

Mapping Illegality: The i-Map and the Cartopolitics of “Migration Management” at a Distance

Sebastian Cobarrubias 

Global Studies, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, NC, USA;
scobarru@uncc.edu

Abstract: Cartographies for “migration management” are part and parcel of controversial border practices far from conventional borderlines. Focusing on the i-Map, this study renders how the European Union’s current practices of remote border control are visualised among migration policy circles and expert security actors through a “mapping migration matrix”. The lines portraying migration flows in recurrent maps generate a shared expert language and a common geographical imaginary reinforcing practices of contention and classification of those assumed to move toward the European Union irregularly. It is argued that illegality is constructed in ways that target border crossing long before any border is crossed, making someone *illegal* at the very moment and place where s/he might decide to migrate. This paper analyses the cartopolitics and limits of cartographic expertise in the production of a “routes thinking” able to legitimise extra-territorial interceptions and practices of remote border control.

Resumen: Las cartografías utilizadas en la llamada “gestión de las migraciones” forman parte integral de la externalización fronteriza que realiza controles migratorios más allá de los límites convencionales de los países. Este estudio se centra en el i-Map y demuestra cómo las prácticas actuales de control remoto de las fronteras por parte de la UE se visualizan entre los círculos expertos de política migratoria y de seguridad a través de una “matriz de mapear migraciones” (“mapping migration matrix”). Las líneas que representan flujos migratorios en mapas repetitivos generan un lenguaje experto compartido y un imaginario geográfico común fortaleciendo las prácticas de contención y clasificación de las personas que supuestamente se dirigen hacia la UE sin los documentos requeridos. Argumento que la ilegalidad se construye centrándose en el acto de cruzar fronteras, entendiendo este acto de manera “desplazada”, mucho antes de que se hayan cruzado las líneas fronterizas a defender. De esta manera, el *ilegal* se constituye en el momento y lugar donde una persona decide migrar, y no en el momento de cruzar. Este artículo analiza la “cartopolítica” y los límites del conocimiento cartográfico experto en la producción de un “pensar en rutas” capaz de legitimar las intercepciones extra-territoriales y las prácticas del control remoto de fronteras.

Keywords: border externalisation, irregular migration, critical security studies, critical border studies, cartopolitics

What a Big Brother Map!

Members of a pro-migration group based in Zaragoza (Spain) were staring at a detailed cartography of irregular migration flows widely used among EU border authorities. Known as the i-Map, this online cartography of migratory routes is produced and updated by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) based in Vienna. In response to the i-Map, someone at this

meeting of la Red de Sin Papeles said: “What a big brother map!” Mainly from Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, and Algeria, many of these no-borders activists had successfully trespassed recent EU-led migration control operations deployed in order to manage migratory routes in Atlantic and Mediterranean waters. These operations can include military vessels, surveillance technology and the deployment of multi-country border guards both in sea and land territories, thousands of kilometres away from the actual EU borderlines. I was an active member of this network formed by activists across geographies (or rather, mobilities) including local, immigrant and about-to-be emigrant participants, all organising under the principles of “no borders” and “no precarity”. This network emerged in the first decade of the 2000s as an intersection between migrants’ organising against exclusionary policies, and local youth mobilising against precarious work conditions brought about by economic restructuring and austerity policies. During my participation in this collective, as a precarious and itinerant scholar myself with short-term low-paid contracts moving from country to country, I was able to share many of the research findings of my study at the time which explored the externalisation of EU borders. Weekly meetings, where anywhere from a dozen to about 50 members would be present, usually started with a round of reports including updates on raids, local cases of deportations and lay offs. They also included a time to share broader information to better grasp how this restrictive migratory system worked and was connected to the growing austerity policies. At one of these assembly-based gatherings, it was my turn to speak, projecting the interactive version of the “i-Map” onto the walls of this activist space (Figure 1). The reactions to this detailed and flashy portrayal of irregular migration flows were intense. Everyone at la Red de Sin Papeles’ meeting fumed and retorted verbally to what was felt as a limited, obscuring yet intimidating map of a key part of their lives.

This paper focuses on the i-Map and the politics of the ICMPD behind it. I use quotes from security border authorities to show their understanding of the i-Map and the migratory reality it purports to represent. This self-representation of the thinking of these actors is then put into conversation with a careful review of their cartographic material, existing literature, and finally into conversation with members of la Red examining the maps as well.

From the early 2000s to the present, the i-Map has been a cartographic database that follows the evolution of trans-Saharan, trans-Mediterranean and Eastern European migration routes towards the EU. Its sophisticated and professional design traces migratory routes, including graphs of apprehended migrants during bilateral or multilateral operations of interception. Printed versions of i-Map are to be found on the walls of border guards’ offices as well as in migration policy meetings. The i-Map has been key in the latest attempts by the EU to manage migration flows through processes of “remote control” or “border externalisation”.

This paper looks at maps used by border agents and migration policy experts as technologies of control and legitimising devices. In particular, I engage with the cartographic planning originally discussed and designed among EU policy circles and expert communities supporting border externalisation policies. My



Figure 1: Projection of i-Map at first workshop of “Drawing our own Map of Routes” in Centro Social Pantera Rosa, Zaragoza, Spain, November 2011 (source: author)

contention is that these maps enable a particular way of thinking and acting upon migration control. Related to the notion of *cartopolitics*, which thinks of maps as playing a crucial role in naturalising geopolitical arbitrariness (Bueno Lacy and van Houtum 2015), it is argued that current representations of migration flows assuming uni-directionality towards the EU lead to the production of an arbitrary geographic imaginary that produces illegality beyond borderlines. Such professional yet simplified cartographic portraits of migratory routes justify the budgets and political prioritisation for EU member states in conducting border work beyond their territorial limits.

My reading of the i-Map takes an “autonomous gaze” toward migration, which emphasises the interdependent agency as well as primacy of migrant movements in regards to border policies (De Genova 2017; Mezzadra 2011). The map’s great conceit is that it suggests a spatial truth that it can capture and comprehensively represent which can then be prescriptive. This effort is always a reactive one—a response to something that is already there, but which is also always more complex, convoluted, pliable, mutable, and tactical than the map can ever succeed to represent. So there is a continuous dialectic between the autonomy of migrant mobilities and the tactics of control, involving reciprocal responses and alternating tactics, but the map’s efforts to instruct bordering is, like bordering itself, always playing “catch up”.

This analysis is based on a multi-year research project on EU extra-territorial border policy. From 2011 onwards, as part of a research team, I conducted

fieldwork identifying the actors involved in these maps that are part and parcel to ongoing extra-territorial border practices. While focused on the Spanish–Moroccan case, following the displacement of EU borders took me to Brussels, Vienna, London, Madrid and Rabat, to carry out ethnographic visits and interviews at some key institutions of the broader assemblage of EU external migration policy. The paper starts with a brief recapitulation of border externalisation under the perspective of theories around borders in motion. Such spatial transformations afoot in the understanding and operationalising of the border are accompanied by a notable proliferation of cartographic productions. In this first section I introduce the concept of Mapping Migration Matrix. The second section addresses the expert knowledge production from the ICMPD focusing on the “cartopolitics” of the i-Map. The conclusion signals that despite their professional appearance, these cartographies cannot completely capture the excess of migration.

Externalisation of Migration Control Practices: Borders Adrift?

Border externalisation refers to the transformation in the scales and operations of border institutions, shifting bordering practices from the conventional ground of state lines to an itinerant and stretched border zone made out of mobile border posts, development projects and transnational military operations, targeting migratory flows often far away from the territories of supposedly destination countries. The “New Keywords: Migration and Borders” project has a specific entry on “externalisation” pointing to the drifting character of border work at a distance:

By rethinking borders beyond the dividing line between nation-states and extending the idea of the border into forms of dispersed management practices across several states, externalization is an explicit effort to “stretch the border” in ways that multiply the institutions involved in border management and extend and rework sovereignties in new ways. In this way, the definition of the border increasingly refers not to the territorial limit of the state but to the management practices directed at “where the migrant is”. (Casas-Cortes et al. 2015a:73)

First conceptualised as “remote control” (Zolberg 2003), this modular process of outsourcing border control is characterised by its law-evading tendencies and its constant extending of geo-juridical boundaries. Border externalisation has its roots in the United States’ interdiction of Haitian refugees in the early 1980s. Besides the EU and the US (Zaiotti 2016), border externalisation policies have been implemented in Australia with disastrous consequences (Grewcock 2014; Neilson 2010; Perera 2016; Watkins 2017). The legality of this spatial displacement of border work has been questioned by legal scholars (Nessel 2009; Ryan and Mitsilegas 2010) and criticised as a direct attack to human rights (Podkul and Kysel 2015). Border externalisation by the EU has been discussed in terms of transformations within the EU’s foreign policies as an “off-shoring of migration control” (Bialasiewicz 2012). Bio-political studies have identified a kind of simultaneous inside/outside mode of population control (Vaughan-Williams 2008) and pointed to extra-

territorial forms of statecraft and sovereignty (Mountz and Hiemstra 2014). This phenomenon has also been read in terms of the shifting geographical imaginary as well as the geopolitical restructuring of border scales (Casas-Cortes et al. 2013; Raeymaekers 2014). Also, the recent edited volume on EurAfrican borders acts as a correction to readings centring on an overly empowered role of the EU. Both European and African Studies scholars show that the emergent bordering practices are rather the product of ongoing negotiations among various actors, including international institutions, EU countries, as well as non-EU countries, with emphasis on the role played by certain African governments and actors (Gaibazzi et al. 2017).

Nonetheless, while receiving growing scholarly attention, what remains less explored is the materiality of externalised border practices, those activities and techniques through which transnational border cooperation is enacted. The research agenda of “border security as practice” (Côté-Boucher et al 2014) would look at ongoing EU training programs for third countries’ coast guards; provision and deployment of technical equipment for monitoring migrant journeys; the development of cartographic data; or the identification of passports and visas. It would allow one to trace how the exporting of those migration control know-hows from EU-based migratory authorities to elsewhere is contributing to a series of emerging border spaces and border cultures at the external frontier of the EU. Ethnographic readings of EU external bordering processes are still rare, with the exception of works in West-African territories (e.g. Andersson 2014; Frowd et al. 2014) and North Africa (Collyer and King 2015; Cuttitta 2018; Garelli and Tazzioli 2017). This piece is inspired by this detailed attention to bordering practices themselves, focusing on the praxis of mapping migratory itineraries.

Border externalisation shifts spatial practices of migration management in such a way that it is necessary to think it through the latest theorising on the mobility of borders. Instead of assuming the border as a relatively static object, a stable line to be crossed, the border is understood as an inherently unstable product of constant mobilities to be managed (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut 2015; Casas-Cortes et al. 2015b; Haselberger 2014; Konrad 2015). While building on the itinerant character of borders, my reading of the phenomenon of externalisation points to its underlying politics of control. Yes, borders are adrift, but not as in the wanderings of the Situationists. Quite the opposite, borders have a pre-set agenda. With externalisation, borders are on the move through checkpoints along migrant itineraries creating a regime of mobility control which my research team has called an “itinerant b/ordering assemblage” (Casas-Cortes et al. 2015b). Experts, border authorities from EU and non-EU countries, are developing a prototype of b/ordering (and its triple function of bordering, ordering and othering; van Houtum and Naerssen 2002) that is exportable.

In this mobile culture of bordering, it is challenging to find the potential of the border as a relational space. For Anzaldúa (2012), the border between the First and Third World at the “U.S.–Mexican border *es una herida abierta* [is an open wound] where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds”. Then, border externalisation might be read as the First World seeking out the people to “grate” before they get to any geopolitical border. The pursuit to manage human

movement in origin and transit countries preempts the formation of a “meztiza border culture”, which according to Anzaldúa, emerges from the blending at territorial borders. Rather, if there is a border culture in externalisation, it comes from the emergent international and inter-institutional cooperation in managing mobility which seeks to constantly intervene in potential migration.

Europe Developing a Mapping Migration Matrix

In the case of Europe, the explicit adoption of the “external dimension” of migration policy took place at the Tampere summit of 1999 and more strategically with the approval of the Global Approach to Migration (GAM) and its Migratory Routes strategy in 2005.¹ The GAM framework has been updated in 2015 as the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility responding to the aftermath of the Arab Spring and related uprisings across the Mediterranean. Within that framework of thinking and operating migration control work beyond the EU member-states’ bordering perimeters, the Migration Routes Strategy called to stop irregular migrants not only at places of entry to the EU, but at places of “origin and transit”, targeting territories where migration flows are supposed to start and move through (Commission of the European Communities 2007). This goal, to operate beyond the assumed territories of the borderlands, was accompanied by an increase in cartographic representations of those routes.

Displacing border control practices to presumed places of origin or transit for migrants has resulted in a series of sea and land operations in Western Africa conducted by multiple EU and non-EU countries, including the European Agency in charge of the EU external borders (FRONTEX). Some are veritable military interventions such as *Operation Hera* and less well known ones, such as *Project West Sahel* and *Project SeaHorse*, targeting sites of origin and transit in West African waters and inland.²

I encountered these two police cooperation missions, led by Spanish Civil Guard border authorities, while living in Spain, concretely in Zaragoza, where I was an active member of la Red de Sin Papeles. Besides working on obtaining papers with migration lawyers, one main focus of the Red was to organise “cities without borders”. This meant denouncing and protesting random arrests, usually based on racial profiling, that ended up in deportation back to assumed countries of origin. The overall reaction to the projection of the i-Map and to details from research on the mapping process was striking. Many of these activist migrants from West African countries were astonished and enraged by feeling watched through their journeys, but also sensing that so many elements had been omitted. The group did not like how the lines were drawn: “this is such a taboo map ... erases all the challenges faced on the journey! It does not talk about how much pain, emotions, money and adventures are involved when traveling this way!” Such a response of outrage fuels the purpose of this paper. Besides airing the influential role of the ICMPD in EU migration management, I point to how maps help constructing illegality in ways that not only target and criminalise border crossing, but trace back migrants’ routes to places of transit and supposed origin,

making someone *illegal* at the very moment and place where s/he decides to migrate.

Building on ethnographies on the production of illegality (De Genova 2002, 2013), specifically within the framework of the European Union's (EU's) border regime (Andersson 2014; Feldman 2012), this paper contends that illegality is arbitrarily configured and re-configured far away from conventional border lines, and this illegalisation is supported by cartographic productions. A series of Euro-centric lines drawn in virtual and paper maps intend to have effects on the ground, diverting and aborting migrants' journeys. To highlight the expert-driven production of maps on illegal migration and its links to militarised border control operations, I call these varied tools and actors a "mapping migration matrix". The more general notion of "matrix" comes from the Latin term *mater*, as mother or breeding female—also womb—meaning the source, or the origin point of a certain process. When talking about migration maps as a matrix, I point to the reproductive power of those maps as being one of the main sources behind the legitimacy and currency of restrictive migratory policies, eventually becoming the new normal. In mathematics, a matrix is often represented as a rectangular set of numerals, conveying a rather chaotic sense of complexity but ultimately, rendering an authoritative portrait of mathematical truth. In this case, the role of border authorities and communities of security experts (e.g. FRONTEX, ICMPD) promoting a series of formalised categories (e.g. asylum seeker, mixed migration, hub or route) generates a particular kind of representation of international migration, graphically rendered by a series of maps. The cartographic knowledge about migration and illegality in those maps, while limited and problematic, spreads virally among border security personnel, politicians and media outlets. This authoritative reiteration of a cohesive-looking set of numbers, grids and lines becomes the accepted explanation of "migratory crisis" and "illegal border crossings".

For such institutional cartographies to legitimate certain migration control practices the question of expertise becomes important. In "B/Ordering Turbulence" my research team analysed the ICMPD as a key expert knowledge producer with growing influence among EU policy circles (Casas-Cortes et al. 2019). We signalled how ICMPD's own terminologies and cartographies impact migration management discourses and practices. This professional research and policy agency has been central in the process of naturalising taken-for-granted identities of "irregular migrant", "refugee", "expat", "tourist". Building on the notion of "epistemic communities" (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013), we identify ICMPD cartographers as articulating areas of intervention for migration control. We draw upon the Foucaultian framework of regimes of power and knowledge used by anthropologist Feldman (2012) in understanding the current "migration apparatus" in the EU. In this paper, I introduce Andersson's (2014) ethnographic work on the actors implementing current bordering practices by the EU, because his analysis further shows how the expert production necessary to implement the EU's border externalisation policies plays out in externalised spaces. Both Feldman and Andersson briefly point to the i-Map. This paper makes the i-Map its centre of attention, arguing that through its rendering of routes, it has produced a

distinct spatial truth about the existence of illegality beyond the borders to be guarded. This vision, in turn, enables restrictive practices and discourses for governing migration at a distance. Nonetheless, despite these repeated attempts at ordering migration, movement continues—even with difficulties and pain. Also, migrants and migrant associations continuously disseminate their own maps, which both contest and crossover the maps of migration management. This paper centres on the practice of mapping and the intergovernmental organisations involved in the production of cartographies of migration routes, especially those outfits working as service providers to the EU and member state governments.

The “Carto-Expertise” of International Organisations on Migration Management

The i-Map is not supposed to carry a message, it is supposed to carry the truth. It is a technical tool, not a political tool. (Interview 2)³

This is how one of the makers of i-Map introduced it to my research team during our visit to Vienna. The Austrian capital holds the headquarters of a think tank called the International Centre for Migration Policy Development where these series of interactive maps tracing multiple migratory routes were originally designed and currently run. After years of collaborating on migration “management” with EU and non-EU member states, the ICMPD came up with a multi-layer interactive cartography.

After a series of cordial emails, and noticing our names being Googled several times from Vienna, two of my research team members were walking into the main office of the ICMPD. It was located on the third floor of a historic building in Vienna downtown. The “proud Daddy of i-Map”, as he described himself, welcomed us into their research hub: a series of offices where most of the data are compiled and collated to support the maps of migratory routes that will be used by border control personnel from the EU and beyond. While ICMPD’s founder was a well experienced and long-term diplomat according to the website, most of the researchers and cartographers at the time of our visit were young professionals, often trained specialists in fields such as law, statistics, graphic design, sociology and international relations. The data produced here would travel to Brussels, where other ICMPD programs were based, and from there spread to the EU’s External Action Service, its DG of Home Affairs, and the DG on Development Cooperation, sites where ICMPD was considered a source of legitimate information on EU border policies. Still, while the exchange with the i-Map coordinator was informative, one of our main queries felt unattended. My team wanted to see one of the layers of the maps on irregular flows and its metadata that were not available online. A message would simply appear stating “restricted from public view”. The response to our query was negative in so far as the i-Map was conceived as the result of a broad security dialogue of border agencies and interior ministries from different countries. The map layers on “irregular routes” were considered security related and would require a unanimous decision from over two

dozen government agencies in order to grant access to an “outsider” to the dialogue process.

This instance speaks to one of my paper’s concerns: how intergovernmental organisations, such as the ICMPD, have gained prominence in developing “EU”-ropean migration and border policy, shaping institutional decisions and border practices around migration and mobility. Sites of expertise—located outside, although in relation to, public institutions—produce their own research on migration risks, coin new migration terminology, and provide guidelines for border control implementation on the ground. In fact, these kinds of actors have become increasingly central in defining the parameters of debate and even in drafting laws on migration. They include the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, the International Labor Organization and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, as well as the International Organization for Migration. While there has been growing attention to the IOM (Brachet 2016; Georgi 2010; Mountz and Ashutosh 2011), the work of ICMPD has received less attention.

The ICMPD: Mobilising Knowledge on Mobility

The ICMPD, whose slogan reads “migration is about people”, has been a major recipient of projects and contracts from the EU Commission through its program for funding border cooperation with third countries (Interview 3).⁴ At times, it has also carried out training for members of the Commission in concepts of border management that the Commission itself proposes in its communiqués. ICMPD is charged with organising, managing, and implementing projects of exchange, training and equipping third countries recruited for doing border work with the EU. The ICMPD was one of the earliest institutions to propose multi-national border management between EU and non-EU countries.

German migration scholars have been central in early critical research on ICMPD. For instance, the ICMPD has been read in institutional terms to show how it shapes the development of current international migration management practices (Georgi 2007). Also, from ethnographic engagement with the everyday practices and discussions within the ICMPD headquarters in Vienna, Sabine Hess (2010) has emphasised the ways in which the ICMPD serves the interests of its funding states and how this clientalist role conditions the projects and practices of the organisation. These analyses are in line with the overall process of “depoliticising migration” fuelled by both international organisations as well as NGOs (Pécoud 2015).

Our research team has analysed the ICMPD as contributing to the emergence of a depoliticised and expert-driven discourse on migration, by which it is intended to frame and define what *is* migration, *who* is a migrant, and *what* is to be done about it. For us, the ICMPD has focused on “ordering” what is perceived as “turbulence”, contributing to the underlying architecture of the EU’s border externalisation policies:

The explicit charge of the ICMPD is to formulate and disseminate a series of scientific statements and concepts to help understand and improve management of human

mobility ... [T]he organization defines categories and their respective modes of management, counts the resulting populations of migrants, shares findings with its stakeholders and consolidates a common set of concepts and terms to address migration issues, and ... it maps—and consequently creates—the spaces where these categories and groups of populations circulate. (Casas-Cortes et al. 2019:264)

Building on Feldman's analysis of the EU's border policies as a migration apparatus, we emphasise how ICMPD's politics of knowledge and uses of cartographic expertise have been central to frame current mainstream common sense on migration:

Through its role as policy development agency and site of official expertise, ICMPD has emerged as an important actor in translating these complex patterns of migration into discrete categories with corresponding legal and policy attributes ... mapped into concrete and knowable systems of routes, and organized into templates of recommendations for state policy makers to manage and coordinate visas, policing, and border management regulations beyond the administrative limits of the European Union. (Casas-Cortes et al. 2019:264)

The overly restrictive approach to mobility that characterises ICMPD's discourse is exacerbated by its own self-understanding as "serving states", including its dependence for operational budgets. ICMPD's general director makes this clear:

In the field of migration policy, states want to define and to decide who enters, stays and leaves the territory ... Through its targeted services, ICMPD serves the interests of governments to enhance their capacities to manage migration flows. (Zurcher 2007:2)

The voices of people on the move are not the ones that matter in the final recommendations for migration management. In fact, migrants enter the equation as data inputs in need of appropriate management. Still, despite its problematic logics and questionable objectivity, ICMPD has been quite successful in its ultimate goal of harmonising migration policy guidelines among EU states and beyond, spreading a language, a geographic imaginary and a series of practices, all around remote border control. Nonetheless, the ICMPD is just one more actor at designing migration management strategies, constituting one among many institutions that contribute to a field and network of individuals, organisations, concepts, governmental bodies, laws and technologies that are advancing particular framings of immigration and borders. For the scope of this paper, instead of over or under emphasising the role of the ICMPD's influence, I seek to signal how a particular cartographic language of management is proposed and promoted, giving rise to certain forms of expertise on mobility and policy making.

The ethnographic research helps in assessing some of its potential reach. During interviews with different actors within the EU's external border regime, my research team always posed a few questions in reference to the i-Map per se. I gather here a spectrum of reactions towards this ubiquitous map in border authorities circles ranging from dismissal to enthusiastic support: "Bah! The i-Map! A waste of time!", according to a member of the Risk Analysis Unit at FRONTEX (Interview 5).⁵ This contrasts with the view by an officer from

EuropeAid with responsibility for approving funding for externalisation projects in third countries: “I have been the main mover in supporting i-Map” (Interview 6).⁶ It might have little operational function, but the i-Map has become a familiar icon across the different actors within the migration regime, from the member states, non EU-members, the IOM to FRONTEX, or as a UNHCR stated: “the i-Map has become a quasi-institution” (quoted in i-Map 2014). The i-Map awakens contrasting views even within the same institution. While the Risk Analysis Unit (RAU) at FRONTEX was dismissive, the situation centre (SITCEN) “uses an i-Map base and adds on different elements, chang[ing] it to make it work” (Interview 5).⁷

The i-Map: A “machete clearing a path in the jungle”

In a Warsaw meeting room, one Frontex risk analyst spread printouts of a map for tracking clandestine migrant routes across the table. On the “i-Map”, developed by the international organization ICMPD ... In Frontex lingo, routes are closed, displaced and reactivated, while transfers of “pockets” of migrants are talked about in the imported academic language of push and pull factors. Here risk is visualized through abstract [lines], pockets and vulnerabilities, which can then be operationalized by defence contractors and border guards. (Andersson 2012:9)

The i-Map constitutes a thick visual archive of migratory movements made out of a web of lines assumed to move towards Europe. Up to early 2018, different versions of the i-Map (interactive or static ones, more detailed or more general) have been available online through the ICMPD website or its subsidiary.⁸

The i-Map clustered itineraries in major routes, representing common paths thought to be taken by irregular migrants from different locations. Those routes were represented by thickened colour lines, flashing in bright yellow when the viewer scrolled over them. The map visualises itineraries by linking “hubs”, and “sub-hubs”, such as cities or neighbourhoods mentioned in police interrogations to irregular migrants, each hub with a hyper link (not open to the public) with risk assessment information developed by FRONTEX (as well as EUROPOL, and the UNODC). These *routes-lines* were the predominant feature of these maps, as opposed to national *borderlines*. Contrary to the conventional colour-coding by country, national territories shared a neutral colour fading away in the background, marked merely by their International Standards Organization codes (e.g. in ISO code Spain=ESP, Algeria=DZR). The result is a suggestive visualisation of territoriality, which is not a static state-centred shot, but rather an image that attempts to capture the shifting paths of (irregular) bodies in motion.

The routes are highlighted as an existing fact on the ground, and all countries on the route are visualised as partners, yet a clear centre of policy concern and knowledge becomes apparent. The directionality of concern is Europe-bound (or assumed to be), and the priorities of migration management expressed are primarily those of EU member states.⁹ The ability to consider the countries of origin and transit as sites to directly intervene in migrant trajectories—including through international military deployments—has led to critical readings of externalisation and border cooperation as a form of neo-colonialism (Akkerman 2018; Bunyan

2017; Prestianni 2018). Processes of externalisation, however, imply more than a “roll-out” of imperial power if the agency from African nation-states, with their internal diversity of influence and reasons behind their participation in border cooperation with the EU, is also taken into account (Gaibazzi et al. 2017). Nonetheless, the mapping of Europe-bound migrations as flashy migratory routes erases African national borders in the i-Map and is reminiscent of the boundary-making power that Europeans have historically exerted on the African continent from colonial times onwards. This geographic imaginary embraced by the EU and its member states portrays a displaced border space which ignores and overrides African nation-state borders. That imagining only makes sense in the historical context of a colonial erasure of previously existing polities and societies. Again, Africa becomes a kind of “living space” for Europe to design, order and profit from (Hansen and Jonsson 2014).¹⁰

Indeed, a deep Eurocentric understanding of mobility permeates early discussions of EU border externalisation policies. When tracing the genealogies of these logics of contention, an old document speaks of how Europe is in the centre of a series of concentric circles as a desired destination and the rest of the globe is parcelled into different areas of desirable or undesirable mobilities (Casas-Cortes and Cobarrubias forthcoming).

“Routes Thinking”: Capturing Another Vision of Migration Control

The i-Map’s vision of migration management ignores the conventional centrality of borderlines. Routes become the main visual protagonist grabbing the attention of the viewer, who instead of focusing on moments or lines of border crossing, starts to wander beyond the national perimeters following the hypothetical trajectories of migrants. This gaze erases the solo-state framework of prioritising exclusively the security of one’s own borders. Instead, this trans-state and beyond Fortress Europe gaze towards migration management was at first shocking at top levels of the EU. The normal thinking had been in terms of national (or supra-national in the case of the EU) agendas in order to understand and to deal with issues of migration.

One of the first attempts at articulating a map of migrants’ routes was for a meeting of border management officials of Mediterranean and Sahelian countries (participants in the Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue [MTM] process) and resulted in a shift in thinking. A presentation was made by a member of ICMPD in 2003 in which partner countries were shown migration information on several maps with interconnections (essentially an early map of routes) and was surprised by the audience’s response. The “experts” were basically shocked.

The point of the i-map was to give the partners of MTM a better understanding of the region in which they were operating. EU member states did not understand why partner states could not operate in similar ways in activities such as policing the border. They did not understand the different capacities and different levels of access to information ... An Algerian representative said that “the European partner states just

don't understand that one trip from Tamanrasset to the border is one set of tires", that meant they could not be patrolling back and forward ... There was discussion of distances. The Sahara is about twice the size of the EU but with only a few million people. (Interview 2)¹¹

A distinct awareness emerged among many EU and non-EU border management agencies that the movements they wished to control were traversing multiple countries in a single circuitous itinerary. Thus controlling a borderline (whether at the edge of the EU or in a North African country) was insufficient.

Such cartographic renderings of migration flows support, normalise and legitimise EU border externalisation practices. These maps facilitate a visual logic towards the control along migratory routes, criminalising movements both at the departure and during the transit points of a migrant's itinerary. In this way, a kind of "routes thinking" emerged as a novel migration management concept. Indeed, such "routes thinking" is embedded in the visual portraits of migration flows and has been able to create a shared expert language normalising a spatial vocabulary and geographical imaginary of illegality beyond borders.

For instance, the interactive platform of i-Map¹² allows partner countries to update information regularly. This has been a mechanism to build common vocabularies and shared tools among the border authorities of countries as distinct as Niger, Poland, Algeria and Holland. Serving as a coordination tool among states and agencies, one of its goals is that countries begin to see their own migration "issues" as connected to much broader migratory trajectories or routes, learning from other participants what policy and management options have been successful (Interview 2).¹³ The i-Map and its vision of longer trajectories is part of a set of inter-country border cooperation processes, including the multi-national border surveillance project EUROSUR as well as the diplomatic Regional Consultative Processes (basically intergovernmental forums for interstate institutional cooperation) that include the participation from different countries along a route.

The cartographic imaginary of a stretched border made out of hubs and checkpoints along migrants' itineraries has created a shared way of thinking about migration control. The i-Map, and its "routes thinking", has become mainstream. Other migration management agencies such as FRONTEX and the IOM have developed their own renderings inspired by the i-Map.¹⁴

When critical border scholars have asked about the accuracy of representing migrants' routes or the efficiency of these interactive cartographies for the implementation of multi-country border control operations, one border official's joke referred to the i-Map as a "crystal ball", as in conveying "a sense of mastery over clandestine movements" (Feldman 2012:71). This sense of mastery granted by a graphic tool able to deal with disorder and potentially risky complexity is echoed by an i-Map coordinator when talking about the origins of i-Map as "an avant-garde" and "a machete clearing a path in the jungle" (Interview 2).¹⁵ While my co-researchers and I were surprised by the frankness of this statement, it reflects the ethos of previous explorers and mappers in these formerly colonised territories. The i-Map and related maps of migratory routes were to make sense out of the "unknown" (even if large continental and intercontinental migratory

trajectories in the region date back centuries and were perfectly well known to those migrating), to “make societies legible” (or at least the mobile parts of these societies (Scott 1999). The idea of a data-driven node of expert knowledge collating disparate sources of information to make a readable whole is reminiscent of an earlier history of map-making, machetes included.¹⁶

It is in this attempt to create legibility that the cartopolitics of the i-Map becomes more explicit:

The i-Map does not do analytical work, which would give the impression that ICMPD would be taking a side ... i-Map is not supposed to carry a message. It is supposed to carry the truth. It is a technical tool not a political tool. Quickly the partner states recognised this and accepted its neutrality. (Interview 2)¹⁷

This affirmation of the i-Map reflects the notion of cartopolitics as the use of geographic information that is understood as scientific and seamlessly representative of reality in order to negotiate complex geopolitical issues in spaces that are little understood by state actors (Strandsbjerg 2012). These maps are produced with precision and filled with metadata to carry out a territorialisation of migratory reality. If read without scepticism towards the cartographers’ craft (Bueno Lacy and van Houtum 2015), then the ability to see how the i-Map precedes the spaces it purports to represent is lost (Pickles 2004; Winichakul 1994). If the map precedes the territory, if the lines of identity and difference it draws create spatial meaning, then the route maps of the ICMPD serve to facilitate a political agenda of managing migration far from one’s border. They are the visual coagulation of a spatial imaginary that invokes complex human movement through multiple countries as something that can be broken down into units (routes and hubs) and thus managed. Through its sleek lines, its interconnection of hubs, and clear relations between them, the i-Map conveys a view of migratory routes that assumes their existence and accuracy (even if conceding that the routes shift over time), and also one that conceals other types of movements, as well as other types and directionalities of migration via an act of “cartographic cleansing” (van Houtum 2012; Bueno Lacy and van Houtum 2015).

While not necessarily providing the technical information for interception missions, the cartopolitics of i-Map has framed many of the operations helping to legitimise its goals and means. Still, the “sense of mastery” is precisely just “a sense”. The i-Map and ICMPD represent only one way and one actor working on these route logics. The following quote from the Spanish Civil Guard units involved in border work in West Africa attests both to the recognition of the i-Map and its role, and also to the perception that the ICMPD’s work is insufficient and incomplete, even from a police point of view:

The Guardia Civil is not a part of [the i-Map] project ... although I personally know [one of the i-Map coordinators]. Through this project of the i-Map, they’ve gathered a lot of information in just one map ... but we have our own information, these routes change a lot. For us, in our police work, this [points to map] is insufficient ... the map is a map but the reality is different. The merit is that they have summarised a whole

global vision of the problem that gives you a different perspective of the matter. It is useful, yes, but insufficient at an operational level. (Interview 1)¹⁸

Despite its operational inefficiency, and the fact that different actors involved in border externalisation are generating different sets of information, the i-Map does seem to convey a “global vision” of migration that can envision the spaces of migration as a whole. The i-Map contributed to the establishment of a new normal, providing a sense of knowledge over the entire migrant journey, details otherwise thought as private in the case of regular travellers’ itineraries. Suddenly, instead of the border work expected upon entering a country, a series of random places and activities before and beyond the border itself, including resting points and family visits on the way, become objects of management, and ultimately, of control.

Crafting Spatial Truth and Erasing Realities of Migration

Building on the politics of expert knowledge behind the ICMPD’s production of terminology, grids and maps, I point to how through the visualisation and repetitions of the routes, the i-Map has created a legitimate spatial truth about migration flows. While there are not specific directional arrows on the i-Map routes, somehow the graphics of overlapping lines produce a definitive sense that all migratory movements are heading towards the Europe. That is, the EU as a definitive destination becomes a given. Put differently, the cartopolitics underlying the i-Map’s apparent over-display of anonymous itinerants blinds the viewer to two migratory realities. The first reality erased is the amount and complexity of intra-African migration flows, with multiple points of destinations within the continent, as well as elsewhere, including a depth and variety of movements towards Asia and the Americas. The second one refers to how by assuming the EU is “the solo destination”, the i-Map conceals the increasing numbers of EU citizens emigrating under the financial pressures of an unresolved austerity crisis.¹⁹ In fact, the map hides any kind of inbound migration towards Africa or Asia.

This simple, yet powerful visual truth of the EU as the only desired destination entails a latent, yet inevitable message to the map observer: those moving and being mapped are somehow undesired ones, or directly they constitute a problem. This is precisely how artist Tiffany Chung read and portrayed these maps of migration management, as renderings of “unwanted populations”. Under this title, this artist curated an exhibition made out of re-renderings of migration maps (such as the i-Map) in acrylic on large canvases, exposing the cartopolitics of these maps in subtle ways (Figure 2).²⁰

The simple eloquence and graphic elegance of i-Map as the neutral rendering of migration flows hides a pre-set agenda already at work among security and border authorities in the EU well documented in the critical migration studies literature; that is, the emergence of illegal migration as a global security concern nearly at the level of terrorism and other transnational criminal activities.

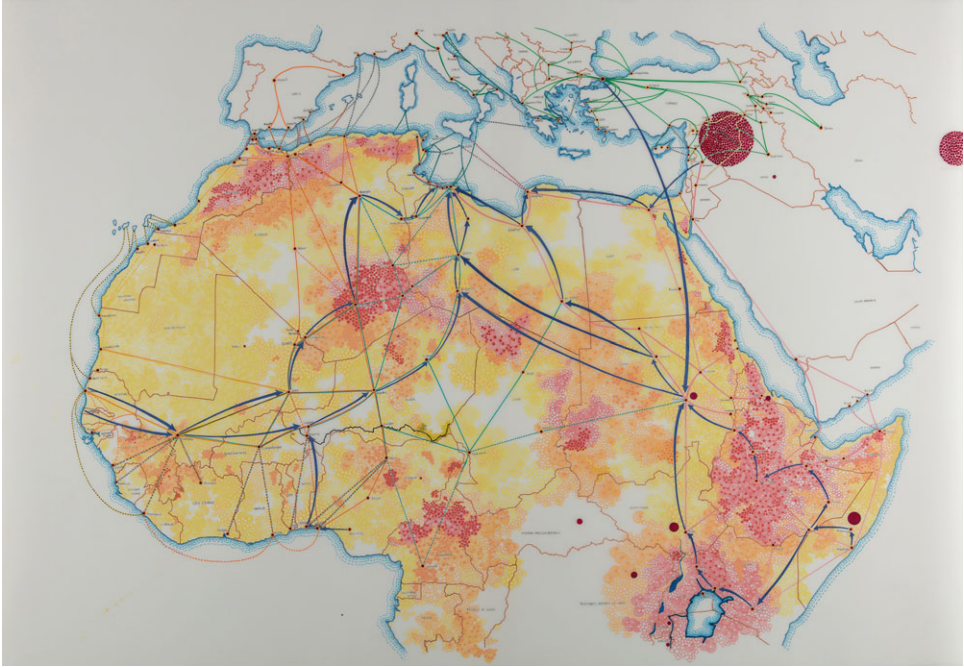


Figure 2: Tiffany Chung, “ICMPD, IOM Missing Migrants Project, Frontex, Reuters, NYT: Migration Routes through Africa to Europe, 2017”, from the exhibit “the unwanted population” at Tyler Rollins Fine Art, New York (courtesy of the artist and Tyler Rollins Fine Art; reproduced here with permission). This is an artist’s rendering of the cartographic work by the ICMPD, IOM, FRONTEX as well as imagery from Reuters and the *New York Times*.

The Production of Illegality Beyond Borders

In terms of naturalising geopolitical arbitrariness, it is well known how maps have contributed to the defining role and spatial representation of borders as respectable lines marking categorical distinctions between us/them. Colour-coded world-maps suggest blocky assumptions of countries as homogenous sets of people within giving territories. Nonetheless, when borders are going through such operational and spatial reconfigurations under processes of externalisation, what are the spaces of belonging and exclusion that are projected? The naturalisation of us and them, as sets of people in their respective bounded entities, is phased out in i-Map. Rather, the cartopolitics behind route thinking assigns yet another arbitrary geopolitical distinction, the illegal migrant vs. presumably the legal one (who does not appear on the map).

When expert cartographic knowledge traces and purports to uncover the itineraries of people assumed to move towards Europe, these maps produce the elusive category of the illegal migrant before any border is actually crossed. Irregular border crossing must be assumed (for the purpose of prevention) far from any EU borderline. Ruben Andersson illustrates the difficulty in identifying “where” the EU’s externalised border is, and thus where the irregular border crossing takes place. He demonstrates in various instances how the externalised border only

comes into being when a person or group is scripted as the “illegal/irregular migrant”. In his exploration of the cooperation of West African security forces in policing the EU’s external borders, Andersson shows how the “irregular migrant” is an elusive figure to situate, especially if they have not yet done anything “irregular”! His engagement with Senegalese police forces near the coast shows how potential candidates for migration must be profiled by their “look” and “behaviours”. These include hanging out in groups by fishing beaches and carrying full backpacks (Andersson 2014:101–102). There is no “EU border” there until those police forces profile potential candidates as “migrants”. At the Senegal–Mauritania border this search for the external border, and the irregular migrants it seeks to “manage”, becomes even more elusive, where there is an attempt to identify the “intent” to migrate to Europe at an intra-African national border. At these inter-African borders there is no way to confirm that travellers are on their way to Europe, thus this “intent” must be assumed and imposed on particular profiles of people (Andersson 2014:108).

Yet, while the i-Map and the broader project of mapping migration routes convey a sense of “knowing” how migration works, it is always only a sense. While very real, the map necessarily cuts into certain trajectories and misses others, it reduces the migrant experience to a trajectory, and perhaps more importantly, it is primarily reactive. i-Map, and other attempts at identifying routes work retroactively, by interviewing intercepted migrants, or by deploying specialists to countries of origin and transit. The routes identified are often then past tense. Migration management projects are deployed in response to the perceived route, and migration continues, perhaps adjusting to or perhaps ignoring the management efforts in question. Furthermore, as Andersson suggests, migration control efforts may be exercised based on *ad hoc* profiling. Therefore, the totality of the route maps is always misleading; there are always more routes and more possible routes than could ever be mapped, and many who are migrating (including emigration within or from the EU) are not mapped.

A Mapping Migration Matrix and Cartographies of Excess

Some of the activists in the la Red de Sin Papeles de Zaragoza were the target of these pre-border controls. As members of fishing families, many of the *chicos* from Senegal were profiled as potential migrants to Europe. When the local fishing industry collapsed in 2006 due to overfishing by EU trawlers, there was an intentional decision to migrate. Many tried the legal way first, waiting long days in line at embassies and then long weeks, months or more for a “visa” never to be seen. Europe has a “black” list of countries—renamed as “the negative list”—whose populations are subject to stricter visa and entry regulations (van Houtum 2010). During a series of workshops discussing the shortcomings and goals of the i-Map among the members of la Red, some of the insights were recorded in meeting minutes, one of them being:

when going to the EU from many West African countries, the decision about how to travel is made far in advance by someone else. The options are set: either you stay back home or you end up trespassing inland and sea borders.

Having experienced restrictions to mobility from the very moment of deciding to travel, these activists were furious upon watching the smooth and cool looking display of flashy yellow lines crossing their homelands. The response was unanimous:

this surely does not represent us! Where is the fear, the suffering, the joy and all the hitches, drawbacks and delays found in each of our journeys? We will make *our own map* of routes. We will share and show the many impediments perpetrated to our need and desire to move.

The discussion went from a sense of personal blame for having embarked on such risky journeys, to an empowering tone after visualising the many obstacles found in their travels through icons:

the problem is not us crossing borders, the big problem is them setting those borders! If they draw those lines with the goal of stopping people (ultimately erasing those lines), we will keep drawing more and unpredictable lines!



Figure 3: “Our own map of routes” (source: author and La Red de Sin Papeles de Zaragoza, Spain)

The result of these series of workshops was an amateur cartography made out of large pieces of paper stuck together, with a traced contour of the i-Map's base of countries, criss-crossed by coloured lines, each with different patterns—straight, curvy or dotted ones—depending on the mode of transport (Figure 3). Every line was plagued with icons making reference to different episodes during the journey—including temporary arrests, money lending, encounters with friends, changes in direction, and danger at sea. The actual map was never exhibited nor shown to a broader public and is likely stuffed into the closet of the Pantera Rosa, the social centre where la Red used to meet. Still, the very process of making such an alternative version of i-Map based on sharing stories of personal drama but also of the difficulties encountered on their respective journeys that resulted from current EU migration policies implemented far from Spain, let these activists—both local and from abroad—form a shared analysis and further commitment to “no-borders”.

The mapping exercise challenged some internal hierarchies in the groups such as preconceived notions of the “illegal” on the part of “Spanish” allies, and also forced a reckoning with the term migration versus mobility. In regard to the last item, after a couple of meetings doing this mapping exercise, it was insisted upon, in particular by Senegalese members of la Red, that everyone in the group, including local Spaniards, also place themselves on the map. Their challenge was that all of us “need to move”, that it is a basic desire, necessity, and should be accessible to all. While some simply moved within a country, between cities or from rural to urban areas, mobility was an asset for all. This simple yet central observation was key for rethinking solidarity within the group, and was also important when “Spanish” members of the group began to emigrate due to the unemployment crisis in Spain.²¹

This ephemeral mapping exercise by those very migrants being targeted in the i-Map speaks forcefully about the limits of expert-driven cartographies and the general arbitrariness of the broader border regime. The *cartopolitics* of i-Map produces a “crystal ball” effect of capturing all migratory movements, recoding them as moving towards Europe.

It is precisely that “crystal ball” effect of knowledge and territorial mastery that must be interrogated. The cartographic expertise attempts to recreate the sense of control or at least awareness that accompanied earlier modern state based mapping enterprises. The externalisation of borders with reference to human mobility was initially thought to reaffirm nation-state control over movement into and through territory, thus those formulations of externalisation that understood it as “remote control” or a “stretching of the border”. Additionally this border management is carried out in another nation-state's territory that may or may not have the same goals of migration management. While a joint vocabulary is being developed in these multilateral border activities, it is unclear which country's territory is being bordered. At this level, “experts”, including organisations such as the ICMPD, become key actors in transmitting the know-how of externalisation, creating a level of border management that is not simply “stretched” or “outsourced” to a third country but that maintains its own logic of migration management which is non-state based though constantly in reference to the idea of states. Ultimately it is migrants (actual, potential or simply imagined) that must

deal with the consequences of these policies. Yet as with nation-state maps, the cartopolitics at work in these maps of routes reflect only a will to manage and order complexity, and do not reflect actual control.

Despite the overwhelming “sense of mastery” conveyed by the i-Map and the image of EU borders expanding into a far-reaching architecture of border checkpoints along migratory trajectories, I got to sit, chat, dance, protest and cry with people who somehow were able to go over, under or through that emerging border assemblage, moving in and beyond nation-state limits. Those I met at the weekly meetings of *la Red* were not simply interrogated at the infamous EU borderline of Ceuta and Melilla, the two Spanish enclaves in North Africa that often make national and international news because of collective attempts at jumping the border fences followed by cruel physical repression to avoid entrance into Spain. Rather, most of these young Senegalese men encountered problems in travelling early on, even before embarking on their journey. With high restrictions to obtain any kind of visa for entering the EU, many had to drop the basic alternative of a flight. Instead, they used family fishing boats to reach the Canary Islands in the Atlantic as a step into the EU. However, attempts to leave home were often met without success. Their flimsy boats were intercepted at several points, even at the very beaches when departing. When intercepted in deep waters, joint patrols from Spain and partner countries, would return travellers to their closest point on West or North African coasts. Many were left in Mauritanian and Sahrawian lands without knowing where to go next; others were interrogated and landed for months in the Canary Islands’ detention centre.

Somehow, some of these travellers were now living in Spain and were ready to trace itineraries not captured by the i-Map. Active members of this no-borders collective often shared insights of their everyday experiences during the check-in opening time of regular meetings. Those stories were sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy, though the continuous menace of deportation was always underlying. After several unexpected detentions of members of *la Red* carried out by local police randomly in the street, Amadou, who was once stopped in his hometown on the Senegalese coast while carrying a backpack walking towards his family fishing boat, concluded: “Man! The border is here and it follows you all the way back, even back home!” Amadou’s insight captures the deep spatial and political transformations undergoing current border control practices beyond its assumed scale at the contours of destination countries. But also, the very voice of Amadou, being projected and heard on the other side of that EU external border during a no-border activist meeting, shows how incomplete migratory controls are and how the excess of migratory movements keep overcoming the continued refinement of border securitisation. Thus, besides expressions of resentment and despair at not having their actual trajectories and suffering adequately represented in the i-Map, these no-border activists have made and re-made the routes that otherwise are being represented and criminalised in these presumptuously definitive and sanitised ways by the ICMPD’s production of maps.

By focusing on one particular organisation, the ICMPD, I highlight how governmental institutions define and target certain bodies in motion; how borders and their spatial architectures are being transformed, and how expert knowledge—

specifically through mapping techniques—are used to alter the policy debates and practices around illegality. The ICMPD’s expert work has contributed to re-defining the “migrant in transit” as an object of policy and state action, and transforming the act of border control as the tracking and policing not only of the borderline, but extending to multiple and temporary checkpoints along a complex array of trajectories. I propose “mapping migration matrix” as a playful term to capture that pretended sense of mastery conveyed by a series of spreading maps of migratory routes, regularly appearing in news reports, policy briefs and border guards’ materials, evoking illegality beyond borders and slowly becoming a normal way to think about migration for those institutions. Nonetheless, this matrix is fraught with notable limitations, both in terms of its empirical simplification of ever multiplying lines and in terms of the assumed directionality of movements. The maps are quite “Borghesian”, like a tattered kind of construct that does not reach nearly as far as the cartographers would have the viewers to believe. Thus, the relationship between the maps and the highly militarised border operations at sea and in land across the West Atlantic waters and the Mediterranean is not one of causality but rather of symbiotic alignment, in which at times the i-Map coincides with border practitioners’ own systems of surveillance, and at times stand in contrast with them; at times the maps and enforcement agencies coincide with migratory routes and at times they miss each other. As such, the spread of such limited representations of human mobility as produced by the mapping migration matrix is not only surpassed by the excess of migration movements but also challenged by cartographic knowledge emerging from people who—despite it all—keep, and reclaim, being on the move.

Acknowledgements

This paper uses empirical data gathered during a multi-year collaborative research project financially supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. BCS-1023543, “Neighbors and the New Geographies of Europe: Non-Accession Integration and the Changing Exercise of Sovereignty in the Euro-Med Region”. This paper builds on a first introductory piece to the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) co-authored by my research team (M. Casas-Cortes, J. Pickles and myself) for the interdisciplinary book *Mapping Migration, Identity and Space*. Entitled “B/Ordering Turbulence Beyond Europe: Expert Knowledge in the Management of Human Mobility”, the chapter explores how ICMPD’s own terminologies and cartographies impact migration management discourses and practices (see Casas-Cortes et al. 2019).

The present paper has been fully revised, expanded and re-focused on the carto-political work of the i-Map itself, bringing forward the interview materials directly related to the vision, production and reception of this interactive and influential cartography of migration flows. Furthermore, I am grateful for the constructive feedback by the anonymous reviewers and the support by editors for the improvement of the manuscript. Finally, I would also like to thank Nicholas De Genova and Ruben Andersson for their insightful and knowledgeable comments on an earlier draft of this work, strengthening the critical and situated standpoint of this paper.

Endnotes

¹ Nonetheless, genealogies of externalisation go back further, an important point being the proposal of concentric border circles disseminated in an EU Council proposal during Austria’s EU presidency in 1998.

- ² See slide no. 13 here: https://digit.site36.net/files/2018/01/SEAHORSE_Guardia_Civil.pdf
- ³ Program director, ICMPD, Vienna, 8 September 2011.
- ⁴ Director, DG Home Affairs—Directorate C, European Commission, Brussels, 2 February 2011.
- ⁵ Vice Director, International and European Cooperation Unit, FRONTEX, London, 21 January 2013.
- ⁶ Chief of Section for Migration and Asylum EuropeAid/DG DevCo, Brussels, 4 February 2011.
- ⁷ Vice Director, International and European Cooperation Unit, FRONTEX, London, 21 January 2013.
- ⁸ At the time of publication (early 2019), access to the International Centre for Migration Policy Development's i-Map website (<http://www.imap-migration.org>) is restricted, requiring a username and password.
- ⁹ While there has been discussion of including South–South migration routes on future i-Map versions, or even distinct routes within the EU (MTM i-Map 2014), those migratory movements are not yet present on existing public visualisations.
- ¹⁰ On the one hand, it is precisely the borders imposed by previous European powers that are being ignored in their bordering on the continent. On the other hand, these externalisation projects can end up reinforcing the very borders that are being ignored as a means to manage migration. Security forces in African nation-states take advantage of externalisation projects in order to improve their own capacity to deepen or harden territorial control.
- ¹¹ Program director, ICMPD, Vienna, 8 September 2011.
- ¹² The initial version of i-Map called “Interactive Map on Migration” used to be available at <http://www.imap-migration.org/index.php?id=1130>
- ¹³ Program director, ICMPD, Vienna, 8 September 2011.
- ¹⁴ See the map here: <http://migration.iom.int/europe/>
- ¹⁵ Program director, ICMPD, Vienna, 8 September 2011.
- ¹⁶ The comment about “machetes” was preceded by a metaphor that reflected the increasing securitisation of migration policy discussing how the i-Map, MTM and ICMPD were asked to be “paratroopers behind enemy lines”.
- ¹⁷ Program director, ICMPD, Vienna, 8 September 2011.
- ¹⁸ Lieutenant, Border Command of the Guardia Civil, Madrid, 20 March 2011.
- ¹⁹ Once net emigration countries such as Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal which experienced large-scale in-migration in the two decades of the 1990s and 2000s have again shown high numbers of emigration as austerity politics have forced many to seek work out of the country.
- ²⁰ This exhibition was hosted by Tyler Rollins Fine Art in New York City during 2017. That same year, I co-curated an exhibition “It is Obvious from the Map!”, including a collection of migration maps showcased first in RedCat Gallery, Los Angeles, and at Galeria Nova, Zagreb (see <https://www.redcat.org/exhibition/it-obvious-map> or <http://www.whw.hr/galerija-nova/izlozba-signs-and-whispers.html>).
- ²¹ While La Red often dealt with urgent solidarity work to avoid deportations, obtain documents for a member, or challenge cases of racial profiling, the stated goal of La Red was to generate a broader mixed alliance between locals and migrants: a “mestizo space” as it was referred to. This explained the demand that all members appear on the “map of our routes” being generated during the assembly. I have written in more detail about this experience in Casas-Cortés et al. (2017).

References

- Akkerman M (2018) *Expanding the Fortress: The Policies, the Profiteers, and the People shaped by EU's Externalisation Programme*. Amsterdam: Transnational Institute. <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/expanding-the-fortress> (last accessed 3 October 2018)
- Amilhat Szary A-L and Giraut F (eds) (2015) *Borderities and the Politics of Contemporary Mobile Borders*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Andersson R (2012) A game of risk: Boat migration and the business of bordering Europe. *Anthropology Today* 28(6):7–11
- Andersson R (2014) *Illegality, Inc.: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe*. Oakland: University of California Press
- Anzaldúa G (2012 [1987]) *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (4th edn). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books
- Bialasiewicz L (2012) Off-shoring and out-sourcing the borders of Europe: Libya and EU border work in the Mediterranean. *Geopolitics* 17(4):843–866
- Brachet J (2016) Policing the desert: The IOM in Libya beyond war and peace. *Antipode* 48(2):272–292
- Bueno Lacy R and van Houtum H (2015) Lies, damned lies, and maps: The EU's cartopolitical invention of Europe. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 23(4):477–499
- Bunyan T (2017) The EU goes to war with African "elites". *Statewatch Analysis* 19(15). <http://www.statewatch.org/analyses/no-319-eu-africa.pdf> (last accessed 3 October 2018)
- Casas-Cortes M and Cobarrubias S (forthcoming) Concentric circles in the EU's external migration policy? Dissecting colonial logics in the ordering of territories and mobilities. In K Mitchell, R Jones and J Fluri (eds) *Handbook on Critical Geographies of Migration*. London: Edward Elgar
- Casas-Cortes M, Cobarrubias S, De Genova N, Garelli G, Grappi G, Heller C, Hess S, Kasparek B, Mezzadra S, Neilson B, Peano I, Pezzani L, Pickles J, Rahola F, Riedner L, Scheel S and Tazzioli M (2015a) New keywords: Migration and borders. *Cultural Studies* 29(1):55–87
- Casas-Cortes M, Cobarrubias S, Heller C and Pezzani L (2017) Clashing cartographies, migrating maps. *ACME* 16(1):1–33
- Casas-Cortes M, Cobarrubias S and Pickles J (2013) Re-bordering the neighbourhood: Europe's emerging geographies of non-accession integration. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 20(1):37–58
- Casas-Cortes M, Cobarrubias S and Pickles J (2015b) Riding the routes and itinerant borders: Autonomy of migration and EU externalization policies. *Antipode* 47(4):894–914
- Casas-Cortes M, Cobarrubias S and Pickles J (2019) B/ordering turbulence beyond Europe: Expert knowledge in the management of human mobility. In T Linhard and T Parsons (eds) *Mapping Migration, Identity, and Space* (pp 257–281). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan
- Collyer M and King R (2015) Producing transnational space: International migration and the extra-territorial reach of state power. *Progress in Human Geography* 39(2):185–204
- Commission of the European Communities (2007) "Interim Progress Report on the Global Approach to Migration." Commission Staff Working Document. http://www.agri-migration.eu/docs/Towards_a_Common_Immigration_Policy_2007.pdf (last accessed 3 October 2018)
- Côté-Boucher K, Infantino F and Salter M (2014) Border security as practice: An agenda for research. *Security Dialogue* 45(3):195–208
- Cuttitta P (2018) Delocalization, humanitarianism, and human rights: The Mediterranean border between exclusion and inclusion. *Antipode* 50(3):783–803
- De Genova N (2002) Migrant "illegality" and deportability in everyday life. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31:419–447
- De Genova N (2013) Spectacles of migrant "illegality": The scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36(7):1180–1198
- De Genova N (ed) (2017) *The Borders of "Europe": Autonomy of Migration, Tactics of Bordering*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Feldman G (2012) *The Migration Apparatus: Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union*. Stanford: Stanford University Press
- Frowd P, Côté-Boucher K, Infantino F and Salter M (2014) The field of border control in Mauritania. *Security Dialogue* 45(3):226–241
- Gaibazzi P, Dünnwald S and Bellagamba A (2017) *EurAfrican Borders and Migration Management: Political Cultures, Contested Spaces, and Ordinary Lives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan

- Garelli G and Tazzioli M (2017) *Tunisia as a Revolutionized Space of Migration*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Georgi F (2007) *Migrationsmanagement in Europa. Eine kritische Studie am Beispiel des International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)*. Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag
- Georgi F (2010) For the benefit of some: The International Organization for Migration and its global migration management. In M Geiger and A Pecoud (eds) *The Politics of International Migration Management* (pp 45–73). New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Grewcock M (2014) Back to the future: Australian border policing under Labor, 2007–2013. *State Crime Journal* 3(1):102–125
- Hansen P and Jonsson S (2014) *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism*. London: Bloomsbury
- Haselsberger B (2014) Decoding borders: Appreciating border impacts on space and people. *Planning Theory and Practice* 15(4):505–526
- Hess S (2010) We are facilitating states: An ethnographic analysis of the ICMPD. In M Geiger and A Pecoud (eds) *The Politics of International Migration Management* (pp 96–119). New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Konrad V (2015) Toward a theory of borders in motion. *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 30(1):1–17
- Mezzadra S (2011) The gaze of autonomy: Capitalism, migration, and social struggles. In V Squire (ed) *The Contested Politics of Mobility: Borderzones and Irregularity* (pp 121–142). New York: Routledge
- Mezzadra S and Neilson B (2013) *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*. Durham: Duke University Press
- Mountz A and Ashutosh I (2011) Migration management for the benefit of whom? Interrogating the work of the International Organization for Migration. *Citizenship Studies* 15(6):21–38
- Mountz A and Hiemstra N (2014) Chaos and crisis: Dissecting the spatiotemporal logics of contemporary migrations and state practices. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104(2):382–390
- Neilson B (2010) Between governance and sovereignty: Remaking the borderscape to Australia's north. *Local-Global Journal* 8:124–140
- Nessel L (2009) Externalized borders and the invisible refugee. *Columbia Human Rights Law Review* 40(3):625–699
- Pécoud A (2015) *Depoliticising Migration: Global Governance and International Migration Narratives*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan
- Perera S (2016) Grim design: Australia's Pacific black sites. Cultural Anthropology, Hot Spots website. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/901-grim-design-australia-s-pacific-black-sites> (last accessed 17 January 2019)
- Pickles J (2004) *A History of Spaces*. New York: Routledge
- Podkul J and Kysel I (2015) "Interdiction, Border Externalisation, and the Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants." Working paper submitted as written testimony to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, Women's Refugee Commission and Georgetown University Human Rights Institute. https://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/centers-institutes/human-rights-institute/our-work/projects/upload/WRC-HRI-Border-Externalization_Oct-2015.pdf (last accessed 28 August 2018)
- Prestianni S (2018) "The Dangerous Link between Migration, Development, and Security for the Externalization of Borders in Africa." ARCI Analysis Document. <https://www.arci.it/documento/the-dangerous-link-between-migration-development-and-security-for-the-externalisation-of-borders-in-africa-case-studies-on-sudan-niger-and-tunisia/> (last accessed 3 October 2018)
- Raeymaekers T (2014) Europe's bleeding border and the Mediterranean as a relational space. *ACME* 13(2):163–172
- Ryan B and Mitsilegas V (2010) *Extraterritorial Immigration Control: Legal Challenges*. Leiden: Brill
- Scott J (1999) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press

- Strandsbjerg J (2012) Cartopolitics, geopolitics, and boundaries in the Arctic. *Geopolitics* 17 (4):818–842
- van Houtum H (2010) Human backlisting: The global apartheid of the EU's external border regime. *Environment and Planning D* 28:957–965
- van Houtum H (2012) Remapping borders. In T Wilson and H Donnan (eds) *A Companion to Border Studies* (pp 405–417). Malden: Wiley-Blackwell
- van Houtum H and van Naerssen T (2002) Bordering, ordering, and othering. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 93(2):125–136
- Vaughan-Williams N (2008) Borderwork beyond inside/outside? Frontex, the citizen-detective, and the war on terror. *Space and Polity* 12(1):63–79
- Watkins J (2017) Bordering borderscapes: Australia's use of humanitarian aid and border security support to immobilise asylum seekers. *Geopolitics* 22(4):958–983
- Winichakul T (1994) *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press
- Zaiotti R (ed) (2016) *Externalizing Migration Management: Europe, North America, and the Spread of "Remote Control" Practices*. New York: Routledge
- Zolberg A (2003) The archeology of "remote control". In A Fahrmeir, O Faron and P Weil (eds) *Migration Control in the North Atlantic World: The Evolution of State Practices in Europe and the United States* (pp 195–223). New York: Berghahn
- Zurcher G (2007) The DG's corner. *ICMPD Newsletter*