

# Introduction

## Recentring the South in Studies of Migration

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■ **ABSTRACT:** It has become increasingly mainstream to argue that redressing the Eurocentrism of migration studies requires a commitment to decentering global North knowledge. However, it is less clear whether this necessarily means “recentering the South.” Against this backdrop, this introduction starts by highlighting diverse ways that scholars, including the contributors to this special issue, have sought to redress Eurocentrism in migration studies: (1) examining the applicability of classical concepts and frameworks in the South; (2) filling blind spots by studying migration in the South and South-South migration; and (3) engaging critically with the geopolitics of knowledge production. The remainder of the introduction examines questions on decentering and recentering, different ways of conceptualizing the South, and—as a pressing concern with regard to knowledge production—the politics of citation. In so doing, the introduction critically delineates the contours of these debates, provides a frame for this volume, and sets out a number of key thematic and editorial priorities for *Migration and Society* moving forward.

■ **KEYWORDS:** coloniality of knowledge, decentering, decolonial thought, feminism, geopolitics of knowledge, recentering, relationality, South-South migration

## Introduction

In line with long-standing debates in diverse disciplines, over the past few years scholars have increasingly argued that redressing the Eurocentrism of migration studies requires a commitment to a “decentering of global North knowledge” of and about migration (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2018: 22; see Achiume 2019; Grosfoguel et al. 2015, 2016; Pailey 2019; Vanyoro 2019).<sup>1</sup> However, it is less clear whether the “epistemic decolonization of migration theory” (Grosfoguel et al. 2015: 646, drawing on Quijano 1991) necessarily means “recentering the South” in such studies. It is against this backdrop that this volume poses “Recentring the South in Studies of Migration” as a question, or rather a set of intersecting questions: What do decentering and recentering mean and what might these processes entail? What or who does the South refer to in contested academic, political, and policy domains? And whose knowledge is and should be involved in re-viewing the nature, and plural futures, of migration studies?

This introduction starts by delineating three ways that researchers—including the contributors of this volume—have aimed to redress Eurocentrism in migration studies: (1) examining the applicability of classical concepts and frameworks in the South; (2) filling blind spots by



studying migration in the South and South-South migration; and (3) engaging critically with the geopolitics of knowledge production. Building on this overview, the remainder of the introduction draws upon debates in migration studies and cognate fields to examine the preceding questions on decentering and recentering, different ways of conceptualizing the South, and—as a pressing concern with regard to knowledge production—the politics of citation. In so doing, this introduction highlights a number of issues that *Migration and Society* will be exploring further, both through subsequent volumes and through editorial priorities.

## **Redressing Eurocentrism in Migration Studies**

It has become increasingly mainstream to acknowledge that academic and policy studies of and responses to migration have been dominated by scholarship produced in the Northern Hemisphere (i.e., Bommers and Morawska 2005; Gardner and Osella 2003; Piguet et al. 2018; Pisarevskaya et al. 2019). Indeed, migration studies, as an Anglophone institutional field of study, was first born in and dominated by scholarship from North America and, since the 1970s and 1980s, Europe.<sup>2</sup> In turn, the alignment of migration studies with the political and policy priorities of North American and European states has been widely documented and critiqued (i.e., Geddes 2005; Scholten 2018). For instance, it has been widely argued that studies of migration have often closely paralleled the interests of states that are the main funding sources for many academics in North America and Europe, and that often both explicitly and implicitly direct research agendas (Bakewell 2008; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2018; Geddes 2005; Schinkel 2018). As a means of highlighting connections with state priorities, researchers have traced both the predominance of particular themes and research questions in this field (i.e., Pisarevskaya et al. 2019) and particular directionalities and forms of migration. With reference to the former, for example, scholars have noted a long-standing focus on “classical” questions in migration studies. These include tracing the challenges of the integration of migrants in Europe and North America and developing analyses that provide insight into how to better manage and govern migration in and to such countries (ibid.; Adamson and Tsourapas 2019). Concurrently, it has been recognized that the field has historically been dominated by studies of migration from the global South to North America and Western Europe (i.e., processes of South–North migration), in spite of the greater numerical significance of internal and cross-border migration within and across the countries of the global South (i.e., South–South migration).

Indeed, given the long histories of migration in and across different parts of what is now often referred to as the global South, Jonathan Crush and Abel Chikanda (2018: 394) remind us that “this blind spot is indicative of the hegemony of the Northern discourse on South–North migration, which has traditionally attracted widespread attention from scholars based in the North and has been assumed to have greater developmental value relative to other migration flows.” Following the diagnosis of this “blind spot” and the “hegemony” of particular discursive frames of reference, one of the questions that emerges is how to redress this Eurocentric bias. Diverse responses have arisen accordingly, including three key approaches reflected in this volume.

### ***Examining the Applicability of Classical Concepts and Frameworks in the South***

First, taking as their starting point the acknowledgment that many concepts in the field are far from universal, scholars have examined the applicability of a range of classical concepts and frameworks in countries that are not readily classified by scholars or politicians as “Western liberal democracies” (i.e., Adamson and Tsourapas 2019; Natter 2018).<sup>3</sup> In this vein, a series of

articles in this volume critically draw on research in countries of the global South to explore concepts, policies, and programs originally developed from the vantage point of European states and “international” (read: Northern-led) intergovernmental organizations.

For instance, the introduction and the subsequent five articles in this volume’s special themed section interrogate the concept of the transit state, a concept that, as guest editors Antje Missbach and Melissa Phillips note (this volume), was originally developed to describe the nature and roles of countries on the European borderlands, such as Turkey or Ukraine (Düvell and Vollmer 2009; İçduygu and Yüксеker 2012). In contrast, the special section explores the ways that state-level and local actors in six countries—Ecuador (Soledad Álvarez Velasco), Mexico (Wendy Vogt), Malaysia and Indonesia (Antje Missbach and Gerhard Hoffstaedter), Libya (Melissa Phillips), and Niger (Sébastien Moretti)—negotiate being interpellated and mobilized “as” transit states and as (presumably compliant) gatekeepers. It also, “more importantly,” examines how stakeholders within these “Southern positionalities” themselves perceive, conceptualize, and negotiate discourses of transit (Missbach and Phillips, this volume).

Concurrently, in their research article, Heather Wurtz and Olivia Wilkinson (this volume) explore how local faith actors in Mexico and Honduras conceptualize, interpret, and define two concepts—“innovation” and “self-sufficiency”—that have been heralded by policy makers and humanitarian practitioners from the global North. In so doing, they challenge the secular framework that “reflects a predominantly Western, neoliberal agenda,” providing important insights into how concepts and frameworks that are at the core of “international” humanitarian debates are conceived of, negotiated, and enacted in Southern contexts.

### ***Studying Migration in the South and South-South Migration***

A second approach that scholars, and indeed politicians, policy makers, and UN agencies, have pointed to in order to redress the above-mentioned “blind spot” is promoting, and funding, further studies of migration *in* the South (i.e., Nawyn 2016a, 2016b) and *of* South-South migration (see Crush and Chikanda 2018). In this light, a number of articles in this volume document and explore migration “in” and across countries of the global South. For instance, Sarah Turner, Thi-Thanh-Hien Pham, and Ngô Thủy Hạnh examine the complex histories and experiences of internal migration in relation to the territorialization of Vietnam’s upland frontier regions, with a particular focus on Lào Cai Province on the country’s border with China. In their article, Hanno Brankamp and Patricia Daley trace the ongoing legacies of colonial migration regimes between African societies, highlighting the ways that “African bodies as labor” have been racialized and subjected to different forms of discrimination and exclusion in postcolonial states like Kenya and Tanzania (this volume). In so doing, they stress that “considering long-term socio-historical trajectories is essential to understand contemporary hegemonic approaches to migration in Africa” (this volume). In turn, Neil Carrier and Gordon Mathews (this volume) explore connections between Eastleigh (Nairobi) and Xiaobei (Guangzhou)—two sites “that have become emblematic of much South-South migration and mobility”—arguing that South-South migration “offer opportunities for literal and social mobility—opportunities that the global North attempts to restrict for citizens of the South.”

Indeed, researching processes of South-South migration can be seen as redressing the above-mentioned historical imbalance, and as offering “an important corrective to Northern state and non-state discourses which depict the North as a ‘magnet’ for migrants from across the global South” (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2018: 19). At the same time, however, the extent to which policy makers and politicians in Europe and North America have expressed an interest in better understanding and promoting South-South migration (i.e., IOM 2013; Richter

2018) raises concerns that “Northern actors might precisely be instrumentalising and co-opting Southern people and dynamics (in this case, migrants and migration flows) to achieve the aims established and promoted by Northern states and institutions” (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2018: 19).

### ***The Geopolitics of Knowledge Production***

Such concerns resonate with a third approach reflected in this volume: engaging critically with the geopolitics of knowledge production in this field. On the one hand, as Juliano Fiori (interviewed by Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, this volume) and Nof Nasser-Eddin and Nour Abu-Assab (this volume) argue, researching migration in the South or about South-South migration per se can be seen as a continuation of normative and hegemonic research, policy, and political practices, rather than necessarily being part of a commitment to either “decentering” the North or “recentering” the South. On the other hand, Francesco Carella highlights “a recent trend . . . in both academia and practice whereby the ‘global South’ has been developing its own understanding (or rather, multiple understandings) and critical analysis of migration, rather than having South-South migration concepts and models imposed from the ‘global North’” (interviewed by Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, this volume). Indeed, as many contributors argue throughout this volume, there are multiple ways of knowing, including epistemological perspectives and methodological approaches that have been marginalized through the coloniality of knowledge (Quijano 1991).

In effect, while many migration scholars are committed to testing the applicability of classical concepts and frameworks and filling empirical gaps by focusing on the particularities of migration in the global South and South-South migration, a parallel constellation of debates has taken a different route to challenge the Eurocentric bias of migration studies. Among other things, such scholars aim to resist Eurocentrism by building on a range of long-standing theoretical and methodological interventions that can variously be posited as postcolonial, decolonial, and/or Southern in nature<sup>4</sup> (i.e., Anzaldúa 2002; Asad 1975; Connell 2007; Grosfoguel 2011; Minh-ha 1989; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013; Quijano 1991, 2007; Said 1978; Santos 2014; L. Smith 1999; Spivak 1988; Thiong’o 1986). While internally heterogenous, such approaches have “traced and advocated for diverse ways of knowing and being in a pluriversal world characterised (and constituted) by complex relationalities and unequal power relations, and equally diverse ways of resisting these inequalities” (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2018: 2). To illustrate, Anibal Quijano has centralized the coloniality of power and knowledge (1991, 2007), while Samir Amin (1972a, 1972b, 1988) and Chakrabarty (2000) have “provincialized” European and Eurocentric systems of knowledge that have been artificially constructed as “universal” by denying or marginalizing the existence of “non-European” or “non-Western” forms of knowledge. Building on such works, scholars such as Raewyn Connell and Boaventura de Sousa Santos have proposed the urgency of recentering “Southern theories” (Connell 2007) and “epistemologies of the South” (Santos 2014). A range of disciplinary, epistemological, and methodological traditions have thus guided the deconstruction of hegemonic conceptual models used in mainstream North American and European migration studies to examine, explain, and “diagnose” the challenges faced by migrants throughout their journeys. As explored further below, doing so, for instance, requires interrogating and contesting, rather than taking for granted or reproducing, the “coloniality of the ways that terms like ‘indigenous,’ ‘southern’ [and, I would add here, ‘the South’] . . . fix and contain those subjects and spatialities” (Jazeel 2019: 10). Beyond testing the applicability of classical concepts in countries of the South, it involves resisting what Connell refers to as “methodological projection,” through which “data from the periphery are framed by concepts, debates and research strategies from the metropole” (Connell 2008: 64, cited in Jazeel 2019: 11).

As exemplified in this volume, such approaches may lead scholars to engage in what Robtel N. Pailey denominates “subversive acts of scholarship” (2019: 8), insofar as they are ways of acting against the grain. As I discuss further in the following section, this can include considering what it means to engage critically with “local” or “Southern” perspectives not merely as data but as forms of knowledge, and to acknowledge artistic production *as* forms of knowledge, as reflected in the short stories by Simone Toji and Suranjana Choudhury, and the spatial-visual intervention by Rafael Guendelman Hales included in this volume’s “Creative Encounters” section, introduced by Yousif M. Qasmiyeh (this volume). It may involve “studying up” structures of inequality such as the humanitarian industry rather than “researching down” the lived experiences of refugees (see Reem Farah, this volume); challenging traditional modes of research or humanitarian programming through implementing critical, participatory approaches to working with people affected by displacement (see Marcia Vera Espinosa, this volume, and Riccardo Conti, Joana Dabaj, and Elisa Pascucci, this volume); or applying a “southern ethnography” lens to migration-related systems in the global North (see Camillo Boano and Giovanna Astolfo, drawing on AbdouMaliq Simone, in this volume).

Indeed, importantly, where Sin Yee Koh and Liliana Jubilut (both in this volume) centralize the roles of academics and universities from Southeast Asia and South America, respectively, in promoting nuanced studies of migration, decolonial and postcolonial scholars have also been attentive to the potential of provincializing European ways of being and knowing by shifting the geographical focus of the critical academic gaze—this includes the potential of seeing Europe through “Caribbean eyes” (Boatca 2018; see also Grosfoguel et al. 2015). As such, far from assuming that “recentering the South” must entail conducting more research in and about particular geographies associated with the global South, challenging Eurocentric approaches to migration studies can also be grounded on critical writing vis-à-vis migration to the North. As evidenced in Tayeb Saleh’s pivotal novel *Season of Migration to the North* (1969), there is of course a long history of critical reflections highlighting the very question of directionality as a decolonial stance, with more recent reflections building on such a tradition to argue that migration to the North is itself a form of “decolonial migration,” going as far as to view “migration as decolonization” (Achiume 2019: 1510, 1523).

Throughout, decolonial and postcolonial scholars have thus been critiquing the ways that particular directionalities and modalities of migration, and specific groups of migrants, have been constituted as “problems to be solved,” including through processes that are deeply inflected by gender, class, and race. In so doing, many of these scholars are part of a broader collective that argues that there is a need to challenge the very foundations and nature of knowledge production—to “decolonise migration research” (Vanyoro 2019)—and to acknowledge and resist the way that migration research is embedded within and reproduces neoliberal and neocolonial systems of exploitation.

In essence, what this brief summary of three key approaches to redressing Eurocentrism in migration studies highlights is that although these (and other) approaches often overlap in a given article or book, one can be a scholar who acknowledges the hegemony of Northern and Eurocentric migration studies—with its tendency to prioritize researching migration from the South to the North through concepts and frameworks that are often aligned to European and North American state interests—without necessarily being interested in decolonial thinking or challenging neocolonial knowledge production or migration control. Equally, while decolonial scholars may prioritize studying migration through Southern theories or epistemologies from the South, one can also be a postcolonial or decolonial scholar who (while critiquing these very constructs) conducts research in and in relation to the North rather than empirically exploring processes of migration taking place in and across the South.

Recognizing a multiplicity of ways of redressing Eurocentrism in migration studies in turn leads us, in the following section, to the three questions outlined in the opening of this introduction: (1) what decentering and recentering might entail; (2) the meanings of “the South”; and (3) the broader politics of knowledge production in this field. While the following reflections are far from exhaustive, they raise questions that *Migration and Society* is interested in exploring further, both in terms of topics and thematics, but also in terms of broader approaches to conducting research, writing, and publishing in this field.

### **Decentering the North qua Recentering the South?**

I start this section by reasserting that although a focus on studying migration in the South may be a means of “recentering the South” in empirical terms—by filling a gap *in* knowledge—this does not necessarily “decenter” or challenge the dominance of and inequalities perpetuated by the original system, nor does it contest what is constituted *as* knowledge itself.

Indeed, gap-filling studies are open to similar critiques as those developed in response to studies of women in development that merely adopted an “add women and stir” approach (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2014), thereby failing to challenge the systems that excluded women in the first place, and that sought to instrumentalize the “added” women to meet preexisting, externally established goals. In part, I introduce this reference to feminist critiques of the “add women and stir” method as a means of echoing Scarlett Hester and Catherine Squires’s call—in their reflections on “*recentering black feminism*”—that we must be “willing to search for knowledge and theory outside of our discipline” (Hester and Squires 2018: 344, emphasis added). Echoing these authors—who are writing from within the context of feminist critical race studies—highlights that debates on centering and recentering have been pivotal to diverse fields of study. Critical inquiry vis-à-vis those people, places, and processes that have historically been marginalized and erased extend from feminist theory (i.e., hooks 1984) to “recentering” or “adding and stirring” Africa into international relations (respectively, Iñiguez de Heredia and Wai 2018; K. Smith 2013). In the pages that follow, I draw on these cognate debates to reflect on the challenges and possibilities of engaging with the proposed processes of “decentering” and “recentering” in relation to migration studies.

#### ***The Politics of Recentering***

In their 2018 edited collection, Marta Iñiguez de Heredia and Zubairu Wai advocate “taking Africa out of a place of exception and marginality, and *placing it at the center* of international relations and world politics” (n.p., emphasis added). While many scholars and activists advocate such a process, others contest the notion of recentering for different reasons. On the one hand, for instance, Achille Mbembe draws on the work of Ngugi wa Thiong’o to argue that “in Ngugi’s terms, ‘Africanization’ is a *project of ‘re-centering.’* It is about rejecting the assumption that the modern West is the central root of Africa’s consciousness and cultural heritage . . . Decolonizing (a la Ngugi) is not about closing the door to European or other traditions. It is about defining clearly what the centre is. And for Ngugi, Africa has to be placed at the centre” (2016: 35, emphasis added). Far from proposing an isolationist *modus operandi* characterized by rejecting European traditions, reifying a static geography, or solely conducting research “in” Africa, Mbembe reminds us that for Thiong’o “Africa expands well beyond the geographical limits of the Continent. He wanted ‘to pursue the African connection to the four corners of the Earth’—the West Indies, to Afro-America” (Mbembe 2016: 35). In this sense, centering must

intrinsically be viewed as a particular relational project, extending beyond a specific spatial referent: “After we have examined ourselves, we radiate outwards and discover peoples and worlds around us. With Africa at the centre of things, not existing as an appendix or a satellite of other countries and literatures, things must be seen from the African perspective” (Mbembe 2016: 35).

On the other hand, however, Mbembe draws on the work of Frantz Fanon to stress that Africanization itself is not “decolonization”: placing “Africa” and “Africans” at the core can still, as Fanon critiqued, be characterized by xenophobia and the drive to expel “the foreigner,” which, as Mbembe reminds us, “was almost always a fellow African from another nation” (ibid.: 34; see Brankamp and Daley, this volume). In this sense, centering—whether “Africa,” “Africans,” or, in the context of this volume, “the South”—can still be characterized by inequalities, and may, in fact, risk perpetuating systems of exclusion.

Indeed, in contrast to calling for recentering “as” decolonization of knowledge, Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni powerfully rejects calls to “bring Africa *back in*” (2018a: 283, emphasis added; also see 2018b). First, he argues that there is a need to shift from Vumbi Yoka Mudimbe’s (1994) “idea of Africa” to the “African idea” proposed by Ngugi wa Thiong’o (2009: 74), and already hinted at in the quotes above. We could posit that this parallels arguments that while “the idea of the South” is a construct that artificially fixes and contains (to draw on Jazeel’s words, quoted above), it may nonetheless be the case that “Southern ideas,” theories, and epistemologies enable us to productively engage with the complexity of intersecting and mutually constitutive processes.

Second, Ndlovu-Gatsheni urges for a “shift from the simplistic discourses of negativity, alterity, peripherality, and marginality to the complex alternative decolonial ones of Africa that was both ‘*inside*’ and ‘*outside*’ *simultaneously* and that continued to be a site of ‘critical resistance’ thought and self-assertion” (2018a: 284, emphasis added). Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues that “both the ‘inside-ness’ and ‘outside-ness’ of Africa are determined by coloniality giving it the character of an insider who is pushed outside and an outsider who is kept inside forcibly” (ibid.). In effect, beyond the diagnosis that “Africa” has been absent(ed) or marginal(ized), Ndlovu-Gatsheni “challenges the very premise of *the politics of bringing Africa back-in* as misguided and missing the complexity of Africa’s position within the modern world system, world capitalist economy, and global imperial/colonial orders” (ibid., emphasis added).

Twenty years before Ndlovu-Gatsheni powerfully argued in this chapter that “Africa cannot be brought ‘back in’ to the bowels of Euro-North American-centric beast. It is already inside as a *swallowed* victim” (ibid., emphasis added),<sup>5</sup> the Chicana feminist theorist Gloria Anzaldúa spoke of, and against, “this kind of United Statesian-culture-*swallowing-up-the-rest-of-the-world*” (quoted in Lunsford 1998: 16, emphasis added).

Anzaldúa also simultaneously confronted the inside-outside binary through her conceptualization of *nosotras* (feminine “we” in Spanish):

It used to be that there was a “them” and an “us.” We were over here, we were the “other” with other lives, and the “nos” was the subject, the White man. And there was a very clear distinction. But as the decades have gone by, we, the colonized, the Chicano, the Blacks, the Natives in this country, have been reared in this frame of reference, in this field. So all of our education, all of our ideas come from this frame of reference. We are complicitous for being in such close proximity and in such intimacy with the other. Now I think that “us” and “them” are interchangeable. Now there is no such thing as an “other.” *The other is in you, the other is in me.* This White culture has been internalized in my head. *I have a White man in here, I have a White woman in here. And they have me in their heads, even if it is just a guilty little nudge sometime . . .* (Anzaldúa, quoted in Lunsford 1998: 8, emphasis added)

By rejecting the false binary between the insider *nos* (the white “us,” qua the “I,” the subject) and the outsider *otras* (the colonized “them,” the Other, the inferior object), Anzaldúa proposed the concept of (*nos+otras* =) *nosotras* (“we”). In this conceptualization, each is constitutive of the other, albeit on terms and through processes that are not only unequal but embedded in different forms of colonial violence—or, as I discuss below, also with reference to her work (Anzaldúa 2002: 25), “colonial wounds.”

Such a theoretical move posits that it is not only the case that there are multiple “we’s,” but also that the “we” itself is internally plural and is created relationally within, through, and against structures of inequality (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019a). While with somewhat different roots, this echoes analyses that argue that there are multiple Souths in the world, including “Souths” (and Southern voices) within powerful metropolises, as well as multiple Souths within multiple peripheries (Connell 2007; Sheppard and Nagar 2004).<sup>6</sup> It resonates with assertions, such as those made by Urvashi Aneja, that historical and contemporary processes mean that “the South and the North alike ‘can thus be said to exist and evolve in a mutually constitutive relationship,’ rather than in isolation from one another” (Aneja, quoted in Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2018: 3). In turn, this parallels Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Kenneth Tafira’s assertion that “the global South was not only invented from outside by European imperial forces but it also invented itself through resistance and solidarity-building” (2018: 131).

If we extend the challenges presented by Anzaldúa, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, and many others to the study of migration, this leads us simultaneously to critique the processes through which certain people, spaces, and structures constitute themselves as the center/inside, and the processes that can reinscribe the power of that “center” by aiming to “add and stir” that which has been (kept) outside. It is also, perhaps, to challenge the very binaries that underpin the project of decentering/recentering, since, in this framework, the North-South/core-periphery/center-margin are always already mutually constitutive and mutually implicated in one another’s being in (or exclusion from) the world.

Diagnosing bias and exclusionary processes can thus run the risk of recentering that which scholars ostensibly aim to challenge (see Horner 2019; Madlingozi 2018). In this regard, rather than “recentering,” perhaps what is required is a process of “decentering” the hegemonic.

In the following section, I briefly turn to the implications of a number of the arguments outlined above—of simultaneity, relationality, and mutual constitutiveness, and the politics of decentering rather than recentering—for conceptualizations of “the South.”

### The “South” or “Southern Theories”?

If recentering is a contested proposition, so too is “the South.” On the one hand, when used in the context of examining “migration in the global South” or “South-South migration,” it is often taken for granted that a geographical complex known as “the South” objectively exists, typically encompassing and equated with countries in or the entire regions of “Asia,” “Africa,” “Latin America,” “the Middle East,” and “the Pacific.” In other contexts, authors such as Peace Medie and Alice Kang define “countries of the global South” as “countries that have been marginalised in the international political and economic system” (2018: 37–38). In this sense, “the South” is often adopted as an equivalent or substitution for the formerly popular and now widely disavowed terms of “the Third World” and “the developing world.”<sup>7</sup>

While such classifications may be externally applied and/or imposed, it is equally the case that states have often *defined themselves* with reference to the global “South.” For instance, over 130 states *define themselves* as belonging to the Group of 77—a quintessential platform for “South-



South” cooperation—in spite of the diversity of their ideological and geopolitical positions in the contemporary world order, their vastly divergent gross domestic product (GDP) and per capita income, and their rankings in the Human Development Index.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, a number of official, institutional taxonomies exist, including those that classify (and in turn interpellate) different political entities as being from and of “the South” or “the North” (see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015). Such emic and etic classifications have variously been developed on the basis of particular readings of a state’s geographical location, of its relative position as a (formerly) colonized territory or colonizing power, and/or of a state’s current economic capacity on national and global scales (ibid.).

On the other hand, as already suggested above, the South and both the North-South and West-East binaries are just some of many constructs that have been interrogated for over four decades, including by scholars like Edward Said (1978), Chandra Mohanty (1988), Arturo Escobar (1995), Uma Kothari (2005), Raewyn Connell (2007), and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Kenneth Tafira (2018). Among other things, these scholars have argued that, far from being “either static or purely defined through reference to physical territories and demarcations” (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley 2018: 3), geographical imaginaries of the South (and the Orient) have been invented, after Edward Said (1978), through the active deployment of “imperial reason and scientific racism” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Tafira 2018: 127). This “imperial reason and scientific racism” has constituted certain places, peoples, ways of knowing, and ways of being as inferior to or void of hegemonic (read Western/Northern) systems of meaning.

Indeed, if such scholars have demonstrated the urgency of interrogating “the South” as a means of defining and containing geographical locations, it has nonetheless been widely used by theorists engaged in postcolonial and decolonial debates and politics in ways that are pertinent for the topic of this volume. For instance, Sujata Patel (2018: 32) follows both Connell (2007) and Santos (2014) in conceptualizing “the South” as “a metaphor” that “represents the embeddedness of knowledge in relations of power.” Stressing its constitutive *relationality*, it is defined by Siba Grovogui as “an idea and a set of practices, attitudes, and relations” that are mobilized as “a *disavowal* of institutional and cultural practices associated with colonialism and imperialism” (2011: 177, emphasis added). Furthermore, as noted in the preceding section, Connell (2007) and Santos (2014) shift from using “the South” (as a noun) and instead respectively develop their focus on *Southern* theories (the adjectival) and epistemologies *of the South* (a fixed referent in the genitive construction).

From this standpoint, redressing Eurocentrism is not merely a matter of recentering “the South” by conducting research in and about countries in “the South” (as a fixed geographical descriptor), but instead requires a more radical and deeper shift. Returning to the question of recentering and decentering, Walter Mignolo (2009: 3) proposes that this shift can only be achieved through “de-Westernisation,” which, in his words, “means, within a capitalist economy, that the rules of the games and the shots are no longer called by Western players and institutions.” It is, in his view, only through de-Westernization that we can go beyond the insufficient step of aiming “to change the *content* of the conversation,” and instead take up the essential challenge of “chang[ing] the *terms* of the conversation” (ibid.: 4, emphasis added).

However, Mbembe disagrees with the diagnosis of “de-Westernization” as the solution. While he agrees that “decolonization is not about design tinkering with the margins,” and, drawing on Fanon, holds that Europe must not be taken as a model or paradigm to be imitated or mimicked, he powerfully argues that “decolonizing knowledge is . . . not simply about de-Westernization” (2015: 24). As noted above with reference to simultaneity, relationality, and mutual constitutiveness, de-Westernization is insufficient precisely because “the Western archive is singularly complex,” and because this archive “contains within itself the resources of its own refutation” (ibid.).

Indeed, the Western archive is “neither monolithic, nor the exclusive property of the West,” and Mbembe maintains that “Africa and its diaspora decisively contributed to its making and should legitimately make foundational claims on it” (ibid.).

Pulling together the diverse strands of the introduction thus far suggests that changing the *terms* of the conversation, and changing the very “rules of the game” in this sense, arguably therefore requires transcending the model of “recentering” the South or of “decentering” the North/West. Instead, as suggested above, and as explored in more detail in the next section, it requires attention to the relational and situated nature of knowledge production (as has long been argued by feminist and decolonial thinkers alike<sup>9</sup>) and the broader geopolitics of knowledge.

### **The Politics of Citation: Beyond Diversity and Inclusion**

Building on the above, in this final section I focus on one aspect of the politics of knowledge production, and publication, that is crucial to *Migration and Society*, as a journal that has, since its inception, been committed to inclusive citation and scholarly practice. As we note in our guidance to authors: “We encourage our contributors to ensure they reference and engage with the work of female, black, and minority ethnic writers, and work by other under-represented groups” (*Migration and Society* n.d.). However, Hester and Squires (2018: 344) remind us that although “recentering and historicizing race scholarship around black feminism is one approach to the issue of citational politics,” inclusive citation is insufficient when it becomes little more than an exercise in “diversity management.” Inter alia, Hester and Squires argue that, just as insisting that scholars cite white, European, or North American “experts” in the field is part of an exclusionary and hegemonic process, so too “the insistence that scholars cite particular, well-known, ‘authorized’ theorists of color, serves to police the boundaries: which fields and which scholars are permitted, and which scholars are unrecognized because their ideas haven’t made their way into the authorized shortlist?” (ibid.: 345). Going beyond “inclusion” as “diversity” thus requires careful consideration of how to develop meaningful engagement with and acknowledgment of the intellectual work of people who have often either been excluded from the “authorized shortlist,” or whose work has been ignored, or merely “footnoted,” in academic publications.<sup>10</sup> It also involves a recognition, in the words of Gloria Anzaldúa, that “an outsider is not just somebody of a different skin; it could be somebody who’s White, who’s usually an insider but who crosses back and forth between outsider and insider” (Anzaldúa, quoted in Lunsford 2004: 62). In all, it requires a reconsideration of whose knowledge and what types of knowledge are viewed as knowledge to be engaged with, or as material to be “quoted” to inspire academic analysis, as I now discuss.

### ***The Politics of “Quoted” Knowledge: Rethinking the Wound***

There is a long history of implicitly and explicitly dismissing the intellectual and conceptual work of people positioned outside of the Northern academy. This history has been characterized by “exploiting” and “extorting,” to use Paulin Hountondji’s terms (1992: 242), “their” words to develop concepts and theories rather than acknowledging “their” words *as* concepts, theories, and knowledge. Indeed, as Mbembe argues (2016: 36), critiques of the “dominant Eurocentric academic model” include “the fight against what Latin Americans in particular call ‘epistemic coloniality,’ that is, the endless production of theories that are based on European traditions; are produced nearly always by Europeans or Euro-American men who are the only ones accepted as capable of reaching universality; a particular anthropological knowledge, which is a process

of knowing about Others—but a process that never fully acknowledges these Others as thinking and knowledge-producing subjects.” To illustrate such a process, I will take an example from one of the leading figures of decolonial studies who I have already cited at length above: Gloria Anzaldúa. By offering this example it is not my intention to question the integrity of the researchers under question; instead, I aim to trace the ways in which a thought, or that which marks the inception of a thought, has traveled, not in the sense of traveling theory (Said 1983: 226–247), but traveling *as* theory. I do so as an invitation to think about the process through which theory comes to be recognized as theory, and to ask who is acknowledged as playing a significant role in the inception of theory, and who is relegated to the margins.

In her groundbreaking text *Borderlands/La Frontera*, originally published in 1987, Gloria Anzaldúa writes: “The US-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds” (2002: 25). The border is *una herida abierta* (an open wound), a wound that continues to bleed due to the ongoing violence of coloniality, a colonial violence that is gendered, racialized, racist, and patriarchal in nature. And yet this wound has itself become implicated in the ongoing violence of gendered, racialized, and disciplinary hierarchies of knowledge, including when Anzaldúa has been marginalized, uncited, or merely “footnoted” in relation to what has come to be “known” as one of decolonial theory’s key and foundational concepts: the “colonial wound.”

Through a range of problematic citation processes forming the foundation of this example, Anzaldúa has at best been presented as inspiring the foundation for the conceptualization and theorization of the “colonial wound,” and at worst entirely absented from publications applying this concept. These processes range from scholars introducing “what can be called *following and reformulating a bit* G. Anzaldúa, ‘the colonial wound’” (Tlostanova 2008: 1, emphasis added), to Anzaldúa’s words being demoted, in a footnote, to the status of a “metaphor”: “Chicana intellectual and activist, Gloria Anzaldúa, described the borders between America and Mexico as ‘una herida abierta.’ *We see in this metaphor*, an expression of the global ‘colonial wound’” (Tlostanova and Mignolo 2009: 143, emphasis added). From a core concept in her own text, Anzaldúa’s words have traveled to other spaces: as noted above, with her words depicted as *preceding* theory and being relegated to a footnote; subsequently entirely absented (Mignolo 2009); and ultimately referred to in a footnote added a full ten lines after the first use of “colonial wound” in a 2011 article, with the displaced footnote clarifying the journey that the concept has taken: “The *concept* of colonial wound *comes from* Gloria Anzaldúa, in one of her much celebrated statements: ‘The US-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds’” (Mignolo 2011: 64n9, emphasis added).

Starting and ending the above brief reflection with Anzaldúa’s line is a way to recenter her and her work as the origin of this “decolonial” concept, and simultaneously to argue for a careful reflection on the politics of citation and theorization. To do so is not to speak on Anzaldúa’s behalf, since she herself has reflected on these processes of appropriation in detail: “When it [*Borderlands*] was appropriated, it was taken over and used in a token way by white theorists who would . . . mention my name . . . but as an aside. They never integrated our theories into their writing. Instead, they were using us to say, ‘Here I am a progressive, liberal, white theorist. I know women of colour. See? I’m mentioning these folks’” (Anzaldúa 1991, published in Keating 2009: 192). Indeed, rather than acknowledging Anzaldúa as an intellectual in her own right and with her own intellectual foundations, she writes that at times white theorists “would look at some of the conclusions and concepts and theories in *Borderlands* and write about them, saying that my theories were derived from their work. They had discovered these theories. They insisted that I got these theories from Foucault, Lacan, Derrida or the French feminists. But I was not familiar with these theorists’ work when I wrote *Borderlands*. I hadn’t read them. So

what they were saying was, ‘She got it from these white folks and didn’t even cite them’” (ibid.). Far from taking it for granted that only white theorists have “produced” and subsequently “own” key concepts and theoretical approaches that must be cited appropriately, it is important to disrupt citational practices that have long been implicated in bordering knowledge and keeping certain people in the center of such systems while excluding others. In line with this reflection, attention must be paid not only to the questions of who produces knowledge, when, why, and how (all of which are key for feminist and decolonial theorists alike) but also of what knowledge is acknowledged and cited as knowledge, and on whose terms.

In this regard, a further significant challenge emerges when going beyond identifying Eurocentric biases and aiming to redress gaps in knowledge. This is the importance of not only recognizing but indeed centralizing the knowledge and the conceptualizations of people who have migrated, been displaced, and/or who are responding to migration in different ways (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019a, 2019b).

If our starting point is (which I believe it should be) the acknowledgment that people have heterogeneous experiences of migration and are active agents whose capacity to act is restricted by diverse systems of inequality and violence, it subsequently becomes essential to go beyond collecting, or documenting, such experiences, voices, and acts (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019a, 2019b; Qasmiyeh 2014; Nasser-Eddin and Abu-Assab, this volume). From this starting point, it becomes necessary to challenge rather than reproduce the assumption that migrants and refugees merely experience, are affected by, and/or respond to migratory processes, and that it is only through critical scholarly attention that these experiences can be analyzed, for “us” to make sense of “their” lives and worlds. In the powerful words of *Migration and Society’s* “Creative Encounters” editor, Yousif M. Qasmiyeh, it is essential to reject the violence of projects that take ownership of migrants’ and refugees’ voices—“After spending hours with us, in the same room, she left with a jar of homemade pickles and three full cassettes of our voices” (Qasmiyeh 2014: 68)—even, or especially, when these projects are undertaken ostensibly to subsequently “give voice” to people from the South. It is in this context that Qasmiyeh posits the aim of the “Creative Encounters” section of the journal as follows: “to embroider the voice with its own needle: an act proposed to problematise the notion of the voice; something that cannot be given (to anyone) since it must firmly belong to everyone from the beginning” (2019: n.p.; see also Qasmiyeh, this volume). Such a commitment means thinking carefully about how and why we “quote” migrants, refugees, and those responding to migration, and to recognize that analysis and theorization are not the preserve of academics and practitioners.

People who are involved in diverse migratory processes conceptualize their own situations, positions, and responses as everyday theorists rather than as providers of “data” to be analyzed to provide the materials for conceptual and theoretical scholarship (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2015, 2016b). This means that it is urgent for us to focus intently on identifying and challenging the diverse structural barriers—including academic, political, economic, cultural, and social ones—that prevent certain people’s understandings and worldviews from being perceived as knowledge. Anzaldúa may have written that “all . . . is fiction,” but this is only because, firstly, “to me, everything is real” (in Keating 2009: 108) and, secondly, words are more than “metaphors” to be “reformulated a bit” (op cit.) to be owned and subsequently mobilized by theorists. Fiction, poetry, art is knowledge, to be read and engaged with in its own right as knowledge, not “converted” into “knowledge” through the analyses of expert critics (Garb 2019; and as argued by Walter Benjamin,<sup>11</sup> see Selz 1991: 366). I use this as an analogy for the modes of research that have often underpinned our work as scholars in the field of migration, and a reminder of the importance of the “Creative Encounters” section of the *Migration and Society* journal, not as “seasoning” for an otherwise “social science” publication (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2019a: 44–45), but

to recognize these encounters as forms of knowledge that sit beside (following Jarratt 1998) the pieces categorized as research articles or “People and Places.”

Indeed (and I am fully aware of the irony of including such a statement within only a few lines of having traced Anzaldúa’s erasure or footnoting), Mignolo draws attention to the need to “shift the attention from the enunciated to the enunciation” (Mignolo 2009: 2). Equally, Gayatri Spivak famously interrogates “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (1988) in ways that focus both on the subaltern speaker (the enunciator) and the structurally unequal processes of enunciation, and Homi Bhabha conceptualizes the “Third Space” as a “contradictory and ambivalent space of enunciation” by arguing, in terms that might be read as resonating in some ways with Anzaldúa’s conceptualization of *nosotras*, that “it is in this space that we will find those words with which we can speak of Ourselves and Others. And by exploring this hybridity, this ‘Third Space,’ we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves” (2006: 156–157).

As such, in addition to considering which topics, geographies, and directionalities of migration are explored, and which scholars or enunciators are being cited (i.e., women of color, Southern scholars), it is essential to remain critically attentive to the conditions under which processes of enunciation take place and are engaged with. In particular, it is a focus on the unequal process of listening and recognizing speech as more than words that emerges as being pivotal here, as bell hooks (1989: 5–6) argued over three decades ago: “Certainly, for black women, our struggle has not been to emerge from silence into speech but to change the nature and direction of our speech, to make a speech that compels listeners, one that is heard . . . the voices of black women . . . could be tuned out, could become a kind of background music, audible but not acknowledged as significant speech.” This thus involves being attentive to who is positioned as being capable of producing “significant speech,” including across intersecting vectors of gender, race, sexuality, migration status, and, as discussed above, also what kinds of knowledge are viewed as significant in their own right. These are some of the questions that *Migration and Society* will be bringing to the fore, as key thematic and editorial priorities, over the years to come.

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## ■ NOTES

1. This introduction, and this volume more broadly, are informed by my ongoing project “Southern Responses to Displacement from Syria” ([www.southernresponses.org](http://www.southernresponses.org)), which has received funding from the European Research Council under European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme (Grant Agreement No. 715582). The project combines attention to a particular *directionality* of both forced migration—from Syria to the neighboring states of Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey—and of *responses* to this displacement—by organizations, states, groups, and individuals from “the South”—while simultaneously critically examining the diverse ways that “the South” is understood, mobilized, and indeed resisted by differently positioned people, and tracing the power relations underpinning and emerging through and from these processes of migration, response, and conceptualization/interpellation.

2. On the dominance of North American scholarship in migration studies' first decades as a field of study, and the more recent (post-1970s) "Europeanization" of migration research, see Bommers and Morawska (2005) and Pigué et al. (2018).
3. On "African rearticulations of Western concepts" in the context of international relations, see K. Smith (2013).
4. On the particularities of and differences between decolonial, postcolonial, and Southern theories, see Dastile and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) and Patel (2018).
5. In turn, one of José Martí's most famous phrases, as an early critic of American imperialism (b. Havana, 1853), is "Viví en el monstruo y le conozco las entrañas" (I lived in the monster, and I know its entrails). With many thanks to Mette L. Berg for drawing my attention to this echo.
6. As noted by Horner (2019), it is not only critical scholars who acknowledge the existence of multiple Souths, including Souths in the North, and vice versa (Sheppard and Nagar 2014), but also representatives of quintessentially neoliberal institutions such as the World Bank. Among the examples shared by Horner to demonstrate the "blurring boundary" of traditional neoliberal "maps of development" (Sidaway 2012) are the then World Bank President Robert Zoellick arguing in 2010 "that the term Third World was no longer relevant in the context of a more multipolar world economy" (Horner 2019: 8), and the official 2016 announcement that the World Bank would be removing "the classification of 'developed' and 'developing' countries in the World Development Indicators" (Horner 2019: 8).
7. While "the South" is used in different ways throughout this volume, it is notable that contributors such as Francesco Carella highlight that the term "Third World" is no longer an "acceptable" frame of reference in the field of international migration policy, while policy makers are increasingly "doing" South-South in the field of migration (interviewed by Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, this issue). Indeed, the unacceptability of the term is widely acknowledged, not only by the World Bank (see Horner 2019: 8), but also by proponents of the intellectual tradition of Third World Approaches to International Law (known by its acronym TWAIL; see Achiume 2019). TWAIL advocates nonetheless continue to argue that the usage of the term "Third World" is expedient precisely because "it provides the conceptual framing for counter-hegemonic discourse that unveils the close relationship between capitalism, imperialism and international law, and explains why international law has always disadvantaged Third World peoples" (Peel and Lin 2019).
8. For more detailed discussions and applications of the notion of "the South," and of diverse modes of definition and typologies vis-à-vis the "global South," see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2015) and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley (2018).
9. On this commonality, see also Nasser-Eddin and Abu Assab (this volume).
10. On footnoting Islam in historic and contemporary studies of migration to Cuba, see Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2016a). On the forgotten legacy of the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, see Berg (2010), Coronil (1995) and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh (2016a).
11. With many thanks to Yousif M. Qasmiyeh for drawing my attention to this reference.

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