Union, its member states and neighbours. It indicates themes and concepts that are deemed relevant to the development of Border Studies as well as discussions on emerging research perspectives. The authors contributing to this report – edited by Kolossov - are: Anne-Laure Amilhat, Vladimir Kolossov, Ilkka Liikanen, David Newman, Pertti Joenniemi, Nira Yuval-Davis, Stephane Rosière, James Scott. The review is characterised by advancing a strong State perspective.

**Parker, N. and N. Vaughan-Williams et al., (2009) 'Lines in the sand? Towards an Agenda for Critical Border Studies', *Geopolitics* 14(3): 582-587**

This paper has been written in the context of the research programme 'Lines in the Sand?' - Critical Border Studies Network, started in 2008 with a British Academy Small Grant. This project aimed at producing empirical studies of new forms of bordering practices across Europe and to promote theoretical development of alternative border conceptualization. The essay questions the idea of border together with other concepts such as territory and space. In the view of the authors, adopting a critical perspective refers to the capability of illuminating changing aspects of border and evaluating their ethical and political aspects. To do so, the authors analyse various contributions to Border Studies along three axes: epistemology, ontology and spatiality-temporality. The research programme 'Lines in the sand?' has been renewed in 2011 thanks to an award by the British Academy and National Science Foundation, Taiwan, Joint Project Grant.

**Wilson, T.M. and H. Donnan (2012) 'Border and Border Studies' in Wilson, T.M. and H. Donnan (eds.) *Companion to Border Studies*, pp. 1-25. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.**

This text provides an historical overview of the development of Border Studies, paying particular attention to the different disciplines that have contributed over time to this research area: anthropology, political geography, sociology and history. Later, it traces the trends now crossing the field of Border Studies. To do so, a contrast between two generations of Border Studies is elaborated. In the argument proposed, epistemological stances such as post-modernism as well as a Foucaultian understanding of micro-power are affirmed. Indications for future research agendas include calls for escaping

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<sup>30</sup> Accessed 14 April 2013:

<[http://www.euborderscapes.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/EUBORDERSCAPES\\_State\\_of\\_Debate\\_Report\\_1.pdf](http://www.euborderscapes.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/EUBORDERSCAPES_State_of_Debate_Report_1.pdf)>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.euborderscapes.eu/>

State perspectives and elaborating theoretical views on borders from the Global South. Among the most interesting contributions offered by this paper, the analysis of “how border studies have evolved from individual cases seen through the lens of one scholarly discipline to a more comprehensive and comparative perspective on other borders and other intellectual traditions” emerges as particularly detailed and well connected to broad historical changes.

## **The postmodern approach in Border Studies**

**Cons, J. (2012) 'Narrating boundaries: Framing and contesting suffering, community and belonging in enclaves along the India-Bangladesh border', *Political Geography*, ahead of print: 1-10**

This paper examines the politics of community making at the India-Bangladesh border, taking into consideration the public and private narratives of history and belonging in a sovereign territory of Bangladesh very largely surrounded by Indian territories. The argument advanced by this article is that, in the narrative analysed, statements about who belongs and why are to be considered political projects in and of themselves. This is in contrast to more common readings of narratives of belonging in this type of area, where destitution, exclusion and suffering are the elements more commonly acknowledged. The relevance of this piece of research is that it constitutes an example of how Border Studies can participate in both deconstructing common perceptions and recognising the value of marginalised perspectives.

**Dobler, G. (2010) 'On the Border to Chaos: Identity Formation in the Angolan-Namibian Border, 1927-2008', *Journal of Borderland Studies* 25(2): 22-35 \***

This article is part of a special dossier in the *Journal of Borderlands Studies* on African Border Studies (2010). It focuses on the border between Namibia and Angola, where Portuguese and South African colonialisms met, creating mutual images of identity as colonial masters that informed colonial policy and gradually shaped the areas divided by the border with long term effects that are evident also today. The article connects three case studies from the colonial period, the war situation and the postcolonial economy to construct a history of South African/ Namibian identity construction on the border. Observing that borders constitute loci where collective identities are shaped by comparison and contrast, this study argues that the role of border in constructing separated identities is strictly tied to the legitimization of political domination. The significance of this case study is mainly located in its critical focus on States' perspectives – showing that 'seeing like a state' does not necessarily translate into mainstream research. On the contrary, this type of perspective can be a critical instrument to denormalise present power arrangements.



**Heyman, J.McC. (2012) 'Culture Theory and the US-Mexico Border', in Wilson, T.M. and H. Donnan (eds.) *Companion to Border Studies*, pp. 48-64. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing**

This chapter focuses on the US-Mexico border and enters into the debate about distinctive characteristics of border cultures, which is crossed by two main positions: the former argues for a fundamental hybridity of border cultures; the second emphasises cultural and identity separation and polarization. The author provides a third perspective supporting the view that cultures from borderlands can reveal both hybridity or resistance to, and polarization or embracing of, state boundaries. The focus of this chapter is on socio-cultural processes as generative of specific cultures understood not as a bounded set of traits, but as publicly exchanged meanings. The originality of this piece of research lies in its emphasis on connecting present social processes and institutions to different historical phases of the making of the US-Mexico border.

**Scott, J.W. (2012) 'European Politics of Borders, Border Symbolism and Cross-Border Cooperation', in Wilson, T.M. and H. Donnan (eds.) *Companion to Border Studies*, pp. 83-98. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing**

In this chapter, Scott focuses on the European Union where the creation of supranational sovereignty is believed to serve as a laboratory of political, social, economic and cultural modes of bordering. Based on the assumption that borders are both product and producers of social and individual identities, the process of bordering is seen in this paper as an everyday construction, that comes to be, for instance, through political and institutional discourses as well as media representations and school books. Investigating the politics of border symbolism, the chapter examines cross-border cooperation as an expression of bordering within Europe and raises questions about the effects of bordering practices both for the EU and its regional neighbours. The significance of this paper relies on its recognition of the role played by everyday practices in the making of borders and boundaries.

**Viatori, M. (2013) 'Sovereignty and the Other in Ecuadorian Nationalist discourse', *Identities: Globalization in Culture and Power*, 20(2): 190-206. \***

This article reflects on the relationship among discourses on borders, boundaries and the nation in order to illuminate key mechanisms for the making of a state's authority. In particular, it focuses on the 2008 border row between Ecuador and Colombia. In this context, the paper analyses how President Correa framed this dispute as a national emergency requiring national unity. It argues that such discourse entailed the representation of indigenous communities as a racially marked Other, delegitimising indigenous social movements. As in other essays, issues of border and belonging are tied to the legitimation of state authority. However, this paper is especially interesting because of its ability to illuminate internal differences within the nation.

## The governmentality approach in Border Studies

**Andrijasevic, R. and W. Walters (2010) 'The International Organization of Migration and the *international* government of borders', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28: 977-999**

This article discusses the relationship between globalization and processes of bordering. It states the importance of reflecting on the role played by international agencies in shaping emergent regimes of border control – what is called “the international government of borders”. In particular, the authors choose to focus on the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its involvement in the promotion of “better border management”. They argue that the IOM has made 'border management' into an object of technical expertise and intervention within programmes and schemes of international authority. As a result, the IOM system does not rely on coercion or discipline alone, but on calculated construction of states and other subjects as bearing abilities and responsibilities to shape their futures by making informed and strategic choices. The originality of this piece of research, thus, does not lie only in giving attention to an often neglected issue such as the international dimension of the government of borders, but it also emerges from the authors' choice to build a dialogue between works on global governmentality and on international neoliberalism.

**Hiemstra, N. (2010) 'Immigrant “Illegality” as Neoliberal Governmentality in Leadville, Colorado', *Antipode* 4(1): 74-102. \***

This paper enters the debate on the making of migrants' 'illegality' as a local-scale technique of neoliberal governmentality. Relying on diverse anthropological studies, this essay presents illegality as a racialised and spatialised social condition, whose effects are the marginalization and criminalization of migrants. Focusing on a case study of Leadville, Colorado, the author conceptualises how illegality disciplines immigrant labour in service of the neoliberal order, turns all residents into controllers of immigrants' subordinate socio-spatial position, and masks contradictions within neoliberalism that arise particularly at the local scale. The main contribution of this paper is the connections it makes between legal boundaries and the constitution of space.

**Rudnykyj, D. (2004) 'Technologies of Servitude: Governmentality and Indonesian Transnational Labor Migration', *Anthropological Quarterly* 77(3): 407-434**

This paper examines the techniques and networks that enable the transnational movement of migrant labourers from Indonesia, and shows interconnections of the "global" economy with localized moral economies. In particular, this study focuses on two technologies deployed by non-state entities, specifically human resources companies and NGOs, that facilitate transnational labour migration. Combining ethnographic techniques with theories of governmentality, the paper argues that some NGOs advocating

migrant workers' rights are not inimical to state power, but in fact work to enhance it as their strategies may bring about greater state intervention in migrants' lives. Overall, the paper fruitfully shows how the governmentality approach can be employed to explore processes of regulation and discipline not directly promoted by governmental institutions, but found in the everyday practices involved in the production of subjects as transnational domestic workers.

**Walters, W. (2008) 'Bordering the Sea: Shipping Industries and the Policing of Stowaways', *Borderlands* 7(3): 1-25. \***

This paper focuses on the role of maritime insurance companies in the policing of stowaways by sea. In particular, it examines the ways in which insurers and shipping experts constitute a private industry specialized in the disembarkation and repatriation of migrants. The author argues that, in a global context of spreading migration and border control, insurance companies handle stowaway situations as an inevitable part of trade in open seas, to be managed as calculable risks. Worth noting is that their policing practices are not based on the understanding of migrants as dangerous or cultural Others, but primarily as an issue of economic profits and losses to be managed with a pragmatic approach. This paper represents a further example of everyday practices analysis, this time focusing on the sea space, characterised as being beyond the sovereign space of the nation states.

**Walters, W. 'Foucault and Frontiers: Notes on the Birth of the Humanitarian Border' in Bröckling U., S. Krasmann and T. Lemke (eds) *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges*, pp.138-164. New York: Routledge, 2011. \***

In order to comprehend the diverse political rationalities framing the means and objectives of state borders, this chapter scrutinises the emergence of the humanitarian border – understanding 'humanitarianism' in connection to practices of government justified by higher moral principles, such as the preservation of life and the alleviation of suffering. In this paper, the author argues that the exercise of humanitarian power is connected to the actualization of new spaces, and mainly concentrates on the Italian island of Lampedusa. He thus examines the materialization of the humanitarian border within particular forms of knowledge and the constitutive role which politics plays in making and changing humanitarian borders. The contribution made by this work specifically relates to its attention to the study of pastoral power, which has received far less attention in governmentality approaches than discipline or liberal power.

## **The political economy approach in Border Studies**

**Tsianos, V., S. Hess, S. Karakayali (2009) 'Transnational migration theory and method of an ethnographic analysis of border regimes'. Sussex Centre for Migration Research, Working Paper 55. Sussex: University of Sussex. \***

This paper questions the metaphor of Fortress Europe, after the events of Ceuta and Melilla in 2005 and the creation of Frontex as a EU border control agency. On one side, the authors acknowledge that this metaphor has played a role in the anti-racist movement in order to develop critical discourses on European migration policies. On the other side they invite us to look at border regimes as made of very differentiated 'border zones' where the border is seen as a highly perforated system. The originality of this piece consists in challenging dichotomous understanding of EU borders and regimes of mobility control in favour of viewing migratory systems in a way informed by the fluid, clandestine, multi-directional and context-dependent forms of mobility.

**Mezzadra, S. and B. Neilson (2012) 'Borderscapes of Differential Inclusion: Subjectivity and Struggles on the Threshold of Justice's Excess' in Balibar, E., S. Mezzadra and R. Samaddar (eds) *The Borders of Justice*, pp. 181-203. Philadelphia: Temple University Press \***

This chapter proposes a critical analysis of the relation of justice and borders, starting from the assumption that borders no longer exist at the edge of the territory, but have been transported into the middle of political space. Bringing together Marx's and Foucault's criticisms of the liberal theory of justice and their perspectives on the production of subjectivity, this work explores some of the transformations of the border and migration "regime" that can be observed in several parts of the globe. It argues that an analysis of the relationship of justice and borders, which has hitherto focused on the binary inclusion/exclusion, now needs to be enlarged to grasp the emerging mechanisms of differential inclusion as well as the political significance of 'border struggles'.

**Samaddar, R. (2012) 'The Justice Seeking Subject' in Balibar, E., S. Mezzadra and R. Samaddar (eds) *The Borders of Justice*, pp. 145-165. Philadelphia: Temple University Press \***

This chapter explores the political concept of justice in the Indian experience. It argues that it has experienced a double absorption: justice subsumed under law and politics subsumed under constitutionalism. Though an historical analysis, the author argues that the Indian case reveals a fundamental problematic of modern politics: its clarity about rights and its incoherence about justice. The essay follows constructing a justice-seeking subject, and outlines alternative models of justice raising issues of legal pluralism and multiplication of borders of justice. The main contribution of

this piece of research can be found in the application of the border-as-method perspectives to historical and philosophical discussions of issues of justice.

**Ross, A. (2009) 'The Rise of the Global University', in Edu-factory Collective (ed) *Toward a Global Autonomous University*, pp. 18-30. New York: Autonomedia.**

This paper enters into the debate on the marketization and globalization of universities as processes in line with the WTO agenda on the liberalization of trade in services. Focusing on China and the establishment in that country of overseas programmes and branch campuses led by Anglophone universities, this work focuses on the roaming across borders of high educational services and the impacts of such dynamics on the working conditions of academics or on the ethical profile and aspirational identity of academic institutions. This work reflects on the links existing between constitution of global labour markets, labour struggles and issues of borders. In sum, it brings some important contributions to the elaboration of the concept of multiplication of labour.

**Xiang, B. (2007) *Global "Body Shopping". An Indian Labor Regime in the Information Technology Industry*, Princeton: Princeton University Press. \***

This book explores how new human connections and disconnections are created and ultimately contribute to a process of abstraction in global capitalism today. Through a detailed examination of India-based "body shopping" practices, a global labour management system in the IT industry, the author gives centrality to labour power and traces how this volatile global industry is constructed through concrete human relationships. He documents how people behave transnationally and shows how different regions of the world are related to each other institutionally and structurally. This work has constituted a main source of inspiration for the political economy approach, in particular for the development of concepts of differential inclusion and multiplication of labour.

## **South-South migration and Border Studies**

**Adjai, C. and G. Lazaridis (2013) 'Migration, Xenophobia and New Racism in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *International Journal of Social Science Studies* 1(1): 192-205. \***

This paper explores every day and institutional racism against migrants in South Africa. It contrasts post-apartheid South Africa's culture of inclusiveness, tolerance and human rights, embodied in its 1996 Constitution, to the racialization of African migrants as Other. It argues that racist and xenophobic sentiment are about the politics of access and explains them as a struggle for political and socio-economic resources. In doing so, the article discusses social boundaries, inclusion and exclusion as well as issues of

citizenship. In general the article develops reflections on migration and racism in the South.

**Betts, A. (2009) 'Institutional Proliferation and the Global Refugee Regime', *Perspective on Politics* 7(1): 53-58. \***

This article explores institutional proliferation in the international field of refugee protection. In particular, it focuses on new parallel and overlapping institutions that have emerged in two previously unregulated areas: internally displaced persons and international migration. The paper argues that institutional proliferation has affected both states' and international organizations' strategies in relation to refugee protection. For example it has fostered shifts in the responsibility of refugee protection from the Global North to the Global South. Even if this piece of research does not relate explicitly to borders and boundaries, its relevance to Border Studies lies in its attention to processes of global governance of migration and its effects on the Global South.

**Bakewell, O. (2009) 'South-South Migration and Human Development: Reflection on African Experiences', Human Development Research Paper 2009/7. New York: United Nations Development Programme.**

This paper looks at the relationship between South-South migration and processes of human development. Relying on a critical appraisal of the concept of South-South migration, it draws attention to four fundamental problems: (1) changing patterns of migration in developing regions; (2) economic, social and political drivers of migration within poor regions; (3) the role of the state in influencing people's movements and the outcomes of migration; (4) the contributions of South-South migration to human development in terms of income, human capital and broader processes of social and political change. Notwithstanding a clear focus on African countries, the main significance of this paper consists in providing an overview of the phenomenon of South-South migration that generates insights on how to foster this research area in the field of Border Studies.

**Chaturvedi, S. and T. Doyle (2010) 'Geopolitics of fear and the emergence of "climate refugees": imaginative cartographies of climate change and displacement in Bangladesh', *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region* 6(2): 206-222. \***

This paper explores the *how* and *why* of the discursive production of geographical knowledge on climate change by various actors/agencies and specifically focuses on climate change-induced displacements and their implications for Bangladesh and India. The article argues that a geopolitics of fear dictates and drives the dominant climate change discourse both *in* and *about* Bangladesh. By specific reference to the 'problem' of refugee, the production of anxieties about climate change-induced displacements and

migrations, is revealed. The originality of this piece of work consist in bringing together reflections on South-South migration, climate change and processes of boundary-making in a critical fashion that shows links between discourses on climate change and certain domestic as well as foreign policy agendas.

**Ratha, D. and W. Shaw (2007) 'South-South Migration and Remittances', World Bank Working Paper. Washington D.C.: Development Prospects Group, World Bank.**

This paper represents a step in the ongoing effort to improve data on bilateral migration stocks in the South, and proposes some hypotheses on the determinants and socio-economic effects of South-South migration. In particular, it focuses on the role of South-South remittances, which are described as smaller and with higher costs than North-South remittances. However, the article argues that, notwithstanding their limited dimension, South-South remittances are an important element to raise welfare levels in developing countries. Overall, this paper does not bring up explicit discussions on borders and boundaries, except when it acknowledges that most common forms of international migration in the South occur to contiguous countries. Also, its economic approach to migration in the South can stimulate a reaction and a wish to comprehend how international organizations construct Southern borders.

## **Female migrant workers and Border Studies**

**Andrijasevic, R. (2009) 'Sex on the move: Gender, subjectivity and differential inclusion', *Subjectivity* 29: 389-406.**

This paper enters discussions on migration, gender and sexuality, criticising approaches to borders and regulations that have been based primarily on the inclusion/exclusion dichotomy. The author claims that contemporary transformations of state borders, including their proliferation and reterritorialization, as well as changes in labour relations undermine the adequacy of the exclusion-based interpretative model. Bridging feminist and queer migration studies with governmentality and political economy approaches to Border Studies, the article presents the advantages that the concept of differential inclusions has to explain issues of subjectivities and then identifies lines for future research.

**Fresnoza-Flot, A. (2009) 'Migration Status and Transnational Mothering: the case of Filipino migrants in France', *Global Networks* 9(2): 252-270. \***

This paper explores the various strategies female migrant workers use to negotiate their absence from home, paying attention to how migration status differently affects practices of transnational mothering. This study specifically focuses on Filipino migrant mothers working in the domestic service sector in and around Paris. It argues that transnational family life appears more complicated for undocumented migrant mothers as they cannot easily visit

their family back home and try to compensate by engaging in more intense transnational communication and gift-giving practices. This article does not take up explicitly issues of border and boundaries, but by showing that migration status plays an important role in shaping transnational motherhood, it represents an example of how boundaries produced by legal status have concrete effects on migrants' lives.

**Hyndman, J. (2000) *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. \***

This book critically analyses dominant representational and material practices in humanitarian activities and discusses the international refugee regime within a neoliberal context. In particular, it investigates the boundaries of specific refugee sites and the gendered aspects of sociospatial networks of capital and human mobility. The author argues that the variable porosity of borders and unequal geographies of control intertwine with multiple social hierarchies which separate in a hierarchical way aid providers and clients in the refugee industry. Relying on stories of female refugees' daily lives, issues of labour are raised. This work can be located in the feminist geography approach and it importantly contributes to the field of Border Studies by showing how borders are shaped by and shape gender and other axes of difference..

**Kron, S. (2012) 'The Border as Method: Towards an Analysis of Political Subjectivities in Transmigrant Spaces' in Wastl-Walters, D. (ed.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies*, pp.103-120. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.**

This chapter is located within discussions on the effects of border and border crossing for the production of political subjectivities. In particular, it reflects on the return movement of Guatemalan war refugees, attempting to bring complexity to the understanding of political consciousness building and subject constitution, through employing intersectionality as a tool of analysis. To do so, it questions the use of fixed categories of social inequality and identity in feminist analysis and argues that transmigration contributes to the constitution of nomadic subjectivities performed both by the crossing of political borders and transgression of symbolic boundaries. The main contribution of this article can be found in its bringing into Border Studies of theoretical discussions of intersectionality.

**Raghuram, P. and N. Piper (2012) 'Women and Migration in Asia – Eroding Borders, New Fixities', in Wastl-Walters, D. (ed.) *The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies*, pp.529-547. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing.**

This chapter connects reflections on borders and female experiences of migration, moving beyond conceptions of borders as fixed frontiers that women cross. In fact, it reads borders as dynamic elements constructed in the lives of migrant women. In this text, various case studies from Asia are



brought to the fore to discuss a multiplicity of issues. First Malaysian borders are analysed as metaphorical devices and social practices. Second, the Burma-Thailand border is discussed as producer of new forms of labour and political subjectivity. Third, Indian borders are treated as devices to govern emigration. Finally, forms of bordering between skilled and lesser skilled workers, and reworking of territorial borders through migrants' advocacy in different sites of destination, are analysed. Overall, this paper can be considered the most elaborated work on the condition of female migrant workers in the South and issues of borders.

## **APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT FORA FOR COLLABORATIONS AND RESEARCH PROGRAMMES**

In order to foster possibilities to carry on the objectives of the project 'Migration, Gender and Social Justice', the following research networks and institutes are relevant:

- The Association for Borderlands Studies (ABS)<sup>32</sup> is an international scholarly association dedicated to the exchange of ideas and information relating to borders and frontiers. It was founded in 1976 to foster studies on the United States-Mexico borderlands region. Over time, the ABS has expanded its focus so as to include an interdisciplinary membership of scholars at more than three hundred academic, governmental institutions, and NGOs from the Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe. The ABS publishes an academic journal, the *Journal of Borderlands Studies*<sup>33</sup>, and an association newsletter 'La Frontera'. It also sponsors an annual meeting.
- The Nijmegen Centre for Border Research<sup>34</sup>, aims at stimulating research on borders and organises seminars, congresses and symposia. The most recent meeting was organised in October 2012 in Amsterdam under the title 'Cross-Border Migration and Cross-Border Migrant Cooperation'.
- The School of Transborder Studies at the Arizona State University<sup>35</sup> is a widely recognised institution for the study of populations of the U.S.-Mexico transborder space and beyond.
- The Critical Border Studies Network<sup>36</sup> has been created in the context of the 2008 project 'Lines in the Sand?'. The Network is actively researching for funding and contact people are Nick Vaughan-Williams<sup>37</sup> and Noel Parker<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.absborderlands.org/>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjbs20#.UZogB5zD5ws>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.ru.nl/ncbr/>

<sup>35</sup> <http://sts.asu.edu/>

<sup>36</sup> [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/people/vaughan-williams/critical\\_border\\_studies/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/people/vaughan-williams/critical_border_studies/)

<sup>37</sup> N.Vaughan-Williams@Warwick.ac.uk

- The Goldsmith's College (University of London) Politics Department<sup>39</sup>, among its main lines of research, focuses on crossing-borders.
- The Departments of Political Science<sup>40</sup> and Sociology/Anthropology<sup>41</sup> at Carleton University in Ottawa have produced diverse research on borders, especially under the lead of Dr. William Walters.
- The Department of Political and Social Science at the University of Bologna<sup>42</sup> has worked widely on issues of borders and this work has been especially led by Dr. Sandro Mezzadra.
- The Institute for Culture and Society at the University of Western Sydney<sup>43</sup> has worked on issues of borders especially thanks to the work of Dr. Brett Neilsen.
- The African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE).<sup>44</sup> The institutional members of this network are mainly located in Europe, however many individual members are situated in African universities. ABORNE collaborates with the African Union Border Programme, which co-finances ABORNE activities in order to enable participation by African scholars and constant exchange on issues of scientific and policy relevance.
- The Asian Borderlands Research Network (ABRN)<sup>45</sup> aims at encouraging academic interchange between both local and foreign scholars from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds. ABRN organises every year an international conference to foster this objective. The last conference was held in Singapore in October 2012 and was titled "Connections, Corridors and Communities".
- The Center for Latin American and Border Studies at the New Mexico State University<sup>46</sup> has set as a main mission the stimulation of scholarship on Latin American borders. To this end, it collaborates with the Colegio de la Frontera Norte (Colef) and the Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez (UACJ), both in Mexico, together with the Hewlett Foundation. These institutions have the 'Paso del Norte: Integrating the Region'<sup>47</sup> publication series.

Among the most relevant completed and/or ongoing research programmes on borders, the following are pointed out:

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<sup>38</sup> NP@ifs.ku.dk

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.gold.ac.uk/politics/>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www1.carleton.ca/polisci/>

<sup>41</sup> <http://www5.carleton.ca/socanth/>

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.dsps.unibo.it/it/ricerca>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.uws.edu.au/ics>

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.aborne.org/>

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.asianborderlands.net/>

<sup>46</sup> <http://clabs.nmsu.edu/>

<sup>47</sup> <http://frontera.nmsu.edu/pdn.htm>

- EUBORDERSCAPES<sup>48</sup>, is a research project funded by the European Union. It started in 2012 and is expected to last for 48 months. Its main topic is the evolving concept of border. Its full title is 'Bordering, political landscapes and social arenas: Potentials and challenges of evolving border concepts in a post-cold war world'.
- EUCROSS<sup>49</sup> is a research project funded by the European Union. It started in 2011 and is expected to last for 36 months. It aims to map out individuals' cross-border practices as an effect of European integration and globalisation and to assess the impact of these practices on collective identifications. Its full title is 'The Europeanisation of everyday life: Cross-border practices and transnational identities'.
- EUBORDERREGIONS<sup>50</sup> is a research project founded by the European Union. It started in 2011 and is expected to last for 48 months. It investigates the manifold consequences of increasing cross-border interaction for the development of regions at the EU's external borders and, in this way, contributes to scientific and policy debate on the future of economic, social and territorial cohesion within the EU. Its full title is 'European regions, EU external borders and the immediate neighbours. Analysing regional development options through policies and practices of cross-border cooperation'.
- BORDER DISCOURSE<sup>51</sup> was a research project founded by the European Union. It started in 2000 and was concluded in 2003. Its full title is 'Border Discourse: Changing Identities, Changing Nations, Changing Stories in European Border Communities'.
- GEMIC<sup>52</sup> was a research project founded by the European Union. It started in 2008 and was concluded in 2011. It aimed at identifying links between migration, gender and intercultural interaction. Its full title is 'Gender, migration and intercultural interactions in the Mediterranean and South East Europe: an interdisciplinary perspective'.
- 'Transit labour: circuits, regions, borders'<sup>53</sup> is funded by the Australian Research Council Discovery Projects. It investigates changing patterns of labour and mobility in the whirlwind of Asian capitalist transformation. Its full title is '*Culture in Transition: Creative Labour and Social Mobilities in the Asian Century*'.

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<sup>48</sup> <http://www.euborderscapes.eu/>

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.eucross.eu/cms/>

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.euborderregions.eu/>

<sup>51</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/005\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/social-sciences/projects/005_en.html)

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.gemic.eu/>

<sup>53</sup> <http://transitlabour.asia/>

*Possible research fora for establishing future collaborations are:*

- The UN High Level Dialogue on migration that took place on 3-4 October 2013 in New York. The theme was the benefits of international migration for migrants.<sup>54</sup>
- The annual conference of the Asian Borderlands Research Network.
- The first Association for Borderlands Studies World Conference, on Post Cold War Borders: Global Trends and Regional Responses, which will be held on 9-13 June 2014 at Joensuu, Finland and St. Petersburg, Russia.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <http://www.iom.int/cms/hld2013>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.uef.fi/fi/abs2014world>