

This is a pre-edited version of an article which appeared in *Postcolonial Studies*. You will find the final of the article here:  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13688790.2013.850046#.VLkwKHt4cWI>

## Studying Embodied Encounters: Autonomy of Migration beyond its Romanticisation

**Stephan Scheel**

The Open University, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom

### **Abstract:**

This article forms part of the attempt to develop the concept of autonomy of migration as an approach that is no longer prone to critique of implicating a romanticisation of migration. Drawing on the example of biometric rebordering, it shows in the first part, that it becomes pertinent to address the two allegations that drive this major critique, as their warranty increases due to the technologisation of border controls. It then introduces a reading of autonomy, which emphasises that moments of uncontrollability and excess of migratory practices cannot be thought in isolation of the conditions, in which they emerge. The second part introduces the notion of the embodied encounter as a transmission channel that mediates between the investigation of the situated practices of individual migrants and the assertion of an abstract autonomy of migration, thereby efficiently dissolving the two criticisms that have been raised against the concept of autonomy of migration. What the adoption of this analytical focus affords to acknowledge is, however, that neither migration, nor borders exist as such, but are brought into being in the innumerable encounters between people on the move and the actors, means and methods of mobility control.

### **Keywords**

Autonomy of migration, borders, militant research, situated knowledge, performativity

This article forms part of the attempt to develop the concept of autonomy of migration (CAM) as an approach, which is no longer prone to the critique of implicating a romanticisation of migration. As its name suggests, the CAM asserts moments of autonomy of migratory practices in regards to any attempt to control or regulate them.<sup>1</sup> This claim has stirred ongoing debates within the antiracist movement. On the one hand, the CAM has been promoted as a valuable alternative to the misleading image of the *fortress* that has dominated antiracist campaigns since the 1990s. Instead of representing borders as impenetrable walls, the CAM emphasises migrants' capacity to render borders porous as well as the related productivity of border controls that are not geared towards the exclusion, but the differential inclusion of migrants.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, critics accuse the CAM, first, of not sufficiently considering the varying conditions, under which migration occurs, and second, of downplaying the repressive

effects of border controls. In conjunction, these two allegations fuel the major critique of the CAM implicating a romanticisation of migration.<sup>3</sup>

In the first part of this article I demonstrate that it becomes pertinent to address these two criticisms as their warranty increases in the context of the technologisation of border controls in general and their biometrification in particular. Besides implicating a further diversification of how the border is experienced, biometric rebordering significantly alters the power relations between migrants and border control authorities. I illustrate my arguments through the Visa Information System (VIS), one of the largest biometric databases in the world. Ultimately, the technologisation of border controls stirs a question: what does the assertion of the *autonomy* of migration refer to in the face of border regimes that try to render migrants' bodies as a means of mobility control? I argue that autonomy does not refer to a quality inherent to migratory practices, but to the institution of a relation of irreconcilable conflict between migration and the attempts to control and regulate it by migrants' practices of appropriation of mobility and other resources.

In the second part, I introduce the notion of embodied encounters as a way to unearth this relation of conflict, which mostly plays itself out in the realm of the hidden. The study of embodied encounters provides a transmission channel between the practices of particular migrants and the assertion of an abstract autonomy of migration, thereby efficiently dissolving the two criticisms that have been raised against the CAM. What the adoption of this analytical focus affords to acknowledge is, however, that neither migration, nor borders exist as such, but are brought into being in the innumerable encounters between people on the move and the actors, means and methods of mobility control.

#### *Autonomy of migration within biometric border regimes?*

Following critics, the CAM's core thesis subsumes the experiences of millions of migrating people either under the totalising and therefore empty subject position of 'the migrants' or under the subjectless abstraction of 'migration'.<sup>4</sup> The lived experiences of migrants are quite diverse due to their unequal access to economic, social and cultural resources *and* their differential treatment by border regimes in terms of class, 'race', gender. What is needed in light of this critique is then an acknowledgement of the crucial insight of feminist migration research that mobility is always embodied and relational.<sup>5</sup>

It is vital to address this criticism, because the differential treatment of migrants is intensified *and* concealed through the biometrification of border controls. It is intensified, because biometrics implicate a shift from border control to body control, which enables to

replace systematic checks for the targeted control of those classified as 'risky'. How the biometric border is experienced by whom, is however determined by factors of class, 'race' and gender. But these discriminations are concealed by biometric technologies, which supposedly do not suffer from the prejudices shared by human beings, as they verify a person's claimed identity on the basis of features of its biological body independently of any factors, which might be regarded as discriminatory.<sup>6</sup> Yet, Irma van der Ploeg has succinctly shown that biometrics transform the biological body into a machine readable 'text', whose meaning is contingent upon 'the context', in which it is produced, and the relations, which are established with other 'texts'.<sup>7</sup> It is through both the social context, in which biometrics are deployed, and the comparisons, for which the machine readable texts they produce are used, that all forms of discrimination in terms of class, 'race' and gender come into play. Consequently, the CAM needs to better account for the diversity of migrants' subject positions to be able to critique how '[technologically] consolidated identities for some produce marginalised locations for others' within material-semiotic contexts, in which sexist and racist practices and discourses are virulent.<sup>8</sup> What becomes pertinent in the face of biometric rebordering is then to develop a reading of autonomy, which allows for a *situated* analysis of migrants' *embodied* and therefore *diverse* encounters with and experiences of today's biometric borders.

According to the second allegation, the CAM's proponents glorify migrants as heroes of clandestine border crossing without sufficiently acknowledging the efficiency of border controls.<sup>9</sup> Again, it is crucial to address this criticism, because the restrictive effects of border controls intensify through their technologisation.

One of the purposes of the VIS is, for instance, to facilitate the re-identification' of *visa-overstayers*. In the case of re-identification a newly generated fingerprint template is compared to the up to 70 million fingerprint templates stored in the VIS.<sup>10</sup> The apprehended person is then reidentified on the basis of the alphanumerical data, which is linked to the fingerprint template that has been generated, when the person initially applied for a visa. Consequently, concealing one's identity in order to forestall a deportation is no longer just a matter of destroying one's passport. Rather, *visa-overstayers* are now haunted by their data doubles: If their fingerprints are stored in the VIS, it just takes authorities a few hours to establish their identity and country of origin. Hence, the latter no longer rely on migrants' cooperation, because the data doubles that are fixed to their bodies by means of biometrics replace their narratives as a source of truth.<sup>11</sup> What this example highlights is that biometric rebordering alters the power relations between migrants and border control authorities to such

an extent that the general assertion of moments of autonomy of migration within any border regime regardless of its legal, material and technological composition becomes, in fact, a highly problematic claim. Ultimately, biometric rebordering stipulates a question: What does the notion of autonomy refer to in the context of biometric border regimes, which try to turn migrants' bodies into a means of mobility control?

The example of biometric rebordering demonstrates that border regimes have become so pervasive and intrusive that a rethinking of autonomy has to go beyond its Greek etymology of *self-legislation* as well as beyond its popular reading as *self-determination*. In order to emphasise that moments of autonomy of migration can not be thought in isolation of the governmental regimes, in which they emerge, I follow Ranabir Samaddar's proposal to read autonomy as *governmentality's other*.<sup>12</sup> While the notion of governmentality stresses that government primarily operates through the conduct of people, it are the moments, which exceed and escape these attempts, that I seek to capture with the notion of autonomy. I therefore define autonomy as *the institution of a relation of irreconcilable conflict between migration and the attempts to control and regulate it by migrants' practices of appropriation of mobility and other resources*.<sup>13</sup> This reading of autonomy underscores that moments of excess, uncontrollability and self-determination of migratory practices only manifest within a relation of conflict with techniques of government. It thereby efficiently avoids a misreading of autonomy as pure self-determination or self-legislation free of any governmental effects.

Migrants' practices of appropriation invest border, migration and citizenship regimes with a relation conflict by transgressing the limits the latter impose on their access to mobility and other resources. But these transgressions do not occur openly, but mostly in the realm of the hidden, because it is a precondition for success of practices of appropriation to remain undetected.<sup>14</sup> The underlying reason is that practices of appropriation operate, like the tactics described by Michel de Certeau, in an environment they do not own. In consulates people willing to move have to behave within the narrow parameters set by the numerous regulations defining the Schengen visa regime: they have to provide all the requested documents and answer all questions by consular staffs no matter how indiscrete these questions are and, since the start of operation of the VIS, have their fingerprints taken. A refusal to comply with any of these regulations results in the automatic refusal of a visa. Hence, people willing to move have to appropriate mobility in securitising sites, in which open opposition to the manifold regulations and obligations seeking to steer their behaviour is no option.<sup>15</sup> Rather than openly contesting these requirements or refusing their fulfilment, the successful appropriation of mobility hinges on a convincing performance of compliance with these regulations. Practices

of appropriation transgress the parameters of the border regime, but they do so clandestinely. From this follows however, that the relation of irreconcilable conflict does not play itself out openly, but, just as the practices initiating it, in the realm of the hidden. This feature of the relation of conflict stirs two questions that I am going to address now: First, where does this relation of conflict manifest itself? And second, how can it be studied?

*Studying embodied encounters: acknowledging the performativity of borders and migration*

In brief, this relation of irreconcilable conflict manifests in a series of mostly silent struggles over the direct appropriation and selective denial of mobility and other resources. In each of these struggles this conflict surfaces in a dynamic *dialogue of actions* between those trying to appropriate mobility and those charged with forestalling such attempts. Since people willing to move and on the move are compelled to appropriate mobility and other resources within and against border regimes, these conflictive dialogues of action take place in their *embodied encounters* with the means and methods of control. Hence, it is through the analysis of these embodied encounters that the relation of conflict between migration and the attempts to regulate it, and the possible emergence of moments of excess and uncontrollability within this relation, the autonomy of migration, can be studied.

To move to the study of the embodied encounters of people on the move with the actors, means and methods of border control in order to unearth the irreconcilable conflict between them appears logical, if we define a conflict with Georg Simmel as ‘one of the liveliest patterns of interaction, one that is logically impossible to limit to a single participant.’ Simmel stresses the integrative dimension of a conflict, which unifies antagonistic forces in a relation of mutual opposition surfacing in dynamic interactions between them.<sup>16</sup> The move towards the study of embodied encounters is in line with the CAM’s conception of borders as sites of contestation, in which migrants’ practices *encounter* the methods and devices of mobility control, entering a relationship of reciprocal determination.<sup>17</sup> If people willing to move bring themselves into being as both people on the move and as political subjects by appropriating what border, migration and citizenship regimes deny them, they do so in their embodied encounters with the means and methods of control. What takes place in each of these embodied encounters is a conflictive dialogue of actions, in which each action forms itself as a reaction to the previous actions of the counterpart; just as it is shaped by the possible responses of the counterpart to this action.<sup>18</sup> And it is this conflictive dialogue of actions that I seek to bring out through the study of embodied encounters.

Yet, the connotations of an encounter do not only accommodate the relation of conflict I seek to foreground with my reading of autonomy, but also moments of creativity and indeterminacy within the struggles, in which this conflict manifests. For what '[t]he term encounter suggests [...is] a meeting which involves surprise and conflict.'<sup>19</sup> What the connotation of 'surprise' permits to stress is that the relationship of reciprocal determination between migrants' practices and the means and methods of control is always incomplete and that the outcomes of the conflictive dialogues of actions between them are, consequently, not determined in advance.

What I seek to emphasise by speaking of *embodied* encounters is, in turn, that it is a particular person in a particular body who tries to appropriate mobility in her encounters with the agents, devices, means and methods of control. These embodied encounters might be mediated through other actors (private service providers, travel agents, security firms, etc.) or devices (files, digitalised templates, passports etc.), but they *always* feature a particular human body. It is this particular physical body, in which a person willing to move tries to appropriate mobility, that also provides the target, and in the case of biometrics also a means, for practices of surveillance and control. To stress the embodied nature of people's encounters with the means and methods of control underscores both the *materiality* and *situatedness* of the practices these encounters involve. To emphasise the materiality of contemporary border control practices and the always embodied nature of their experience offers, consequently, an effective antidote to counter the misreading of biometric technologies as implicating a shift towards 'virtual' border controls.<sup>20</sup>

Hence, the study of embodied encounters, and this is its first advantage, introduces a situated analysis of concrete situations. It thereby responds to the two points of critique that have been raised against the CAM. On the one hand, the move towards a situated analysis of concrete situations, namely embodied encounters, better accounts for are the legal, practical and technological specificities of border regimes as well as their impact on people's chances, possibilities and forms of appropriation. Thereby, the investigation of migrants' embodied encounters with particular border regimes in particular sites addresses the critique, whereupon the CAM would not sufficiently consider the restrictive effects of ever more sophisticated border controls.

On the other hand, the investigation of embodied encounters accounts for the insight that mobility is always embodied and relational. The forms human mobility takes and the experiences it involves are diverse, because it is a particular human body that moves, a body which has been classed, raced and gendered.<sup>21</sup> If autonomy is understood as the institution of

a conflict between migration and the attempts to regulate it, then the analysis of people's embodied encounters with the means and methods of mobility control unravels the diversity of the practices, through which people willing to move try to appropriate mobility, thereby initiating that conflict. How particular subjects appropriate mobility and what forms their struggles take is shaped, but not entirely determined by their varying access to resources, the different degrees of racist and sexist discriminations they have to endure and, finally, the particular design and composition of the governmental regimes within and against which they struggle. Thereby, the investigation of embodied encounters introduces a situated reading of autonomy, as it implies the adoption of 'politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating', favouring 'the view from a body, always a complex, contradictory, structuring, and structured body, versus the view from above, from nowhere, from simplicity'.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, and this is its second advantage, the study of the embodied encounters efficiently bridges the tension between particular practices, struggles and experiences of embodied subjects and general conclusions about the autonomy of migration. To be sure, an analytical focus on embodied encounters insists on embodied, situated knowledge. But this does not imply to get stuck in a detailed investigation of 'empirical' practices of migrants, as feared by the existing literature on ethnographic border regime analysis.<sup>23</sup> For 'encounters between embodied subjects always hesitate between the domain of the particular – the face-to-face of this encounter – and the general – the framing of the encounter by broader relationships of power and antagonism. The particular encounter hence always carries traces of those broader relationships.'<sup>24</sup>

Whereas, the study of people's embodied encounters with the means and methods of mobility control in particular sites allows to unravel, how attempts to govern and appropriate mobility play themselves out differently in each encounter, it equally permits to unearth broader dynamics in the government of mobility and the forms peoples' struggles take. Put simply, the notion of the encounter grasps that a visa applicant encounters a particular staff in a particular consulate with a distinct mode of processing visa applications, but at the same time she encounters the Schengen visa regime as a whole.

Thereby, the notion of the encounter provides a much needed transmission channel that mediates between the subjective practices of particular migrants and the assertion of an abstract autonomy of migration. I would argue that it is precisely the previous lack of a methodological mediation between the two that has spurred the critique, whereupon the CAM would subsume the varying experiences of millions of migrating people under the subjectless

abstraction of migration. To shift the analytical focus on embodied encounters efficiently dissolves this critique.

The third advantage of the study of embodied encounters is that it forestalls a static analysis, which is especially pronounced in studies drawing on the notion of agency. For what agency, understood as ‘the socioculturally mediated capacity to act’<sup>25</sup> always presupposes, is a structure as its *external* counterpart. The resulting structure-agency divide implicates a static analysis, in which structures and agency are investigated in isolation of one another. This problem is also not solved by Anthony Giddens' structuration theory, the most elaborate attempt to overcome it. Giddens seeks to bridge the divide by attributing a virtual existence to structure. Accordingly, structures exist only insofar, as they are constantly re-produced by human agents, whose actions they enable and constrain. Hence, structures constitute both the ‘medium and the outcome of the social practices they recursively organise.’ In order to account for this virtual and dual nature of structures, Giddens proposes to study the actions of human agents and structural properties simultaneously.<sup>26</sup> According to critics, Giddens' structuration theory rests, however, on a conflation of structure and agency, whose 'logical end is a black box of structure-agency dialectics which are impossible to research.' This analytical impasse compels researchers, in turn, to accept a methodological and analytical dualism of structure and agency.<sup>27</sup> Yet, by investigating the actions of agents and institutional settings separately, these studies treat structures again as the external counterpart of peoples' agency. Thereby, they do not only reproduce the structure-agency divide that structuration theory denies, but also the static mode of analysis implicated by this divide.

The study of embodied encounters avoids such a static analysis for the following two reasons. First, it places a dynamic *relation* between two antagonistic forces at the centre of analysis, namely a conflict. What the dialogue of action, in which this conflict surfaces, highlights is that migrants' practices of appropriation are inseparably interwoven with the means and methods of mobility control. The investigation of embodied encounters therefore proceeds *transversal* to the question of structure and agency. Instead of confronting people's capacity to act with structural properties imagined as exterior to their practices, the analysis of embodied encounters allows to study, how two interacting, but antagonistic forces try to engross devices, technologies, regulations, actors and practices for their incommensurable and therefore conflictive agendas. The result is a dynamic analysis, in which the technological, institutional and legal specificities of a border regime are no longer catalogued in a meticulous description in order to be juxtaposed as 'structures' to people's 'agency'. They rather emerge as



the contested terrain of and disputed stakes within multiple struggles over the selective denial and direct appropriation of mobility and other resources.

The second, related reason is ontological. To investigate encounters does not imply to assume a meeting of two pre-established entities like a 'migrant' and a 'border'. It rather implicates to follow the proposition that it is in and through the encounter that borders and migrants come into being as such.<sup>28</sup> Without borders, there would neither be migration nor migrants, but only mobility and people on the move.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, borders only become actualised and discernable, when someone is trying to cross them.<sup>30</sup> On a less abstract level, people willing to move only become intelligible as visa applicants in their embodied encounters with the Schengen visa regime at the consulates. Conversely, the Schengen visa regime is brought into being in and through each of the countless encounters, in which 'street-level-bureaucrats'<sup>31</sup> are putting its various devices and regulations into practice in their daily interactions with people willing to move. In analogy to Simmel's premise, whereupon society is not a given collection of human beings, but only comes into being through the interactions between them,<sup>32</sup> we can conclude that neither migration nor border regimes do exist as such, but are brought into being in and through the daily encounters between people on the move and those charged with controlling their mobility. Thereby, the study of embodied encounters induces a shift from a static analysis of structures and agents to an investigation of the performative interactions through which borders and migrants are *done*.

The notion of embodied encounters affords to acknowledge, moreover, that borders and migration are not performed unilaterally, neither by people on the move nor by the agents of control, but in and through the interactions between them. It implies, furthermore, to concede that these performances are *not* deliberate fabrications of the performers involved in their production. These performances are not only interrelational, but those staging them are also compelled to perform according to particular scripts.<sup>33</sup> Performativity is 'not a singular "act" [performed by a wilful subject]', but the constrained and compulsory 'reiteration of norms' that produces and regulates that to which it refers, while concealing 'the conventions of which it is a repetition'.<sup>34</sup> What distinguishes my approach from previous attempts to make Butler's notion of performativity productive for the theorisation of borders and migration<sup>35</sup> is then that I underscore the interrelated and dialogical nature of these performances.

If the visa application of a young man, who seeks to visit his brother in Europe, is rejected, because his 'will to return could not be established', as the most common justification for the refusal of a visa states, he is constituted as a 'migrant' though he has never crossed a geopolitical border. For his application is rejected, because consular staffs ascribe a 'migration

risk' to him. Hence, the consulate emerges as a border, where people willing to move are rendered as migrants by consular staffs. The concealed convention that is reiterated through the citational *practices* of consular staffs (e.g. asking questions about the purpose of stay, verifying the authenticity of supporting documents, opening a file) and those applying for a visa (e.g. organising all requested supporting documents, completing an application form, answering consular staffs' questions) is the claimed prerogative of states to control the access to their territories.<sup>36</sup> What this example highlights is that borders and migration are *not* primarily performed through the linguistic citation of norms, but first and foremost through 'practical or bodily citations' and in 'the bodily subject's encounters with other bodies in the world.'<sup>37</sup> The countless dialogues of actions between people willing to move and those charged with controlling their mobility are then performative, because they constitute that to which they refer, among others: borders and migration.

In sum, the study of embodied encounters relates to the agenda of militant research in at least three ways: First, it places migrants' struggles that militant research seeks to unearth at the centre of the analysis. In a context, in which borders 'are no longer situated at the outer limits of territories [but] dispersed a little everywhere',<sup>38</sup> the notion of embodied encounters permits to trace the performance of borders in those sites and situations, in which conflictive dialogues of actions, or in other words struggles, between people on the move and those charged with controlling their mobility take place.

Second, the study of embodied encounters challenges dominant knowledge production on human mobility insofar as it reveals its compartmentalisation into separate knowledge fields as artificial. Instead of contributing to the fetishisation of (forced, illegal etc.) migration, borders or refugees by positing them as given realities waiting to be researched, the study of embodied encounters affords to embrace a radical constructivism that highlights the dialogical and contested nature of the performances, by which these phenomena are brought into being in the first place. Thereby, the study of embodied encounters contributes to the development of a *political epistemology* – a political questioning of the fundamental categories guiding much of the current thinking and writing on human mobility.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, the study of embodied encounters implicates a politicisation of the researcher and the research, as it compels researchers to leave the comfort zone of their writing desks. In the course of the research, the boundary between participant observation and observant participation will inevitably blur. Ultimately, researchers will realise that the knowledge they produce and, consequently, they themselves are part of the struggles they investigate.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Moulier Boutang, Yann, 'Interview' in *Materialien Für Einen Neuen Antiimperialismus Nr. 5*, N.N. (ed), Berlin & Göttingen: Schwarze Risse/ Rote Straße, 1993, pp. 29-56. A shortened version of the interview is available online: [http://www.grundrisse.net/grundrisse34/interview\\_mit\\_yann\\_moulierbouta.htm](http://www.grundrisse.net/grundrisse34/interview_mit_yann_moulierbouta.htm) (30.06.2013).

<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of differential inclusion see: Mezzadra, Sandro, and Neilson, Brett, *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the CAM and the core arguments in the debate: Scheel, Stephan. 'Autonomy of Migration Despite Its Securitisation? Facing the Terms and Conditions of Biometric Rebordering', *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 41(3), 2013, pp. 575-600.

<sup>4</sup> Sharma, Nandita, 'Escape Artists: Migrants and the Politics of Naming', *Subjectivity* 29(1), 2009, pp. 467-476.

<sup>5</sup> Hyndman, Jennifer, 'The (Geo)Politics of Mobility' in *Mapping Women, Making Politics: Feminist Perspectives on Political Geography*, Lynn A. Staeheli, Kofman, Eleanore and Peake, Lynda (ed), New York: Routledge, 2004, pp. 169-185.

<sup>6</sup> Rygiel, Kim, 'Governing Borderzones of Mobility through E-Borders: The Politics of Embodied Mobility', in *The Contested Politics of Mobility: Borderzones and Irregularity*, Squire, Vicki (ed), London and New York: Routledge, 2011, pp. 143-168.

<sup>7</sup> Van der Ploeg, Irma, 'Written on the Body: Biometrics and Identity' in *Computers and Society* 29(1), 1999, pp. 37-44.

<sup>8</sup> Haraway, Donna, *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millennium.Femaleman\_Meets\_Oncomouse. Feminism and Technoscience*, London & New York: Routledge, 1997, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Omwenyeke, Sunny, 'Autonomy of Migration: Where We Stand in the Debate' *published online*, 06.05.2004, <http://thecaravan.org/node/25> (30.06.2013).

<sup>10</sup> Template refers to digital representations of particular biometric characteristics, which are generated by means of algorithms. These templates can be stored, exchanged, searched and matched by computers, which fulfil these tasks much faster and more efficiently than human beings.

<sup>11</sup> Broeders, Dennis, 'The New Digital Borders of Europe: EU Databases and the Surveillance of Irregular Migrants' in *International Sociology* 22(1), 2007, pp. 71-92.

<sup>12</sup> Samaddar, Ranabir, 'The Politics of Autonomy: An Introduction' in *The Politics of Autonomy: Indian Experiences*, Samaddar, Ranabir (ed), New Delhi & London: Sage Publications, 2005, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> This definition is inspired by Serhat Karakayali's, who argues that the autonomy of migration 'resides in the very creation of a specific [...] zone of conflict, in which migration does not escape the impact of the state or the economy, but rather moves transversal to them, thereby changing the statist migration regime.' But since Karakayali deals with the question of the autonomy of migration in the concluding chapter of his book, he neither explains how and by whom this 'zone of conflict' is created, nor how it might be investigated. Karakayali, Serhat, *Gespenster Der Migration. Zur Genealogie Illegalen Einwanderung in Der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Bielefeld: transcript, 2008, p. 256.

<sup>14</sup> The migration from African coasts to European islands constitutes a noteworthy exception to this rule, as it involves to be 'rescued' by the coast guard and to spend some time in detention camps on the island, before receiving a transfer to the European mainland. But once there, the appropriation of mobility operates, again, in the realm of the hidden, as migrants usually disappear and live under conditions of illegality and collectively organised invisibility. Papadopoulos, Dimitris, Stephenson, Niamh and Tsianos, Vassilis, *Escaperoutes. Control and Subversion in the Twenty-First Century*, London: Pluto Press, 2008, 197-199.

<sup>15</sup> Guillaume, Xavier, and Huysmans, Jef, 'Citizenship and Securitising: Interstitial Politics' in *Citizenship and Security: The Constitution of Political Being*, Guillaume, Xavier and Huysmans, Jef, London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Simmel, Georg. *Sociology: Inquiries into the Construction of Social Forms*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009 [1908], p. 227.

<sup>17</sup> Bojadžijev, Manuela, and Karakayali, Serhat, 'Autonomie der Migration. 10 Thesen zu einer Methode', in *Turbulente Ränder. Neue Perspektiven auf Migration an den Grenzen Europas*, Transit Migration Forschungsgruppe (ed), Bielefeld: transcript, 2007, pp. 203-210.

<sup>18</sup> This formulation is inspired by Michail Bakhtin's thesis of the dialogical condition of the world, in which each utterance is shaped as a response to previous utterances, just as it is prefigured in anticipation of possible replies. Bakhtin concludes that 'language lives only in dialogic interaction of those who make use of it.' Bakhtin, Michail, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984, p.183. Below I make a similar claim in regards to borders and migrants, which only become 'alive' in and through the dialogic interactions between them.

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- <sup>19</sup> Ahmed, Sara, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 8.
- <sup>20</sup> See for instance: Ross, James C., 'Biometrics: Intersecting Borders and Bodies in Liberal Bionetwork States' in *Journal for Borderland Studies* 22(2), 2007, pp. 77-96.
- <sup>21</sup> Sharma, 'Escape Artists', p. 474.
- <sup>22</sup> Haraway, Donna, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of the Partial Perspective' in *Feminist Studies* 14(3), 1988, p. 589.
- <sup>23</sup> Hess, Sabine, and Tsianos, Vassilis, 'Ethnographische Grenzregimeanalyse. Eine Methodologie der Autonomie der Migration' in *Grenzregime: Diskurse, Praktiken, Institutionen in Europa*, Hess, Sabine and Kasparek, Bernd, Berlin: Assoziation A, 2010, pp. 243-244.
- <sup>24</sup> Ahmed, 'Strange Encounters', p. 9.
- <sup>25</sup> Ahearn, Laura, 'Language and Agency' in *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30, 2001, p. 112.
- <sup>26</sup> Giddens, Anthony, *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984, pp. 17, 25, 288-289.
- <sup>27</sup> Bakewell, Oliver, 'Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory' in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36(10), 2010, p. 1702.
- <sup>28</sup> Ahmed, 'Strange Encounters', p. 8-9.
- <sup>29</sup> De Genova, Nicholas, 'Citizenship's Shadow: Obscene Inclusion, Abject Belonging, or, the Regularities of Migrant "Irregularity"', *Keynote presented to the conference 'Within and Beyond Citizenship: Lived Experiences of Contemporary Membership'*; Oxford, 11 April 2013.
- <sup>30</sup> Guild, Elspeth, Moving the Border of Europe. Inaugural Lecture at the University of Nijmegen, 30 May 2001, available online: <http://cmr.jur.ru.nl/cmr/docs/oratie.eg.pdf> (30.06.2013).
- <sup>31</sup> Lipsky, Michael, *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1980.
- <sup>32</sup> Simmel, Georg, 'The Problem of Sociology' in *American Journal of Sociology* 15(3), 1909, pp. 289-320.
- <sup>33</sup> Gregson, Nicky, and Rose, Gillian 'Taking Butler Elsewhere: Performativities, Spatialities and Subjectivities' in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18(4), 2000, pp. 433-452.
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- <sup>37</sup> Hollywood, Amy, 'Performativity, Citationality, Ritualization' in *History of Religions* 42(2), 2002, p. 95.
- <sup>38</sup> Balibar, Etienne 'At the Borders of Europe' in *We, the People of Europe*, Balibar, Etienne, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003, p. 1.
- <sup>39</sup> On the notion of political epistemology see the introduction to this special issue.