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Deconstructing Border Theory through the Axiological Assumption

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Borders and border regions have become particularly topical subjects for social studies, and especially so in the present days of growing globalization, and the development of supra-state regions such as the European Union (EU). The new way of thinking about Europe's borders has also been inspired by the ongoing ruminations on border security and the migration crisis on this Continent. All of that has been promptly echoed in research literature and its critical analysis of current migration policies as well as detentions, deportations and border checks in recent years. Taking an axiological approach the author analyzes the new paradigm of thinking about European borders using definitions such as *the vacillation of borders, diffraction, dehumanization and animalization of migrants, biopolitical security.* He shows how the situation developing on European borders in recent years has influenced the hierarchy of European values as is evident in the media and social networking sites.

Keywords: border, border's axiology, biopolitical security, hierarchy of European values, reterritorialization

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The community stagnates
without the impulse of the individual.
The impulse dies without the sympathy of the community

William James

Introduction

The present era of growing globalization and European border crisis integrates sociological, political, social and philosophical analyses as well as questions of migration and borders, which stand at the core of critical and radical geography. Today in the globalized world people should willingly live in a society which contains vast diversity and risks of terrorism, insecurity, economic and social instability. At the same time, there is no chance of returning to a world in which European countries borders can be reinstated. The situation of the EU and its internal and external borders characterized by more broadly issue related to borders: their "selective openness".

On the European stage, we see important actor - a refugee. In the public opinion, mass media, and political discourse, the refugee is perceived in different ways: as an incomprehensible alien, as a radical, and as an absolute Other; *homo sacer* (in Agambian sense); pure victims and the passive objects of others' compassion, pity, or protection. Simultaneously "they (refugees) remain subjects who make more or less calculated strategic and tactical choices about how to reconfigure their lives and advance their life projects despite the dispossession and dislocation of their refugee condition."[1]

Nevertheless, from the different perceptions of the refugees arise ethical discourses of care that can prove useful in establishing that there is a relation that has to be acknowledged, as a strategy against "dehumanization," "indifference," and "individuation." This ethical discourse is close 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

[1] Nicolas de Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 7 (2013): 1180–1198.

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subject'.[2] The moral issues raised by the migration and ecological crises also expose the need for philosophical and ethical contributions to scrutinize the normative aspects of European responses.

Background and Theoretical Contexts of European Borders

Throughout the centuries, the process of construction and deconstruction of various types of borders has been an important part of the history of civilizations Many famous neo-liberalists and globalists tell us that the end of both history and geography is near, that borders will disappear, and that humanity will live in a global village, a postmodern and reterritorialized hyperspace created by the processes of globalization. In support of this view, Anssi Paasi says that the key theme is role of territorial factor at various spatial scales and borders "are more than 'lines on a map' but have crucial links with identity, action, mobility and power that we need to grasp if we are to understand the changing spatialities of our globalizing world."[3] He argued that borders "should not be seen solely as phenomena located at the 'edges' of territories but rather 'all over' territories, in innumerable societal practices and discourses."[4]

Europe is characterized by a reduction in the number of state borders – a process that has been going on since 1989. Central and Eastern European countries are now framed by approximately 8,000 miles of new state lines. Europe is characterized by a reduction in the number of state borders – a process that has been going on since 1989. Central and Eastern European countries are now framed by approximately 8,000 miles of new state lines. Michel Foucher points out that "the so-called old continent is the newest of all, with more than 60% of its present borders drawn during the twentieth century."[5]

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[2] Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 109–110.

[3] Anssi Paasi, "Review on Dijkink, G. and Knippenberg H. Territorial Factor: Political Geography in a Globalizing World," *Journal of Economic and Social Geography* 93, no. 4 (2002): 6.

[4] Anssi Paasi, "Bounded spaces in a 'borderless world': Border studies, power and the anatomy of territory," *Journal of Power* 2, no. 2 (2009): 215.

[5] Michel Foucher, "The Geopolitics of European Frontiers," in *The Frontiers of Europe*, eds. Malcolm Anderson and Eberhard Bort (London: Continuum, 1998), 235.

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In the middle of the 1990s, Hastings Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson proposed that "borders no longer function as they once did, or at least not in every respect. The globalization of culture, the internationalization of economics and politics have apparently resulted in the opening up of borders and the relaxation of those state controls which limited the movement of people, goods, capital and ideas."[6] They concluded that nowadays borders researchers sharing a number of features, which previously distinguished them. They focus own attention "on the border as 'processes' as much as 'products,' and state regarded as incomplete, fragmented and embedded through everyday practice."[7]

Globalization has, however, had its effect: contemporary borders appear to be more differentiated, and their meaning is changing. With the increase of the European integration, the nature of borders has altered: the functions of boundaries and borders are rapidly transforming, "creating a situation that demands careful analysis, considering boundaries and cross-boundary interactions at different levels… as a single system."[8] Ten years ago, the situation, complemented by the quickly developing process of migration to Europe, changed and modified these tendencies. Over the last three years, many EU member states have quickly come to strengthen their own state borders inside the European Union. Evidently, the above-mentioned tendencies are still relevant today, but the "bridge" function of the border does not find its reflection in the common political and emotional atmosphere in the European Union. Such notions as "wall" and "lock" are more applicable to the current state of European borders. In this situation, the meaning of borders has to be reframed and rediscovered.

Imaginary patterns of space, such as core, periphery, semi-periphery, and center-periphery, have been significant in developing the boundaries of countries and have attempted to forecast the approaching relation between local and global borders. The territory as an analytic category inscribes membership

[6] Hasting Donnan, Thomas M. Wilson, *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State* (New York, Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1999), 3.

[7] Hasting Donnan, Thomas M. Wilson, "Borders and Border Studies," in *A Companion to Border Studies*, eds. Hasting Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwel, 2012), 13.

[8] Vladimir Kolossov, "Theorizing Borders. Border Studies: Changing Perspectives and Theoretical Approaches," *Geopolitics* 10, no. 4 (2005): 628.

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and identity in physical space. Nevertheless, borders are an element in the transforming dimensions of space. Territory, or territoriality, has become an increasingly prevalent notion in the discourse of the EU.

We note three phases as the dialectical process of border formation: *territorialization, re-territorialization* and *de-territorialization.* Two of them appear to oppose each other, while being reciprocal processes in the European territory: the disappearance and strengthening of borders happens simultaneously. Deleuze and Guattari spoke about the two general phases: "territorialization" and "deterritorialization," which are very important for the philosophical analysis of the meaning of borders. Territorialization mostly means differentiation of space and construction of borders. Deterritorialization is described as the eradication of social, political, or cultural practices from their native places and populations. The result of this process is weakening of ties between ethnic, religious belonging, culture, and territory. At the same time, both deterritorialization and territorialization are processes, which are going on and developing not only on the physical, but also on the psychological territory, which designates the status of a relationship between groups or individuals. Felix Guattari divides the processes of deterritorialization into "relative" and "absolute". To him, the relative deterritorialization constitutes a possibility of re-territorialization or returning to a past situation. The absolute deterritorialization is marked by an impossibility of being territorialized again. Deterritorialization tends to be followed by re-territorialization.[9]

As philosophical approach, the new materialism offers the new notion of "trans-corporeality" as an attempt to open "up a mobile space that acknowledges the often unpredictable and unwanted actions of humanity."[10] The new materialism "rewrites thinking as a whole, leaving nothing untouched, redirecting every possible idea according to its new sense of orientation."[11] It represents a new type of metaphysics. Being an attempt to "jump" into the future without an adequate preparation in the present, it becomes the new unknown future. In this sense, the new materialist explanation concerning the relationship between linear

[9] Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, transl. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 110.

[10] Stacy Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 2010), 2.

[11] *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*, eds. Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin (Open Humanities Press. An imprint of Michigan Publishing, 2012), 13.

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and nonlinear time is very helpful for the interpretation of contemporary borders. Border and borderland are a space where "past" and "future" clash permanently. The simple linear time dimension really does not work there. Three observed phases of territorialization, re-territorialization and re-territorialization mutually replace each other. From the Karen Barad and Donna Haraway view, the "past" was never simply there to begin with, and the "future" is not what will unfold, but "past" and "future" are iteratively reconfigured and enfolded through the world's ongoing intra-activity. Respectively it influences on border axiological assessment, valuation and ranging border' functions. Another important new materialist notion is *diffraction*. Van der Tuin explains that "*diffraction* is meant to disrupt linear and fixed causalities, and to work toward "more promising interference patterns."[12]

Such new materialism ideas as "unpredictable and unwanted actions", "attempt jump into the future," "diffraction" make possible to look on the ongoing migration and European refugee crisis not only as a result of "unpredictable and unwanted actions" of policymakers, but an example of *diffractions* variety which includes consequences of colonialist and neo-colonialist past, strengthening of religious radicalism and current military conflicts.

Human history never had pure and only tendency in the territorial and borders' spheres. At the end of the 1990s, the tendency to understand borders and boundaries only as a symbol of "past and fixed world" in which territory was the most important dimension begins to become less popular. European process of re-territorialization partially starts in the period after 1989. The new stage of the re-territorialization process, which started to be visible less than a decade ago, also shows that "this changing shape of governance" does not adequately manage such rapidly and unpredictably changing processes of borders. These changing processes of borders have their own general features. Étienne Balibar indicates some of them: the borders are no longer entirely situated at the outer limit of territories, they are somewhat dispersed in all directions, Europe is always home to tensions among numerous religious, cultural and linguistic identities as well as multiple readings of history. Balibar concluded that borders and territories are not a symbol of "past and fixed world" and they start to be a "transitional object," an object of permanent transgression. The new image of territorial transgression was

[12] Iris Van der Tuin, "A Different Starting Point, a Different Metaphysics: Reading Bergson and Barad Diffractively," *Hypatia* 26, no. 1 (2001): 26.

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realized and started to be obvious in the second decade of the XXI century. It can be stated that after some decades of European deterritorialization, we have observed such tendency as re-territorialization. Balibar develops his metaphor that "Europe is a frontier" and creates the idea of "European citizenship as citizenship of borders" in a metaphoric sense.[13]

The process of secession from EU member states only confirm these tendencies. It creates a novel situation for the demarcation of the internal borders of the European Union. The Brexit case adds the complexity of simultaneously redrawing internal and external borders. Situation differ among the territories in which decision of independence combined with EU membership and the latter willingness of not to be EU member. Both processes: the secession from EU member states and decision of independence can be analyzed and discussed through prism of European and national values.

Citizenship in the Axiological Migration Debate

After a long period of relative calm, there has been a dramatic upsurge in philosophical interest in citizenship. Two main challenges have led researchers to re-concept meaning of citizenship. First of all, the internal diversity of contemporary Western civilization and world; second, the pressures of globalization on idea and practice of the territorial bounded state. The contemporary debates of citizenship move around the theory of social, national, religious and cultural pluralism and meaning and borders of tolerance. Both processes: social, national, religious and cultural pluralism and tolerance have long nonlinear history. Nowadays, particularly in Europe, in many analyses around border issues is evident the spatial relationships with citizenship that invoked in undergoing processes of change. From the modern time, citizenship was important value for people. It was a mark of justice, freedom and participation in social-politic activities. The concept of citizenship is included three general dimensions: the legal person free to act according to the law and having the right to claim the law's protection, the citizen as political agent, as member of a political community with collective identity

[13] Étienne Balibar, "Europe as Borderland," *The Alexander von Humboldt Lecture in Human Geography*, 2004, http://gpm.ruhosting.nl/avh/Europe%20as%20Borderland.pdf (accessed: 05.03.2021).

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that contributes to social integration. In conditions of cultural pluralism, the majority culture should be replaced by universalistic principles of human rights and the rule of law that makes constitution and those principles a universal value.

The institution of citizenship has undergone far-reaching factual and normative changes. Michael Lister in the article "Europeanization and migration: challenging the values of citizenship in Europe?" uses axiological approach and underlines that key interactions between citizenship and migration, national conceptions of citizenship and Europeanization and migration, possible to understand only in terms of the normative and analytical values of citizenship. Lister same as new materialists emphasizes and allocates some features of these processes: non-linear or non-additive character, key factor as migration that reconfigured citizenship in Europe, the precise ways in which migration affects national conceptions of citizenship is unclear and complex and it does effect on their different models.[14] As result of these processes, European states now have sizeable proportions of foreign-born non-citizens residing within their territorial borders.

Looking on the citizenship is a unified concept, we emphasis such important problem as Europeanization and migration, assessing their impact on citizenship. For Christian Joppke, the focus is the relationship between immigration and citizenship and the interrelation between the dimensions of citizenship. At the book "Citizenship and Immigration", he shows increasing liberalization in the process of accessing citizenship, the strengthening of rights of non-citizen residents and examines internal relationship between such dimensions as status of personality and its rights. Joppke provides evidence to establish a general process of liberalization in accessing the status of citizenship. For him, the way to citizenship liberalization should include three important elements: adopting *jus soli* rather than *jus sanguinis* rules, tolerating dual citizenship, and lowering the requirements of naturalization. On this way, he found two obstacles: re-ethnicization of citizenship and security-based restrictions. The reason of first is attempt "the contemporary states seek to retain or strengthen ties with expatriate communities abroad" and second – the problem of terrorism and the rise of national security.[15] At the same time, in the increasing fluidity of the relations between individuals

[14] Michael Lister, "Introduction: Europeanization and Migration: challenging the values of citizenship in Europe?," *Citizenship Studies* 12, no. 6 (2008): 529–530.

[15] Christian Joppke, *Citizenship and Immigration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 210), 32.

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and polities in a globalized world possible observe first steps to a friendly amendment to current principles of citizenship allocation. For some researcher it is means request the disaggregation of rights, commonly associated with citizenship, from the legal status of citizen. For us is very important the problem about universalization of citizenship and identity from the reason that most of the values concentrate around cultural identity.

The "cultural convergence" is long and difficult process; on the way of which we should take into account such tendencies and factors as correlation between a "state culture" and a "majority culture", the influence of domestic Diasporas and other.

Nowadays four key interactions between citizenship and migration are visible:

- the impact of migration on national conceptions of citizenship,
- the impact of national conceptions of citizenship on migration policy and practices,
- the relationship between European citizenship and national citizenship
- the relationship between a developing European citizenship and migration

The complex landscape of these relationships, configurations and interactions help us to create the integral picture of citizenship in the time of migration.

The contemporary theory of migration, ecological crisis and partly posthuman approach actualized some mainly axiological meanings such as agent-relative value, buck- passing, moral blameworthiness and other. Agent-relative value mostly appeal to a distinction between agent-relative and agent-neutral value that must make it in to circumstances of evaluation for matters.[16] The account of such a distinctions allows to agents to deal with intuitive cases of right or wrong decisions. Sometimes classical consequentialism is supported by appeal to the intuition that one should always do the best action and only after that try to analyze of what they lead to. The case of buck- passing account of value means possibility to be valuable is not from the reason that somebody maintain it as a simple and unanalyzable intrinsic value, but rather to have other foundations that provide reasons to take up an attitude in favor of future agent' activity or against it. The attempt to equate the value of an object with the existence of reasons in its

[16] Mark Schroeder, "Teleology, Agent-Relative Value, and 'Good'," *Ethics* 117, no. 2 (2007): 274.

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favor lead to many wrong decisions. Leonard Kahn faces that the "wrong kind of reasons" sometime becomes source of moral blameworthiness. In reality, we have deal with pro-attitudes towards rather than their objects, which are valuable.[17]

In this context actualized Guy-Ernest Debord book "The Society of the Spectacle" (1967) that found many responses from contemporary migration and border researches. In 1989, Debord in his later "Comments on the Society of the Spectacle" (1989), arguing that everything he wrote in 1967 was still true, only with one major exception: the society of the spectacle had reached a new form. In fact some his remarks and conclusions about image and real "situationist" praxis are important and fruitful for analyses of border and migration subjects. Debord some ideas are actual from the view that "nowadays debates related to borders are perhaps one of the most visible signs that we are experiencing a process of change."[18] The quick changes on European borders look as spectacle which last act is yet not start. In its actual phase of history European borders is a "transitional object" and an object of permanent transgression. Today Debord's "situationists" theory show us that "when the real world changes into simple images", which become "real beings and effective motivations of hypnotic behavior"[19] and "every society which eliminates geographical distance reproduces distance internally as spectacular separation."[20] He adds that every kind of critical theory must be communicated in its own language: "the language of contradiction, which must be dialectical in form as it is in content. It is critique of the totality and historical critique. It is not "the nadir of writing" but its inversion. It is not a negation of style, but the style of negation."[21]

De Genova use same definition "spectacle" when he wrote about "methodological nationalism" that creates the frame of the nation-state that remains their

[17] Leonard Kahn, "Moral Blameworthiness and the Reactive Attitudes," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 14, no. 2 (2011): 131–142.

[18] Ricard Zapata-Barrero, "Borders in Motion. Concept and Policy Nexus. Refugee Survey Quarterly," *Oxford Journals* 32, no. 1 (2013): 1–23.

[19] Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, transl. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), thesis 18.

[20] Ibidem, thesis 167.

[21] Ibidem, thesis 204–205.

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defining horizons, while these are often no longer sufficient to understand contemporary mechanisms of bordering.[22]

Giorgio Agamben in the essay "The Coming Community" (1993) discussed axiological and social contradictions, which follow from Debord general idea about "the society of the spectacle." Agamben adds that "the meaning of ethics becomes clear only when one understands that the good is not, and cannot be, a good thing or possibility beside or above every bad things or possibility perfectly analogous (even if opposed) to the false and the inauthentic. Ethics begins only when the good is revealed to consist in nothing other than a grasping of evil and when the authentic and the proper have no other content than the inauthentic and the improper."[23] For us this Agamben conclusion is a key for understanding contemporary sense and reality on European borders and the way to deconstruct borders theory. This putative crisis therefore summons the ever- reinvigorated and convulsive recalibration of strategies for border policing and immigration and asylum law enforcement, and thus always resolves itself into a dispute over the most effective and efficient tactics of bordering.[24]

Conclusion

When discussing ethics in the context of migration, it is important to remember first that migration is about the movement of people. Because the ethics of migration results the tension between individuals and nations, these discussions should always begin from ethic issues. Also the process of deconstructing border theory possible only through axiological paradigm and ethic evaluation. We use the term "ethics" to refer to cultural driven choice making around the moral values, which broadly constitutes "right" behavior. It includes such principles as to provide clearly public articulated ethics norms and values, to use and explain context where the need to balance possibly conflicting ethical issues

[22] Nicholas de Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36, no. 7 (2013): 1180–1198.

[23] Georgio Agamben, *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1993), 20.

[24] Nicholas de Genova, *The Borders of "Europe": Autonomy of Migration, Tactics of Bordering*, ed. Nicholas De Genova (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2017), 5.

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is understood as part of a process oriented approach. The Western ethics have been influenced by the principles of acting in ways that benefit individuals and society, respect others and that work for the greater good. More globally, ethics have been influenced by promotion of justice and human rights. There is also a growing recognition of the necessity of inter-cultural ethical dialogue. In addition, necessary take care about recognition of the different ethics principles, which operate between different states, ethnic and religious groups and minorities.

Nowadays some actors (EU states) have different opinions about strategy, tactics and decision in the debate of border security and migration crisis in Europe. Today for some of the questions receiving countries have not simple answers: may receiving countries arbitrarily choose what immigrants to accept? Can countries ethically limit migration by race, nationality, religion? To what extent may receiving countries defend their borders? Should European Union create a coherent, understandable, and publicized policy?

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Streszczenie

Dekonstrukcja teorii granic w hipotezie aksjologicznej

Granice i regiony przygraniczne to szczególnie ważne miejsca dla badań społecznych, zwłaszcza w erze postępującej globalizacji oraz rozwoju regionów ponadpaństwowych, takich jak Unia Europejska (UE). Migracyjny kryzys Europy wymusił aktualną refleksję na temat bezpieczeństwa granic. Wszystko to natychmiast znalazło odbicie w literaturze badawczej, która oferuje krytyczne spojrzenie na bieżąca politykę migracyjną dotyczącą zatrzymań, deportacji i kontroli granicznej w trakcie ostatnich lat. Poprzez paradygmat aksjologiczny nowego materializmu oraz krytycznej i radykalnej geografii spróbuję porównać koncepcje granic z lat 90. (É. Balibar, A. Paasi, H. Donnan i Th.M. Wilson) z koncepcjami z pierwszych dziesięcioleci XXI wieku, które reprezentują nowy sposób myślenia o granicach Europy poprzez takie definicje,

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jak *wahanie granic, dyfrakcja, dehumanizacja* i *animalizacja migrantów, biopolityczne bezpieczeństwo*. Artykuł pokazuje, w jaki sposób powstała w ostatnich latach sytuacja na europejskich granicach wpływa na hierarchię wartości europejskich, uwidoczniającą się w mediach i internetowych sieciach społecznych. Ponadto w artykule mowa jest o moralnych kwestiach kryzysu środowiska i zmiany klimatu.

Słowa kluczowe: granica, aksjologia granicy, bezpieczeństwo biopolityczne, hierarchia wartości europejskich, reterytorializacja

Zusammenfassung

Die Dekonstruktion der Theorie der Grenzen in der axiologischen Hypothese

Die Grenzen und Grenzregionen bilden besonders wichtige Standorte für soziale Forschungen, zumal im Zeitalter der fortschreitenden Globalisierung und der Entwicklung solcher staatsübergreifenden Regionen wie die Europäische Union. Die Migrationskrise in Europa ließ auch eine neue Reflexion über die Sicherheit der Grenzen aufkommen. All das fand sofort seine Widerspiegelung in der Forschungsliteratur, die eine kritische Sicht auf die aktuelle Migrationspolitik, Festnahmen, Abschiebungen und Grenzkontrollen in den letzten Jahren präsentiert. Unter Anwendung des axiologischen Paradigmas des neuen Materialismus und der kritischen Geographie versuche ich die Grenzkonzepte der 1990er Jahre (É. Balibar, A. Paasi, H. Donnan und Th.M. Wilson) mit den Entwürfen der ersten Jahrzehnte des 21. Jahrhunderts zu vergleichen. Diese Entwürfe vertreten eine neue Denkweise über die Grenzen Europas anhand solcher Definitionen wie *Grenzschwankung, Diffraktion, Entmenschlichung und Animalisierung der Einwanderer, biopolitische Sicherheit*. Der Artikel zeigt, wie die in den letzten Jahren entstandene Situation an den europäischen Grenzen die Hierarchie der europäischen Werte beeinflusst, die in Medien und in sozialen Netzwerken im Internet zum Vorschein kommt. Es werden zusätzlich die moralischen Aspekte der Umweltkrise und des Klimawandels behandelt.

Schlüsselwörter: Grenze, Axiologie der Grenze, biopolitische Sicherheit, Hierarchie der europäischen Werte, Reterritorialisierung

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