Mobility

Riedner, L.; Álvarez-Velasco, S.; De Genova, N.; Tazzioli, M.; van Baar, H.

[Link to publication]

Europe/Crisis: New Keywords of "the Crisis" in and of "Europe"

NEW KEYWORDS COLLECTIVE

A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT OF COLLECTIVE WRITING

coordinated + edited by:
Nicholas De Genova + Martina Tazzioli

co-authored by:
Soledad Álvarez-Velasco (SAV)
Nicholas De Genova (NDG)
Elena Fontanari (EF)
Charles Heller (CH)
Yolande Jansen (YJ)
Irene Peano (IP)
Fiorenza Picozza (FP)
Lisa Riedner (LR)
Laia Soto Bermant (LSB)
Aila Spathopoulou (AS)
Maurice Stierl (MS)
Zakeera Suffee (ZS)
Martina Tazzioli (MT)
Huub van Baar (HvB)
Can Yildiz (CY)

Authorship of specific keywords is indicated by contributors' initials (as above), with the first listed initials indicating the keyword's lead author, and the rest listed alphabetically.

EUROPE / CRISIS: INTRODUCING NEW KEYWORDS OF "THE CRISIS" IN AND OF "EUROPE"

Martina Tazzioli + Nicholas De Genova

"CRISIS"

Charles Heller, Nicholas De Genova, Maurice Stierl, Martina Tazzioli + Huub van Baar

"MIGRANT CRISIS" / "REFUGEE CRISIS"

Nicholas De Genova, Elena Fontanari, Fiorenza Picozza, Laia Soto Bermant, Aila Spathopoulou, Maurice Stierl, Zakeera Suffee, Martina Tazzioli, Huub van Baar + Can Yildiz

SOLEDAD ÁLVAREZ-VELASCO (SAV) is a Ph.D. candidate affiliated with the "Spatial Politics" research group in the Department of Geography at King's College London. Originally from Ecuador, since 2007 she has been investigating the relation between irregularized transit migration, violence, and the capitalist state, particularly in the case of the Mexico-U.S. migratory corridor. Her doctoral research focuses on the production of Ecuador as a zone of transit used by irregularized migrants mov-ing towards the United States, and how the tensions between the politics of mobility and the politics of control have provoked multiple spatial and temporal transitions that shape the dynamics of that space of transit. In addition to various book chapters pub-lished in edited volumes (in Spanish), she is the author of *Frontera sur chiapaneca: el muro humano de la violencia: Análisis de la normalización de la violencia hacia los migrantes indocumentados en tránsito* (forthcoming), and co-editor of *Entre la violencia y la invisibilidad: Un análisis de la situ-ación de los niños, niñas y adolescentes ecuatoria-nos no acompañados en el proceso de migración hacia Estados Unidos* (2012).

NUMBERS (OR, THE SPECTACLE OF STATISTICS IN THE PRODUCTION OF "CRISIS")

Maurice Stierl, Charles Heller + Nicholas De Genova

"HUMANITARIAN CRISIS"

Martina Tazzioli, Nicholas De Genova, Elena Fontanari,
Irene Peano + Maurice Stierl

MOBILITY

Lisa Riedner, Soledad Álvarez-Velasco, Nicholas De Genova,
Martina Tazzioli + Huub van Baar

(THE CRISIS OF) "EUROPEAN VALUES"

Can Yildiz, Nicholas De Genova, Yolande Jansen, Laia Soto Bermant,
Aila Spathopoulou, Maurice Stierl + Zakeera Suffee

"MOBILITY"

The consolidation of the Schengen zone within which border controls were eliminated, and more generally, the institutionalization of the ostensible "right" to freedom of movement within the EU for the citizens of signatory states, have been defining hallmarks of European integration during recent decades. The contemporary "crisis" of migration in Europe dramatically exposes the deep limits and exclusionary dimensions of these particular EU-ropean formulations of "freedom" in the context of the broader government of human mobility. Recently, and repeatedly during 2015, the "right" to freedom of movement for EU citizens and denizens alike has been more and more restricted, and border controls within the Schengen area have been re-introduced. Nonetheless, migrants and refugees simply keep arriving. Hence, the measures for governing mobility and ostensibly stopping "unwanted" migratory movements – particularly, the movements of those who are considered to be deficient according to dominant criteria of "employability," or those purported to lack properly "European values," and thus, according to racist rationales, who may be considered a "threat" to "Europe" – have simultaneously been continuously confounded as migrants persistently defy these controls. The incorrigibility of these autonomous mobilities has consequently prompted the repeated announcement of new "crises" (such as the "refugee crisis" or alarmist proclamations about a parallel "crisis" of "poverty migration"). Here, of course, we are reminded of the long history by which the mobility of labor has served simultaneously as both a resource for capitalism as well as a disruptive and potentially subversive force (see "Migrant labour" in Casas-Cortes et al. 2015).

National governments in the EU's wealthier member states (such as Germany or the UK) resort to discourses of "poverty migration" to problematize specifically "European" mobilities as the ostensibly "unwanted" by-product of the

larger regime of "free" mobility within the EU. "Mobility," it would seem, turns into "migration" quite easily. According to this rhetoric, "mobility" pertains to those who bring investment or enhance profitability, whereas "migrants" are those who perennially threaten the viability of "national" economies and social welfare systems (see "Differential inclusion/exclusion" in Casas-Cortes et al. 2015). Through the imposition of various restrictions on access to social benefits, the putative "right" to mobility is rendered profoundly conditional, as it becomes thoroughly contingent upon access to "regular" work contracts in the formal labor market. Those who cannot meet more or less stringent requirements are designated to be economically "inactive" and consequently denied various social rights, and may be subjected to harsh regimes of workfare, or even eviction and deportation (van Baar 2012; Riedner 2015). For example, Belgium recently expelled more than 7,000 EU citizens because they had worked with formal labor contracts for fewer than twelve months and had been unemployed for more than six months prior to expulsion. Thus they were deemed an unbearable burden on the welfare state.[7] For many, then, the much-celebrated EU-ropean "freedom of movement" is not a right in any substantive sense, but rather serves to intensify the neoliberal obligation to be engaged in wage labor or some other form of productive economic activity, and thus to accept increasingly precaritized working and living conditions. This process of re-disciplining labor goes hand in hand with conditionalization of social rights, their pervasive denigration as mere "dependency" on welfare benefits, and the withdrawal of mobile persons' "right" to stay.

We begin to detect, furthermore, that the "migrant" predicament is not reducible only to the potential withdrawal or conditionality of the simple "rights" to move or to stay, but also the more expansive (partial, differential) exclusion from the substantive entitlements of citizenship, such as access to state services and social welfare benefits, and thus also a withdrawal of social, labor, and political "rights" (see "Differential exclusion" in Casas-Cortes et al. 2015). This corresponds closely to what Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson (2013) have described as the "multiplication of labor." Thus, current attempts to restrict "internal" (EU) mobilities could be interpreted as experiments within the EU-ropean neoliberal laboratory for governing migration without border controls as "free" but highly conditioned mobilities, whereby migrants are nonetheless subjected to the conditionalities and contingencies imposed through the amplification of "workfare"-like technologies of government (Riedner 2015).

The current "economic crisis" and the resultant widespread increase in precaritization have triggered various re-orientations of mobility across and also beyond "Europe," contributing to the (renewed) "migrantization" of various EU-ropean citizens and denizens alike. In the protracted context of "crisis"-driven neoliberal austerity across Europe, there has been noteworthy evidence of new forms of migration as well as reversals in the direction of more long-standing migratory processes. Hence, migrants originally from the so-called Global South who now possess Spanish or Italian passports abandon joblessness and home foreclosures in the debt-strangled "European South" and relocate to more prosperous northern European countries, now as EU citizens

7. http://www.connessioniprecarie.org/2014/12/05/the-government-of-mobility-1-conditioned-freedom-and-mobility-on-probation/

availing themselves of their "right" to mobility. Meanwhile, an additional con-sequence of economic "crisis" and austerity in Europe has been a noteworthy increase in mobility out of EU-rope altogether. Spanish and Italian nationals, for instance, have increasingly migrated as "tourists," overstayed visas, and sought "irregular" residence and employment in North Africa or South America.

Notably, the movement of young Europeans with relatively high levels of for-mal education or skill migrating (within or out of Europe) in search of employ-ment opportunities – particularly in "unskilled" work – signifies that mobility is also inseparable from processes of "de-skilling." For instance, the increased presence of (formerly unemployed) Spanish citizens who have recently moved to Morocco to find jobs in call centers is a considerable phenomenon. The estimated number of Spaniards currently based in Morocco is approximately 25,000, while the number of those who are registered at the Spanish consulate as residents is only about 3,500. Of course, the conditions of migrant "irregular-ity" for Europeans in North African countries such as Morocco or Tunisia are in no sense comparable with the illegalization in those countries of sub-Saharan migrants (usually with aspirations of eventually making their way to "Europe"). Thus, there is increasing evidence of a kind of "differential illegality," with quite glaringly unequal implications for distinct categories of migrants' divergently racialized lives: detainability and deportability for sub-Saharan (Black) migrants, on the one hand, and benign neglect and tolerated presence for European (white) migrants, on the other. This example helps to clarify that the "migrant" condition cannot be reduced narrowly to legal status alone, and that the actual ways in which distinct categories of people and their respective mobilities are effectively governed must be carefully taken into account. However, the re-ori-entation of mobility across the Mediterranean is not limited to "Europeans" moving southward: return migrations from Europe to the Maghreb (and many other countries and regions of origin) has likewise been a significant but largely undocumented and unmapped phenomenon that should be investigated in its global articulation with the effects of "the crisis" in Europe.

Likewise, EU-uropean nationals have increasingly been migrating out of the continent altogether, particularly to Latin America and the Caribbean. A recent study carried out by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reveals, furthermore, that since 2010 this trend has been accompanied by a marked decrease in the movement of people in the other direction. For the first time since the year 2000, more people migrated from Europe to Latin America than the reverse: in the year 2012, for example, approximately 182,000 Euro-pean nationals left for Latin American and Caribbean countries, as compared to approximately 119,000 Latin American and Caribbean nationals who moved to the EU (IOM 2015). The leading EU-ropean countries of this recent out-migra-tion notably include not only debt-strangled Spain, Italy, and Portugal, but also France and Germany. Among these, the Spanish case is truly remarkable. This Spanish migration has, due to shared language and historical interconnections, perhaps predictably prioritized Latin America as its main destination. Accord-ing to the Fundación Alternativas,[8] some 700,000 Spaniards left the country between 2008 and 2012. Figures from Spain's National Statistics Institute

8. http://www.fundacionalternativas.org

(INE) show that another 547,890 people left in 2013. However, the profile of these European migrants is notably not reducible to that of "return migrants." In other words, this is not simply a statistical illusion generated by Latin American or Caribbean migrants returning from Europe to their home countries. Instead, the majority of these European migrants are "crisis migrants" (or, rather, austerity refugees) – native-born "Europeans," now turned "economic migrants," seeking new life and job opportunities in countries such as Ecuador, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Peru, or Bolivia, places that have conventionally been almost exclusively depicted as "sending" countries.

Despite these extraordinary numbers, however, this significant reversal in the configuration of "migration" in the European context has not been depicted in the European media or dominant political discourse as a European "migration crisis." Apparently, "Europeans" cannot be conceived as "economic migrants." Such a categorization is customarily overburdened with racial, gender, class, and national prejudices, and evidently reserved for those who migrate from the impoverished (formerly colonized) countries of the so-called Global South ("peripheral" countries, in the place formerly known as the Third World) to the rich ones fashioned as "the core" of the world economic system, where "European" countries, particularly the former colonial powers, historically secured their self-styled centrality. Thus, it seems to be no longer quite a "natural" or self-evident condition that "Europe" is figured as a space of prosperity that acts as a magnet for "economic migrants" from the "underdeveloped" countries. In the contemporary "crisis" scenario, Europeans have increasingly joined ranks with Africans, Asians and Latin Americans as mobile persons compelled to seek their fortunes and new life opportunities in faraway lands. However, the juridical and socio-political conditions under which Europeans migrate outwards predictably are utterly different from those imposed by the European border regime: Latin American and Caribbean countries generally receive the European newcomers with open arms, with virtually no immigration restrictions imposed on them. Nevertheless, these contemporary reversals of European mobility are important signals of a reversal of fortune for EU-rope. Yet, this reversal in the direction of migratory movement is seldom taken as evidence that European countries are plagued by "failed" economies, or that the neoliberal ambush of European welfare states has proven incapable of preventing the exit of their citizens due to the increasingly acute precaritization of their living conditions.

Undoubtedly, the process of selectively labeling some migrant and refugee mobilities as a "migration crisis" while concealing the "crisis migration" of others has profound and productive effects. Reinforcing anti-immigrant racism and nativist hostilities, perpetuating postcolonial bigotries, and aggravating forms of both blatant and subtle violence against those deemed to be "non-Europeans" all serve to de-fuse or re-direct some of the potentially most explosive socio-political dynamics constituting Europe today (De Genova 2015; De Genova and Tazzioli 2015). Nevertheless, the massive movement of unemployed or under-employed EU citizens toward the most prosperous EU countries, usually to work in low-paid service jobs beneath their formal qualifications, is another

major feature of the contemporary processes of "crisis migration" in EU-rope, more generally. Consequently, alongside the predictable anti-immigrant racism toward ("non-European") "foreigners," the increasingly shrill anti-immigrant politics of countries such as Britain over recent years have been discursively re-tooled, now predominantly obsessed with "migration" from the rest of EU-rope.

In times of "crisis," therefore, we must ask anew: *Who has become a migrant? Which forms of human mobility are classified, or recognized, or disavowed as manifestations of "migration"?* Moreover, it is crucial to ask: *Who does, and who does not, come to be governed as a "migrant"?* These developments signal noteworthy transformations. Some forms of "mobility" have been converted into "migration" (as in the transformation of intra-EU "mobility" from southern or eastern Europe into labor markets in more prosperous northern and western European countries); likewise, some forms of "migration" have turned into "mobility" (as in the "secondary migrations" of Latin Americans or Africans from Spain or Italy into other European countries following their "regularization" and acquisition of European passports, or similarly, the summary reclassification of previously undocumented migratory movements from eastern European countries into western European labor markets following the accession of their countries of origin to EU membership and consequently, their reclassification as EU citizens engaged in their rightful free "mobility"). The EU-ropean experiment with mobility thus offers a striking context in which to contemplate how cross-border mobility alone does not necessarily become apprehensible as "migration," and likewise, how juridical status alone (e.g. "illegal migrant," "refugee," "EU citizen," "tourist," "diplomat" and so on) seems insufficient to enclose a mobile person within (or release her from) the socio-political burdens of becoming a "migrant."

If "migration" cannot be adequately defined in exclusively juridical terms – according to which kind of border is crossed, and under which legal parameters – we must consider, furthermore, whether the very classification of particular forms of mobility as "migration" always already imply particular forms of discrimination and domination. Here, we must immediately confront the diverse ways in which the problematization of particular mobilities as "migration" raise questions of difference and "foreign"-ness that may be overtly constructed in either "cultural" or narrowly legal terms, but are nonetheless principally constituted according to logics of race and class. We are reminded therefore of what Nicholas De Genova (2016) has called the "European" Question, and the always ambivalent and unstable constitution of "European" identity in relation to the putative "outside" of "Europe" (understood to be a postcolonial formation of racial whiteness) and simultaneously in relation to those who inhabit the amorphous extended borderlands of "Europe" itself and their "not yet" or "not quite" status as "white"/"European."

Here, and particularly in the case of the "mobility" of (South) Eastern Europeans, we deal with a newly articulated form of what Maria Todorova (1994; 1997) has called "Balkanism": that specific and ambiguous kind of Orientalized imagination and representation according to which, due to its alleged "infe-

rior" status, southeastern Europe, or "the Balkans," simultaneously does and does not belong to "Europe." At the time of Yugoslavia's violent dissolution in the 1990s, Balkanistic reasoning served as one of the dominant ways to legitimize "military-humanitarian" interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo. While these practices were frequently considered to be interventions in a space *external* to "Europe," at the same time they were commonly legitimized on the basis of the contention that crimes against humanity "on *European* soil" were an intolerable scandal and had to be combatted (Balibar 2002/2004: 1–6). And even while the then-manifest Balkanism was operationalized as a kind of "nested" Orientalism (according to which, for instance, "the Serbs" would be more "brutal," "violent," and "cruel" than "the Croats"), in the end, all of the Balkan "peoples" were nonetheless considered to be effectively indistinguishable and comparably "problematic," for they could all be expected to resort to "ancient hatreds" and violent "primordial" nationalisms. As Slavoj Žižek (2000) has argued in his reflection on the "Western" imagination of the Balkans, what "Balkanism" offers to the Western gaze is "what it likes to see in the Balkans." This is "a kind of exotic spectacle that should either be tamed or quarantined…a mythical spectacle of eternal, primordial passions, of the vicious cycle of hate and love, in contrast to the decadent and anemic life in the West." In the contemporary version of Balkanism, those who are coming from (South) Eastern Europe to western Europe to look for work opportunities, or to flee socio-political circumstances (particularly in the case of the Roma), are again considered to be largely indistinguishable – but now are homogenized as "poverty migrants," "social (benefits) tourists," "bogus asylum seekers" or "fake refugees" (see also footnote 6, above). While, in public discourse and political debate, this representation of citizens from the new or candidate EU member states has been predominantly mobilized to "irregularize" the status of Roma and to "securitize" their situation (van Baar 2015), we have nevertheless been able to observe a trend towards what could be considered to be a more general "Gypsification" of all (South) Eastern Europeans, according to which they are racialized on the basis of many of the stereotypes that are customarily attributed to Roma through the derisive "Gypsy" label (as lazy, dirty, criminal, irresponsible, profiteering, and so on).

At the same time, particularly when they move across the purportedly "borderless" space of EU-rope, racially minoritized Europeans of Roma or Sinti backgrounds (most of them EU nationals and, thus, EU citizens) are often designated officially as "nomads," and effectively pathologized as incorrigibly *mobile* "populations." Despite this specter of "excessive" mobility, however, nation-state governments and local municipalities enact enforcement measures precisely in order to obstruct Roma / Sinti *settlement* and to re-mobilize them by subjecting them to coercive evictions and displacement. To truly understand such regimes of EU-internal migration, however, we must also move beyond simplistic critiques of the racism against "Roma" and "Sinti" that naturalize these very identities, and thereby become complicit in the imposition of such racialized ("ethnic") categories from above. Particularly when what is at stake is often a racialization – or specifically, a "Gypsification" – of poverty (Van Baar 2016b), it seems more productive to ask *who* comes to be racialized as "Roma"

or "Sinti," under what circumstances, and how these categories are contested and with which effects. This analytical perspective also opens up possibilities to better understand the strategic and situational character of the particular struggles of self-identified "minorities" for rights and recognition. Thus, the mobility of the poor, and especially the racially stigmatized poor – even despite ostensible EU citizenship – is scarcely tolerated, and subjected to special policies and regimes of *evictability* (van Baar 2015; 2016a). Paradoxically, it seems that as soon as these "unwelcome" mobile "citizens" use their "right to free movement" and look for better labor opportunities outside their countries of birth, they are summarily converted into (deportable) "migrants." Thus, the EU-ropean government of mobility entails (specifically neoliberal) experiments with borders and migration through the modulation of the "freedom of mobility," establishing various terms and conditions related to formal and regular employment and economic "independence" that enhance new conjunctures of racism and produce new zones of internalized borders and boundaries.

The "migrantization" of various distinct but related practices of mobility is a phenomenon that until now has remained rather un-remarked, under-theorized, and un-mapped, as the meaning and the socio-political condition of being "governed like a migrant" cannot be adequately comprehended within the narrow parameters of juridical status alone. In this scenario, intra-EU-ropean mobility has provided a socio-political context in which the autonomy of human mobilities of various kinds unsettles and challenges the dominant neoliberal model of internal (EU / Schengen) "freedom of circulation." These mobilities have thereby produced unforeseen fractures and divisions within the "European" space itself – between the presumptive (self-anointed and self-authorizing) "core" of Europe and the southern and eastern "frontiers" and "transit zones" where the putative "inside" and "outside" of "Europe" have become increasingly blurred and confounded.

LR, SAV, NDG, MT, HvB

9. http://europa.eu/scadplus/constitution/ objectives_en.htm#VALUES