

A Political Ontology of Territorial Borders

Ernesto C. Sferrazza Papa¹

Abstract

The essay examines a few issues related to the crucial theme of borders in the contemporary world. Through the combination of ontological, political, and legal reflection, the article shows the need for a rethinking of the role of borders within the globalized world. The first part introduces the problem of the complexity of the border from its terminological analysis. The second part challenges the idea of the border as a simple object using some ideas from the debate in social ontology. The third part analyses the complexity of the border through the Foucauldian notion of *dispositif*. In part four, I apply the notion of *dispositif* to a particular border, namely the wall. In the conclusion, it is suggested that the problematization of borders implies the questioning of the spatial-political structures inherited from modernity. In this conceptual rethinking, the role of law is of primary importance and a global constitutionalism is an option that is as viable as it is necessary.

Keywords: *Border; Politics; Ontology; Walls; Earth.*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32111/SAS.2022.2.2.2>

¹ Department of Humanities, University of Turin, Italy

Email: ernesto.sferrazza.papa@gmail.com

Introduction

The polysemy that Aristotle attributed to being in a famous place in the *Metaphysics* also applies to the border. Border is said in many ways. And it is said firstly in many languages, without one term “automatically” translating the other, so that in each of them a different meaning resounds, a nuance of meaning, bearing witness to a metaphysical, ontological, and political richness that will never be explored sufficiently¹. Let us briefly examine some examples from European languages. It is evident that in the Italian “confine” the idea of *cum-fines* resonates, where the idea of the end, of the ultimate limit, does not dominate, but rather the fact that this limit is irrevocably marked by the “con” (with). Thus, the border comes to indicate both a separation and a mutual sharing, a limit that allows both the beginning and the end, both the continuity and the discontinuity of being. But if we take the English border, we have a different curvature of meaning. Here we see the primacy of order, the relationship between the perimeter of space and its ordering based on this very action. The border is what introduces some form of order, an *ordo*, into the disordered web of the world. The border is a b/order: an important collection of essays published a couple of years ago had no problem playing with this interpretation of the border concept right from the title (Van Houtum, Kramsch, Zierhofer, 2005). And if we move to the German area, linguistic distinctions seem to assume even greater theoretical relevance. Just think about the distinction between *Schranke* and *Grenze*, between border as barrier and border as limit, as discussed by

Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Hohenegger, 2014, pp. 519-580). This interpretation invites us to elaborate a more complex phenomenology of the border, to distinguish it from neighboring concepts, to disambiguate. *Distingue frequenter* remains the motto of critique, and perhaps of philosophy *tout court*.

Of course, it could be rightly objected that one does not philosophize with a dictionary, and we would agree with this remark. However, these suggestions are useful to understand that when we talk about borders, we are not talking about simple objects (Newman, 2003; Williams, 2006). A border is always something more than the line representing it on a map. The “territorial trap”, which John Agnew never ceased to warn against (Agnew, 1994), all too often leads us to interpret borders as simple lines, imagining a perfect correspondence between the “cartographic” and “real” dimensions, flattening the latter on the former (Farinelli, 2009).

The critique of this hermeneutic attitude is the first step towards a better understanding of what borders really are; in this way, it will be possible to arm ourselves with a more acute analytical framework, thanks to which we can tackle the problems, challenges and controversies that borders impose on our time.

Political ontology of the border

Philosophy has struggled to define what a border is. The question is first and foremost ontological: along with the question of what borders are, we are forced to ask the question of their existence, which is by no means obvious. Do borders *actually* exist? Are they a primary datum? Is the fabric of being crossed by

¹ For a first overview on the complexity of the idea of the border see Zanini 1997. See also Salter 2012, Nail 2016.

partitions, discontinuities, “natural” fractures independent of the subject experiencing them, or is it necessary to consider all borders as either the projection of human perceptive capabilities or as a historical-political product (Vaughan-Williams, 2009)? When Barry Smith (2001) introduced a famous distinction between *bona fide* and *fiat* borders, this was considered definitive for a couple of years. It is only recently that the more discerning literature has managed, with good reason in my opinion, to severely question it. But let us briefly look at Barry Smith’s proposal, which is in any case philosophically relevant.

The *bona fide* border exists in the world before any possible action of the subject. It is a kind of pre-categorical, whose givenness is independent of the action of the subject both in the creation and in the perception of the border. In short, “natural boundaries” would exist. In particular, according to Smith, the borders of material entities can be traced back to this ontological category.

The second type of border, the *fiat* one, is a product of human action. It is produced historically as the outcome of acting on the world. The *fiat* border, differently from the *bona fide* one, does not exist independently of the individual who produces it. This does not mean that its existence in time, its persistence, is linked to that of the individual who produced it: state borders continue to exist even after the death of the person who established them, as they sediment in the collective memory and, above all, in the documents that legitimize and certify their existence. This means that there is no “natural border” sepa-

rating, for example, France and Italy; it is conventional, arbitrary, and it is precisely this arbitrariness that can give rise to political and legal ambiguities².

However, the ontology of the border proposed by Barry Smith needs to be complicated in at least two places. As we wrote, there are good reasons to argue about the conceptual untenability of natural borders. Or at least: the idea that the natural borders of entities are in fact only the borders we experience. The theoretical position that there are *actually* natural borders confuses the structure of the physical world with the capacity that we humans have to experience it. Or, to put it more precisely, this position “falls on epistemological rather than ontological criteria” (Ferraris, 2013, p. 34). Since the atomic structure of reality is in perpetual motion, it must be recognized that at the microscopic level the boundaries of entities are changeable and variable. What we perceive as determinate borders that give things in the world their specific individuation are, in fact, constantly changing, albeit at such a microscopic level that we cannot account for them through our perceptual apparatus. Consequently, what we perceive as discontinuous is actually ontological continuity. This is not to mention the blurred borders of vague entities such as a mountain, a river, a coastline, which challenge the “naive physics” view of the “natural” border as grounded in the fabric of being. One might wonder, with sober polemics with respect to certain contemporary reflections, when it was decided that naivety was a philosophical value.

² Sometimes cinematographic works can condense philosophical depths. This is the case, for example, of the comic film *La legge è legge* (1958), with Totò and Fernandel as protagonists. The whole film, which is a continuum of paradoxical situations at the limit of the

Kafkaesque, is based on the arbitrariness of the border between Italy and France, an arbitrariness that will have tragic consequences (at least until the situation is resolved) for the lives of the two protagonists.

The second complication concerns the notion of a *fiat* border. It is undoubtedly a border produced by human beings. But what does it mean to produce a border? How is the process of bordering structured and established? Smith does not give any indication in this sense; however, the analysis of bordering is essential to grasp the artificial nature of the border.

This preliminary ontological framing of the problem should not be taken as an end in itself. Strictly ontological issues are in fact at the heart of political and legal disputes that have marked decisive stages in Western history. We could go so far as to speak of a genuine political ontology of borders. One thinks, for example, of the very vivid discussion in the modern age on the freedom or otherwise of the seas. A crucial discussion for the future configuration of European space, in which the heavyweights of the modern legal-philosophical *intelligenza* converge: Bartolo di Sassoferrato, Baldo degli Ubaldi, Hugo Grotius, John Selden, Paolo Sarpi, Loccenius, Bynkershoek (Sferrazza Papa, 2019, pp. 23-58). Without reconstructing the whole story, which is known in its general lines also and above all thanks to the importance assigned to it by Carl Schmitt in *Der Nomos der Erde* (1950), it is sufficient to recognize the strictly ontological question that runs through it. If sovereignty is defined starting from its exercise perimeter, how can the perimeter of the sea surface, in itself fluid, be defined? Can such a political border exist? All the solutions used to justify, against the Grotian hypothesis of *Mare liberum* (1609), the possibility of identifying a sovereign space even in maritime territory, strive to theorize a boundary so disconnected from its naive naturalness that it can also be thought of on the sea surface. Up to the infamous doctrine of the cannonball,

conceived by Cornelius van Bynkershoek in *De dominio maris* (1702), crystallized in the formula *potestas terrae finitur, ubi finitur armorum vis* and destined to great fortune.

I mention this debate only to say that the question of borders is not a piece of abstract metaphysics, so much so that its philosophical coordinates directly affect and have affected the political and legal life of human beings. Without doubt, borders are not a recent invention and “have mattered” throughout human history. As Alexander Diener and Joshua Hagen write, human beings are “geographical beings, for whom the creation of places, and consequently the process of producing borders, seems natural” (Diener, Hagen, 2012, p. 1): in other words, it is not the border that is natural, but the continuous making and unmaking of borders by human beings. A decisive contribution in this sense can come from twentieth-century anthropology. Arnold van Gennep showed, in a classic of anthropology, the role of borders in the formative process of individuals. In fact, one of the fundamental themes of *Les rites de passage*, published for the first time in 1909, is that the symbolic process of passing from one phase of life to another only comes to an end when it is spatialized. Excellent examples of this spatialization of the symbolic are all those foundational rites centered on the transit from adolescence to adulthood that are condensed in the crossing of a dangerous border: for example, the passage from the protective dimension of the village to the uncertain dimension of the forest (Van Gennep, 1909).

However, for several contingent reasons, the importance of borders seems particularly relevant in contemporary times. Today, merciless ideological battles are being fought over borders, which seem to have reached a stalemate. On opposite sides of the barricade,

there are those who reaffirm the “closed” nature of modern political configurations (states) and those who oppose the necessarily cosmopolitan and “open” nature of the contemporary world. The trigger for this fierce battle is, in our opinion, easy to identify: the “geographical” nature of the human being and the “modern” partition of the world into state units (i.e. territories delimited by borders) has been increasingly overlapped, fomented both by the logic of globalization and by the increase in poverty in specific parts of the world, by a logic of mass movement that has crossed those borders to the point of radically challenging them, to the point of forcing us to ask ourselves whether those same borders are still morally justifiable in an age in which being on one side or the other of a border is tantamount, if not to a struggle between life and death, then at least to extremely uncomfortable living conditions and others that are highly privileged. Even if the gesture of migration is the gesture *par excellence* of our Judeo-Christian tradition, with the first “expulsion” from the Garden of Eden being nothing but an original forced migration (Coccia, 2008), the historicity of today’s migration processes requires to be interpreted with non-abstract categorical lenses.

What is most important to note at this stage is that, in order to explain the complexity of the border, it is necessary to remove it from reflections that degrade it to a simple object, trivializing it and failing to address its real functioning and meaning. In order to do this, it is necessary to equip ourselves with an analysis that differs from those hitherto provided by philosophical reflection on the subject.

The border *dispositif*

The border is not a simple line. If we approach it from the side of the bordering process, we notice that a number of material and immaterial elements converge in its establishment. Barriers, walls, fences, simple lines on the ground (Rosière, Reece, 2012), are accompanied by official documents, political disputes, cartographic transpositions, ceremonies of establishment (Salter, 2004). And when borders are disputed, we see warlike disputes and real legal wars clustered around them, fought not with guns but with the Code of International Law in hand. In short, borders live in a state of uncertainty, they are never defined once and for all: we therefore have, on the one hand, the problem of the origin of the border, the question of its institution which, as we shall see, is certainly not a simple and immediate act; on the other hand, the historical evidence that the border is never established once and for all, but that its existence is always in the process of being negotiated, revised and reaffirmed. In short, the naively understood border is nothing more than a snapshot of a continuous process of bordering; the image of the border as a line is the illegitimate abstraction of this whole complex of elements. The border is always a “making the border”.

With regard to the institution of the border, i.e. how it is “inaugurated”, how it “comes into existence”, it may be useful to consider one of Rousseau’s classic sites and read it differently from what has been done so far. We can draw interesting ideas from it to complicate the phenomenology of the institution of the border. Here is the beginning of the second part of the *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Mankind* (1755): “the first man, who after enclosing a piece of ground, took it into his head to

say, *this is mine*, and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society” (Rousseau, 1755, p. 113). Let us comment on this, but first a *caveat*.

It is not relevant here to evaluate the importance of this passage for a general theory of sovereignty, i.e. to reflect on the relationship between the *nomos* and the material configuration that institutes it. A renowned critical literature has already explored this issue with convincing arguments (Brown, 2010, pp. 43-71). What interests us is to describe the phenomenology of bordering that emerges from this passage by Rousseau.

Rousseau proposes a three-stage ontogenesis of the border, bringing together three different and heterogeneous elements in the institution of the border. Firstly, he describes the pragmatically material dimension of the act of drawing a line. In this material phase, the subject introduces an ontic discontinuity by drawing a line on the ground, but it is not yet enough to declare that line a border. Secondly, Rousseau identifies a phase that we might call linguistic-discursive: the individual declares that the space that comes into existence by virtue of the existence of the border is his property, in other words, that this unprecedented partition of the world corresponds to a political-legal order. Without this declaration, the line drawn in the first phase would be equivalent to a line drawn on the shore. The third and decisive phase is the social phase. Rousseau argues for the need for social recognition of this complex act: someone has to believe that this line really does define spaces of different sovereign competence. The ontogenesis of the border, in short, ends thanks to the miniature society that accepts its existence.

Trying to generalize this articulation of the process of bordering, which we have theorized in more detail elsewhere (Sferrazza

Papa, 2020a), it is possible to find these components in any border, in more or less defined, more or less abstract forms. Empirical borders are not, in short, imaginary lines or merely lines on a map. They are an endless process of spatial and social redefinition that holds together: 1) the material dimension of the border; 2) the discursive order called upon to justify its existence; 3) the documentary corpus that bears witness to it; 4) the material forces deputed to its protection. Any border that has significant political relevance is a combination of these elements. It should not, therefore, be thought of as a simple object, as an autonomous entity, but rather understood in the same way as the *dispositif* (or *apparatus*) of Foucauldian inspiration, i.e. a coherent assembly of heterogeneous elements, both material and immaterial, which also contribute to its production: “a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements” (Foucault, 2001, p. 299).

Borders and walls

Those who insist that contemporary borders are “no longer simply lines on a map” (Rumford, 2006, p. 161) make a significant mistake: borders have *never* been lines on a map. They have always been the precarious result of a balance between different elements, material and immaterial. Complex devices that articulate the world, nodes where the power relations that produce them interlock. Devices that evidently decide the lives of

those who find themselves, by virtue of a pure casualty of birth, in one part of the world and not another. This phenomenon has been significantly called “birthright lottery” (Shachar, 2009). Our insistence on the complex, processual, material and immaterial dimension of borders does not only serve to clear the field of the most naive and trivializing assumptions about their nature. It also serves to emphasize that borders are always a historical, i.e. contingent, product. The assemblages may change, the various components may weigh differently. Obtusely material elements may prevail over social and discursive ones.

In the current global context, in which a feeling of profound insecurity is spreading due to a wild and badly governed globalization, the defense of borders has been an outlet for a frightened citizenry. Today’s borders are guarded, fortified, re-sacred, venerated. There is no need to return at length to the decisive role played by walls in the current political configuration of the world (Sferrazza Papa, 2020b), but it is clear that these forms of verticalization of borders produce highly problematic moral and political effects. While borders have always guaranteed contact, a relationship of reciprocity and recognition between the inside and the outside, their current reification transforms them and connotes them negatively. The interdiction of passage, of which the walls are a symbol, is in fact accompanied by a stance against those who, for the most diverse reasons, would like to cross those borders. And since the borders are only crossed on foot by individuals in serious economic conditions, the walls are, with only an apparent paradox, fully compatible with the current economic and financial globalization.

³ For a recent and controversial defense of the role of borders see Furedi, 2020. A more balanced view is proposed in Nida-Rümelin, 2017.

They work in favor of maintaining the discriminatory structure of our world: they repel the undesirables, the “wasted lives” – as Zygmunt Bauman (2003) would call them – of the global economic order, those who “endanger the happy globalization of capitalism” (Föessel, 2016, p. 27). The emphasis placed on the dimension of control and surveillance, inflated to the point of setting up an ambiguous European agency for border control, Frontex (Campesi, 2015), is very significant of the symbolic function played by borders (and their protection) in safeguarding the state form of which they represent one of the conditions of material and social possibility.

Fortified borders, however, represent an obtuse and parochial way of protecting state territory³. By reactivating the ancient logic of defense through fortification, they discursively presuppose a defenseless Ego to be protected against a violent horde that threatens it relentlessly. The muscular power of the strong/fortress Ego-State reveals itself to be extremely fragile and weak, projecting that same weakness onto its own citizens, so that a fortified democracy must imagine itself to be continually under siege in order to reasonably justify its set-up. The implications of such psychopolitics are dangerous on a moral and political level⁴. On the one hand, it introduces a radical discrimination between inside and outside, us and them, moralizing spatialization itself. In this context, being on the other side of the wall becomes a stigma of inferiority and threat. On the other hand, walls provoke an unsustainable tension between states. This tension feeds the Hobbesian image of an international state of nature from which it is

⁴ Obviously, although we cannot deal with this issue in this essay, the border itself can be analyzed from a psychological point of view with exceptionally fruitful results. See De Luca Picione, 2021.

necessary to protect oneself by means of techniques of political immunization and prophylaxis. From this point of view, walls should be included in the broader conceptual framework of the so-called “immunitarian democracy” (Esposito, 2002; Brossat, 2003). They are the most visible element of such a democracy.

The letter dated 8 October 2021 sent by the Ministers of the Interior of twelve EU Member States to the European Commission asking for funds for the construction of new walls is a proof, certainly only the last of many, of how the logic of the fortress is now openly considered the most reasonable strategy to deal with the migration drama⁵.

The future of borders

The renaissance of walls we have witnessed during the 21st century is a direct consequence of both the misery of international policies in the governance and non-authoritarian management of migration flows, and of the demonization tout court operated by reactionary and extreme right-wing parties and groups (but also sometimes by left-wing groups, partially recovering some Marxist insights) against migrants, for whom all the best racist stereotypes of the past century have been rehabilitated. The migrant as animal, beast, invader, rapist, criminal in himself. It is necessary to deconstruct the relationship, which now appears almost synonymous, between the mobility of migratory masses and violent phenomena. By virtue of associating mobility with violent phenomena, we end up perceiving it as a violent phenomenon in itself. Moving in search of better living conditions thus becomes a dangerous and guilty act.

Those who make this critique, and shape public opinion accordingly, forget that the borders that define us and that define the very nature of migration, i.e. of moving across a border, are not a second nature of the world, but the historical and contingent result of changing power relations. The arbitrariness of coming into the world cannot, as far as is possible, be considered a death sentence. And perhaps, as Reece Jones suggests, “one day denying equal protection based on place of birth may seem as anachronistic and wrong as denying civil rights based on skin color, gender or sexual orientation” (Jones, 2016, p. 171).

In conclusion, it is worth remembering that it is not a question of aestheticizing the figure of the migrant as such. In some radical positions this risk is certainly evident, but the nauseating image of the good migrant is as paternalistic as that of the criminal migrant is offensive. As Alberto Toscano notes in a dense reflection commenting on Mezioud Ouldamer, “the immigrant-as-promise, though not as immediately toxic, is not a more convincing notion than the immigrant-as-threat” (Toscano, 2020, p. 39). In both cases there is a stigma attached (hidden in the former, declared in the latter), and both positions reinforce each other as they mirror each other.

What needs to be taken seriously, as a matter of *Realpolitik* even more than as a moral issue, is the dizzying increase in migration flows that is expected in the years to come. We now know beyond any reasonable doubt that climate change, with all that it entails (melting of glaciers, rise in average temperature, climate disruption, drought), will determine the shape of humanity’s (and not only

⁵ The twelve signatory states are Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, and Slovakia.

humanity's) life in the near future. Political and legal philosophy can no longer avoid confronting this transcendental condition (Mann, Wainwright, 2018). It is necessary to pose, avoiding any form of catastrophism, the radical question of whether the state form, with its claim to be able to guarantee hermetic closure at any time, at least as the ultimate possibility preserved in the sovereign monopoly on borders, is still able to correspond to the problems of humanity to come. Since the future of the world is to overheat, the future of borders, and in particular the borders that mark the Western world, will be to be increasingly crossed. It is time for political and legal culture to start equipping itself with categories and concepts capable of overcoming the modern state system. In a world that on the one hand grows demographically, and on the other shrinks in terms of livability, the condition of the migrant will be the structural condition of a significant part of humanity (Nail, 2015). This means that the migratory phenomenon can no longer be governed in the form of exceptionality and emergency. Migrations are destined to radically transform the face of the world we inhabit, reshuffling peoples, displacing masses. The political and legal forms of our age are not capable of understanding this evidence as a constituent element, and on the contrary they degrade it to an exceptional phenomenon to be dealt with by emergency measures hastily prepared from time to time.

Against this logic of perpetual emergency, it is necessary to invent new conceptualizations that definitively break with the dominance of modern political-legal rationality, and to imagine new forms of global coex-

istence. The current interregnum that we inhabit, the fraternity between the old modern system and supranational political-legal forms that tend to go beyond it, has yet to “decide” which path to take: whether to consider these new entities as mere adjustments to the old state forms, like those who think that the European Union, i.e. “the greatest political event of the post-World War II period” (Ferrajoli, 2020, p. 155), should establish itself once and for all as a state amalgamating the old states, totally ignoring the material ways in which the state structures were formed; or whether to turn decisively towards courageous, and therefore risky, globalist legal-political visions underpinned by a strong sense of global justice (what is lacking in today's globalization, which is brazenly consistent with colonial logics of domination).

The fact that this path has to be “decided” means that it is not a “destiny”: there is no immanent fate in the future of world politics and in the elements that have so far defined it. It is precisely from the most courageous positions in this sense, utopias that are perhaps unrealistic and unattainable, that we can draw suggestions for reflecting on the future of our world, on that common land that we have all found ourselves unwillingly inhabiting. It is time, in short, to seriously take up the political and legal challenge of a new “Constitution of the Earth” (Ferrajoli, 2021)⁶, in the awareness that the most mature level that a global democracy can reach is not the one wanted by all, as in the most daring, hopeful and unrealistic contractualism, but the one that protects everyone and guarantees, at least in theory, the possibility of a decent life for the entire human community.

⁶ On the problematic aspect of the cosmopolitan solution see Zolo, 1995. For a theoretical overview of the issue see Taraborrelli, 2011.

References

- Agnew, J. (1994). The Territorial Trap: The Geographical Assumptions of International Relations Theory. *Review of International Political Economy*, 1 (1), 53-80.
- Bauman, Z. (2003). *Wasted Lives: Modernity and Its Outcasts*. Hoboken: Wiley.
- Brossat, A. (2003). *La démocratie immunitaire*. Paris: La Dispute.
- Brown, W. (2010). *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books.
- Campesti, G. (2015). *Polizia della frontiera. Frontex e la produzione dello spazio europeo*. Roma: DeriveApprodi.
- Coccia, E. (2008). Inobedientia. Il peccato di Adamo e l'antropologia giudaico-cristiana. *Filosofia politica*, 1, 21-36.
- De Luca Picione, R. (2021). Metapsychology of borders: Structures, operations and semiotic dynamics. *European Journal of Psychotherapy & Counselling*, 23(4), 436-467.
- Diener, A.C., Hagen, J. (2012). *Borders. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Esposito, R. (2002). *Immunitas. Protezione e negazione della vita*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Farinelli, F. (2009). *La crisi della ragion cartografica*. Torino: Einaudi.
- Ferrajoli, L. (2020). L'Unione Europea: la sua crisi e il suo futuro. In F. Cerrato, M. Lalatta Corterbosa (Eds.), *L'Europa allo specchio. Identità, cittadinanza, diritti*, Bologna: il Mulino.
- Ferrajoli, L. (2021). *Perché una Costituzione della terra?*. Torino: Giappichelli.
- Ferraris, M. (2013). *Documentality. Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Foessel, M. (2016). *État de vigilance. Critique de la banalité sécuritaire*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.
- Foucault, M. (2001). Le jeu de Michel Foucault. In M. Foucault, *Dits et écrits 1976-1988*, Paris: Gallimard.
- Furedi, F. (2020). *Why Borders Matter. Why Humanity Must Relearn the Art of Drawing Boundaries*. London: Routledge.

- Hohenegger, H. (2014). La terminologia della spazialità in Kant. In *Locus-spatium. XIV Colloquio internazionale del lessico intellettuale europeo*, Firenze: Olschki.
- Jones, R. (2016). *Violent Borders. Refugees and the Right to Move*. London-New York: Verso.
- Mann, G., Wainwright, J. (2018). *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future*. London-New York: Verso.
- Nail, Th. (2015). *The Figure of the Migrant*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Nail, T. (2016). *Theory of the Border*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Newman, D. (2003). On Borders and Power. A Theoretical Framework. *Journal of Borderland Studies*, 18, 13-25.
- Nida-Rümelin, J. (2017). *Über Grenzen denken: Eine Ethik der Migration*. Hamburg: Körber.
- Rosière, S., Recce, J. (2012). Teichopolitics: re-considering globalization through the role of walls and fences. *Geopolitics*, 17 (1), pp. 217-234.
- Rousseau, J.-J. (1755). *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Mankind*. In J.-J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract and The First and Second Discourse*. New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Rumford, C. (2006). Theorizing Borders. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9 (2), 155-169.
- Salter, M.B. (2004). Passports, Mobility and Security. How smart can the border be?, *International Studies Perspectives*, 5, 71-91.
- Salter, M.B. (2012). Theory of the /: The Suture and Critical Border Studies, *Geopolitics*, 17 (4), 734-755.
- Schmitt, C. (1950). *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum*. New York: Telos, 2006.
- Sferrazza Papa, E.C. (2019). *Modernità infinita. Saggio sul rapporto tra spazio e potere*. Milano-Udine: Mimesis.
- Sferrazza Papa, E.C. (2020a). Filosofia e *Border Studies*. Dal confine come “oggetto” al confine come “dispositivo”. *Rivista di Estetica*, 75 (3), 184-197.
- Sferrazza Papa, E.C. (2020b). *Le pietre e il potere. Una critica filosofica dei muri*. Milano-Udine: Mimesis.

- Shachar, A. (2009). *The Birthright Lottery. Citizenship and Global Inequality*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Smith, B. (2001). Fiat objects. *Topoi*, 20 (2), 131-148.
- Taraborrelli, A. (2011). *Il cosmopolitismo contemporaneo*. Roma-Bari: Laterza.
- Toscano, A. (2020). I nomi dell'Altro. Per una storia algerina della filosofia francese. In A. Cavalletti, G. Solla (Eds.), *L'avanguardia dei nostri popoli. Per una filosofia della migrazione*, Napoli: Cronopio.
- Van Gennep, A. (1909). *The Rites of Passage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
- Van Houtum, H., Kramsch, O., Zierhofer, W. (Eds.). (2005). *B/ordering Space*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Vaughan-Williams, N. (2009). *Border Politics. The Limits of Sovereign Power*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Williams, J. (2006). *The Ethics of Territorial Borders: Drawing Lines in the Shifting Sand*. New York: Palgrave.
- Zanini, P. (1997). *Significati del confine. I limiti naturali, storici, mentali*. Milano: Mondadori.
- Zolo, D. (1995). *Cosmopolis: la prospettiva della guerra mondiale*. Milano: Feltrinelli.