Jahrbuch
Migration und Gesellschaft/
Yearbook
Migration and Society
2020/2021

BEYOND BORDERS

Hans Karl Peterlini,
Jasmin Donlic (eds.)

[transcript]

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Hans Karl Peterlini, Jasmin Donlic (eds.)
Jahrbuch Migration und Gesellschaft /
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**Jahrbuch Migration und Gesellschaft /
Yearbook Migration and Society** | Volume 2

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Beyond Borders

[transcript]

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The editors acknowledge the financial support by the University of Klagenfurt and its Faculty of Humanities.

Each paper was reviewed in a double-blind peer-review process. The editors thank the national and international reviewers for the quality assurance of the publication.

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de

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First published in 2021 by transcript Verlag, Bielefeld
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Cover layout/Umschlaggestaltung: Maria Arndt, Bielefeld
Proofreading/Lektorat: Florian Kelle, B.A.
Typesetting/Satz: Mag. Christian Herzog
Printed by Majuskel Medienproduktion GmbH, Wetzlar
Print-ISBN 978-3-8376-5591-9
PDF-ISBN 978-3-8394-5591-3
https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839455913
Buchreihen-ISSN: 2700-6824
Buchreihen-eISSN: 2703-0547

Printed on permanent acid-free text paper.

https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839455913 https://www.inlibra.com/de/page/agb - Open Access - (cc) BY

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In the radius of borders—and beyond

Hans Karl Peterlini, Jasmin Donlic

"Beyond Borders" is the focal topic of this new edition of the "Yearbook Migration and Society". The view goes from the border as a basic figure of demarcation to the border area as a potential for overcoming it. Migration and borders are conditional on each other. There may also be inner migration, movements within a state, but even in this case such movements only become problematic when at least imaginary border lines are crossed—between country and city or vice versa, between north and south, east and west, rich and poor, or even between regions of different ethnic or religious prevalence in the same state. The yearbook draws in part from an intensive scholarly examination of border and migration on two levels, firstly through the preparatory work for a Horizon2020 project on narratives of migration, and secondly within the program committee of the International Migration Conference 2021 in Klagenfurt (Austria) with its focus on "Border Thinking".

In its geographical dimension, the concept of "border" points to migration movements as such: migrants leave their previous central place of living and livelihood, departing for somewhere else. They do so in order to begin a new life there, although it does not by any means have to be the final destination of their migration. However, bound up with this is a venture, subjectively experienced in very different ways, into a more or less new transnational (life)world. In traversing the geographical border, at the same time they must grapple, come to terms with—and successfully surmount—political, social, linguistic and socio-cultural borders as well.

Border research in migration deals principally with political questions in the framework of confronting and dealing with border regimes. The interest there looks at complex, national and supra-national activities and

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policies of the respective states concerned, the securing of existing borders and the constituting of new national-state borders, as well as the political and populist discourses accompanying these developments in regard to the control and supervision of migration. The main topic of previous investigation has been the border regimes along the external boundaries of the EU and the border between the United States and Mexico. Going beyond such political questions and closely associated with them is the broad palette of borderland topics, extending from political-geographical practices to social and cultural practices, and to practices transcending what is cultural, such as in connection with social practices of "bordering" and "border making." Here the prime focus is on questions of the genesis and treatment of group-related differences, historical, political, social and cultural forms of border making within societies, which can be bound up with structural and personal processes of exclusion and discrimination. The central key words here in the context of migration are racism, ethnicization and culturalization. Examples of criticism of and resistance to the various forms of exclusion and marginalization are the Black Lives Matter Movement, postmigrant discourse and also the new post-colonial debates, such as those within Critical Whiteness Studies. Forms of negative exclusion are countered by forms of self-determined boundary making, such as in the framework and creation of forms of cultural, ethnic or religious self-determination by migrants. Central to these forms of boundary making are in particular the development and establishing of forms of joint action grounded in solidarity and oriented to reciprocity, mutuality, modes of mutual aid. A further form of dealing with borders involves practices in life, work and the economy extending over and beyond borders, where—beyond political and media discourses on crisis—border regions harbor a wealth of experience for the shaping of transnational exchange and convivial strategies for multi-, inter- and trans-cultural forms of living together, synergy and collaboration. However, in regard to positively experienced and tangible forms of border making, it is necessary to keep in mind that they are variable and mutable. This means that modes of border making in social practices are also subject to changes; they can alter their significance and character. Thus, for example, a positive attitude toward regional contexts can give rise to narrow-mindedness, dissociation and distancing in regard to neighboring regions or persons who have fled or who are in need of protection and care.

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Thus, in respect to migration very different forms of borders and bordermaking develop their impact. In the dynamic process, social, political and cultural factors and contextual situations become visible, within which societal and social structures and specific social practices are manifest. In the context of these practices, very individual and diverse forms of dealing with migration—and also with borders—arise and crystallize. The Yearbook seeks to investigate these aspects, inter alia with reference to the debates on decolonizing through critical case studies about borders and migration in Europe, between USA and Mexico, in Mideast and in Africa. In line with this international radius, this issue is published exclusively in English. It includes following contributions:

Regina Römhild, Hans Karl Peterlini, Nadja Danglmaier, Jasmin Donlic: The Border as research space: Potentials of historical and contemporary border narratives for a better understanding and addressing of migration

The article proposes a research approach for addressing controversial challenges through migration by focusing on experiences in border regions. This is based on the assumption that narratives of belonging, defence and threat have emerged around borders over centuries, which have produced prevalent national identities over the past 150 years. Among these problematic and heavily mediatised discourses, the regions on both sides of the border are guarding a precious treasure of experiences of border crossing, cultural exchange, social and economic transactions. This hidden knowledge and underestimated potential of border regions can be recovered through research and used for inclusive processes in migrant and ethnicised societies.

Naif Bezwan: Borders, authoritarian regimes, and migration in Kurdistan: An Intersectional Inquiry

This paper examines the interplay between borders, regimes, and migration by focusing on the Kurdish case. It explains migration as being causally related, (a) to the ways in which territorial boundaries of the states were redrawn, (b) the processes by which the political regimes have been established and (c), to the authoritarian and homogenous state policies and practices that followed and continue to exist. To make sense of this interconnected-

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ness, I present the concept of structural migration to explain the phenomenon of migration as being engineered by and built into the institutional and ideological structures of the political regimes ruling over Kurdistan.

Isabel K. Latz: U.S. immigration enforcement policies, health care utilization, and community health

Under the Trump administration, immigration policies have become more restrictive and immigration enforcement has been strengthened, particularly at the U.S.-Mexico border. We conducted a survey study examining immigration policy perceptions in relation to mental health and health care utilization among 211 Hispanic residents with different immigration statuses in El Paso, County in the Spring of 2019. Findings showed associations between deportation fears and increased psychological distress as well as experiences with immigration enforcement and lower health care utilization. The COVID-19 pandemic highlights a need to understand how immigration policies affect health care utilization and health outcomes to mitigate community harm.

Emina Osmandzikovic: Lessons learned between Ebola and COVID-19: Border politics and securitization of migration flows in West Africa

Border politics in West Africa is a gravely misunderstood topic. Externally securitized in a way that does not necessarily serve the local communities and the sustenance of cross-border flows of people and goods, West Africa has persevered through the Ebola outbreak in a rather miraculous way. Given the acuteness of the West African socio-economic condition and healthcare security, this chapter attempts to explore migration patterns and contextualize viral outbreaks—from Ebola to COVID-19—in the fluid framework of border flows within this Sub-Saharan region, thus invalidating extant prejudice against West African migration patterns.

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Hans Karl Peterlini: Particular to time and space: Historical and life-world explorations on the Brenner border Austria–Italy

The border at the Brenner Pass crossing the Alps between Austria and Italy is politically and emotionally charged: Here, where for millennia there was an open transition between North and South and made possible the cross-border togetherness of the Tyrol region, an arbitrary boundary was drawn in 1918–1920 and Tyrol was divided. The article explores the historical developments and lifeworld potentials beyond an exclusively political definition of border. Exploration in the two border villages of Brenner and Franzensfeste reveals experiences of living together across ruptures and crises, especially with regard to migration.

Alexandra Schwell: Imaginaries of sovereignty: Visualizing the loss of control

"The night that Germany lost control." This headline on the cover of the German weekly DIE ZEIT was published in fall 2016 on the 2015 border opening anniversary when German chancellor Angela Merkel had decided to allow Syrian and other refugees into the country. DIE ZEIT situates its visual and linguistic narrative within a discursive framework that echoes far-right and right-wing populist discourses in the way it instrumentalizes images, metaphors, and visual imaginaries of Others and relates them to imaginations of control and sovereignty. Drawing upon a closed reading of DIE ZEIT's title page, the article seeks to elaborate on the broader relation of images, imaginaries, and emotional practices of border transgression and the invocation of the border in media and political discourse on refugees in Germany. It explores how the cover epitomizes, alludes to, and at the same time fosters a growing unease of large parts of the German liberal middle-class concerning the "refugee crisis".

Tatiana Zhurzhenko: A border on the move: The Ukrainian-Russian frontier from the Soviet collapse to the conflict in Donbas

The border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation is the longest in Europe. It runs across densely populated territories and is crossed by millions of people for private visits, business and tourism. The annexation of

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Crimea by Russia and the military conflict in Donbas resulted in new dividing lines, caused flows of refugees and internally displaced persons, affected labour migration and disrupted the cross-border cooperation between the two countries. This development has significant impact on border crossing regimes, transport routes and routines of cross-border movement.

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The border as research space

Potentials of historical and contemporary border narratives for a better understanding and addressing of migration

Regina Römhild, Hans Karl Peterlini, Nadja Danglmaier, Jasmin Donlic

The article proposes a research approach for addressing controversial challenges through migration by focusing on experiences in border regions. This is based on the assumption that narratives of belonging, defence and threat have emerged around borders over centuries, which have produced prevalent national identities over the past 150 years. Among these problematic and heavily mediatised discourses, the regions on both sides of the border are guarding a precious treasure of experiences of border crossing, cultural exchange, social and economic transactions. This hidden knowledge and underestimated potential of border regions can be recovered through research and used for inclusive processes in migrant and ethnicised societies.

Introduction: Between national orders and transnational spaces

In recent years, the power and fragility of borders have emerged, with a particular intensification from 2015 to 2020, as a key issue for the global shaping of the present and future. The increased movement of refugees to Europe around 2015 was politically highly problematized, whereas in 2020 the political scene appeared almost schizophrenic: After the critique of its military offensive in Syria, Turkey threatened the EU with allowing 3.6 million refugees to enter Europe, who were held back there partly with EU funds. While the EU states were considering stricter measures to secure their borders against

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refugees, the SARS-CoV-2 virus effortlessly crossed all borders and put the world in a state of emergency, causing a global lockdown.

Seldom before has it become so obvious that borders are supposed to protect national boundaries as sharp divisions yet fail in the face of global challenges which can only be addressed by international and transnational cooperation. Just like viruses and climate change cannot be stopped at borders, refugee movements and migration cannot be mastered simply via border management if one does not want to abandon all humanity and international solidarity. However, exactly this happened when several states tended to instrumentalize the Corona pandemic to close down their borders and—as in the case of Bosnia—virtually arrested refugees preventing them from moving anywhere. To make things even worse, the migrants were left alone with no humanitarian support whatsoever. In fact, the recent struggles with the virus strengthened the ongoing renaissance of a 'new localism' in nationalist and racist terms, rather than promoting the necessary opening up for transnational, ultimately global collaborative efforts to combat the pandemic threat.

This article aims at broadening the perspective and allow for a critique of the current return to understanding borders in terms of mere geopolitical firewalls. Against this limitation, it deals with the border as an object of research from a rather unusual, widely forgotten perspective, namely not only as a dividing line, but also as a connecting space (cf. Barth 1969; Driessen 1992). Viewed in this way, borders do not only exercise excluding and blocking functions, but also hold potential for cooperation and collaboration across borders.[1]

Particularly in the context of migration, borders are presented in media, public, political and also scientific discourses predominantly as threatened infrastructures of national—and today also EU-European—sovereignty that need specific protection. Just consider the border controls between Austria and Germany and the conflicts between Italy and Austria over the Brenner

1 The research approach discussed here is the basis for a joint research proposal by universities in Austria (Klagenfurt), Germany (Berlin), Greece (Thessalonik) and Sweden (Malmö) as well as NGOs in Austria (Südwind), Romania (Hosman Durabil) and Tunisia (France and Tunisia Terre d'Asile): "Border Narratives on Migration as laboratories for inclusion". In addition to the authors of this paper, the theoretical and methodological part of the proposal was also worked on by Naif Bezwan, Athanasios Marvakis, Veronika Michitsch, Ricarda Motschilnig, Bo Petersson, Ioanna Wagner Tsoni, Werner Wintersteiner and others.

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border as a result of the flight movements in 2015. This escalated in 2019 in the heated debates about a wall between Italy and Slovenia. At the borders with the Eastern European EU countries, the border and migration policies led to setbacks in fundamental questions of democracy and European cooperation. The border issue has thus destabilised the EU's internal cohesion and led to a stronger stance towards the external borders.

But in the shadow of this negative perception of the border also lie unrewarded and unexploited potentials of the border regions: Despite massive conflicts around the borders, people have repeatedly developed positive practices of living together at the border and practised exchange and encounters across borders.

From this perspective, especially border *regions* hold a wealth of experience in dealing with migration, which lies hidden under the surface of mostly negative discourses and is worth to be protected. This should not lead to a romanticization of migration (Mezzadra 2004: 83), as this all too easily ignores the involuntary nature of migration, conditions of exploitation and precarious living conditions. On the contrary, the aim is not only to acknowledge the painful and traumatic historical and, in some cases, current experiences in the struggle for and at borders, but also to study learning processes in these areas over generations. This should allow a better addressing the issue of migration and lead to a better understanding of migration.

The tension between transnational social spaces and national spaces in terms of constitutional law and order is particularly intense in regional border areas (Scott 2003) with autochthonous minorities and heterogeneity caused by the proximity of the border. The additional complexity is rarely noticed, because of mechanisms of social invisibility of autochthonous *and* allochthonous minorities and is only marginally dealt with in educational research (Krüger-Potratz 2006: 124). The assumption of homogeneous national spaces thus makes, for example, Frisians or Sorbs disappear in public discourses in Germany just as much as the autochthonous Albanian minority in Italy, while contemporary Albanian immigrants are perceived and stigmatized as a migration problem.

Here, a further special feature becomes apparent: The overlapping of historically conditioned experiences of foreignness with more recent migration phenomena has not yet been addressed much (Peterlini 2017). This poses a very special challenge for border regions, because narratives from the past—some of which are mythically transfigured and difficult to access—

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tend to strengthen tendencies of rejection and demands for the protection of autochthonous minorities against new foreign infiltration (ibid.). At the same time, the processing of these narratives offers a high, however still little used, potential for understanding the foreign expressions of others. In areas, where autochthonous minorities and national majority populations live together, mono-ethnic narratives and the resulting narrowly defined identity concepts contrast with the lived plurality. In the concept of the post-migrant society, these distinctions between 'native' and 'migrant' as well as minority are challenged altogether and dismantled as categorical resources to construct a fictive culturally homogeneous 'nation'. Post-migrant narratives deconstruct this notion and replace it by accounts of radical diversities constituting a rather different vision of a minoritized majority (Czollek et al. 2019; Römhild 2014). This superimposition of historically handed-down narratives often standing in the way of an open attitude in the present is not exclusive to the border region.

Discourses being inflamed by border struggles are also effective elsewhere, where experiences have not been made in the first place. Nevertheless, it is worth investigating to what extent inhabitants of border regions are more sympathetic to foreign influences than those who live far away from borders, as they are more used to such influences. In the border region, however, this special mixture of excluding discourses and including ways of life is given in a condensed form and becomes more visible. Therefore, the knowledge generated here is exemplary and can be used for learning processes elsewhere.

The border regions in this sense represent a kind of laboratory for the study of historical and contemporary narratives about migration and its influence. The duality of the border as a conflict-laden condition and the border region as a transnational social space is here of particular interest (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Green 2012; Pries 1996).

The border space also offers itself as a space *in between* (Bhabha 1994), in which fixed meanings are again exchanged and thus transformed. The political and media discourses about refugee's movements, especially those about the Mediterranean, have painfully demonstrated how the concept of the border is subject to deterritorialisation. This is because virtual borders can also be effective elsewhere in contrast to their physically drawn line. This can clearly be seen in the logic of extra-territorialized controls or refugee camps in accordance with EU border protection policy, as negotiated with

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states outside the EU dating back to the decision of the European Council in November 2002 (Europäischer Rat 2002: 10). In the same way, the border can also manifest itself in and around an asylum centre in the region or express itself in cities and conurbations as the plurality of the migration society. It is partly visibly and partly invisibly, divided by different civil rights and participation possibilities (Mezzadra 2003: 112) and accordingly generates different, often contrasting narratives. The zoning of extended "borderlands" has become central to European politics of the externalization as well as the internalization of EU borders (Cuttitta 2010).

A possible access to this presumed wealth of experience of the border regions are their rich narratives about migration. Narratives play a central role in the creation of social and political orders. Generally, they are understood as a representation based on a sequence of events in the past that communicates something from the memory of the narrator (Linde 2015: 2). They are carriers of imagination of how individuals and collectives recall their past (cf. Macdonald 2013), try to understand their present and design their future. The basic idea of the research approach proposed in this article is to survey, transform and create narratives in a performative and participatory method with the various stakeholders in the migration society in order to work on them for a better understanding and management of migration. This makes it necessary to survey less perceived narratives, paying particular attention to discrimination based on origin, ethnicity, language, gender, socioeconomics, culture, religion and others. It is also particularly important that research does not stop at the border, but crosses it, by involving the other side respectively. Especially in the—historical and contemporary—cultural and social exchange, trade and marriage across the border that people in border regions develop a largely unconscious competence in dealing with the other. This can be exceptionally rewarding in those border areas that have a particular conflict potential due to the overlapping of historical—mostly ethnic-national—experiences of strangeness and more recent migration processes.

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Exploring narratives regionally and transnationally

As a method, inquiry narrative analysis is defined by a particular distinction and tension between story and discourse—and their respective rules. Story is taken to refer to the represented events as opposed to a representation of those events, and, as such, tends to follow certain rules of chronological and spatial order. Discourses are, in Foucault's sense, permeated by power relations that tend to support and produce hegemonic and system-sustaining structures, while stories—as narratives—can break these up in life-world contexts.

Therein lies one significant aspect of narrative analysis: Narratives are radically open-ended in that they can be retold, remade and reconstructed in several ways. At the same time, they remain sensitive to changing societal needs, perceptions and dynamics. Another aspect, which makes narrative inquiry fruitful for this study, is that it focuses on "temporality, sociality and place". As such, it attends to personal and social contexts under which people's experiences and events are unfolding, pays attention to the particularities of the places where inquiry and event take place, to include the ongoing temporality of experience (cf. Clandinin and Huber 2010: 436).

Thus, narrative inquiry uses "the power of storytelling as a tool for eliciting people's local knowledge and understandings of social phenomena and of narrative analysis as an instrument for analysing them" (De Fina and Georgakopoulou 2012: 18). This mode of inquiry draws its strengths from giving meaning to human experience, focusing on people's individual experience, paying attention both to language and to discourse and to the contexts of storytelling (cf. ibid.).

In their totality and complexity, narratives, similar to dreams according to Freud, represent a royal road to a better understanding of unconscious motives for human actions and attitudes, if they are made conscious and accessible for reflection. In myths, historical experiences such as warlike defeats (Schivelbusch 2002) and violent conflicts are condensed and changed into stories of victims and heroes. On the one hand they offer consolation in the face of collective humiliation, on the other hand they ward off guilt and shame (Freud 1974 [1921]). According to Schivelbusch such sediment collective memories, which transfigure grave historical experiences, are very persistent and difficult to change.

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What and how something is remembered and what falls into oblivion is fundamental to the formation of collective narratives and thus identity-forming narratives. What individuals remember or repress interacts with the group. According to Volkan (2006: 209) the bond between the individual and the group is woven above all through inner images based on the history of large groups such as myths, songs, eating habits, dances, heroes and martyrs. This is where the psychoanalytic theory of forgetting by suppressing meets Jan Assmann's theory of memory (Assmann J. 2002). Just as collective memory has no neuronal network of its own, individual memory is always socially co-constituted. Assmann distinguishes communicative collective memory from cultural collective memory as the former is still supported by contemporary witnesses and can thus date back up to 80–100 years. In contrast, cultural memory is fed by fixed points in the past, such as ancestral history, exodus, desert migration, land grabbing, war and subjugation. In cultural memory, factual history is transformed into remembered history and then into myths. These hardly accessible memories are of central importance for analysing the traditional heritage of societies. However, for their opening it is significant to transfer them into what Aleida Assmann (2006) called social memory. This means: Making narratives conscious, relating them to concrete experiences and life situations, learning to distinguish between remembered and lived experience, making the fixed fluid again.

For this purpose, it is necessary not to limit the research to the collection and analysis of obvious narratives alone, but to work on theme in an action-oriented way. Care should be taken to give space and voice to narratives that would otherwise not be heard or not be spoken out at all. A particular challenge lies in not only making these narratives conscious and opening up transformation processes, but also in generating new narratives to imagine a better future, in the sense of the (im)possible utopia as Derrida (Assheuer/Derrida 1998) tries to distinguish the concrete utopia from an unreal dream. Thus, narratives are not only understood as storage devices for experiences, but they also hold potential to create a new design for the way we want to live (together). The concrete utopia consists in the assumption that narratives are able to influence political, social and economic orders in the sense of a convivial life and society (Illich 1973).

By bringing together discursively and structurally divided people in focus groups, in the performative and artistic settings, media exchange platforms and real encounters, narratives are exchanged, reflected and changed. This

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can produce those "communities of sentiment" to which Appadurai (1996: 54) ascribes the potential to develop from shared imaginations to common actions. However, this can also be a very painful and not necessarily successful way. Above all, dealing with narratives of rejection and hatred involves risks that are difficult to resolve at the level of discourse. It requires a trust in the pedagogical space of the narrative (Demetrio 1988), in which hierarchies and power relations are lowered in order to be able to face this risk in the sense of a weak pedagogy (Peterlini 2011: 169-178). What is meant by this is a pedagogical attitude that gives up some of its power in order to flatten hierarchies, for example between so-called educationally deprived and educated citizens, and thus make exchange possible (ibid.).

When we speak of memory communities, it is important to address the right to claim recognition from others. Charles Taylor's concept of the politics of recognition shows us that people are dependent on recognition by society in their identity and that lack of recognition can have fatal consequences (Taylor 2009). Changes in deadlocked positions can only be initiated when subjective experiences of suffering are met with acceptance and understanding. In this context, the approach of Michael Rothberg and Yasemin Yildiz (2011) is relevant that communities do not "have" memories, but that communities emerge in dealing with memories.

Selected Examples of Narrative

One example is a narrative project that involved radicalized patriotic youths in South Tyrol on the border between Italy and Austria conducted in intervals of twelve years. The young people were not only interviewed but also accompanied into their life worlds. The topic was how they understand homeland (Heimat)—as the innermost core of political identity in South Tyrol—and how they experience it in their everyday lives. The results of the study showed clear differences between the radical political statements, which were strongly influenced by discourses, and the much softer life-world narratives, which correlated strongly with concrete experiences. In the second survey, the young people had become young adults. All of them showed a remarkable process of reflection, which can be explained, above all, by life experience and educational biography. All the youths interviewed agreed that the first survey twelve years earlier had initiated a permanent process of reflection in

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them. The opportunity to talk about their understanding of their homeland had encouraged them to further reflection (Peterlini 2010; 2011).

The memory of a historical event is never uniform, but is composed of different perspectives, some of which are even contradictory. However, this is also vital on the local scale of (post-)migrant and border regions in which diverse narratives of diverse and shared histories coincide. What meant a victory for some was a defeat for others. Territory that had been won by some had been registered as a loss for others. Avishai Margalit (2002) distinguishes between common and divisive/shared memories. Separating memories require understanding, they must be discussed, told and heard in order to find mutual acceptance. In order to share memories that divide, the dialogue between the individual memory communities about the traditional historical narratives is necessary. This does not automatically lead to agreement but at least to a perception and recognition of the diversity of memories. The aim is not to take over the narratives of others but to respect their experience and recognize their perspective as a legitimate view of things. Thus, the recognition of the narratives of others is a key element in the resolution of hostilities.

Negotiating memories and building communities around such memory work can be seen as acts of citizenship (Rothberg/Yildiz 2011). This can be observed in the experience with another current research project at Klagenfurt University, which aims to bring pupils and teachers from Carinthia and Slovenia into exchange about historical narratives. Together they work on official and less visible historical narratives of their region and reflect on where their own environment is situated in this process. An empirical study on the communities of remembrance in Carinthia from 2016 shows that the old narratives in relation to the history of the region are not breaking or disappearing but that new, different ones are progressively appearing alongside them, in the sense of a multidirectional memory as observed by Rothberg (2009). Voices, that differ to varying degrees, shape the discourse and over the last 20 years the conversation has been increasingly co-determined by young people (Danglmaier et al. 2017).

Methodologically, border studies require an interdisciplinary approach oriented towards the social space to which educational science, cultural anthropology, political science, media theory in the context of critical migration research contribute. Even artistic interventions are not only used, as it is often the case, to communicate or prettify the results of research, but art is used as a performative part of the research project. Performative elements,

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like forum theatre (Boal 1993) and exhibitions, should make it possible to bring the public's attention to narratives that have been suppressed and to produce new future-oriented accounts.

Perspectives and expectations

The different approaches converge in the common interest in the lifeworld (Husserl 1976 [1936]: 4) in the selected border regions. Their historical and current migration experiences are made fruitful for future action strategies through the analysis, reflection and transformation of narratives. The following questions need to be addressed: Which narratives guide the perception of migration in these life worlds and in how far do they provide motives for action? How do these narratives interact with political, social and cultural practices? In which way do narratives determine these practices or are, what much speaks for it, even always practices.

A scientific potential lies in the intentional renunciation of dissolving the ambivalence of modern societies on one side or the other. The complexity and tensions of the migration society are perceived and accepted as the special potential of border areas and their narratives. The approach is oriented towards migration research as research on migrants and non-migrants. It also refers to the research in between as a genuinely educational space (Westphal 2007), in which reality is not simply accepted but can be shaped performatively. It directs its epistemological interest to learning and educational experiences in overcoming the "dualism between the margins and the hegemonic centre" (Castro Varela/Dhawan 2007: 43), from which migration research as a critique of society can lead out (Transit Migration 2007, Römhild 2014). This should especially be understood in the sense of a de-migrantisation of migration research and a migrantisation of society research. The broadening of perspectives to include the overlapping of the migration issue with the coexistence of autochthonous minorities and nation-state majorities represents a potential third way for research on migration.

The overall and ambitious goal of the research approach in terms of a long-term impact is to contribute to changing debates in modern European societies and to open up new opportunities for the successful integration of migrants. In order to stimulate this process, an analytical view of narratives

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of migrants and non-migrants is necessary and, in parallel, an attempt to escape this dualism at least partly.

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https://doi.org/10.14361/9783839455913 https://www.inlibra.com/de/page/agb - Open Access -

Borders, authoritarian regimes, and migration in Kurdistan
An intersectional inquiry

Naif Bezwan

This paper examines the interplay between borders, regimes, and migration by focusing on the Kurdish case. It explains migration as being causally related, (a) to the ways in which territorial boundaries of the states were redrawn, (b) the processes by which the political regimes have been established and (c), to the authoritarian and homogenous state policies and practices that followed and continue to exist. To make sense of this interconnectedness, I present the concept of structural migration to explain the phenomenon of migration as being engineered by and built into the institutional and ideological structures of the political regimes ruling over Kurdistan.

Introduction: An overview of the Kurdish case

Migration is a complex phenomenon with multiple forms, causes and outcomes. It has been, and remains, part and parcel of human history and condition, dating back to the very origins of our species (Crawford/Campbell 2012: 1) and involves a "multifaceted process with distinct stages and decision points" (cf. Helms/Leblang 2019: 2). The story of mobility continues to be relevant today as "very large flows of people are on the move in all directions within countries and across the world" (Richards 2018: 6). Scholars across diverse academic fields have offered a range of explanations as to why individuals, voluntarily and involuntarily, leave their homelands. Search for a decent life, economic, political factors, better living standards, a better future

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for the next generation, the desire to improve economic well-being and enhance the life-chances of offspring have been identified among the universal drivers of emigration (cf.Richards 2018: 5; Agnew 2008: 187). At the broadest level, two main competing theoretical approaches to migration movements can be identified, namely the microeconomic, and the historical-structural perspectives. Whilst the former "focuses primarily on the rational calculus of the individual actor; the latter stresses the origin of the costs and benefits the potential migrant confronts" (Wood 1982: 300). As such, the macroeconomic perspective considers migrants as utility maximizers who assess opportunity in cost-benefit terms and act accordingly (Wood 1982: 299), whereas historical-structural approaches emphasize economic inequalities, exploitation, and asymmetries of power relations, and the international division of labour as the main factors in producing migration movements (cf. Wood 1982: 302ff.). Taken together, it is always about 'push and pull factors' which are considered by many scholars as central to any explanation of the phenomenon of migration. As migration is recognised as a multifaceted phenomenon generated by an intersectionality of multiple structural factors as well as individual motives and choices, an adequate understanding of the causes and outcomes of migration should include both individual motivations as well as structural factors. Keeping that in mind, in what follows, I would like to highlight the basic features of the Kurdish case.

The Kurds not only account for the largest territorially concentrated national community in the world "without its own nation-state" (Jüde 2017: 847), but also one of the largest diasporic communities as well. Over the past decades, through a combination of "labour migration, refugee migration, family reunion and settlement of the second and third generation" the Kurdish diaspora has expanded considerably in Europe (Keles 2015: 78). Currently, it is estimated that around two million Kurds live in Europe, of which approximately one million reside in Germany alone (cf. Keles 2015: 73ff.; Baser et al2015: 133). There are also sizable Kurdish communities in Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK.

More recently, following the Syrian civil war and the resultant refugee crisis, new arrivals have increased the size and composition of Kurdish diaspora communities in Europe over the past several years. As summarized by Eccarius-Kelly, "thousands of Kurdish refugees fled without papers; some relied on human smugglers; and many have been forced to remain in the

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shadows as undocumented laborers across the continent" (Eccarius-Kelly, 2019, p. 29 see also Ayata 2011: 7). In addition, beyond Europe, Kurds have also established communities in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and elsewhere. It is therefore extremely difficult to fully capture the multitude of socio-political nuances which have emerged within and among Kurdish communities in all of these countries (Eccarius-Kelly, 2015: 178).

Although a considerable number of Kurds from Turkey migrated to Europe as 'guest workers' in the 1960s, it was only after two coups d'état in 1971 and 1980, as well as the escalation of military conflict between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*, PKK) in 1984, that the numbers of new arrivals across Europe increased exponentially. Forced deportation from some 3,000 villages created thousands of internally displaced people and refugee flows of more than three million Kurds (cf. Baser et al. 2015: 132). The development of the Kurdish diaspora and the formative experiences that shape diasporic communities stand and fall by the politics of 'host' states which are often determined by critical junctures in global and/or Middle eastern politics, such as the end of the Cold War, the Gulf War, the Arab spring and surge in Kurdish self-determination movements, as such 'events' have fundamental bearings on the states ruling over Kurdistan. The Gulf War (2 August 1990–17 January 1991) that followed the Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait, and the subsequent Kurdish uprising marked another critical juncture that caused Kurdish mass migration across international borders.

Finally, the Arab Spring, the Syrian Civil War and the rise of ISIS have generated new flows of migration and displacement, which have provided new momentum for transnational diaspora mobilisation, ranging from campaigning via social media, fundraising for displaced people to second-generation Kurds joining the fight against ISIS. The seizure of Kobanê by ISIS, and the internationally acclaimed resistance against it, led to widespread expressions of solidarity among Kurdish communities in both the homeland and the diaspora. The urgency of the suffering of the Kurds in Syria and the genocidal assault on the Yezidis in Iraq pushed for wider cooperation among the Kurdish forces such as the KRG's (the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq) peshmerga, Kurds in Syria, and the PKK. This has also strengthened a sense of belonging among Kurdish communities in the diaspora (cf. Baser et al. 2015: 142). In addition, scholars have shown how the ethnotheocratic state of Iran "continues the practices of systematic and steady de-

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mographic engineering and displacement to undermine the distinct ethnic profile of Kurdistan" (Mohammadpour/Soleimani 2020: 10).

The lack of demographic data on the Kurdish diaspora and homeland communities continues to act as a permanent source of scholarly unease, as any estimate of the size and composition of the Kurds is immediately exposed to the test of reliability. But the fact that there are no official records is part of the problem and indicative of policies of the states ruling over Kurdistan, and indeed "mirrors the condition of statelessness for the Kurds and creates a gap in the literature when it comes to research about the specificities of their life conditions" (Baser et al. 2015: 134).

As the foregoing review makes clear, whatever the actual number of Kurds living in the diaspora may be, and however different the individual motivations for leaving or fleeing their country of origin are, one thing about the formation and development of Kurdish diaspora is certain: its coming into existence is essentially attributable to the politics of the 'host' states in which they live as well as the shifting dynamics of geopolitics in the Middle East, that is to say, momentous events which produce particular effects on the states ruling over the Kurdish regions, such as the Gulf War, the invasion of Iraq and removal of Saddam regime, military putsches and conflicts, the Arab spring, and the Syrian civil war etc. Currently, the Kurdish-ruled areas in Kurdistan/Iraq and Rojava (in Syria) are under threat because of cross-border Turkish military interventions, which have given rise to new flows of forced migration. Indeed, "[o]ne of the three cantons ruled by the Kurds in Syria, Afrin, is already back in the hands of Turkey-backed Syrian opposition groups. The remaining two areas are under threat from both Turkish attacks as well as the expanding control of the Bashar al-Assad regime throughout northern Syria" (Yılmaz 2018: 2). This conflict has had a profound effect on the local population with many forced to flee the region in search of safety. As stated elsewhere, the Turkish government resorts to a combination of security-related, geopolitical, expansionist arguments to justify its cross-border aggression against a foreign movement. On the one hand, the military expedition is touted as a last-resort action to defend Turkey's national security and territorial integrity against hostile Kurdish forces, whilst on the other, the offensive is aimed at expanding Turkey's geopolitical influence in Syria, with the intention of ethnic cleansing (Bezwan 2018: 63).

Consider also the recent, and still ongoing, cases of Turkish military incursions into north-eastern Syria in 2018 and 2019. Two cross border military

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expeditions were conducted by the Turkish Armed Forces and their allies the "Free Syrian Army" against the Syrian Democratic Forces in Afrin District in north-western Syria, and the Syrian Arab Army in northern Syria. Turkey views the Syrian Kurdish organisations, the Democratic Union Party (PYD) and the People's Protection Units (PYD), "as an extension of the PKK and considers it a terrorist organisation" and justifies its military operations on that ground (Kajjo 2020: 283).

The first attack was launched in January 2018, targeting the Kurdish city of Afrin, a strategically and economically important area located in the heart of the Kurdish region in Syria, while the latest offensive was conducted on 9 October 2019 when the Turkish Air Force launched airstrikes on Kurdish towns and settlements across the Syrian border. This military offensive immediately followed the internationally condemned withdrawal of American forces from north-eastern Syria on 6 October 2019 by the Trump administration[1]. These Turkish military incursions into Syria have caused the expulsion of tens of thousands of refugees and thousands of deaths, including civilians[2]. The conflict resulted in the displacement of over 300,000 people and has caused the death of more than 70 civilians in Syria and 20 civilians in Turkey. Amnesty International stated that it had gathered evidence of war crimes and other violations committed by Turkish and Turkey-backed Syrian forces who are said to "have displayed a shameful disregard for civilian life, carrying out serious violations and war crimes, including summary killings and unlawful attacks that have killed and injured civilians"[3]. The explicit aim is to dismantle the territorial and societal cohesion of the Kurdish regions in Syria and to destroy the self-determining political structures governed

1 The internationally criticized American withdrawal from the frontline of the most successful alliance in fighting against ISIS has thrown the Kurds into a mortal predicament. The critique has been evolved around facilitating the resurgence of ISIS, calling American credibility into question, strengthening the Russian, Iranian and Syrian axis in the Middle East, and not least giving the green light to the Turkish invasion.

2 The conflict resulted in the displacement of over 300,000 people and has caused the death of more than 70 civilians in Syria and 20 civilians in Turkey. Amnesty International stated that it had gathered evidence of war crimes and other violations committed by Turkish and Turkey-backed Syrian forces who are said to "have displayed a shameful disregard for civilian life, carrying out serious violations and war crimes, including summary killings and unlawful attacks that have killed and injured civilians"

3 https://www.voanews.com/middle-east/amnesty-international-decries-shameful-disregard-civilian-life-syrian-offensive, accessed on 21 February 2021.

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by the PYD. Similarly, as late as 2017 Iran, Iraq and Turkey have jointly undermined the Kurdish quest for independence after the 2017 independence referendum in Iraqi Kurdistan.

While itself having caused massive internal and external displacement through its politics, Turkey has not shied away from using the refugees fleeing from the Syrian civil war to Turkey as an instrument of foreign policy. In an effort to counteract European critique against Turkey's military cross-border military campaigns, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has on different occasions reiterated his threat of 'opening the gates'. As late as the 10th of October 2019 Erdoğan declared that if the EU tried "to frame our operation in Syria as an invasion, our task is simple: we will open the doors and send 3.6 million migrants to you" (cited in Jennequin 2020: 1).

The continuous instrumentalisation of the refugees provides a textbook case of what has been conceptualised as "coercive engineered migration" (Greenhill 2010, p. 2). It refers to "those cross-border population movements that are deliberately created or manipulated in order to induce political, military and/or economic concessions from a target state or states" (Greenhill 2010: 13.). In this sense it denotes "a very particular non-military method of applying coercive pressure—the use of migration and refugee crises as instruments of persuasion" (Greenhill 2010: 12). The use of migration as a bargaining chip was accompanied by expansionist and aggressive politics that has caused tens of thousands of refugees, and both internal and external displacement on a massive scale.

My main argument is that migration in its varieties and shifting dynamics is located precisely at the interface between the establishment of the nation-states model on the Kurdish territories to the exclusion of the Kurds and the drawing of the state borders cutting through the predominantly Kurdish inhabited territories. In other words, migration is conceived of as resulting from the state coercive capacity, the level of collaboration between the states ruling over the respective part of Kurdistan, the political expedients as provided by the wider geopolitical environment in the Middle East, and the Kurdish resistance.

Finally, a thought on the theoretical and empirical focus of the study shall be in order. The present study is not intended as an analysis of the Kurdish self-determination conflict as such, nor the associated positions and perspectives of the parties to it. While presenting the ways in which political regimes and their borders have been installed in the post-Ottoman Middle

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East as a tool for understanding the pattern of migration, narratives of migration could not be addressed in a warranted manner, essentially because of space constraints. In addition, the empirical focus on the Kurdish example was chosen for two principal reasons. First, it presents a paradigmatic case of structural migration and yet remains understudied. Second, and perhaps more importantly, because of the author's expertise, and familiarity with the Kurdish case along with his epistemological interest in interrogating this case through the lens of comparative border and migration studies.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. In the next section, I will consider the interconnectedness of borders, authoritarian regimes, and migration in relation to the Middle East. The second section is concerned with the Kurdish case. By placing migration at the intersection of the reconstitution of political authorities, the redrawing of territorial boundaries, and the restructuring of populations in the post-Ottoman political geography, this section is informed by an interest in providing an explanatory framework for the Kurdish case of migration. The third section under the heading of "State borders as colonial institutions and sites of decolonial resistance" provides selected examples of how, and by what means, policies and practices of bordering and the ordering of local populations and territories are imposed by the state. Finally, I will conclude by summarizing the main insights drawn from the essay and indicating possible avenues for further research.

An overview of the politics of borders, authoritarian regimes and migration in the Middle East

Many countries across the Middle East stand out as being among the most "critical geographies of migration"—defined "as spatially informed theories and practice explicitly directed towards understanding and challenging migration as a site of exploitation" (Gilmartin/Kuusisto-Arponen 2019: 18). The concept of critical geographies is concerned with the causes of migration by focusing "on efforts to restrict people's movements across national borders, whether legally or physically", while emphasizing "the effects of migration, particularly through a focus on the experiences of migrants who are vulnerable, marginalized or exploited" (ibid.). As these experiences are intersectional, "critical geographies of migration are increasingly address-

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ing the relationship between migrant status, race and sexuality, adding to a longer-standing interest in migration and gender" (ibid.). After all, the scholarly literature on borders, border regions, and migration provides fresh insights and opens up new perspectives on the nature of state, sovereignty, citizenship, territory and territoriality. One of the main objectives of this essay is thus to make use of insights provided by this scholarship to better understand the causal factors affecting mass migration in the Middle East, by focusing on the emergence of political borders and regimes from a historical and multidisciplinary perspective. However, referring to the phenomena of the past in colonial and/or postcolonial settings to explain the outcomes in the present requires mindful methodological considerations and approaches. This also holds true of the Middle East. The invocation of history in the context of the Middle East is indeed abound with contradictory, anachronistic, often misleading and justificatory arguments. Given the (mis)uses of the past, it is therefore of paramount importance to carefully examine, and critically reflect on, the contextual and historical conditions under which the phenomena of interest have emerged, changed, eclipsed and yet reenacted and reactivated.

Having said that, there is indeed no getting away from the overwhelming significance of the historical processes when analysing contemporary phenomena such as state violence, migrations, and refugees in the Middle East. The task then, is twofold: first, to forsake the trap of the irrelevance of the history as an essential part of as an explanatory framework, and second, to overcome the trap of using history for justifying, for example, the policies of repression or expansion—both of these tendencies need to be carefully scrutinised and deconstructed. What is needed is not the renunciation of history altogether, but instead its careful contextualisation and conceptualisation as an explanatory variable.

In what follows, I will discuss the interconnectedness of political borders, regimes and migration in the Middle East drawing on insights derived from this critical scholarship outlined above. It is, however, beyond the scope of this paper to examine the phenomenon of mass migration across the Middle East in any length. What I will provide is instead a cursory glance at the mechanisms I argue to be responsible for the occurrence, frequency, recurrence and intensity of migration movements during the last century.

Paraphrasing the late Charles Tilly's dictum that "states make wars and wars make states", James Scott indicates that the corollary of Tilly's adage

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should be: "States make wars and wars—massively—make migrants" (Scott 2009: 146). Based on the evidence gleaned from his selected region of investigation Scott identifies four eras in term of the level of 'stateness': "1) a stateless era [by far the longest], 2) an era of small-scale states encircled by vast and easily reached stateless peripheries, 3) a period in which such peripheries are shrunken and beleaguered by the expansion of state power, and finally, 4) an era in which virtually the entire globe is 'administered space' and the periphery is not much more than a folkloric remnant" (Scott 2009: 324). This classification provides a useful starting point for understanding the state of political geographies of the Middle East.

By the turn of the 20th century there was neither 'state' nor 'nation' in the sense as envisioned by the homogenising and plurality-hostile logic of the nation-state model. Instead, the vast amount of areas in the wider Middle East were under imperial domains with multi-ethnic and multicultural populations, and varying degrees of state capacity and penetration into 'stateless' peripheries. This situation, however, came to be radically changed in the aftermath of the First World War. If the drawing of modern state borders can be dated back to the transformation from feudal to absolutist to territorial nation-states in Europe where territory became foundational to the state and sovereignty, the phenomenon of territorially based "nation-states" in the specific European sense emerged only after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire in the wake of First World War in the Middle East. This epoch-making event brought about "dramatic and often destructive changes to colonial lands, societies, and economies, including the imposition of European norms of sovereignty, territoriality, and borders" in the Middle East (Diener/Hagen 2012: 46). "Ottoman expansion", as historian Kasaba puts it, "involved the conquest of a series of castles, major towns, and crucial waterways and passes", but it would be difficult to find any indication of where the Ottoman lands ended since there "were no border posts or barbed wires that separated the Ottoman Empire from its neighbours, and one certainly did not need a passport to travel to and from the territories of the surrounding states" (2004: 29).

The post-war period, however, witnessed the establishment of the "national state model" and the redrawing of political and social boundaries in ways that were indeed unknown to the peoples of the region except for the emergent nationalist elites. The Middle East emerged out of this momentous historical process as a critical geography where the reordering of political

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authority, the redrawing of territorial boundaries, the restructuring of populations, and the ensuing processes of migration, forced or otherwise, took place on a massive scale.

In contrast to the creation of nation-states within the Balkan part of the former Ottoman Empire, the emergent nation-state regimes in the Middle East "either received a different territory from the one they wanted, or were unclear about the territory to which they aspired" (Brandell 2006: 7). Here boundaries were all drawn in the aftermath of the First World War, "when the principles of the Westphalian sovereign nation-state were dominant, with the concept of sovereignty now understood in the double sense of an inviolable right to a territory *and* the right of every people to self-determination if it so desired" (emphasis in original, ibid.).

As this paper intends to show, there was another variant with far-reaching consequences, namely the use of sovereignty as an instrument of territorial acquisition, land grab, and coercive domination of communities denied a state of their own by the imperial powers of the day and the emergent nation-states, all the factors that also created flows of migration. As insightfully stated by Aristide Zolberg, "the adoption of the nation-state model by countries with ethnically mixed populations accounts for many refugee flows of the twentieth century" (1983: 30). Taking on the homogenising and nationalising nation-state model in a region marked by a sheer diversity of peoples and a plurality of national, cultural and religious communities, I argue, necessitated and produced two interrelated policy paradigms: forced assimilation and forced migration. The latter can also be conceptualised as the 'migration of ethnic unmixing' which was enforced by population exchange, deportations and expulsions, whereas the former was aimed at communal destruction of the targeted groups by long-term state-engineered coercive public policies. Locating the phenomena of "ethnic unmixing" within the historical context of the dissolution of empires in the wake of First World One, Brubaker conceptualises migrations of ethnic unmixing as resulting from periods of political expansion, contraction and reconfiguration involving simultaneously "the reconstitution of political authority, the redrawing of territorial boundaries and the restructuring of populations" (Brubaker 1995: 213). Migrations of ethnic unmixing were thus, as Brubaker observes, "engendered not by war as such, but by war in conjunction with the formation of new nation-states and the ethnic 'nationalization' of existing states in a region of intermixed population and at a time of supercharged mass ethnic

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nationalism" (Brubaker 1995: 194). In trying to establish the link between the migrations of ethnic unmixing in the past and the present, Brubaker states that just as "the great 1989 exodus of Bulgarian Turks to Turkey marked the continuation of an intermittent process of unmixing spanning more than a century, so too the centripetal migration of ethnic Hungarians resumed, forty years after the last significant episode, in the late 1980s" (ibid.).

Attempts at explaining migration of ethnic unmixing as well as the broad question of forced migration go to the very heart of *geopolitics* as it has been applied to Kurdistan, and to the Middle East at large for the past century or so. Given that, a brief explanation of the concept of geopolitics, its manifestations and implications should be presented. Geopolitics is commonly referred to as the study of the relationship between geographical features and international politics, with a focus on the political effects of geography, such as climate, topography, arable land, and access to the sea. In his critical analysis of geopolitics Ó Tuathail rightly emphasises that "[T]he region of knowledge that would later be dubbed 'geopolitics' was born in the colonial capitals of the rival empires of the late nineteenth century, within the established universities, geographical societies, and centers of learning of the Great Powers" (Ó Tuathail 2005: 16). So, geopolitics, the politics of "giving space power", as indicated by Dahlman, has its roots in the emerging geographical conditions of the world order at the end of the nineteenth century (2009: 87). While the major paradigms of geopolitics are still essentially determined by strategies of security, domination and expansion, critical scholars "seeking to unveil the manner in which politicians discursively construct geopolitical spaces, often by manipulating 'geographical facts' for strategic purposes" (cf. Dahlman 2009: 98).

As political geographical research gained momentum, questions of borders, territory, political identity, power, and resistance emerged as central to its constitution" (Agnew 2015 et al.: 4). The political geography as a way of thinking about (world) politics as constituted through everyday spatial practice and experiences, with border studies have come to form "an increasingly vibrant field" (cf. Agnew et al. 2015: 4). Political geography plays a role "in crafting an understanding of the political as not only a product of representations and representational practices, but also imbued with materiality, the non-human, and the affective" (ibid.). At the heart of political geography lies "a recognition that where political processes unfold is central to the nature and outcomes of these processes" (Agnew et al. 2015: 7). A critical and an-

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alytical understanding of geopolitical research must therefore expose how "the power relations are normalized through the appropriation of the word 'geopolitics', while provid[ing] explanations of how politics and geography intersect to make the world the way it is" (Flint/Mamadouh 2015: 2).

One conclusion that can be derived from the foregoing is that geopolitics, or political geography for that matter, is not so much about the effects of geography on politics as the effects of power relations and politics on geography. Such a shift in emphasis may provide a more accurate description of geopolitics[4] than the one that concentrates on properties of geographies. Geopolitics then can be defined as power and politics as being applied in their combined effects to a given geography in order to establish a political order based on the securitarian, economic, ideological interests of the more powerful. On a more general level, the political order that comes into being under the logic of geopolitics can be described as a "top-down order, imposed and maintained by coercion" (Lebow 2018: 49).

The modern history of the Middle East in general, and that of Kurdistan in particular, is predicated on and defined by geopolitical and territorial parameters within which the inherently unequal power relations and power politics come together to produce devastating outcomes, ranging from civil war to mass migration, and from abysmal regional disparities to external and regional military interventions. This has many implications for borders, regimes and causal pathways of migration. One major implication is that borders are understood both as sacred and violable at the same time. Put differently, geopolitics lends itself to a very specific understanding of territory, as it implies an extended notion of territoriality[5] that is not always equivalent to the internationally recognised territory of the state in question. That the borders were drawn arbitrarily and unjustly as a result of imperial legacies is not taken as a point of departure for an engagement in addressing historical injustices and grievances of those affected. In fact, quite the opposite is true:

4 For a concise summary of different strands of geopolitical discourse along with leading figures involved in "productions of global space", including Halford John Mackinder (1861–1947), Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904), Alfred Mahan (1840–1914), Rudolf Kjellen (1864–1922), Karl Haushofer (1869–1946), Nicholas J.Spykman (1893–1943) (see Ó Tuathail 2005: 20–45).

5 In a general sense, territoriality refers to "the activity of defending, controlling, excluding, including", while territory is "the area whose content one seeks to control in these ways" (Cox 2002: 1ff.). "Territorial politics is, in turn "about how politics is organized and fought out across territory" (Gibson 2012: 15).

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arbitrariness and unjustness are put at the disposal of a geopolitics that creates and legitimates authoritarian rule, military interventions, expansion, thereby generating new injustices.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the conduct of Turkish policies towards Kurdistan. The sacralisation of state borders to all intents and purposes goes hand in hand with periodic military interventions into neighbouring countries on the pretext of crushing Kurdish insurgency in the cross-border regions. More tellingly, Turkey's extra-territorial expansion as reflected in the past and ongoing military incursions and campaigns, is justified by a ubiquitous and self-righteous rhetoric, and accompanied by a strategic framing of the argument of territorial integrity and national security. As Turkish President Erdoğan strikingly put it in a speech made on 10 November 2016: "Turkey is larger than Turkey. We cannot be imprisoned in 780,000 square kilometres. The borders of our hearts are elsewhere. Our brothers in Mosul, Kirkuk, Skopje, may be outside our natural boundaries, but they are within the borders of our hearts, at the epicenter of our hearts" (cited in Jennequin 2020: 2).

The preceding account raises a set of questions to be dealt with in this study: Why are Kurdish aspirations towards autonomous existence of any kind considered a mortal threat to the territorial integrity of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria? What explains the politics of the states in question vis-à-vis the Kurdish regions and communities? To what degree do the politics and policies of these states intersect with, or differ from, each other? And, perhaps even more importantly for the purposes of the present study, to what extent are respective policies and practices of these states towards the Kurds are causally responsible for Kurdish migration movements and refugee flows?

Having set the historical stage, the following section then turns to the Kurdish case in order to illuminate how the state borders and state structures which emerged out of the process of the dissolution of the Ottoman empire have affected both Kurdish society in general, and the phenomenon of Kurdish migration in particular.

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Conceptualising the Kurdish migration

As this paper draws on political geography, critical borders studies and migration studies, I shall provide a brief review of the relevant literature, before laying out the conceptual framework adopted in this essay. Scholarship on migration and borders offers a variety of conceptual tools and (re)definitions of the concepts of border, boundary and frontier, boundary-work, borderland, borderscape, borderity, networked borders, as well as methodological approaches to the study of borders, ranging from relational to intersectional, to the understanding of borders as method, as process or assemblages (cf. Lamont/Molnar (2002: 168ff.). Contrary to rather state-centered understanding of borders and frontiers, recent scholarship underlines the socially constructed nature of boundaries and the importance of relational approaches to the study borders and well as their intersectionality with migration, exclusion and inclusion (cf. Dell'Agnese 2013: 122-123; /Neilson 2013: 7ff.). Some scholars also highlight the importance of studying borders as a process, an idea that should help deconstruct the material and symbolic dimensions that is firmly attached to border by including changing dynamics over time and space (cf. Meier 2018: 496).

Amilhat Szary and Giraut offer 'borderity' as another new term to "help develop an analysis that would throw off the constraints of the tautological relationship between territory, state and borders" (2015: 3). Building on Foucault's work on state, territory, sovereignty and governmentality, they define borderity as "a principle of intelligibility of what is, but is also what should be" and as a technology of power grounded "in the governmentality of territorial limits and their access" (Amilhat/Giraut 2015: 7). On that view, the spatial characteristics of borders and their functions, "a mobile dimension that breaks with its traditional fixity in time and space, [and represents] an epistemological shift away from fixed border" (Amilhat/Giraut 2015: 6).

The concept of borderscape is another novel approach offered by Suvendrini Perera. Based on his analysis of the Australian policy towards refugees, Perera uses the concept of borderscape to refer to the making and remaking of different forms of border space in the Pacific region (Perera 2007: 206). "Like the detainees of the war in Afghanistan held on Guantanamo Bay by the United States", Perera maintains, "the asylum seekers held in Australia's offshore detention camps under the Pacific Solution occupy a legal limbo, a deterritorialized space of indeterminate sovereignty", because under the Pa-

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cific Solution, "asylum seekers are considered out of reach of both Australian law [and the international obligations it entails] and the domestic law of the states where the camps are located" (Perera 2007: 207). Thus, the conceptualisation of the borderscape, it is argued, "allows for the inclusion of different temporalities and overlapping emplacements as well as emergent spatial organizations" (ibid.).

The recent scholarship on borders advances two broad arguments: first, it emphasizes the need for new approaches that conceive borders as being elastic, moveable and subject to a process of constant formation and transformation, rather than viewing them as unchangeable and fixed. And second, it calls for multi-layered and differentiated understandings of space, territoriality, sovereignty, and identity.

Having that in mind, this essay relates migration to the imposition of territorial boundaries of the states, the authoritarian regimes on these territories, and to the consequences of nationalising and homogenising policies. Methodologically, the paper adopts a relational and intersectional approach to the phenomena of state borders, political regimes and migration. The relational, or transactional approach, is a spatio-temporal understanding that focuses on "dynamic processes-in-relations" and thus unfolding transactions, and not pre-constituted attributes of some immobile entities (cf. Emirbayer 1997: 293ff.). Moreover, this approach "sees relations between terms or units as pre-eminently dynamic in nature, as unfolding, ongoing processes rather than as static ties among inert substances" (Emirbayer 1997: 289). On that view, "concepts cannot be defined on their own as single ontological entities; rather, the meaning of one concept can be deciphered only in terms of its 'place' in relation to the other concepts in its web" (Emirbayer 1997: 300).

While also essentially relational, the intersectional approach brings the importance of the interconnected nature of events, structures, or processes to the fore. Having first been introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw in a seminal article on *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex* (Crenshaw 1989: 139), the basic argument of intersectionality is that the intersectional experience as determined by a combination of equally relevant elements such "racism and sexism" is greater than the sum of any single factor in bringing about an outcome of interest. Intersectionality emerged as an analytical term to go beyond a single-axis framework and to bring into focus the "multiple-disadvantaged experiences of Black women that cannot be captured by the single-issue framework" (Crenshaw 1989: 139). For example, since race and

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gender cannot be treated "as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis", any approaches which detach racism from sexism would be unable to capture the whole spectrum of discrimination, so "any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated" (Crenshaw 1989: 140). Proceeding from this argument Crenshaw points out that "Black women can experience discrimination in any number of ways and that the contradiction arises from our assumptions that their claims of exclusion must be unidirectional" (Crenshaw 1989: 149).

Whereas relationality is grounded in a spatio-temporal understanding of "dynamic processes-in-relations", intersectionality holds up the importance of overlapping and interdependent effects of social categories and structures, including those such as state, sovereignty, borders. These, of course, are not immobile, static and monolith at all as they are subject to continuous processes of power struggle, negotiation, claims, counter claims, adaptation, and change. Nor are they devoid of any causal capacities. As suggested by Elder-Vass, the causal powers model views causation as resulting from the causal powers of social entities which in turn result from "interactions between multiple causal powers" (Elder-Vass 2012: 16). This suggests that evidence of empirical regularities does not constitute a causal explanation, instead "we only have a causal explanation when we can identify the mechanism *responsible* [emphasis in original] for a regularity" (Elder-Vass 2012: 17).

To conclude, combining elements of relational and intersectional approaches with the idea of causal power would help to better identify the causal pathways of migration over time and space, while simultaneously relating factors behind migration to the nature of state borders, authoritarian regimes, imperial geopolitics and colonial legacies. Drawing on methodological considerations presented here, I use the term *structural migration* to provide a framework that explains migration as a phenomenon that is built into the ideational and institutional structures of a given political regime, and therefore systematically engineered by its policies and practices. For the purpose of the present study, structural migration is explained as causally related to the structures of dominance over Kurdistan, to the nature of state borders which cut across economic, cultural, and societal lifelines of Kurdish communities and regions, and to the concomitant policies of de-

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development[6] as well as the non-recognition and repression enacted to differing degrees by the states in question. As such, while specifically focusing on the sources of internal and external sources of migration, the concept of structural migration is capable of linking colonial legacies to authoritarian rule and policies in the present.

Two possible critical questions about the usefulness of this concept spring to mind. First, given the multiplicity of motivations and compelling reasons behind migration, whether, and to what extent, the making of migration, forced or otherwise, can be deferred from abstract entities. As reflected in the introduction, while emphatically embracing a multi-causal explanation of migration, my focus here lies on the identification of causal pathways of *mass migration*, its recurrence, frequency and intensity across time and space. The second point leads me to link personal and structural dimensions. One way to reframe this linkage is to draw on the scholarship of state criminality, which refers to a type of "criminality organized by the state [and] consists of acts defined by law as criminal and committed by state officials in the pursuit of their job as representatives of the state" (cited in Kramer 2016: 233)[7]. This definition has laid down the foundation for subsequent framings of state-organised crimes of which forced migration, whether internally displaced persons, or refugees are part. According to another influential definition state crime is defined as resulting from "state organisational deviance involving the violation of human rights" (Green/Ward 2004: 2). State crimes may involve "an act or omission of an action by actors within the state that results in violations of domestic and international law, human rights, or systematic or institutionalized harm of its or another state's population, done in the name of the state regardless of whether there is or is not self-motivation or interests at play" (Rothe/Kauzlarich 2016: 102).

While concentrating on state borders, borderlands and the ways in which such areas are designated by the state, this essay sees particular merit in an-

6 On the concept of "de-development" see (Roy 1987: 56). Its use in the Kurdish context see (Yadirgi 2017:; Mohammadpour/Soleimani 2020: 4).

7 The concept of state crime goes back to Bill Chambliss. In his 1988 Presidential Address to the American Society of Criminology, he introduced his speech by emphasizing that: "There is form of crime that has heretofore escaped criminological inquiry, yet its persistence and omnipresence raise theoretical and methodological issues crucial to the development of criminology as a science. I am referring to what I call 'state-organized crime.'" (cited in Kramer 2016: 232).

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thropological approaches that focus on "the ethnography of the state as embedded in practices, places, and languages considered to be at the margins of the nation-state" (Das/Poole 2004: 3, see also Barth 2000). As a mode of knowing that privileges experience, ethnography "offers a unique perspective on the sorts of practices that seem to undo the state at its territorial and conceptual margins" (Das/Poole 2004: 4). This is not because "it captures exotic practices, but because it suggests that such margins are a necessary entailment of the state, much as the exception is a necessary component of the rule" (Das/Poole 2004: 4). Keeping in mind that the framing of a region as a 'margin' and frontier may posit a prejudgment or entail discursive strategies to justify the imposition of rule, order and discipline, the political geography of Kurdistan provides a particularly interesting vantage position from which to study state functions and the consequences of borders.

Linking personal motivation to the structural logic behind the workings of state institutions and policies is crucially important for an enhanced understanding of the causal pathways of the politics of migration and displacement by authoritarian regimes. It is hoped that the concept of structural migration would allow us, first, to ascertain the criminogenic structures put into operation which generate mass migration, and second, to focus more specifically on the driving forces behind state-engineered migration, that is to say, on policies executed by states and perpetrators acting in the interest of the state. The concept of de-development presented above is another concept that can be fruitful for the inquiry into state-engineered migration—understood here as shorthand for resource extraction and exploitation combined with low levels of investment in social and economic infrastructure and human development—in regions marked by abysmal disparities, inequalities and injustices in the use and allocation of vitally important resources and infrastructures (Bezwan forthcoming).

To sum up, structural migration may take various forms of migratory movements, existing on a continuum from being latent to manifest. In normal times, it causes less visible migration, whereas in times of crisis, such as civil war, resurgence of political opposition, economic crisis of great scale, it brings about mass migrations and refugees, mostly in the form of *survival migration* and *forced migration*. The former refers to people who are outside their country of origin because of an existential threat for which they have no access to a domestic remedy or resolution. The concept does not focus on a particular underlying cause of movement—whether persecution, conflict,

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or environment. Instead, as Alexander Betts argues, "it is based on the recognition that what matters is not privileging particular causes of movement but rather clearly identifying a threshold of fundamental rights which, when unavailable in a country of origin, requires that the international community allow people to cross an international border and receive access to temporary or permanent sanctuary. Refugees are one type of survival migrant, but many people who are not recognized as refugees also fall within the category" (Betts 2013: 4–5). The concept of survival migration brings into focus the peculiar situation of people whose countries of origin are unable or unwilling to ensure their most fundamental human rights and yet who fall outside the framework of the refugee regime (cf. Betts 2013: 5 and 188).

Many cases of mass migration across the region can also be taken as typical instances of survival migration. For instance, the 5.6 million refugees from Syria, and 6.2 million internally displaced created by the Syrian civil war which started in March 2011, are but survival migrants. This also holds true for the bulk of Kurdish migration from across the four states. By way of illustration, tens of thousands of Kurds became displaced and fled the war zones following the Kurdish and Iraqi wars in the 1960s and 1970s. Similarly, the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, the first Gulf War in the early 1990s, and ensuing uprisings altogether created several million Kurdish refugees and forced migration. One of the most significant instances of mass migration relates to the coup d'état of September 1980, especially after the escalation of military conflict between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*, PKK) in 1984. During this time, the Turkish military engaged in widespread destruction in the Kurdish regions burning over 4000 villages and forcing as many as two million Kurds to flee from their homes. This displacement of Kurdish citizens "was a deliberate strategy of the state with the objectives of establishing territorial control in the Kurdish regions and weakening the Kurdish mobilization in Turkey" (Ayata 2011: 4). Through displacement "the Kurdish conflict has become deterritorialized and relocated to urban centers where it reemerges in the guise of socio-economic problems such as unemployment, poverty, crime, child labor" (Ayata 2011: 5).

In what follows, I will discuss the major processes and policies by which the boundaries were drawn between the Kurdish regions and indicate their implications on patterns of state violence and migration.

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State borders as colonial institution

On the whole, despite their tremendous impact on Kurdish societies and Kurdish self-determination conflict over a century, state borders cutting across Kurdistan have received scant scholarly attention, as was demonstrated by the fact that it was not included in the excellent book *A Companion to Border Studies* by Wilson and Donnan (2012). By contrast, in a more recent book, *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Political Geography* (Agnew et al. 2015), the editors gave the Kurdish case prominence by narrating the battle of Kobani in the introduction to their edited collection, and by displaying a picture taken during the battle on the front cover. This is a striking example of how a forlorn border town can emerge out of the oblivion to which it was consigned and become a focus of attention. Before considering the underlying issue of *coloniality of border and rule*, I shall begin this section by briefly outlining the tale of Kurdish border town Kobani that has been the epicentre of an epic resistance recently. The town is located in Syria at the Turkish border and was home to roughly 50,000 inhabitants before the start of the war (cf. Agnew et al. 2015: 1). As Agnew et al. state, Kobani has been part of the Syrian state since it was created as a French protectorate under the authority of the League of Nations after the First World War and the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire. In an attempt to provide some historical context to the event, the authors point to the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) which proposed a Kurdish state that would have encompassed most of the region's Kurds, indicating that Kurdistan did not survive the final Peace Treaty signed in Lausanne in 1923 since the lands that would have been Kurdistan were ultimately divided between Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. Having said that, the authors conclude that "the tragic and highly complex situation of Kobani and its connections to historical, regional, and global dynamics illustrate the importance of geopolitical literacy and the potential for political geographical analysis to illuminate the dynamics and contingencies of current affairs" (Agnew et al. 2015: 2).

As suggested elsewhere, the break-up of the Ottoman Empire resulted in, among other things, the "partition of Ottoman Kurdistan" (McDowall 2017: 115). This process was then officially completed by the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) between Turkey and the victorious powers of the First World War, and the ensuing international border agreements. The first border treaty was signed between Turkey and the mandatory State of Syria and France in May

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1926, followed by border agreements between Turkey and the Mandatory state of Iraq and Great Britain in June 1926, and between Turkey and Iran in January 1932. The agreements not only involved redrawing state boundaries, but also security-related arrangements targeting the Kurds as potential destructors of the emerging post-war status quo (Bezwan 2008: 270; Bezwan 2018: 63–64). This essentially meant that regimes hostile towards Kurdish national demands became legally entitled to rule over Kurdish communities. As the post-war order began to take shape, the Kurds found themselves losing their territorial and societal integrity. Contrary to the promises of equal treatment and self-rule, Kurds were exposed to a double exclusion: being denied minority rights in the newly established states while simultaneously deprived of a state of their own.

As has been argued throughout this paper, structural migration goes back to the processes by which empires, in our case the Ottoman empire, were transmuted into nation-states. The League of Nations (1920–1946), the first worldwide intergovernmental organisation created after World War One, granted mandates to France and Great Britain in 1920 to rule over present-day Iraq and Syria respectively. This momentous development "fostered the penetration of the western territorial sovereignty state system and secured the foundations of the implementation of this model in the Middle East through elites production and the political control of the new states" (Meier 2018: 498). The international borders drawn up in the aftermath of World War One "created formal borders cut across the major Kurdish linguistic and cultural groupings in Kurdish society" (Chatty 2010: 233). As a result, "the vast Kurdish region was divided, and the Kurds were left under the control of Atatürk in Turkey, Reza Shah in Iran, British-appointed Prince Feisal in Iraq, and French politicians in Syria. However, the Kurds did not simply accept these territorial divisions. Inspired by the concepts of nationalism and self-determination, there were various revolts in Turkey, Iran, and Iraq" (Culcasi 2010: 113).

Alluding to three cases of partitions after World War I, namely the partition of Ireland in 1920, that of Hungary in 1920 and the Treaty of Lausanne (1923) that partitioned Kurdistan between the novel British mandate Iraq and Turkey, Brendan O'Leary characterises these partitions as 'fresh cuts' (cf. O'Leary 2012: 30). For him, a political partition necessarily involves "a new fresh border cut through at least one community's national homeland, creating at least two separate political units under different sovereigns or

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authorities", including some border adjustment "because there must be a fresh, novel border" (O'Leary 2012: 29ff.). Yet political partition is always executed and maintained by imposing rule on the territories and societies involved and drawing the boundaries between them. The partition was manifested in wire mesh fencing, minefields, and air surveillance to make it more difficult for people to cross frontiers other than at official border crossings (Chatty 2010: 233). Walls and fences were constructed by successive governments since the late 1920s to close off the Kurdish territories by inter-state security regimes[8]. One of the fundamental consequences of the reordering of the Middle East then, was the territorial and societal disintegration of the Kurdish communities across four states. The transnational boundaries of the states became established as intra-Kurdish borders, with Kurdish communities living on all sides of the respective state borders. One important and enduring implication of that process has been the fact that Kurdish regions have become reconstituted by the emergent nation-states ruling over respective area of Kurdistan as antagonistic 'tribal' peripheries at the margins of the state boundaries, hostile frontiers and thus unruly "borderlands" that should be pacified and incorporated into the respective state territories in order to be ruled at any price.

Referring to the arbitrary nature of states and frontiers in Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Latin America, the late Fred Halliday has offered the concept of "the postcolonial sequestration syndrome" to make sense of the predicament of national communities like the Palestinians, Tibetans and the Kurds (Halliday 2011: 332). Whilst this category may appear somewhat abstract, Halliday maintains that, "the lived experience it denotes is real and multiple: that is, the cases where countries or peoples have at a decisive moment of international change, amid the retreat of imperial or hegemonic powers, failed [through bad timing and/or bad leadership] to establish their independence" (ibid.). The concept of post-colonial sequestration is referred to as explaining the fates of national communities which have been unable to form an independent state following periods of momentous histor-

8 Chief among them was the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), originally known as the Baghdad Pact or the Middle East Treaty Organization (METO) based in Ankara, designed as a military alliance of the Cold War. It was formed in 1955 by Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and the United Kingdom and dissolved in 1979. The main purpose of the Baghdad Pact was to prevent communist incursions and foster peace in the Middle East. It was renamed the Central Treaty Organization, or CENTO, in 1959 after Iraq pulled out of the Pact.

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ical change, only to find themselves legally possessed by another or "imprisoned in a state not of their own making" (Owtram 2019: 301).

The peculiarity of state boundaries dividing the Kurdish regions lies in the fact that they form nothing less than intra-Kurdish borders, that is to say, borders cutting through Kurdish communities inhabiting all sides of the borders drawn between them by Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. To put this into perspective, consider the following thought experiment. Imagine the multiplication and amplification of the Berlin Wall (1961–1989) over an extended period of time. Such an analogy would probably provide a good point of reference against which one can better assess the impacts of state boundaries dividing Kurdish societies.

In early spring 2019, having found myself on a train from Innsbruck to Bozen (the capital city of South Tyrol in Italy), I could not resist thinking what would happen if citizens belonging to the same Tyrolean community on both sides of border would not have had the liberty to cross the border whenever they want without fear and restriction. And think of the members of an extended Kurdish family living, let say, in Kobani, the above-mentioned border town in the Kurdish region of Syrian, and Suruç, a Kurdish border town on the Turkish side of border—they have to either get passport, if possible at all, to take long journey to visit their relatives or risk of going through some deadly minefield and being exposed to a bullet of border security.

One particular, and particularly upsetting, outcome of state boundaries across Kurdish regions and communities is the recurrent and continued massacres at border crossings. One of the most vulnerable groups among those which are subject to state violence and being targeted on an almost daily basis, are the people involved in cross-border trade activities. As demonstrated by Soleimani and Mohammadpour in their examination of what they called *"kolberi"* (cross-border labour) in Iranian Kurdistan, where 389 *kolbers* (cross-borders laborers) have been shot at border crossings since 2015. In that year alone, 126 kolbers were killed as a result of direct shooting by Iranian security forces (Soleimani/Mohammadpour 2020: 11). *Kolberi* is referred to as arising from "the state's policy of de-development [or internal colonialisation] of the Kurdish region" (2020: 1). For many Kurds living on borderlands, *kolberi* has become a path to survival, although viewed by the participants themselves "as a low-income transient, unreliable, and dangerous work, they desperately stick to it as their only means for economic survival" (2020: 14). As an extremely dangerous and precarious cross-border

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economic undertaking to earn a living, Kolberi is not technically illegal, "but it is punishable by death without ever being designated as a crime" (Soleimani/Mohammadpour 2020: 9ff.). As such, kolbers are both inside and outside the juridico-political order with no laws criminalizing kolberi and no legal mechanism in place "that allows redressing the grievances of those kolbers who fall victim to the state violence" (ibid.).

By way of concluding this section I would like to outline two other cases of border crossing and their tragic consequences. These cases too bear testimony to how state borders dividing the Kurdish communities have become a "landscape of death" with the functional equivalence of a colonial regime, that causes durable human suffering and forced migration on the one hand, and resilience and non-compliance on the other. To begin with, the first instance involves the extrajudicial execution of 33 Kurds in 1943 in a remote town near the Turkish-Iranian state border. On the night of July 30, 1943 in Özalp, a district of the city of Van, a border town located at the Turkish-Iranian border, the thirty-three Kurds were killed accused of smuggling. The talk of smuggling and smugglers as it is framed by the official discourse is inherently discriminatory and has always produced dehumanising effects. It has legitimised the killing of 'smugglers' and the banning of cross-border trade activities, exchanges that have occurred mostly between the members of extended families or groups of families and relatives they happened to be on the wrong side of state borders. Such accusations of smuggling or 'terrorism' are telling examples of how state borders across Kurdistan can determine issues of life and death. What the states take to be criminal and subversive activities can by all accounts be regarded as a natural tendency among communities that share historical, cultural and familial bonds and geographical vicinity, and yet are fractured by the state borders. This is what happened in Özalp in 1943.

The murders at Özalp, euphemistically called "the 33 Bullets Incident", are referred to by the Kurds as the "Seyfo valley massacre". Some 7 years later, a trial was finally opened against the perpetrating General Mustafa Muğlalı, then the 3rd Army Inspector in Diyarbakır. Muğlalı was found guilty by General Staff Military Court General on February 3, 1950 and sentenced to death. But later a court decided to lower the verdict to 20 years of imprisonment. He died in a military hospital in Ankara in November 1951 (for a summary of the event cf. Özgen, 2016: 85-88).

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The poet Ahmed Arif (1927–1991), one of the most widely read poets in Turkey, created a literary monument to the memories of those who were brutally killed in a poem entitled "Thirty Three Bullets": *In a solitary corner of the mountains/ At the hour of morning prayer/ [...]. I have been shot/ My dreams are darker than night/ No one can find a good omen in them/ My life gone before its time/ I cannot put it into words/ A pasha sends a coded message. And I am shot, without inquest, without judgment [...].*[9]

One striking aspect of this poem is the Arif's use of the singular first person to emphatically embrace the victims' perspective while simultaneously signalling identification with their destiny and dignity. I have chosen this poem because it brings to the fore the brutality of borders and the sense of resistance under the most life-threatening circumstances one can imagine.

The influential Kurdish poet and intellectual Musa Anter (1920–20 September 1992) was among the first authors to publicly criticise this extrajudicial killing of 33 innocent people. In one of his pieces published in 16 December 1948 in Dicle Kaynağı (literally the Source of Tigris), a magazine he edited, Anter criticised the government policy towards the Kurds, underlining that the killing would not be forgotten, and that the perpetrators must be held accountable. Decades later Anter himself was assassinated at the age of 72 by Turkish JITEM (Turkish acronym for the Turkish Gendarmerie's Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism Service) in September 1992 because of his cultural work and political activism[10]. While writing an investigative book, entitled *Yas Tutan Tarih. 33 Kurşun* (A History of Mourning: The 33-Bullets) published in 1989 in Istanbul, another influential Kurdish author and journalist Günay Aslan, doubly exiled (in 1994 and 2016), and now lives in Cologne, was subjected to a criminal investigation. The book provides a well-examined account of the extra-judicial killing and the circumstances surrounding it, citing the ordering general Muğlalı as saying that "the Kurds cannot be treated by normal laws of the states"[11]. For his book, Aslan was charged and found guilty of "separatism and undermining national unity" by

9 By Ahmet Arif translated by Murat-Nemet NEJAT.

10 After long delays, cover-ups and systematic attempts by the Turkish authorities to obstruct the justice, the Gendarmerie Intelligence and Counterterrorism was finally found guilty of Anter's assassination and Turkey was fined related to his murder in 2006 by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). A Diyarbakır court in 2013 allegedly charged four individuals with Anter's murder of them all of them are fugitives.

11 Confirmed by Aslan in an interview held on 4 August 2020 in Cologne.

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the then State Security Court which sentenced him to 2 years in prison. After serving 20 months of his sentence he was released and felt compelled to leave his country for Germany.

The state borders, that is to say, the intra-Kurdish borders, have been working as a "landscape of death", to use a striking term coined by Joseph Nevins to criticise critical contemporary borders (2002: 120). The border regimes imposed upon Kurdish societies too are "part of longer histories of displacement, segregation and persecution" (Raeymaekers 2019: 61). The states ruling over Kurdistan themselves have always characterised the Kurdish regions in terms of states of exception by which life is permanently put into question. While deemed as *the national and territorial other* by the states in question, Kurdish areas are disparagingly cast as backward peripheries that should either be assimilated into the dominant society and/or eliminated, not least by forced migration and depopulation (Bezwan forthcoming). Following the definition of the concept of the margin offered by Das and Poole, the Kurdish regions are taken by the states to "form natural containers for people considered insufficiently socialized into the law and order" (2004: 9). The task then becomes to "manage" or "pacify" these populations "through both force and a pedagogy of conversion intended to transform "unruly subjects" into lawful subjects of the state" (ibid.).

This pattern of killing at the border crossings presented here would repeat itself periodically, targeting both ordinary citizens, and activists from across Kurdish political movements. The most recent example of this was the Roboski Massacre, committed in a small, isolated mountain village on the Turkish Iraqi border known as Roboski. While once more highlighting the role of state borders as a "landscape of death", the massacre unfolded as follows: "On December 28, 2011, an American Predator drone flying over the mountains along the Iraq–Turkey border detected a surge in wireless communication. U.S. officials alerted Turkish military officials about the crossing of a suspected group of Kurdish armed militants belonging to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) into Turkish territory. Within a matter of hours, Turkish jets and artillery responded by bombing the group. The bombardment lasted 45 minutes (cf. Eralp 2015: 450)[12]. On the night of

12 As pointed out by Eralp, "members of the PKK identify themselves by wearing identifiable uniforms as required by Article Four of the Third Geneva Convention on lawful combatants in an armed conflict, be they members of a state's armed forces or militia. "The

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December 28, 2011, thirty-four of a party of 38—19 of them children—were slaughtered in an aerial bombardment by a Turkish F-16 fighter jet. In their report following their visit to the families, Green and Karakaş state that those killed were engaging in traditional cross border trade. Roboski is a poor village where there is little or no work. Cross border trade provides a small and welcome income for the older men and pocket money for the purchase of notebooks, stationery, and pens for the teenagers (2014).

Many villagers who have been killed living near the Iraqi border, had been smuggling goods for many years with the knowledge of the Turkish authorities. At the time of the military operation, there was no military activity at the border. After the massacre was committed, authorities claimed that the operation had been conducted to prevent the passing of the terrorists from the border (combatants of the Workers' Party of Kurdistan, PKK), but there was "no evidence that proves that the villagers were carrying weapons or posed any threat to the security forces. On the contrary, the PKK members operating at the border were already known to patrol in much smaller groups" (Altiparmak 2020: 2).

Impunity in dealing with the Kurds has been one of the defining features of the states ruling over the Kurdish regions. Here too the mass killing was typically denied by "state criminals" on the ground that the attack was against PKK operatives crossing the border. In fact, "none of those killed had any connection with the PKK or any terrorist organisation" (Green/Karakas 2014). The Roboski massacre finally led to an investigation undertaken by the Military Prosecutor of the General Chief of Staff. On 6 January 2014, the court ruled non-prosecution against five suspects, who were members of the Turkish Armed Forces. Because of "the frequency of the terrorist attacks against the security forces" in that border region, the prosecutor makes clear, "the decision of the personnel of the Turkish army to conduct an aerial attack on the area in question was the most effective and appropriate method" (Altiparmak 2020: 2). The prosecutor based his justification on the assumption of an unavoidable mistake, a line of reasoning that was also confirmed by the Military Court of the Air Forces Command on 11 June 2014 (ibid.). Following this rejection, the Roboski case was then filed to the Turkish Constitutional Court on 18 July 2014. After a preliminary review of the petitions, the appli-

PKK has a clear line of command, and its members wear uniforms and carry guns openly" (2015, p. 450).

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cants' legal representative was notified on 4 August 2014 that the application file was incomplete, whereby "the applicants were asked to address the shortcomings, which was done with a 2-day delay accounted for with a medical excuse" (Altiparmak 2020: 8).

The Section of the Constitutional Court (the tribunal that passes judgment on the merits of a case) rejected to consider the case. Interestingly, the rejection is not set forth as a judicial decision, but regulated as an administrative decision, issued by the Commission's Rapporteur in Chief with no judicial mandate, a line of action that renders the application invalid from the outset. Therefore, Altiparmak concludes, "the Section's rejection in the Roboski application is not only the first decision of its kind, it is the only decision of its kind!" (2020: 8). As the Section has no authority to rule such a rejection, the Constitutional Court issued a decision of rejection on 24 February 2016 contrary to all procedural rules "in an application regarding one of the biggest massacres in the history of Turkey, the massacre of Roboski" (Altıparmak 2020: 14)[13]. While the Constitutional Court has been "instrumental in creating impunity and injustice", not seldom have the rulings of the ECtHR on Turkey provided a cover up for the grave cases of injustices in Turkey (cf. Altiparmak 2020: 15). As strikingly put by Das and Poole drawing on Agamben, "law produces certain bodies as 'killable' because they are positioned by the law itself as prior to the institution of law" (2004: 12). The impunity is the mechanism that puts life in question by producing a category of killable lives.

Almost a decade after the massacre, "victims' families are still being denied their basic right to know how and why their family members were killed, with the continued denial of truth that "prevents the transformation of hurtful memories and robs families of their right to mourn properly for their sons, brothers, husbands, and fathers" (Eralp 2015: 454). In December 2013, two years after the massacre, the Diyarbakir city government unveiled a Roboski monument in commemoration of those who lost their lives. "The

13 As if that were not enough, the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) too endorsed the logic on which rejection decision of the Turkish Constitutional Court rests and issued an "inadmissibility decision" (17 May 2018) concerning the application of the Roboski massacre "on the grounds that domestic remedies had not been exhausted". This unwavering trust, as Altıparmak concludes, "has resulted in the once-and-for-all burial of the truth about one of the gravest massacres in the history of Turkey without a proper examination of the allegations of the applicants (2020, p. 1).

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monument", in the words of Eralp, "depicts a Kurdish mother with raised open arms shouting at the sky while sitting in the middle of a circle surrounded by eight missiles dropped that day. The Predator Drone is conspicuously missing in the monument very much like the truth that is being denied and made invisible by the Turkish and American governments" (2015: 454).

At this point in time, things seem to have turned full circle. In October 2016, the metropolitan mayor and co-mayor, the well-respected Gülten Kışanak (female) and Fırat Anlı (male) respectively, were removed from their office and replaced by a state-appointed administrator (*Zwangsverwalter* or Turkish *kayyum*). Kışanak and Anlı were immediately arrested on charges of dissemination of the propaganda of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). In February 2019, Kışanak was then sentenced to 14 years and 3 months in prison entirely on political grounds. Yet, her own political and public engagement can in many respects be seen both as resumption and résumé, as recurrence and summary of the recent history of Turkey, including the drivers and dynamics of forced migration, nature of state borders and suppression of the Kurdish quest for self-rule. To begin with, as a young student of the Faculty of Education in Diyarbakir, the very Kurdish metropole that would elect her to its metropolitan mayor in 2014, Kısanak was arrested following the military putsch of the 12th September 1980 in Turkey. The widespread politics of *Gleichschaltung* conducted by the military regime (1980–1983), among other things, caused a flow of Kurdish and Turkish political refugees to Europe and elsewhere. As suggested in the introduction, this has indeed played an important role in the formation of the Kurdish diaspora across Europe.

After her arrest, Kişanak was then imprisoned in the (in)famous Diyarbakir Prison for two years, a prison that according to all accounts of its former prisoners and Kisanak herself, has embodied a system of organised inhumanity, identical with unimaginable methods of harassment and torture. Following her release from this prison, Kisanak subsequently took up the study of journalism in Izmir, in 1986. On the 16th March 1988, however, she was again arrested on the ground of protesting Saddam Hussein's attack on Halabja, a genocidal chemical attack against the Kurdish civilian people conducted during the closing days of the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988), an attack that caused mass migration and flow of refugees across international or intra-Kurdish borders for that matter. Kişanak was released one year afterwards and began to continue with her political and public work in the years

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to come, including as a member of parliament (elected 2011) on behalf of a pro-Kurdish party and as mayor.

On the other hand, the *kayyum*, the *forced administrator*, has removed the Roboski monument by destructing the marble tables on which the names of the deceased were engraved, along with banning all Kurdish linguistic and cultural activities supported by the mayoralty. The physical extermination of 34 of people through an aerial bombardment is followed by the enactment of symbolic violence on the memory of the deceased. After all, one of the striking features of the (re)established Turkish presidential system since 2016 has been the widespread use of *kayyum*. Hundreds of elected Kurdish mayors and co-mayors have been dismissed, arrested, and sentenced to years of prisons. Perhaps not surprisingly, among 95 mayoralties whose mayors and co-mayors were exposed to the kayyum regime by the government, there is no single female kayyum. As an instrument to force the elected incumbents of public institutions into receivership by arresting, harassing and replacing them through state-appointed officials, kayyum emerges as a new colonial figure and form of colonial administration. As an emergent entity, however, it arises out of coloniality of border and rule imposed on the Kurdish communities. The effects of this development on the upsurge in external and internal migration cannot be overemphasised.

Concluding remarks

Building on an expanding body of literature on the critical conceptions of borders, frontiers, boundaries, borderlands on the one hand, and migration studies on the other, this study has established the transformation of empires into nation-states by means of ethnic, cultural and religious homogeneity as the key driver behind the mass migration and refugee flows of the twentieth century. This historical process has taken the form of either forced assimilation or forced migration, both of which have caused large-scale migration movements, as well as external and internal displacement. By focusing on the Kurdish case within the wider context of the Middle East, this paper has tried to deliver a tentative analysis of how state borders, state structures and migration have acted together to produce what I have described as structural migration, defined as a phenomenon that is engineered by and built into the very structures and policy paradigms of political regimes in the Middle

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East and elsewhere. As such, structural migration has been generated both by "migration of ethnic unmixing" and the politics of forced assimilation, that is, the systematic targeting of the communal existence of territorially and historically settled communities. The predicament of non-Muslim communities in the Middle East and their forced migration, which has not been treated in this paper, is an important case in point (Bezwan forthcoming).

I have argued that the phenomenon of mass migration across the Middle East, among other things, can be explained by two main factors which are intimately related: first, the effects of colonial legacies, and second, more importantly, the policies and practices of postcolonial and/or post-imperial authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. The former refers to the ways in which borders and regimes were imposed on the region, and to the imperatives of imperial geopolitics, whereas the latter brings the authoritarian and exclusivist institutional and ideological features of the political regimes to the fore as they are currently applied and maintained across the Middle East. Put differently, the imposition and maintenance of the religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural homogenisation by the states (whether secular, theocratic, or a combination thereof) against a background of historical/colonial legacies has been, and still continues to be, the most decisive factor behind mass migration across the Middle East. Moreover, this is compounded by the fact that all societies, state and non-state communities alike, in the Middle East have been, and are, paradigmatic examples of diverse and plural societies, realities that are fiercely denied by the sovereign powers across the region. The politics of non-recognition then facilitates homogenisation, both of which in turn act as the main source of state coercion and of migration for that matter.

As for our understanding of the Kurds' situation and of Kurdish migration, the main subject-matter of this essay, it can be concluded that the reconstitution of political authority, the redrawing of territorial boundaries and the restructuring of populations in the post-Ottoman political geography laid the foundations of the Kurdistan question along a continuum with three dimensions: the territorial and societal disintegration of the Kurdish regions, their incorporation into the newly established states to the exclusion of the Kurds, and the politics of non-recognition of Kurdish rights and aspirations both by the elites of the emergent nation-states, and the major powers leading the international community. Put differently, the territorial partition, forced incorporation and non-recognition refer to the primal

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mechanisms which have not only produced historical injustices, but more importantly, continue to shape the parameters of the Kurdish predicament and are responsible for migration movements from Kurdish regions across the Middle East (Bezwan 2018: 63ff. and forthcoming).

The majority of cases of Kurdish migration throughout modern history, as I have argued, have their root cause in the ceding of Kurdish territories to the emergent nation-states, to the exclusion of the Kurds, and to the imposition of direct rule on the Kurdish communities. While splitting the Kurdish regions and communities across four states, state borders function as markers of colonial rule and power execution. In fact, by all appearances these borders are not only the longest standing but also the longest boundaries that have ever existed in human history which cut through the same national communities who inhabit the border regions across four states. This state of affairs has had fundamental implications on the pattern of migration in and around Kurdistan. First, new state borders brought about border regimes that divided Kurdish communities, leading up to their societal and territorial disintegration. Second, it gave rise to the collaboration and joint strategies of containment on the part of the states ruling over Kurdish territories. Third, the redrawing of state borders set in motion a long process of marginalisation, peripheralisation, de-development and exclusion of Kurdish communities from proper social and economic infrastructure, as well as human and societal development. Fourth, the policies and practices of boundary-making and domination of the Kurdish communities have produced a spiral of repression and resistance, mostly manifested in the recurrent and durable patterns of state-organised mass violence on the one hand, and Kurdish non-compliance, periodic uprisings, including armed resistance, on the other. And finally, fifth, all of this has led to the use of mass violence and mass migrations, flows of refugees, internal and external displacements, and deportations. Which may explain why the borders between the states ruling over the respective parts of Kurdistan have been, and remain, as colonial institutions par excellence, and sites of decolonial contention, producing mass migration, state violence and resistance.

As stated by Martin van Bruinessen, one of the leading scholars of Kurdish studies, scholarship on the Kurds "to a considerable extent reproduces the division of Kurdistan into four main parts (van Bruinessen 2015: 125). Complicated by the nature of the available sources and the multiplicitiy of languages, "(T)he relations cutting across the different parts of Kurdistan

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have for this reason perhaps received less scholarly attention than is warranted. There has been little comparative work, and most of it has been based on secondary sources" (van Bruinessen 2015: 126).

I conclude by echoing this statement and uttering a final word concerning research desideratum. There are many studies on Kurdish diaspora(s) and aspects of forced migration, but no studies exist that deal with the Kurdish case of migration in its entirety from a historical, multidisciplinary, and comparative perspective. Works that focus on diaspora typically fail to look at the structural conditions and causal pathways of the migration in the country of origins, whereas studies that deal with the country of origins mostly neglect to consider the phenomenon of migration and its impact on the Kurdish communities and receiving societies alike (for a review of literature on Kurdish diaspora see also Baser et al. 2015: 143ff.). The frequency, recurrence and intensity of the phenomenon of Kurdish migration in particular and the Middle Eastern migration in general, however, call for comprehensive studies that focus on the nature of migration in relation to geopolitics, borders and authoritarian regimes, by more systematically combining relational, intersectional and structural approaches to ethnographic methods and field research.

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U.S. immigration enforcement policies, health care utilization, and community health

Isabel K. Latz

Under the Trump administration, immigration policies have become more restrictive and immigration enforcement has been strengthened, particularly at the U.S.-Mexico border. We conducted a survey study examining immigration policy perceptions in relation to mental health and health care utilization among 211 Hispanic residents with different immigration statuses in El Paso, County in the Spring of 2019. Findings showed associations between deportation fears and increased psychological distress as well as experiences with immigration enforcement and lower health care utilization. The COVID-19 pandemic highlights a need to understand how immigration policies affect health care utilization and health outcomes to mitigate community harm.

Introduction

The United States (U.S.) was once referred to by its federal government as "a nation of immigrants" (Gonzales 2018). Under the current federal administration, this description has been removed from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' mission statement (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2020), a changing sentiment which is reflected in the administration's immigration-related policies and political rhetoric.

At this time, the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is exposing strengths and weaknesses of U.S. healthcare and social service systems, much like in other countries. The crisis has also highlighted existing ethnic and racial health disparities, as reflected in disproportional death rates from

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the virus among Hispanics and African Americans. For instance, as of April 6, 2020, Hispanics, who make up 29 percent of the population in New York City (NYC), accounted for 33.5 percent of all COVID-19 related deaths. African Americans, who represent 22 percent of the NYC community, accounted for 27.5 percent of deaths. In contrast, white residents who make up 32 percent of NYC's population accounted for 27.3 percent of deaths (NYC Health 2020).

An examination of the underlying causes of disparities in this health crisis are beyond the scope of this chapter. Rather, its focus is on recent changes to U.S. immigration enforcement policies and the corresponding impact on health, healthcare utilization, and community health. While drawing on a large body of research and anecdotal evidence from different regions of the U.S., part of this chapter highlights observations from the U.S.-Mexico border city El Paso, Texas and neighboring communities. This chapter will first provide a demographic and historic context for key changes to immigration enforcement policies under the current federal administration, followed by an outline of changes pertaining to the U.S.-Mexico border in particular. Subsequently, I will summarize scientific evidence about associations between immigration enforcement policies and health outcomes from studies prior to and since the beginning of the current administration. Following this section, I will share observations from research projects on this topic as part of my doctoral studies in El Paso, Texas. The chapter concludes with recommendations that reflect the insights from this evidence base for policymakers and for further study on this topic in the U.S. and globally.

Hispanic and immigrant populations in the U.S.: A demographic context

There are approximately 44.7 million immigrants (i.e., foreign-born individuals) in the U.S., constituting 13.7 percent of the total population (Batalova et al. 2020). Hispanics or Latinos/Latinas/Latinx, native- and foreign-born combined, make up 18 percent of the U.S. population (Flores, 2017). Two-thirds of Hispanics were born in the U.S. and of the remaining third, approximately 77 percent are lawful immigrants, including naturalized citizens (45 %) and permanent (27 %) or temporary (5 %) residents, while the remaining 23 percent are undocumented (Budiman, 2020). About three quarters

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of foreign-born Latinos have lived in the U.S. for over ten years (Radford/Krogstad). Thus, most Hispanics in the U.S. are citizens and a smaller group comprises residents with a less stable immigration status. Considering all ethnicities, one in four children in the U.S. is foreign-born and/or has a foreign-born parent (Council on Community Pediatrics 2013). Furthermore, at least 5.9 million U.S. citizen children are members of mixed-status families, meaning they share a household with an undocumented family member (Mathema 2017). These statistics highlight the intergenerational and socio-biological connections between different immigration status holders. On the U.S. side of the border with Mexico, about half of the population is Hispanic and predominantly of Mexican origin (Stepler/Lopez 2016; United States-México Border Health Commission 2014).

U.S. immigration enforcement laws and policies: A historical context

Since the beginning of the 20th century, immigration-related laws and policies in the U.S. have typically promoted immigration in some form and simultaneously restricted pathways for legal immigration and/or access to benefits and services for immigrants (see Figure 1).

In the mid-1990s, two laws introduced notable restrictions to public benefits for legal immigrants in the U.S. and expanded mechanisms to deport immigrants from the country. Specifically, the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)* of 1996 rendered legal immigrants with less than five-year residence ineligible for federally-funded public benefits, including Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) (Hagan/Rodriguez/Capps 2003). In the same year, the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA)* expanded the list of criminal offenses for which immigrants could be deported, authorized federal officers to issue removals of non-citizens without a formal court hearing, and increased the budget for immigration enforcement (Donato/Rodriguez 2014). Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the federal government broadened its capacities for increased surveillance, apprehension, and detention of immigrants who were suspected to be part of terrorist groups under the Patriot Act (2001). Under the Homeland Security Act (2002), the Department

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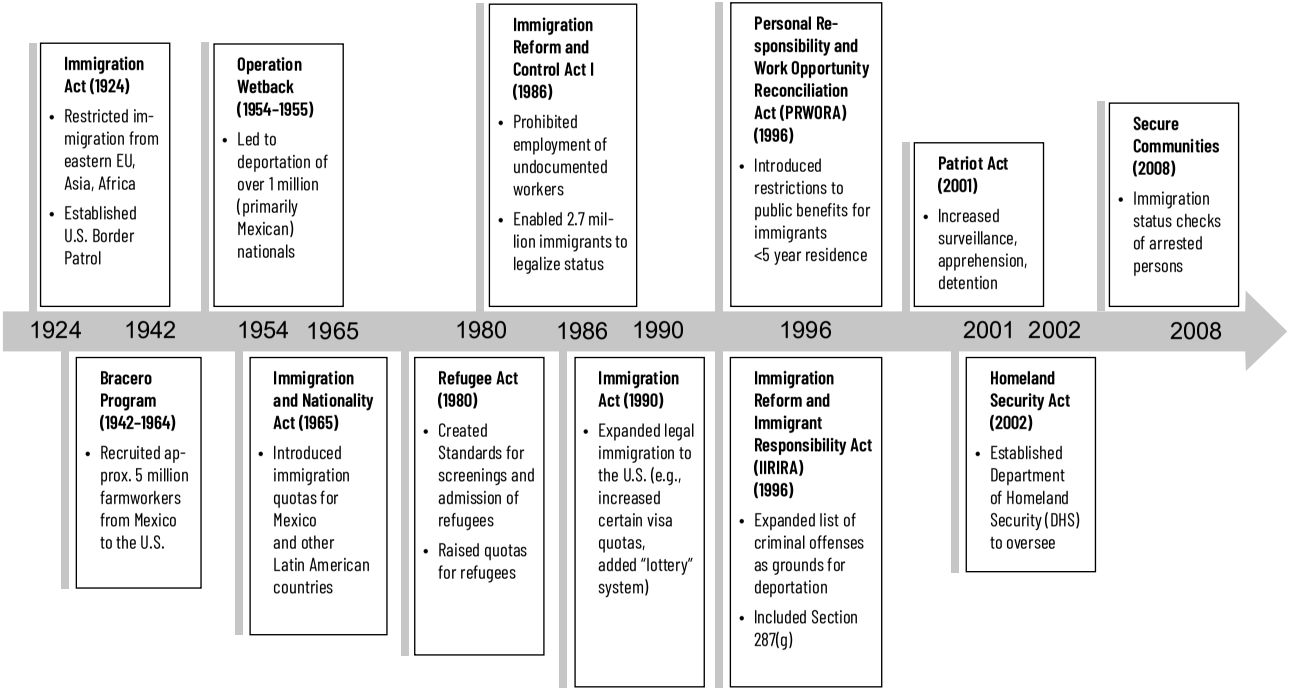

Figure 1: Timeline of key U.S. federal immigration enforcement laws and policies—own image

of Homeland Security (DHS) replaced the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to oversee United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP), United States Border Patrol (USBP), United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), amongst other departments (U.S. Department of Homeland Security 2018a). Under DHS leadership, CBP and USBP intensified their border security and immigration enforcement operations in U.S. border areas, specifically along the border with Mexico (Donato/Rodriguez 2014; Plascencia 2017), while ICE gained responsibility for immigration enforcement in the U.S. interior (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2018).

The impact of strengthened immigration enforcement was reflected in a substantial increase in deportations from 70,000 persons in 1996 to 420,000 in 2012 (Rosenblum et al. 2014). Despite legal prohibitions of discrimination in immigration enforcement, Latinx immigrants have disproportionally been targeted by these measures. For instance, Hispanics made up approximately 75 percent of the undocumented population between the years 2000 and 2009, but accounted for at least 90 percent of deportees during this period and in subsequent years (Passel/Cohn 2009; U.S. Department of Homeland Security 2009; 2018b). Notably, the number of deportations during the first five years of the Obama administration (over 1.9 million) was almost as high as deportations during all eight years of the Bush administration (2 million) (Rosenblum et al. 2014). However, the Obama administration also expanded access to legal residence for some undocumented immigrants with the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) programs in 2012 and 2014, respectively, although the latter was blocked by a federal injunction in 2015. In addition, the government shifted its focus on deporting immigrants with a criminal record or who had recently crossed the border, in contrast with regulations under the current federal administration (ibid.).

Immigration enforcement policy changes under the current U.S. federal administration

Shortly after President Trump's inauguration, the administration released a series of executive orders focused on strengthening immigration enforcement in the interior of the U.S. (for instance, by considering undocument-

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ed immigrants regardless of criminal background a "priority" for deportation), intensifying border security measures (such as, by requesting federal funding for a wall between the U.S. and Mexico), and prohibiting entry to the U.S. for foreign nationals from Muslim-majority countries (The White House Office of the Press Secretary 2017a; 2017b; 2017c). In September 2017, the administration terminated DACA, which currently grants temporary authorization to work or study in the U.S. to approximately 690,000 individuals who came to the U.S. before their 16th birthday[1] (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services 2017).

Another policy change targeting legal immigrants in the U.S. involves the so-called "*Public Charge*" rule, which determines whether an immigrant is likely to become dependent on the government for support in legal permanent residency and certain visa applications. Previously only cash benefits were considered, however under the new rule (in effect since February 24, 2020), the use of non-cash benefits (such as, SNAP/food stamps, non-emergency Medicaid, and housing benefits) constitutes grounds for inadmissibility as well (Immigration Legal Resource Center 2019). Health care and social service providers have expressed concerns that this policy change may create a "chilling effect", in other words, prevent immigrants from seeking services for themselves or their family members, even if their eligibility remains unchanged. In fact, researchers at the Urban Institute found that one in seven adults from immigrant families and one in five adults from low-income immigrant families did not access government benefits in 2018 due to concerns about future legal status applications, even prior to implementation of the new rule (Bernstein et al. 2019). In addition, social service providers have observed disenrollment from nutrition assistance and children's health insurance programs among immigrant families, despite their continued eligibility for these services after the announcement of the new rule (Bottemiller Evich 2018; Jewett et al. 2018). These developments are particularly worrisome given that immigrant families in the U.S. are more likely to live in poverty, lack health insurance, and earn lower incomes compared to the general population (Khullar/Chokshi 2019).

1 The DACA termination was initially halted by federal judges and the Supreme Court is expected to decide about the legality of the administrations' decision by June 2020 (de Vogue 2020)

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Additional policy changes have particularly affected migrants and asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border. For instance, the administration adopted a "*zero-tolerance*" policy in May 2018, which involved the criminal prosecution of anyone crossing the border without legal authorization, including asylum seekers (Lind 2018). As a consequence, at least 5,400 children were separated from their parents and accompanying family members until the policy was ceased in June 2018, though the total number of separated children is unknown (Spagat 2019; U.S. Department of Health/Human Services Office of Inspector General 2019). The "*Migrant Protection Protocols*" policy of January 2019 forces asylum seekers from countries other than Mexico to remain on the Mexican side of the border until the date of their court hearing in the U.S. (Lind 2019). An additional policy involved so-called "*safe third country*" agreements with Mexico and Guatemala, amongst other countries, which require migrants to first seek asylum in nations they have transited through on their way to the U.S., despite unsafe conditions in these countries for migrants, including high homicide rates, kidnappings, and extortions (Fratzke 2019; Vulliamy 2020).

Apart from these policy changes, the president has continuously engaged in anti-immigrant rhetoric, such as the allegation that Mexico was sending criminals and rapists to the U.S. An analysis of Trump's speeches revealed the frequent use of the terms "animals", "invasion", and "killer" when referring to immigrants (Fritze 2019). Similar language was included in a manifesto by the shooter who killed twenty-three and injured twenty-five individuals, specifically targeting Hispanics, in El Paso on August 3rd, 2019, in one of the deadliest mass shootings in modern U.S. history (Associated Press 2020; Law/Bates 2019).

Associations between immigration enforcement and health outcomes: A summary of the scientific literature

Research prior to and since the current federal administration has revealed associations between strengthened U.S. immigration enforcement and adverse health outcomes among immigrants and Latinx residents (see Figure 2). To summarize broadly, studies have shown associations between stricter immigration enforcement policies at state level (for instance, Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 of 2010, which authorizes state and local law enforcement to ask

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about a person's immigration status) and poorer self-rated health and mental health among Hispanic adults (Anderson/Finch 2014; Hatzenbuehler et al. 2017). With respect to physical health effects, local immigration raids by ICE and the 2016 presidential election were found to be associated with low birth weight in infants of Hispanic mothers (Gemmill et al. 2019; Novak et al. 2017). A study by Torres and colleagues (2018) identified significant associations between deportation concerns for participants themselves, family members, or friends and increased cardiovascular risks, including higher body mass index, waist circumference, and pulse pressure among Mexican women in California (Torres et al. 2018). Moreover, studies have uncovered adverse psychological and material effects of intensified immigration enforcement on children in particular, including U.S. citizen children. For instance, researchers found that the experience of parental deportation or threat thereof increased stress, fear, and confusion about their identity, but also corresponded to experiences of limited access to resources, poorer academic performance, and discrimination in children (Gulbas/Zayas 2017; Dreby 2015). Notably, research also uncovered that mixed-status families commonly engage in shared risk management strategies, such as avoiding the outdoors, staying within confined geographic spaces to evade immigration checkpoints, and minimizing contact with health care or social service agencies to avoid questions about immigration status (Bailliard 2013; Enriquez 2015; Núñez/Heyman 2007). Finally, studies have documented Hispanics' decreased utilization of health care services, including for pediatric, mental health, and preventive health needs (White et al. 2014; Beniflah et al. 2013; Fenton et al. 1997) as well as public assistance programs (Toomey et al. 2014) in response to enactments of state immigration enforcement policies.

Studies since the beginning of the current federal administration also identified psychological and physical health effects related to immigration policies. For instance, Roche and colleagues (2018) examined concerns and behaviors among 213 Latino parents with different immigration statuses in Atlanta in response to immigration actions and news in 2017 (such as the DACA termination or targeting of undocumented immigrants without a criminal background in immigration enforcement). The authors found that worries about family separation, concerns about negative impacts on their children's lives, and changes in daily routines were not only common experiences among undocumented residents, but also temporary legal status holders, and, albeit to a lesser extent, legal permanent residents. In addi-

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tion, worries and behavioral modifications were associated with increased psychological distress, regardless of parents' immigration status (Roche et al. 2018). Another study by Eskenazi and colleagues (2019) found significant associations between worries about immigration policies, higher anxiety, and poorer sleep quality following the 2016 presidential election among 397 U.S.-citizen adolescents with Latino immigrant parents in California. Lastly, Krieger and colleagues (2018) discovered significantly higher preterm birth rates among infants of immigrant, Hispanic, and Muslim women in New York City in the post-presidential inauguration period (January to August 2017) compared to the period prior to presidential candidate nominations (September 2015 to July 2016) (Krieger et al. 2018).

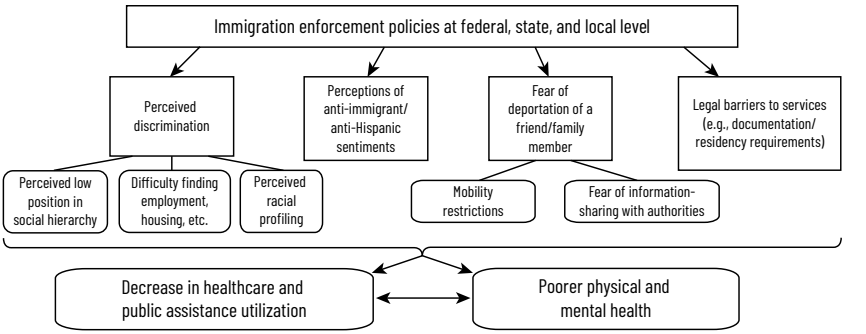

Figure 2. Conceptual framework of associations between immigration enforcement policies, health care and public assistance utilization and physical and mental health—own image

Under an administration that continues to strengthen immigration enforcement and minimize options to maintain or stabilize one's immigration status, it is important to consider the implications of these studies. Evidently, stricter immigration enforcement policies do not solely affect individuals who are directly targeted by these measures (i.e., undocumented immigrants) but extend to other community members, including mixed-status families, U.S. citizen children of Hispanic parents, and Latinx individuals who perceive anti-Hispanic sentiments or discriminatory practices (e.g., racial profiling in immigration enforcement) as a result of these measures (Ayón/Becerra 2013; Vargas et al. 2017). Thus, there is reason for concern about cumulative effects of increasingly restrictive immigration policies and

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hardened enforcement on the physical health, mental health, and service utilization among Latinx residents and communities in which they live.

The relationship between strengthened immigration enforcement and underutilization of health care and social services has additional implications, some of which are particularly concerning during this global pandemic. First, individuals risk damage to their own health by forgoing preventive health screenings, delaying diagnosis and treatment for acute conditions, or avoiding regular monitoring of chronic health problems. Second, underutilization of health care and social services has the potential to exacerbate existing health disparities, particularly in the U.S.-Mexico border region, including higher levels of obesity, diabetes, and poverty among Hispanics compared to non-Hispanic Whites (Healthy Paso del Norte, 2019). Third, the use of emergency services for conditions that could have been treated more economically and effectively at earlier stages poses greater costs for state and local health care systems (Behrman et al. 2019). Lastly, the underutilization of care for infectious diseases poses health risks for entire communities, as highlighted by the current pandemic. According to the CDC, Hispanics account for 23.1 percent of COVID-19 cases as of April 22, 2020, thus, a higher rate than the 18 percent who make up the total population (CDC 2020). Moreover, Latinx residents disproportionally work in sectors that are less likely to provide paid sick leave and unemployment benefits (e.g., agriculture, service, and hospitality), thus forcing workers to choose between loss of income or employment and working while they are sick, thereby increasing risks of disease transmission (Page et al. 2020; Scheltens 2020). In sum, the interference of deportation fears or future legal status concerns with health care and social service utilization in addition to gaps in employment protections poses a number of individual and community health risks.

Immigration enforcement impacts in the U.S.-Mexico border region: Observations from El Paso, Texas

El Paso County, Texas is located at the U.S.-Mexico border across from Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, with a population of 840,758 residents of whom 83 percent identify as Hispanic, 25 percent are foreign-born, and an estimated 8 percent are undocumented (Migration Policy Institute 2014; U.S. Census Bureau 2017). Since the beginning of the current federal administration,

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there have been noticeable shifts in immigration laws, policies, and enforcement activities in the borderlands. For instance, Texas governor Abbott signed into law *Texas Senate Bill (S.B.) 4* in May 2017, which as enacted as of March 2018, authorizes immigration status checks by local law enforcement and mandates compliance by local jails with ICE detainer requests, amongst other measures (Aguilar 2018a; Núñez 2018). In February 2017, an unprecedented arrest of an undocumented domestic violence victim by ICE at the El Paso courthouse reportedly contributed to local and nationwide fears among victims of domestic violence to engage with law enforcement (Blitzer 2017a; Lockhart 2017). In the same month, an ICE raid at a trailer park in Las Cruces, New Mexico (a neighboring city of El Paso) was followed by a 60 percent increase in absences from public schools in the city the following day (Blitzer 2017b).

My doctoral advisors Professor Lusk, Professor Heyman, and I conducted a study in the Spring of 2018 to explore perceptions among health care, social, and legal service providers regarding effects of strengthened immigration enforcement measures on their patients and clients in El Paso and surrounding communities. Our structured telephone interviews with 20 providers revealed perceptions of noticeable changes among almost all (18 out of 20) respondents. On the one hand, participants reported a decrease in service utilization, largely due to fear-related service avoidance, in addition to uncertainties regarding impacts of policy changes on individuals' service eligibility and immigration status. On the other hand, providers noticed an increased need for services, especially for information about the meaning of policy changes, service eligibility changes, and individuals' civil rights (Latz et al. 2019).

Subsequent to this study, we developed a survey to assess the extent to which perceptions of and experiences with current immigration enforcement policies affect health, mental health, and health care utilization among Hispanic residents with different immigration statuses in El Paso and neighboring communities. Participants were recruited via convenience and respondent-driven sampling at community health fairs, community organizations, and public events throughout the region in the Spring of 2019. The items of this bilingual self-administered survey were predominantly based on existing surveys with Hispanic populations and their selection informed by an expert panel at the University of Texas at El Paso. The study sample of 211 Latinx participants included U.S.-born citizens (49 %), foreign-born U.S. cit-

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izens (19 %), legal permanent (17 %), legal temporary (8 %), and undocumented residents (8 %). Bivariate and multiple regression analyses were used to assess relationships between immigration status, immigration enforcement perceptions or experiences, and health outcomes. Over half of respondents reported fear of deportation for themselves, a close friend, or family member across all immigration statuses (the only group in which slightly less than half expressed this fear were U.S.-born citizens). The experience of deportation fears was significantly associated with increased psychological distress regardless of immigration status. In addition, experiences with immigration enforcement, such as having to proof one's immigration status more than in the past or having more trouble getting or keeping a job due to immigration enforcement, were also associated with greater psychological distress as well as lower utilization of health care services (although the latter association was only marginally significant after adjustment for other factors) (Latz 2019). This study was limited to a relatively small number of participants in more vulnerable immigration status groups, thus likely underestimating the nature of deportation fears, experiences with immigration enforcement, and corresponding associations with mental health and service use among more vulnerable legal status holders. Nonetheless, findings from this study indicate spillover effects of immigration enforcement measures on well-being among Hispanic residents with different immigration statuses.

Conclusion and recommendations

The final section of this chapter focuses on a number of broad recommendations for further research on immigration policy health effects and for policies, especially during a global pandemic and in a climate of intensified concerns about migration influxes and nationalistic tendencies in countries around the world.

In line with previous research, the abovementioned El Paso-based studies highlight effects of strengthened immigration enforcement on community members with different immigration statuses with respect to deportation fears, mental health, and service utilization. With the continued expansion of immigration restrictions and immigration enforcement measures under the current federal administration, there is a need to monitor and counteract corresponding adverse health effects on Latinx and immigrant com-

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munities. These efforts should involve further research on health impacts of recent policy changes, such as the new public charge rule and binational assessments of migrant health and safety under the "Migrant Protection Protocol" policy. Community-based designs and sampling techniques that are inclusive of hidden community members would yield particularly meaningful findings, as these are means to address local community concerns and give voice to traditionally underrepresented individuals in studies on topics that concern them. Furthermore, rising tendencies toward nationalism and xenophobia in countries around the globe highlight the need for international research on community health impacts (including physical, mental, social, and economic well-being) of corresponding policy choices.

With respect to policies, the evolving COVID-19 crisis calls for particular attention to the well-being of vulnerable groups, such as ICE detainees. Currently, individuals are being held in detention facilities despite confirmed COVID-19 cases and conditions that preclude following recommended social distancing and hygiene regimens, regardless of detainees' increased vulnerability to the virus due to preexisting conditions or lack of criminal background (Flores/Aleaziz 2020). Another concerning practice which warrants scrutiny are current deportation flights with COVID-19-positive passengers to Guatemala, Haiti, and other countries, thereby placing fellow passengers as well as residents in receiving countries at risk of contracting the disease (Johnston 2020). These examples highlight the need for increased transparency of decision making in immigration enforcement agencies and correspondingly, mechanisms to hold officials accountable and address harmful practices.

The current global pandemic also underscores the importance of viewing policies related to immigration and employment from a public health and social justice perspective. As outlined above, everybody's health is at greater risk when vulnerable legal status holders or their families do not feel safe to access health care or social services (or fear the use thereof may jeopardize future legal status applications) and are unable to abstain from employment during sickness without the risk of losing their jobs. Therefore, a policy framework to decrease the social, economic, and human damage of the pandemic ought to include measures to expand paid sick leave and access to health care and social services regardless of immigration status.

The COVID-19 pandemic also exposes particular challenges and opportunities for border areas around the world. While there are wide variations

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across borders, some lessons from the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez context may apply to borders elsewhere. Characteristic of this region is that many goods, services, and workers are able to cross the border regularly and with relative ease, while it constitutes a fixed barrier for others, including deportees from the U.S., migrant workers, or asylum seekers. Despite an overwhelming focus on border security in the media and political discourse, it is crucial to recognize how much is shared binationally within this space, including languages, culture, family ties, an economy, as well as environmental challenges (e.g., water scarcity, heat waves). Thus, binational collaboration is critical to finding solutions to mutual challenges in this space.

Notably, as of March 2020, an order by the CDC to limit the spread of COVID-19 has justified a virtual halt of all new asylum seekers and an expulsion of over 11,000 migrants without access to a legal process to apply for residency in the U.S. (Misra 2020). As highlighted in a statement by leading public health experts, there are means to upholding individuals' legal right to asylum while protecting the public health of migrants and border communities (Columbia Mailman School of Public Health 2020). Beyond this immediate challenge, a persistent undermining of the well-being, safety, and dignity of migrants at the U.S.-Mexico border stresses the need for humane immigration reform that recognizes the realities of family connections across borders, push and pull factors underlying migration, and the importance of global collaboration in safely managing future migratory flows.

In sum, a discerning response to the COVID-19 pandemic ought to include serious consideration of systematic changes to policy structures that create avoidable harms to the well-being of increasingly diverse communities in the U.S. and elsewhere and instead recognize the connectedness between individuals across borders, immigrants' valuable contributions to nations' economies, and need for equitable access to essential health and social services to promote community well-being.

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Lessons learned between Ebola and COVID-19
Border politics and securitization of migration flows in West Africa

Emina Osmandzikovic

Border politics in West Africa is a gravely misunderstood topic. Externally securitized in a way that does not necessarily serve the local communities and the sustenance of cross-border flows of people and goods, West Africa has persevered through the Ebola outbreak in a rather miraculous way. Given the acuteness of the West African socio-economic condition and healthcare security, this chapter attempts to explore migration patterns and contextualize viral outbreaks—from Ebola to COVID-19—in the fluid framework of border flows within this Sub-Saharan region, thus invalidating extant prejudice against West African migration patterns.

Introduction

Given their overall socio-economic state and migration management, West African countries[1] have been flooded with ominous predictions that the region's healthcare systems would be overwhelmed as the novel coronavirus cases escalated. Given the overall underdevelopment and widespread socio-economic inequality across the region, West Africa had previously under-

1 The United Nations (UN) defines West Africa as the region encompassing the following 16 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, as well as the United Kingdom Overseas Territory of Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha (Masson/Pattillo 2001).

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gone one of the largest Ebola outbreaks in contemporary human history in 2014. In Guinea alone, it took nearly three months for health officials and their international partners to identify the Ebola virus as the causative agent. By the time an official diagnosis was reached, the virus had already spread across multiple countries, migrating from rural areas to densely populated cities, and eventually expanding beyond the region. These factors undoubtedly contributed to the overall absence of preparedness against the spread of the COVID-19 virus across Sub-Saharan Africa, albeit with some exceptions.

Given that West Africa is a region with a deep, historical connection to migration, wherein porous borders and cross-border trade make the largest part of the region's contemporary socio-economic habitus, its border communities have managed to create and internalize a plethora of localized approaches to tackling the cross-border voyage of viral outbreaks.

Leaning on their historical underpinning and catalyzed by contemporary waves of globalization, the regional migration flows within West Africa have been conjoined with a global migration system. They are, hence, heavily influenced by international socio-economic and securitization policies that aim to control and curb flows of people and goods. While a high number of cross-border businesses remain informal, the prominent involvement of women in trade between borders and the buy-in of local communities galvanized re-thinking of migration, especially in the post-Ebola period (UNCTAD 2019).

To that extent, this chapter seeks to explore migration patterns across West Africa's porous borders, thus embedding the region's experience with viral outbreaks in a greater context of its migration flows and innovative approaches to tackling the local communities' dependence on cross-border trade amidst viral outbreaks. In doing so, this chapter attempts to demonstrate the need to view and analyze the problematics of migration in the region through a more comprehensive and intersectional approach, especially in the COVID-19 aftermath.

A brief history of contemporary migration flows in West Africa

In order to fully comprehend contemporary migration systems, and current migration policies, in the region, it is pertinent to set its migration configuration in its proper historical context.

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Including refugees and migrants, West Africa is a region with a long-standing culture of migration, primarily characterized by intra-regional movements (IOM 2020). Due to its postcolonial geography, migrants regarded West Africa as an economic unit within which trade in goods and services flowed and people moved freely (cf. Adepoju 2005: 1). Mobility within and out of the region has taken place through temporary, circular and more permanent movements, principally for the purpose of labor and cross-border trade (IOM 2020). In the 1990s, conflict and violence also led to internal and cross-border displacement. Being among the smallest and economically worse off countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea have been intertwined in civil wars throughout the 1990s, destabilizing the region in both political and economic terms.

Census-based estimates by the United Nations Population Division suggest that West Africa has the largest absolute international immigrant stock, as based on place of birth data (cf. Yaro n.d.:1). It is also the only region of Sub-Saharan Africa where migration stocks relative to the total population have been increasing over the past couple of decades (cf. de Haas 2007: 1).

Therefore, the process of growth and development which West African countries have experienced in the post-colonial period has been characterized by the process of areal differentiation (cf. Riddell 1980). In a spatial sense, employment opportunities and developmental changes have been concentrated in a few areas, especially the cities; the rural areas, which dominate both in terms of population numbers and areal extent, have either undergone little growth or have felt the backwash effects of development elsewhere (cf. Hirschman 1958; Myrdal 1957). Given the historical absence of rigid borders between the countries in the region and the relatively small market share of their fledgling domestic economies, the local communities have responded to these socio-economic developments via utilizing border fluidity and scaling up cross-border trade.

A pertinent challenge to migration in the West African region is the paucity in the enforcement of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocol on entry, residence and settlement. As a trading union, ECOWAS was envisioned to create a single, large trading bloc through economic cooperation (ECOWAS 1975). In comparative terms, ECOWAS is also meant to create a single, large trading bloc through economic cooperation, similar to the concept behind the European Union. The founding idea of the treaty was the creation of a borderless and integrated region where the pop-

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ulation has access to its abundant resources, enjoys free movement, has access to efficient education and health systems, and engages in economic and commercial activities while living in peace and security.

Guided by the principles of solidarity and collective self-reliance, ECOWAS has had mixed success in codifying and monitoring informal migration flows within the region; nevertheless, it has grown into the region's socio-economic backbone in migration management, especially in times of crises.

In the wake of the Ebola crisis, land borders within West Africa closed, immediately ceasing trade and movement of people (Games/Vickers 2015). ECOWAS, however, was the first organization in the world to provide an institutionalized response to the Ebola outbreak (cf. Yaya 2015), eventually training healthcare professionals of the most affected states and providing financial support within the organization's regional plan and solidarity fund against Ebola. Despite the cessation of cross-border trade and flows of people, ECOWAS ceased the global momentum and brought in well-coordinated, international assistance, thus paving the way forward.

Localized border solutions for marginalized communities

Since the early 2000s, West African countries have given birth to some localized efforts to tackle the problematic aspects of movement of marginalized and prosecuted communities, including refugees and asylum-seekers. The regularization of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in Nigeria in 2007 included 339 people, as based on ECOWAS. With the restoration of peace in Sierra Leone and Liberia after the two countries' devastating civil wars, the governments of both countries and Nigeria, where a substantial number of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees had found refuge, signed a multipartite agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in order to integrate them in Nigeria. The agreement acknowledged that the ECOWAS Protocols can be applied to refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia in Nigeria. Moreover, the agreement promoted the exploration of a legal migrant status by all parties as a solution for refugees upon cessation of their refugee status.

The agreement specified that the Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees: (i) have the possibility to opt for legal migrant status on the basis of the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol, (ii) have the governments of Sierra Leone

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and Liberia provide them with valid ID and travel documents, (iii) have the government of Nigeria provide them with residence permits for a period of two years, with the possibility of renewal, allowing them to work, reside and move freely within the country, and (iv) have the UNHCR cover the fees incurred for the issuance of passports and residence permits.

According to the UNHCR, out of 1,634 Sierra Leonean refugees registered in Nigeria, 339 opted for local integration, in addition to 185 Liberian refugees. An estimated 61 percent of registered Liberian refugees and asylum-seekers have opted for local integration in Nigeria. Although the multipartite agreement only applies to Nigeria, several other countries in West Africa have subsequently applied for the protocol to facilitate the integration of former Sierra Leonean refugees, resulting in a total of 6,012 applications for local integration, processed through ECOWAS.

Succored by flexible ECOWAS provisions, the West African approach has successfully attempted to bridge the gap between asylum and economic aspects of migration, wherein the mandate of the treaty was expanded to incorporate asylum as a beneficiary category. The peculiarity of the program is two-fold; namely, vulnerable communities were scattered across several countries, rather than one, and the agreement was successful in formalizing the socio-economic lives of these communities. There is no evidence to suggest that these provisional status normalization and border solutions for marginalized communities changed amidst the Ebola outbreak, albeit with poor follow-up.

West African female entrepreneurs and the informal cross-border trade

In the case of West Africa, informal cross-border trade occurs between neighboring countries conducted by vulnerable, small, unregistered traders (UNCTAD 2019). Typically, it is proximity trade involving the move of produce between markets close to the border. Similar to the situation elsewhere in Africa, in major cross-border posts, women account for a high percentage of informal traders.

Across the board, this female-intensive sector has broad poverty reduction ramifications. It constitutes a vital source of sustenance and livelihood for low-income and low-skilled women in border areas. Small-scale border

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trade can play a fundamental role in contributing to poverty reduction and food security, wherein women play a catalyzing role locally and regionally (cf. Brenton/Soprano 2018).

Women's businesses are not necessarily registered as formal owners; however, they do not aim to circumvent existing laws and applicable taxes by default. In fact, cross-border traders typically pass through official crossing points and even undergo formal clearance procedures, yet their consignments are often so small that they escape official records (cf. Brenton/Soprano 2018).

As an important defining factor for these businesses that contribute to local and regional food security, infrastructural, policy, procedural, and behavioral constraints at the border hinder traders' ability to grow and formalize. Nevertheless, revenues from cross-border trade are often the main source of income for the households of cross-border traders. For example, a 2013 World Bank report, based on a survey of more than 600 traders in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda, found that cross-border trading activities provide the main source of family income for three out of four traders (Brenton et al. 2013). The survey found that for measures such as quality of dwelling, access to electricity, type of cooking fuel used, and ownership of durable goods, the households of cross-border traders are as well off as the average urban household that is used as a comparative case.

The migratory dimension of women's cross-border trade also deserves more cogitation. Cross-border trade is not only a trading activity but is also an act of migration, with traders crossing national and regional borders within economic communities as well as international borders outside the continent. More attention to the migratory aspects of cross-border trade and the specific characteristics of women's migration can enhance the scope of female traders' cross-border economic activity.

Women also play an important role in health-related awareness-raising, which is why Ebola put them at a heightened danger, especially compared to other demographic groups (cf. Wolfe 2014). Some research shows that more than two thirds of Ebola patients in DRC have been women (cf. Peyton 2019).

Moreover, increased use of water for handwashing and other prevention activities has led women in border areas to commute more frequently traveling long distances to collect water, leading to increased risk of sexual violence (IRC 2019). The situation has significantly improved since, especially given the women's role in awareness raising of their own communities who

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remained being at a heightened risk of infection even after the Ebola outbreak subsided.

How Ebola crossed porous borders within West Africa

The scope of the 2014–2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, both in terms of cases and geography, can be attributed to the unprecedented circulation of the virus into overcrowded urban areas and the capitals, increased mobilization across borders, both formal and informal, and conflicts between key infection control practices and prevailing cultural and traditional practices in the region.

The Ebola virus was first discovered in 1976 near the Ebola River in today's DRC. According to the American Center for Disease Control and Prevention, WHO reported first Ebola cases in the rural region of southeastern Guinea in March of 2014. The identification of these early cases marked the beginning of the Ebola epidemic, the largest in the region's history (CDC 2019).

A pertinent amount of circulation of goods and people has taken place between Ghana, Gambia and Nigeria; Togo and Cote d'Ivoire; Burkina Faso, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire since the early 1970s. Reinforced by historically open exchange, many borders between countries in the region remain porous. Moreover, some research suggests that a number of people have been much more likely to cross into a neighboring country without even going through a formal border crossing (cf. Fallah 2019). On the ground, people cross geographical boundaries without physical boundaries in their minds, especially in search for socio-economic sustenance that they cannot find in their immediate vicinity. When migrants, refugees and cross-border traders find themselves in DRC and fall ill from a disease, they will do what anyone would: seek support from their relatives and friends, some of whom are in border towns (cf. Fallah 2019), making cross-border monitoring strenuous for local authorities.

While border fluidity has proven as a key advantage for regional trade and the economic market, weak surveillance systems and poor public health infrastructure contributed to the difficulty surrounding the containment of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. By mid-2014, the outbreak spread to urban areas and the capitals of all three countries, eventually reaching several countries in Europe and the US.

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While it might have seemed counterintuitive, closing borders in the face of Ebola was the worst possible response, according to WHO experts at the time, including the Secretary-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (cf. Turse 2019). Met with border or travel restrictions, people who rely on crossing borders to feed their families will always find a way to do so. Moreover, an independent investigation by The Intercept, an online news publication, found that Congolese and Rwandans regularly traversed the frontier between the two countries without safeguards and health screenings. Some actively bypassed public health efforts at formal borders as well (cf. Turse 2019).

As one of the greatest examples of the porous border dynamics in West Africa, on-ground research has mapped out the DRC-Rwanda fluid asymmetry. There are stark contrasts between the border districts in Rwanda and DRC in terms of their economic and political characteristics. In general, the Congolese side displays weak, locally contested state authority, insecurity, negotiable and inconsistent economic regulation, and greater opportunities for employment. The Rwanda side of the border is characterized by strong, centralized political authority, physical security, heavy regulation and absence of work opportunities. In the context of Ebola, preparedness interventions, including cross-border surveillance, ought to be understood against a backdrop of pre-existing suspicions, political-economic exploitation, smuggling, and the ongoing security concerns of both countries (cf. Bedford 2019: 3).

On the one hand, Ebola has been a very difficult disease to contain because of human social and behavioral factors. But it can be easily contained if 100 percent of the infected people's contacts are identified and monitored and if cases are quickly removed into treatment units (cf. Fallah 2019).

On the other hand, a 2014 study in the Eurosurveillance journal found that travel bans could have only delayed, and not prevented, the international spread of the Ebola outbreak and only "at the risk of compromising connectivity to the region, mobilization of resources to the affected area and sustained response operations, all actions of critical value for the immediate local control of [Ebola] and for preventing its further geographical spread" (Poletto et al. 2014: 5). In the concrete case of the Ebola outbreak, these restrictions effectively posed as a great logistical hindrance in managing its spread.

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Moreover, a 2016 retrospective epidemiological study found that "travel restrictions were not effective enough to expect the prevention of global spread of Ebola virus disease." The research, in PLOS One, found that it was "more efficient to control the spread of disease locally during an early phase of an epidemic" (Otsuki/Nishiura 2016). The incongruences on how localized the containment measures should be, especially in regions with ambiguously upheld borders has been left open-ended, despite some burgeoning efforts to reinforce greater health safety in border areas.

Moreover, according to a Harvard Medical School piece published in Quartz Africa in 2019, "some evidence suggests that there are a lot more informal crossings than the formal ones across West Africa," making *de facto* monitoring of borders virtually impossible for both the local and the national authorities. Herein, some research reveals that a number of people have taken antipyretic medications to avoid being detected at the formal border crossings. These drugs bring fevers down so that scanners don't detect a high temperature (cf. Fallah 2019). While channeling the regional response to the Ebola outbreak, ECOWAS had taken a backseat with reinforcement of tougher border mechanisms.

Overall, more than 100 million Ebola screenings have occurred during the outbreak. Twenty-eight times, health checks have stopped people with the Ebola virus in transit. But many continued crossing borders without anyone taking their temperature or checking for symptoms. Two and a half years after the first case was discovered, the outbreak ended with more than 28,600 cases and 11,325 deaths.

In the immediate aftermath of the Ebola outbreak, there were some behavioral on-ground shifts that might speak to the lasting impact cross-border contamination left on the region. Having many residents who cross the border for daily trade, local communities in border areas understand that screenings—which include registration, hand washing and temperature checks—came as a protective measure (cf. Enaka Kima 2016: 4). Herein, communal self-regulation complemented poorly executed official efforts that are unable and incapable of penetrating the most vulnerable societies, at times.

In Guinea, for instance, volunteers were trained and mobilized to conduct door-to-door awareness raising and focus group discussions on hygiene education, especially in border areas, in addition to infection control through community event-based monitoring. The acceptance by local communities of these initiatives, is primarily the result of the adoption of a com-

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munity-based approach in the aftermath of ebola (cf. Enaka Kima 2016: 2). On a broader communal level, religious and traditional leaders played a key role in dialogue to prevent any resurgence of the Ebola epidemic or other diseases, ensuring that local communities that live and work between borders are more prepared for future outbreaks.

In the period leading up to the COVID-19 outbreak, information-sharing and awareness-raising, especially among the region's border communities, has elevated its preparedness, indicating that border fluidity has had some positive effects. Herein, some research suggests that because the authorities who had previously been associated with the HIV epidemic have been providing information on Ebola, the information is taken more seriously on the ground and internalized by those who cross borders daily to engage in trade and business.

Bracing for the COVID-19 virus outbreak and its lasting repercussions

Originating in the Chinese Hubei province in late 2019, the COVID-19 outbreak spread to all continents by mid-March of 2020, when the World Health Organization officially updated its status to a pandemic (WHO 2020). In late February of 2020, the first case of COVID-19 in West Africa was recorded in Nigeria. Within one month, the virus had spread to all the countries in the region (OECD 2020).

The COVID-19 outbreak in West Africa was primarily covered with food security and public health discussions through the lens of socio-economic demise of regional trade. While the angles of food security and public health hold substantive merit (cf. Akinwotu 2020), West Africa's response to the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be merely tossed as totally negative.

While many west African countries continued to have poorly resourced health systems in the post-Ebola period (Martinez-Alvarez et al. 2020), thus rendering them unable to quickly scale up an epidemic response with the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, WHO made several statements that the region's previous devastating experience with the Ebola outbreak had made it more resilient (cf. Akinwotu 2020).

Herein, research from other regions suggests that experience with viral outbreaks has made entire populations more disciplined, aware of virus-

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associated health risks, cautious in their social behaviors and more trusting of the pandemic health management efforts overall, thus quickening national responses amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 (cf. Walsh 2020). For instance, despite their proximity to China, Hong Kong and Singapore managed to keep COVID-19 infections and death extraordinarily low. While both are economically developed[2], with strong public healthcare systems and a deep bench of infectious disease experts, the deeper reason lays not in their success with COVID-19, but in past failures with the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) earlier in the century, both of which managed to engineer socio-economic and health-related behaviors in order to follow official guidelines and catalyze crisis management (cf. Walsh 2020).

Similarly, West Africa's experience with the Ebola outbreak has galvanized public debates on health and preventative measures that local communities can undertake, especially regarding awareness raising. This, however, does not consider the socio-economic and developmental differences between West African countries and the two above-mentioned case examples.

In the case of West Africa, local businesswomen and female entrepreneurs in border areas have played a key role in conveying health-related messages to their respective communities, capitalizing on the religious and local leaders' buy-in of official anti-Ebola measures among the populace of West Africa.

Although some West African countries have measures in place from the Ebola epidemic, the region includes some of the poorest countries in the world[3]. Despite having young populations, some West African countries have rates of other risk factors similar to European countries, wherein 27 percent of Gambians have hypertension and 6 percent have diabetes (Martinez-Alvarez et al. 2020).

While many West African countries have poorly resourced health systems, rendering them unable to quickly scale up an epidemic response, which had severely impeded the region's response to Ebola, the region fared

2 The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) ranks Singapore at 0.935 and Hong Kong (SAR China) at 0.939 within the Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019. Measuring life expectancy, education, and per capita income indicators, the index ranges between 0 and 1, wherein lower values correspond to zero and higher values correspond to one.

3 According to World Bank data, nine of the 25 poorest countries are in the region.

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better with the COVID-19 crisis. Public awareness and greater cross-border discipline, coupled with the region's previous experience, had perhaps stifled the virus' devastating consequences.

Overall, many uncertainties of the long-term impact of COVID-19 on the region remain, given the persevering prevalence of some of its structural impediments.

Continued border fluidity and preventative measures against viral diseases

Given that migration has been historically seen as a way of life in West Africa (cf. Adepoju 2005: 4), ECOWAS aimed to officiate the total removal of obstacles to the free movements of goods, capital and people in the region, primarily responding to the on-ground realities of informal border crossings, cross-border traders and local, unofficial entrepreneurs who have been sustaining regional economies. The wavering political support, political instability and inter-state border disputes, including violent clashes and civil wars, have retarded any significant progress in ratification and implementation of the ECOWAS protocols (cf. Adepoju 2005: 5).

Filling the deep abyss, contemporary efforts to modernize borders and manage local migration flows within West Africa have primarily been driven by external forces. This is best exemplified with the EU's expansive campaign to manage borders outside of the old continent in almost two decades; a stance that has galvanized countries across Sub-Saharan Africa, including West Africa, to manage historically fluid border flows by focusing on securitizing their territories. Securitization came in parallel with viral outbreaks, thus galvanizing external forces to even more involved in compartmentalizing local flows of goods and people, with some restrictive policies being naturally reinforced amidst the Ebola crisis.

Following the guidelines of the African Union and ECOWAS, both of which acted as guarantors of free movement with an active agenda of harmonization of border policies, there has been a diversity of actors involved in determining policies and practices of border management across West Africa. Herein, border management led by an international agency, such as the IOM, has included training of local stakeholders (cf. Howden 2018).

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While some key principles of border management illustrated by best practices from similar contexts can improve the overall health of border fluidity, ultimately leading to a reduction in criminalization and harm for human security and life, the application of a more securitized approach to managing West African borders has remained primarily external with minimal buy-in from regional governments. The gap between external influences and local border capabilities has been further exacerbated with the Ebola epidemic and has not changed much since, given the lack of political will from within the region.

While it is exigent to prognosticate the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on border fluidity and cross-border movement of people and goods within West Africa, especially when it is coupled with the phenomenon of externally-fueled securitization of borders for purposes that might not be pertinent for the region's immediate benefit, viral outbreaks have left their mark on the behaviors and practices of local communities in border areas, indicating a potential shift of the on-ground status quo.

Conclusion

Given the region's complex indebtedness to migration as the most effective medium of socio-economic sustenance, diverging incentives around border management in West Africa persist, even in the context of viral outbreaks that make cross-border movement difficult to execute and safely monitor. All of this means that health authorities' interventions within West Africa must be strategic.

The nightmare scenario for West Africa, according to health experts, is the COVID-19 virus loose in an urban and densely populated city with insufficient public health resources (WHO 2020). The results could be catastrophic—worse than the West African Ebola outbreak earlier this decade that killed more than 11,000 people.

Many analysts argue that the region's porous and poorly managed borders contribute to its intrinsic hazard factors when it comes to viral outbreaks, mislaying the fact that that West Africa has learned valuable socio-economic and healthcare-related lessons from the Ebola outbreak, some of which have been applied to the region's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with locally-based approaches to curbing border fluidity when necessary.

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Herein lies an important defining factor of cross-border businesses, often led by female traders, that contribute to local and regional food security and strengthened socio-economic infrastructure. As an official underpinning, ECOWAS has had laudable success in marshaling contained border fluidity amidst the region's viral outbreaks; evolving into the socio-economic backbone in migration management, especially in times of crises. Coupled with West Africa's previous experience with viral outbreaks and locally-underpinned exposure to mixed migration patterns within the region, it ought to be given more credit for surviving the worst case scenarios with a plethora of lessons learned that can be applied even in more developed regions of the world in the post-COVID-19 period.

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Particular to time and space

Historical and life-world explorations on the Brenner border Austria–Italy

Hans Karl Peterlini

The border at the Brenner Pass crossing the Alps between Austria and Italy is politically and emotionally charged: Here, where for millennia there was an open transition between North and South and made possible the cross-border togetherness of the Tyrol region, an arbitrary boundary was drawn in 1918–1920 and Tyrol was divided. The article[1] *explores the historical developments and lifeworld potentials beyond an exclusively political definition of border. Exploration in the two border villages of Brenner and Franzensfeste reveals experiences of living together across ruptures and crises, especially with regard to migration.*

Historical strip lights: How barriers create sites

"Perhaps a place", as if that were not so certain, Siegfried Nitz (2004: 7) writes in a poem about the world of his childhood, the village Franzensfeste in South Tyrol/Alto Adige (Italy). It could be described as a *non-place* (cf. Auge 1994), but this would mean to misjudge its particularity. Franzensfeste, with the hamlets of Mittewald and Grasstein, is better known for its imposing

1 This article is a reworked version of a contribution to the project "Arbeitsmigration in Südtirol" (University of Innsbruck), translated into English by the author himself: "Lebenswelten im Zwischen. Ansichten der Migrationsgesellschaft an Schnittstellen von Öffnung und Schließung: Franzensfeste/Fortezza, Brenner/Brennero", in: Eva Pfanzelter, Dirk Rupnow (eds.): einheimisch - zweiheimisch – mehrheimisch. Geschichte(n) der neuen Migration in Südtirol, Edition Raetia, Bozen, 2017, 283-304.

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fortress in the south than as residential area. The massive barrage of heavy stone quads, which rises at the end of a reservoir, closes the valley and hides the village behind it. Just as the fortress gives Franzensfeste its right to exist and its importance, so does the proximity to the Austrian border determine the conditions of life in the village of Brenner.

Both places, the one directly at the border crossing, the other 35 kilometres to the south, were mostly places of transit rather than of stay, determined in their genesis and further development by the alternation of closing and opening, of increased permeability and tightened barriers. For example, a narrow gorge in this area, called the *Sack*, plays a central role in the political myth of Tyrol, according to which this small country bravely defies enemies invading from outside. In 1809, when Europe was overrun by Napoleon's troops, Tyrolean fighters were able to stop the overwhelming army in the sack with stone avalanches. This may also have inspired the Viennese government to build the fortress almost 30 years later (from 1833 to 1838), this time to protect the empire from troops from the south. Defence technology is often based on past wars and can hardly prevent future ones.

Paradoxically, the construction of the fortress, which was never damaged during the war, opened up the valley to an arrival of over 4,000 workers from Italy and Balkan countries of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, rather than blocking it off. Next, the construction of the railway, which arrived here around 1867 and led to Vienna, Ljubljana and Trieste, gave the place unexpected significance and caused a large influx of workers (cf. Facchinelli 1998). They came from different countries of the multinational Monarchy to a place that had not existed before and that only came into being through them. A place where strangers did not meet locals, but where everyone was new, immigrant and foreign. Franzensfeste is thus a prototype of the migration society in the sense that it more clearly expresses what otherwise remains hidden behind the construct of local and foreign: that migration is not a historical emergency, but a human condition, *the actual form of human existence* (Hoffmann-Nowotny 1994: 388).

At the Brenner Pass it was the demarcation of the border that gave rise to the site. For centuries the pass was a crossing point for shepherds, traders and the German emperors on their way to the coronation by the Pope in Rome. Early settlers on both sides of the pass were involved in an intensive cultural exchange, as early archaeological finds demonstrate. Due to the partly skilful, partly brutal power politics of count Meinhard II, a political

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unity on both sides of the Brenner Pass was created from 1248 onwards. Later on, the county Tyrol became a crown land of the Habsburg monarchy. The area between Kufstein (on the border with Bavaria) and Lake Garda comprised three language regions—German in today's Tyrol and South Tyrol, Ladin in the Dolomite valleys and Italian in Trentino, the former *Welschtirol*. Belonging and togetherness were defined by the common dynasty. In 1809, Tyroleans of all language groups fought together against the Bavarians allies of Napoleon. It was not until the national movements from the middle of the 19th century onwards that a gulf began to open up between *Deutschtirol* and *Welschtirol* (cf. Peterlini 2008: 19–24). German-Tyrolean parties fought against attempts at autonomy in Trento, whilst the emerging young Italy laid claim to the Tyrolean territory up to the Brenner Pass, which was finally decisive for Italy's entry into the First World War against Austria in 1915. With the secret treaty of London, the Allies secured the areas of Tyrol, south of the Brenner Pass and the Trieste region for Italy in the event of a war win (cf. Peterlini 2016: 8–19).

With the hoisting of the tricolour in November 1918, the Brenner became a boundary for the first time. For Italy, this meant the completion of its idea of unification, for Tyrol the end of its political unity. The area south of the Brenner Pass became the Italian province of Alto Adige, in German called Südtirol (South Tyrol). Whereas the, over decades, oppressed and disadvantaged new province had to go through a painful but finally successful process to become the autonomous model region of South Tyrol. The new state border also accelerated the growth of the settlement on the Brenner Pass. Around 1930, when Mussolini, out of mistrust of his ally Hitler, also had a ring of bunkers built here as the core of the planned Alpine Wall, 5,000 soldiers were stationed at the Brenner, some of them bringing their families with them. Merchants' and workers' families settled down.

At a distance of 35 kilometres, two non-places had thus become places, grown out of nothing in an attempt to control, regulate and, in case of emergency, stop passage, which at the same time meant mobilising migration. In both places, which only owe their existence, more visibly than others, to migration in the first place (because which place does not?), the question of natives and foreigners becomes fragile. In a partly autobiographical examination of significant sites and incidents in the recent history of South Tyrol's autonomy, I have described this neuralgic place of my earliest childhood

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from my parents' memories. The following short excerpt refers to the 1960s, the time of the most serious political conflicts and violent attacks:

»The Brenner people must be a particular breed. Many worked at customs, at the railway, at forwarding companies, almost nobody had relatives nearby, and nobody had roots. German and Italian families lived very closely together. […] If you do not consider a border politically, it has its flair. Austrian and Italian frontier guards met each other in their favourite taverns, bars and inns. We bought chocolate on the other side, coffee on this side of the border. The few German families stuck together. However, when my mother enumerates the people she liked, also the names of the Italian Brenner families spontaneously cross her lips.« (Peterlini 2003: 10).

Migration in the interplay of economy and politics

The arrival of the railway and the large train station allowed the population of Franzensfeste to grow in rapid succession. In 1869, the municipality still had 314 inhabitants. Only twelve years later, the number had increased by more than a third. In 1900, the population reached 844 persons, by 1910 it was 1,269 persons—a quadrupling in 40 years (Heiss 2012: 161). The population came from different areas of the Monarchy, but—surrounded by a German-speaking area—was predominantly oriented towards the German language. In 1881, one tenth of the population still declared itself Italian, which was 40 people; in 1910 there were only three. The tendencies to ethnic homogenization in the linguistic overlapping areas had also had its effect here.

Beyond linguistic assimilation, Franzensfeste preserved a special feature: the history of its origins from the immigration of families of workers and public servants promoted the formation of a self-confident "confessional mixed, church-free and ideologically deviant enclave" (Heiss 2012: 162). Franzensfeste was one of the few strongholds of social democracy in the oppressive conservative environment. The railway was a fertile humus for labour and social consciousness. In addition to the book printers, who fought for their rights mainly in northern Tyrol but were few in number, the workers and officials for the railway were harbingers of an enlightened workforce. In Franzensfeste they were joined by one of the few peripheral industrial enterprises in Tyrol south of the Brenner Pass, a cardboard box factory in 1890, which "brought a touch of industrial spirit to the village and offered secure

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jobs to immigrants from other valleys in South Tyrol and Upper Italy" (Heiss 2012: 158).

From 1895 onwards there was a Social Democratic Party in Franzensfeste as well as leisure clubs of the railway union, which was notorious for being left-wing. The suspicion of the Catholic Church was correspondingly deep: the railway station quarter was apostrophized as Jewish quarter (ibid.: 162). Soon a Christian Social Workers' Association was founded, and the construction of the new Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus began (Kramer 1957: 162), in order to counteract the loss of souls and influence. This example shows, on a small scale, how migration per se challenges power structures and social orders, which on the one hand is socio-politically and culturally productive and creative, and on the other hand leads to a rejection and defensive attitude towards migrant movements. Migration as a "significant motor of social change and modernisation" (Mecheril 2010: 8) irritates and provokes the resistance to change of more or less conservative societies.

Conversely, migration itself can be set in motion, accelerated, stopped or changed by economic, political, military or ecological upheavals—and often in a painful and traumatic way. The annexation of South Tyrol by Italy simply deprived a large part of the Austrian railway employees in the country of their right to be there. In the years before, most municipalities had never officially recognised the more socially democratic-minded railway employees from other parts of the Monarchy as citizens, in order to prevent social democratic growth in elections. Thus, 90 per cent of them left Italy (Peterlini 2016: 37). South Tyrol lost a politically mature and critical section of the population, which would have been important not only for a pluralistic debate within the country, but also for its political representation under the upcoming fascism. The country, almost completely robbed of its social-democratic component, under fascism withdrew into subterranean national perseverance, which created a fertile ground for the approaching Nazism.

In Franzensfeste 150 of 245 railway families left their home (Lechner 2005: 20), to which they had given vitality and diversity. This triggered a rare solidarity across language groups. While in South Tyrol the usual dynamic prevailed that ethnic oppression drives the oppressed groups into self-ethnicization and displaces supra-ethnic interests, such as social, economic and even gender rights (cf. Butler/Spivak 2011: 24ff), the railway workers set an example of solidarity across language groups. This was not limited to Franzensfeste, but was particularly striking there: from 24 April to 21 May

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1921, for a whole month, a strike in protest against the dismissal of a large part of the German-speaking railway workforce shut down all rail traffic on the Brenner route. Italian trade unions also participated massively in the strike. Adolf Berger junior, son of the then chief engineer, recalls: "We sat on the rails and sang the Internationale together, each in his own language." (Tiroler Geschichtsverein 1989: 28)

With the forced emigration of the German-speaking railway workers, the demographic composition of the population in Franzensfeste abruptly changed once again. Italian workers filled the vacant positions, and additional workers were needed for the construction of the new Italian railway line. This trend was further forced by the 1939 resettlement agreement, the so-called *Option*, according to which Mussolini was to receive the land of South Tyrol and Hitler his people—a cynical barter between two dictators. Like in the whole country, 90 percent of the German population of Franzensfeste decided to emigrate to the Reich. While in other parts of the country, however, emigration was partially stopped by the following war events, here real emigration was much higher due to the proximity of the border and the lack of economic prospects for the German language group (Heiss 2012: 164). In the interplay of emigration of the German population and continuing immigration from Italian provinces, the population was almost completely ethnically exchanged: while the German language group represented a narrow majority of 54 percent until 1939, it was only 26 percent in the year of the German invasion in 1943 (Kramer 1957: 153). The cardboard box factory, for example, had to hire new workers from other provinces almost overnight. (cf. Nitz 2004: 11).

Another industrial enterprise, promoted by fascism, provided for immigration from the 1930s onwards. The transport of perishable goods such as milk, fresh vegetables, fruit and meat led to the establishment of an ice factory, which specialised in the production of 22-kilo sticks of ice for refrigerated vehicles. Despite the high level of emigration due to the option, the population thus grew to over 1,362 inhabitants by 1943. Because of the many workers, around 3,000 people stayed in this pluralalistic microcosm during the day. Franzensfeste counted several grocery stores, two butcher shops, a dozen haulage companies and more than enough bars and restaurants (Del Piccolo 2008).

Franzensfeste was a village at the pulse of technology and progress, of traffic, industrialisation and the associated energy requirements: 1931 an

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electric power station was built, 1940 the dam between village and fortress. An entire hamlet was flooded for the power plant, similar to the *Reschenpass* on the border to Switzerland. There, the parish tower of the flooded village still rises out of the artificial lake like a memorial. In Franzensfeste, nothing reminds us of the violent intervention against nature and man. This may also have something to do with the constant exchange of the population, which made breaks with the past, with the loved and the familiar, more bearable.

Somehow, things in Franzensfeste and Brenner have always been different in comparison to the perceptions, moods and developments in the rest of South Tyrol. When the rest of the country resigned economically and politically in the 1950s, the two often shady and marginal places flourished. For the Brenner village, the State Treaty for Austria in 1955 was a stimulating economic impulse. Austria's acquired sovereignty had a particular effect on the border with Italy, and border trade came to life: "Whoever was able to offer something to eat on the road, at that time did good business. There was a queue in front of every 'shop', and some merchants from the shantytown could bring the money they had earned in a single day to the bank in an apple crate." (Senoner 20013: 70). The gold-rush atmosphere also loosened up life on the Brenner, in stark contrast to the gloomy mood in South Tyrol in the 1950s and 1960s, when a long uprising with dynamite attacks accompanied the political struggle for autonomy like a threatening echo. South Tyrol experienced decades of tension and violence due to the terrorist attacks. While the bombers were smuggling dynamite across the border in flat cars, with blonde-haired women in the side seat and often with baby carriages, life at the Brenner Pass went on almost unencumbered. There were love affairs across the border, people married back and forth, and at the same time the presence of so many border guards ensured permanent vigilance in view of the flourishing smaller and larger, legal and less legal border trade.

In Franzensfeste, the railway, along with the electric power station and the state presence, remained the generators of further prosperity. The staff of the Ferrovie dello Stato was constantly increased, the station was a central reloading and customs clearance point on the Brenner route. Forwarding companies settled down, and since the 1950s, cattle transports had also increased enormously. This required a considerable logistical effort, as customs clearance and health checks (with a special veterinary service) had to be carried out as quickly as possible in combination with a wide range of other services. Often up to 150 livestock wagons arrived per week (Del Piccolo

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2008). The *Dopolavoro* as a leisure-meeting place for railway workers became the social centre, just like the shooting range and the innkeeper once were in typical Tyrolean villages. In many parts of South Tyrol, young people from farming and working families had to look desperately for work in Germany, while in Franzensfeste the forwarding companies and service providers created good job opportunities.

From the outside, Franzensfeste was perceived as an "ugly hole" (Kinigadner n. d.). The good wages, low housing prices and ideal transport connections, made it a place of good life for the residents. Despite the immigration from mostly poor Italian regions, which was steered by fascism and right wing post-war governments, the fascist successor party MSI remained in the minority among the Italian population. From 1952 to 1982 the school principal Oddo Bronzo was mayor. He was the only socialist mayor in the whole of South Tyrol and also one of the very few Italians who was perfectly bilingual, an integration figure and representative of a very special South Tyrolean, typical for the inhabitants of Franzensfeste, according to Thomas Klapfer, the mayor in office in 2016 (interview 8.8.2016)

From overcoming to reinforcing borders

In the 1970s and 1980s, about 1,600 inhabitants lived on the Brenner Pass. There were five schools, a kindergarten "and so many telephone connections that they filled five pages in the telephone book" (Mitterer 2013: 21). Immediately after the Schengen Agreement came into force in 1998, the population dropped to around 300 people. The security forces alone had previously accounted for almost 250 people. After Schengen, only 30 state officials from the finance, police and carabinieri departments remained stationed at the Brenner Pass, says Mayor Franz Kompatscher (interview 8.8.2016). With the privatisation of the railways, further jobs were lost. When on the 1st of April 1998 the then provincial governors of Tyrol and South Tyrol Wendelin Weingartner and Luis Durnwalder, triumphantly raised the border bar as a symbol of the division of Tyrol, it was a highly celebrated event. On the Brenner and in Franzensfeste however "it got dark overnight" (Klapfer, interview 2016). The legal, semi-legal and illegal business, from freight forwarding to foreign exchange speculation to smuggling, lost their most important basis. The border was freely passable, the currency was converted to the common euro, the

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range of goods was globalized anyway—"today you can get anything anywhere, it makes no sense to cross the border to buy it here if you can get it in any shop over there" (Kompatscher, interview 2016). While the drawing of the border as a closure of space had allowed the place to grow and flourish, the opening of the border now reduced it back to a space of transit. One after the other schools had to close, the village remained without a permanent priest, and one page in the telephone directory was enough for the names of the inhabitants. (Mitterer 2013: 22)

In Franzensfeste, partly due to a crisis in the industry and partly due to a delay in modernisation, the cardboard box factory had already closed in the 1980s and the ice factory had lost its technological justification. With EU integration and finally Austria's accession to the EU, the withdrawal of customs and financial police also began. In the 2001 census, the population fell to 822 persons compared to 1,130 in 1981. The ethnic balance also shifted once again: 57.82 percent declared themselves German speaking in 2001, while the former Italian majority fell to 40.69 percent. The trend continued until 2011 (the last census to date): now 59.63 percent were German-speaking, 38.51 percent Italian-speaking. (Astat 2011: 91) Although the village thus followed the trend of the continuing nationwide strengthening of the German language group, it fell far behind the economic upswing of the German-speaking periphery of South Tyrol. Thus Brenner and Franzensfeste were, contrary to the pendulum swing in the surrounding area, once again on the way to becoming a non-place. For Hans Heiss (2012: 155), the present Franzensfeste is an example of those temporary places "where something irrevocably comes to an end, turns beyond recognition or simply decays" (Raabe/Sznajdermann 2006: 9).

The gloomy picture at the turn of the millennium has since become somewhat more colourful. In Franzensfeste, the empty apartments attracted numerous migrant families. They found cheap housing and good public transport connections for their jobs in the surrounding villages and in the towns of Sterzing, Bruneck, Brixen and Bozen. The lower demands on living comfort made apartments in poor condition or without heating still attractive. Far away from being an idyll, the immigrant families at least met a local population, who largely know about the fragility of being locals themselves. In fact, sooner or later also the locals had immigrated or knew of stories told by their families. This allowed—despite all the uncertainty—a certain calmness in dealing with migration.

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Thus Franzensfeste, in its temporary decay and change to unrecognizability, ultimately remained true to itself. Migration is inscribed in the town's chronicle: "Anyone who comes to Franzensfeste tries to get away immediately, but after a while, when someone has lived here for a while, they will gladly come back or feel the longing to do so," wrote the legendary mayor Oddo Bronzo in a letter to the Italian local newspaper *Alto Adige*. (Bronzo n. d.) "When I read this, I feel like I could write it all now", says the later Mayor Klapfer (interview 2016).

The village that Bronzo describes in his letter is not a beautiful, but a liveable place. Here everybody is foreign or nobody, nobody is native or everybody. For the mayor of the good old days, the immigrant families of railway workers, officials, financiers, workers and service providers gave their vitality to the village, whereas for the Post-Schengen-Mayor Klapfer these are the migrants from 27 nations. (Interview 2016). They make up 25 percent of the local population—with around 1,000 inhabitants in 2016. With those who continuously receive citizenship thanks to ten years of residency, there would be much more.

> »For me, they are all Franzensfester, that's how it used to be, whether German or Italian, I grew up like that, we never made a difference. Why should we do that now? If someone says that these are not real Franzensfester because they have only recently arrived, I answer: Where do you want to draw the line? Your family has been here for 40 years, mine for 100 years—should I then say that I am a real Franzensfester and you are not?« (Klapfer, interview 2016).

The question of who is native and who is not, is nevertheless difficult to avoid. It also became one of the dilemmas for the project "Intercultural encounter at the community level" (Profanter/Lintner 2011) of the Organisation for One World (OEW). How to define a "group of natives" (ibid.: 108) in a village that owes its existence to migration and where there was multiple ethnic exchange. In the publication of the results, the authors found themselves reproducing the stereotypes of the native and the foreign, which were to be deconstructed by the project, simply through the selection of images—people in colourful garments, with headscarves, dark-skinned children—in the "depiction of the foreigner" (ibid.: 77ff). *Stranger* and *natives* are categories of

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deeply rooted systemic orders that are constantly being thwarted in the real world, but which are not abolished.

Usual orders are visibly relativized in Franzensfeste, but not suspended. The village never had a company of *Schützen*, the German-Patriotic Association of Tyrol par excellence in the tradition of homeland-defence from 1809, and the only marching band during the fascist period was an Italian one (Del Piccolo 2008), while they are German-oriented everywhere else in South Tyrol. Nevertheless, Franzensfeste also reflects in many ways the ethnic division structures of the South Tyrolean society. "We have many things twice, as everywhere else in South Tyro" says the mayor: "Italian workers' association (Acli), German association of the working people (KVW), Italian club for the elderly, German club for senior citizens, the German fire brigade in Mittewald, the Italian fire brigade in Franzensfeste." (Klapfer, interview 2016) Even basically open institutions and associations, such as the youth centre or the choir, are usually dominated by one language group (Profanter/Lintner 2011: 83, 110), while the respective others stay away: "If there is an association here, something is taken over strictly by the Italians or by the Germans." (ibid.: 110) Social and public spaces in which encounter is not primarily dependent on the language are a prerequisite for integrative processes. The usual offer in South Tyrolean villages with their inns and bars as meeting places is not easily accessible for migrants. The Muslim population in particular is afraid of them due to the predominant presence of alcoholic beverages.

An integrative link across divisions has always been sports. In Franzensfeste this used to be, for example, table tennis in the parish hall and in the bar garden of the restaurant or billiards in the *Dopolavoro* (Kinigadner nod). The strongest integrative force, ethnically equal and social, is still football today. In Profanter/Lintner's research project (2011), the football teams of Franzensfeste—from the U8 upwards clearly recognisable as integrating by name and skin colour—unfortunately did not come into evidence. Too few participated in the encounter project on which the research was based. Encouraging integration through encounter initiatives, no matter how passionate they may be, rarely goes beyond good intentions (cf. Chisholm/Peterlini 2012: 141), because it remains selective and artificial. Rather, integration requires concrete experiences of the other person, based on real needs and habits. For women, for example, the project has made visible the importance of the playground and thus of children as future *Franzensfester*, albeit limited

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to very specific age groups (Profanter/Lintner 2011: 82f.). For people working outside it is partly the route in the train on the way to work (ibid.). Those who travel this route at commuting times can experience how people of different origins greet each other, sit together, exchange short words—they share a piece of mobile living space, often of course also without knowing or wanting more from each other. The origins of the 250 migrants from 27 countries make it difficult to form larger communities in favour of retreating into the private sphere, but also prevent ghettoization in parallel worlds.

Because of the refugee movements, the Brenner Pass became the focus of fierce polemics between Italy and Austria in 2014/2015, which attracted attention throughout Europe. The worry that refugees arriving in Italy via the Mediterranean Sea could continue their journey to Austria on a massive scale led Austria to consider closing the border. The historic conflict seemed to be turning around: Whereas historically Italy had insisted on a sharply drawn line at the Brenner Pass in order to avoid any doubt about its claim to South Tyrol, Austria was now insisting on closing the boundary. The border, which South Tyrolean politicians still complain about as a separation from the fatherland and the protecting power Austria, has now been drawn more sharply by Austria for 'protection' against refugees

At the same time, the village of Brenner, which had almost died out, owes its demographic revival to migration. The reasons for settling in the border village are similar to those in Franzensfeste: apartments that are not always cheap, but in any case have become vacant, comfortable trains to the workplace, vacant structures that owe the migrants their continued existence, such as the Italian kindergarten. Unlike in Franzensfeste, immigrants from Pakistan form a remarkable community on the Brenner Pass, "by far the largest", as Mayor Kompatscher estimates (interview 2016). The Pakistani youths thus form active peer groups and their mothers happily take part in sewing courses. However, the opportunities for community life that goes beyond ethnic group formation are meagre. The mayor also sees one of the few opportunities in sports: "We will have to do something about it" (ibid.).

The place, which in 2016 became the focal point for the refugee debate throughout Europe, is unspectacularly marked by the presence of migrant families: "The living together is fine, once there was trouble because the children of a foreigner family were allowed to stay up late and were very loud, so I just talked to the people, then they understood." (Kompatscher, interview 2016). The association Volontarius took care of the refugees arriving daily in

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small groups and individually in the middle of the village from 2016 on, without any major difficulties. The border village is again dependent on how the larger politics operates around it. For now, Austria is shying from a border blockade, but the technical devices are ready in case of larger refugee movements.

Probably the densest expression of how structural orders are able to share diversity is school. At the same time, the school, based on the duty to admit all children regardless of their origin, represents an open social space in which togetherness can be lived, even if only for the limited time of instruction and school age. The primary school in Franzensfeste is located in a small building, the German language school on the ground floor and the Italian school on the first floor above. In both schools, depending on the year of birth, up to 100 per cent or slightly less of the children come from migrant families, divided into a German and an Italian school.

Hardly anywhere else is South Tyrol's school system, separated according to language groups, as incisive as here. Both in Franzensfeste and on the Brenner Pass with a similar composition of schoolchildren, the mayors are in favour of joint kindergartens and joint schools, but the official school policy according to the Statute of Autonomy does not allow it. (Kompatscher and Klapfer, interviews 2016) The division of educational institutions according to language groups, which is intended to protect the ethnic minority, makes it more difficult than elsewhere to design learning spaces that are not limited to formal teaching, but that also include and make use of the diversity of the world we live in (Baur/Larcher 2011: 164ff).

Left to their own devices and divided into two school systems, the kindergartens and schools on the Brenner Pass and in Franzensfeste threaten to become problem areas in which teachers are overtaxed and pupils are deprived of better opportunities. At the same time, there is a great deal of untapped potential here for breaking new ground. It is precisely the multilingual competence that is present in such heterogeneous class situations that is a resource that has been recognised by international multilingualism research (cf. Cummins 2006: 38), but which is still completely misunderstood in monolingual, nation-state societies with the idea of a single dominant language that should be perfectly mastered. This also applies to South Tyrol. The official and partly life-world bilingualism (related to the German and Italian language group, since the third language group of the Ladin stands in a different context) contrasts the monolingual habitus (Gogolin 1994), but

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rather doubles it as a separate variant for each of the two groups instead of overcoming it. The protection of the minority language German makes it more difficult to open up to the actual language diversity in many school classes, because language policy and sometimes parents fear that their children will not learn German properly. In addition, children of German or Italian-speaking parents bring their children to schools in the surrounding villages where the migration density is lower. On the other hand, multilingualism competence means that children play on several language registers at the same time, get along with foreign words and codes, and communicate beyond linguistic norms and cultural imperatives of unity and purity.

Outlook

The communities Brenner and Franzensfeste both represent in a complex and different way that topos for which migration research is always looking for new terms. As living worlds *in between*, they are presumably the third space from which Homi Bhabha (2000: 5) hopes for the emergence of something new between strangeness and adaptation, between rejection and assimilation. It is true that host cultures have a high assimilation effect on those who come, but their adaptations also change what the migrants adapt to (ibid.: 136). Both communities can also be described as transnational social spaces (Pries 1996) or as transtopias (Yildiz 2013: 9). As global places (Heiss 2012), they transcend and irritate structural orders. This makes them proving grounds for exploring how integration can be imagined, what tasks it places on all population groups, what conceptual changes are necessary. As a pure adaptation achievement of migrants, integration as a political strategy falls short: "We need new models", is the simple insight of the mayor of Brenner, "the way people used to think, it is no longer possible, even if one wanted to". (Kompatscher, interview 2016). In his youth, the fire brigade did not accept the so-called "mixed-language" children, not even when the predominant family language was German. Even if only one parent belonged to the Italian language group, this was sufficient reason to thwart the admission of a linguistically German socialized youth—an undisguised, but hardly conscious racism that had crept into the long justified struggle of the German-speaking South Tyrolean minority.

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The search for perspectives of the two places beyond the language walls common in South Tyrol ties in with their strengths in the past. For the Brenner Pass, the mayor sees the greatest hope in the next stage of expansion for the new outlet-centre. The aim is to transform the border town from a transit point back to a place of rest. The mayor hopes that the town will then be able to resurrect, also thanks to the migrant population (Kompatscher, interview 2016).

In Franzensfeste, the hope lies in the migration of labour, which historically founded the town, in the favourable traffic situation and in the fortress, which was the original crystallisation point for the settlement. The need for survival creates visions: An accessibility of the fortress from the village, preferably spectacularly on a kilometre-long footbridge over the reservoir, and in the village a meeting place that is accessible to everyone and offers something for everyone, from PC stations to card games, because inns alone do not meet all needs. A former house of the hated fascist administration, which Mussolini had built, would be a suitable location. "Yes, and why not a multicultural kitchen in the *Dopolavoro*," muses the mayor (Klapfer, interview 2016). The idea is not only to use the nearby state border for crossing and exchange, but also to overcome internal social, linguistic and cultural boundaries. Migration, which makes the place a non-place in conventional ideas, is its real future resource.

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Imaginaries of sovereignty
Visualizing the loss of control

Alexandra Schwell

"The night that Germany lost control." This headline on the cover of the German weekly DIE ZEIT was published in fall 2016 on the 2015 border opening anniversary when German chancellor Angela Merkel had decided to allow Syrian and other refugees into the country. DIE ZEIT situates its visual and linguistic narrative within a discursive framework that echoes far-right and right-wing populist discourses in the way it instrumentalizes images, metaphors, and visual imaginaries of Others and relates them to imaginations of control and sovereignty. Drawing upon a closed reading of DIE ZEIT's title page, the article seeks to elaborate on the broader relation of images, imaginaries, and emotional practices of border transgression and the invocation of the border in media and political discourse on refugees in Germany. It explores how the cover epitomizes, alludes to, and at the same time fosters a growing unease of large parts of the German liberal middle-class concerning the "refugee crisis".

Introduction

"The night that Germany lost control." This headline on the cover of the German weekly DIE ZEIT was published in fall 2016 on the anniversary of the so-called "border opening" in September 2015. One year earlier, German chancellor Angela Merkel had decided to allow Syrian and other refugees into the country. They had been camping for days under unfortunate circumstances at Keleti train station in Budapest before they decided to march over the highway towards Austria. Merkel had negotiated with Austrian chan-

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cellor Faymann that Austria would allow refugees to cross Austria towards the German border. Merkel had said her famous words, "Wir schaffen das/ we can do this" already on 31 August 2015.

Figure 1: Title page DIE ZEIT Nr. 35/2016

Germany and Austria saw unprecedented waves of solidarity towards the refugees at the Vienna and Munich train stations and locally in small towns, cities, and villages in many European countries (Sandberg 2020). The initial wave of solidarity and sympathy towards the refugees was paralleled by an upsurge in populism, violence, and attacks on refugee shelters and asylum-seekers' homes. Germany is not an exception as many other European countries experienced an increase in right-wing populist and far-right parties and movements. In the aftermath of the "summer of migration", right-wing populists argued that Merkel's decision to suspend the Dublin agreement led to an uncontrolled influx of undocumented migrants, that Viktor Orbán had blackmailed the country, that Merkel had made the country vulnerable to terrorists, that German bureaucracies were not ready or equipped to deal with such high numbers, and finally, that there was the problem of culture. Their Islamic belief and traditions would make the refugees incompatible with German Christian mainstream society; they would pose both a physical and cultural threat to their host society, particularly for "our" women and girls. The night of New Year's Eve in Cologne (Arendt/Brosius/Hauck 2017) exacerbated the refugee Other's framing as an object of fear. In this increasingly heated atmosphere of 2016, DIE ZEIT takes a look back at the

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suspension of the Dublin agreement, commonly termed "border opening," and Merkel's famous words, "We can do this!" Many, DIE ZEIT claims in its cover article, say that in this very moment "Germany lost control" and that it only regained this control in December 2015, as allegedly was secretly admitted by informants from within the Merkel administration.

In this article[1], I provide a close reading of DIE ZEIT's front page to elaborate on the broader relation of imagery, imaginaries, and emotional practices of border transgression and the invocation of the border in media and political discourse on refugees. Since these late summer days of 2015, both the German-Austrian and the Austrian-Hungarian border had become focal points of social imagination. At the same time, they became "empty signifiers" (Laclau/Mouffe 1985)—temporarily fixed but permanently contested and ready to be filled with the most diverse and contrasting meanings under conditions of continuous power struggle.

Borders play a pivotal role in the imaginary of control that is at stake here. Shortly after the first arrivals, Germany introduced border controls on 13 September 2015 at the internal Schengen border to Austria. European internal Schengen borders had almost disappeared from public attention; their practical relevance had become more and more insignificant due to increased cross-border activities and networks, unobstructed by border controls and checks. Borderwork (Cooper/Rumford 2012) was mainly directed not towards exclusion and bulkheading of the neighbor but towards cooperation and networking, aiming at making the border almost invisible, even imperceptible, for legal border-crossers.

In fall 2015, those taken-for-granted certainties changed abruptly with the reinstatement of border controls. They conveyed a clear message: first, that the nation-state was (still) powerful and protective, and second, that it was under threat. The national border, this was meant to signal, returns at a time of crisis. It stages a performance of power, control, and sovereignty beyond its actual relevance as a barrier for cross-border crime. When DIE ZEIT reports "The night that Germany lost control", it establishes a direct seman-

1 An early draft of this article was presented at the workshop "Kulturwissenschaftliche Perspektiven auf Devianz, Kriminalität und Sicherheit" at ISGV Dresden in September 2018. I am indebted to the workshop participants, and Katharina Eisch-Angus in particular, for valuable comments and advice. Also, I wish to thank Guido Tiemann for his comments and help in streamlining the article. Finally, I want to thank the anonymous reviewer whose advice significantly improved the article's argument.

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tic link between the "opened" national border, migration, and control over a state territory. This narrative inextricably links imaginaries of control and state sovereignty to borders and the border function's invocation. Simultaneously, it reinforces the boundary between the national Self and the refugee or migrant Other, whose intrusion signals a violation of the border and an attack on the sovereign nation-state. I argue that DIE ZEIT situates its narrative within a discursive framework that echoes far-right and right-wing populist discourses (Wodak 2015) in the way it instrumentalizes images, metaphors, and visual imaginaries of Others and relates them to imaginations of control and sovereignty.

The article proceeds as follows: First, I take the border-control-nexus as a point of departure to analyze how both are linked to the social imaginary of sovereignty, how this imaginary is produced and perpetuated, and how it contributes to the "doing" of national identity and the nation state's performativity as a "home" and a trusted "safe haven" whose borders hold a security promise. I provide a close reading of the visual narrative on DIE ZEIT's cover in the next step. I explore how the front page emphasizes an alleged "loss of control" threatening this "home" linked to affective bordering practices. Thereby, I wish to attend to the subtle and subliminal emotional practices that impact actors' feelings towards the location of Self and Other and how they practice national belonging and externalizing the Other.

I argue that it is arranged in a security meta-frame, which epitomizes an imaginary loss of control and an imminent threat to national safety and security. This framing overrides the cover image's situatedness in Christian iconography, which would otherwise establish a moral obligation towards the refugees. The article concludes with an exploration of how the cover epitomizes, alludes to, and at the same time fosters a growing unease of large parts of the German liberal middle-class concerning the "refugee crisis".

Control and borders

To desire security and safety is an anthropological constant. Insecurity and uncertainty can be destructive for human beings; security and safety are pivotal for personal, psychological, and social development. The first and primary security community on a micro-scale is the core family who enjoys specific legal protection, often at the expense of the security/safety of its

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most vulnerable members. On the societal and political level, it is the state's responsibility to keep its members safe. This is both a social contract and a promise[2]. In fact, the security promise is a crucial element of the social contract in which citizens cede power to the state. As such, it is also an essential pillar of state sovereignty. Following Max Weber's famous definition, state sovereignty means that a state has the monopoly over the legitimate use of force, maintains the social order within a given territory over a given population, and guards its borders (Weber 2005 [1921]: 1043). Thus, borders are integral to the security/safety promise. Likewise, national sovereignty conveys a sense of security and reinforces the nation-state's affective dimension.

National identity and national belonging happen on the symbolic level of the "imagined community" (Anderson 1991) but are also practiced, embodied, and emotionally rooted. Nation-states represent "homes" to "their" people who can claim their membership, e.g., through citizenship. Walters coined the concept of "domopolitics," i.e., governmental practices that make the nation-state appear like a home. Domopolitics are defined as "the governance and construction of the nation as a domestic or 'homely' space to be secured through practices of filtering, classification, and surveillance" (Darling 2013: 1786; Walters 2004). As such, these practices are inextricably linked to borders. Imaginaries of the state as a "home" or a "safe haven" are, however, in practice misleading and highly ambivalent, as safety for the privileged majority often entails insecurity and exclusion of those at the margins of society (Balibar 2015).

Borders, boundaries, and bordering practices are integral to and constitutive for the perception and imagination of the nation-state as a home and the definition and exclusion of the Other. My perspective on borders is based on the following assumptions: First, Borders do something; they have agency. They make a difference, and they create social spaces, obstacles, classifications, and opportunities. The border function and infrastructure are potent devices. Second, borders are also objects of agency; they are invoked, imagined, and have symbolic meaning. They are an essential part of social imaginaries and processes of selfing and othering. The imagination of the border function and infrastructure is powerful. As Bendixsen argues, "borders are constructed, reproduced and contested by a variety of actors, using

2 On the concept of promise, see Färber 2019.

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techniques, institutions, laws, policies and social interactions at different scales" (Bendixsen 2016: 536).

The national border is pivotal for the imagination of the sovereign nation-state because it promises security. National borders and border controls provide an idea of stability and reliability. They mediate trust not only in state institutions but in an idea of national belonging and national power in a world of neatly divided Westphalian nation-states. Ironically, as Wendy Brown states, national borders are increasingly hyperbolically emphasized in a world where national sovereignty and the practical importance of borders are waning:

> "This theatricalized and spectacularized performance of sovereign power at aspirational or actual national borders brings into relief nation-state sovereignty's theological remainder. If walls do not actually accomplish the interdiction fueling and legitimating them, if they perversely institutionalize the contested and degraded status of the boundaries they limn, they nevertheless stage both sovereign jurisdiction and an aura of sovereign power and awe. Walls thus bear the irony of being mute, material, and prosaic, yet potentially generative of theological awe largely unrelated to their quotidian functions or failures." (Brown 2010: 26)

My contribution takes the link between borders and control and the symbolic, even theological dimension of the border as a point of departure to analyze the subtle and affective ways of "doing" the sovereign nation and excluding the Other through discursive and visual means.

The loss of control

"The night that Germany lost control." Below this headline is a subheadline: "What happened on the 4th of September 2015? Which intentions, mishaps, and misunderstandings lead to hundreds of thousands of refugees entering the country? A protocol." In these lines, DIE ZEIT insinuates that a suspension of the Dublin agreement and the influx of refugees are equivalent to a loss of sovereignty over the German national territory and state. Moreover, the "border opening" happened under tremendous pressure and somewhat accidentally; it did not occur intentionally and in a rational and controlled

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way. Therefore, the argument goes, it is a sign of bad government. DIE ZEIT joins the ranks of those who claim that the so-called "border-opening" led to an uncontrolled influx of unknown, i.e., not classified/classifiable and potentially harmful people into the country.

The cover sparked my interest because it is marked by internal tension and epitomizes societal and political frictions, which since 2015 worked their way from the margins of right-wing extremism to the center of the German middle-class. DIE ZEIT addresses the liberal upper-middle-class and prides itself on its intellectual stance. Therefore, the article was received with surprise and anger, as it ran counter to the coverage of many left-wing mainstream media in 2015/2016. Funke and Nakschbandi (2017) report that the title "The night that Germany lost control" was also fiercely contested by DIE ZEIT's editorial staff, as it was considered an ingratiation with right-wing populists by evoking a myth of defeat, even the abandonment of the magazine's own identity. The front page is both symptom of and actanct in a broader context where the German upper-middle-class struggles to define its relation to the political (far-)right-wing.

Numerous scholars have analyzed discursive constructions and representations of refugees and migrants as unwanted Others in different settings (for a wide range of contexts, see Fürsich 2010; Khosravinik 2010; Powell 2011; Friese 2017). Language is a powerful instrument, and imagery exerts an additional affective effect beyond the rational and the rationalizable. The consequences of narratives and imagery do not remain in the linguistic domain but have very practical repercussions. The visual representation of refugees is an integral component of how the refugee Other is created and perpetuated. In this contribution, I focus on the front page's affective dimension by including the headlines, the cover image, and the cover's overall composition. I argue that to uncover securitizing processes' affective dimension, scholarly analysis needs to attend to the subtle and less obvious influences such as those provided through visualizations and visual imageries.

To a certain degree, reading an image is idiosyncratic yet at the same time informed by and situated in a broader historical context and what might be termed 'seeing rules' and viewing habits. We interpret images against the background of our socialization, upbringing, and the discourses that surround us. A photograph in a newspaper is not neutral or documentary, but it is itself a "message" (Barthes 1977: 15). Photographers arrange and compose their image and provide an interpretation of reality, a representation, a sym-

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bol that represents something else. Neither they nor news magazines such as DIE ZEIT who use these images can determine a specific and exclusive reading of the picture; they can suggest a dominant preferred reading for the viewer/reader to evaluate. The following section looks at how DIE ZEIT arranges image and text on its front page to elicit a preferred reading.

First, the front page is dominated by a strong visual imaginary. The cover image interacts with the headline "The night…"; both reciprocally constitute each other. It is evident that the message of the text and the content of the image belong together. At first glance, the cover image stands in stark contrast to the text's message. There is no noticeable loss of control in the picture, no raging masses.

Second, the protagonists and the setting. The photograph itself shows a group of five, presumably a family: two women wearing headscarves and a bearded man pushing a baby buggy with two toddlers. The picture shows the family in a delocalized border zone, neither here nor there. They are on a highway, walking on the emergency lane. A large truck drives by; it is an inhospitable and surreal environment. We know nothing about them, but we can guess that they are on their way to the German border. It is dark; the scenery is bathed in dim red light.

Third, interaction. The adults do not look at the camera. We cannot see their faces; they do not look us in the eye. Their lack of interaction with the viewer is irritating. They move before us as by-standers and observers; they are in a hurry, they walk quickly. The look in their eyes is directed straight ahead, with their eyes firmly fixed on the goal. However, they do not seem happy and hopeful but exhausted and demoralized. In their socio-psychological analysis of images of refugees in Australian media outlets, Bleiker et al. (2013) argue that portrait pictures showing only one person who looks directly into the camera elicit the most compassion in the observer. Photos of groups, on the contrary, create an emotional distance between the observer and the subject. This empathy effect decreases with every additional person in the picture and the persons' direction of view (see Bleiker et al. 2013: 404). The pattern is even effective when children are part of the image (cf. Schober 2021). As a result, DIE ZEIT's cover image is unlikely to engender compassion or sympathy in the observer, as it features five persons in the picture, and none of them looks at the camera. By making their lives, personalities, and fates exchangeable through media representation, they are deprived of their subjectivities and rendered almost invisible. In her book *Precarious Life*,

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Judith Butler discusses the kinds of lives that are visible in public life, the "publicly acknowledged field of appearance." She claims: "Those who remain faceless or whose faces are presented to us as so many symbols of evil, authorize us to become senseless before those lives we have eradicated, and whose grievability is indefinitely postponed" (Butler 2004: XVIII).

Four, the colors. The image has been visibly post-edited; colors have been enhanced or altered, and contrast increased to achieve a striking effect. The family is bathed in a red, dim light; the children's faces remain dark; they are not recognizable. The women wear headscarves, the archetypical marker of difference and focal point of "culture clashes" in Germany and "the West" more generally (Özcan 2013). The headscarves appear dark red as well. Psychological effects and cultural-historical symbolism of the red color lie beyond this article's scope, yet suffice to say that the color red is also associated with imaginaries of power, violence, seduction, and danger. The family embodies a looming threat and should not be trusted.

There are other colors in the image: The woman's jacket on the left forms a bright yellow spot of color. It is not a cheerful yellow, yet it stands out in the specific way the title page is assembled. The jacket's yellow is reflected in two other instances. First, part of the subheadline is written in yellow: "What happened on 4 September 2015?" An apparent link between the female refugee with the yellow jacket and the big question mark is thus established—what happened, and how could it come that far? Second, there is a yellow box on the right side of the title page with a police cap on top. It informs about an article in DIE ZEIT's dossier: "Attention, attention, this is the police! Officials talk about their everyday life: emergency calls, burglaries—and suddenly also terror". This box and the article it features are not related to the title story about refugees and Germany's "loss of control." However, it establishes a visual connection via the yellow color and the picture's framing by the police cap. Together with the phrase "and suddenly also terror," these features suggest a specific and biased reading of the title page. The yellow elements on the front page interact, creating a direct link between otherwise independent stories: the everyday life of policing terror and other crime, and the refugees who irregularly cross the border.

Put in a broader context, this image differs considerably from the mainly positive visual narrative which dominated German liberal mainstream media in the immediate aftermath of the "summer of migration." Until then, pictures of refugees prevailed who arrived at daylight and sunshine at Ger-

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man and Austrian train stations. They were shown as being relieved, happy, thankful, often filled with incredulous amazement, and overwhelmed by the enthusiastic welcome and helpfulness which was bestowed on them. The family on the cover of DIE ZEIT does not come at daylight, but it is a dark night, and it is chilly; one of the women has a blanket wrapped around her shoulders against the cold. They are tired, exhausted, desperate yet determined. While the image thwarts DIE ZEIT readers' viewing habits by deviating from "welcome culture" iconography, it also differs significantly from negative depictions of refugees. As mentioned before, the image does not show an actual loss of control or anarchy at the border. The family itself represents no obvious security threat to "Us", but it symbolizes a what-if, a looming potentiality.

To summarize: Judging from its composition and its location on the title page, the cover image is not intended to elicit empathy among DIE ZEIT's readers. It serves to amplify the message of the article it accompanies: the temporary loss of control and sovereignty due to the "border opening" and the influx of refugees. While a press image underlining an article's message is not news in itself, the next section broadens the scope to consider the image's ambiguity within a fragile and contingent context.

The holy family effect

Images are polyvalent and ambiguous; they can be filled with different meanings, but their range of preferred interpretations is also contingent upon historically transmitted ideas and imaginations. Like any image, visual representations of refugees are not neutral, depicting an objective truth. Our reading and interpretation of images build upon existing knowledge. Centuries of art and cultural history have shaped our viewing habits and have taught us, even subconsciously, how to recognize the stranger, the refugee, the migrant as cultural figurations. Contemporary media draw upon this world of images and use it for their storylines or their political agenda. The depiction of refugees, thus, follows specific iconographic rules: "photographic portrayals of refugees are, in our day, extremely abundant. Most readers have probably seen such photographs, and most of us have a strong visual sense of what 'a refugee' looks like" (Malkki 1995: 9, quoted in Wright 2002).

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The refugee and the forced migrant have many precedents in Western art history. Terence Wright argues that, Christian iconography is an essential source of contemporary media representations of refugees. He claims "that refugee images not only have their roots in Christian iconography, but that images perpetuating this visual tradition are reproduced and broadcast instinctively—possibly having a subliminal effect on the viewer" (Wright 2002: 54). Wright distinguishes four categories of images with biblical origins, among them the Holy Family's flight into Egypt, where the link to the visual representation of the refugee is often made explicit (Wright 2002: 57). The Holy Family is a prominent motif of political art protesting migration policies. In 2005, street artist Banksy famously (and allegedly) painted a "Christmas Card" where Joseph's and the pregnant Mary's journey is strangely interrupted by the wall separating Israel and the West Bank. The "Christmas Card" uses explicit biblical references which anyone with a basic knowledge of Christianity can recognize and classify, as Fischer claims: "The anti-barrier message is clear, but it can function only by way of cultural memory: Without knowledge of the Nativity story, the image means nothing [...]" (Fischer 2014: 149).

The biblical meta-story elevates mundane activities to the level of grand narratives. Thereby, it also posits them within a moral and ethical framework. Wright suggests that "we may consider the iconography of the visual image in the West as belonging to a wider set of moral codes and conventions" (Wright 2002: 54), including a moral obligation to feel and to react. Consequently, a refugee family walking on the highway in 2015 recalls the biblical story of the Holy Family that seeks refuge but is refused and sent away, finally ending up in a stable. We know how the biblical story continues, and we also recognize the moral obligation that arises from it. The Holy Family tale teaches us a lesson about charity, solidarity, about helping and protecting the weak and the poor. It is an outstanding example for the assumption that "an image has the potential to induce the viewer to relate it to a visual tradition of much greater length than the immediate news setting" (Wright 2002: 59). But why are we as readers less likely to be inclined, or even prevented, from interpreting the image as a visual metaphor of the Holy Family—and to draw the appropriate conclusions?

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The unease oft the middle classes

Readers of DIE ZEIT are educated; they are expected to recognize the biblical metaphor. Yet, the front page does not convey a message of charity and solidarity, but the opposite. To get the article's message across, DIE ZEIT must ensure that the family is not interpreted as a metaphor of the Holy Family seeking refuge. DIE ZEIT is not a sensation-seeking tabloid that would bomb its readers with stereotypical images of threatening intruders or faceless mass migration moving in on "us," of "dehumanizing visual patterns [which] directly feed into the politics of fear […]" (Bleiker et al. 2013: 399). Readers of DIE ZEIT would be somewhat repulsed by blunt tabloid-like imagery. As outlined the image is polyvalent and ambivalent. In conclusion, I identify elements that account for the image's "security" reading epitomizing the border-control nexus.

First, the link between refugees and a loss of control and sovereignty is rendered quasi-natural through the way it is embedded into an overarching interpretative framework. I argue with Vida Bajc (2011) that the cover image is placed within a "security meta-frame". For Bajc, a security meta-frame provides a framework for interpretation as a security threat that dominates all other possible frames. Alternative readings are ruled out or become less likely. If the image itself can be subjected to ambivalent readings, the security meta frame provided by both the police cap in the yellow box and the headline "The night that Germany lost control" establishes a dominant reading: This group of refugees calls upon the reader to interpret it in terms of an irregular border-crossing; their intrusion results from political failure. The image of the moving family foreshadows Germany's imminent loss of control. They are both harbingers and actors of this loss of control.

Second, the image's inherent ambivalence makes the family a "public icon" epitomizing what Mitchell (2015) terms the "historical uncanny". By adapting the literary and aesthetic concept of the uncanny as "the genre of ambiguity par excellence" (Mitchell 2015: 195) to factual historical events, he seeks to understand the ambiguity, insecurity, and uncertainty that accompany "an event that is collectively understood to mark a turning point or significant moment in a historical period" (Mitchell 2015: 196). The picture of the family, published one year after the "border opening", echoes its ambivalent reading in the aftermath of the historical event of 2015. It embodies uncertainty regarding questions of trust in leadership, (lack of) good governance,

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hospitality, and hostility, and an uncanny feeling that "we" should have seen this (literally) coming towards "us".

Third, images are intended to produce an affective effect. The cover image's appellative function urges us to react and to feel in a certain way, which is linked to its status as an icon of the uncanny. It is in this affective effect where the bordering practice of externalizing the refugee Other becomes salient. When refugees appear as a source of insecurity, as potential risks threatening "our home", it becomes almost impossible to empathize with them. Flam and Doerr claim that "those who generate specific visuals or texts expect their viewers to feel or at least be already familiar with or, alternatively, wish to impose specific feeling rules or an emotional regime on their viewers" (Flam/Doerr 2015: 229; cf. Hochschild 1979). On the front page, such an emotional regime is established. It marks the family as an object of fear. Yet, it is not a fear of the Other itself, but the emotional regime moves the focus from "them" to "us" and on what their intrusion might bring for "us".

The family is not threatening in itself, but as a messenger of the loss of control, they "remind us, irritatingly, infuriatingly and horrifyingly, of the (incurable?) vulnerability of our own position and of the endemic fragility of our hard-won well-being" (Bauman 2016: 16). Instead of reproducing the Christian narrative of charity and humanitarianism, DIE ZEIT's cover foreshadows a very different ending for the family that differs diametrically from the biblical narration. Moreover, the focus moves to "us", to "our home"; it is not on their plight. DIE ZEIT releases the observer from any moral obligation to empathize and to help. This reminds of Gerrard's argument about the imagery of refugees that is intended to appall the observer: "Thus, any humanitarian ethic evoked through shocking imagery (…) is superseded by security and safety threats and fear for oneself and one's community through the explicit narration of the evil 'Other'" (Gerrard 2017: 884).

In conclusion, I suggest that the cover eloquently captures the unease of the liberal middle-classes and their struggle of defining their political stance in times of the "refugee crisis". A homology exists in the link between the visualization of the loss of control and the middle-class's unease. The front page represents a figuration that appeals precisely to a German middle-class' ambiguity that oscillates between the two poles of moral obligation towards the deserving and their subjective feeling of insecurity. In fact, it assists in sharpening the blurry boundary between the deserving and the

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undeserving. Readers of DIE ZEIT are middle-class liberals whose self-image tends to be marked by a general empathy for and a humanitarian stance towards refugees and forced migrants. Since the night of New Year's Eve in Cologne and the upsurge in right-wing extremism all over Western Europe, their empathy has increasingly turned to indifference at best or xenophobia at worst (Arendt/Brosius/Hauck 2017; Borneman/Ghassem-Fachandi 2017). Right-wing populism and far-right thoughts appeared to be gradually seeping into mainstream discourses and have become increasingly socially acceptable.

This fear is directed at the uncanny that may turn against "us" anytime. Thus, the cover page functions as a catalyst for a moral panic that calls for the border in order to regain a subjective feeling of security. Gerrard suggests that "there is the potentiality to border the 'pain of Others' through a recognition of their pain, if the narration rests upon fear and territorial imagined communities of nationhood" (Gerrard 2017: 887). The refugee family's fear, suffering, and desperation are overridden by a politicized framing that helps create and reproduce a politics of fear of the refugee Other and the threatened Self. The national border's security promise is restored at the refugees' expense by establishing distance towards the undeserving and redirecting the focus to the own threatened existence.

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A Border on the move
The Ukrainian-Russian frontier from the Soviet collapse to the conflict in Donbas

Tatiana Zhurzhenko

The border between Ukraine and the Russian Federation is the longest in Europe. It runs across densely populated territories and is crossed by millions of people for private visits, business and tourism. The annexation of Crimea by Russia and the military conflict in Donbas resulted in new dividing lines, caused flows of refugees and internally displaced persons, affected labour migration and disrupted the cross-border cooperation between the two countries. This development has significant impact on border crossing regimes, transport routes and routines of cross-border movement.

Introduction

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the administrative boundary between Ukraine and the Russian Federation became an international frontier. The longest land border in Europe (almost 2,000 km), it runs across densely populated territories and is crossed by millions of people for private visits, business and tourism. The annexation of Crimea by Russia and the military conflict in Donbas have created new dividing lines between the Ukraine-controlled territory and the territories controlled by Russia and by the separatist "republics". The ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia resulted in massive flows of refugees and internally displaced persons, affected labour migration and disrupted the cross-border cooperation be-

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tween the two countries. It caused significant changes in the border crossing regime, transport routes and routines of cross-border movement.

This article offers an analysis of the current situation against the historical backdrop of the Ukrainian-Russian relations since 1991. The first section provides an overview of the institutionalization processes of the Ukrainian-Russian border from 1991 to 2014. The second section discusses the impact of the current conflict on the border regime between Ukraine and Russia. The third section addresses the situation at the de facto borders with Crimea and the uncontrolled territories of Donbas. Finally, the fourth section deals with the migration crisis which resulted from the Ukrainian-Russian conflict.

Historical background

For Ukraine, as for other post-Soviet countries, national borders and the ability to control them have been an important attribute of state sovereignty and one of the key elements of national security. With the collapse of the USSR, the new Ukrainian state faced rather different challenges at its "old" and "new" frontiers. Having a common border with the countries of the "socialist camp" (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania), Ukrainians before 1991 could hardly profit from this neighbourhood: the Soviet external border was well protected and hardly permeable while cross-border contacts were strictly controlled by Moscow. On the contrary, Ukraine's borders with the neighbouring Soviet republics (Russia, Belarus, Moldova) were merely administrative lines, which were neither controlled nor demarcated; they hardly mattered in terms of labour market, social provisions or education system (Zhurzhenko 2010: 126). After 1991, the infrastructure of Ukraine's western border thus needed to be modernized to answer the needs of growing cross-border traffic, to facilitate contacts between the populations of the near-border regions and to develop tourism. At the "new" borders of Ukraine with the former Soviet republics, the delimitation and the demarcation had to be accomplished and the infrastructure of border and custom controls had to be built practically from zero. Additional challenges emerged in the case of the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, where the frozen conflict in Transnistria has become a source of instability and economic crime. Ukraine's border with Belarus, though thinly populated and not very busy in terms of traffic,

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runs through territories which were heavily polluted as a result of the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986.

As a border with a former "imperial power", Ukraine's border with Russia has acquired a special symbolic status in post-Soviet Ukraine being associated to such issues as the power imbalance in bilateral relations, unfinished nation-building and the alleged weakness of Ukrainian national identity in the east. During the first post-Soviet decade, the Communist opposition and Russian nationalists in both countries presented the Ukrainian-Russian border as a "wound" cutting through the single collective body of East Slavic civilization and as an artificial dividing line imposed on the "brotherly peoples" by the "corrupted pro-Western elites" (Zhurzhenko 2010: 163). Major issues between the two countries were settled in the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation, and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation (1997), and in 2003 presidents Vladimir Putin and Leonid Kuchma signed the Agreement on the State Border between Ukraine and Russia.

Nevertheless, the common border remained, to use Friedrich Ratzel's metaphor, a "power barometer" in the relations of the two countries. For many politicians in Kyiv, the border with Russia represented economic dependence, vulnerability to Moscow's political and informational influences, and the general weakness of the Ukrainian state. For the Kremlin, especially after the Orange Revolution in 2004, the border with Ukraine embodied the danger of a further EU and NATO enlargement to the East and the perceived threat of being encircled by a geopolitical adversary and cut off from the rest of Europe.

Like other frontiers in the post-Cold War Eastern Europe, the Ukrainian-Russian border became a laboratory where processes of nation- and state-building overlapped with the effects of globalization. Moreover, it has been the main site of competition (and later conflict) between two ambitious projects: the EU integration and enlargement, on the one hand, and the Russia-led Eurasian integration, on the other. Although Ukraine was not considered an official candidate for accession, the perspective of an EU integration motivated Kyiv to proceed with the delimitation and demarcation of its borders with the post-Soviet neighbours. This corresponded to the growing concern in Brussels that Ukraine—a new neighbour of the EU after its enlargement to the East—posed a number of soft security threats, of which the issue of illegal migration seemed most urgent. Indeed, from the mid-2000s and till the Arab Spring Ukraine was considered one of the main transit

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countries for migrants from the Middle East, China and the CIS to Europe. By investing in the infrastructure of Ukraine's borders, including the border with Russia, and providing training for the local border and custom services, the EU sought to prevent illegal migration, human trafficking and contraband in its neighbourhood but also to contribute to political stability and security in the region (Zhurzhenko 2005).

Russia, which during the 1990s favoured "transparent borders" inside the CIS, has never considered the demarcation of the border with Ukraine a priority. The agreement on demarcation between the two countries was signed only in 2010, and until 2014, only 372 km of the border with Russia in the Sumy and Chernihiv oblasts were demarcated (Chervonenko 2014). While investing in the technical infrastructure of its border with Ukraine, Russia emphasised the importance of cross-border cooperation and regional integration, including such projects as the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Single Economic Area (SEA) and lately, the Customs Union. Instruments like the "Euroregions" established in the Ukrainian-Russian borderlands, a consortium of near-border universities and a "green corridor" facilitating the small cross-border movement were largely borrowed from the arsenal of EU politics. This integration "from below" served as a show window for the business projects of the regional elites and was largely welcomed by the local population in eastern Ukraine profiting from cross-border trade, contraband and seasonal jobs in Russia.

These attitudes were reflected in a sociological survey conducted by the Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine in 2001. It showed significant differences between the attitudes of Ukrainian experts and ordinary citizens towards the status of Ukraine's border with Russia. The overwhelming majority of Ukrainian experts (87.5 %) assessed the transparent and non-demarcated border with Russia "negatively, as a proof of Ukraine's exposure to potential risks." More than a half of the experts (56.2 %) opted for a "Ukrainian border equally protected along its entire perimeter" while another 25 % were for "the western border being more open than the eastern one." In contrast, the results of the general opinion poll demonstrated that the majority of the Ukrainians (59.8 %) saw the transparent and non-demarcated eastern border "positively, as a proof of a special relationship between Ukraine and Russia," and only 22 % considered this situation negatively, as bearing potential risks. Almost half of the respondents (46.7 %) wanted to see

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the eastern border "more open than the western one" (Sushko/Parkhomenko 2001).

The conflict with Russia and the securitization of the Ukrainian-Russian border

With the annexation of Crimea in spring 2014, the outbreak of the military conflict in Donbas and Russia's intervention (on the legal aspects, see Tsybulenko/Sayapin 2018), Ukraine lost 7 % of its territory; about 13,000 Ukrainian citizens have been killed and more than 28,000 wounded in the conflict (United Nations 2019).

In spring 2014, the porous border with Russia was blamed for the smuggling of paid "pro-Russian protesters" and paramilitary groups into eastern Ukraine (cf. OSCE 2014). In summer of the same year, Russia's hybrid aggression turned into a full-fledged military intervention. As a result, Ukraine lost control over 400 km (20 %) of its land border with Russia (Interfax-Ukraine 2016). With the deployment of additional military units and the development of the military infrastructure, the Ukrainian-Russian border has been heavily militarized (cf. UNIAN 2017).

These dramatic developments affected the attitudes of Ukrainians to the border with Russia. According to an opinion poll carried out in June–July 2014, more than a half of the respondents (58 %) wanted Ukraine to close the border with Russia, while 34 % were negative about such a measure. Half of the respondents (49 %) supported the idea of introducing a visa regime with Russia, while 41 % were against it. Such restrictive measures were, however, less popular in the east and south (Rating Group 2014). The widespread perception of Russia as a source of instability and military threat resulted in various grass roots initiatives which emerged during summer 2014 with the aim of improving the infrastructure of the border and supporting the Ukrainian border guards. In Kharkiv, an eastern Ukrainian city forty kilometres from the border with Russia, groups of volunteers helped digging trenches and building bunkers, fixing equipment and decorating buildings with Ukrainian symbols (Kumkova 2014). By the same token, the idea of a "security fence" similar to the one at the Israeli-Palestinian border was proposed by Ihor Kolomoiskyi, a pro-Ukrainian oligarch and at that time the head of the Dnipropetrovsk oblast. Critics of the project pointed out that

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such a wall, even if helpful against illegal crossing and smuggling of weapons, would not be able to stop a military invasion and denounced it as a PR stunt meant to consolidate Kolomoiskyi's image as a Ukrainian patriot. The idea was supported by President Petro Poroshenko and especially by Prime Minister Arseniy Yatseniuk, who embraced the project of a "European rampart" which, he argued, would be part of the future eastern border of the EU (Kyiv Post 2014). The government also announced that the demarcation of the border with Russia would be continued unilaterally as the Ukrainian-Russian commission on demarcation failed to continue its work after the outbreak of the conflict. Years after the launch of the "European rampart" project, however, only some elements of it have been implemented, while the rest stumbled over financial difficulties and corruption allegations (Miller 2018).

The regime of crossing the border has been strengthened since the outbreak of the conflict, especially from the Ukrainian side. In spring 2014, afraid of Russia's hybrid aggression, the Ukrainian government temporarily limited the entry of adult Russian male citizens into the country. These restrictions were soon partly lifted, but at the same time new requirements were introduced for Russian citizens visiting Ukraine: travel passports instead of internal ID cards, official invitations and preliminary online registration. The new system of biometric control, which Ukraine implemented at its borders in 2018 as part of the preparations for the visa free regime with the EU, has also affected citizens of Russia, which Kyiv authorities added to the list of "migration risk countries". From March 2020, Ukrainian citizens, too, can enter Russia only with travel passports and not with internal ID cards and birth certificates.

In addition to these changes, Ukraine terminated the agreement with Russia on local border traffic: since March 2015, only international border crossings have been open, while small local ones previously used mainly by near border residents remain closed (UNIAN 2015). In October 2015, Ukraine and Russia suspended direct flights between the two countries; in the following years, Minsk, the capital of Belarus, has become the main regional transit hub. Other transport connections were adjusted to the conflict as well: Russia rushed to build a new railway from Moscow to Rostov bypassing Ukrainian territory. For Russian tourists, the popular transit route to Crimea through the territory of Ukraine was replaced by direct flights to Simferopol; since 2018, the new Kerch Bridge connects Crimea with the Krasnodar

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region. The number of train connections between Ukraine and Russia decreased, although there are still some trains run by Ukrainian Railways connecting main Ukrainian cities with Moscow. Cancelling them would mean a significant financial loss as the Moscow destination remains most profitable for the Ukrainian state railway company (Proskuriakov 2019). Moreover, this would be also a rather unpopular measure as these trains are used predominantly by Ukrainian labour migrants working in Russia (more on this topic in the last section). The situation has been used by various private bus companies which offer alternative and rather cheap possibilities for people commuting between the two countries. Very often, a minibus brings people to the border which they cross by foot and then at the other side are picked up by another minibus which de facto belongs to the same owner (cf. Kolosov et al. 2018: 461).

The deep crisis in Ukrainian-Russian relations resulted in cross-border cooperation projects being put on ice. This concerns, for example, the Ukrainian-Russian Euroregion "Slobozhanshchyna" established in 2003 by the Kharkiv and Belgorod oblasts. In 2016, the trade turnout of the Belgorod oblast with Ukraine dropped 74 % in comparison with 2013 (Kolosov et al. 2018: 462). Kharkiv local business, especially retail, services and entertainment, has been suffering from a significant drop in the number of visitors from Belgorod whose inhabitants also feel a certain nostalgia for pre-war times when Kharkiv was a frequently visited friendly territory offering cultural pleasures, entertainment and affordable shopping. Cross-border professional and personal contacts obviously have suffered from the conflict, especially from restrictions on travel and from hostile TV propaganda. In the interviews I conducted in Kharkiv in summer 2017, representatives of the Kharkiv academic community confirmed broken or frozen contacts with Russian colleagues[1]. Common projects with Russian institutions were put on ice and inviting Russian citizens to conferences in Ukraine became tricky. Travelling to Russia for Ukrainians (and vice versa) has become politicized and thus—especially for academics, journalists and public figures—limited to exceptional reasons of illness or death in the family. Public servants and

1 Research was conducted together with Daria Skibo in Kharkiv and Belgorod in summer 2017 and supported by the program "Transcultural contact zones in Ukraine" of the University of St. Gallen.

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especially law enforcement officers in both countries are strongly discouraged to cross the Ukrainian-Russian border.

Crossing precarious de facto borders

In 2014, Crimea and its harbour city Sevastopol became two new federal subjects of Russia, while parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts are now controlled by the self-proclaimed "people's republics" backed by Moscow. According to Ukrainian legislation, in both cases these territories are considered "temporarily occupied"; in 2016, a special governmental body, the Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs, was established by Kyiv. The new "temporary administrative lines" separating Crimea and the "people's republics" in Donbas from the rest of Ukraine have become de facto new borders; for Ukrainian and Russian citizens as well as foreigners crossing them is in many ways more complicated and stressful than crossing the "normal" Ukrainian-Russian border. The politics of bordering in the two cases of Crimea and Donbas and the regime of crossing on the ground are, however, rather different.

Ukraine's border with Crimea is de facto Russia's new external frontier, even if illegitimate and not recognized by the international community. As a new subject of the Russian Federation, Crimea has been integrated in its administrative, political and economic system. For patriotic or pragmatic reasons, most of the Crimean population accepted Russian citizenship (which was granted automatically to all residents of the peninsula; an exception was made for persons who, within one month after the annexation, rejected Russian citizenship in writing). Quite a few of Crimean residents, however, did not give up their Ukrainian passports (which allow more freedom of movement for inhabitants of a territory under international sanctions). From the Ukrainian perspective, Crimea is an occupied territory temporarily out of control; its residents remain Ukrainian citizens. According to Ukrainian law, entering the territory of Crimea from Russia without permission of the Ukrainian authorities is a criminal offence, and a number of Russian public personalities have been banned from entering Ukraine for this reason (Zhurzhenko 2019). While the fundamental disagreement between Ukraine and Russia on the issue of Crimea is unlikely to be settled soon, the administrative boundary between Crimea and continental Ukraine is de facto a new

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border between two countries. It is controlled by border guard and custom services of Ukraine and Russia, and apart from long waiting hours the regime of crossing is quite stable. Most of those who cross this de facto border are Ukrainian citizens and Crimean residents who kept their Ukrainian passports. Since autumn 2014, there is no direct public transport connection between continental Ukraine and Crimea—the border can be crossed only by foot or by private car—but private minibus services on both sides bring people to the crossing point and pick them up there. As Crimea used to be a very popular holiday destination for Ukrainians, it is hardly surprising that, despite a dramatic drop in the number of tourists, the cross-border movement has seasonal character: in 2019, the number of crossings (both entry and exit) at three crossing points in February was 121,000 while in August 408,000. In sum, during 2019, 2,582,000 persons crossed the border with Crimea in both directions (State Border Guard Service of Ukraine 2020).

At the other new boundary separating the so-called DNR and LNR from (the rest of) Ukraine the situation is far more ambivalent and not settled at all. To start with, the region suffered enormously during the hot phase of the military conflict which resulted in flows of refugees and a ruined infrastructure. The front line has been stabilized but shelling and sniper fire continues, with casualties on both sides reported regularly; after six years there is still no sign of progress in solving the conflict. The new "border"—which is actually a frozen front line—is seen by both sides as provisional and movable, worth investing in fortification but not in civic infrastructure. It runs through two densely populated Ukrainian regions—the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts—leaving the regional capitals with their educational and health care facilities in separatist-controlled territories. While the "republics" issue their own documents (which Ukraine does not recognize) and many local residents made use of the new opportunity to apply for a Russian passport (more on this in the next section), the local population is still dependent on Ukrainian social provisions and thus Ukrainian citizenship. Many families are divided, with young people leaving for Ukraine for work and study and elderly staying in the uncontrolled territories bound to their Soviet era apartments or houses—the only assets they have. This explains the intense movement across the dividing line where five control points from the Ukrainian side have been established (one in the Luhansk oblast and four in the Donetsk oblast). According to the statistics of the Ukrainian Border Service, the total number of crossings (both entries and exits) during 2019

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reached 13,933,000, a number more than five times higher than at the administrative line with Crimea during the same period (State Border Guard Service of Ukraine 2020). Here, seasonal fluctuations are not so pronounced.

The fact that Ukrainian citizens living in the so-called DNR and LNR can receive their pensions and social benefits only on the Ukraine-controlled territory creates additional incentives for regularly crossing the dividing line. According to the Eastern Ukraine Survey Checkpoint Monitoring (UNHCR 2020) 63 % of those crossing the temporary dividing line are 60 years and older, 65 % of them are women. Apart from receiving pension, other popular reasons for crossing are issues with documents, visiting relatives and, to a lesser extent, shopping (food, clothes and many other categories of goods are more expensive in the "uncontrolled territories"). As in Crimea, the border can be crossed by foot or by car (many local residents have both Ukrainian and "separatist" car plates). But unlike in Crimea, the border crossing regime is regulated by a "Temporary Order" established by the Headquarters of the Anti-Terrorist Operation (since May 2018 the Joint Forces Operation). It can be changed (e.g. in case of escalation) by decision of the United Center for Civic-Military Cooperation which includes representatives of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ukrainian Security Service and local authorities. In the last years, it often happened that crossing points were temporarily closed because of shelling threat. But even in absence of immediate danger, the general uncertainty, long waiting lines and the absence of a basic infrastructure and services make crossing the dividing line quite a challenging experience. In 2018 alone, 60 Ukrainian citizens—most of them elderly people with chronical health issues—died during crossing the dividing line (Myrnyi 2020). Illegal crossing outside the official checkpoints can cost a trespasser her/his life—strips of land adjacent to the dividing line are heavily covered with mines.

The humanitarian situation at the temporary crossing points in Crimea and especially in Donbas has been often criticized by human rights activists and international observers, and little progress in terms of improving the infrastructure has been made until recently. It seems that apart from a lack of political will, corruption and weak administrative capacities, the Ukrainian authorities have been caught in a dilemma: while the lack of improvement imposes high human costs on the local residents of the conflict zone and undermines their trust into the Ukrainian state, building a proper

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infrastructure for temporary crossing points would implicitly mean a de facto acceptance of the status quo as a permanent arrangement.

In summer 2019, the Ukrainian government announced its plans to modernize the infrastructure of the two crossing points in Crimea, Chongar and Kalanchak. These plans envisaged the construction of parking areas, sanitary facilities, offices providing administrative services, and medical emergency rooms. In November of the same year the first round of modernization was completed. In February 2020, Ukrainian president Zelenskyy announced plans to build a new town in the Kherson oblast for refugees from Crimea, especially for the families of Crimean Tatars. He promised it to become a "garden city", a show window of the new Ukraine demonstrating its advantages to visitors from Crimea (President of Ukraine 2020). In October 2019, Zelenskyy ordered to restore the bridge (destroyed since 2014) over the Siverskyi Donets river in Stanytsia Luhanska, the only crossing point in the Luhansk oblast (Kyiv Post 2019). The same presidential decree listed a number of other urgent measures aimed at improving the infrastructure and simplifying the regime of crossing the temporary dividing line. The COVID pandemic has unfortunately suspended these plans; moreover, in March 2019 crossing points in Crimea and Donbas were closed for both entrance and exit—a decision strongly criticized from the humanitarian point of view.

Migration crisis and passportization politics

The annexation of Crimea and especially the outbreak of the military conflict in Donbas, resulted in a migration crisis, which, in Ukraine's modern history, can be compared only to World War II. Half of the Donbas population has been forced to flee. Of those who have fled, around one million and a half went to other parts of Ukraine. On May 12, 2020, 1,446,651 persons were registered in Ukraine as IDPs (internally displaced persons) (Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine 2020). The official statistics, however, is incomplete. Many of those who went to other parts of Ukraine did not register officially as IDPs while some of those with IDP registration returned back to the uncontrolled territories in 2015–2016, after the relative stabilization of the situation. During the peak of the displacement crisis in 2014–2015, an unprecedented number of people was on the move, forced to leave their homes in haste, often being already traumatized by the armed conflict, families

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being divided by front lines and state borders. The majority were women with children and elderly people with rather limited financial resources. Some could count on relatives and friends in other regions of Ukraine, but the majority needed at least a temporary shelter. The capacities of the Ukrainian state, weakened by the political crisis and the external aggression, were in no way sufficient, and spontaneous civil society initiatives were decisive in providing immediate help during the first months. For example, the "Stantsiia Kharkiv", an around-the-clock info point, organized by local volunteers at the Kharkiv railway station, one of the main destinations for the displaced from Donbas, did not only offer initial orientation and basic information but helped people to find temporary accommodation, provided them with food, necessary medicine, children's clothes and diapers etc. The majority of the displaced have been staying in Kyiv, Kharkiv and the Ukraine-controlled parts of Donbas, still in hope to return home. Very often, they face marginalisation, social exclusion and feel like second class citizens (Bulakh 2020). But there are also many who, due to their education, financial resources and social capital, have been able to start their life anew and even succeed. This especially concerns displaced persons from Crimea, whose number accounts for less than 7 % of Ukraine's entire IDP population (Charron 2020). Crimean IDPs did not flee from the military conflict; most of them left because they refused to accept the annexation or/and saw their future in Ukraine. Having left for "political" reasons, this group enjoys a different symbolic status in today's Ukraine.

In addition to Ukrainian IDPs, over one million Ukrainians went to Russia (Kuznetsova 2020). This number is even more contested and politicized, and the picture is extremely complicated. To start with, there are of course some "political refugees"—people with pro-Russian views, those who were active in the pro-Russian rallies in spring 2014 and thus came under pressure of Ukrainian security services as well as those afraid of criminal prosecution in Ukraine. But there are also people with pro-Ukrainian views who fled from the military conflict to Russia because they have relatives or friends there. The majority of Ukrainian refugees in Russia has been, however, driven by security concerns and hope for a better life: after all, the level of wages and social provision in Russia is higher than in Ukraine and the former was until recently the primary destination for Ukrainian labour migrants.

Like in Ukraine, civil society in Russia responded to the flow of refugees from the conflict zone by a number of humanitarian initiatives. Russian

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regional authorities in the near border regions and the Ministry of Emergency joined in organizing temporary accommodation and basic provision for refugees. The Russian state was, however, not motivated by pure altruism: as noted by Kuznetsova (2020), the issue of the Donbas refugees was instrumentalized by the Kremlin to blame Kyiv for "genocide" of the Russian speaking population in Ukraine. She also pointed to the fact that Ukrainians who left for Russia to escape the conflict do not constitute a single group from the legal point of view: their statuses differ from refugee or temporary asylum to regular labour or irregular migrant. Russia is, however, notoriously restrictive with granting refugee status, while temporary asylum, which is not easy to obtain, limits freedom of movement for its holder. Therefore, "the most attractive and, in some cases, the only way to stay in Russia for some of the displaced, was as an economic or irregular migrant" (Kuznetsova 2020: 517). The way from economic migrant to Russian citizenship was, however, long and complicated. Essentially, the only way to apply for Russian citizenship immediately was the State Programme for Voluntary Emigration of Compatriots Living Abroad to Russia (cf. Kuznetsova 2020) which, however, limited the choice of the place of residence and did not provide additional social benefits.

Responding to the shortcomings of this policy, in May 2019 Vladimir Putin issued a decree simplifying the procedure for granting citizenship to Ukrainian citizens from the non-government-controlled areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Two months later, Putin's second decree extended the simplified rules for granting citizenship to the inhabitants of the government-controlled territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. According to the new procedure, Donbas residents are not requested to provide a proof of their Ukrainian citizenship being renounced. Subsequent amendments simplified the rules for granting citizenship to other categories of Ukrainian citizens (including e.g. former residents of Crimea who had left the peninsula before March 2014). Ukrainian and Belarusian citizens were officially recognized as "Russian speakers" and thus spared from the Russian language exam. According to the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, during 2019 more than 196,000 Donbas residents received Russian citizenship, 136,000 from the Donetsk and Luhansk "republics" and the rest from the Kyiv-controlled territories (TASS 2020).

These steps can be seen as motivated by pragmatic economic considerations. In the last decades, Russia has been facing demographic decline,

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while some regions suffer from depopulation and its social and economic consequences. Another concern of the Kremlin is that labour migration from the former Soviet republics of Central Asia, while filling certain deficits of non-qualified labour in big cities, causes ethnic tensions and nurtures grassroots nationalist sentiments. Against this backdrop, Ukrainians—culturally close to Russians and easily assimilated—have come to be regarded as a welcome resource for Russian economy. The growing demand for Ukrainian labour migrants in the countries of East Central Europe might have additionally pushed Moscow into this direction. But not less important, of course, is the political motivation: passportization has long been used by the Kremlin as an instrument of geopolitical influence-seeking. This has already been Russia's policy in other breakaway territories of former Soviet republics, such as Transnistria, Abkhazia and South Ossetia (cf. Grigas 2016). Granting Russian citizenship to Donbas residents, gives Moscow additional leverage in the ongoing conflict. No wonder that both the Ukrainian government and the EU denounce this policy.

Responding to Putin's decrees from May and July 2019, the newly elected Ukrainian president Zelenskyy ordered the government to simplify naturalisation procedures for foreigners and stateless people who have "defended Ukraine" and for Russians facing "political persecution" at home (The Ukrainian Weekly 2019). Indeed, Ukraine has been a destination for some Russian political emigrants—journalists, bloggers, academics—attracted by the relative freedom of media and political pluralism in Ukraine in comparison to the increasingly authoritarian Russia. While Ukraine cannot provide a level of security and well-being comparable to EU countries, opportunities for professional career are definitely better in Ukraine, due to the widespread Russian language and the flexible boundaries between the two East Slavic cultures. Apart from this, the attractiveness of the Ukrainian passport significantly increased in the last years due to the visa-free agreement between Ukraine and the EU, which came into force in 2017. For the Crimean residents, this is an additional incentive to keep Ukrainian citizenship despite their new Russian passports: according to the State Migration Service of Ukraine, since March 2014 Crimean residents received 166,000 Ukrainian passports for travelling abroad. "Passport tours" have become a flourishing business on the peninsula—private buses bring Crimeans across the de facto border to the nearest Ukrainian city Kherson, where they can apply for a Ukrainian biometric passport (Evchin et al. 2019).

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The migration crisis caused by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict should be discussed in a broader historical and geo-economic context. Since 2014, an increase of labour migration from Ukraine can be observed. One of the factors is the growing demand for labour force in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, as well as in other new EU member states which themselves suffer from an outflow of their labour force to the West. Many of these states liberalised migration legislation to attract labour force from Ukraine. The growing attractiveness of the labour markets of these countries led to a significant reorientation of labour migration flows from Ukraine. Russia, which for decades had been the most popular destination, lost its place as number one to Poland. In 2017, the main recipients of the Ukrainian labour force were Poland (38.9 %), Russia (26.3 %) and Italy (11.3 %) (Pyrozhkov et al. 2018: 83). According to Ukrainian statistical data, the decrease of labour migration to Russia started some years before the events of 2014 in Ukraine. Despite the advantage of the common cultural background and the family ties between the two countries, Russia as a labour market has never been as attractive as the labour markets of Ukraine's western neighbours. The new EU members, which now have liberalised their labour migration rules for Ukrainian citizens, offer better working conditions, higher wages and better social protection.[2] No wonder, that the young and more educated risk new opportunities while the older generation and low qualified prefer the old routes. The same tendency—reorientation from Russia to the EU—can be observed in the education migration. One of the reasons is that a European academic degree gives access to the Western labour market.

Conclusion

In his seminal study of the US-Mexican border, Oscar Martinez (1994) suggested a useful classification of borderlands according to the criteria of the intensity of cross-border contacts and the mode of relations between neighbouring countries. He differentiated between alienated, co-existent, interdependent and integrated borderlands. Applied to our case and slightly modified to include the dynamic aspect, Martinez's scheme allows us to

2 Of course, Ukrainian labourers working illegally do not necessarily benefit from these changes.

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see the Ukrainian-Russian borderlands evolving from integrated (during the Soviet era) to interdependent and in some regards co-existent (until 2014). The annexation of Crimea and the Russian intervention in the east as well as the resulting conflict of Russia with the West dramatically changed the geopolitical context of the Ukrainian-Russian border. The current situation thus bears some features of alienated borderlands, especially concerning the official contacts, business and education. The border has been militarised, the regime of crossing has been strengthened and cross-border cooperation projects were put on ice. Moreover, the Ukrainian-Russian borderlands experienced a proliferation of new "temporary dividing lines" and "de facto borders" thus having turned into a patchwork of unrecognized "quasi states", annexed territories under international sanctions and "grey zones" where normal life is suspended due to the ongoing military conflict. Despite all these developments, or as a result of them, mass migration and cross-border movement remain important features of the Ukrainian-Russian borderlands which in this regard cannot be considered alienated.

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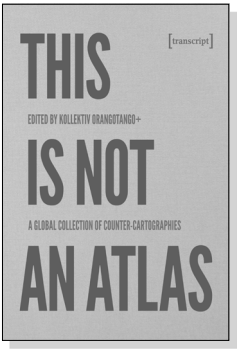

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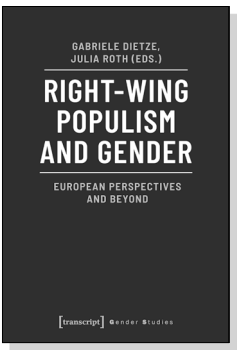

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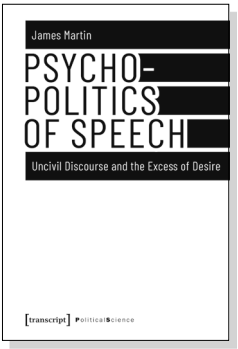

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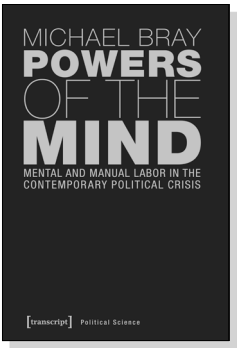

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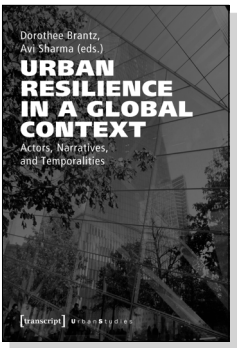

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