

# The “Container Model” Paradox: Borders, Frontiers and the State’s Own Image of Itself.

By

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*“The question of government intervention in the work of Colonization involves the future and permanent interests of civilization itself, and far outstretches the comparatively narrow limits of purely economic considerations...the removal of population from the overcrowded to the unoccupied parts of the earth’s surface is one of those works of eminent social usefulness, which most require, and which at the same time best repay, the intervention of government” ---*

**John Stuart Mill**

*“No doubt, the body politic is a monster—so much so that it is not even a body” –*

**Bruno Latour**

*“Theories of the State take the State, itself, as a point of departure, and hence fail to demystify the State’s existence. Almost all theories of the State proceed as if the State were indeed a universal, a prerequisite to our social existence rather than a product of our social existence...By treating the State as a coherent object with ontological qualities...State theorists reify (“thing-ify”) the State, treating it as a thing or a given, rather than, for instance, as a mappable constellation of social practices”. –*

**Chris Kortright**

## **Introduction**

In this paper, my aim is to rethink the processes and discourses of modern migration, peregrination, global movements, and displacements. This rethink is necessary in the light of the emerging fact that the modern understanding of the migration process is based on a distorted and ahistorical picture of both the migrants and the migration process. This warped picture forms the foundation of the discourses, policy processes, and the mutually exclusive indexing devices endorsed by academics, nation states and international organizations like the UN, EU, and OECD etc. Foremost in the many of factors that underpin this distortion is what Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller (2002) identified as “methodological nationalism” or the “container model”.

Methodological Nationalism hinges on the reproduction of the modern state’s own idea of itself as a bounded, stable, coherent, self contained, independent, demographic, economic, political and social concrete unit (Abrams 1988). Methodological nationalism is accompanied by a specifically modern definition of the person and grouping that corresponds to or is ‘embraced’ (Torpey 2000) by the processes of state formation. This particular “container model” conception of the person or peoplehood on the basis of being ‘embraced’ by the state within a “container” society authorises the typically modern codified “in” and “out” groups differentiation. Therefore the other side of methodological nationalism is methodological individualism validating the boundary based “unitary and sovereign” notions of the “private person” or “citizen” parallel to the “container” self image of the modern state. In a container model of individual-state-society, the “foreigner” or *Ausländer* becomes an aberration subjected to the anthropophagic or anthropoemic negation intrinsic to even the “benevolent” container debates on migration. In such a cultural environment dominated by methodological nationalism/individualism, the mutually reinforcing constellations of discursive relations and dissimulations combine to form what I call “methodological modernism”. Methodological modernism not only underscores the reproduction of the states own image of itself, it also allows us to mutilate and hide the complete trajectory of the migration process and, to reduce it to one half of the emigration/immigration couplet thus

casting adrift the confluent spheres of its historical foundation (Sayad 1999; Bourdieu and Wacquant 2000; Lebovics 1992).

Migration discourses take the state's idea of itself as a given even when words like "transnational", "diaspora" or "network" are used to conceptualized the supposedly shifting configurations of movements, "flows", self understanding and belonging. This equally applies to the corresponding push-pull cost and benefits analysis which views migration from the point of view of costs or benefits to mutually exclusive national, individual or strategic rational "identities", "interests" and "choices". Methodological nationalism also underscores the mutilation of the emigration/immigration couplet, sending/receiving societies, the issues of remittances and its link to development and the transfer of skill and technology. In the Social Science especially, the dominant received paradigms still under the grip of the container model plays a key role in the political construction, social, and common sense understanding of this distorted picture of the migrant and migration in general.

Instead of following the usual route of reducing migration to immigration, or extolling the 'global' virtues, necessities and concerns of the powerful 'receiving' or 'host' societies, this paper will rethink the processes and discourses of modern migration from those angles in the discourses concealed by the blinkers of the "container" model. The paper will pivot on an analysis of the centripetal and centrifugal historical transformations and forces which not only connect the "sending" and "receiving" societies, but also produces the dynamics many erroneously assume is bounded up within mutually exclusive contexts or national "borders". Border are not merely produced or reproduced materially, there are grounded in both the microphysics and metaphysics of what Foucault described as "dividing practices".

### **Problematizing the Current State of the Art**

Modernity is intrinsically linked to the centripetal and centrifugal forces of axial state formation and the corresponding "container" models of time, space, persons and peoplehood that is integral to that process. The modern "individual" self image, or even the modern state's image of itself as "unitary", "sovereign" and an independent socio-political system marked by "borders", is deeply

rooted in the larger social, historical, economic and cultural construct we call modernity. The “container” model paradox stems from the necessary contradiction between the modern state’s image of itself as “domestic” and bounded, and the *univers de discours* realities that are constantly at the root of modern state formation and transformation. The extent of this contradiction is perhaps captured by the particularistic global designs of the Blairite “liberal imperialist” internationalism and particularistic universalism. As Hywel Williams put it in *The Guardian* (UK), Thursday May 23, 2002:

*The ethical indifference underlying the ethical uplift is a familiar noise by now. It's a reminder of the neo-colonial patronage which is the undertow to Blairite internationalism. Africa - an entire continent which recently became a friend - now seems a bit of a threat. And Indian business, he tells us admiringly, is alive to the close links between “enterprise” and science.<sup>1</sup>*

Invariably, this convoluted modern state/personality self image is the basis of all current migration discourses, practices and the phenomenon that is allegedly signified by the migration discursive practices. Discourse and truth regimes produce forms of knowledge, quasi-objects, subjects, vested interests and practical knowledges. Thus, for Foucault (1972:32), discourse is: “...constituted by all that was said, in all the statements that named it, divided it up, described it, explained it, traced its development, indicated its various correlations, judged it, and possibly gave it speech by articulating, in its name, discourses that were to be taken as its own”. Despite the quite boring “engine science”<sup>2</sup> debate between “constructionism<sup>3</sup>” and “realism”, political and economic institutional insiders like Edward L. Bernays and Walter Lippmann, understood the discursive nature of “quasi-objects” quite well. The conversation between Ron Suskind and George W. Bush’s aide in Suskind’s article *Without a Doubt*, published in the New York Times, October 17, 2004, illustrates the latter point very well:

*“The aide said that guys like me were “in what we call the reality-based community,” which he defined as people who “believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality.” I nodded and murmured something about enlightenment principles and empiricism. He*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/comment/story/0,,720602,00.html>

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Carroll (2006), *Science, Culture and Modern State Formation*

<sup>3</sup> Whether “soft” or “hard”.

*cut me off. "That's not the way the world really works anymore," he continued. "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality -- judiciously, as you will -- we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors . . . and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do."*

The contradictions and contractions that emanate from this convoluted process enacted by universalistic particularistic “history’s actors” feeds into the dilemma we all witness everyday in all modern social formations and boundary based processes whether in the form of the state, coloniality, capitalism or “individualism”. Despite the obvious contradictions, the discursive process lucidly described by Bush’s aide is at the root of: the classification of the planet’s population through the prism of race; the invention of the concept of spatial and mental “economy”; the view of nature as a resource to exploit, the division of spaces into states that think of themselves as singularities and mutually exclusive containers; the invention of the “individual” or the bourgeois subject-form as the atom of the collective called the state; and the ideological representation of these individuals within the territory of a state as a distinct society set against other distinct societies.

In spite of the “liberal” view of the “individual” as a counter discourse of statism, the individual or indivisible “atom” actually exists because the state “embraces” or “penetrates” the individual through birth and death registration, taxation, pension, social “welfare”, security and “poor” laws, town planning and “wages”. These penetrating practices are enacted in such a way that the fictive individuals experiences fitting into the system as if acting out of their own initiative. Foucault was echoing Ernest Renan’s (1882) reasoning over a hundred years ago when he argued that: never before in the history of the human societies – even in the ancient Chinese society – has there been such cunning amalgamation of “individualisation techniques” and “totalisation procedures” (Rabinow 1984:14). What we are dealing with here actually has little to do with what is routinely implied in the discourses about “migration”, “migration systems”, “sovereignty”, “agency” “interculturalism”, “transnationalism” or “networks”. According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2006):

*“Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. One of the difficulties in defining colonialism is that it is difficult to distinguish it from imperialism. Frequently the two concepts are treated as synonyms. Like colonialism, imperialism also involves political and economic control over a dependent territory. Turning to the etymology of the two terms, however, provides some suggestion about how they differ. The term colony comes from the Latin word colonus, meaning farmer. This root reminds us that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the new arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin. Imperialism, on the other hand, comes from the Latin term imperium, meaning to command. Thus, the term imperialism draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control.”*

As the Stanford Encyclopaedia observes above, the crux of the problem is not “migration”, “border” or “sovereignty”, but the diachronic contradictions that piggy-back the serial enactment of “dividing practices” from within the “delimitation” paradigm of the Eurocentric centripetal forces and global designs.

### **The Discursive Drift of Modern Confluent Spheres**

Until very recently, the idea that modern migration is unique and unprecedented in human history is seen as a self evident truth. This is to the extent that the metaphor of the ‘age of migration’ introduced by Castle and Miller (1993) is now taken for granted by many basking in the supposed newness of recent global mobilities. The interesting thing about this trendy withdrawal into the present regarding human movements is that it is typical of the self image discourses of modernity. Modernity has always been seen as the spirit behind the transformative contractions of scientific and technological ‘progress’. The modern age is usually marked by the concern with time; the cult of reason, the deals of freedom; the state-individual-society trio along side the axial division of labour that forms the grounds of global capitalism. Ideals such as humanism, pragmatism, the cult of rational action and achievement associated with the history of

modernity are also integral to the cultural and socio-economic transformation that is seen as 'universal' in today's fashionable nomenclature.

Modernity is also seen both by its internal and external critics as the impetus behind the uprooting of people from 'traditional' life worlds into a 'universal' rationalizing system. In other words, modernity is "...the socio-historical organization and classification of the world founded on a macro-narrative and on a specific concept and principles of knowledge" (Mignolo and Tlostanova 2006: 205). The successive sequential move from 'traditional society' to modern society; mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity; chaos to order; superstition to scientific rationality are marked features of that modern macro-narrative. The individual and other such modern cybernetic indexing devices cleaved from "nature", "tradition", clan, family or kindred can be seen as the fictitious 'atom' of an ideological representation of society; a 'reality' fabricated by the specifically modern mechanism of power. Globally dominant institutions like the Nation State/individualism emerged as embodiments of such massive transformative organization and classification. What is usually forgotten is that these transformations entail a huge shuffling and reshuffling of "borders", peoples, ideas, images and objects due to such transformations.

The former British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw in a statement in 2002<sup>4</sup>, blamed "*our colonial past*" and the "*odd lines*" drawn by the colonial powers for "*a lot of the problems we are having to deal with now*". He used several examples ranging from the Balfour Declaration of 1917 to the illogical borders and frontiers drawn by the British in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Iraq as the primary source of explaining the global territorial disputes and conflicts which continue to have huge demographic and migratory implications today. The imperial reconfiguration of national borders from Palestine, Africa to the countries of "Latin America" serve as a foundation to the borders and "fractal frontiers" (Maier 2003) whose crossing or breaching constitutes the elementary particle of migration discourses. "Borders", as noted by Mignolo and Tlostanova (2006: 205) is for the twenty-first century what 'frontiers' were in the nineteenth century. Such division is enacted to differentiate 'civilization', "citizens" or "rational subjects" on one side and

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<sup>4</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2481371.stm>

barbarism, emptiness or primitivism on the other. This is because “*the modern foundation of knowledge is territorial and imperial*” (ibid).

The second largest concentration of people of direct African descent within a modern body politic is in fact Brazil not within the continent of Africa. The global movements and reshuffling of people that made the entity called Indian, Nigeria, Pakistan or Brazil possible did not happen recently. The “newness” of the “age of migration” or ‘globaloney’ cannot tell us why “*The Saint-Simonians...were the direct inspiration of the building of the Suez and Panama Canals*”; or why “*Comte’s phrase, ‘Order and Progress’ not only adorns the Brazilian flag but inspired a whole phase of nineteenth-century Latin American development policy*”; or perhaps, “*why Australians and Indians alike came to see the work of Friedrich List as inspiration for the construction of their...national economies*”<sup>5</sup>.

Practically every country in the world as it is presently configured is a product or outgrowth of such planetary organization and reorganization. It is in fact fair to argue that the dynamics we describe as ‘globalization’ or ‘globalisations’ and ‘migration’ and the mobilities associated with those terms are integral to the geo-historical transformative nature of modernity. Even though modernity as an historical age is generally understood to be a stage or phase in Western civilization marked by sweeping demographic, economic, cultural and social transformations, this ahistorical discourses of permanent ‘newness’ persist. Norbert Elias wrote in the *Processes of State Formation and Nation Building* (1970: 274) that

*“One of the strangest aspects of the development of sociology during its first century and a half or so as a relatively autonomous discipline is the change from a long-term perspective to a short-term perspective, a kind of narrowing of the sociologists’ interest to contemporary societies - and above all to their own societies - as they are here and now, and a withdrawal of interest from the problem how and why societies over the centuries have become what they are. The narrowing of the focus has found its most striking expression in the change in the dominant type of sociological theory.”*

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<sup>5</sup> See Cowen and Shenton in Crush 1995: 41

This tendency for modern discourses to, as Elias put, withdraw into an ever receding ‘present’ is rooted in the modern historical tendency to conceal the image of its origin (Veroli 2002). This concealment is rife both in the processes of state building and more so, in the discourses of modern migration. The concealment is often disguised in the usual myopic cost and benefit analysis, politico-juridical, utilitarian, formalistic and functionalist discourses of immigration, citizenship, denizenship, interculturalism and integration. Abdelmalek Sayad (2004: 3) observes that:

*“...in many ways it is so reassuring, one has to be deliberately myopic to accept and reproduce the reductive definition of the migratory phenomenon that implicitly describes it as being nothing more than the mere displacement of a labour force...with no question asked as to the reasons for that surplus, or about the genesis of the process that made this surplus available”.*

As a result of this, the processes and discourses of modern migration are indissociable from the large scale spatial and mental transformations associated with the rise of the modern states and inter-state system commonly associated with the emergence of modernity. In this sense, modern migration and the paradigms linked to it are an integral part of the “great transformation” spirit that made the modern world not only possible but also plausible and conceivable. Zygmunt Bauman (1989) has made precisely the same case in relation with the holocaust. The Oxford University International Migration Institute in a paper titled *Towards a New Agenda for International Migration Research* (2006) identified “research and policy gaps” in the dominant trends in migration discourses:

*“Migration research has its roots in social scientific approaches developed in the epoch of nationalism, when the control of migration and minorities was seen as crucial to nation-building. As a result, migration studies have tended to be based on distinct national assumptions and organizational models...There is a common failure to analyse migration as an integral part of development and global transformation processes rather than a problem to be ‘managed’ or ‘solved’ by tackling its perceived causes...Scholars tend to focus more on migration decisions and integration issues than the process of migration itself...The bulk of international migration research has focused on the movement, settlement, and integration of migrants in Europe, North*

*America and other industrialised countries. There is a tendency towards 'snapshot' approaches in analysing migration systems that cannot capture their continuing mutation. Consequently, there is a limited capacity to comprehend the past and current dynamics of migration and gain a sense of how it will evolve in future decades"*<sup>6</sup>

While the above observation identified the now accepted limitations of generalized migration discourses, it fails to link the limitations of migration discourses to the epistemic and organizational models that underpin the discourses and the phenomenon itself. The "snapshot" approaches, preoccupation with the present, methodological nationalism and Eurocentricism are not simply "research and policy gaps", they are integral to the "global transformation" that is largely responsible for both the phenomenon and lenses used to analyse it. The key question regarding the "research and policy gaps" then is how they fit into the prevailing scheme and order of things.

It is against this historical backdrop of modern social, spatial and mental transfigurations that modern migration and discourses of migration must be understood. If modernity is a historical process that is "aware of itself", it follows that modern migration is equally reflexive and therefore reflects this modern concern with time as a linear process. Paraphrasing Ulrich Beck's conceptualisation of the 'risk' society, modern migration can be differentiated from other epochs not simply because of the scale, pattern and dynamics of the movements but specifically because it cannot be attributed to "external causes"<sup>7</sup>. This is because the global classifications (including the axial racial profiling, "citizenship", "residency" and "asylum seeking"), movements, displacements, exiles, population redistributions, the shuffling and reshuffling of peoples and the accompanying discourses are "*introduced by modernization itself*" (Beck 1992:21). The often cited murky link between coloniality, methodological nationalism/individualism and modernization becomes even clearer if we situate state building in its proper historical and epistemological context.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/a4-imi-research-agenda.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> i.e things outside the processes of modernization and coloniality.

It follows that modern migration and its accompanying discourses cannot be separated from, or understood outside the processes of modernization and the ‘coloniality’ constitutive of the modern “Euro-centred” program (Quijano 2000; Mignolo 2000). To understand modern mobilities we have to understand that what binds the explanatory discourses to the larger historical formation is not simply the location of these discourses within the core regions of the modern habitus. Modern migration discourses are largely “Eurocentric” but how can they be anything else since Eurocentricism is the core rationality of the modern model of power that is globally hegemonic at present? All the historical sources of the modern state and other modern social transformations like the French revolution, the peace of Westphalia or even the contradictory British dogma of “instituted economic process” (Polanyi 1977) were Eurocentrically, “international” from the onset. The French concept of “citizenship”, the nation state model or the “international system” are themselves international enactments that transcends what is now seen as national borders buttressed by the aforementioned withdrawal into the ‘present’. The location of these discourses within the core regions of modernity is however, a clear indication of the vestiges of the modern episteme exercising itself in the dominant stock of knowledge and the context of the modern enterprise of ‘research’. Given the entrenched nature of the modern episteme within both the modern migration process and its accompanying discourses, the modern migration ‘industry’ becomes enlisted into doing “imperial services” (Mann 2003) and therefore requires at least a rethink.

The fact that modern migration discourses operate from within the classifications, distinctions and national borders/frontiers mapped by a global diachronic “coloniality of power” makes it imperative to take a historical view “from afar”. Since the logocentric foundation of modern migration is predicated on the binary ‘borders’ that migrants have to cross in order for migration to take place, it is necessary to look at the “geo-body politics of knowledge”<sup>8</sup> that inform such binary foundational classification. Migration research should set out to analyse this larger diachronic contradictions, formations, and forces that permeates the migration “industrial complex”<sup>9</sup> by focusing on the convolutions of the global and transnational forces at work in the

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<sup>8</sup> See Mignolo and Tlostanova 2006

<sup>9</sup> The word “industrial complex” is used to encapsulate the array of interdependent but specialized units that have emerged out of the cleavages of the attempt to control modern mobilities by modern states; from ‘people traffickers’ to identity forgers, academics and researchers, immigration lawyers to activists, law

not only the local histories of the “sending” societies but also the “receiving” societies “illusory account of practices” that mystifies those convolutions.

Given the latter, it may benefit migration research and discourses if the seminal migration research principles laid down by the late Algerian ethnologist Abdelmalek Sayad is adopted widely. These principles which remain underutilized by scholars and policy makers alike are firstly, that before a migrant becomes an immigrant, they were first an emigrant, therefore the sociology of migration must necessarily begin not from the border concerns, exigencies or cleavages of the receiving societies or the “challenges” and “problems” the migrant may pose for the “receiving” societies. Rather, the sociology of migration must take “*the sending communities, their histories, structures and contradictions*” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2000: 174) as its point of departure. It is important to bear in mind that there is no magical alchemy that transforms the migrant at the point of entry therefore the migrant’s history and biography is rooted in the sending communities. The usual practice of focusing on the concerns and logic of the receiving societies (even when the sending communities are claimed to be one of the research consideration) mutilates and distorts the migration process into “*an artificial problematic...explained away by ritualized references*” (ibid).

The sociology of migration must focus on the “complete trajectory” of the individuals, households, and groups caught in the movements as a way to unveil the hidden forces that impact on the “sending” context and the varied but interconnected trajectories of the migrant and the migration process. In other words, migration must be viewed from the point of view of the “*relationship between the system of dispositions of emigrants and the ensemble of mechanisms to which they are subjected owing to this emigration*” (Sayad 1999: 57). This is simply because “*immigration here and emigration there are the two indisassociable sides of the same reality, which cannot be explained the one without the other*” (Ibid: 15). Reconnecting emigration and immigration foreshadows the second proposition by Abdelmalek Sayad, which is that migration is best seen as a “*relation from state to state*”; that is, a vestige of an “*historical relation of inter-national domination*” that is both material and symbolic concealed in everyday discourses

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enforcement and anti-immigrant political parties and activists, and migrant ‘communities’ subsumed under the dubious term of ‘diaspora’ (See Roger Brubaker 2005).

as a “domestic” issues bounded up in mutually exclusive political and social domains (Sayad 1991: 267). Finally, the third key proposition by Sayad is that migration involves what he describes as a “collective dissimulation” and “social duplicity” which allows for a diachronic mystification and misrecognition of the process for what it actually is. One of the key processes that maintain the collective dissimulation is of course the “illusory account of practices” that hinges on methodological modernism.

The reduction of the migrant or the migration process to the discourses of immigration, strategic rational choice, maximal utility or the purgatorial category of “those to be included” in terms of “munificent acknowledgment” (Taylor 1992) and the humanitarian appeal for inclusion or “integration” (Habermas 1998) is part of that dissimulation. Despite many centuries of the colonial anthropophagic discourses of “assimilation”, “integration” and “multiculturalism” the intensity of the recent politics on identity and geo-body politics of knowledge is a clear indication of the present state of the art. “The point about the melting pot” as Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1963) wrote “is that it did not happen” (See Brubaker 2001: 531). Theophilus Okere, Anthony Njoku and Rene Devisch (2005) remind us that all knowledge is a product of local histories. However, as Mignolo (2000) and Quijano (2002) have shown, some local histories are able to enact global designs while others are left to cope with the global designs. With this simple insight in mind, this paper hopes to contribute to the emerging scholarship on the confluent histories that make up the global mosaic. The core of my arguments in this paper is therefore contrary to the habitual recycling of the anthropophagic and anthropoemic discourses that are in accord with the dominant colonial knowledge that is predicated on the reproduction of borders and barbarians.

### **Methodological Modernism and the Fiction of the Container Model**

My objective in this presentation has been to account for the appearances and persistence of the diachronic contradictions we see in the dominant discourse on “migration”, the modern state, the issues of “sovereignty”, borders and frontiers. The mainly European concept of “sovereignty”, in the modern sense, is rooted in Jean Bodin’s *Six Books on the Republic* (1576) that marked the emergence of the concept of *raison d’être* and *raison d’État*. The concept of sovereignty gives

“pre-eminence” to the specific type of “authority” and “rule” that emerged out of the narrative of *De jure* and *de facto* legitimate exercise of absolute power. The narratives of sovereignty and “agency” have a close kinship with both the mythologies of the *res publica* and illusory “independence” that trickles down from the “sovereign” after “pacification”. The expansionist model of power that emerged in Europe along side these transformations induced by the “Reformation” and the secularization of “pastoral power”, became the organizing dynamics that initiated modern state/personality formation and colonialism/imperialism. In *The Sociology of Imperialism* (1918) Joseph A. Schumpeter reminds us that:

*“Modern Imperialism is one of the heirlooms of the absolute monarchical state. The “inner logic” of capitalism would have never evolved it. Its sources come from the policy of the princes and the customs of a pre-capitalist milieu. But even export monopoly is not imperialism and it would never have developed to imperialism in the hands of the pacific bourgeoisie. This happened only because the war machine, its social atmosphere, and the martial will were inherited and because a martially-oriented class (i.e., the nobility) maintained itself in a ruling position with which of all the varied interests of the bourgeoisie the martial ones could ally themselves. This alliance keeps alive fighting instincts and ideas of domination. It led to social relations which perhaps ultimately are to be explained by relations of production but not by the productive relations of capitalism alone.”<sup>10</sup>*

Long before the French philosopher Michel Foucault, Schumpeter already argued that the accumulation of capital that began during the early modern period is inseparable from the accumulation of men. The radical transformations leading to the constitution of modern society created the conditions that made “society” and “men” a fertile site for the exercise of modern power in the name of “God”, “sovereign”, “nationalism”, “solidarity” or “citizenship”. Those classified as “mad”, “fools” etc began to be “removed” or confined as a way of defining a monopolistic political space devoid of threats, contamination or alterity. The reformation which was an integral part of the modernization and secularization process instigated the process through which the “soul” acquired a new political relevance away from morality and religion, towards order and “economy” – that is “economy” in a spatial and mental sense. The ultimate

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1918schumpeter1.html>

goal of such disciplinary power according to Foucault is to discipline, regulate, invalidate, clear confusion, dissipate compact peoplehood and groupings and manage spaces, mentalities in the style of calculated hierarchical distributions and utility (Calhoun 2002; MacNay 1994; Rabinow 1984).

Foucault later theorised that the rise of bio-politics is linked to the emergence of the “population” as the object of modern cybernetic governance. For Foucault: *“the modern state can scarcely function without becoming involved with racism at some point, within certain lines and subject to certain conditions”*. Foucault is not simply talking about the ideological use of “race” or “playing the race card”, but the “racism” or coding of the human body that is integral to the evolution of the specific form of socio-technical arrangement which the modern state and modernity itself embodies. The modern state itself is a formation based on the organic metaphor of the “body”, “organs”, “development” and “decay” – as in “organisation”, “body politic”, “social body”, “corporatism”, “organs of the state” or Adam Smith’s “body economic”. The structural functionalist and formalistic analogies used to describe the state both by the defenders and internal critics of the modern state from Hobbes to post modernists are mostly anthropomorphic. What Foucault is trying to tell us nonetheless, is that while the modern state may or may not explicitly create the conditions for the ideological use of “race”, the state as an entity exists because it *“justifies the death-function in the economy of biopower by appealing to the principle that the death of others makes one biologically stronger insofar as one is a member of a race or population”*. Bio-power politics then is fundamentally based on the “inside” and “outside” binary differentiation that relies on the noble/ignoble logic of “protecting” those inside from the inevitable threat or death of those “outside”.

Nevertheless, the important thing to bear in mind is that in many ways the debates about “migration”, “borders”, “sovereignty” and “agency” are illusory since these are the very thing that are constantly violated in the processes of axial modern institutional formation. These Eurocentric debates can not be about migration since migration is a constant in human history. The Leiden University migration website in the Netherlands informs us that:

*“Before 700 000 B.C. Homo sapiens resided solely in Africa as did Australopithecus afarensis, the precursor of Homo erectus, which appeared there around 3.3 million years ago. The well-known complete skeleton nicknamed “Lucy” is an example of Australopithecus afarensis. In the period from 1.5 million B.C. until about 5000 B.C. Homo erectus and Homo sapiens respectively spread to the other continents. The oldest human fossil in Europe was found near Heidelberg, Germany and dates back to 650 000 B.C. It is presumed that by that time, people had already migrated to the French Central Massif, the Côte d’Azur, Italy, Germany, Austria and Bohemia.”<sup>11</sup>*

A report by the Center for International Relations, published within the framework of the project entitled *“Transatlantic Security Challenges and Dilemmas for the European Migration Policy”* reminds us that:

*“If, for example, one looks at the development of homo sapiens over the past 150.000 years, then a nomadic way of life makes up more than nine tenths of our history. Living in the same place for many generations is a relatively new ‘invention’ by human evolution and probably only practiced by a minority of all people.”<sup>12</sup>*

The real issue here in essence is not about the phenomenon of migration itself or the so called challenges and problems that migrants pose to the imagined stable demographic “container” entity of the nation state, sovereignty or other Western conceptions of boundary based mechanisms of belonging. Oxford University Professor Stephen Castles, who helped coin that grossly misunderstood oxymoron “the age of migration”, insisted recently that:

*“The upsurge of interest in migration in recent years obscures the fact that migrations of various kinds were always key factors in colonialism, industrialisation and nation-building. In the post-1945 period, labour migration played a crucial part in the growth and restructuring of industrial economies, while forced migration was an inevitable result of the processes of state formation*

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.let.leidenuniv.nl/history/migration/chapter111.html>

<sup>12</sup> Ludger Pries (2006) *Transnational Migration: New Challenges for Nation States and New Opportunities for Regional and Global Development*.  
[http://www.csm.org.pl/images/rte/File/EN/Publications/Reports%20&%20Analyses/2006/rap\\_i\\_an\\_0106a.pdf](http://www.csm.org.pl/images/rte/File/EN/Publications/Reports%20&%20Analyses/2006/rap_i_an_0106a.pdf)

*and economic change under the conditions of system competition and neo-colonialism. Thus the public interest in migration in the early 1990s represents a shift in perception, rather than in the real significance of the phenomenon. Migration is clearly a systemic element in processes of globalisation...that has existed in various guises ever since the beginnings of the capitalist world market around the 16th century”<sup>13</sup>*

It is equally not about “globalisation” or the contradictions that globalisation presents to supposedly insulated societies or self contained economic, political and social indisputable units. Ultimately, the real issue is the concealed “dividing practices” of the power/knowledge nexus that serves as a background to the contextual variations erroneously compartmentalized in everyday instrumental discourses on migration as a “domestic” issue. The word “immigrant” for example, is so often conflated with “black” that Unwin Hyman Dictionary of Sociology (1999:414) warns us that:

*“There have been a number of MORAL PANICS about immigration since 1945, focusing on the immigration of black people, and it is therefore important to distinguish between immigrants and black people; it is wrong to assume that an immigrant is black...”*

There are a few things to note in the statement above: the fact that there has been a number of “moral panics” about “immigrants” in Europe and the West in general; that these recurrent moral panics mainly focus on “blacks” and that “black” is seen as synonymous with the word “immigrant”. The “blacks” are certainly “immigrants” but not in the populist sense of migration or movements but rather as perpetual immigrants in a world defined as “white”. The serial conflation of “immigrants” and “black” are therefore metaphors for those that incessantly “*enter the picture and the strategy only a resistant to be overcome*” (Bauman,1991:38). Consequently, I want to again reiterate the fact that the real issue here is not migration or movements of people since some migrating persons are classified as “pioneers”, “puritans”, “missionaries”, “explorers”, “EU nationals”, “technical assistants”, “aid-workers”, “people from Visa Waiver

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<sup>13</sup> Stephen Castles (2001) “Migration and Community Formation Under Conditions of Globalisation”. Paper presented at the *Reinventing Society in the New Economy* Conference, University of Toronto 9-10 March 2001

Program (VWP) countries” or “expatriate communities”; while others are dehumanized as “slaves”, “coolies”, “bogus asylum seekers”, “illegal immigrants” and “migrant workers”.

In his analysis of the nuances and bio-politics of boundary installation and maintenance, Zygmunt Bauman affirmed Marshall McLuhan’s concept of the Western “outering” culture and Claude Levi-Strauss’s “anthropophagic” and “anthropoemic” binary:

*“Claude Levi-Strauss suggested that one of the crucial differences between our, modern, type of society and other, simpler societies is that they are ‘anthropophagic’, while we are ‘anthropoemic’: they eat their enemies while we vomit ours. Our way of dealing with the Other (and thus, obliquely, of producing and reproducing our own identity) is to segregate, separate, dump onto rubbish hip, flush down into the sewer of oblivion.”*

Levi-Strauss’ binary does not in fact refer to “simpler societies” since the binary concept of “complex” and “simple” societies is a modern “complex” societies’ invention. The “anthropophagic” tendencies many moderns see in non-modern societies is actually the modern inner beast projected onto all those varied societies classified as “simple”. The “anthropophagic” and “anthropoemic” are simply two faces of the same modern/colonial model of power masked by its location of application. While the “clothed” anthropoemic face is prevalent in the metropole and its “influx control” systems, the “naked” anthropophagic face is the face at work in the periphery or “sending” societies generating the exodus. Therefore to understand the constellation of relations that underpin the many faces of the modern cosmopolis of nation states we have link the local histories of the periphery with the global designs embedded in the local histories of the metropole or Europe. In 1896, long before the inventions of the slightly irritating buzzwords of “transnationalism” or “globalisation”, Lord Elgin, Viceroy of India, realized that:

*“...we are not and cannot be fully cognisant of the political considerations which ultimately must decide the action to be taken in this as well as other parts of Africa, because they are inseparably bound up with European politics.”<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>14</sup> India Office Library, MSS. Eur. F. 84/14, p. 79, Elgin to Secretary of State for India. Also see The Historical Journal, Vol. 7, No. 1. (1964), pp. 154-169

To paraphrase K.M Stokes in *A Metatheoretical Discourse* (1996), there are certainly variations to these boundary based themes in a “delimited” world; as in when the “other” side of the border is not the *“interdicted place we long for in vain, but rather the exile into which our ideology has cast some excluded other”*. Part of the problem with current discourses of migration is of course the “borders” of academic “disciplines” and areas of specialization and the very modern tendency to be over preoccupied with the “present”. So, there is a border (often in binary form) between “object” and “subject”, “ancient” and “modern”, “history” and “biography”, “past” and “present”, “settlement” and “mobility”, “agency” and “structure” and other modern logocentric binaries. Hence “borders” have to be understood within the context of the power/knowledge nexus that imbue these borders with meaning and make them possible and plausible. The link between the uses of the “migration” of certain people from certain regions of the world in the bio-political discourses of increased state control; the illusory tension between the Western ontologically bounded conceptions of “agency” or universal “rights” and “sovereignty”; and the contradictory image of the mainly “third” world “immigrant” as the everlasting “new” threat, “problem”, “challenge” or “victim” of the supposed bounded entities of the state and “social membership”, becomes clear in relation to this power/knowledge nexus.

It is against this back ground of a historical power/knowledge nexus that we can begin to see the diachronic underpinnings of the contradictory discourses and process we see in the issues of migration and state control. The relatively recent origin of state control in many cases is rooted in the imperial attempt to make “very vague and independent particles” to “cohere”. Thomas Pownall, the Governor of Massachusetts in 1772, defined the word ‘empire’ below in a language reminiscent of the metaphors of “transnationalism” and “globalisation”. Pownall’s definition does shed some light on the undersides of the formalistic term of ‘chain’ or ‘network’ of “interdependency” that are making the usual rounds in the academy.

*“This modelling of the people into various orders and subordinations of orders, so that it be capable of receiving and communicating any political motion, and acting under that direction as a whole is one which the Romans called by the peculiar word ‘Imperium’ ...by this system only*

*that a people become political body; tis the chain, the bonds of union which very vague and independent particles cohere”<sup>15</sup>*

As noted by Denis Kwek (2002), European imperial and colonial powers were able to conquer, dominate and rule “colonies”, “protectorates” and “dominions” in far away continents not only by territorial or overt conquest but also through a covert epistemological and ontological conquest. This conquest was characterized by the displacement and replacement of indigenous knowledge and thought systems by a European macro-narrative based on historiography, taxonomies, sensibilities, social theories, concepts, categories, and classifications constructed in Europe. The most important and durable legacy of this epistemic and geo-historical conquest, accomplished through the prism of 'colonial knowledge', is the notion that the nation-state is the natural embodiment of history and society. It is crucial to understand that modern colonialism/imperialism and the “inner logic” of global capitalism as an “atavism” (Schumpeter 1918), are transnational enactments that are fundamentally linked to the evolution of modern nation-states within an emergent inter-state system. Eric Wolf wrote in his book *Europe and the People without History* (1982: 3; 76) that

*“The central assertion of this book is that the world of humankind constitutes a manifold, a totality of interconnected process, and inquiries that disassemble this reality into bits and then fail to reassemble it falsify reality...Since much of this history involves the rise and spread of capitalism, the term ‘Europe’ can be read as short hand for the growth of that mode of production...it is a major argument of this book that most of the societies studied by anthropologists are an outgrowth of the expansion of Europe and not the pristine precipitates of past evolutionary stages” .*

Methodological nationalism in all its variations therefore serves as the collective dissimulation that entrenched the contradictions we see in the discourses of sovereignty and the movements of certain people in the many taken-for-granted dimensions of every day social reality. The entrenched nature of the discourse of bio-politics in the institutional frameworks of the state is

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<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Pagden, 1995:13

well illustrated by the plethora of “race relations” and “immigration” legislation in Western industrialized countries. However, while “race relations” laws and “monitoring” confirms the practical existence of “races” and the “relations” pertaining to those “races”, it is quite silent on the constitutive dynamics of the historical relations that made “races” possible and plausible in the first places. We can only begin to see these pivotal dynamics if we take a “bird’s eye view” of these processes. This of course means that we begin to pull away from the dominant politico-juridical trends and situate our analysis away from the usual reproduction of the modern state’s own image of itself.

### **Borders and Binary Other-ings**

In *Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State*, Philip Abrams contends that:

*“The state is not the reality which stands behind the masks of political practice. It is itself the mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is. It starts its life as an implicit construct; it is then reified—as the res publica, the public reification, no less—and acquires an overt symbolic identity progressively divorced from practice as an illusory account of practice.”<sup>16</sup>*

The state as an “illusory account of practice” is however not a mere illusion or a completely blind and symbolic process. As it is the case with the “individual” and other modern projects and constructs, the state is not only “aware of its self” but does also have a commanding material existence. But that material existence does have a history that is concealed in the normalised discourses generated from within the installations of the state itself. It is also that violent and suppressed history that links the state to coloniality and racism. Modern state formation is intrinsically linked to colonialism and the conquest of space/nature/tradition that fundamentally shifted the axis of existing prejudices. The idea of race and the bio-political enlisting of human physiological variations as markers of these kernel relations of domination became a vector for

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<sup>16</sup> Philip Abrams (1988:58) “Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State.” *Journal of Historical Sociology*.

that shift. The state itself emerged to manage and maintain those history patterns of domination through intergenerational transmission of colonial knowledge.

Consequently, what we are ultimately dealing with here, despite the tendency to compartmentalized, is rather the culmination of an historical negation of the African that forms the core of the axial model of modern power the Peruvian Sociologist Anibal Quijano describes as “coloniality of power”. The racial scales and hierarchies of coloniality imply the deployment of identification practices based on the human body as a register or depository of social and historical relations of domination. Revealingly, recent developments and trends in the “bio-metric” technologies or “surveillant assemblage”<sup>17</sup> are based on the same core principle as the idea of “race” – the socio-technical coding of the human body in accord with the expediency of prevailing social relations. What is then coloniality of power?

According to Quijano,

*“What is termed globalization is the culmination of a process that began with the constitution of America and colonial/modern Eurocentered capitalism as a new global power. One of the fundamental axes of this model of power is the social classification of the world’s population around the idea of race, a mental construction that expresses the basic experience of colonial domination and pervades the more important dimensions of global power, including its specific rationality: Eurocentrism. The racial axis has a colonial origin and character, but it has proven to be more durable and stable than the colonialism in whose matrix it was established. Therefore, the model of power that is globally hegemonic today presupposes an element of coloniality.”*<sup>18</sup>

“Coloniality of power” is fundamentally based on

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<sup>17</sup> According to Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson (2000): “The resultant ‘surveillant assemblage’ operates by abstracting human bodies from their territorial settings, and separating them into a series of discrete flows. These flows are then reassembled in different locations as discrete and virtual ‘data doubles’”. See <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/sociology/pdfs/survassemb.pdf>. See also van der Ploeg (2003)

<sup>18</sup> See Anibal Quijano (2000, <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/nepantla/v001/1.3quijano.pdf>). Also see Walter D. Mignolo 2000

1. *The classification and reclassification of the planet population – the concept of ‘culture’ becomes crucial in this task of classifying and reclassifying. (this includes the so called culture wars and identity politics)*
2. *An institutional structure functional to articulate and manage such classification (state apparatus, universities, church, etc)*
3. *The definition of spaces appropriate to such goals.*
4. *An epistemological perspective from which to articulate the meaning and profile of the new matrix of power and from which the new production of knowledge could be channeled.*

(See Mignolo 2000:17)

For example, the Nigerian “Lugardian” state and identity is a direct product of the European “partition” of Africa which formalized almost all the modern states of Africa. The “partition” was seen by those who were involved in it as a trans-national “nation” making process. In his review of *Africa and the Victorians and Prelude to the Partition of West Africa*, Ronald Hyam (1964:157) lucidly outlined what many these days would rather forget:

*“...it has been suggested the authors do not perhaps bring out as clearly as they are unusually well qualified to do, the extent to which partition was not merely an African event, but world-wide phenomenon. Not even so big a subject as Africa can safely be studied in isolation. The idea of a ‘partition of the world’ was not confined to the imaginations of Rhodes and Chamberlain; it was accepted as a commonplace of actual fact in the most responsible quarters. Rosebery said Britain must not decline to take her share ‘in a partition of the world, which we have not forced on, but which has been forced upon us’. Elgin, while Viceroy of India, wrote about ‘an era of delimitation, all over the world’; of the ‘struggle between civilisation and barbarism which is going on more or less all over the world’”*

Lord Elgin’s planetary “delimitation” is clearly the basis of the “partition” that produced the modern states of Africa and the reified mutually exclusive “national” borders and identities that mystifies itself through what many refer to as “nationalism”. The “partition” also marked the beginning of “colonialism” in the annals of Western historiography thereby linking state building

to colonialism. Colonialism and Imperialism are complementary and mutual reinforcing to the processes of European state and border formation from Spain to Britain, the Netherlands and France. The particular binary world view that emerged out of the European “delimitation” and “partition of the world” contains within it the idea of a world divided between “civilization” – which classifies, analyzes and makes history; and “barbarism” – which is classified, analyzed and has and makes no history.

When we look in-between the cracks and fissures masked by the ritualized references and formalistic notions of mutually exclusive borders between persons and people-hood, a pattern begins to emerge. This pattern as Abdelmalek Sayad argues simply tells us that migration is best seen as a “*relation from state to state*”; that is, a vestige of an “*historical relation of international domination*” that is both material and symbolic concealed in everyday discourses as a “domestic” issues bounded up in mutually exclusive political and social domains (Sayad 1991: 267). In line with the latter argument, Sayad observed that:

*“...the most fleeting encounter between an Algerian worker and his French boss in Lyon – or a Surinamese-born child and his school teacher in Rotterdam, a Jamaican mother and her social worker in London, an Ethiopian elderly and his landlord in Naples – is fraught with the whole baggage of past intercourse between the imperial metropole and its erstwhile colony”* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2000: 175)

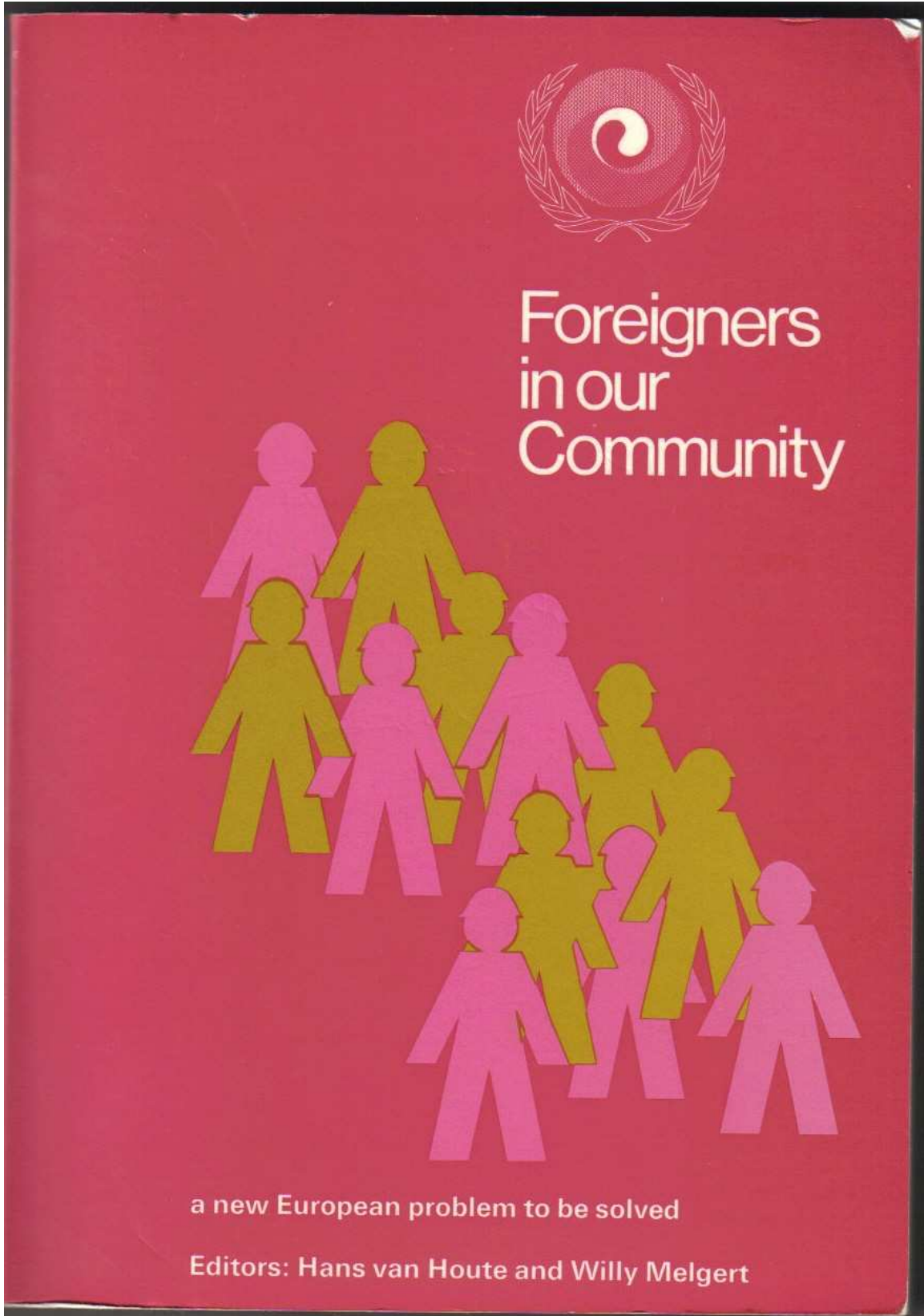
It is only by looking at this historical background can we begin to understand the contradictions, the conflicting discourses and convolutions that are present across those contextual variations. Taking this history view from afar, allows us to see the link and connections between what is usually thought of as mutually exclusive and the underpinning processes beneath those compartmentalized categories. There is equally a more mundane reason for taking a longitudinal view, which is that human beings, social institution and social arrangements are diachronic in nature. Therefore to understand them, it is necessary to take an historical view. As Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002: 325) reminds us

*“Taking such a historically informed ‘view from afar’ allows us to see what migration researchers saw, what they did not see and to explain why these varying blind spots have evolved.”*

Thus a historically informed ‘view from afar’ is necessary under the current intellectually climate dominated by the usual modern/colonial collective amnesia; withdrawal into the present or the ritualised “cock and bull” stories, collective dissimulations and “social duplicity” that pervade the discourses particularly on African migrants in Europe and North America. Since Ernest Renan’s necessary amnesia is an integral part of the ever receding nation building discourse it is worthwhile to show how persistent the same negations appear over time in different guises. The Book below entitle *Foreigners in Our Community a new European problem* to be solved is the report of a Congress held in Amsterdam in August 1971 by the Netherlands United Nations Association as part of the United Nations year for actions to combat (oh yes!) “racism” and “racial discrimination”. The book mainly deals with facets of this “new problem” in Britain, the Netherlands and Germany. Below are racialized images from the book that not only show the reoccurring discourse of the forever “new” problem of the “black” foreigner but also the fact that some people from the beginning enter the axial racial habitus<sup>19</sup> as a “problem” to be “solved”.

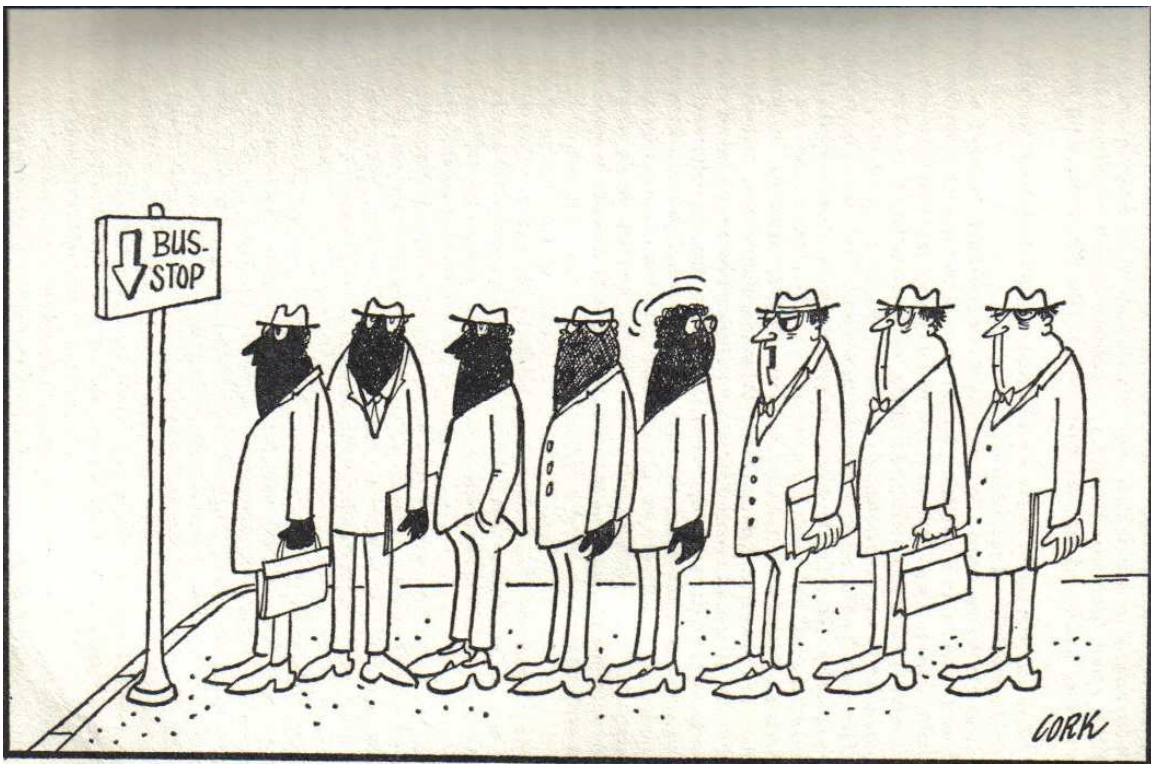
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<sup>19</sup> The axial racial habitus is made up of a set of historical relations which become ‘deposited’ or deeply “installed” within individual bodies in the form of mental and corporeal schemes of ‘perception and appreciation’ which correspond to social relations. So, “race” works at the level of those deeply installed dispositions through which we perceive, judge and act in and on the world – a Deleuzian “synthesis of repetition” that is analogous to the silence between the tick and the tock of the clock. For a detailed take on “Habitus” see Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge University Press and Gilles Deleuze (1995) *Difference and Repetition*. Columbia University Press.

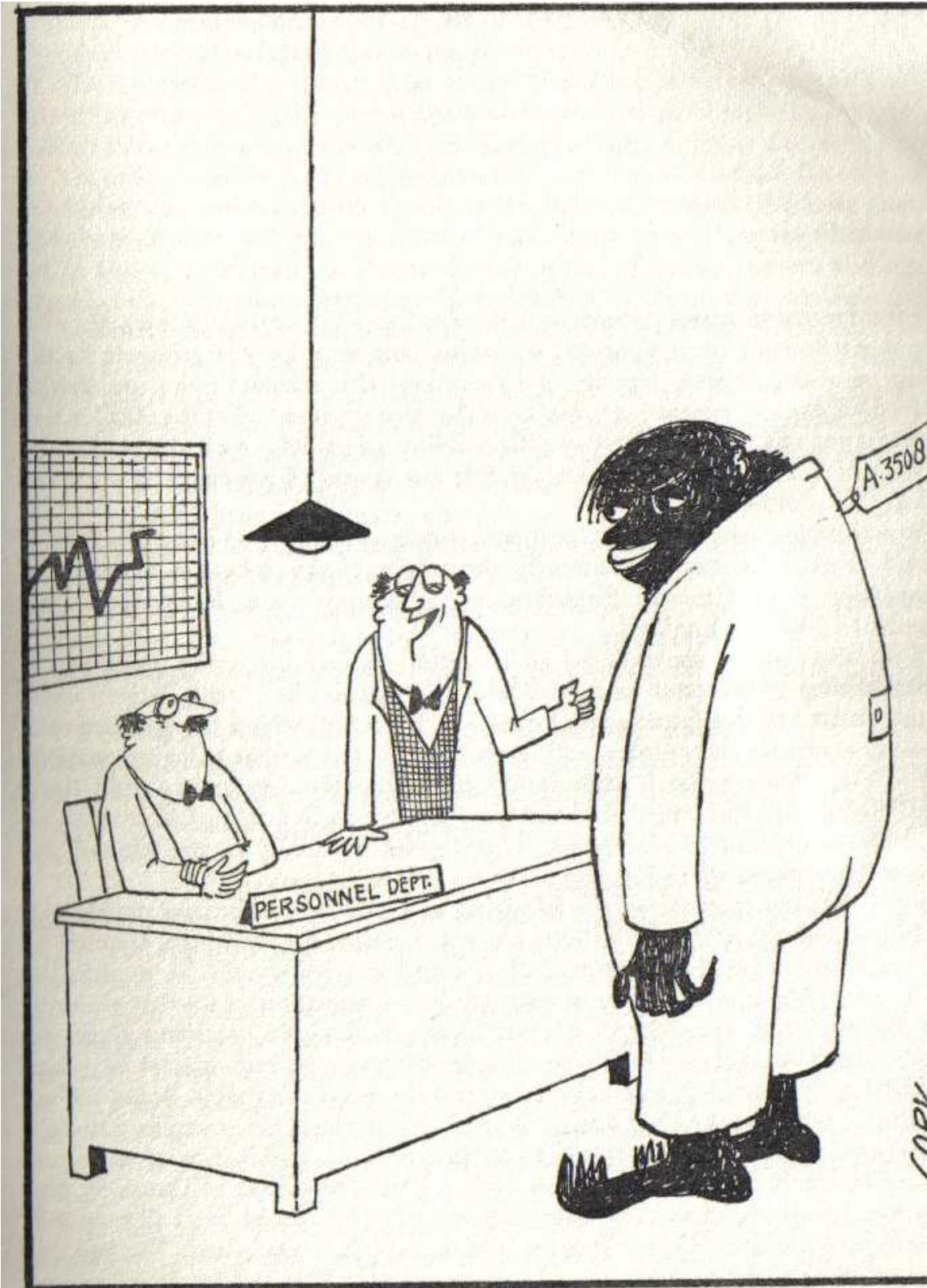




.. "Of course you can choose your own boyfriend. As long as he's not a 'Foreigner'."



\*Why don't you run...I thought you people were such good athletes...\*



"He's a thoroughbred African, works like a dog, and he'll save you three other 'Foreigners'..."



## Conclusion and Epilogue

All current discourses of human migration pivot on the notion of borders as their primary basis. Migration is said to happen when a person crosses some administrative line instituted by colonialism and imperialism and maintained by nation states. Borders fundamentally rely on the making and remaking of “aliens” for its stability and maintenance. The corresponding idea of a metropolitan centre and peripheral space that supply “raw materials” to the centre in the form of human and material resources merely reinforces the border notion by other means. “Borders” are fundamental to modern discourses of migration because borders and frontiers (in the form they exist today) are relatively modern inventions not simply in the geographical sense but also in the epistemic connotation of the word. Migration is mainly defined in the light of crossing a border or taking residency within a territory marked by borders for a specified period of time. It follows therefore that modern discourses of migration or perhaps, what Foucault described as “truth regimes” about migration are predicated on the concept of movements across borders and state lines. It is important to bear in mind that by “migration” we are referring to human migration under the condition of a strictly modern cultural environment and cartography.

Etymologically, the word “migrate” appears to derive from the Latin *migratus* or the past participle of *migrare* which perhaps is related to the Greek *ameibein* which means “to change”. The Merriam-Webster Online dictionary defines migration as the process of moving from one

*“...country, place, or locality to another; to pass usually periodically from one region or climate to another for feeding or breeding; to change position in an organism or substance (filarial worms migrate within the human body)”<sup>20</sup>*

The word migration is also used in the field of both medicine and information technology. In medicine for instance Lauffenburger and Horwitz (1996) informs us that cell migration is a physically integrated molecular process. In the human science, migration discourses focus mainly on human movements and residency patterns within a geo-historical space marked by binary and mutually exclusive borders. This then forms the basis for the binary discourse of immigration/emigration, sending/receiving societies, “diaspora”, and even the more sophisticated discourse of “transnationalism” and “global networks”. In biology, the natural science and information technology migration is seen as an integrated or integrating process and therefore treated as the rule rather than the exception. In the human sciences however, human migration is seen as the exception rather than the rule. This is well illustrated by the internationally agreed definition of a migrant as someone taking residency in another country for more than one year. In this sense therefore migration is said to happen when a person moves across a line of distinction that supposedly separates one “country” from another.

The centrality of border/state formation in the discourses of modern migration is by no means surprising given the fact that “ruptures” and “great divides” are pivotal to the modern episteme. As Foucault, Elias, Weber, Marx, Durkheim and many others have insisted the modern period is marked by the paradox of differentiation and integration. The modern period is usually marked by the tendency towards a transformative enclosure of the “commons” whether in terms of economic/cultural capital, knowledge/power, social/personality formation or the “economy” of

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<sup>20</sup> See Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online - <http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary?book=Dictionary&va=migration>.

bodies and souls. This boundary based enclosure also features prominently the monopoly principle that Elias, Weber and Foucault attributed to modern inter-personality/state formation. The integrating effect of both the bio-political and economic centripetal and centrifugal forces is accompanied by the “dividing practices” that distribute bodies along binary lines. In other words, the modern power/ knowledge nexus in both the Baconian and Foucauldian sense, underpin the constitution of the “nation” as a differentiating and integrating bordered economic and demographic entity.

In *The Will To Knowledge* (1998), *Society Must be Defended* (2003) and *The History of Sexuality* (1979) Michel Foucault linked the in and out group differentiation to both disciplinary power and bio-power. Both technologies of power imply internal and external differentiation along side a correlative constitution of a specific form of knowledge of persons and peoplehood marked by such “dividing practices” (Foucault 1979). This further implies a constitution of human beings and spaces as enclosed bordered and bordering entities and therefore, as objects of this specifically modern technology of power. This then begs the question of if human migration can be understood outside the processes of border, state formation, global capitalism and therefore modernization. Borders in idealized terms are seen as lines of demarcation between mutually exclusive territorial principalities. Recent trendy paradigms theorize borders as “liminal spaces” existing in-between stable “states”. The idea of a buffer zone sandwiched in-between stable states is of course an integral discourse of modernity since such state of exception is carved out of the larger more permanent states of “stability”. The essential idea is that borders embody the quality of transitional spaces that are waiting to be included into the more permanent and therefore mainstream “stable” state. This is why the modern anthropological concept of “liminality” is cleaved out of a non-modern contextual rite of passage making the transition from youth to adulthood. The geo-political habit of attributing childlike status to the bordered ‘outsider/other’ against the background of an “insider” stable citizenry have been typical of colonial geo-historical logocentricism since the 16th century in Europe.

The inside and outside binary group differentiation in other words, serves as a background not only to state/border formation but also to the great global transformation that made the modern world possible. Modernity is generally seen as transformative negation of “disorder” or chaos

through the constitution of self maintaining substantive epistemological and ontological “order”. This order is characterized by a classification and reclassification of the planetary population embodied and managed by institutions like the nation state, churches etc. These classifications underscore the mutilation of the emigration/immigration couplet, sending/receiving societies, the issues of remittances and its link to development and the transfer of skill and technology.

However intractable it may seem to us, modern states<sup>21</sup> are not “societies” and certainly not self-contained, independent economic, political, and social enclosed units, each with its own unique path of historical development, social change and transformation<sup>22</sup>. In the abstract of *Quasi-states, weak states and the partition of Africa* (2000), A. G. Hopkins, echoing the Gulbenkian Commission Report (1996), reminds us that:

*“The paths taken by historians and political scientists intersect less frequently than their subject matter might indicate. Both sets of scholars, for example, have a mutual interest in the formation and evolution of the modern state. However, while this interest has made the ‘Westphalian system’ the common currency of exchanges among political scientists, few historians refer to the concept, and some would not recognize it—even at close range and in full sunlight. Practitioners of the two disciplines often pass like ships in the night because they are unaware of another large presence on a parallel course. In an age of intense specialization we readily become separated, like Alfred Marshall’s noncompeting wage groups, from a common body of information... Political scientists assign significance to the Westphalian system mainly because they wish to generalize about the principles governing the international regime of sovereign states after 1648. Historians, on the other hand, are less interested in testing the merits of realism and its rivals than in charting changing relativities in international relations.”*<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> However they are defined; whether as “liberal”, “welfarist”, “pluralist”, nation-states, city-states or otherwise.

<sup>22</sup> See the Gulbenkian Commission Report on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences entitled *Open the Social Sciences* (1996). The Gulbenkian report foreshadowed Wimmer and Glick Schillers work on methodological nationalism and provides a coherent theoretical basis to engage with the seminal methodological principles encapsulated in the works of Abdelmalek Sayad on migration (1984, 1988, 1991, 1999, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> *Review of International Studies* (2000), 26: 311-320 Cambridge University Press

The dominance of the internal discourses of the “Westphalian system”, or the “Bretton Woods” system and the compartmented discourses that logically flow from such internal discourses blinds us from seeing beyond the “common currency”. This blindness extends even to what the senior British diplomat Robert Cooper describes as “the postmodern state”<sup>24</sup> or Tony Blair’s “liberal imperialism” with a moral purpose. Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s “new” internationalism predicated on the very old doctrine of “humanitarian intervention” that places limits on the sovereignty of “weak” states or “torrid zones” was alive and well in the 18th and 19th century. Compartmentalization of course has ensured that the historical repetition is experienced as the eternal return of the new. Interestingly, Cooper annoyed those on the “left” in Britain by justifying the usual imperial double standards in foreign policy and issues of sovereignty.

As it is the case with migration, compartmentalization also prevents us seeing the obvious fact that there is hardly anything “national” about nationalism since there are always trans-national conditions of possibility for what is seen as the “national”. There is always a cosmopolitan base at root of what we call “nationalism” even in the often cited “extreme cases” of nationalism. Hitler was an Austrian “immigrant” from a “multi-cultural”<sup>25</sup> background despite his delusions about “racial purity” in Germany. Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau himself was as “racially” and “nationally” pure as Hitler after him. All the “founding fathers” of the “Right of conquest” “doctrine of discovery” and “manifest destiny” are all cosmopolitans. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Jawaharlal Nehru and Yasser Arafat are trans-national cosmopolitans who enacted “nationalism” under the conditions of a trans-national coloniality.

In his book *UnAfrican Americans: Nineteenth-Century Black Nationalists and the Civilizing Mission* (1998), Tunde Adeleke showed how Delany, Crummell, Turner and other “Black nationalists” were enlisted as collaborators in the 19th century imperialist ideas and policies that led to the colonization of Africa. Those who followed their foot steps in the processes of Nigerian state formation were also “foreign born” and “educated”; those Mary Kingsley described in her *Travels in West Africa* (1897) as “*excellent pure-blooded Negroes in European*

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<sup>24</sup> <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/worldview/story/0,11581,680117,00.html>

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/secondworldwar/story/0,14058,1542146,00.html>

*clothes, and with European culture*". As Michael Echeruo put it in the Education of the Lagosians:

*"Most of the illustrious men in early Nigerian history were foreign born and educated: the Rev. Babington Macaulay, Samuel Crowther, Henry Robbin and James Johnson, as well as Rev. S. Johnson."*<sup>26</sup>

Those among these "illustrious men" who were not foreign born, were foreign educated and explicitly saw state building in Africa as a European project which it was and still is. For instance, in 1947 one of the "founding fathers" of Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, tried to explain why his "tribe", the Yorubas, were forging ahead of the other major Nigerian tribes at that time:

*"In embracing Western culture, the Yoruba take the lead, and have benefited as a result. The Efiks, the Ijaws, the Ibibios, and the Igbos come next. The last four named are particularly ambitious, and are doing all they can to overtake the Yorubas. The Hausa and Fulani's on the other hand are extremely conservative, and take reluctantly to Western civilization. And if the race is to be swift, in spite of their lower cultural background, the Igbos and the Ibibios would certainly qualify for self-government, long before the Hausas."*<sup>27</sup>

Even figures like Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri are "multi-cultural" upper middle class cosmopolitans who speak several languages and have lived in many countries. In his statement to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, July 9, 2003, Marc Sageman informed the commission that despite the popular "traditionalist" image of the "terrorist", he found that they were very modern "rootless" cosmopolitans. In his own words,

*"I collected data on more than 130 members of the Global Salafi Jihad. They are a heterogeneous group. Three large patterns emerged: about 60% come from core Arab countries, mostly Saudi Arabia and Egypt; 30% from Maghreb Arab countries and 10% from Indonesia. In*

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<sup>26</sup> West African Review (2001) ISSN: 1525-4488

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Odili 2000, pp.1-2.

*terms of socio-economic status, two thirds came from solid upper or middle class backgrounds...the terrorists were relatively well educated with over 60% having some college education...Most had good occupational training and only a quarter were considered unskilled with few prospects before them. Three quarters were married and the majority had children. I detected no mental illness in this group or any common psychological predisposition for terror...Three fourths of the group decided to join as expatriates. At the time, they were living in a country far from family and friends. So a remarkable 84% were literally cut off from their culture and social origins.”<sup>28</sup>*

It was under the auspices of the League of Nations in the 1930s that the singularity idea of citizenship became codified and transformed into general state practice. The declaration that “*All persons are entitled to possess one nationality, but one nationality only*”<sup>29</sup> is not a national declaration but an “international” one. It was after the problem following the “world wars” in Europe that the guidelines for the formalisation and “standardization” of modern passports and entry protocols were issued. It was also under the auspices of the League of Nations<sup>30</sup>, the United Nations and the ICAO that these instruments of “national identity” were instituted. What (if anything) is “national” about “the treaties on the art of government”?

On the other hand, there is nothing individual about individualism. Individualism is a value sustaining self image that is both a motivating and controlling force that produces a “management-oriented” conception of the human being (Prado 2000). The idea of the person as a “citizen”, an embodiment of “national character” and even the concept of “citizenship” itself are by and large international processes. State formation is a trans-national process which like migration mystifies itself into the illusion that allows us to treat it as a “domestic” issue. This was quite clear to Thomas Jefferson when in the spirit of “Jacobin Internationalism” he declared that:

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<sup>28</sup> [http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/congress/9-11\\_commission/030709-sageman.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/congress/9-11_commission/030709-sageman.htm)

<sup>29</sup> [http://untreaty.un.org/ilc/documentation/english/a\\_cn4\\_83.pdf](http://untreaty.un.org/ilc/documentation/english/a_cn4_83.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> International Conference on Passports, Customs Formalities and Through Tickets, 1920.

*“Every man has two countries – his own and France”*<sup>31</sup>

While the tendency to forget the foundation of modern intellectual and institutional traditions is part of the ‘normality’ of modern self and collective constitution, excavating these con-cealments (Dussel 1988) may help in putting the modern disciplinary discourses of migration into context. Many studies in migration now recognized the need to go beyond this foundation but this does not in any way indicate the actual transgression of this foundation.

*“We have to think outside the box of dominant national discourses to see such trans-border foundations of particular nation-state building projects, to see the dynamics between English domination of Ireland and English national identity or the linkage between French ideas about citizenship and concepts of civilization and the French colonial projects”* (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002: 308)

While methodological nationalism might be dominant in all spheres of social endeavour, its very limits are present in the discourses the modern state uses to reify itself – the discourse of “domestic” spatial and border control. The idea of “banning” something in so many ways encapsulates the nucleus of the idea of border both in its politico-juridical and metaphysical sense. To ban means to “prohibit”, “outlawry, banishment”, “forbid”, “to command or forbid under threat of punishment”. However, even though “illicit drugs” are “banned” or prohibited by all modern states, the UN Drug Report (2005:17) puts the figure of “illicit Drug” retail at \$321.6 billion. How can this staggering figure exist along side the modern state claims of socio-economic monopoly, “border” security and territorial control”? Given the above arguments it is then easy to understand that the reified “borders” or “odd-lines” of modern states; gulf between “citizens” and non-citizens or the compartments of academic disciplines are not by any means absolute lines rather we should think of them as *“artificial barriers”* or *“zones of exchange”*. John Davidson Collins observed in the *“The Clandestine Movement of Groundnuts across the Niger-Nigeria Boundary”* (1976:259) that:

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<sup>31</sup> See Anatol Lieven (2005: 35) *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*. Harper Perennial

*“Artificial barrier” is the phrase most commonly used to describe the impact of international boundaries in West Africa. See as particularly aggravating for the land-locked francophone states, these colonial ‘artifacts’ are most often depicted as being responsible for the separation of common peoples and the deflection of trade from its natural outlet to the sea”<sup>32</sup>*

The fictive “barrier” is applicable to Asia, South America and in many respects even Europe. The case of the *Pashtuns* or the *Pathans* caught in the convolutions of colonial state formation in Afghanistan and in the North-West “frontier” and “tribal areas” of Pakistan is well known. However, the even more relevant point with regards to the issue in hand is the recent developments that build on the earlier imperial intervention. During his visit to Britain and United States in late 2006, “President” Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan reminded every one that these people now labelled as “terrorists” were the same trans-national Jihadists “legally” recruited from many Muslim countries with the logistic support of the West and Saudi Arabia to fight the former “axis of evil” – the Soviet Union – in Afghanistan. Then they were regarded as “Mujahadden” and even one of Sylvester Stallone’s “Rambo” movies was dedicated to these fighters. The imported “Mujahadden” who married and settled amongst the *Pashtun* since they were “imported” decades ago are now routinely described as border crossing “foreign fighters” and “terrorists”. Ironically, this was precisely what they were doing during the Soviet occupation or even British invasion of Afghanistan almost a century ago. What all these contradictions tell us quite clearly is the reality of global imperial classifications and the convoluted discourses integral to those classifications. As Charles S. Maier (2003: 13) argues:

*“Recent works on empire...emphasize that frontier is not an absolute line...but a “zone” of exchange”. “Barbarians” can and do enter the empire; they are often recruited for their defense capacity or in modern times their labor, whether as industrial workers, as gardeners and house-cleaners, as hospital orderlies, and increasingly as skilled scientists and physicians. Still, the empire seeks to control the free flow of outsiders, whether on the Rhine and Danube, or the Rio Grande. Distinctions of rights or residency or citizenship within the imperial space are increasingly extended...empires understand how to create their own barbarians. That is what empires do.”*

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<sup>32</sup> See Canadian Journal of African Studies Vol. 10, No. 2 (1976), pp. 259-278

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