



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

**Making feminist arguments  
against  
borders and regulated migration**

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**Abstract:** *This thesis is about theoretical critiques and practical resistance to regulated migration specifically and borders more generally. My aim is to explore how we can make strong arguments and strategies against borders and regulated migration and, more specifically, to answer this by exploring what feminist theory can contribute to the theorising and critique of borders and regulated migration. I do so by discussing five different types of arguments against regulated migration: (1) arguments by Giorgio Agamben, (2) arguments focusing on citizenship, (3) arguments focusing on labour and capital, represented by Nicholas De Genova, (4) arguments from the perspective of indigenous peoples and that focus on the racialising aspect of borders, represented by Harsha Walia, and (5) arguments that focus on how borders produce many kinds of subjects, represented by Bridget Anderson. I analyse these five approaches by reading each of them through the practical situation of on-the-ground-struggles against regulated migration and through various feminist interventions. I conclude that strong arguments against borders/regulated migration conceive these as practices that produce subjects, imaginaries, and social and political relations. Good arguments also recognise how borders and regulated migration are entangled with numerous power structures such as class, race, gender, sexuality, nation and ability, and refrain from making arguments that would secure the freedom of movement or the freedom to stay for some people at the expense of others. Good strategies must also – despite a principled rejection of the right of the state to control migration – allow for some interaction with the state in order to secure the immediate needs of unauthorised migrants.*

**Keywords:** feminist theory, undocumented migration, borders, regulated migration, citizenship

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## Introduction

Borders are, as Étienne Balibar (2002:79) puts it, '*world-configuring*'. They squeeze our thinking and feeling about the world into different categories. Territorial borders in particular squeeze our thinking into territorial states. There is nothing 'natural' or 'given' about them, the messy reality is impossible to neatly order into states, and maintaining an illusion of borders requires constant effort. Think of the lines signifying the borders on a world map, they are imposed on top of what is already there, as lines cutting through the land, the people, the rivers, the mountains, the fields. They could always be elsewhere, or not at all. Birds do not care about the borders, nor does the water or the wind. Borders materially shape the world and people's lives, they shape how we think and understand the world, others and ourselves, and they create affect: how we, perhaps unconsciously, feel about ourselves and others, and for whom we feel responsible. However, they are also impossible, a dystopian/utopian project. They never manage to completely contain people, thoughts or affects.

Here I am going to focus on only one aspect of borders, a very material and often violent practice: the regulation of migration. I approach this not from the perspective of the state – which often sees migration as a problem and as something in need of regulation – nor of the bird – for whom the border is irrelevant – but from the perspective of people migrating and crossing borders without authorisation and permission of the states in question. From the perspective of people living in a place where they do not have permission to be, from those who are in constant risk of deportation, and who perhaps are deported. From here, it is not migration but the border that is the problem. From here, the border is not irrelevant, not something we can just disregard, it shapes and conditions one's life in a very material and direct way. It is constantly there. At work, at the hospital, at school, in public spaces, at home.

My interest in studying borders and regulated migration is motivated by my engagement with different groups that work politically against the regulation of migration and that support undocumented migrants. I have been involved in providing legal counselling and support for migrants, in providing practical support such as finding housing, money, and food, helped in contact with authorities and schools, and in more public activities such as organising seminars and lectures. Many of the undocumented migrants that I know or have met come from war-torn countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia, but whose asylum claims are rejected for example with the argument that there are some parts of their country of origin that are safe, so they could supposedly use the 'internal flight alternative'. Many asylum-claims are

not tried because they are so called 'Dublin-cases'.<sup>1</sup> Many are unaccompanied minors, who do not know if their families are still alive or where they might be, but whose age is not believed, or who are not believed when they say that they have no one to take care of them if they are deported. Many are families where one or some of the family members have got residence permits but not the others, either because of idiosyncratic bureaucratic rules or because they are not recognised as family. Many are LGBTIQ-people who are denied asylum either because they are not believed, or because it is deemed safe in their country of origin, even in countries where homosexuality is illegal or where homophobia is well-documented. Many are women whose political work is not recognised, or whose stories are not seen as signs of persecution because of the gendered form that persecution has taken, and some are not believed as 'credible' because they have not behaved as it is thought that women from this or that 'culture' do. Many have lived in Sweden for years. And some are seen as having no legitimate reasons what-so-ever to be in Sweden: no grounds for asylum, no work, no spouse, no children. These are the reasons that are 'valid', that is, unless you come from a state whose citizens need no particular 'reasons' to live here, for example EU-citizens.

Through these engagements I have come to see something of how borders and the state may appear from the perspective of unauthorised migrants: as brutal forces of extreme violence with complete disregard for people's lives, as powers that reach into every corner of one's life, thoughts and feelings. Being engaged in this practical and political work, we discuss, have different ideas about, and struggle to find useful and effective strategies and arguments against borders, or against the regulation of migration. That is what this thesis is about: what would be strong and effective arguments and strategies against borders and regulated migration? I aim to make this exploration useful both in practical work against regulated migration and in providing some directions for future feminist theoretical work on borders and regulated migration. A further aim is, concurrently, to explore some ways in which feminist theory can contribute to research on borders and regulated migration and to arguments against them. I am particularly curious as to how feminist affect theory could be useful for this inquiry. In this thesis, however, I will only use some specific points and arguments from affect theory, as an initial exploration of what it could mean to study borders

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<sup>1</sup> The Dublin convention stipulates that it is the EU-country through which the asylum-seeker entered the EU that should try their application for asylum. This is usually verified by checking if their finger prints have been taken by some other country or if they entered the EU with a visa issued by another country. If an asylum-seeker, in for example Sweden, who gets a Dublin-decision avoids being transferred for 18 months, then they can have their asylum-application tried in, in this example, Sweden.

and regulated migration with this approach.

Feminism is about equality and solidarity, and it must always take the side of the most precarious lives. What makes this a feminist project is not my object of study but the above foundation and my use of feminist theory. Feminist theory, further, is not always explicitly about gender, it may be about other power relations, or it may not deal explicitly with any particular power relation, but be theory sprung out of feminist research and feminist concerns, theory that is much more widely applicable than its original object of study.

Based on the inability of the state to properly recognise people's needs and/or desires to migrate, I take it as my starting point that regulated migration must be abolished. Thus, I do not focus on *whether* there are good arguments against regulated migration, but on what arguments are *good* arguments. We need to think beyond borders, to denaturalise borders, to constantly keep in mind that they need not be. Taking them for granted or seeing them as necessary without properly questioning them is an example of methodological nationalism, 'the naturalisation of the nation-state by social sciences', which has shaped much scholarship on migration (Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002:576).

In the practical work against regulated migration and in support of individual migrants, we ask the following questions about arguments and strategies: how do we reconcile migrants' urgent need for residence permits, and equal rights to health care, education, social welfare, with more radical hopes for a different system in which migration status does not matter? How can we argue for this or that person's – or group's – right to stay, or need to stay, without implicitly arguing that others have less right or need to stay? Is there any point in trying to make the asylum system better when the state will never be sufficiently good at recognising people's needs? (How) can we work towards improving the existing laws or the current practices without reproducing the state's legitimacy to decide over migration?

This is where I turn to theory. In order to navigate these questions one needs to more thoroughly understand what borders and regulated migration are, or better put, what they *do*. They have to be put in a larger context, as being a constitutive part of the organisation of our social and political life into nation-states, and as connected to various axes of power that structure political and social relations. In order to do this I will analyse and discuss what I have grouped into five different approaches or types of arguments against borders, either borders in general, or specifically regulated migration. The first is Giorgio Agamben's philosophical critique of how sovereignty always produces bare life, or *homo sacer*. Refugees

and unauthorised migrants have been seen as contemporary examples of homo sacer, both by Agamben himself and by others drawing on his work. Secondly, I analyse arguments against borders that seek to rethink, deconstruct or expand citizenship as a theoretical and practical strategy to counter the exclusions of borders. The third approach is Nicholas De Genova's marxist argument that the primary function of the state and of borders is to regulate and discipline labour in order to facilitate capital accumulation, and that 'deportability', a consequence of insecure migration status, is a key tool in creating exploitable labour. Fourthly, I look at arguments against borders that take the perspectives of indigenous peoples seriously. I focus in particular on the work of Harsha Walia who is active in migrant justice and indigenous movements and who combines the anti-capitalist critique of borders with a critique of borders as racialising practices. Lastly, I discuss Bridget Anderson's critique of migration control which focuses on how borders, entangled with other power structures, produce subjects (migrants and citizens alike) as well as social and political relations of which everyone is part. Thus, migration controls shape social and political life at large, it is not only a concern for migrants.

The outline of this thesis is as follows. In the next section I map out how my study is situated in relation to previous feminist research on borders. After that I briefly present the theoretical and methodological approaches I use in this thesis. Thereafter I present the five approaches or types of arguments against regulated migration on which I have chosen to focus. In the main body of the thesis I read each of these five approaches through different feminist theoretical frameworks and interventions and through my own experiences of the practical work against regulated migration. In the concluding section I wrap up and try to provide some answers to the questions I posed at the outset.

Before proceeding, however, I will briefly clarify my usage of some key terms. There are many different terms used to discuss what are called 'illegal migrants'. Labelling migrants 'illegal' is, however, criticised for several reasons. Firstly, it disguises the fact that it is not persons who inherently *are* illegal, but that it is the state that *makes* their presence or movement illegal. A better term would thus be '*illegalised*'. Secondly, it is avoided as part of a rejection of the state's right to decide on migration. Thirdly, the distinction between legal and illegal is often unclear and permeable. People often move in and out of legality and illegality,

many are in conditions of 'semi-legality' (Anderson 2013; Rytter 2012), and some of the problems facing 'illegal' migrants are the same for those with 'legal' status, particularly those whose legality is temporary, that is, who have temporary permits. The permeability and instability of these distinctions apply to all the following terms as well.

A second commonly used phrase is 'irregular migrants' (and the concurrent term 'regularisation' meaning moving from a state of unauthorised or 'illegal' presence, to legal and documented presence). However, because of the sheer numbers of people crossing borders in an 'irregular' manner, one might question whether this is really not one of the 'regular' ways of migrating, and often it is the only alternative (for example for asylum-seekers that are not among the few who are selected by the UNHCR to be relocated). Perhaps it is called 'irregular' because of the racialisation of those who travel in this way.

A further commonly used term is 'undocumented migrants' (*sans-papier* in French or *papperslös* in Swedish). It is, however, a bit misleading. Undocumented migrants often have a lot of documents<sup>2</sup>, for example a passport, but just not those documents that are required by the state where they live. Neither are they undocumented in the sense that they are entirely unknown or unidentifiable. Another problematic aspect of this term is that it risks portraying people as always or inherently 'paperless', as a constant lack, when in reality they become so only in specific situations when their papers are 'wrong'. It also obscures the fact that it is the state that makes them 'undocumented'.

Other terms are 'without (legal) status' or 'precarious (legal) status' (Villegas 2015), as well as 'clandestine migrants' (Sager 2011). The term that I have chosen to use most extensively is, however, 'unauthorised migrants' (Harrison & Lloyd 2012:374; Chauvin & Garcés-Mascreñas 2012; Basok et al. 2014). The benefits of this term are that it highlights the state's agency in deeming people 'unauthorised' and that it avoids the language of 'illegality'.

Occasionally, I find it more appropriate to speak of unauthorised *residents* (I could also have used the terms non-citizens or denizens) (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascreñas 2012) rather than 'migrants'. I use 'migrants' when speaking about the actual journey of crossing borders or of newly arrived people, but for people who live permanently in a place and have done so for years, perhaps generations, 'residents' sometimes seems more appropriate.

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2 To the legal counselling that I have been involved in, it often happens that people bring several binders of documents, documents from years of struggle with the migration authorities, and documents from their countries of origin proving their persecution, but which, in the language of the migration authorities, are deemed documents of 'low quality'.



However, as will be noted, I use several of these terms, partly in order to adhere to the vocabulary used by the authors I am discussing, and partly because one term or the other may be more appropriate, depending on the context. Nevertheless, when I use for example the term 'illegal' migrants/migration, with or without quotation marks, I ask the reader to keep the above clarification in mind. Further, when I speak about migrants or migration, this includes 'unauthorised' migrants and migration. I only spell out 'unauthorised' when it makes a difference.

Furthermore, the label 'unauthorised' migrants/migration comprise any number of different people and positions along the lines of class, race, gender, sexuality, nationality, age, ability, etc., and any number of reasons for migrating. Also, the unauthorised migrants that I know or meet are extremely diverse in these terms; it is impossible to describe them as a group. The only thing they have in common is their lack of full legal status, which causes them a lot of problems and suffering.

One more clarification of terms is necessary: sometimes I use 'borders' and 'regulated migration' interchangeably, sometimes I specify that I mean both, and sometimes I speak only of that aspect of borders that is regulated migration. I hope that the reader will understand what I mean in each context. If not, perhaps the ambiguity is significant: while I focus on regulated migration and take as my starting point that this system must be abolished, I leave the question about borders in their wider sense more open, and leave it to the reader and to future research to decide whether the arguments against regulated migration should also be arguments against borders in the general sense.

## Previous research

Within feminism, postcolonial, black, xicana and third world feminists have studied borders and migration most extensively. In *Borderlands/La Frontera* (2007), Gloria Anzaldúa shows how borders are imposed on top of people, communities and land. She discusses the psychological and affective consequences of living in the borderlands. Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003), in *Feminism Without Borders*, argues against bordered thinking in feminist theory, and in favour of a decolonisation of theory. She also argues that feminism must practice solidarity across borders and that struggles across locales must be connected. Sara Ahmed (2007) does not focus explicitly on borders but shows how – for instance – migration control can be used as a stopping device that obstructs some bodies' movement through space and facilitates that of others. This exposes some of the norms of the nation, since those not in line with norms are noticed, stand out as non-belonging, and consequently encounter more resistance. All of this challenges the assumption of territory-language-ethnicity-nation-race-citizenship-belonging-home-community being tied to each other, and shows that these are not necessarily connected, and that the border is arbitrary (see also Wimmer & Glick Schiller (2002:309) for a critique of the assumption of congruence between citizenry, sovereignty, solidarity and nation). This work is important because it challenges the naturalness of borders, by challenging their affective and discursive power and by showing their connections to other power structures. However, they do not pay very much attention to the aspect of borders that is regulated migration. Starting from the position – as I do here – of one of the groups that are most directly, materially and violently affected by borders, unauthorised migrants, shows that feminist theory cannot stop at theoretically criticising or overcoming the border, or at making practices and theory that disregard the border (there is a difference between practices that are 'without' or 'against' borders). Rather, as the plight of unauthorised migrants shows, we must directly confront the border, both in theory and in practice, and more specifically, we must directly confront – and theorise – the very material aspect of borders that is regulated migration.

Nira Yuval-Davis (1997), among others, have further worked on some aspects of borders through her attention to the nation, and particularly the centrality of gender in the construction of the nation. Another approach to the nation and nationalism is Jasbir K. Puar's (2007 & 2013) work on homonationalism, which is the combination of homonormativity and

nationalism, when nationalism takes the form of homonormativity, and when the nation is constructed as tolerant, homonormative, civilised and modern, in contrast to others that are consequently constructed as sexually deviant, perverse, backwards, intolerant, etc. In my analysis I will draw on Puar's arguments about the connection between nationalism, racialisation and sexuality to demonstrate their importance in making good arguments against borders. This is especially relevant because the five approaches that I analyse do not sufficiently account for sexuality within their arguments. Neither Yuval-Davis nor Puar work explicitly on borders, however, at least not regulated migration, and thus I have the same points of critique here as above.

Another stream of feminist studies that is concerned with borders includes the scholars that work on peace and transversal politics. Cynthia Cockburn (2004 & 2014) has studied how women across borders collaborate in their struggle against partition, conflict and inequality. In doing so they enact what Cockburn and Yuval-Davis, among others, call 'transversal politics', 'a practice of creatively crossing (and re-drawing) the borders that mark significant politicized differences' (Cockburn 2014:436), and which thus is a way of challenging the significance of borders when it comes to solidarity, identification, collaboration and shared political struggles.

Feminist criticism of theories of citizenship is also relevant. These theories are for instance concerned with the 'masculine' norm for citizenship; production and conscription taking priority over reproduction; the division between public and private; and the legal sense of citizenship taking priority over the active doing of citizenship. Examples of feminist critical engagement with citizenship can be found in texts by Mary G. Dietz (1998), Iris Marion Young (1998), Ruth Lister (2003), Maja Sager (2011) and Lauren Berlant (1997). With the exception of Sager, however, their work does not primarily question citizenship from the perspective of migration or unauthorised migrants/residents, which I aim to do, in order to more decisively move away from an already given national/state frame.

Furthermore, feminists have also studied borders and/or migration in relation to global capitalism, particularly how capitalism creates increasingly precarious living conditions, and low wage and dangerous employment in the Global South as corporations move their production from the North to the South, and how women are particularly affected by this. One focus has been on maquiladoras, the offshoring of production into free trade zones (see for example Mohanty 2003; Jaggar 2001). This phenomenon has received attention largely

because women working in these industries have themselves struggled against the situation. There is also a large body of work on the feminisation of migration in the form of women migrating to do domestic work elsewhere, taking care of other people's children while leaving their own at home (see for example Lutz 2008). Anderson's (2013) work – which is one of the five approaches that I focus on – could be said to have emerged from this field of research; particularly by studying migrant domestic workers and au pairs, she shows how migration controls are gendered and gendering practices.

Feminists have directly engaged with borders and the regulation of migration – and consequently the illegalisation of migrants – by demonstrating that the UN convention, which forms the basis of asylum laws, constructs the refugee according to certain male, liberal norms of who is politically active and what it means to be persecuted. 'The refugee' was/is imagined as a liberal man, politically engaged in clearly recognisable ways, such as being publicly outspoken and active in party politics, who is persecuted by a totalitarian communist state (Anderson 2013:55-6; Lewis 2013:177-8). Very few of today's asylum-seekers fit this figure and this idea of persecution (although some of course do). Rather, people flee wars, conflicts, heteropatriarchy, poverty and a lack of possibilities to imagine a liveable future (reasons that are often entangled, but whose separation is crucial for the migration system). Moreover, political acts, as well as persecution, may take forms that the migration authorities fail/refuse to recognise. Feminists – and others – have criticised the inability of the refugee system and asylum-process to recognise gendered and sexualised forms of persecution, the ways in which gender identity and sexuality can be bases of persecution, and the narrative requirements of the asylum-interview (Lewis 2013; Fobear 2014). This points to the limits of seeking recognition by the state and of state regulation of migration in general. It also points to how the regulation of migration, and in particular the asylum system, may serve wider nationalist projects of the state. I will return to all of these points.

There is also research on the connections between sexuality and (illegal) migration (see for example Luibhéid 2005; Lewis 2013). For my purposes, the most relevant aspect of this field of study is the way in which sexuality is entangled with gender, class, race, nation, etc., how all of these in turn are not just regulated and targeted but also produced through borders, and how borders do their work – for example that of differentiating between 'us' and 'them' – *through* sexuality.

To sum up, there is a wide range of feminist work that is relevant for the study of

borders and regulated migration. Some of it is explicitly engaged with borders or with the regulation of migration whereas other contributions only indirectly discuss borders through their focus on adjacent concepts or processes, such as the nation or citizenship. Boundaries – of which borders are one form – are, however, a central focus for feminism (for example boundaries between genders). Feminism has shown that boundaries are complex, changeable, arbitrary and sometimes it challenges them altogether. Thus, (nation/state) borders would seem a very relevant focus for feminism even if it has not so far been a primary area of concern. While there has been a lot of feminist theorising about borders, there has been much less that specifically focuses on that aspect of borders that is regulated migration. Borders are criticised on a more abstract level and theory and practice are urged to disregard borders, to disengage and disentangle from them, to not let borders determine how we think and act. However, if we start from the position of unauthorised migrants – in various contexts and who have become 'unauthorised' for a variety of reasons – then it becomes apparent that borders cannot just be disregarded or criticised in the abstract, rather, we must engage with the material practice of regulated migration, theorise this particular border-practice, explore it, argue against it and act against it. Of those feminists that study the regulation of migration, and who point towards the need for a more thorough critique, there are even fewer who take it a step further and embark on this project, for example, by theorising what borders and regulated migration (as a whole, not just one aspect of them) really are and what they *do*, and who put it in a larger context and challenge it on a more systematic level. For instance, sometimes feminist critique of the asylum-system (for example that by Lewis 2013) argues for the need to improve it, to make it more sensitive to issues of gender and sexuality, but without connecting asylum to other forms of migration, to the regulation of migration as part of capitalism, or to nation-building and nationalism. Some of the exceptions are Anderson, as already mentioned, and Melissa Autumn White (2014) who argues for a queer politics of no borders. Thus, there is a need for more feminist work on this particular aspect of borders: regulated migration. I seek to contribute to this by taking work from other fields – that perhaps have little grounding in feminism – and examine which aspects of these approaches and arguments that could most fruitfully, from a feminist perspective, be developed further.

My aim is not to come up with strategies that always work. That is impossible, because arguments will always have to change according to time and place. Nevertheless, I try to sketch out some key points that arguments and strategies need to include in order to be

useful in the practical struggle against regulated migration, and which can provide some directions for further research.

## **Theoretical and methodological approaches**

As already mentioned, my aim with this thesis is twofold. Firstly, it is to find good arguments and strategies against regulated migration, and secondly, it is to explore some ways in which feminist theory can be useful in making good arguments and strategies against regulated migration, both in order to make a case for the need of feminist theory in this kind of project, and to chart out some possible directions for further research within feminism.

The methodological inspiration for this thesis comes from Alecia Y. Jackson and Lisa A. Mazzei. In their book *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research* (2012), they 'plug in' the same material into numerous different theoretical concepts and frameworks. 'Plugging in' can be explained as making the material and the theory (or different materials or different theories) speak to each other. 'Plugging-in', they argue, should be seen as a process rather than a concept (Jackson & Mazzei 2012:1-14). This way of thinking about analysis also makes room for the recognition of the 'agential intra-action' (Barad 2003) of the material, the theory and the researcher plugging them into each other, acknowledging that all exert a form of agency in this intra-action. Something happens when 'reading-the-data-while-thinking-the-theory' (Jackson & Mazzei 2012:4), and also when reading-the-theory-while-thinking-the-data; the theory changes, the material changes, and the researcher changes too. This can also be explained with the concept 'diffraction' (elaborated by Karen Barad). Diffraction occurs when 'waves pass through an opening or obstruction and are spread differently than they would be otherwise' (Jackson & Mazzei 2012:114). That is, something happens to the material when read through theory, and different things happen when read through different theories. Thus, by plugging the same material into various different theories, different things emerge. This is a way of opening up analysis to unexpected things, and to open up several paths of inquiry rather than being confined to only one path of analysis from the beginning, through the choice of one theoretical framework. Thus, I have chosen to use multiple theoretical frameworks and concepts in my analysis of the five approaches that I am focusing on. I do a kind of prismatic reading of each approach; as light goes through a prism it is dispersed, it takes several directions and angles, more things come to light, and different colours appear.

In the prism, it could thus be said that I plug in my material (which in this case also consists of theories) into different feminist theories, or I read it while thinking other theories. I also, however, read it with my practical experiences of working against regulated migration in

mind, and I plug it in to the problems and situations of some of the unauthorised migrants that I know.

I do not read all of my five approaches through the same theories. Depending on the approach in question, I plug it into those theories where it seems possible that a fruitful conversation/intervention/intra-action could take place. Since there are different strengths and drawbacks with my five different approaches, they need different things. Here I will only very briefly present those theoretical approaches that I use more consistently throughout, they will be explained more thoroughly when I use them. I will also use other theories and concepts, some of which were presented in the section on previous research.

I draw extensively on Berlant's (2006 & in Seitz 2013) work on affect and attachment. She views objects as clusters of patternings and promises, and argues that it is our relation and attachments to objects – rather than the object itself – that matter and that say something about what objects do. I also use Barad's (2003) material feminist critique of objects, that objects should be seen as phenomena in intra-action rather than as 'things'. It is by drawing on the work by Berlant, and also that by Puar, that I attempt to explore some ways in which affect theory could be used to study borders and regulated migration.

Focusing on how subjects and relations are produced – rather than taking for granted categories and identities and studying how they are differently affected by various practices or structures – is a feminist perspective that I use throughout. This approach was (perhaps) initiated by Michel Foucault (1998 & 1980) with his view on power as productive, but has since been further developed in feminist theory. Judith Butler (2010) argues that gender is produced through the heterosexual matrix, through discourse and performativity. Puar argues that we must question how subjects are produced, and that the production of the subject is always already normative (Puar 2012:16), a questioning that may be pursued by studying assemblages, since, as she claims, 'assemblages are interesting because they de-privilege the human body as a discrete organic thing', or as Barad (referred to in Puar 2012:10) puts it, 'matter is not a “thing” but a doing'. Boundaries, between for example different categories and identities, or between human/non-human, are constantly produced, stabilized, destabilized. Similarly, Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman (2008) argue that material feminism sees nature not as given, but as an agential (drawing on Barad 2003) part of practices, processes and becomings. Focusing on processes, practices and how subjects, categories, differentiations, relations are produced is important because it opens up the possibility that things could be



otherwise, and it opens up strategies to make them otherwise.

Another theoretical perspective that runs through the whole analysis (as well as the methodological design), is the argument that knowledge is situated. Donna Haraway (1988) argues that you always perceive the world from a situated vantage point and through the aid of different instruments, such as the human eye, which can see some things but not others. Further, drawing on marxism and stand-point theory, she argues that those affected or subordinated by a system often have an epistemologically favourable position for apprehending the extent and complexities of this subjection. The significance of this is apparent when it comes to studying borders and regulated migration. From the perspective of the state or of some citizens, migration might be seen as a 'problem' to be dealt with and as something that has to be controlled and regulated, and borders might be seen as necessary in order to create order through classification and delineation, to make the state appear as a 'thing' and to manage its relations to other states. From the perspective of migrants, however, particularly unauthorised migrants who cross borders illegally, who stay without permission, or who are deported, it becomes much more apparent that it is the regulation of migration that is the problem. The argument that knowledge is situated is one of the reasons why, throughout my analysis, I try to look at the arguments from the perspective of those most badly affected by the regulation of migration, and to consider what arguments and strategies that work for them. I do not myself have that experience, and cannot claim to speak for those who have. Nevertheless, by listening to what different people with these experiences say and by thinking about problems and perspectives of people I know or have met who have experience of living or moving without authorisation, I try to consider what things would look like from those positions.

Another central and recurring theoretical intervention is intersectionality, which is used to analyse how various power structures are connected and intra-act. There is, however, much debate about how this inter- or intra-action between structures should be understood and conceptualised (Crenshaw 1998; Collins 2000; Davis 2008; Lykke 2010). I use Barad's (2003) 'intra-action' rather than 'interaction', because I do not see the different power structures as separable, but rather, that they often are co-constitutive, and with a lot of intra-categorical variation. Sometimes I also say that they are 'entangled', also in order to emphasise their inseparability and that there is no clear directionality in their intra-action. Moreover, I often use 'power structures' to speak of for example gender, class, race, sexuality, nationality, even

if 'power structure' is not a perfect term. They could be seen as practices, patterns, norms, or as something else. At the very least it has to be recognised that they are much more changeable, contradictory, fluid and unstable than the word 'structure' might convey. Puar, for instance, also criticises intersectionality for sometimes leading to a too static and fixed view on identity and as failing to question the constitution of the subject (Puar 2007:211-16 & 2012). In my use of intersectionality, I try to always see the making of structures, categories, differences and identities as constant processes. I do not use intersectionality to understand how different individuals or groups are positioned (in a static sense) according to various power structures or categories. Rather, I use intersectionality in the sense of the intra-action or entanglement of various operations of power, to explore how subjects, relations, affects, imaginaries and discourses are produced through these intra-actions/entanglements. I am looking at how borders and regulated migration can be understood as gendering, sexualising, racialising *practices*, and as practices that produce class, economic inequality, nationality, nations and nationalism.

I also tentatively claim that some intersectional analyses would benefit from taking citizenship, migration status or migratory background into account. I leave it open, however, whether these could in some way be incorporated as one of the axes/structures of power commonly attended to in intersectional approaches (doing so would challenge state-centric analysis and would denaturalise citizenship as a legitimate basis of differentiation) or whether it would be more appropriate to see them as one set of practices *through which* other power structures operate and are materialised.

## **Material: Five approaches against borders/regulated migration**

I have chosen to focus on five different approaches or types of arguments against borders and regulated migration. Based on the perspective that the extent and complexity of a system or practice of power often appear more readily from the perspective of those most badly affected by it, I have chosen arguments that not just discuss migration, but that specifically attend to the problems of unauthorised migrants. Taking into account those for whom regulated migration really does not work, the arguments would be more likely, I thought, to question regulated migration in a more thorough manner. However, not all of them are sufficiently grounded in the practical situation of unauthorised migrants, something which becomes apparent when considering the applicability of the arguments in practical work.

### **Sovereignty and homo sacer**

Agamben's philosophy is a critique of the very foundations of the nation-state system and of sovereignty. Borders and regulated migration are not his primary concern. The reason that I have chosen to include Agamben and people drawing on him as one of my approaches is that he is widely used in critiques against borders (see for example McNevin 2013). Thus it might be relevant to explore whether his arguments are useful (or can be made useful) for feminist theoretical work on borders and in the practical struggle against regulated migration.

Sovereignty, the state of exception, the camp and homo sacer are those of Agamben's concepts that are most widely used when it comes to the study of borders (see for example Prem Kumar & Grundy-Warr 2004; Pope & Garrett 2012; Dines et al. 2015; Mountz 2011; Vaughan-Williams 2010). Homo sacer means 'sacred man'. It is a figure from ancient Roman law, 'the *fridlos*' (*fredlös* in Swedish), who is banned from the politically qualified life, *bios*, to become bare life, *zoe*. *Bios* is life in a particular form, organised in politics and society, life in the city, whereas *zoe* is the mere fact of being, biological life. Homo sacer becomes so by being banned by the sovereign, and thus excluded from the protection that laws and practices otherwise bestow on members of the political community, and thus he [sic] may be killed without it being homicide. Some of the examples that Agamben gives of homo sacer are, apart from the *fridlos*, people who were stripped of their citizenship, put in camps and killed by the Nazi regime in Germany; and contemporary refugees that are detained in arrival zones where they have no legal form of protection, but are completely at the mercy of those around

them. The homo sacer may sometimes be treated well, but the crucial point is that he [sic] has no guarantees, that he [sic] is completely dependent on the good will of others, because no one would be punished for any act committed against him [sic]. Agamben further argues that 'we are all *virtually* homines sacri' (1998:111), suggesting that no one's life is ultimately safe under the rule of sovereignty, that citizenship is not a protection since we may be stripped of it.

One of the important points of Agamben's critique is that he points out how vulnerable and precarious life is in systems putatively based on democracy and human rights. Since sovereignty will always produce homo sacer, and since we are all at risk of becoming so, it is futile to found political liberties on the right of the citizen (Agamben 1998:181) (as Hannah Arendt (2004:376) puts it, human rights do not mean much those who do not even have the 'right to have rights'). There is thus little point in entrusting the sovereign with the task of ensuring the fulfilment of political liberties. Agamben's point is that democracy is just as incapable of caring for zoe as totalitarianism (1998:10). The vulnerability of life in face of the sovereign state is relevant for feminism more broadly, and vulnerability and precarity have been increasingly debated issues in gender studies over the last decade or two (see for example Butler 2004a; Puar et al. 2012). Agamben's critique makes it clear that the state/sovereign sometimes directly creates this vulnerability, which provides some healthy scepticism of turning to the state for protection and security.

Agamben's depiction of the sovereign resonates well with the state as viewed from the position of unauthorised migrants. For someone who lives with the threat of deportation, the state appears in all its brutality and shows its most violent face. The reach of its power seems unlimited, it might catch you anywhere: at home, at work, in school, at the hospital, on public transport. It seems to be completely indifferent to your life or death. If you are caught and deported it does not refrain from using physical violence against you. The only thing that matters is that you are no longer present on its territory, and what happens after they have dumped you at an airport somewhere in Afganistan, Iraq, Somalia, or Kongo-Kinshasa, is none of their concern.

In contrast to Foucault, Agamben argues that western politics is biopolitics from the very beginning (1998:181), because politics is 'giving form to the life of the people' (1998:148), which means giving shape to and deciding on the limits of bios, that is, differentiating it from zoe. He argues that 'the original political relation is the ban' (1998:181),

and that sovereignty, consequently, will always produce homo sacer. Agamben, thus, attends primarily to the process of some being cast outside of the bios, rather than the regulatory technologies directed at the bios, on which Foucault (1998:136-40) focuses (see also Mbembe 2003 in this context). Attending to those unfit for biopolitics, those who do not matter to it, so to speak, and whose life and death is thus completely indifferent to sovereignty, is also relevant for feminist usages of biopolitics, since, in my view, feminism should always seek to attend to those who are most marginalised.

### **Rethinking and redoing citizenship**

Critically studying citizenship is not new in gender studies. Feminists have examined the gendered aspects of citizenship, for instance by questioning who, at different times and places, is legally considered a citizen and who is partially or entirely excluded (for example women, children, people of colour, people with cognitive disabilities); which acts are seen as constitutive of citizenship (for example military service or childrearing); the norms that underpin the ideals of citizenship (for instance rationality, autonomy, self-sufficiency, holding property); and its association to the problematic divide between public and private (see for example Dietz 1998; Young 1998; Lister 2003; Sager 2011).

In the practical and theoretical work against borders and regulated migration, citizenship is sometimes seen as an alternative route to the undoing of the exclusion of borders. I choose citizenship as one of the approaches that provide arguments against borders because it shifts the focus from criticising exclusion (borders), to finding paths for inclusion (citizenship). These are of course intertwined, but focusing on citizenship has spurred a wide range of academic work that not only destabilises borders, citizenship and the nation-state, but that is also more geared towards practical strategies than many of the arguments that focus on borders (see for example Nyers & Rygiel 2012; McNevin 2011 & 2013; Varsanyi 2006; Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas 2012; Balibar 2004; Sager 2011). In this thesis, the citizenship approach stands out because it is not represented by one key person.

Rethinking and deconstructing citizenship shows that it is not simply a formal status granted by the state but that it also comprises acts such as social and political engagement, being part of a community, that it entails rights and duties that may also apply to people who are not formally citizens, that it is not enacted only on the national state level, but also more globally and more locally, and that the state is not the only source from which citizenship emanates (McNevin 2011; Nyers & Rygiel 2012; Balibar 2004:31-50; Varsanyi 2006).

Pointing out these complexities and multiple aspects of citizenship is a way of showing that there is indeed room for debate about who is a citizen and who is not. It points to a route of contestation of the right of the state to decide on migration, on who can stay, on who is a citizen, on who 'belongs', on who should have rights and on the limits of political community and responsibility.

In work against borders, there are primarily two routes through which citizenship is questioned or rethought. The first focuses on the *doing* of citizenship, in the same way as the feminists cited above have previously criticised citizenship. These doings and acts can include political mobilisations by unauthorised migrants/residents, claiming different forms of rights, formal status, improved working conditions, better wages, or other political causes that are not directly about their own situation (Balibar 2004; Sager 2011; McNevin 2011 & 2013; Rygiel 2011). It can also be the building of or participation in local communities (Nyers & Rygiel 2012). Further, doing the 'duties' of citizenship, for example contributing by working and paying taxes, educating oneself, participating in social and political life, and even doing military service<sup>3</sup>, are sometimes emphasised as bases on which one can claim entitlement to the 'rights' of citizenship (Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas 2012:242-51). As Shahram Khosravi (2010:99) puts it, '[i]ronically, the undocumented migrant exemplifies the impeccable citizen', by never breaking any laws, blending in, working hard without objections.

The second main way of rethinking citizenship in relation to migration is by questioning the state as the only unit, arena or level of citizenship. Focusing on local citizenship seems to be the most promising route here (rather than, say, cosmopolitanism) (Varsanyi 2006:231-41). There are local forms of inclusion, rights, and/or protection against deportation, where one's formal exclusion is overlooked or rendered irrelevant. Some examples are so-called 'sanctuary cities' where local municipalities decide that everyone, independently of legal status, should have access to the services and provisions of the municipality (Walia 2013; Nyers & Rygiel 2012); local police districts' decisions not to enforce migration law; rights to vote in local elections; local decisions that institutions of for example education or health care are open to everyone, and so forth (Varsanyi 2006:241-4).

Rethinking citizenship, as something one can *do*, independently of legal status, and as something that can be created at the local level when citizenship at the state level is more

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3 Several of these things are very difficult or impossible to do in Sweden, but possible in for example the US.

restrictive, may provide multiple paths and practical strategies for concrete and immediate improvements of the life situations of unauthorised residents. Deconstructing citizenship can also show that the concept is not as coherent and clear-cut as it may appear, which may, further, facilitate its reformulation or expansion at the level of the national state. These can be useful strategies in other feminist struggles, if, for instance, there is a deadlock at the national level in respect to recognising a third gender, it is of course already practiced independently of what the state says, and local municipalities or institutions could also decide to recognise it in their own policies and activities, even if the national state does not.

### **Deportability, labour and the state**

De Genova's basic argument is that the primary aim of the state is to facilitate capital accumulation, and that borders, citizenship and the regulation of migration are key to this. He argues that if we do not begin 'from the epistemological standpoint of the state and its functionaries but rather from the standpoint of the elementary freedom of movement as something like a basic human entitlement, then [...] the real problem comes into considerably sharper focus: the problem, clearly, is the state itself' (De Genova 2007:425). I have chosen the work by De Genova as one of my approaches because he provides a radical critique of borders and because his work has been influential in the field (see for example Basok et al. 2014; Dines et al. 2015; Doering-White et al. 2014; McNevin 2013; Lewis 2013; Papadopoulos & Tsianos 2013; Rygiel 2011; White 2014).

Restricting movement prevents people from escaping their predicaments (De Genova 2010:58) and when they nevertheless do so and migrate despite the obstacles, they are made vulnerable and thus exploitable through the threat of deportation, a condition which De Genova calls 'deportability'. The objective of the state is not, in this view, to deport as many as possible, because they are needed as cheap labour. Instead, the objective is to create a docile and exploitable labour force, disciplined through the threat of deportation (De Genova 2007:426).

De Genova sees citizenship as a particularly statist form of governance – 'citizenship in particular comes to entail "the primary inscription of life in the state order"' (Agamben in De Genova 2010:45) – of which he is very critical. Firstly, he argues that citizenship is part of the territorialisation of human existence, which is a result of the 'fragmentation of laboring humanity' into citizen and non-citizen which underpin the exploitation of human power by the state, on behalf of capital (De Genova 2010:48). Further, the fragmentation and

immobilisation of humanity also has a nationalist undercurrent. He argues that struggles to expand citizenship for 'the enhanced "inclusion" of the "foreigners" who already reside *within* the space of a "national community" tend therefore to merely *intensify* the constitutive separation of the "aliens" on the far side of the frontier' (2010:53). 'Immigrant inclusion', he argues, rests on nativity as a legitimate basis on which to differentiate and prioritise people. Nativism, he claims, 'is best apprehended precisely as *native-ism* – a promotion of the priority of "natives", on no other grounds than their *being* such' (2010:53). Citizenship is made to appear as a legitimate ground on which to distinguish between people and prioritise some over others, dissimulating racial distinctions: 'the apparently race-neutral and presumptively "legitimate" politics of *citizenship* may serve to achieve the elision of race' (2010:55).

Moreover, he argues that struggles for citizenship as a route to protection against bare life or for freedom are in vain, because attaching our transformative energies and struggles to citizenship would domesticate them, re-inscribe them in the state-order and would also be an implicit endorsement of the 'necessity' of the political state (De Genova 2007:441-2). Human insurgent energies, he argues, cannot use citizenship as a vehicle because they will then 'be contained within the state, delimited and further delimitable by law, and thus become advantageous for the further subjection of restless and creative human powers as alienated and domesticated ones' (De Genova 2007:442). Lastly, citizenship is deceptive; it prevents us from recognising our own abjection. Citizens are not safe: 'the more flagrant abjection of the world of denizens only shows, to the more properly domesticated citizens, the image of their own future' (2007:442). De Genova (2010:45) makes the point clear: "'Criticism has torn up the imaginary flowers from the chain," Marx once admonished, "not so that man shall wear the unadorned, bleak chain but so that he will shake off the chain and pluck the living flower" [...] Indeed, it is *citizenship* that remains for us the imaginary and purely deceptive flower dissimulating our subjection and adorning our abjection'.

There are at least two ways in which De Genova's critique is relevant for feminist studies. First, he reminds us about the need to maintain a healthy critical distance to the state and its forms of governance, of which citizenship is one. If/when we seek changes and solutions through the state it is important to keep in mind that these may also serve other objectives of the state, such as facilitating capital accumulation and creating a governable population. Secondly, the way he initiates a consideration of what borders *do* and what they *produce* resonates with wider feminist interests in studying practices rather than taken for



granted categories and objects, and shows that borders and regulated migration are practices that are indeed very interesting and relevant to study.

### **Indigenous perspectives and border imperialism**

The next approach to borders and regulated migration that I will focus on is that stemming from indigenous relationships to land and the critique of borders and settler states emanating from indigenous resistance. I focus particularly on this critique as it appears in the work of Walia. Walia combines an anti-capitalist critique of borders similar to that of De Genova, with the critique from indigenous struggles and with a firm grounding in migrant justice movements, specifically No One Is Illegal (NOII) (Canada). She uses the concept 'border imperialism', which she describes as consisting of four overlapping structures:

first, the mass displacement of impoverished and colonized communities resulting from asymmetrical relations of global power, and the simultaneous securitization of the border against those migrants whom capitalism and empire have displaced; second, the criminalization of migration with severe punishment and discipline of those deemed 'alien' or 'illegal'; third, the entrenchment of a racialized hierarchy of citizenship by arbitrating who legitimately constitutes the nation-state; and fourth, the state mediated exploitation of migrant labor, akin to conditions of slavery and servitude, by capitalist interests (Walia 2013:5).

The perspective of indigenous peoples provides a radical critique of borders and the state, one that is based on a different relationship to nature, land and property, than the dominating views in western understandings. To make a very generalising claim, in indigenous cosmologies, land is not property, and nature is not something to be exploited and used. Rather, human beings are inextricably *part* of nature, living in relation to it and to other animals. From these perspectives, one does not need any extensive theorising to be critical of borders, it becomes readily apparent that borders are imposed on top of the land and people, sometimes as part of a colonial project, and that the state is sometimes best apprehended as an illegitimate settler state. These perspectives denaturalise borders and property, and provide examples of how things could be otherwise. Drawing on these knowledges, which could perhaps be called subaltern in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's words (1988), or subjugated in Foucault's (1980:81-3), provides a way of arguing and acting that departs from state-centric perspectives on migrant justice. Two examples of slogans in this vein are 'we didn't cross the border, the border crossed us' and 'No one is illegal, Canada is illegal' (Walia 2013:77). The

question about standpoints, perspectives or subordinated knowledges are central topics of feminist theory (see for example Haraway 1988), and the standpoints/perspectives/knowledges of colonised indigenous peoples need to be taken into account to a greater extent in gender studies and feminism more broadly. Further, indigenous relationships to nature speak to current feminist rethinking of materiality and the divisions between human/non-human, nature/culture, material/discursive (Alaimo & Hekman 2008:1-7).

Walia points to similarities in the positions and oppression of unauthorised migrants and of indigenous peoples within border imperialism. Despite numerous obstacles to solidarity and coalitions, she argues that indigenous struggles and struggles for migrant justice, *have to* and *can* work together, and that the goal of indigenous sovereignty and no borders go hand in hand. She provides numerous examples of alliances between the two groups. For example, undocumented migrants have participated in protests to defend indigenous lands, and indigenous peoples' challenges of the Canadian state's jurisdiction over their land have also been a challenge to its right to decide on migration. As an act of asserting their own sovereignty over their land indigenous peoples have welcomed migrants and offered protection against deportation. As Melissa Elliot, indigenous activist, says 'the Canadian government has no jurisdiction in our lands to be deporting you people, to be treating you the way that they are, or us the way that they are' (Walia 2013:135) and Lee Maracle, indigenous feminist writer, '[y]ou [migrants] have a counter-law. It is my law. It is the host law of Indigenous people. Everybody eats, every woman has a right to a house, and everyone has access to the wealth of the land' (Walia 2013:136). Concurrently, No One Is Illegal in Canada does not only argue for the 'freedom to move in order to flourish with dignity and equality', but also: 'the freedom to stay and resist systemic displacement [...] and the freedom to return to dispossessed lands and homes' (Walia 2013:77). Understanding the ways in which the same systems subordinate people in similar, but perhaps different, ways, and finding shared interests, as bases of forging solidarity, alliances and coalitions among various groups, has for a long time been a central concern for feminists, particularly for those negatively affected along various axes of power (see for instance Johnson Reagan 1998; Mohanty 2003). The importance of overcoming dividing lines and instead working together for equality – 'on the one hand [to] look for commonalities without being arrogantly universalist, and on the other affirm difference without being transfixed by it' (Cockburn & Hunter in Cockburn 2014:441) – is also part of transversal politics (Cockburn 2014; Yuval-

Davis 1997).

Another way in which Walia's work should be of interest to gender studies is the way that she writes from *within* an activist movement, and the way that she combines theory and practice, making theory serve practical purposes. Another important point that also resonates with feminist practices is her argument about the need for prefigurative practices: enacting the world we want in the here and now, relating to each other in the way that we think we should. For example, movements for decolonisation must make sure to properly decolonise themselves and their internal practices. By combining theory, movement-based practices and knowledges, personal experiences and multiple voices from migrant and indigenous activists, her book challenges established forms of academic knowledge-production as well as the boundaries between activism and academia.

### **Borders as moulds and the community of value**

The distinctive contribution of Anderson's analysis and arguments, compared to the others, is that she starts from the injunction to look at what borders *do* and what they produce. By focusing on value and values she discusses how regulated migration intra-acts with other power structures. In her work she focuses primarily on class, race and gender, but using the same framework one could easily also discuss sexuality and ability more extensively.

Borders, she argues, produce rather than reflect status and they create social, political and economic relations (Anderson 2013:2). Status here, is not just 'about legal status, but fundamentally about status in the sense of worth and honour' (2013:4). Together with Nandita Sharma and Cynthia Wright, Anderson argues that borders are moulds, they create certain types of subjects, subjectivities, and power relations, and not only 'good workers', but also 'good wives', 'straight guys and gals', 'good parents', and 'good children' (Anderson et al. 2009:6-7). Anderson sees borders as productive not only of those who are directly subjected to migration control, but of everyone. Since they produce relations, and since subjectivities are relational, they matter for everyone. As Anderson puts it, borders 'reach into the heart of political space', '[t]he exclusion of migrants helps define the privileges and the limitations of citizenship, and close attention to the border (physical and metaphorical) reveals much about how we make sense of ourselves' (Anderson 2013:2).

Modern states, argues Anderson, do not just arbitrarily exclude people on the outside in order to maintain an administrative unit or to facilitate capital accumulation. They do not portray themselves as 'arbitrary collections of people [...] but as a *community of value*',

'composed of people who share common ideals and (exemplary) patterns of behaviour expressed through ethnicity, religion, culture, or language – that is, its members have shared values' (Anderson 2013:2-3). By using the concept 'community of value' rather than 'nation', Anderson can more effectively show that not all formal citizens are good citizens (some fail, so to speak, to live up to the national values (2013:4, 178)). The term non-citizen is also normative, it does not just describe a legal status; 'outsider' comes to mean 'not the same values', which comes to mean 'wrong values', and immigration debate is 'about the contours of the community of value as much as [...] about trade offs and economic impact' (Anderson 2013:4). It is about the norms and values underlying the community of value, that is, about the ideal and limits of good citizenship. 'The community of value is defined from the outside by the non-citizen, but also from the inside, by the "Failed Citizen"' (Anderson 2013:4), as external and internal 'others'. Some of the figurations that Anderson discusses are 'the benefit scrounger' and 'the criminal' as failed citizens, and 'the illegal migrant' as the least tolerated of non-citizens, because of its association with 'the criminal'. All of these figurations are also gendered, racialised and classed.

Thus, Anderson makes a good case for why borders and the regulation of migration are concerns for gender studies and feminist theory more broadly: they concern everyone, they 'reach into the heart of political space', they are key practices through which numerous other power structures are mobilised, and they affect some of the most marginalised and shunned figures today.

## **Analysis**

I will analyse these five different approaches in the same order as presented above.

### **Sovereignty and homo sacer: Objects, differentiation, dehumanisation, and social relations**

I will explore whether Agamben provides effective arguments and strategies against borders and regulated migration by plugging his arguments into the following situations and theories. Firstly, I start by considering what possibilities of action Agamben might provide for unauthorised migrants, and then I read Agamben's 'sovereignty' through Berlant's and Barad's theorisation of objects as both a critique of Agamben's view on sovereignty and as a way of making his arguments more useable in the practical work against regulated migration. Secondly, I read him through feminist arguments – in this case represented by Alison Mountz – about the need to differentiate and contextualise the workings of power as well as his unspecified and abstract concepts. This leads on to a discussion about how representing people as bare life might contribute to dehumanisation – often intertwined with racialisation – rather than benefit those such represented. I connect this to Puar's and Butler's arguments about the need to address the question of who or what can be a subject. Lastly, I plug in his view on sovereign power and the camp to the practical need – and reality – of social relations and collectivities.

Agamben speaks to the vulnerability of many unauthorised migrants, and to the sense of being completely at the mercy of the state. Human rights, the refugee-convention and national asylum laws sometimes seem to offer no protection, since their fulfilment is completely dependent upon the state. Agamben's critique points to the inherent flaws in the asylum system, since in his view the sovereign is inherently incapable of properly caring for *zoe*. Agamben's arguments can thus be used to argue for the need for a radically new system, a new way of organising not only migration, but politics, society and communal living more generally. Further, since he makes it clear that we are all vulnerable in face of the sovereign – 'we are all *virtually* homines sacri' – his arguments can also be used to show that this is not a question that is of concern only for those currently experiencing the brutality of being banned, but for everyone. This could be a basis for larger alliances against the current system. Agamben gives little clues as to how this could be brought about or what alternatives there

are. His vague gestures towards a different politics can be found in the argument that '[t]his biopolitical body that is bare life must itself instead be transformed into the site for the constitution and installation of a form of life that is wholly exhausted in bare life and a *bios* that is only its own *zoe*' (1998:188), that is, a form of life that is not based on the distinction between bios and zoe. Considered in the context of contemporary social movements, his critique can thus be used for a radical no-border and anti-state politics.

However, for unauthorised migrants, obtaining legal status is often a top priority and necessity. One woman I know became apathetic because of the insecurity of not having legal status. For several years she was almost permanently in bed. She, her husband and their children had fled a war, with all the (gendered) violence this may entail, but were denied asylum and lived with the fear of deportation for almost a decade. For her, and other unauthorised residents who suffer from illnesses, pain or other problems caused by anxiety, it is obtaining the security of legal status that is needed in order to cure their physical and psychological pains. Making good strategies against regulated migration must recognise unauthorised residents'/migrants' need to obtain legal status, even if this entails a collaboration that might be seen as a reinforcement of the legitimacy of the state to decide on migration and a re-inscription of citizenship as something which protects us against bare life. For those who do not have it, obtaining citizenship and the rights it entails can not be seen as 'in vain'.

Agamben's argument that we need a total exodus from sovereignty – against any hopes of changing it or strategically engaging with it – might be more adjusted to the practical *need* to sometimes engage with the state, by reading his 'sovereignty' through Berlant's and Barad's critical examinations of 'objects'. Sovereignty, I argue, is not as coherent and singular as it appears in Agamben's work, a critique also made by others. For instance, Anne McNevin advances this kind of critique:

William Connolly argues that Agamben attributes to sovereign power an internal logic that simply is not there. Others have pointed, in this respect, to the agents of sovereign power (border guards, police, immigration officials) whose discretionary actions are far more suggestive of a highly fragmented system of governance than a coherent and systematic sovereign logic (McNevin 2013:188).

Similarly Nick Dines, Nicola Montagna and Vincenzo Ruggiero argue that

it needs to be reiterated that the transformation of Lampedusa into a border zone is not the work of a

single sovereign state power but the upshot of a complex assemblage of governmental (Italian, European and third country) and non-governmental actors engaged in migration management (Dines et al. 2015:436).

Looking at the object 'sovereignty' through the work of Berlant and Barad, however, provides a more theoretically grounded account of this complexity, pointing to a much more fundamental necessity to rethink all our concepts and objects of study, that this complexity is the case for all objects, not just sovereignty. Berlant (in Seitz 2013<sup>4</sup>) argues that 'queer theory is fundamentally about not presuming your object' but about understanding what it is, that we should not simply presume that our objects of study are given, or that they are discrete, identifiable 'things'. Instead of presuming our objects we should ask what our relation to the object is and what it does for us (see also Wiegman 2012). 'Your object is a relation, [...] your object is a cluster of promises to you', consisting of patterns that are ambivalent and improvisatory (Berlant in Seitz 2013). If, for example, the state or sovereignty, are seen as patternings rather than as coherent actors, it is easier to understand that, as Berlant (in Seitz 2013) puts it, 'the state is a resource as well as a site of domination'.

Berlant (2006) draws on psychoanalysis to make this argument while Barad takes her departure in science studies and draws particularly on the physicist Niels Bohr. Barad (2003:815) argues that 'according to Bohr, the primary epistemological unit is not independent objects with inherent boundaries and properties but rather *phenomena*'. Phenomena, in Barad's view, 'are the ontological inseparability of agentially intra-acting "components"' (2003:815), and 'components' are only momentarily identifiable/delimitable within this momentary phenomena, they do not preexist the phenomena, and the 'agential cut' that separates them may be done differently at any other moment. Thus, both Berlant and Barad, albeit in different ways, question that objects, concepts, words and things are really as unitary, independent, coherent and singular as commonly conceived.

Questioning the stability and internal coherence of sovereignty is no mere theoretical exercise but has implications for the practical usages of Agamben's arguments. As I said above, he argues that sovereignty will always produce bare life and that we thus need a complete exodus from it. However, Berlant (in Seitz 2013) argues that one benefit of '[t]hinking about the object as a patterning that's loosely organised', is 'that it would be possible to change the object without having to lose everything [...] So rather than saying "I

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4 This source has no page numbers.

hate the state,” or “I love the state,” saying “here’s what the state can do” and then ask what else we need that cannot be satisfied by, in this case, 'the state'. This, she argues, is enabling because then you can 'start to think of yourself as having a capacity to produce many kinds of patternings and attachments to the world' (in Seitz 2013). For instance, when it comes to sovereignty, we might want that aspect of it that can be used to protect us and the place we live from exploitation, protect us against what Balibar (2002:85) calls 'the unfettered domination of the private centers of power which monopolize capital, communications and perhaps also, arms'.

Thinking about objects in this way, in this case specifically sovereignty, might provide a way in which Agamben's arguments can be made more useful for migrants in their actual situation. Agamben's arguments that it is futile to struggle for political liberties attached to citizenship, and that sovereignty will always produce bare life, seem to suggest no paths of action for people who are currently made into bare life, other than withdrawing from sovereignty. And withdrawing and refusing to have anything to do with the state, citizenship and sovereignty is impossible. You cannot just refuse gender, you are *within* a system of gender, what you can do is to try to change it or to inhabit or do it differently. In the same way, you cannot just refuse sovereign power, you can try to resist it in various ways, but it will affect you, which becomes particularly apparent if you defy it by, for example, migrating without authorisation. Obtaining a residence permit is almost always a primary need and objective of all the unauthorised migrants that I meet. People might, in principle, be against seeking this kind of permission by the state, but the consequences of not doing so are so grave that it is almost impossible. Given these conditions, arguments and strategies against borders and regulated migration must make room for the need to at least partially engage with sovereignty and the state, and perhaps also to change them, at least as one step in the process of creating an alternative system.

Moving on to the second focus of my analysis of Agamben, reading him through feminist theories that pay close attention to contexts and differentiations, his theory appears to be too unspecified, presented as universal. This critique is directed at the state of exception, the camp and homo sacer, demonstrating that they are too general and need to be differentiated, for example with respect to race, gender and nationality, and to location, place and context (Mountz 2011:387). Homo sacer, argues Mountz, is presented as a 'universal figure – an undifferentiated, gender-blind, unspecified body – always outside of the state'



(2011:383). While the generalisable and generalising aspects of power and exclusion are important, feminist thought has long argued that it is crucial to understand the specificities of the workings of power. Mountz (2011:394) continues, '[p]erhaps key to understanding exclusion is the balance between its generalizable aspects, which Agamben masters so tantalizingly and those specificities that differentiate sites, methods and people's biographies of in-betweenness'. Thus, while Agamben studies sovereignty as a largely undifferentiated/ing power, we must specify how this is entangled/intra-acts with power along the lines of for example gender, race, sexuality, nationality and class. This is important, since it shows some of the ways in which the sovereign power of Agamben does not randomly target anyone, but operates specifically along the aforementioned lines. We are not all '*virtually* hominis sacri' to the same extent, but according the same power structures that structure most social and political life. For example, the dehumanisation of migrants that is sometimes depicted as a condition homo sacer is difficult to understand without the larger context of racial dehumanisation. What it means to be homo sacer, how it is inhabited and what risks one faces, also varies depending on context as well as on how one is positioned in relation to various power structures. Additionally, it also means that the bios, from which homo sacer is excluded, is also constituted in relation to gendered, racial, sexual and classed terms.

Others, for example Dines et al. (2015) and Kim Ryzgiel (2011), focus not on the need to differentiate homo sacer and bios along various power structure, but argue that constructing/representing people as bare life, may spectacularise and/or dehumanise, rather than as perhaps intended, work in favour of those thus represented. For example pictures of starving and thirsting people, rescued after weeks at sea, or representations of informally created migrants camps as dangerous, lawless places (as Ryzgiel argues that the French authorities represent the camp at Calais), might contribute to an othering and dehumanisation of migrants. Dines et al. argue that '[t]he transformation of Lampedusa into a spectacle of bare life is not only instrumental to the functioning of migration management at Europe's southern border; it is also constitutive of the subordinate position of migrants in Italian society and its labour market' (Dines et al. 2015:432).

Challenging dehumanisation is a recurring feminist and anti-racist theme (see for example Butler 2004a and Mbembe 2003, as well as my analysis of Walia's work). It is a question of who or what is considered to be a human and to be a subject. Puar, in a critique of intersectionality, which she argues aims at decentering 'the normative subject of feminism',

ask how then it can 'address the problem that the construction of the subject is itself already normative?' (Puar 2012:63). Instead, she claims, we must interrogate subjecthood itself (Puar 2012:62). Similarly, Butler argues that we should 'dislodge the subject as the ground for ethics in order to recast the subject as a problem *for* ethics' not as the death of the subject, but as an inquiry into how it is constituted, and 'how the norms that govern ethical principles must be understood as operating not only to guide conduct but to decide the question of who and what will be a human subject' (Butler 2005:109-110). Butler (2005:29) further argues 'that our capacity to respond to a face as a human face is conditioned and mediated by frames of reference that are variably humanizing and dehumanizing'. These frames are undoubtedly based on constructions of gender, race, sexuality, ability, class, and so forth, and borders (as well as bare life) can be seen as another frame that – entangled with the others – works in a de/humanising way. Constructing migrants as bare life, might thus contribute to them not being seen as subjects. This is surely not Agamben's intention, but the uses of his work might have this function. It points to the need to attend to what concepts *do*, not just what they are.

Finally, another important critique of Agamben that emerges when reading him through the practical experiences of people who could perhaps be described as *homo sacer*, and with a focus on finding effective strategies against borders, is that he does not spell out any forms of collective organising. Sovereignty and *homo sacer* appear to be irrevocably individualising. This is not true in reality, because even though detention and deportation sometimes are extremely individualising practices – for example detention in isolation cells and prohibition of any contact with others – people still sometimes help each other to challenge the worst excesses of the sovereign. Further, when thinking about strategies rather than only critique, we also need a view on power that is not only and irrevocably individualising, because in order to achieve change we need collective action, and we thus (also) need theories that can account for and make room for collective organising. 'For Agamben' argues Mountz, 'every citizen stands alone, authority hidden, law elusive. Feminist counter-topographies, conversely, offer tools for political mobilization of states of exception, mapping transnational linkages between sites where asylum-seekers are policed and refugee-receiving states called into accountability' (Mountz 2011:394).

Rygiel (2011) challenges the individuating character of power in Agamben's work by engaging with the various representations of 'the camp'. 'The camp' is central in Agamben's work, as a paradigmatic example of sovereign power and the state of exception in the 20<sup>th</sup>

Century. It is exemplified with the Nazi extermination camps, and its inhabitants as bare life. Rygiel presents diverging representations and meanings of the camp, exemplified by the migrant camp 'the jungle' at Calais. On the one hand, she argues, the authorities seek to construct the camp as a site of bare life and as outside of the law. This would legitimise their destruction of the camp, as a reassertion of state sovereignty as well as a way of presenting themselves as 'protecting' those who live in the camp, constructed as its victims (Rygiel 2011:9; Dines et al. 2015:438). On the other hand, Rygiel (2011:4) argues, the migrants inhabiting the camp, as well as other activists and local residents supporting them, represent the camp 'as a social and political space from which a politics of citizenship might emerge'. According to Rygiel, the social relations created within the camp as well as between inhabitants of the camp, residents in the local community and activists threaten state sovereignty precisely because they may form the basis upon which to create a politics that challenges the current border regime, and that the politics of detention, in contrast, seeks to prevent the formation of such social relations.

Thus, despite all the critical force of Agamben's work, feminist interventions are needed in order to make his theory into usable and strong arguments and strategies against borders and regulated migration. Central objects of study – in this case sovereignty – need to be seen as clusters of patternings, practices and promises. This view on objects – as contradictory and changeable – is necessary in order to reconcile the practical needs of unauthorised migrants of obtaining legal status, with the principled rejection of the system of regulated migration and the right of the state to control mobility. Further, while it is important to criticise the individualising aspects of power, in order to envision good arguments and strategies against borders we also need to recognise that it is possible to resist the individualising forces, recognise similarities, differences and connections across time and space, as well as recognise the ways in which sovereign power, exclusion, the camp and homo sacer are entangled with other power relations such as gender, race, sexuality, class and nationality.

### **Rethinking and redoing citizenship: Protection, normative governance, deservingness, and imaginaries**

My analysis of the approach that focuses on citizenship as a way of challenging borders and regulated migration will run along the following points. Firstly, by reading it through the practical situation of unauthorised migrants it becomes clear that a focus on citizenship

provides several possible strategies for unauthorised migrants and other people working practically to support them. It also shows, however, that formal citizenship still matters in a very material way, so while it may be deconstructed or be seen as a *doing*, this does not (yet?) adequately protect people against deportation. Secondly, reading citizenship through feminist intersectional theory I argue that when mobilising around citizenship, we must be cautious not to reproduce its current normative underpinnings. Thirdly, I note the risk of arguing for a form of citizenship (or regularisation programme) that differentiate between deserving and undeserving residents/migrants. Finally, I read the focus on citizenship through Berlant's discussion about how, on the one hand, our attachments to objects such as citizenship may have become relations of 'cruel optimism', and on the other hand, that we need imaginaries that support a better life, and that citizenship might provide such an imaginary.

I start with the strategies that the focus on citizenship might provide for the practical work against borders and regulated migration. The focus on citizenship provides various strategies against borders: *doing* citizenship, organising politically and collectively, changing local policies. The *doing* of citizenship can also become a path not just to inclusion in the local community but sometimes also eventually lead to formal status (Chauvin & Garcés-Masareñas 2012). These approaches challenge the state as the most central actor in the determination of rights of mobility, rights and inclusion, and instead shows that migrants and local actors can take matters into their own hands, without restricting themselves to waiting for the state to change. In addition, by disregarding legal status, they challenge its importance for local politics and for people's possibilities to act and to organise.

The most immediate problem is that *doing* citizenship, and often local forms of citizenship as well, do not adequately protect people against deportation and cannot make up for the lack of legal status. *Doing* citizenship, or making use of rights obtained through local citizenship, does not immediately create more security against the risks of apprehension and deportation. On the contrary, it often augments these risks for unauthorised residents since it entails increased visibility. For example, while the right of unauthorised residents to access social services is contested and legally unclear, many people I know are anxious about asking the social services for help because of the risk it entails. Even though social workers would breach confidentiality if they reported them to the police, there is always a risk that the social worker in question does not know this (until a few years ago this was a legal procedure). I also know of young people who have been apprehended by the police when going to or

coming from psychiatric clinics. Being actively, visibly political entails even more risks. I know people who are public with their lack of legal status, name and face – figuring in photos and videos or speaking at demonstrations – but most people would not take this risk, since if their faces are known they could much more easily be reported and apprehended by the police. Taking part in demonstrations or protests, even without taking a leading role, is also a considerable risk, since you could be required to show ID to the police if there are any disturbances. Being publicly political as an unauthorised resident requires a lot of courage.

Further, as long as formal citizenship continues to have significance, it is a serious issue of inequality if some people only have local or partial form of citizenship. Monica Varsanyi (2006:238) argues that 'institutions of political membership below and beyond the nation-state are not yet potent enough (and may not be in the near to medium term) to provide adequate protection or alternative structures of belonging'. Consequently, we cannot stop at deconstructing citizenship or doing it differently, but must in some way ensure that it can also lead to more safety and to equality. This could be done either, as Varsanyi argues, by making the rethinking of citizenship 'be[ing] tied back in with discounted structures of legal and formal citizenship' (2006:238), or by finding other ways to limit the importance of legal status. That is, deconstructing citizenship or seeing it as a process or a doing must also lead to materially more security either by also leading to changes in the acquisition of formal citizenship or by limiting the significance of formal citizenship, for example by limiting the right of the state to deport non-citizens. Just as is the case with other forms of oppression, changes in civil society or local policies are important, but legal forms of exclusion or oppression must also be addressed.

Moving on, if citizenship is used as a vehicle or objective of struggle, the normative underpinnings of citizenship must be taken into account and challenged. This means understanding that people have different possibilities of doing acts that count as citizenship, and thus different possibilities of being recognised as citizens. For instance, the definition of political acts is gendered and classed. Participating in party-politics, public demonstrations or public debate might be considered political acts whereas engagement in the local community, caring for others by providing food and a place to stay, breaking with dominant norms and expectations, or simply struggling to survive, may not. Undocumented migrants with higher education, knowledge of English and/or the local language and who perhaps have a larger social network, have much more possibilities to *do* citizenship than those who can hardly read

or write or who have a harder time learning the local languages. Having previous experience of political work might also make it easier to organise in one's new place of residence. Further, someone who has children to care for or other dependants might be less willing to take the risks of being too public. Of course, this does not mean that people without formal education, little knowledge of local languages, no previous experience of political work, who have disabilities, and who have dependants, do not work politically, or *do* things that can be seen as citizenship, but it demonstrates the need to question the normative underpinning of how citizenship is *done*. It also shows that we need more strategies to challenge borders than that of *doing* citizenship.<sup>5</sup>

The focus on citizenship may also strengthen its normative underpinnings and the power structures with which it is entangled. If we argue that people should be considered citizens because they do what citizens (should) do – for example engage in public life in a particular way, work and contribute to the economy, raise children to become good future citizens – then we are also strengthening these normative ideals, these 'duties' as important, as well as this particular way of doing them. It strengthens a normative and productive ideal of citizenship at the expense of political projects that question the duties of labour, reproduction, consumption, propriety, self-sufficiency, etc. This is the critique of homonormativity and the model minority syndrome (which I will discuss at greater length further on): by seeking recognition and acceptance as proper citizens and as part of national life, the norms underpinning these are strengthened (Puar 2007; Walia 2010). Citizenship is a form of governance (Luibhéid 2005; De Genova 2007 & 2010). Thus, if we mobilise for its expansion or rethinking, we also have to make sure that we do not reproduce some of the regulating and normative structures that currently operate through it.

Another related issue is that many arguments resort to claiming that a person – or group – *deserves* to be considered citizen, to have rights, or to be allowed to stay. This is a significant problem because arguing, for instance, that all children deserve health care implies that not all adults do, or arguing that all people who are born 'here' (wherever the boundaries of 'here' are) deserve citizenship implies that not everyone born 'elsewhere' do. For example, the slogan 'good enough to work, good enough to stay' (Walia 2010:81), implies that those who are not working – who perhaps cannot work – are not 'good enough to stay'.<sup>6</sup> It is also

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5 For example in the US there are millions of unauthorised residents who *do* citizenship, and the fact that some eventually gain legal status does not directly help those who for various reasons do not qualify.

6 Many regularisation programmes based on labour also risk making migrants even more dependent on their employer, and basically grant employers the right to decide who can stay and who cannot.

easy to fall into the trap of arguing according to this logic of the deserving or undeserving when campaigning in individual cases. If there are no other reasons that would resonate with the public and/or stand a chance of being legally recognised, I have myself felt compelled to argue, for example, that a person really cannot be deported to Afghanistan because they have no network to rely on for support, thus indirectly implying that it would be more acceptable to deport someone who has a local network. Or that a person must be allowed to stay because their partner lives 'here', and because they have lived 'here' for many years, indirectly implying that it would be more acceptable to deport someone who has not lived 'here' for as many years, or who does not have a partner 'here' (but who perhaps has other – less legitimate – relationships, or who perhaps is alone). It is understandable that one resorts to a variety of arguments in the desperate situation of trying to stop one's own or someone else's deportation – but it is indeed problematic. It undermines the possibility of obtaining rights or residence permits for those who do not have legible, legally recognisable, and publicly resonant reasons to stay, and it reinforces the very idea that one needs a *reason* to be allowed to move and to stay, and that whether one deserves to stay or to have rights depends on what one does, who one 'is', or what one's situation is.

The critique against differentiating between different people's deservingness is present in some versions of the focus on citizenship. Varsanyi (2006:241), for instance, argues that one of the benefits of 'local citizenship' policies, as opposed to citizenship as process or as a doing, is that local citizenship is in a sense 'universal', it applies to everyone in a place with no conditions other than inhabitation. Anderson (2013), whose work I will discuss further on, is also critical of the logic of deservingness, a critique that she makes clear by pointing to the similarities in the structural positions of 'illegal migrants' and 'the undeserving poor'. Thus, arguments for the expansion of citizenship – or for the freedom of mobility and right to stay – should instead be based on solidarity and equality: that everyone, just by virtue of existing, should have the freedom to move and stay, and the right to dignified living.

Moving on, I read the focus on citizenship through the work of Berlant. She argues:

When I first started working on citizenship, older people would say to me, 'How can you even take the state seriously? The state is a monster of imperialism.' And I said, 'I'm on the side of people's survival, and if people's optimism is attached to things like the state, I want to know what the state stands in for.' If we start seeing our objects of ambition and desire as stand-ins, as things that organize our attachment to life, we have a totally different understanding and a kind of generosity toward those objects. That's

why I started working on citizenship in the first place, not because I loved it, but because I saw that people saw it as a state where they could imagine being collective, and being willing to be collective in ways that were also inconvenient for them (Berlant in Seitz 2013).

Paying attention to our attachments to objects – such as citizenship or the state – to what they 'stand in for', which desires and imaginations are attached to them, what the objects do for us, is central in Berlant's work. She argues that our sense of continuation of life and meaning is attached to objects around us, for example a partner, an employment, a dream, the nation, or citizenship. These 'objects', however, will never fulfil the desires we have invested in them, and in that sense Berlant argues that 'all attachments are optimistic' and that optimism is an affective form (2006:20). Talking about objects as 'clusters of promises [...] allow[s] us to encounter what is incoherent or enigmatic in our attachments', it can be 'an explanation for our sense of *our endurance in the object*' (2006:20). Since it is often difficult to detach from these objects even when they fail us – because of the way in which they provide a sense of meaning and attachment to the world – we sometimes continue to nurse attachments to objects that no longer do their job, or that undermine the possibility of realising the desire attached to the object in question. This is what Berlant calls 'cruel optimism': 'the condition of maintaining an attachment to a problematic object *in advance* of its loss'. That is, the object *x*'s presence threatens one's well-being and the very potency of the desire attached to it contributes to the demise of the conditions for *x*'s thriving, but one cannot endure losing it because it offers a 'sense of what it means to keep on living on and to look forward to being in the world' (2006:21). One could thus consider whether our attachments to the state or to citizenship are relations of cruel optimism. Does our attachment to the state and to citizenship entail desires for equality, collectivity, freedom and safety, and is the realisation of these desires ultimately undermined rather than served by citizenship and the state? Agamben and De Genova would probably agree that this is the case.

However, Berlant (in Seitz 2013) also argues that we need imaginaries and institutions that support a better life. As indicated in the quotation above, if citizenship is a way in which people can 'imagine being collective, and being willing to be collective in ways that were also inconvenient for them', then it could perhaps also support better imaginaries and institutions. Jacques Rancière (in Nyers & Rygiel 2012:11) argues that 'perhaps what is as important as the acquisition of legal status is what citizenship mobilises in its name' because 'politics is mobilised in the "gap" or discrepancy between the desire and belief of "a right to have rights"'



and the absence of the materialisation of those rights'. In this view it becomes important to have positive imaginaries of what we could have, of how society could be, because we are politically mobilised by the fact that what we *could* have or *should* have is not materialised. Thus, if citizenship is such an object that provides imaginaries of a better life and a sense of what we could and should have, there might be advantages to mobilising around it, just as there might be in retaining 'democracy', 'rights', 'freedom', 'equality' or 'justice' as objects that can provide better worlds, despite their failure to materialise. However, if using citizenship, or any of these objects, as something worth struggling for, we should also always engage in a struggle over its meaning, by focusing, to use Berlant's vocabulary, on those patternings of an object that serve our aims. As explained above, '[t]hinking about the object as a patterning that's loosely organised, [is enabling because it makes it] possible to change the object without having to lose everything' (Berlant in Seitz 2013).

The focus on citizenship provides, to a greater extent than several of the other forms of arguments against borders, examples of practices in the here and now which prove that alternatives are not just imaginable but immediately possible, such as sanctuary cities and other forms of local citizenship policies (Walia 2013; Nyers & Rygiel 2012; Varsanyi 2006). Butler (2004b:29) argues, '[t]he critical promise of fantasy, when and where it exists, is to challenge the contingent limits of what will and will not be called reality. Fantasy is what allows us to imagine ourselves and others otherwise; it establishes the possible in excess of the real; it points elsewhere, and when it is embodied, it brings the elsewhere home', and sanctuary cities make some of that imagination tangible, as a material elsewhere you can travel to, and as a material home.

Thus, focusing on citizenship has the advantage of providing alternative imaginings as well as concrete strategies, but it has to be remembered that doing citizenship or local citizenship is not a sufficient alternative to formal citizenship as long as the latter continues to be important. We also need equality and stronger protection against deportation. It also has to be kept in mind that citizenship is a technology of governance that is intertwined with gender, class, race, sexuality, nationality, etc.

### **Deportability, labour and the state: Disengagement, power entanglements, and asylum**

In my analysis of De Genova's arguments against borders I focus on three different things. Firstly, I read his critique against struggling through citizenship or the state, through the

practical context of trying to cope with regulated migration. Secondly, I read him through feminist arguments about the need to consider various power structures, showing that borders both target and produce people differently. Lastly, by focusing on asylum-migration rather than primarily labour, as De Genova does, I develop the argument that borders produce more things, subjects and relations than only capital accumulation.

De Genova does not spell out any concrete strategies of action, apart from his argument against struggling through citizenship or seeking recognition from the state in the form of citizenship, since this, he argues, would reinscribe the legitimacy and necessity of the state, as well as undermine the wider struggles by domesticating insurgent energies within the orbit of the state (De Genova 2007:441-2). Struggling through or for citizenship is also, in De Genova's view, a symptom of still being caught within methodological nationalism and methodological stasism (De Genova 2013). However, as I have already discussed in my analysis of Agamben, since it is very difficult and dangerous to live without authorisation, not least in a very formalised society such as Sweden (Hellgren 2014), in my view it is untenable to maintain a strategy of non-engagement with the state. Dimitris Papadopoulos and Vassilis Tsianos (2013:193) speak of their collaborator, Sapik, who chose to return to a life without legal status in Greece instead of obtaining residence permit in Germany; but not everyone could make that choice. Who can live with that insecurity? What if you really need the security of legal status as a guarantee that you will not be deported, so that you can start processing your traumas? What if you have your children with you? What if you need to know you can stay in order to imagine a future? Obtaining a residence permit is the top priority of most people I know who live without legal status, and the struggle to obtain it cannot be dismissed as in vain, as misguided, or as wrong. For all the problematic implications of seeking recognition and permission from the state, one cannot dismiss the immediate necessity of doing so for those who are currently refused it. From my experience, we have to engage with the state even if we do not like it. We have to try to obtain residence permits for those who do not have it but who want it. People's lives must, when in conflict, stand above a principled opposition to the state and to citizenship. We also have to engage with the state in making education, health care and other social services available to everyone, independent of their migration status. Then of course, as I argue elsewhere, we must think about *how* we engage with the state, on what terms, and what arguments we use (see for example McNevin 2013 and Walia 2013:182-7 for the same kind of arguments).

In addition, as Tanya Basok, Danièle Bélanger and Eloy Rivas (2014:1397) observe, 'when migrant workers attempt to minimise the disciplinary power of the deportation regime, they engage in practices of discipline and self-discipline and thereby co-construct the deportation regime'. This points to the difficulty of avoiding, escaping or standing outside of the reach of the state and the border-regime, and thus the need for strategies that provide ways of being *in* them, of changing them and of dealing with them, rather than arguing, as De Genova implies, that we have to refrain from engaging with them.

Moving on to my second topic, reading De Genova's arguments through the embodied lives of unauthorised migrants and through feminist theory, points to at least one issue that warrants further attention: how borders and deportability are entangled with other power structures. The fact that De Genova does not discuss this, except race, to which he does pay attention, means that he does not provide enough means of understanding how people are differently targeted by borders and deportability. They do indeed target people differently and people are varyingly vulnerable to them. For example, Tanya Golash-Boza and Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo (referred to in Doering-White et al. 2014<sup>7</sup>) argue that there is a 'gendered racial removal program' in the US particularly targeting Mexican and central american men. Furthermore, appearance makes people more or less vulnerable. Writing about 'white space' (and nations might be imagined as such), Ahmed (2007:161-3) argues that some bodies are more easily identifiable as 'out of place', as 'strangers', that some bodies – more than others – encounter resistance when moving through space and are 'stopped'. When it comes to in-state enforcement of immigration law, Kate Hepworth (in Villegas 2015:188) argues that '[a]n individual may be identified as out-of-place through somatic traits such as race, as well as through more intimate, emplaced relations: through how that body behaves in place [...] how the body is clothed [...] the activities in which it is engaged [...] its emplacement in time or space and the manner of that emplacement'. Other factors may also increase the general vulnerability of lacking legal status. As Paloma Villegas shows, precarious legal status might make women and LGBTIQ-people more vulnerable to harassment and deportation, since they cannot, in cases of harassment or violations, fight back, challenge it or report it to the authorities in the way they could have done if their legal status was secure, which perpetrators might know and exploit (Villegas 2015:191-2). Depending on class, racialisation and other factors, people also have different possibilities to 'pass' as a citizen or as having

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7 This source has no page numbers.

legal status (see for example Villegas 2015:188).

If, as Catherine Dauvergne puts it, '[w]e imagine illegals as poor and brown and destitute' (in Villegas 2015:186), those who are read as such are at greater risk of being stopped in internal border controls. Those who do not 'stand out' or who can pass as legal, are not safe, but safer. As a friend of mine explained, when he was 'illegally' travelling through Europe to get to Sweden, if it were not for his light skin tone he might not have been able to pass unnoticed. He said people probably read him as Italian rather than Afghan. Or as another person told me, when encountering police officers checking IDs as part of the internal border controls, the fact that he had a girlfriend whose 'Swedishness' was never questioned and that they spoke Swedish with each other, meant that he was not stopped while most other negatively racialised people were.<sup>8</sup> Paying attention to how borders and deportability affect and target people differently provides more complex accounts of how they work, and is also necessary when it comes to strategy. It shows that people have very different possibilities for dealing with deportability and for subverting borders, that people might need different strategies for coping with it. Further, it also suggests that deportability and borders *produce* more than just docile workers, which is what De Genova focuses on. For instance, they produce women, LGBTIQ-people, or racialised people who are unable (or less able) to respond to, challenge or report harassment, hate-crimes or other forms of violence or injustices committed against them; they produce whiteness by encouraging people to pass, and by disproportionately deporting people otherwise racialised; and they make LGBTIQ-people pass as straight and gender-conforming in order to avoid exposing themselves to dangerous situations.

Moving on, I will now read De Genova's arguments through the context of asylum-migration. De Genova primarily discusses migration through labour, but reading him in the context in which I am active – where most of the unauthorised migrants I meet have migrated primarily in order to claim asylum – provides a more complex account of how the state, borders and regulated migration work, and how they are entangled with other power structures. For many working within the 'autonomous migration' approach, which De Genova does, it is a conscious decision to resist 'the heterogenising practices of state regulation of mobility' which divides it into different 'types' of migration, for example labour, asylum or family, and instead they 'attempt[...] to articulate their commonalities' (Papadopoulos &

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<sup>8</sup> This was in Stockholm 2013, during the infamous REVA-campaign.

Tsianos 2013:185). I maintain, however, that despite the intentions, this homogenising entails a risk of losing critical insight.

As mentioned in the introduction, 'the refugee' is imagined as a man fleeing persecution by a totalitarian state and seeking asylum in the liberal, tolerant states of the West (Anderson 2013:55-6). This means that people fleeing from something that does not fit well into this idea often have troubles being recognised. Gender and sexuality often pose particular problems to obtaining recognition (which is not to say that it is otherwise easy). In order to think about recognition I turn to Butler, even though her work on recognition is not specifically about asylum it is still applicable in this context. The process of deciding who is recognizable, or trustworthy, as human, and specifically who fulfils the requirements for asylum, is governed by the language and norms that frame this situation, and by the narrative capacity for giving a legible account (see for example Butler 2005:12). As Butler argues, 'there is a language that frames the encounter, and embedded in that language is a set of norms concerning what will and will not constitute recognizability' (Butler 2005:30). I must conform, among other things, to the norms of narration and causality, as well as the categories, classifications and identificatory schemas that govern this situation, which in the context of asylum are not only specifically western and liberal, but also specifically legal. If you are, for instance, seeking asylum on the basis of sexuality you must also be recognisable as say, a lesbian. You must tell your story in a chronological narrative, use a language and reasoning which is understood, and conform to the adjudicators' conceptions of how for example 'lesbians', 'trans\*people', or 'women' *are*, look and act, conceptions that are sometimes narrowly western, middle-class, heteronormative and liberal, and sometimes, on the contrary, racialised conceptions about what, for example, 'Muslim women' do or look like. As Katherine Fobear (2014:52) puts it: 'the effort to prove to the adjudicators that they belong to a sexual and/or gender minority becomes heavily racialized and classed. Sexual exceptionalism works by first glossing over the boundaries of gender, race, and class formations and then implicitly privileging white and western gay norms'.

There are innumerable examples. Lesbians can be denied asylum because they do not look 'lesbian', because they have children, or because they do not show any interest in 'lesbian culture' (Lewis 2013). In my experience LGBTIQ-people may be rejected because they cannot provide a narrative account of when they first realised that they 'were' LGBTIQ or reflect in sufficiently elaborate ways on their sexuality/identity. People may be refused

because it is not deemed credible that a woman in a patriarchal society would defy her husband, or because the asylum adjudicators are unable to recognise that men can also be victims of honour-violence.

The asylum-system is part of the production of worlds and nations. It produces identities, performances, discourses and representations, enacted both by asylum-seekers and their supporters and by the state. Sima Shakhsari (2013:568) argues that '[i]n order to present a successful and legitimate claim to asylum officers, the refugee/asylum seeker often has to repeat a story that inevitably demonizes the "home country"' and Lewis claims, '[i]n the context of refugee law, states will only grant political asylum to women who appear vulnerable either because they are openly lesbian or because they are foreign women in need of rescue from oppressive patriarchal – read *third world* – cultures' (Keenan 2011:39 in Lewis 2013:180). Similarly, Fobear (2014:53) argues that '[i]n order to prove persecution, sexual and gender minority claimants may have to inferiorize and pathologize their ethnic, religious, or cultural communities in order to fit into Canada's national fantasies of being a safe haven to marginalized populations'. Further, through the state's management of 'the political and cultural production of refugee identities in public sphere', presenting refugees (particularly women) as victims and Canada as the 'white knight' saviour, 'the whiteness of Canadian settlement is maintained through the othering of refugees as inherently separate to the nation' (Fobear 2014:51). This demonises and inferiorises places that people have fled from and elevates the receiving states above such things, 'produc[ing] a discursive erasure of the very real forms of heterosexism and homo/transphobic violence present in Canada [and other asylum-receiving places in the Global North] today' (2014:53).

Thus, attending to asylum, and in particular to the problems facing many women and LGBTIQ-people seeking asylum, demonstrates two interrelated things: borders produce particular forms of gender and sexuality, and the state gains more than just capital accumulation. The state produces itself as 'modern', 'tolerant' and 'generous', differentiating itself from 'other' 'backwards', 'intolerant', 'uncivilised', 'oppressive' places. Asylum plays a significant role in the production of the national self-image as well as in geopolitics (manifested in, for example, the principled acceptance – or rejection – of all asylum-seekers from a particular country in order to make a point about the situation in that country of origin) (Shakhsari 2013; Fobear 2014; Luibhéid 2005:xvii; Anderson 2013).

Reading De Genova's arguments through feminist theory and through material

contexts, it becomes clear that his view on the state and borders as having only one, or at least one primary, objective and logic – capital – needs to be complicated. Firstly, as the wealth of scholarship on intersectionality has made clear: various power structures are entangled/intra-act, and to understand how capitalism, economic exploitation and borders work, one has to attend to how they are entangled with, say, race, gender, sexuality, ability and nationality. Secondly, as I discussed above in the section on Agamben, objects – the state, or borders – are not singular, unitary, coherent 'things', but complex and contradictory sets of patternings, promises and projections (Berlant 2006) or 'phenomena' in 'intra-action' (Barad 2003). This is not only a theoretical argument but is also apparent empirically. The state consists of a great variety of departments, branches, agencies, civil servants, locations, layers, practices and promises, and surely all of these sometimes have disparate objectives and sometimes do things that have completely contradictory outcomes. The same goes for borders. The state and borders may have several objectives and outcomes – facilitating capital accumulation, securing legitimacy among its inhabitants, securing continued governance for the incumbent parties, and creating a favourable standing in the international arena – while individual civil servants may have other priorities, such as keeping their job, advancing their career, keeping budget, or even using their position to do as much good as possible. Sometimes these go hand in hand, but sometimes they do not. To properly understand how borders work – and consequently to make good arguments and strategies against them – we must properly take into account how they are entangled with multiple power structures, how they may serve various different objectives on part of the state, and how both the state and borders are internally complex and contradictory.

Thus, borders produce not only an exploitable labour-force, but also a range of other subjects. As Anderson et al. (2009:7) argue, '[i]t is not only “hard workers” who are produced at the border. “Good wives” who do not challenge patriarchal families, “straight guys and gals” who adhere to correct sexual scripts, “good parents” whose parenting accords with the requirements to produce “good children” are policed through immigration requirements'. Thus, borders do not just produce capital accumulation and economic inequality, they also produce nations, Peoples<sup>9</sup>, populations, families, hetero- and homonormativity, racialisation of people and of places, and shape thinking, theory and methodology (see for example Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) and De Genova (2013) on methodological nationalism).

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<sup>9</sup> On various meanings of 'the people' see Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002:308-9; Agamben 2000:29-35; and Jonsson 2005.

To conclude, while there are several good points in De Genova's arguments, to make them better, and to make them into useful strategies, they must be complicated. This necessary complication occurs primarily by connecting them to various other power structures, and by seeing the state and borders not as monolithic, given, things, but as complex patternings, involving a variety of practices, that may both be resources to us, and sites of domination (Berlant in Seitz 2013), and with which we sometimes have to interact, even if we would prefer to bypass them altogether.

### **Indigenous perspectives and border imperialism: Strategies, homonationalism, the freedom to stay, and necropolitics**

In order to explore in what ways Walia's work might provide good arguments and strategies against borders, and how they might be further developed, I focus on four topics. Firstly, by attending to the practical situation of unauthorised migrants' immediate need for a residence permit I discuss what might appear as a strategical contradiction to seek permission by the state whilst being opposed to regulated migration. I explore this possible dilemma by reading it through Butler, Berlant and Barad. Secondly, I read Walia through Puar's work on sexuality and homonationalism. Thirdly, I focus on (the indigenous demand for) 'the freedom to stay' and connect it to the need to pay attention to people's very varying possibilities or abilities to migrate and to be mobile. Finally, I take the cue from Walia's argument about borders as racialising practices and turn to Achille Mbembe to discuss the racialised indifference to the death of migrants.

Unsurprisingly, since Walia writes from within a movement of migrant justice, her arguments provide much more concrete and applicable strategies than any other of the approaches that I discuss here. She argues for the need to build solidarity and alliances with other groups, particularly indigenous peoples, and her arguments about the connection between borders, capitalism and racialisation should also encourage solidarity on behalf of otherwise racialised peoples who have citizenship or secure migration status, as well as on the part of wage labourers. The strategies she discusses take into account the immediate situation and needs of unauthorised migrants. For example, she recognises the need of

navigating state institutions like border agencies, immigration offices [...] in order to support those facing detention and deportation. Such organizing to meet the immediate needs of undocumented migrants and refugees changes migrants' material conditions by, for example, winning legal resident



status, which then facilitates them becoming more involved in radical movements. It also works to build long-term relationships of confidence and trust, and provides a means through which to share our own analysis (Walia 2013:183).

The strategy of creating sanctuary cities (Walia 2013:111-7) – where the local municipality decides that formal migration status does not matter for the provision of its services – is another strategy that engages with some branches of the state – local municipalities – and that could thus be seen as reformist, but she argues that it still serves the wider goals because it improves the material situation of people, it provides a basis of involvement by various sectors of society, it advances the demand of status for all, and it works as a prefigurative practice where alternative visions are materialised. Based on these practical experiences and on other people's work, she argues that in practice, there is no strict dualism between reformist and revolutionary strategies (2013:182-7). However, she also argues for the need to be conscientious about *how* to engage with the state: 'NOII [No One Is Illegal] would not, for example, work toward a selective regularization policy that would benefit some migrants but exclude those migrants with criminal records or those on social assistance' (Walia 2013:184). The way she spells out these practical, strategical issues is much more useful than the arguments which regard all struggles that engage with the state and its institutions as reformist, conformist and futile.

Reading Walia's discussion about strategies through Butler, Berlant and Barad provides more theoretical perspectives on how to think about the strategic dilemma of engagement with, or withdrawal, from the state and regulated migration. White argues that 'migrant politics and queer and trans politics' have a shared problematic issue, namely 'the relationship between tactics and imaginaries' (White 2014:978). White cites Butler who calls this tension a 'performative contradiction', and who argues that '[t]here can be no radical change without performative contradiction ... The contradiction must be relied on, exposed, and worked on to move toward something new. There seems to be no other way' (White 2014:976-8). That is, Butler argues that it is impossible not to act within the current situation: '[o]bviously, the political task is not to refuse representational politics – as if we could', and 'there is no position outside this field' (2010:7). Rather, Butler's argument that gender is performative means that gender is an act, and by virtue of being an act it can also be changed. Change does not require outright refusal, but is apparent in every little iteration doing gender differently. Acts reference and cite what is already there, but they may reference and cite with

a difference, with a twist, without merely replicating the previous acts or scripts. Butler explains: 'The productions swerve from their original purposes and inadvertently mobilize possibilities of "subjects" that do not merely exceed the bounds of cultural intelligibility, but effectively expand the boundaries of what is, in fact, culturally intelligible' (2010:40). Despite the completely different context of Butler's arguments, they might still be applicable to work against regulated migration. When navigating migration law, it is impossible not to take part in representational politics – you and your case must be intelligible according to the representations of an eligible candidate of residency ('refugee', 'lesbian', 'family', 'worker', etc.) – and the costs of refusing to be recognised by migration law are often far too high for that to be a viable option, if you have a choice. Thus, while it may sometimes be necessary to navigate this system, we can do so strategically, subverting it, mobilising possibilities that were not there before, while always keeping the larger transformation and imaginary in mind (White 2014:991-2; Walia 2013:182-4).

The same process – changing something by engaging with it (as a strategic choice or out of necessity, since there is no position that is not produced in relation to it) – would be conceptualised differently by Berlant, or by Barad, whose arguments about the possibilities for changing objects were discussed in the section on Agamben. Berlant (in Seitz 2013) would say that since objects are clusters of patternings, promises, projections, by making them do certain things and not others, by using some of these patternings but not others, objects can change. Barad (2003) would say that objects as phenomena are delimited in the intra-action that is the phenomena, and that the 'agential cuts' between its constitutive parts might always be done differently. In each new 'momentum' they can be arranged differently (2003:814-5). Objects can thus change. Thus, when White (2014:992) argues that 'queer anti-deportation activists do not only unwittingly reproduce methodological nationalisms, they do so *strategically* in order to make their claims hearable by the state', this *strategy* should always aim to undermine methodological nationalism, borders and the state. That is, not only aim to be heard by the state, but *by* being heard, to fundamentally change it. This also requires that we think about *how* we engage with the state and what the engagement is used for.

I now turn to a consideration of sexuality. Plugging Walia's and Puar's work into each other might provide useful insights and paths for further applications or developments of both frameworks. Walia does take into account the often central role of women and queers in mobilising and in community building, and she connects the nation to heteropatriarchal

structures, for example in her argument against the distinction between 'good/desirable/real migrant (read: English-speaking, employed, and/or conforming to heteropatriarchal norms) versus bad/undesirable/bogus migrant (read: unemployed, without formal education, and/or with a criminal record)' (Walia 2013:77). However, she does not provide any more extensive analyses of the significance of sexuality and gender in racialisation processes and in nation building. Puar, on the other hand, argues that sexuality, racialisation and nationalism are entangled in multiple ways. Firstly, racialisation often involves sexualisation. For instance, through orientalist imaginings, which currently produce the figure of 'the terrorist', Muslim populations are sexualised and racialised as 'pedophilic, sexually lascivious and excessive, yet perversely repressed' (Puar 2007:20). Racialised populations (at least when combined with poverty) are seen as in need of improved marital practices (Puar 2007:29; Rytter 2012), and the sexualisation of terrorism becomes apparent in the very frequent use of homophobic imaginaries to satirize and to humiliate 'the terrorist' (Puar 2007:37-78). Secondly, the combination of being queer *and* racialised – or even more so, Muslim – is seen as impossible. This pernicious dualism – 'the homosexual other is white, the racial other is straight' (Puar 2007:32) – 'mutates from a narrative of incommensurate subject positionings into a "Islam versus homosexuality" tug of populations at war' (2007:19). In this way, nationalist projects, from borders and migration control to interventions in other countries, are legitimised in the name of 'human rights' and the protection of LGBT-people. Moreover, sexuality is mobilised to strengthen the imaginary of the exceptional excellence of the home nation. By depicting others as barbaric, uncivilised, repressed, excessive, and perverse, the nation is constructed as tolerant, civilised and emblematic of proper sexual behaviour (which is no longer limited to heterosexuality, but which can also involve domesticated and normative homosexuality). Nationalism thus provides a route towards rehabilitation for previously excluded sexual others. Homonormativity (a normativity that mimics the heterosexual norms of monogamy, marriage, class, gender conformity, and a whiteness that is available also to model minority ethnics), the patriotic spending of gay tourism, gay marriage, and participation in the military all serve to fold gay people (back) into (national) life (Puar 2007).

Hence, when Walia discusses the ways in which Canada is produced as white and the racial hierarchy is maintained by the simultaneous exclusion and subordination of indigenous peoples and of migrants, one should also consider the role of sexuality within this framework. This could be enacted by, for example, paying attention to the settler state's regulation of

indigenous sexuality and family life (Egan & Place 2012:134-5); the sexual norms that underpin the laws regarding family migration (Puar 2007:29; Luibhéid 2005); the ways in which sexuality becomes part of citizenship norms (as Anderson 2013 argues); the specific disciplinary acts that target migrants' sexuality (Basok et al. 2014:1401); and the extent to which it increases their risk of deportation (Villegas 2015:191-2). Whiteness and racialisation work *through*, and are inseparable from, sexuality and gender. Walia provides very convincing arguments for the rationale of (and need for) alliances between (unauthorised) migrants and indigenous peoples. Further elaboration on the connection between sexuality and borders could also facilitate the building of solidarity between queers and (unauthorised) migrants, as well as between feminists and (unauthorised) migrants.

Walia writes:

One major tension is the 'model minority' syndrome, in which certain categories of successful immigrants are used as symbols to discipline ghettoised communities of colour, such as undocumented migrants. The ability of the state to determine who is worthy of citizenship creates barriers between some immigrants, who believe they have met this test of worthiness and are grateful for being accepted into the colonial nation, and others who are subverting the system in order to exert the right to reside in Canada (Walia 2010:82).

The parallel when it comes to sexuality would be homonormativity and homonationalism (Puar 2007:25-8). Puar argues that just as 'multiculturalism [in which the model minority is key] is the accomplice of the ascendancy of whiteness' (2007:27), homonormativity is the accomplice of heteronormativity (2007:9), and both strengthen the nation. Paraphrasing Walia: 'certain categories of successful [LGBTQ-people] are used as symbols to discipline ghettoised communities of [queers], such as [homeless, racialised, HIV-positive queers]. The ability of the state to determine who is worthy of [becoming a full-fledged citizen of the nation] creates barriers between some [LGBTQ-people], who believe they have met this test of worthiness and are grateful for being accepted into the [hetero/homonormative] nation, and others who are subverting the system'. Or, expressed in Puar's words: 'The factioning, fractioning, and fractalizing of identity is a prime activity of societies of control, whereby subjects (the ethnic, the homonormative) orient themselves as subjects through their disassociation or disidentification from others disenfranchised in similar ways in favor of consolidation with axes of privilege' (2007:28). Reading Puar through Walia could also

constitute a call to use Puar's framework of affect and assemblage in a more thorough study of borders/regulated migration (which she does not discuss at any length), perhaps considering them – as well as the figure of 'the migrant' – as assemblages.

Changing topic, I will now read 'the freedom to stay' alongside a feminist intersectional call to pay attention to people's very varying possibilities to move. De Genova (2010) or Papadopoulos and Tsianos (2013) convey a lot of confidence in the transformative power of mobility – movement as 'an affective and generic gesture of freedom', a politics that 'relies on struggles for movement that escape and subsequently delegitimise and derail sovereign control' (Papadopoulos & Tsianos (2013:185). While I agree with a lot of their perspectives, I cannot help thinking that the subjects they imagine fit a little too comfortably alongside the traits that 21<sup>st</sup> Century capitalism demands of its subjects: the ability to survive without any institutional support, the flexibility to always adapt to changing conditions, the readiness to move to wherever one can find the means to support oneself (see for example White 2014:980-3; McRuer 2006). Attachments to places and people that make one unwilling to move, lacking the personal physical and psychological resources to be flexible and survive against all odds, or move despite all the barriers, all this has no place in the neoliberal economy, and seems to be invisible also for many of those who foreground mobility as *the* current transformative and revolutionary force. This matters not only for indigenous peoples, but for anyone who does not want to, or who is unable to, use mobility as the solution to their problems and as their method of transformative politics. It matters for the too old, the too young, the too ill, those who are so debilitated and vulnerable that they cannot move, those with people depending on them whom they can neither bring nor leave behind, those who love the place where they live too much and would not leave it for anything, the crip, and the poor, who cannot even imagine saving up enough money to move.

Attending to the freedom to stay may also provide a critique of postcolonial theory. Robert Young argues that 'indigenous activism uses a whole set of paradigms that do not fit easily with postcolonial presuppositions and theories – for example, ideas of the sacred and attachment to ancestral land. This disjunction, however, only illustrates the degree to which there has never been a unitary postcolonial theory – the right of return to sacred or ancestral land, for example, espoused by indigenous groups in Australia or the Palestine people, never fitted easily with the postmodern Caribbean celebration of delocalized hybrid identities' (Young 2012:24). Attending to settler colonialism, displacement and forced movement –

which come into focus when starting from the position of indigenous peoples – shows that freedom of movement must be accompanied by the freedom to stay, and the possibility of maintaining one's livelihood when one stays. It serves as a reminder not to locate *all* transformative energy in 'mobility', but also in 'staying'.<sup>10</sup>

Walia provides an extensive elaboration on how borders are racialising practices, but she does not elaborate on the racialised indifference to the death of thousands of migrants every year, people who die primarily when crossing the border, but also when already inside the country or as a consequence of deportation. Walia points towards the dehumanisation and indifference towards the suffering of migrants when she argues that '[t]heir [migrant workers] racial dehumanisation as “illegal” or “undesirable” (and, post-9/11, as “potential terrorists”) [...] legitimises their deplorable working conditions and the state securitisation processes that disproportionately target them' (Walia 2010:79). However, turning to Mbembe and his concept 'necropolitics', we get an explicit theorisation of death as an objective as well as the indifference towards it. By attending to neo/colonialism Mbembe asks, '[i]s the notion of biopower sufficient to account for the contemporary ways in which the political, under the guise of war, of resistance, or of the fight against terror, makes the murder of the enemy its primary and absolute objective?' (Mbembe 2003:12). It only takes a short step to add the militarisation of borders to that list. Thousands die every year on their way from Asia or Africa to the EU (and on other migration routes), either at the direct hand of border patrols, or because the closure of ever more sections of the border forces migrants to take increasingly dangerous routes. The indifference towards what is going on, the lingering thought that it plays its part in reducing the number of migrants who come to Europe, a goal that is part of many European leaders's rhetoric, as well as the way in which the death and suffering of (racialised) migrants is mobilised in the project of 'deterring' future migrants from embarking on the journey, all point to the relevance of seeing regulated migration as a necropolitical, in addition to a biopolitical practice.<sup>11</sup> This indifference towards killing and death, argues Mbembe, rests on a 'racial denial of any common bond between the conqueror and the native' (2003:24), or to use words applicable to the context of migration control rather than that of colonial occupation, the 'racial denial of any common bond' between, on the one hand, people

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10 See also Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002:326-7 about the need not to overemphasise fluidity in the attempt to counter the sedentary bias of statist-thinking such as methodological nationalism; and Cockburn 2014:438-9 on land and on the 'right of return'.

11 Regulated migration as biopolitics is discussed in for instance Chauvin & Garcés-Mascareñas 2012 and Vaughan-Williams 2010.

and states of the Global North and on the other, migrants from the Global South whose life or death is not seen to matter, or is seen as 'not our problem'. As Butler (in Puar et al. 2012:170) argues, dominant norms – such as racialisation – shape 'whose life is grievable and worth protecting, and whose life is ungrievable, or marginally or episodically grievable – a life that is, in a sense, already lost in part or in whole and thus less worthy of protection and sustenance'.

In summary, the main strengths of Walia's arguments and strategies are her recognition of the racialising function of borders, of the need for alliances (particularly between migrants and indigenous peoples), of the importance to struggle both for the freedom of movement *and* for the freedom to stay, as well as of the immediate need of most unauthorised migrants and residents to secure their legal status, and thus her questioning of the strict dualism between reformist and revolutionary strategies. Furthermore, this last point can be made theoretically by drawing on Butler, Berlant and Barad. Walia's arguments can also be further developed by combining them with Puar's arguments about the entanglements of racialisation, sexuality and the nation, and through Mbembe's and Butler's arguments about the dehumanising – and thus deadly – consequences of racialisation.

### **Borders as moulds and the community of value: Alliances, deservingness, 'the migrant' and interdependency**

My analysis of Anderson's arguments will focus on three topics: the ways in which Anderson's arguments might inspire the building of alliances across seemingly disparate groups; her critique of deservingness; and the concept, category and figure of 'the migrant'. This last topic, 'the migrant' as figure and concept, is in turn divided into three parts. Firstly, I discuss the intertwining of the imagined construct of 'the migrant' – and even more so, the 'illegal' migrant – with other power structures such as race, class, sexuality and gender. Secondly, I discuss the ways in which the concept of 'the migrant' may fix this category and those so labelled into subordination. Lastly, I focus on Anderson's argument that 'the migrant' is, both discursively and materially (or discursively-materially), a relational term to 'citizen', that they are interdependent. I then read this together with feminist discussions about interdependency and care as bases of organising social and political relations.

One of the useful points that Anderson provides to the practical struggle against borders and regulated migration is her argument that 'contingent acceptance' into the community of value turns different contingently accepted groups against each other. The

community of value and its multiple bases of exclusion thus become a form of divide-and-rule practice. Recognising the structural similarity between seemingly disparate positions – the benefit claimant, the criminal, the non-citizen – can thus become a basis of solidarity and coalition-building, rather than the all-too-frequent phenomenon of turning these groups against one another.

The contours of the community of value are permeable. It is easy to move from accepted to marginal to excluded. Anderson explains:

That is, as well as Good, non-, and Failed Citizens, there are also (not-quite-)good-enough citizens. These are 'tolerated citizens'. The fragility of hold of the Tolerated Citizen, the contingently accepted, permeates the politics of citizenship. Those at risk of failure or of not belonging seek to dissociate themselves, one from another. Migrants and their supporters are usually eager to differentiate themselves from failed citizens with whom they are often associated. Assertions that refugees are not criminals, or that migrants do not claim benefits, are attempts to counter these associations by affirming the community of value. Migrants and refugees are fit to belong because they have the right kinds of values, unlike criminals and benefit scroungers. Similarly, citizens at risk of failure may seek to dissociate themselves from non-citizens in order to bolster their claim to rights (Anderson 2013:6).

Thus, '[c]ontingent acceptance turns tolerated citizens, who must often struggle for acceptance into the community of value, into the guardians of good citizenship' (2013:6). This points to the shared interest of migrants, the poor, the working class, the racialised, the queer, those who challenge the 'proper' doing of gender, sexuality and family: to resist this divide-and-rule practice and instead challenge the community of value, and with it, regulated migration.

Secondly, I turn to the concept of deservingness, which I also discussed in the section about citizenship. As previously discussed, contribution is often one condition for deservingness. Another condition of deserving assistance is that the reasons for necessitating it should be outside of one's control, and should not be the result of carelessness or lack of values. Anderson argues that it is easy to slide from 'deserving' benefit claimant to 'benefit scrounger'. She quotes UK Prime Minister David Cameron:

We are finding a large number of people who are on incapacity benefits because of drug problems, alcohol problems or problems with weight and diet and I think a lot of people who pay their taxes and work hard will think, 'That's not what I pay my taxes for. I pay taxes for people who were incapacitated through no fault of their own' (Daily Mail 2011, in Anderson 2013:5).



Proper 'values', which manifest in 'responsible' behaviour and self-mastery, is thus a common criteria for deservingness. Anderson argues that '[l]ack of values and value is the hallmark of the undeserving poor, [...] the non-citizen and the Failed Citizen are both categories of the undeserving poor: one global, the other national' (2013:5), it may be 'vagrants' (control of whom has been part of legislation since the 14<sup>th</sup> Century in England), contemporary poor 'illegal' migrants, or 'benefit scroungers'. And what is seen as 'values' and proper or responsible behaviour is always classed, gendered, sexualised, racialised, etc. (see for example Anderson 2013; Skeggs 2003; Warner 2000). An example of deservingness as dependent on responsible behaviour can be found in recent Swedish debate over health care and education for unauthorised residents. A common argument for granting these rights to children was that they are 'victims of their parents' choices' (that is, it is not their fault that they do not have legal status), whereas it was common to argue against these entitlements when it came to adults because, it was claimed, they had *chosen* to stay illegally, so it was their own fault they were in such a precarious situation (Hellgren 2014:1179-80).

Deservingness as conditional and dependent on contributions, values and behaviour, runs contrary to the dictum 'from each according to his [sic] ability, to each according to his [sic] needs'. It is clear that the decision over who is deserving is always dependent on power structures associated, at least, with class, race, gender, sexuality, ability and nationality. Anderson systematically argues against any conditionality on deservingness or on the freedom of movement. This is one of the reasons that migration control must be abolished, because it will always differentiate between people, some as deserving and some as not. However, I read her as arguing that if it is not possible to abolish migration control completely and at once, if reform must come in steps and stages, then we should always seek that form of regularisation or reform that has as few conditions attached to it as possible.

Moving on I now turn to the third topic: the figure, term and concept of 'the migrant'. Anderson argues that 'migrant' is an othering term, the other of citizen (Anderson 2013:4), a term that is classed and racialised, which involves particular figurations of gender and sexuality. The idea of 'the migrant' does not correspond to those who are classified as migrants in legal and technical terms (Anderson 2013; Blinder 2015)<sup>12</sup>. Anderson et al. argue that only

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12 In the statistics of many countries nationals/citizens returning from an extended stay abroad count as 'immigrants', serving as an example of how the term 'immigrant' means much more than a legal status, since citizens returning to their country of origin are not generally those imagined in public debates on migration (Blinder 2015:85)

some people are imagined as migrants, '[t]he figure is generally negatively gendered, racialized, and classed: US financiers, Australian backpackers, and British “expats” are not, generally, constructed as migrants' (Anderson et al. 2009:10), and the term 'illegal migrant' is even more heavily racialised, gendered, and classed. White rich tourists who overstay their tourist visa, international students who work more than their student visa permits, or academics going to international conferences and saying 'tourism' rather than 'employment' when asked about the purpose of their trip by the border agencies at the airport, none of these are commonly imagined as (semi) 'illegal migrants'. Villegas argues

In terms of race, im/migrants are often constructed as racialized outsiders [...] Similarly, racialized peoples are often categorized as im/migrants [...] This double process of hierarchization is augmented when it comes to precarious status migrants because of their association as 'fraudulent,' 'bogus,' 'jumping the queue' [...] and other modes of representing membership through formal status and perceptions of deservingness [...] There is also a class component. Dauvergne (2008) alludes to the interlocking between discourses of race, class and immigration status when she states: '[w]hile any number of people may infringe migration laws and regulations, the label adheres better to some than to others. We imagine illegals as poor and brown and destitute' (Villegas 2015:186).

This is revealing of the entanglement of borders, migration control and citizenship with various power structures such as race and class, and thus, as discussed in previous sections (for example in that on De Genova), of how migration controls targets people differently and produce people differently.

However, it points to something else too. Here I turn to the second aspect of 'the migrant': this term may fix the subordination of those so labelled. Since the term migrant is already imbued with power structures that fixes it as an 'other', not just along the line of citizen versus non-citizen, but also along racial, gender, sexual and class terms, the use of the term and the figure of the migrant – for example in 'migrant justice' – is always at risk of contributing to the fixation of these subordinations rather than to their dissolution. This is a parallel argument to that which claims that we must look at, and question, how different categories are created, since the category itself might facilitate the subordination. The term 'migrant' fills the purpose of legitimising the restriction of movement of those so classified, 'foreigners' in contrast to 'citizens', whose movement cannot legitimately be restricted (Anderson et al. 2009). This argument rests on a view of categories and terms as relational, and particularly, on the recognition that this relation is hierarchical. The meaning of each term

is dependant on its (dominant or subordinate) position in this dichotomy. Butler (2010) questions, for example, if it is really viable to use 'woman' as the object of feminist struggle, or if doing so will not just fix the subordination of 'women'.

The awkwardness, limitations, inadequacy and fixing character of the term 'migrant' may also be felt in practice. As Rygiel (2011:13) argues, 'the use of the term "migrant" itself can invoke a certain distancing that becomes offensive through social relations', and that 'the very label "migrant" comes to be seen as "offensive" in its "non-specificity"' (2011:15). Anderson argues that we need 'a new perspective on migration, one that does not essentialize (and thereby recreate) the figure of the Migrant' (2013:179). There are several reasons why this is needed. Apart from the 'othering', fixing, and subordinating function of 'migrant' as an unquestioned term, discussed above, taking the term 'migrant' for granted also obscures the fact that it is produced by the border, 'without borders there could be no "migrants", only mobility' (De Genova referred to in White 2014:993). It also obscures the relational nature of the term, functioning as the 'other' of 'citizen'. Here we come to the third aspect of the consideration of the term 'migrant', namely interdependency.

Anderson argues, '[t]he wealth of the kingdom is not independent of the poverty of the woodcutter', 'the kingdom' here is the receiving state and 'the woodcutter' is the migrant, 'impoverished because the kingdom had chopped the forest down to satisfy its requirement for fuel' (Anderson 2013:177). Some of the underlying causes of migration today are indeed a result of the centuries-long – and continuing – exploitation, destruction and subordination of the Global South by the Global North. The primary term in the dichotomy, 'citizen', is (discursively) dependant the secondary, subordinate term 'migrant' – 'the ontologically valorized term A actually depends for its meaning on the simultaneous subsumption and exclusion of term B' (Sedgwick 2008:9-10) – and 'citizens' are also very *materially* dependant on 'migrants', both on the *making* of migrants (the exploitation that undermines people's means of subsistence and forces them to migrate) and on the labour of 'migrants' (who are employed, for example, in production and care work).

Butler speaks of our ontological interdependency. To become subjects we are fundamentally dependent on a dyadic exchange in which we are interpellated and recognised by an other (2005:23-4). A focus on interdependency and care as possible bases for ethics and social relations have also been espoused by other feminist thinkers. For example, Berlant argues that we need to

[r]einvent work and care [...] to change the affective resonance about dependency. In neoliberal normativity, to be dependent is to be non-sovereign: but in the era of austerity, it is the first step to solidarity (Berlant in McCabe 2011<sup>13</sup>)

and that

[t]hinking about what it means to see relations of care as the source for new social relations that would have policy implications is a really great development in LGBTQ politics from all sorts of perspectives. But I think that has to be accompanied by different kinds of cultural activity and different forms of fantasy about what it means to understand collective life as a problem of survival (Berlant in Seitz 2013).

Anderson seems to be on the same path:

beginning, not with a job, but with the need for subsistence, not with a spouse, but with *the need for mutual care and support*, and not with the right to exclude, but with the assumption of people's full inclusion, has the potential to open up politics and analysis. It invites an open, complex, and multifaceted contemporary 'us' that has the possibility of being shaped by *shared imagined futures as well as shared imagined pasts* (Anderson 2013:180-1, my italics).

However, while there is a lot of potential in turning to interdependency and care as an alternative way of organising our social relations and in thinking about community, there are also a number of potential problems and risks. Firstly, interdependency and dependency do not affect everyone equally. At an ontological level we are all interdependent, just as we are all precarious, but dependency is just as unevenly created and distributed as material and social precarity. Butler (as cited above at the end of my analysis of Walia) argues that there is an 'unequal distribution of precarity, one that depends upon dominant norms regarding whose life is grievable and worth protecting, and whose life is ungrievable' (Butler in Puar et al. 2012:170).

Secondly, focusing on interdependency risks paying less attention to power relations. Berlant argues: '[p]recarious politics also signified a shift (that I'm genuinely ambivalent about) from an idiom of power to an idiom of care as ground for what needs to change to better suture the social' (in Puar et al. 2012:166), and the same could be said about

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<sup>13</sup> This source has no page numbers.

focusing on interdependency. This does not necessarily mean that it is *impossible* to combine an ethics of interdependency and care with a focus on power, but it might require making an extra effort.

Thirdly, we have to make sure that 'care' as an empty signifier is not appropriated by, for example, racist discourses. Diana Mulinari and Anders Neergaard (2014:53) elaborate on the concept 'caring racism' by showing how some women activists in the Sweden Democrats argue that they want less immigration because they 'care for others', and thus how 'care' can be seen 'as a floating signifier successfully appropriated by the racist party'. They argue that the normative 'good' in care has often been taken for granted in feminist scholarship, but that through identifying a colonial, or contemporary racist discourse of caring, they show that a care discourse can enable 'colonisers to construct themselves as superior' and that it can be used to legitimise relations of power (2014:53). A central problem here is thus who decides what 'care' is: the definition must be determined by those who are the objects of care. As Anderson (2013:180) argues, '[i]f they [migrants] choose to be exploited from a universe of admittedly constrained options, then this choice should be theirs to make'. It is not an option to restrict immigration with the argument that this would protect migrants. Anderson (2013:180) continues, '[t]he argument goes that those who are more economically privileged should be careful about claiming to protect those in more constrained circumstances from risks by further limiting their options'.

All these things have to be taken into account if, or when, we pursue interdependency and care as bases of social and political relations. Furthermore, an ethics based on interdependency or care could be more useful when it comes to thinking about, or trying to enlarge, the sphere of our ethical responsibility, than in determining the exact content of ethical conduct. Perhaps discourses of care can prove useful in establishing that there *is* a relation that has to be acknowledged, as a strategy against dehumanisation, indifference and individuation. This may also be linked to Butler's suggestion that 'the norms that govern ethical principles must be understood as operating not only to guide conduct but to decide the question of who and what will be a human subject' (Butler 2005:109-110).

In short, there are several useful aspects of Anderson's arguments. By paying attention to 'values' Anderson discusses the entanglement of various power structures and how these underpin the logic of migration control and delimitation of the community of value. This points to the structural similarity between different positions or figures, such as 'illegal

migrants' and 'benefit scroungers'. Recognising this might lead to a more thorough critique of current politics and its delimitation of community, as well as to the building of alliances between seemingly disparate positions. Her consideration of value and values further contributes to a critique of basing the freedom of movement and other entitlements on a differentiation between some people as deserving and other as undeserving. Lastly, a consideration of the figure and term 'migrant' shows that it is from the start enmeshed with other power relations, which is indicative of how regulated migration is entangled with, for instance, race, gender, sexuality, class, etc., and that further, since 'migrant' is already a subordinated term it might sometimes fix subordination rather than dissolve it. The discursive and material interdependency of 'migrant' and 'citizen', also points towards wider feminist discussions about the strengths and risks of a politics based on interdependency and care.

## **Conclusion**

Recognizing the illegitimacy of regulated migration and all the problems that it causes, I have in this thesis sought to find strong arguments and strategies against borders and regulated migration. I aimed to find effective arguments and strategies for the practical struggle against regulated migration, carried out by unauthorised migrants themselves and by people working to support them, and arguments that could form a foundation for future feminist research on borders and regulated migration and the struggles against these institutions. I have explored different arguments (and the strategies they imply or spell out) by reading them through the context of practical work against regulated migration and through feminist theory, particularly through intersectionality and through the work by Berlant, Puar and Butler.

Based on the practical situation of unauthorised migrants/residents, for whom the attainment of residence permit is crucial for their immediate well-being, I have come to the conclusion that strategies – even if they are, in principle, against the right of the state to decide on migration – must sometimes engage with the state and try to obtain residence permits for those who do not have it, and in order to strengthen social rights for unauthorised residents. This interaction with the state must, however, always keep in mind the fundamental vision of everyone's entitlement to the freedom of movement and freedom to stay. It should be a strategic interaction that avoids reproducing the logic of some being more deserving than others. The strategic interaction must also, through the interaction, seek to change the state and undermine its right to regulate mobility. The impossibility of maintaining a principled refusal to engage with the state becomes apparent when considering people's very varying abilities to cope with deportability and the far-reaching power that the migration regime has over their lives. This strategy or tactic can also be theoretically elaborated and supported if we see objects such as the state and borders not as coherent, clearly definable and stable 'things', but as patternings of practices and projections, as Berlant argues. In this way, it becomes possible to change these objects through engagement/intra-action. Thus, we can establish a more theoretical elaboration of Walia's argument that there is no strict dualism between reformist and revolutionary strategies (2013:182-7).

Further, strategies and arguments should strive to create imaginaries and practices that support a better world. Our internal practices must of course be anti-racist and feminist, but we can also practice a better world on a somewhat larger scale, for example through

creating sanctuary cities and local citizenship policies, which provide examples of the viability of alternative imaginaries.

Strategies and arguments should make sure to avoid reproducing norms of deservingness, for example by working for reforms or regularisation programs that leave some people behind. This is important both for those who would fall in the undeserving category and whose possibilities of staying would thus be undermined, and also because, as Anderson argues, the norms underpinning migration law also underpin deservingness and worth for citizens. For example, if labour is a condition, what does that do for those – citizens and migrants – who are unable to work? Instead, strong arguments should start from the position of the fundamental freedom of movement, and freedom to stay, that everyone is entitled to a liveable life, that we are fundamentally interdependent.

In addition, building coalitions and alliances is often strategically important. Attending to how regulated migration and borders intra-act with multiple power structures, for example along the lines of class, race, gender, sexuality and ability, can facilitate the building of alliances by demonstrating the shared interests of the various groups.

Effective arguments against borders and regulated migration see borders as productive: productive of subjects, relations, imaginaries and affects. Strong arguments must fully take into account the extent to which borders are entangled with multiple power structures – for example race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, ability – because without recognising these crucial entanglements, arguments fail to acknowledge the complexity of how borders and regulated migration work, and the many different things and subjects that they produce. Acknowledging the ways in which borders are entangled with multiple power structures also strengthens the case against regulated migration by providing several arguments against it. Furthermore, effective arguments take into account different migrants, contexts, forms of migrations and reasons to migrate, and point to their commonalities without erasing their differences. Strong arguments must never pitch different groups against each other, but they must also not erase the differences between their positions.

Further, arguments improve when they recognise that their objects – in this case the state, sovereignty, borders or citizenship – are not static, given, clear-cut 'things', but patternings, practices, processes and projections. This is important primarily for two reasons. Firstly, it creates arguments that are compatible with the strategic impossibility of always refusing to engage with institutions/objects that we oppose. Secondly, it ensures that we



recognise the importance of imaginaries – of being able to imagine something better – but also the cruelty (as Berlant puts it) of maintaining attachments to objects that undermine rather than facilitate the realisation of the desires that we attach to them. Thinking about objects in this way makes it possible to think critically about what it is that the objects in our argument really do.

Borders and regulated migration must be studied further within feminism. Firstly, borders and regulated migration cause a lot of suffering and inequality, and if feminism is about solidarity, equality and protecting and defending those lives that are most precarious, most marginalised and invisible, then borders and regulated migration must be a primary concern for feminism. Secondly, borders and regulated migration are key practices through which a whole range of power structures work. Attending to borders and regulated migration would thus be valuable for feminist work on many other issues. Lastly, as I have shown, feminist theory plays a crucial role in understanding borders and regulated migration and in making effective arguments and strategies against them. Thus, feminist theory and practices are needed to advance this project.

In short, we need arguments and strategies that 'challenge frontally the right of states to control their borders and territories, or the rights of states to exclude and deport' (Anderson et al. 2009:8), and we also need critical work that asks 'what is a good life? And how do we go about making institutions and imaginaries that support it?' (Berlant in Seitz 2013).

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