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THE MIGRANT METROPOLIS:

HUMAN MOBILITY AND THE REGIMES AND REPERTOIRES OF URBANIZATION

Nicholas De Genova

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Faculty of Social Sciences
KU Leuven
Parkstraat 45 box 3615
B-3000 Leuven
Belgium

The Migrant Metropolis:

Human Mobility and the Regimes and Repertoires of Urbanization

Nicholas De Genova, King's College London.

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Introduction

In my lecture this morning, I'd like to invite you to think with me about the intersections of transnational migration and urban space, and the profound ways that the dynamics of urbanization present productive problems for migration theory and research. In part, I will refer to my previous ethnographic, historical, and socio-legal work on Mexican migration to Chicago. I want to emphasize at the outset, however, that the general dynamics that I will sketch here are in no sense confined to the ethnographic particulars or to the socio-historical peculiarities of the United States or to *any* other specific ethnographic or historical example, as such. Rather, the primary concerns here are theoretical. Rather than trying to *show* you something, in other words, I will offer various ways by which we might attempt to *see* things differently. I want to try out some ideas that might offer a fresh perspective, a different angle of vision. Indeed, the ideas that I want to present are somewhat experimental, and I look forward to hearing your feedback.

What I'm interested in here is thinking through some of the ways that a critical study of migrant urbanization might have something significant to contribute to formulating a rigorously postcolonial approach to what, for better or worse, we have come to call "globalization."[1] "The object of postcolonial critique," Achille Mbembe reminds us instructively, "is best described in terms of *the interlacing of histories and the concatenation of distinct worlds*" (2011:86; emphasis in original). The intersections of various migrations with particular cities or metropolitan regions, therefore, allow us to approach this larger theoretical question about "globalization" from the particular vantage point of how migrants become involved in the production of distinct urban/postcolonial spaces, embedded within and emergent from the historical heritage of centuries of colonial social, and political inter-relations on a planetary scale. Postcolonial regimes of human mobility control and "management," therefore, are inextricable from the autonomous socio-spatial repertoires of transnational cross-border mobility and migrant urbanization.

Migration therefore provides an absolutely vital and indispensable critical lens to contemporary urban studies. However, it is equally crucial to consider how a critical urban perspective is also crucial for any migration studies that could be adequate to the conceptual task of situating transnational human mobility in its properly global configuration. In other words, migration studies research tends to be disproportionately urban in its empirical orientation, but commonly

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[1]Karl Marx depicts capitalist accumulation as global from its very inception (1867[1976:915-16]). For critical problematizations of the term "globalization," see Harvey (2000:53-72) and Holloway (1994).

leaves the urban question profoundly under-theorized or utterly unexamined (Glick Schiller and Çağlar 2009). In part, this shortcoming derives from the degree to which the study of migration has inevitably been framed by the border and immigration regimes of "national" states, leaving the urban spatial setting of most migrants' experiences and practices presupposed as merely the background "context" for struggles that are politically articulated at the *national* scale. Nonetheless, with an insufficient conceptualization of the urban, we risk contributing to the kind of migration studies that reinscribes the methodological nationalism that has plagued so much of conventional social science, and worse still, which subordinates the study of migration and migrants' struggles to the epistemic conceits and political prerogatives of one or another nationalism (cf. De Genova 1998; 2005:56-94; 2013b; cf. Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003). And yet, against any naturalized, presumptively neutral, descriptive, and static notion of the urban scale as sub-national, I also want to argue that an adequate conception of urbanization likewise requires an appreciation of human mobility on a global (supra-national) scale.

The spatial practices of migrants, and their specifically urban struggles, allow us to examine the proliferation of sites of border enforcement far removed from physical borders at the territorial margins of nation-states. These transnational spatial conjunctures, therefore, provide crucial standpoints of critique from which to interrogate what we may call the "borderological" fetishism that often pervades border and migration studies. What I call *the migrant metropolis* becomes the premier spatial formation in which we witness the extension of borders deep into the putative "interior" of nation-state space through immigration law enforcement that increasingly saturates the spaces of everyday life. Simultaneously, the migrant metropolis also epitomizes the disruptive and incorrigible force of migrant struggles that *dislocate* borders and instigate a re-scaling of border struggles as urban struggles. Thus, the differential spaces produced at the intersection of migrant subjectivities and historicities with specific urban locations challenge scholars in migration and urban studies alike to fundamentally reconceptualize the emergent formations of social and political life, on a global scale.

Migrant mobilities provide a crucial pivot around which to problematize the enduring trap of methodological nationalism. This is particularly true as political and juridical authorities configured at the "national" scale of territorially-defined states are set into dynamic tension with the urban or metropolitan spatial scales in which migrant social formations articulate transnationally with places that appear to be disconnected and remote. This insight is not particularly new, of course, and has informed much of the most innovative research on both migration and so-called "global cities" since the 1990s (cf. Smith 2001). However, citizenship, immigration law, and the politics of race and class have long been fundamentally elaborated

within the purview of "national" (state) sovereignty. Consequently, these tensions between the "national" spatial scale of "politics" and "the law" and the substantive material and practical formations that conjoin migrants and cities to more global socio-political processes remain the scene of a protracted crisis. One hallmark of this crisis is the seeming paradox that, with accelerated and intensified "globalization," we have witnessed a pervasive de-regulation of the cross-border flows of capital (in its diverse forms as direct investment, finance, and commodities), alongside the escalating *re*-regulation of human mobility, particularly in the form of migratory or refugee movements (Mitropoulos 2006:7).[2] Concomitantly, we have seen a proliferation on a global scale of new formations of "exclusion" based on nativism (and "xenophobia") (Brotherton and Kretsedemas 2008; Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005; Chavez 2008; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001/2005; De Genova 2005:56-94; Fekete 2009; Murray 2011:137-72; Perea 1997).[3] With respect to contemporary migrations, a reanimated politics of expressly "national" sovereignty has been widely articulated in terms of various formulations of a deeply *racialized* (if not avowedly racist) politics of citizenship (Balibar 1991; De Genova 2005; 2010c; 2013a; De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003; Gilroy 2012; Gullestad 2002; 2006; Hervik 2004; 2011; Sharma 2008; cf. Modood and Werbner 1997; Pettigrew 1998; Silverstein 2005). Rather than perceiving these struggles from the (effectively nationalist) epistemic standpoint of the migrant-"receiving" nation-state as problems of "inclusion" or "integration," however, I take the intersections of migrant mobilities and the distinctive urban spaces they produce as sites through which to understand some crucial aspects of this larger *global* crisis. Hence, my reflections here are part of an ongoing effort to conceptualize what I am calling the migrant metropolis as a rigorously transnational and postcolonial socio-spatial framework for comprehending the problems of migration, race, and citizenship, comparatively, on a global scale. Notably, it is also a framework for re-thinking so-called "globalization" that is not only posited against methodological nationalism but also which is emphatically *urban*. Nonetheless, this perspective is predicated on a reconceptualization of the urban that seeks to likewise refuse and systematically repudiate what has been called "methodological cityism" (Angelo and Wachsmuth 2014; cf. Brenner and Schmidt 2015; Harvey 1996a).

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[2] In a manner that is insufficiently attentive to the constitutive contradictions between "the economic" and "the political" under capitalism, James Hollifield designates this tension "the liberal paradox: the economic logic of liberalism is one of openness, but the political and legal logic is one of closure" (2004:193).

[3] Very notably, this has been the case not only with regard to migrant "foreigners" but also toward minoritized fellow citizens who may be recast as virtual or de facto "foreigners" -- indeed, "enemies" -- within the space of the nation-state.

Migrant/ Urban/ Postcolonial/ Europe

My concept of the migrant metropolis is addressed to formulating one kind of answer to David Harvey's provocative question: *How can we dare to even think of future possible urban worlds?* (1996b:435).

Transnational migration is a central and constitutive dynamic in the contemporary social production (and transformation) of urban space. Let's briefly consider Europe. In spite of the denial of the notion that most of the European nation-states are now "countries of immigration," a denial which remains persistent in many quarters (Penninx et al. 2004), Europe has in fact become a complex and heterogeneous "immigration continent" in ways previously unforeseen and still insufficiently understood (European Commission [Penninx] 2010). Three European cities are each home to more than two million foreign-born persons: London (3 million), Paris (2.8 million), and Moscow (2-4 million). Seven or eight European cities have populations that are more than 25% foreign-born (and I want to underscore here that I am not counting the European-born children or grandchildren of migrants, who in some cases are officially classified as "foreigners"): London (37%), Geneva (listing 46% as "foreign"), Lausanne (listing 40%),[4] Malmö (30%); Amsterdam (28%), Brussels (28%), Frankfurt (28%), and Rotterdam (26%).In addition, all of the following cities have populations in which foreign-born migrants comprise between 15 and 25 percent: Athens (17%), Barcelona (18%), Bonn (15%), Bordeaux (18%), Brescia (15%), Cologne (16%), Copenhagen (15%), Cork (15%), Dublin (20%), Dusseldorf (18%), Hamburg (16%), Madrid (16%), Mannheim (24%), Moscow (~20%), Munich (24%), Nice (18%), Nuremberg (17%), Oslo (24%), Paris (23%), Prato (17%), Salzburg (20%), Stockholm (20%), St. Petersburg (~15%), Stuttgart (23%), Vienna (20%), and Zurich (22%).Furthermore, although the proportion of migrants of the total population is smaller, the following cities also count at least 100 thousand foreign-born migrants: Berlin, Birmingham, The Hague, Istanbul, Lyon, Manchester, Marseilles, Milan, Rome, and Toulouse (see Benton-Short et al. n.d.; Price and Benton-Short 2008; cf. Migration Policy Institute n.d.). (Admittedly, these figures are imperfect and misleading in one way or another, probably reflecting significant undercounts and, in any case, likely to be already outdated). Nonetheless, they confirm in general terms that the majority of major European metropolitan areas have been significantly impacted by

[4] The numbers are ambiguous because statistics include most of the Swiss-born children and grandchildren of migrants as officially classified "foreigners". Likewise, Basel (34.6% "foreign") and Zürich (31%) appear to have official "foreigner" populations with percentages above 25%, but are not sufficiently high to warrant the estimation that 25% would be likely to be "foreign-*born.*"

migration. Furthermore, within any of these metropolitan regions, it is invariably possible to identify particular neighborhoods or suburbs in which the population is predictably more than half foreign-born, and in some instances where the degree of concentration (if not segregation) of migrants and their children is astoundingly higher.

We may even suggest that urban space in Europe has, to a great extent, become profoundly reconstituted as *migrant space* and, consequently, the urban has come to also signify a deeply heterogeneous and fractured space of postcolonial (racialized) differences and inequalities. At the risk of recapitulating the methodological cityism to which I have just referred, however, it is useful to see this uneven geography of migrant urbanization across the space of Europe as precisely *continental* in scope and extent, such that the interconnections of these diverse urban sites with a vast array of places apparently remote from, and "outside" of, Europe become constitutive; but, so likewise do the inter-city material and human infrastructures of mobility similarly signal an agonistic process of European "integration" that is being realized by the migrants themselves (Karakayali and Rigo 2010). In spite of the diverse historical particularities and local peculiarities of each instance of migrant urbanization from one European country to the next, there is a larger process that encompasses the space of Europe as a whole. In other words, migratory "destinations" increasingly become spaces of migrant "transit," rather than of permanent settlement. This is particularly pertinent within the European Union, where an initial form of "regularization" (for instance, in Spain or Italy) can often afford relative ease of "legal" cross-border mobility to new destinations. Thus, while accelerated transnational migration has arisen as an effect of European integration it also operates as a remarkable motor for further integration. Migrants and asylum-seekers develop complex connections among ostensibly separate and discrete "urban" and "rural" spaces across European geographies, such as the dynamic linkages between cities and the seemingly remote locales where agricultural labour cultivates nodes of dense and intense migrant mobilities, as exemplified by the vibrant farmworkers' shanty town, known as the Gran Ghettò, at the center of the tomato harvest in Puglia, southern Italy (Gambino 2014). Migrants and asylum-seekers similarly create unforeseen linkages between apparently disparate urban destinations such as Athens and London, or between Rome and Stockholm, for instance. While many migrants and asylum-seekers have a clear preference regarding their ultimate destination — due to links to family or friends, shared language, or other historical affiliations — for many, "Europe" as such is the primary (if preliminary) destination. Particularly among many "irregular" or "illegal" migrants, Europe has become — at least initially— an undifferentiated destination, within which more specific calculations and tactics may be adapted only later, once they have secured a

provisional foothold in any given European country. Thus, paradoxically, migration may be seen to materially and practically advance and enhance Europeanization, even as the politics of "national" (and "European") identity become problematic and contested in unprecedented ways across the European context.

Hence, contemporary migrations are literally re-making cities, but I hasten to insist that this is not merely a banal fact of changing population demographics. Of course, we must be careful not to overstate the novelty of contemporary dynamics. As Alejandro Portes has asserted, "migration and the city can be viewed as two sides of the same coin, having built and accompanied each other's development over the centuries leading to the contemporary global system" (2000:154). However, we must be careful not to recapitulate the well-worn and effectively naturalized equation of urbanization with rural-to-urban migration, uncritically reinstating the familiar "city-centric" ideological divide between "cities" and their "rural" hinterlands as static and ahistorical truisms (Brenner and Schmid 2015:169). Moreover, we must also guard against the familiar risks of what Henri Lefebvre (1968/1996:95,104) critiques as the ideological illusions of evolutionism and "continuism," assuring ourselves either that there's nothing new under the sun or that what is new is merely the accretion of a gradual and "natural" (evolutionary) process of urban development over a continuous history. "The massive forced and unforced migrations of people … a movement that seems unstoppable …" remarks Harvey, "will have *as much if not greater* significance in shaping urbanization in the twenty-first century as the powerful dynamic of unrestrained capital mobility and accumulation" (1996b:416; emphasis added). Indeed, the primacy of human mobility — the fact that it precedes and exceeds any regime of market-based capital accumulation or state-driven border regulation — is a central premise for the conceptual framework that emphasizes the autonomy and subjectivity of migration. The transnational urban conjunctures that I want to consider to be instances of the migrant metropolis, therefore, genuinely challenge us to comprehend our global social, political, historical present in fresh ways. These transnational migrant urban formations are very much generated within the territorial boundaries and jurisdictions of nation-states, and in relation to the very palpable enforcement of nation-state space through immigration law and border policing regimes. Nevertheless, the repertoires of migrant spatial practices radically destabilize and contradict the spatial premises and conceits of nationalism. Thus, the *differential spaces* produced at the intersection of specific cities and migrant historicities invite us to fundamentally reconceptualize the emergent formations of social and political life, as such. So, if we dare to imagine that a different world is possible, how can we even *think* of future possible *urban* worlds?

Of Real and Possible Places

Like Harvey and many other prominent contemporary urban theorists (e.g. Brenner 2013; Brenner, ed. 2013; Brenner and Schmid 2015; Merrifield 2005; 2014; Smith 2003), I have found the work of Lefebvre to be deeply instructive. At the outset of his book *The Urban Revolution*, Lefebvre posits an arresting hypothesis: "Society has been completely urbanized.… This urbanization is virtual today, but will become real in the future" (1970b/2003:1). Although it was only published in English-language translation in 2003, this remarkable if still rather under-appreciated theoretical manifesto first appeared in print in 1970 (at a time when the great majority of humankind still inhabited places that could only be described as rural and agrarian). Lefebvre's inquiries into the specificity of *the urban* notably insist on delineating a theoretical problem that goes beyond describing or cataloguing the positive empirical "object" that may be construed of any particular city, as such. Indeed, he critically distinguishes what he calls "the urban" from any quaint notions of "the city." Urban society, as Lefebvre formulates it, is this not just that which transpires in "cities," conventionally conceived; rather, while cities — and in particular, so-called "global cities" — may serve as predominant nodes where wealth and power tend to be concentrated and commanded (Lefebvre 1968/1996: 73, 109-10; cf. Sassen 1991; 1994), urban society encompasses an effectively global fabric of material and practical as well as ideological and symbolic interconnections on a planetary scale.[5] Thus, Lefebvre's concept of an urban fabric, that is not reducible to "cities" as such, opens up a productive theoretical framework for contemplating those interstitial spaces of mobility but also abjection that "make global cities (as commonly understood) possible and, hence, are internally connected to them" (Isin and Rygiel 2007).

This conception of an incipient (and still virtual) global urban society was also a radically open -ended one. Lefebvre was intent on formulating hypotheses that could discern and apprehend the dynamism of vital potentialities that were still incomplete and unresolved – virtual but possible "objects," so to speak, which were as-yet still in the process of becoming and not mere "facts" of the positivist sort.[6] Adopting Lefebvre's methodological protocol for fashioning theoretical "objects" of knowledge and inquiry grounded upon the as-yet incomplete possibilities and tendencies that can be discerned in actual social processes and spatial practices, I want

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[5] As Nina Glick Schiller and Ayse Çağlar have argued, it is not that a select few urban areas may be counted as "global cities" but rather that "all cities are now globalising," while they remain nevertheless "embedded within differential [global] power hierarchies and with varying outcomes" (2009: 182).

[6] Lefebvre was unapologetic in this regard; as he explains, "There is no theory that neither explores a possibility nor tries to discover an orientation" (1970a/2009:178).

to introduce the hypothesis of *the migrant metropolis*, as a still-incipient but nonetheless real (partially virtual, partially extant, and empirically verifiable) socio-political fact of global significance.

The migrant metropolis is where both capital and territorially defined "national" states must confront transnational labor as the premier manifestation of the sheer restlessness of human *life* itself, in its active (productive) relation to the space of the planet (De Genova 2010a; 2012a). Notably, in an analogous proposition, Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid argue that "the urban … [has become] the very tissue of human life itself":

"Under contemporary conditions, then, traditional models of metropolis and hinterland, center and periphery, city and countryside, have been exploded. The urban/rural opposition, which has long served as an epistemological anchor for the most basic research operations of urban studies, has today become an increasingly obfuscatory basis for deciphering emergent patterns and pathways of sociospatial restructuring around the world. On the one hand, the geographies of uneven spatial development are today being articulated as an interweaving of new developmental patterns and potentials within a thickening, if deeply polarized, fabric of worldwide urbanization….Nor can the rural be understood any longer as a perpetually present 'elsewhere' or 'constitutive outside' that permits the urban to be demarcated as a stable, coherent and discrete terrain….Our claim here … is not that 'rural' or non-urban zones have totally disappeared … However, the conditions within so-called 'rural' zones should not be taken for granted; they require careful, contextually specific and theoretically reflexive investigations that may be seriously impeded through the unreflexive use of generic labels that predetermine their patterns and pathways of development and their form and degree of connection to other places, regions and territories" (2015:174-75; emphasis in original).

Within the critical framework of planetary urbanization elaborated by Brenner and Schmid, therefore, there is no longer any fixed ontological opposition between the urban and the rural, even while "rural" places continue to exist. Indeed, given that these have long been prominent among the places from which migration emerges, we may appreciate all the more clearly that migration is precisely a premier instance of the sort of material and practical human connectivity between these ostensibly remote places and more conventionally conceived of "cities." In other words, migration is an eminently lived human manifestation of the multiple intertwined global processes that encompass the rural *within* the urban (cf. Kearney 1996). In this respect, transnational human mobility itself may be understood to be a lived process of urbanization.

In the global/urban society that seems plainly more self-evident today than forty-five years ago when Lefebvre hypothesized it, it is indeed the migrant metropolis that presents itself as the decisive *lived* spatial intersection in which the contradictions of state power, "national" sovereignty, and the juridical regulation of space (and people in space) are articulated with the global regime of capital accumulation. Consequently, the urban spaces deeply inflected by migrant practices have likewise become premier sites of *border* struggles. Subjected as it is to persistent efforts to manage mobility through immigration law, however, the elemental human freedom of migrants is ever increasingly confronted with the juridical *illegalization* (De Genova 2002:439; 2004:173; 2005:234) of various forms of mobility, and border enforcement regimes that make migrant labor exceptionally disposable by systematically rendering migrant life more or less *deportable*. Indeed, it is in these transnational conjunctural spaces that we may best discern the active processes of what I like to call *inclusion through exclusion* (De Genova 2008; 2010b; 2010c; 2012b; 2013) that are central to producing new social orders of class, race, and citizenship inequalities and hierarchies.[7]

Yet, the migrant metropolis has proliferated and flourished. Indeed, the resounding proclamation of the unprecedented migrant mobilizations that swept the United States in 2006 was a profoundly defiant claim, which I have previously characterized as a politics of incorrigibility: *Aquí estamos y no nos vamos, y si nos sacan, nos regresamos!* [*Here we are, and we're not leaving! And if you throw us out, we'll come right back!*] (De Genova 2009; 2010d; cf. McNevin 2007; Nyers 2008; Walters 2008). Notably, beginning in October 2009, a wave of strikes by several thousand undocumented migrant workers demanding legal residence in France, articulated the themes of migrant presence and labor in remarkably similar terms; their principal slogan was: "*On bosse ici, on vit ici, on reste ici!* [*We work here, we live here, we're staying here!*] (Barron et al. 2011). Similarly, in 2013, there emerged the "We Are Here" movement in Amsterdam (Amaya-Castro 2015), as well as the Lampedusa in Hamburg collective, whose signature slogan has been: *We Are Here to Stay* (http://www.lampedusa-in-hamburg.org/; cf. Meret and Rasmussen 2014). These articulations of border struggles that erupt from the migrant

[7] Similarly, Sandro Mezzadra has developed the parallel concept of "differential inclusion" (2006; 2011; cf. Mezzadra and Neilson 2008; 2012; 2013). With regard to undocumented migrants, Martina Cvajner and Giuseppe Sciortino add a noteworthy twist on this concept by characterizing it bluntly but persuasively as "inclusion at a higher price": "As a matter of fact, many migrants acquire significant resources through market channels: … higher rent … lower salary or more flexible schedules … fake documents or fiscal numbers for a fee….Markets evaluate migrants as economic opportunities: if their irregular status deters some providers, it induces others to exploit the differential chances for economic gain" (2010:400).

metropolis are evidently claims of *presence* — enunciating the simple but insistent affirmation, “We are here” — but above all, they operate as claims to space. Precisely in the face of the threat of deportation, forcible expulsion from the space of the state, they proclaim: “We are here, and we will not be ‘removed’!” And, in this simple but defiant gesture, the very “here” that migrants invoke is always already a new and radically transformed one: “here” we find ourselves in the migrant metropolis.

Transnational Spatial Conjunctures

There are, of course, many historically specific and socially particular manifestations of what I am calling the migrant metropolis. There is no single or singular paradigmatic instance. Indeed, there may often be multiple migrant metropolises that take shape even in a single city or metropolitan region. In purely empirical (demographic) terms, metropolitan areas such as Toronto, New York, or London, for instance, have been accurately enough depicted as “hyper-diverse” (Price and Benton-Short 2008). Just as there is no generic or universal “immigrant experience” (De Genova 2005:56-94), so there can be no generic migrant metropolis, no universal “immigrant experience” of urban life. Nonetheless, if I have posited the concept of the migrant metropolis in the singular, it is because I hope to sketch the rough outlines of a theoretical lens through which to try to begin to see urban space anew, and appreciate one of the more robust expressions of our global urban society (to use Lefebvre’s hypothesis). What must be emphatically clarified, however, is that the migrant metropolis ought not to be reduced to the trivial fact of a mere physical presence of some migrants, of one sort or another, in a given city.

Based upon my ethnographic research conducted among Mexican migrants in Chicago during the mid-1990s, and theoretically assisted by Lefebvre’s conception (1974/1991) of the production of space, for instance, I have previously posited the idea of a *Mexican Chicago* (De Genova 1998; 2005). The point about Mexican Chicago was that it had to be apprehensible as a Chicago that could be said to meaningfully and substantively belong to Mexico, and thus, could be situated within Latin America – a Chicago that, even as it remained physically located within the territorial confines of the United States, had become elusive, even irretrievable to some extent, for the U.S. nation-state. For here indeed was a Chicago that corresponded to the practical presents and imagined futures of countless communities throughout Mexico from which migrants originated, and in relation to which migrants continued in material and practical (as well as symbolic) ways to sustain an ensemble of social relations that exceeded, or even

transcended, the nation-state border. The border that constitutes the premier division between the nation-state spaces of the United States and Mexico otherwise supplied the decisive and defining fault line across which, and through which, these transnational migrant trajectories and projects were actualized and achieved their socio-political and spatialized particularity. And yet, I contended, here was a *Mexican* Chicago – ostensibly confined within the boundaries of the U.S. nation-state, but also a site for their *production*. And here, by emphasizing the production of those boundaries, which are always also *limits*, I proposed that Chicago likewise became a site of their *contingency*. In this way, we could understand the border to have imploded deep into the "interior" of the country, but simultaneously the border was thereby reconfigured. In Mexican Chicago, and in countless similar spaces, it became possible to see that the border was no longer merely a line that could be imagined to separate the "inside" from the "outside" of a presumably integrated and unified national territory. Instead, the border had effectively been folded in upon itself, compressed, perforated and tangled, ruptured and scattered. As lived in Mexican Chicago, the border had become a kind of fractalized and always mobile proliferation of tentative boundaries and borderzones in which the alienage of migrants could be localized but never strictly confined or contained. When the border materialized in this space, it tended to be localized on migrants' *bodies*. In effect, they wore the border on their faces, carried it on their backs. That is to say, the "national" border was now re-articulated as an everyday marker of *racialized* class distinction, racial discrimination, and of segregation.

Yet, none of this was simply the effect of any one-sided, unidirectional strategy of control. If the nation-state border had been fractured and fragmented and riddled with unforeseen complexity, this was the direct consequence of the autonomy and subjective energy of migrants themselves. Undocumented migrants' subversions of the border were not simply a one-time event on the occasion of their physical crossings of the territorial border (or their evasion of detection on the occasion of passport control or a visa inspection). Likewise, for those who were "legal" (or had been "legalized"), their enduring status as non-citizens ensured that the border continued to shape and constrain the conditions of possibility for their efforts to go about making their lives and livelihoods. Thus, the diverse border struggles in the migrant metropolis constituted a whole way of life thoroughly ensnared in migrants' bordered "inclusion" or "incorporation" as labor into everyday life within the space of the United States.

Migrants, I suggested, were producing a *conjunctural space* with transformative repercussions in all directions, and some aspect of Chicago itself had thereby become radically disarticulated from the assimilatory powers of U.S. nationalism and the containments of its presumably sacrosanct and inviolable space. The force of my intervention was directed specifically against

the epistemic stability of the U.S. nation-state as a presupposition, and the hegemony for immigration discourse and politics of the concomitant teleology of ideological notions such as "integration" or "assimilation." However, this did not make Mexican Chicago easily recuperable for the Mexican nation-state, much as various projects of the Mexican state and its dominant political parties sought to reincorporate and domesticate its so-called diaspora. Rather than an outpost or mere extension of the Mexican nation-state, then, the "Mexican"-ness of this other Chicago – this migrant metropolis – was itself *something new* that emerged only from the veritable encounter and engagement of Mexican-origin labor migrants with the racialized social order and political economy of the United States. The migrant metropolis, therefore, is meant to signal the vital possibility of something truly new, a radically differential social formation. Mexican Chicago, as a migrant metropolis, was also then posited as a standpoint of critique.

Mexican Chicago is not a "place" in any positivist sense, even in spite of the existence of numerous virtually homogeneous (segregated) "Mexican" neighborhoods and suburbs. Instead, Mexican Chicago was produced more negatively than positively, which is to say, it emerged *relationally*. Its growth and development could be analyzed in relation to various social processes and spatial practices, deeply grounded in the practical productive activity and creative energies of real people immersed in a complex ensemble of social relations, simultaneously located within the metropolitan region of Chicago and also operating transnationally in ever-proliferating circuits that were oriented around otherwise seemingly remote locales across much of the geography of Mexico. Mexican Chicago was (and continues to be) a real space, but it was (and is), nonetheless not reducible to any particular place, not a delimited migrant "ghetto" or "ethnic enclave," not a putative "village in the city," not some sort of quasi-discrete virtual "island" within the confines of a larger urban space that otherwise could be assumed to thoroughly encompass and contain it. Instead of an enclosure, the proposition of a Mexican Chicago signified a radical and disruptive *opening*, and upon the more prosaically known and conventionally knowable space of the city, it superimposed another (other) metropolis.

An Other Metropolis

As will be apparent to anyone acquainted with the intellectual history of urban sociology, particularly in the United States, my original impetus in formulating the idea of Mexican Chicago was very much a concern with producing a critique of the legacies of what is known as the Chicago School. Although I was working in a different, albeit aligned academic discipline – social (or cultural) anthropology – the dominance of the Chicago School's legacy even for work

in urban anthropology remained entrenched, not least because those early Chicago sociologists had understood their task to be precisely the deployment of the ethnographic techniques more generally associated with the studies that anthropologists had made of “the cultures of primitive peoples” (Park 1929a; cf. 1915/1952:15; cf. Hannerz 1980:19-76). Little surprise, then, that urban sociology came to imagine “the city” as “a complex of distinct social worlds, which touch but never completely penetrate, each with its own scheme of life.” Indeed, many of its elementary weaknesses were exactly the problems that urban sociology had uncritically adopted, in the first instance, when it imported wholesale the methodological protocols of a cultural anthropology preoccupied with the study of presumably discrete peoples with putatively essential “cultures” in ostensibly bounded places.

Having transposed the ethnographic methods of primitivist cultural anthropology to the “modern” urban U.S. context, the Chicago School had effectively sealed the fate of future work by most anthropologists who would later turn their scrutiny to cities and even “repatriate” their studies to the United States or other similarly less “exotic” places. Clifford Geertz memorably proclaimed that “anthropologists don’t study villages … they study *in* villages” (1973:22). In light of this constitutive and deep-seeded anti-urbanism in anthropology, *urban* anthropology — once such a strange creature came into existence, long overdue — commonly involved something like a traditionally conceived “island” or “village” ethnography that simply happened to be conducted in an urban setting, where the city served as “the locus rather than the focus” (Hannerz 1980:3). Much like the ethnographic myopia that systematically precluded anthropological knowledge from including within its purview a critical analysis of the wider socio-political system of colonialism — whereby that very distinctly anthropological expertise could only be judged, in Talal Asad’s damning phrase, to have been “malformed” (1973:18) — so also with the obfuscating ethnographic objectification of contrived spaces of ostensible “cultural” homogeneity detached and fractured from their lived interconnection with the broader texture of urban social relations and struggles. In contrast, I sought to elaborate a critical approach that could aspire to systematically foreclose, as much as possible the shortcomings that I discerned in those canonical works of urban ethnography.

Ironically, perhaps the greatest achievement of urban ethnography generated under the tutelage of the Chicago School was a study that significantly departed from its most fundamental and defining theoretical coordinates. *Black Metropolis*, the book by St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton (published in 1945) — an ethnography of Bronzeville, the segregated African American ghetto on Chicago’s South Side — is a work whose title is palpably pertinent to the title of my talk today and this larger project, for, as I will try to explain further, one cannot adequately think

about the meaning of the *migrant* metropolis, particularly in many European contexts, without an appreciation of it as also a *Black* metropolis. Here, of course, I am not referring to any supposedly "objective" or "natural" sort of (phenotypic, quasi-"biological") racial blackness that might be predictably attributed to people of African descent in particular, but rather to a more expansive and capacious understanding of Blackness as a racialized socio-political category that encompasses the whole spectrum of social identities produced as specifically not-white.[8] Indeed, even for those migrants who do in fact come to be racialized as Black, we must guard against naturalizing what is always an historically specific socio-political process of *producing* them, as such. In this regard, Stuart Hall's reflections are quite poignant:

"I left the Caribbean, in flight from the Caribbean.... Then I 'discovered' my subject, or rather it discovered me. My subject was coming out of the station at Paddington [in London]. It was Caribbeans but over here [in Britain] ... That has been my subject, ever since: the diaspora.... So that is really where cultural studies began for me ... it began with my struggle to come to terms with that experience, which is when I first discovered I was a black intellectual. I'd never called myself black ever in my life, nor did most Jamaican people.... So it was a discovery for me, a rediscovery of the Caribbean in new terms ... and a rediscovery of the black subject.... I didn't choose that. I had no alternative" (Hall and Back 2009:662).

The postcolonial racial condition of the migrant metropolis — its "Blackness" — is therefore always something fundamentally *new*, to be continuously "discovered" by migrants as they endure and confront the larger social forces working to produce them as racial objects and thereby also as (re-)racialized subjects, and thus as they "re-discover" themselves. Mexican Chicago is again instructive, precisely because it can be comprehended as a racially subordinate (hence, "*Black*") migrant metropolis, even as its racialized specificity as "Mexican" comes to be posited not only in relation to white supremacy but also in an inescapable and deeply contradictory (commonly antagonistic) juxtaposition with African American Blackness (De Genova 2005:167-209; see also De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003:57-82).

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[8] This, of course, is not to minimize the salience of the increasing and intensified global migration of Africans themselves. In this regard, AbdouMaliq Simone writes: "Today, the persistent appropriation of African resources as fodder for the industrial capacities of other regions, and the subsequent reproduction of undeveloped domestic economies unable to absorb a large youthful population, propel many residents outward along multiple migratory circuits. Increasingly, the institutional, familial, bureaucratic and social resources of many African cities are skewed toward facilitating the process of leaving. As the volumes increase, the spatialization of movement becomes fractal and its temporalities sporadic and desperate" (2007:227; cf. 2004).

Whereas the famous Chicago School of urban sociology tended to naturalize urban social inequalities, as effectively inevitable features of larger progressive and assimilatory processes of urban so-called "ecological" growth, adjustment, and accommodation, the two African American authors of *Black Metropolis* candidly assessed the stark realities of Black American poverty and disaffection in terms of systemic and pervasive racial discrimination and oppression. They produced their conception of the Black metropolis as "a unique and distinctive city within a city" (1945[1993:12]; cf. Du Bois 1899:5) not as a "natural," inexorable, and *sui generis* adaptation of newcomers to the urban environment but rather as the consequence of, and response to, unrelenting adversity and unforgiving segregation. Following W.E.B. Du Bois's proposition that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line" (1900:95, para.2; and 104, para.19; cf. 1903), Drake and Cayton are perfectly frank about how "the pre-eminence of the white western European powers has been based upon the four-hundred year old political and economic subordination of the colored peoples of Asia and Africa.... The color line in America is merely a specialized variant of *the worldwide problem*" (1945[1993: 97]; emphasis added). Thus, in contrast to Gunnar Myrdal's decidedly quaint formulation of endemic racial injustice in the United States as "an American dilemma" — and also, notably anticipating by many decades the rather more recent transnational reconceptualizations of the African diaspora and the Black Atlantic (Gilroy 1993) — the distinctive and seemingly parochial "American" racial problem at the core of *Black Metropolis* was in fact *a particular localized instance of a global fact* of white supremacy. So it had been consciously formulated at the theoretical level by Du Bois himself, and then it was also deliberately presented as the framework for a comprehensive sociological study at the empirical level by Drake and Cayton.[9] In the prescient concluding lines of their last chapter, Drake and Cayton declared, "The problems that arise on Bronzeville's Fourty-seventh Street encircle the globe.... A blow struck for freedom in Bronzeville finds its echo in Chunking and Moscow, in Paris and Senegal" (767).[10] Notably, in Drake and Cayton's account then, is that the color line was "not static": as they

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[9] For a crucial philosophical exegesis of Du Bois' deployment of the idea of the color line, with particular attention to its original formulation as a concept operating within a global horizon, see Chandler (2006; 2010).

[10] In Du Bois' first published formulation, he contends that the color line "belts the world" (1900:95, para.2). Here, it is instructive to consider Nahum Chandler's reading of the stakes of Du Bois' formulation: "A continual desedimentation of the past is of fundamental necessity in practical thought. In this sense, a certain thinking of the color line might allow a different sense of world, a different sense of horizon, to arise.... In such a world, another one ...specifically one in which the color line has been rendered obsolete – groups such as the African American, *whose originarity necessarily remains at stake in every instance of its promulgation* and thus always in a sense yet to come, might be exemplary for human existence ... exemplary of the historicity of our time..." (2006:40; emphasis in original).

explained, “it bends and buckles and sometimes breaks,” resulting in a permanent tension, constant struggle, and sometimes violence (101). That dynamism surrounding the struggle over white supremacy as a constitutive global fact of the modern world was a significant explanatory feature of their specific account of the continuing migration of African American newcomers from the U.S. South to Chicago’s Black metropolis. For present purposes, it is remarkable that even in this context of the urban social and political segregation of racially subordinate *citizens*, the Black metropolis was always-already also a *migrant* metropolis. As literary critic Farah Griffin demonstrates, “the migration narrative emerges as one of the twentieth century’s dominant forms of African-American cultural production” (1995:3). But in spite of possible (and according to the Chicago-School, predictable) analogies with the experiences of (European-origin) “foreign-born immigrants,” who eventually came to be racialized as white, Drake and Cayton underscored precisely the role of race in ensuring that “integration” and “assimilation” for Black Americans remained ever incomplete (757), even in spite of their ostensible U.S. citizenship.

Richard Wright, the foremost African American novelist at the time, who had spent some of the most formative years of his life in the same Chicago neighborhoods depicted in the Drake and Cayton study and had set his most important literary works there as well, wrote the original Introduction to *Black Metropolis*. In the opening lines, Wright states:

“In writing this definitive study of Negro urbanization, [the authors] were conscious of the over-all American problem and they had to assume that white Americans know little or nothing of the Negro, that a mere statement of his problem would go against the grain of American thought and feeling; they had to assume that Negro personality, Negro conditions of life, Negro feelings, and the ardent and oftentimes bitter nature of Negro aspirations constituted *an alien realm* for white Americans, were unreal to them” (xxvii; emphasis added).

Thus, what appears at first glance to be a more narrowly African American socio-historical specificity of the Black metropolis nevertheless raises a more general problem for theoretical reflection – that of *a space within the city that assumes the character of “an alien realm.”*

Here, it is instructive to leap forward to more contemporary discourses concerning the *urban* question, specifically in Europe. Consider, for example, a brief and casual exchange I had a few years ago with an otherwise pleasant and liberal-minded Dutch acquaintance, a relatively educated man, a school teacher by profession, and an artist by vocation. As we chatted in his parlor, amidst the general commotion generated by our two children playing happily nearby, he mentioned the existence in the Netherlands of what he matter-of-factly called “white schools” and “black schools.” I asked him what he was referring to, exactly. After all, in European

contexts, the discourses of race are supposed to be less brazen and crude than those with which I have been accustomed all my life in the United States. But yes, such bluntly racialized categories of distinction, I discovered, are the organizing discursive frameworks through which many ordinary people have come to understand the socially consequential choices confronting them with respect to which schools they will select for their children's education. What followed, however, was more revealing still. This otherwise broad-minded man then remarked, "Perhaps you have been to the West part of Amsterdam? When you go there, it's really like you're in Istanbul. It isn't the Netherlands there, you feel like it's Turkey – in fact, it *is* Turkey." (What strikes me as especially humorous in retrospect is that, on one occasion when I did visit the West Side of Amsterdam, my daughter (5 years old, at the time) was quite adamant about her own sense that it really reminded her of ... Chicago!). Although I did not spend a very long time in the Netherlands (I lived there for only six months), and make no pretences of having conducted any formal in-depth research there, this casual comment may be taken to signal a kind of discursive and conceptual crystallization of the larger social processes very much at stake in my analysis of the multifarious forms of alien-ation operating in the migrant metropolis. This becomes still more stark, however, when this spectral estrangement of European urban space is situated within the orbit of rather more articulate and elaborated discourses operating at what may be taken by some to represent the "highest" level of European thought. Let us consider, for example, the following quote:

The "Alien" Metropolis

"[S]ocial conditions of the former Third World are becoming commonplace in the urban centers of the First World. These trends are crystallizing in the phenomenon of a new 'underclass'.... An underclass produces social tensions that discharge in aimless, self-destructive revolts and can only be controlled by repressive means.... In addition, social destitution and physical immiseration cannot be locally contained; the poison of the ghettoes infects the infrastructure of the inner cities, even whole regions, and penetrates the pores of the society as a whole. This leads finally to a moral erosion of the society...."
— Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory* (1996/1998:123)

Destitution, immiseration, moral erosion – the infectious "poison of the ghettoes" – such was the cataclysmic gloom that none other than Jürgen Habermas cast upon the historical moment (in the early 1990s) when nothing less than a new Europe seemed to be incipient – and this, in a collection of essays published under the title *The Inclusion of the Other*. The source of this

corrosive, devastating contagion was purported to be precisely a nefarious "underclass," apparently sequestered in urban "ghettoes," reinventing the so-called Third World in the "inner cities" of urbane and enlightened Europe. In spite of its third-worldly foreignness, however, this putative "underclass" is scarcely identified in this ostensibly erudite scholarly discourse by its more conventional or prosaic name – *migration* – and much less is it ever recognized candidly as concerning a question of *race* (for a fuller discussion, see De Genova 2008; 2010c).

It is undeniable, and of course quite pertinent, that there are historical and social specificities to the distinct forms and dynamics of white supremacist racial segregation in the U.S. context, which are in no sense replicated in the European context. Loïc Wacquant (2008), for instance, has very appropriately underscored the salient differences between African American ghettoization and what he calls "hyperghettoization" from more recent manifestations of impoverishment and racial marginalization in the peripheries of European cities.[11] In addition, Wacquant (1997; 2008) has incisively critiqued the use of superficial comparisons between these distinct social and historical cases for the purposes of a pernicious importation of "underclass" discourse into the European context. Nonetheless, the mere fact of this sort of exuberant importation of the raciological discourses and phantasms of hegemonic U.S. sociology into the contemporary European scene commands that we engage with the implications of such discursive convergences in terms of their very substantive racial and class politics. Furthermore, Ayse Çağlar has argued that the concept of the "ghetto" is in fact a "root metaphor" of German political culture, and a "dominant topos" organizing the hegemonic discourses that inscribe "foreigners" in urban space (2001:604,605). Hence, it is indeed fruitful to explore some of the parallels theoretically, especially in light of Drake and Cayton's explicit and emphatic commitment to a more *global* frame of analysis in their account of the racial subordination that could be investigated through the Black metropolis.

In any effort to write the prospective analysis of transnational migrant urbanization, and especially in Europe, we must call to mind the overall *postcolonial* problem. Thus, to paraphrase Richard Wright's reflections on *Black Metropolis*, we must assume that white Europeans (much like whites in the United States) regarding racialized "minorities," both old and new, know little or nothing of the migrants in question, that a mere statement of their problems would go dramatically against the grain of dominant thought and feeling, and that migrants' actual

[11] Indeed, Wacquant acknowledges that there is a more instructive analogy to be drawn by "comparing the 'visible minorities' of the Continent not with African Americans, but with contemporary Mexican Americans" (2008:285). It is beyond the scope of this essay, however, to critique what can appropriately be characterized as Wacquant's African American exceptionalism.

conditions of life, perspectives, and the ardent and oftentimes bitter nature of their aspirations constitute *an alien realm* for whites.

The migrant metropolis is indeed an "alien" metropolis – one subjected to a systemic kind of alienation, one of pronounced exploitation and protracted estrangement, for the migrants themselves. But the migrant metropolis, likewise, becomes a screen for the phantasmatic projection of a beleaguered or even besieged sense of nativist prerogative, now alienated from its own supposed birthright entitlements. Against the onslaught of this sort of nativist politics of identity and entitlement, the migrant metropolis is plainly a *racialized* (indeed, a racially subordinated) metropolis. Contemporary debates about migration are deeply riven by racial meanings, even when they are conducted in the ostensibly race-neutral language of the politics of citizenship or supposedly "insurmountable cultural difference" (Balibar 1991:22), whereby the category of "immigration" itself has come to serve as a routine proxy for race (21; cf. De Genova 2010c; Gilroy 2012). Furthermore, given the co-constitution of global human mobility and planetary urbanization, the figure of *the urban* as such has come to signal a whole complex discursive terrain and a still more convoluted subterranean realm of more murky motivations, impulses, and anxieties.

Again, the migrant metropolis ought not be understood as a communal space of "displacement" and "transplanted" or dislocated "culture." Rather, it is constituted materially and practically by the intersections of global capital, transnational (migrant) labor, territorially-defined "national" state formations and their unequal politics of citizenship and entitlement, and the postcolonial dynamics of racialized inequalities. While all of these forces are configured at a global level, it is on the level of the nation-state that the whole panoply of tactics of immigration law enforcement and techniques of border policing are brought to bear upon migrants. Nevertheless, these border struggles are increasingly re-scaled as *urban* struggles. In this respect, the migrant metropolis tends always to also be a borderzone (McNevin 2007; cf. Isin and Rygiel 2007; Isin and Siemiatycki 2002). In this critical light, in order to adequately confront and subvert the nativism and nationalism that plague our contemporary politics of immigration and citizenship, we must reckon simultaneously with a *global* (postcolonial) politics of race and a comparably global (neoliberal) politics of transnational labor mobility, both of which are very much "at home," so to speak, in the migrant metropolis, incubated and which flourish both within and against the borders of nation-states.

Denizens of "Global Cities," Citizens of the "Planet of Slums"

It is impossible to adequately apprehend the migrant metropolis without a theoretical and historical perspective that can articulate the interconnections of the glitter and glamour of so-called "global cities" (Sassen 1991; 1994) with the apocalyptic gloom and grit of what Mike Davis (2006) has designated to be our "planet of slums." Following Lefebvre, Brenner (2013) refers us to the "extended landscape of urbanization" (89). Hence, radically stretching the conventionally conceived of "cityspaces" of concentration and agglomeration, such as those conjured by the images of "global cities" or "slums," across a complex and ever-thickening transnational, intercontinental urban texture of interconnection, we discern, among numerous other mobilities and flows, the transnational migrant spatial practices that animate the plurality of new spatial formations that I am calling the migrant metropolis.[12]

Like the "Black metropolis" of Drake and Cayton's mid-twentieth century study or the "Mexican Chicago" of my own ethnographic work at the end of the twentieth century, the migrant metropolis presents a counter-intuitive urban formation that encompasses disparate and remote (apparently rural and agrarian) locales in places like Mississippi or Michoacán. Yet, it also tends to become ideologically galvanized by the iconicity of "inner-city" segregated spaces such as the very rigidly bounded African American "ghetto" (in the strict sense of the word) known in the 1940s as Bronzeville or the disproportionately Mexican/migrant neighborhoods, such as one that is known as Little Village, in Chicago today. Without eliding or effacing the substantive differences among these admittedly distinct examples, it may be helpful to juxtapose these sorts of examples with seemingly further removed ones still, such as the numerous sorts of urban locales that take center stage in the dystopic narrative of Mike Davis's *Planet of Slums* (2006); namely, the marginalized spaces of pronounced urban poverty in the "megacities" of that ever-elusive geography formerly known as the Third World, which have generally been the spatial product of mass rural-to-urban migration. Furthermore, these population movements, often magnetizing the parallel aspirations and despair of people fleeing from more or less distant hinterlands, have in no sense ever originated exclusively within the same national state. Perhaps today more than ever, with the inordinate disproportion of migration and refugee movements concentrated in the so-called Global South, the urban crisis of the formerly colonized countries is also deeply inflected by the variegated dynamics of transnational mobility

[12] Doug Saunders has proposed the notion of "arrival cities" to describe the impoverished and improvised transition spaces where rural-to-urban migrants inhabit places that are "often barely urban" but which are "redefining the nature of urban life" (2011:23-24), including villages that get "incorporated into the city" (26).

(cf. Murray 2011:137-72; Saunders 2011; Simone 2004; 2007). And therefore, we may profitably deploy concepts like the migrant metropolis to theorize the so-called "planet of slums" together with the seemingly discrepant narrative of the "global cities" that have become some of more prominent or celebrated destinations for migrant labor.

In light of these disparate but parallel discussions of the distinctive illegal(ized) spaces of the ("migrant") urban poor whose citizenship appears spectral at best, we may return to the dilemmas posed in an earlier historical era by the example of the spatial segregation, de facto disenfranchisement, and effective rightlessness of African American would-be citizens in Drake and Cayton's *Black Metropolis*. For, as I have already emphasized, the dynamics of African American urbanization were inseparable from mass rural-to-urban migration movements, which we may now see to have been analogous in important respects to those that produced the urban crises of government and citizenship that arise throughout the formerly colonized world.[13] Rather than the presumed redemption of citizenship at long last, then, the illegalized "slum-dwellers" of the erstwhile Third World, like the racially subordinate denizens of "ghettoes" in the would-be "global cities" of the self-anointed First World, have been similarly confronted, in their respective experiences of migrant urbanization, with the dizzying spiral of inequalities that are really at the core of the politics of citizenship.[14]

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[13] Indeed, in his pioneering comparative study Black Men, White Cities (1973/1976), Ira Katznelson investigates what is widely known as "the Great Migration" of African Americans from the U.S. South to Northern cities such as New York and Chicago alongside the late colonial or post-colonial migrations of West Indian Blacks (as well as Indians and Pakistanis) to London and other British cities. Despite numerous noteworthy discrepancies, Katznelson underscores how these apparently voluntaristic migrations involved a kind of desertion from the paternalistic and race-ascriptive colonial (or de facto colonial) contexts of plantation-style agricultural labor relations and patterns of political domination sanctioned by law, in favor of the allure of urban settings characterized by competitive, individualistic, industrial or service-sector labor that promised greater opportunities for social mobility and substantive political participation on the ostensible basis of free and equal citizenship (1976:36-42).

[14] The motivations and desires of rural-to-urban migrants in either context are well captured in Richard Wright's first autobiography, as he describes his sense of anticipation about migrating from the "compulsive cruelty" of the U.S. South to Chicago in terms of "imagining a place where everything was possible" (1937[1966:186]), and "a hazy notion that life could be lived with dignity" (285). As we know, however, Black migrants' aspirations in both the United States and Britain were profoundly frustrated by the accommodation of liberal institutions to institutional racism and the implementation of new forms of racialized social control. In the opening lines of his second autobiography, Wright depicts his migration to Chicago's Black metropolis as having "mocked all [his] fantasies" (1944[1977:1]). In Wright's migration narrative, Farah Griffin notes, the migrant quickly discovers that "the city is a land not of opportunity but of unknown terror" where the familiar terrors of the South have been replaced by mysterious new forms of alienation that have "only intensified in the North" (1995:70-71).

As a site for the veritable production of new formations of racialized difference, the migrant metropolis is — in each and every distinct instance — an historically specific conjuncture of unresolved postcolonial tensions and conflicts, reconfigured as a special kind of setting in which the global relation of labor and capital acquires its substance and density as a tentative and tenuous configuration of the politics of class, race, and citizenship.

And yet, the migrant metropolis must be apprehensible, nevertheless, as *produced* at least in part by the autonomy and subjectivity of migrants as a platform for optimizing their own capacities and advancing their own projects — a *differential* space; in short, it is fundamentally elusive for any regime of citizenship and perhaps ultimately irretrievable for any nationalism. By re-situating our understandings of the mutually constitutive intersections of *migration and urbanization as socio-political facts of global scope*, the critical analysis of the migrant metropolis, then, may offer us a critical lens through which to appreciate and better apprehend how the autonomy and subjectivity of migrants supply a vital motive force for the ongoing reconstitution of our global (urban) society. The sheer force and vitality of migrant mobilities remake space at every scale — from the most localized sense of neighborhood to the global scale of complex transnational regions and trans-continental, meta-regions configured by migrant trajectories and the new ensembles of social relations that migrants sustain. As autonomous subjects, with their own aspirations, needs, and desires, which necessarily exceed and overflow any regime of immigration and citizenship, migrants' mobility projects enact an elementary freedom of movement to which borders are intrinsically a response, however brutal. But in spite of it all, everywhere, on a global scale, human beings continue to prevail in their mobility projects, unceasingly and tirelessly establishing migration as a central and constitutive fact of our global postcolonial present. In radical contradiction with the securitized and militarized border regimes of nation-states, but which is also intricately articulated through the multiple and necessarily semi-permeable force fields of these border regimes, the migrant metropolis has emerged as a crucial spatial form for reformulating the relationship of human life to space, and enacting various configurations of our global urban society. Thus, our freedom of movement as a species asserts itself anew, staking a claim to the space of the planet as a whole.

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