Francesca Decimo
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Boundaries within: Nation, Kinship and Identity among Migrants and Minorities

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Nation, Migration and Kinship through Identity Categorization

Francesca Decimo and Alessandra Gribaldo

Introduction

In academic analysis and ever more frequently in media discourse as well, it is common to frame migrants and minorities through classifications. Ethno-national and juridical criteria are among the most widely used, promoting the circulation and diffusion of a specific system of identification. These ultimately represent national categories, originating from a naturalized representation of the world as a bounded set of nations (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002). And yet this process of codifying and bundling continues to take place even while the transnational circulation of bodies, objects and images transforms our concepts and experiences of home and belonging (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Kearney 1995; Levitt 2001; Rouse 1991; Vertovec 2009), granting ever more relevance to the insight that 'being grounded is not necessarily about being fixed; being mobile is not necessarily about being detached' (Ahmed et al. 2003: 1). In view of this, which represents one of the most intense contradictions of the contemporary moment, it is even more imperative that social sciences confirm and reaffirm their focus on the dynamic character of all categories of identity and belonging (Brubaker 2004; Wimmer 2013).

Populations are made geographically identifiable through politics that have historically constructed them as the target of increasing political attention, a resource to monitor, valorize, manage and, ultimately, an object of governmentality (Foucault 2004; Hacking 1982; Kertzer and Arel 2002b; Scott 1998; Urla 1993). For their

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part, studies of migration have contributed significantly to understanding a central element of governmentality, namely the deployment of state technologies in the production, subjection and subjectivation of individuals through the policing of borders and the production of boundaries (Fassin 2011). Indeed, migrant and minority populations are particularly affected by regulatory practices revolving around the biopolitics of bodies and species in the form of norms and disciplinary mechanisms that attribute identity and generate subjectivity.

Specifically, populations are made identifiable through processes of boundary-making and categorization that are located within a regime of truth (Foucault 1975) in which knowledge is conceptualized in terms of evidence and measurement. Nonetheless, every move to produce and control identity from above is matched by ethics, strategies, and forms of resistance that social actors mobilize within and through borders and boundaries. The production of identity – in its various national, regional, ethnic, cultural and intimate manifestations (such as marriage strategies, acknowledgment of relatedness and kinship obligations) – lies at the intersection of agency, classificatory power and governmentality. In this view, we argue that the politics of kinship offer a crucial analytical perspective in that they constitute both a primary reference point and terrain of individual mobility as well as a fundamental construct of affiliation and national recognition.

With the aim of opening reflection on these topics, we issued a call for papers for a conference held in Trento in June of 2014,[1] inviting participants to consider how contemporary processes of social and cultural interconnection fueled by intense spatial mobility are challenging, bridging and overturning institutional boundaries of identity and belonging. This volume thus emerges from the discussion launched in Trento and sets out to offer an analysis of the identity construction processes that are generated when population policies intersect with global migration, through a socio-anthropological reading of identity and migration trajectories. Examining both governmental spheres and forms of agency, this collected volume aims to

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[1] The conference, titled 'Changing Population: Migration, Reproduction and Identity,' was held at the University of Trento, Department of Sociology and social Research, on June 3–4 2014 (http://web.unitn.it/en/sociologia/evento/34709/changing-population-migration-reproduction-and-identity). As the call for papers indicated, we invited participants to consider the 'politics of reproduction put in motion by both national governments, as they distinguish between citizens and non-citizens, and migrants and their descendants, as they affirm, negotiate or refrain from constructing their own definitions of family, kinship, genealogy and belonging.'

Several sessions addressed the themes raised by the call for papers from different perspectives. After having analyzed the over 70 abstracts we received and the 36 papers selected, it became obvious that the interrelated issues of national boundaries and politics of kinship represented thick, innovative and fruitful research strands deserving of exploration. The essays contained here emerged as the most coherent and significant examples of such explorations.

This book is thus the fruit of a collective effort involving multiple scholars in various ways. We would especially like to thank Paolo Boccagni, Nicholas Harney, David Kertzer, Bruno Riccio, Giuseppe Sciortino and Pnina Werbner, whose precious scientific contribution paved the way for the conference and the development of this volume. We would also like to thank Serena Piovesan for the organizational support she provided during the conference and Angelina Zontine and Chiara Masini for proofreading the text. Thanks also go to the three anonymous reviewers for their invaluable suggestions.

uncover how these spheres intertwine when migrants, minorities, boundaries and categorization are at stake. The contributing authors employ diverse disciplinary perspectives and reference a variety of contexts, geographical sites and units of analysis to make visible through social research the production and practices of institutional classification and their intersection with lived experiences of subjects; in so doing, they reconstruct how difference is claimed, negotiated and produced in the contested terrains of mobility and citizenship.

The Strain of Categorization and the Proliferation of Boundaries

A great deal of literature has reconstructed the way that modern nation-states act through the production of categories with the power to order, overwrite and distinguish between classes of individuals. In some respects, this power is inherent in every act of naming, an act which becomes more incontrovertible and absolute the more legitimate and authoritative the naming entity is considered to be (Bourdieu 1982). The modern state has adopted a complex apparatus, together with systematic methods for geographic mapping and archeological cataloging, in order to define and penetrate specific areas, populations and histories in the process of constructing the nation. As several scholars have admirably reconstructed, this long-term process mainly took shape through the construction of colonial empires. Indeed, the ongoing consolidation of European nation-states has been fed by paradigms for conveying knowledge about the Other, methods for incorporating remote territories and populations, and established systems of domination with their consequent legitimization (Anderson 1991). This process can be explored through emblematic analyses of the construction and governance of colonial India (Cohn 1996; Inden 1990) as well as the French (Gervais 1996) and Belgian (Chrétien 1985; Uvin 2002) empires in central-western Africa. Above all, the investigation of these systems of domination has revealed the numerical logics (Appadurai 1996a, b) and topologic and classificatory procedures (Amselle and M'Bokolo 1985) underlying these colonial empires' administrative and governmental regimes, logics and procedures that have succeeded in outliving the empires themselves.

Today, census surveys, vital records, passports, identification documents, church records and medical research data establish and grant materiality to the categorizations that inform our identities: beyond sex and age, they designate citizenship, nationality, lineage, religion, ancestry, health, language, ethnicity and race (Inda 2014; Torpey 2000; Torpey and Caplan 2001). Over time, this production of identity has served to form and consolidate institutional definitions of difference, and the ethno-racial sphere, with its proliferation of diversity, plays a crucial role in this process. As the wealth of significant research conducted over the last few decades has so eloquently demonstrated, the relationship between politics and categories of identification such as official classifications and statistics is far from neutral

(Morning 2008; Nobles 2000). Statistics, and specifically the most powerful tool of their deployment, the census, do not simply reflect the social and demographic profile of the nation, they profoundly contribute to its definition. The census specifically contributes directly to strengthening the nation in its role as the most relevant political instrument states employ to smooth and corral the messy complexity of individuals, cultures, languages, somatic traits, kinship bonds and religions that populate a given territory. Indeed, as Kertzer and Arel (2002a) have argued, the political significance of the census lies in the way it defines the ordered set of bounded identities necessary for a coherent narration of the nation as well as efficient control of the national population. In this way the census, along with other forms of institutional enumeration, has shaped the political arena in which multiple social forces struggle to determine who legitimately represents the nation and its population.

Thus, the institutional production of difference may be mitigated or exacerbated depending on which narration of the nation prevails. Ethno-racial categories have been used differently by different political regimes, as Rallu et al. (2006) find in their study highlighting how the choice of whether or not to use these categories to count national inhabitants may reflect divergent political aims. No ethno-racial statistical data exists for France, for instance, in that such data are overwritten by an overarching French identity that is ex ante defined as shared by all residents (Simon 2008). In Brazil, critics contest color-based classifications on the grounds that they extoll the value of mixed-race status and diminish the weight of racial issues by representing the black population as numerically limited, thus giving rise to a broad debate on census, race and inequality (Loveman et al. 2012; Nobles 2000, 2002; Petruccelli 2015). In contrast, lines of racial differentiation in the United States are highlighted to the point of becoming a constitutive element in and of themselves, inextricable from the national body, even when they are contradicted by the recognition that race has no biological foundation (Morning 2011; Nobles 2002). Similarly, states may continue to use noticeably fictional categories such as the census super-category 'Hispanic' that lumps the vast variety of Latin-American peoples into one group (Kertzer, in this volume).

The academic debate is not immune from the controversial lure of categorizing and counting either, from the trap of treating the nation as a taken-for-granted analytical frame, that is, the *methodological nationalism* depicted by Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002), to contemporary dilemmas of how best to monitor social inequalities. Although scholars agree that it is high time to transcend population categories which have functioned as key tools of nation-state building and scientific racism, many have called for the use of criteria and categories that might account for differences in the composition of populations in order to document existing lines of inequality and social segmentation (Simon 2012; Simon and Piché 2012). And yet this analytical request does not resolve or elude the ambivalence originating from the fact that ethno-racial categories are located somewhere between the representation of social realities and their construction, an ambivalence which remains implicit in classificatory instruments themselves.

On the other hand, these systems for distinguishing and categorizing populations are not stable or durable in the least (Simon et al. 2015), as the history of the racial categorizing in the US (Morning 2008; Nobles 2000) or the continued updating of the Great Britain census (Thompson 2015) remind us. This is a contradiction intrinsic in any institutional system of identification and classification that reflects something deeper than simply a state's attempts to keep abreast of the times and its evolving society. Rather, the shifting and controversial nature of categorizing, especially when embedded in an institutional definition of difference, reveals the structural ambivalence between the will to draw lines categorizing identities and the impossibility of doing so. It is precisely this ambivalence that makes it possible for us to glimpse the area of resistance, the space of tension, that is in some respects a constitutive element of national formations.

As Wimmer (2002) argues, the principle of nationality is based on an assumed isomorphism between the borders of a given country and a society, itself delimited by the boundaries between *us* and *them.* In his analysis, the welfare pact underlying national integration takes the form of a process of social closure implemented through the definition and exclusion of non-nationals. And yet these boundaries are not drawn once and for all; rather, over time they are subject to a continuous push and pull among multiple forces that ends up configuring a stratified system of inclusion, or, in other words, different degrees of exclusion (Morris 2002). Thus, any national framework of differences between nationals and non-nationals reveals the strain underling the definition of citizen status just like that of the relative *other.* In keeping with this perspective, it is particularly the lack of alignment between territory, nation and identity, a disjuncture that is exacerbated by migratory flows, serves to problematize the issue of belonging in modern nation-states (Brubaker 2010).

At the same time, various scholars have unpacked the processes of category construction the nation state uses to maintain its space of influence over global migration, focusing in particular on moves to draw lines designed to distinguish between regular and irregular, legitimated and illegitimated subjects. Some emblematic studies are De Genova's (2005) exploration of the political construction of the category of undocumented migrants and Nyers' work (2006) on the state-centric logic and language underlying the category of *refugee*. These studies do an exemplary job of employing a meticulous empirical process to historicize classifications of identity, denaturalize legal systems and reveal the endless work of defending frontiers and defining categories of inclusion through which states seek to gain sovereignty over global mobility. However, these analyses focus mainly on nation states' historical efforts to produce, maintain and fortify *external* borders and the political significance of these borders in reifying identity-based distinctions between different classes of individuals and their associated rights.

We believe a productive terrain of inquiry, different from yet complementary to these investigations, might be established by shifting the focus towards the processes of redefinition and differentiation that take place within the nation and among its subjects. We therefore seek to offer a perspective that grants equal attention to both the logics of national governmentality in the sphere of global migration and the multiple ways that individuals and collectivities circumvent, adopt, experience and

produce categories of identity. In so doing, we propose to engage first of all with the research perspective investigating the nation-state's role as an inescapable, binding institutional dimension in the construction of migratory space. Multiples scholars have thoroughly argued that the contemporary intensification and differentiation of global mobility, rather than weakening sites of state power and institutional criteria for defining nationality, have actually contributed to their fortification (Bouböck 1998, 2003; Joppke 1998; Zolberg 1999). Above all, we recognize that the circuits of agency migrants weave by mobilizing translational fields of belonging are likewise constructed through engagement with (and not independent of) national borders and categories. This is not only true when claims of transnational belonging achieve institutional legitimacy, as in the case of dual citizenship; it is also true when the elements at play are 'merely' social and cultural and their deployment takes place transnationally in relation to multiple national attachments rather than an ethereal and spread-out deterritorialisation (Faist 2000; Kivisto 2001; Waldinger 2015; Waldinger and Fitzgerald 2004). And yet, research in this area has somewhat neglected to problematize the specific ways national border and category construction actually takes place and therefore missed the chance to investigate the tensions, actors and dynamics through which these borders and categories are reconstructed, imposed or impinged among migrants and minorities. To this end, we focus our investigation on the *boundary within*, understood less as an established line of demarcation or given classification and more as an ongoing process of identity construction and social exclusion. This process takes place among the various actors, levels and spaces that make up the national fabric, itself shown to be intrinsically ambivalent, contradictory and subject to constant redefinition. In this perspective, census classifications, statistics categories, as well as the politics of nationality and the politics of kinship and intimacy comprise a field of investigation with the potential to capture the range of institutional actors, debates, regulations and documents through which the us/them distinction comes to be constructed and reconstructed inside the national body. Applying this approach, over the following pages we investigate how the intertwining of nationality and kinship in a mobile world contributes to the differentiation and reproduction of identities.

Embodied Nationality: Kinship and Identity among Migrants and Minorities

The act of defining collective identities implies analyzing the interplay of institutional and normative fields together with intimate, kinship-related and subjective dimensions. This volume attempts to consider how classifications and boundaries are experienced, embodied and reproduced by the subjects who are the target of the governmental actions, conceiving of these subjects not as disconnected individuals but as social actors embedded in relational contexts. Specifically, we suggest that the politics of kinship represents a crucial dimension in shaping identities and a

powerful cultural repertoire that intersects with national borders and citizenship requirements. We wish to underline the political nature of kinship as a space constantly molded by structures and subjects. Indeed, kinship and relatedness constitute an essential field through which individuals gain spaces of social and spatial mobility and variously reinterpret the boundaries of identity, at times even overturning the categories used to demarcate and define them. Using this lens, we seek to bring together these different strands of investigation, focusing on the strain of national efforts to classify and govern internal differences on the one hand, and the dimensions of belonging through kinship, intimacy and ancestry on the other. At the convergence of these perspectives, we consider the processes of redefinition and articulation that take place within the nation, through its own classifications, and within the boundaries of kinship when it crosses and is crossed by national categories. In so doing, we seek to highlight the governmental practices of the nation state and explore how these practices have repercussions beyond simple classification; rather, they are closely interwoven with people's daily lives and behavior.

Gender, family and reproduction are increasingly identified as a privileged locus for state efforts to foster migrants' social integration and govern migrant populations. Indeed, it is no coincidence that the intersection of kinship and state boundaries plays a pivotal role in migration policies, engaging questions such as, where are children born and to what parents? Who marries who? Who is allowed to reunite with which family members? What relationships enjoy recognition? In this context, the terrain of classification comes together with the terrain in which individuals think of themselves, constitute themselves, relate and act as subjects. The dimensions of kinship and relatedness come to constitute an interface between individual subjectivity and collective identity, a space that is particularly dense in terms of its implications for identity and continuity over time.

Kinship is not the only element that plays a key role in defining and reproducing identity-based lines of demarcation, be they ethnic, racial, national or class-based, however. Identity for its part is produced and made to persist over time through norms and practices (gender roles, marriage norms, kinship relationships, the rules governing descent and belonging) in which the construction of family and affinity bonds represent a decisive arena in the constant interplay between continuity and change. Various studies have shed light on the everyday dimension of kinship practices, transcending the concept of kinship as a bounded set of normative categories (Carsten 2000; Strathern 1992) to address the negotiated nature of kin relations and using the concept of relatedness to provide a more complex and nuanced picture. At the same time, however, this picture is never completely disentangled from normative kinship rules and expectations (Miller 2007). Here we use both relatedness and kinship as terms, the first to underline the processual face of kinship in local contexts and the kind of connections that may be described genealogically or in other ways. In this sense, relatedness goes beyond a set of assumptions related to the social and biological dimensions that have historically constituted the bedrock of kinship studies. Nonetheless, it would be hasty to dismiss the notion of kinship, as it identifies a dense experience captured through ethnography and the core of a lively debate (Herzfeld 2007; Sahlins 2013).

In view of these arguments, our approach is intended to bring analyses of identity-based national classificatory policies together with the fields more closely associated with kinship practices (Bear 2001; Borneman 1992; Das 2006). In so doing, the spatial images of the state characterized by verticality and encompassment that pervade popular and academic discourse (Gupta and Ferguson 2002) can be brought into tension with the construction of community and family within the nation-state. In keeping with this perspective, it is particularly crucial to note that nation and kinship are deeply interrelated and, in some ways, also act to reinforce one another (Das 1995; Delaney 1995; Rytter 2010; Schneider 1977; Shryock 1997). There is a deep interconnection between ideas about blood and relatedness, on the one hand, and historical and demographic features on the other (Carsten 2004: 137). Prevailing metaphors associated with the deployment of a naturalized kinship imaginary – fatherland, motherland, brotherhood – are widespread and commonplace in ideologies of nationalism (Delaney 1995; Yuval-Davis 1997). Intimacy and genealogy are themselves generated by ideas of the gendered conjugal couple and bloodline as the basis for group identity, and these are in turn the basis for the liberal nation-state (Erdreich 2006; Povinelli 2002). These kinship metaphors are constructed, but they also have the power to generate: in other words, they are 'metaphors we live by' (Carsten 2004: 160) that possess a potential political power of their own. Indeed, the connection between family and nation goes beyond the symbolic level and constitutes a potent criterion of recognition and inclusion: the way descent functions to discriminate in citizenship systems based on the *jus sanguinis* principle (Decimo 2015), or the legal meaning and identity-generating power contained in the term 'naturalization' are examples of this powerful connection.

Moreover, these multiple lines of research converge with the points scholars have made about family as a crucial site in global mobility, both as an object for governing migratory paths and minority groups and as a device for reasserting roles, relationships and identities, making claims and enacting forms of resistance. As recent studies have shown, reunification and family formation are less and less frequently perceived as indicators of migrants' stabilization, integration and well-being; instead, they are more and more frequently viewed with suspicion as grounds for social recognition and, as such, subject to specific policies of control and selection (Bonjour and Kraler 2015). In this context, today's familial migration policies are not only more restrictive than in the past, they are also increasingly aimed at discriminating between different categories of migrants (Kraler 2010). These policies are often based on a conceptualization of family that is naturalized and regulated according to Euro-American standards (Kofman 2004), with the result that heterogeneous households, understood exclusively as family units, are regulated and rendered uniform. In this way family is increasingly seen as a space of governmentality in the production of migrant citizenship in Europe (Bonjour and de Hart 2013). However, this process of attempted normalization goes beyond simply setting up a specific model of family that migrants and minorities must abide by. As Grillo highlights, this model also carries with it 'a certain conception of culture as a way of life attached to an identifiable collectivity, static, finite and bounded' (Grillo 2008: 3). Indeed, there is a sort of pedagogy of integration implicit in these policies targeting

migrants and their descendants as representatives of archaic kinship roles, set against liberal conceptualizations of autonomy, control and individual action that are taken for granted as representative of Western values (Sterckx 2015). Marriage norms, family making and gender roles become particularly relevant in this process of othering, and indeed these areas are more and more widely recognized as a dimension to be governed, a privileged locus for the reproduction of identities. And so migrant and minority families end up constituting a specific, problematic issue that lies more or less explicitly at the core of public discourse, serving through a circular logic to reinforce the same policies and norms established to discipline who is allowed to constitute a family and under what conditions. Ever more systematic and inflexible, policies of family reunification target economic characteristics (Staver 2015) and ethno-cultural affiliations (Pellander 2015) to exclude any subjects who might be considered a threat to or burden on society or the bearers of values not in keeping with those of the 'national culture.' Ultimately, this restrictive turn in family migration policy reveals that the hearths of *other* families are taken as an emblem of difference to symbolize and construct the hearth of the nation, once again establishing multiple degrees of belonging and membership (Block 2015; Olwig 2011; Schmidt 2011).

On the other hand, by taking on the point of view of migrants, many studies have demonstrated that migrants' relational spaces often contain stockpiles of the practices, forms of knowledge and skills mobile individuals need to deal with these highly complex and restrictive national systems and migratory regimes. As scholars have shown, migrants respond to the conditioning and constraints shaping their choices of mobility and family lives by re-fashioning meanings and practices of relatedness and inventing new ones along transnational lines (Gardner and Grillo 2002; Salih 2003), from engaging in caretaking at a distance (Baldassar and Merla 2013; Boccagni 2012; Hodagneu and Avila 1997) to establishing couple relationships (Beck-Gernsheim 2007; Lievens 1999) and kinship relations (Gallo 2013; Mason 2004; Olwig 2002; Werbner 1999). Nevertheless, multiple studies (particularly in northern European contexts) have documented the impact migration policies have on the individuals they target, highlighting how the intimacy, personal choices and private lives of migrants and their descendants are conditioned by the most intrusive elements of contemporary migratory regimes. In particular, these scholars have shown that migrants are increasingly obliged to interface with institutions, administrators, public discourse and categorized identities, that systematically force them to demonstrate the validity and value of their family arrangements, condition their narratives and consume an excessive share of their time in administrative and bureaucratic settings (Kraler 2010; Strasser et al. 2009).

Dialoging with these many rich fields of investigation, this book aims not only to contribute to weaving together different research areas; in addition, the studies we present shed light on dynamics that the existing literature on migration, minorities and the politicization of family life addresses only partially, if at all. Indeed, the analyses collected here adopt a perspective that transcends the Western context of minorities and immigration; what is more, these studies encompass a field that extends beyond the nuclear family unit to focus on kinship and relatedness more

broadly. This collection takes into account the continuum linking the logics of kinship and identity on the one hand and national boundaries on the other, with a view to exploring their intersection. By adopting this analytical perspective, we seek to understand not only how metaphors of kinship animate and give shape to the construction of the nation, but also the reverse. In relation to our field of inquiry, this involves exploring how contemporary migratory regimes, and the categorizations they give rise to, affect family life in ways that refashion the meaning of kinship and the very identity of migrants as of minorities.

Book Overview

The research perspectives traced here constitute the foundational themes of the book, the topics which the contributing authors substantiate through reference to different fields, geographical contexts and units of analysis. This chapter, together with the one **by David Kertzer**, aims to offer a theoretical and conceptual introduction to the cases presented in the two following sections of the book. We have organized the volume to begin with empirical analyses of the systems of classification and boundary-making underlying the construction of nationality as well as the impact, processes and paradoxes resulting from efforts to differentiate the national population. The focus then shifts to more explicitly take on the perspective of the kinship subjects and politics that act to impose nationality and its borders while also reshaping, redefining and overturning these lines of demarcation.

The analytical framework informing the **second section** of the volume, entitled **'Building the Nation through Frontiers and Classifications'**, approaches nation and citizenship as historical constructs characterized by ever-changing boundaries, constructs that are defined through an incessant production of identity-based, political, bureaucratic and statistical categories. More specifically, the studies we present here draw on various methodologies and sources to uncover the persistent presence of an internal principle of distinction which, like a set of Russian dolls, progresses infinitesimally from the institutional level to the discursive and social levels, carving out successive degrees of belonging and citizenship. The chapters by Jeroen Doomernik, Viola Castellano, Vanessa Grotti and Dorothy Zinn go straight to the heart of these issues, setting out from different contexts to converge in deconstructing the categories and distinctions through which national identities, together with recognition and belonging, are granted substance and weight. Most importantly, the chapters in this section shed light on the unexpected identity effects and short circuits produced by the crystallization of these categories when they operate regardless of ongoing evolutions in the population.

The **Doomernik's chapter** opens this section by presenting the figure of the *allochtoon:* an individual who, having been born to foreign parents, remains perpetually statistically recognizable and subject to monitoring regardless of the fact that most *allochtoon* are actually naturalized Dutch citizens. Doomernik retraces the historical construction of this category, identifying whom it refers to and which

generalizing ethno-national labels are used to classify it. Through an analysis of parliamentary minutes and political debates, the author identifies a move to politicize assumed differences in which the category of *allochtoon* serves to label individuals who exist at the margins of citizenship and nationality. He clearly shows how institutional arrangements give rise to a drawing of 'borders *within* the nation's population' (Doomernik in this volume). Specifically, policies for distinguishing while at the same time integrating non-western migrants (as generic as this distinction may be) end up overlapping, paradoxically producing a further category in which integration is constantly deferred and instead functions to fuel the definition of alterity. This process of domestic othering mirrors the new process of constructing Europeans in which Dutch migration policies play an integral part; the result is a kind of closed circle in which 'European' and 'non-European' mutually define each other through exclusion without the need for any further explanation.

Doomernik's contribution highlights how an imprecise, unintentional classification imposed from the top down for purely governmental aims can end up distorted to the point of actually working against its originally intended aims. On the other side, the **chapter by Castellano** reveals how similar ambivalences and contradictions may exist even when the classificatory logics in question have been intentionally adopted from the bottom up as a tool of political empowerment. Her ethnography of the child welfare system in New York City focuses on the construction of a social policy target group made up of abused children, the majority of whom come from black families. Not only does her analysis identify the ways that race-making is implicitly reproduced through administrative technologies, it also shows how difficult it can be to tackle the problem of the statistical over- or under-representation of racialized groups. Statistics on ethnicity and race, together with the audit systems and evidence-based technologies of knowledge (Strathern 2000) abundantly used to diagnose social problems and elaborate efficient responses, have the unintended effect of reinforcing racialized perceptions of social deviance. Indeed, discussions of nation and welfare in the US revolve around the construction of the African American woman in particular. Efforts to police the boundaries of family and women's reproductive activities intertwine with a moral economy (Fassin 2005) that exerts increasing influence over social policies under neoliberalism, constructing and assigning pathologized subjectivities that assert assumed characterizations and behaviors as constitutive elements of given racialized groups. Castellano's analysis of the position community organizations promote in the face of racial disproportionality reveals the challenges inherent in naming race, a historically stratified concept that is extremely slippery and difficult to manage. This insight once again illustrates the previously mentioned ambivalence intrinsic in classificatory logics aimed at constructing and crystallizing the realities they seek to represent.

Such tensions and contradictions intensify when integrated into the welfare systems that allocate benefits and protections, the true wealth of nations (Wimmer 2002), and more specifically in relation to the distinction between outsider and insider. In the parliamentary debates Doomernick describes, it is the presumed social costs of *allochtoon* individuals that make manifest the insider/outsider distinction and legitimize the continuing use of this category. Analogously,

Castellano describes the circular logics through which public discourse is able to deploy racial disproportionality in order to blame disempowered subjects for their own marginality and, once again, make them responsible for their social costs. Indeed, these analyses highlight how, while external borders are progressively fortified, national governments move to enact internal closures and distinctions that undermine the very foundations of citizenship and universal rights.

Such dynamics become even more evident if we move from the center of national systems to their peripheries. The **Grotti's chapter** offers an ethnography of a branch department of the French state in Latin America, revealing all the aporias surrounding the production of national identity, especially when access to the national health system is not guaranteed. French Guiana represents an emblematic field of tension between the nominal universalism underlying access to the health services theoretically guaranteed by the central state in Paris and the actual process of differentiation that is applied to local subjects. In this context, the health being contested is that of indigenous women preparing to give birth. It thus involves the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth for the women who contribute to making this maternity ward's fertility rate the highest in all of the French territory, including the Parisian area. This massive reproductive potential is located at an exceptional intersection of social, natural and political borders in which subjects possessed of an identity that is neither certified nor claimed often find their citizenship rights overlooked. The complexity of the bureaucracy and the way healthcare delivery is organized facilitates the establishment of social barriers, thereby calling into question both discursively and practically the right to healthcare that these subjects in principle enjoy.

Like litmus papers, border areas, marginal subjects and liminal identities serve to reveal the logics of governmentality that underlie the construction and selective composition of national populations. These logics sometimes configure the fabric of identity in such a way as to blur and deny it, carrying it back into a generic stateless zone, as with the expectant Guianan women described in Vanessa Grotti's analysis. At other times, logics of governmentality are based on claims of assumed native identity, crystallized and preserved over time regardless of who experiences and embodies them. The **chapter by Zinn** analyzes another border zone, the Alto Adige/Süd Tirol, bringing us back to the heart of the old country in which all the weight of the last century of European history encounters – and clashes with – the complexities of globalization. The remnants of this history derive from a border that was drawn at the end of WWII by cutting across the local area heedless of the identities claimed by its residents. Once established, the border has become embedded in a political arrangement involving a rigid bilingualism embodied in the local government and administrations and used for classifying residents. This classificatory system is preserved and reaffirmed despite rapid changes in the population: a drastic drop in fertility rates among both Italian and German-speaking residents accompanied by a significant increase in immigration. In this case the prevailing logic of governmentality insists on taking the myriad of differences introduced by immigration and subordinating them under the categories of 'Italian' and 'German' in order to maintain the quota system used to organize the distribution of resources and positions. Zinn's analysis focuses in particular on the educational sphere, an exem-

plary site for guaranteeing the reproduction of the system. She observes schools that essentially survive thanks to the presence of students from immigrant families whose mother tongue is neither Italian nor German but who are obliged to choose one language or the other at the moment of registering, a choice that will also bind them to one or the other political community. Furthermore, there is an array of 'other' cultural, ethnicity and affinity characteristics associated with this linguistic affiliation. Just as with the category *allochtoon,* these characteristics serve as criteria, unplanned but still effective, for identifying what choices of language and belonging would grant the most advantages in terms of mimicking an essentialized identity.

The **third section**, titled **'Weaving Kinship and Shaping Identities in Global Mobility'**, investigates how social and spatial mobility is conditioned by national categories of recognition and inclusion, exploring from the inside out the real-life trajectories and paradoxical dynamics generated by normative definitions of identity and belonging. As the title of the section suggests, the chapters by Aurora Massa, Alice Rossi, Barbara Bertolani and Zithian Guo shift the focus, considering the nexus between kinship and identity in contemporary efforts to govern global migration, an analysis aimed at tracing how family and relatedness may represent both arenas in which borders and boundaries shape subjectivity and belonging and, at the same time, spaces of agency and mobility.

What all these chapters highlight is that, in a context in which borders are increasingly powerful, classification-based identity is ever more rigid and social divides are ever deeper. Kinship politics intertwine with the policies governing national belonging to give rise to a complex terrain in which kinship and governmental logics both overlap and diverge. Indeed, the ways migrants make methodical and systematic use of kinship as a key (if not exclusive) channel of mobility grants it such renewed social significance that it ends up calling into question nationality. Moreover, these ethnographies reveal how individuals interpret, personify and experience borders and classifications on both symbolic and emotional levels, thereby generating conflict and ruptures in terms of subjectivity and kinship relations.

The **chapter by Massa** opens this section by providing a view of familial experiences and the construction of belonging when these elements intersect with national history. In particular, she explores how the production of national borders between Eritrea and Ethiopia sometimes literally cuts across kinship ties and the paradoxical effects this can give rise to. Logics of national membership end up severing intimate and conjugal relationships as well as so-called blood ties, to such an extent that they disrupt the taken-for-granted naturalness of genealogical continuity. This process is overdetermined by political contingencies and immersed in complex forms of stratification originating from colonial history, the war between the two Horn of Africa countries, and divergent statuses and opportunities for mobility. State boundaries thus permeate kinship, reconstructing and reinforcing ethno-national distinctions and granting them relevance; these distinctions go on to produce breakages when they end up interwoven with and mixed up within the core of a single family.

It becomes crystal clear just how significant kinship politics have become in this historical moment characterized by the consolidation of nationality and fortification