

Human/Non-human hybrids at the border: The racializing assemblage

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Networks, imbrolios and hybrids are part of what geographers have defined as “the border assemblage”. In this conglomerate where human and non-human actants conflate, the contestation over the right to move across borders goes hand in hand with certain processes of subjectification. The lecture will analyze such processes in the case of the EU-Moroccan border assemblage around the fenced Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. Here the high-tech barrier devices coexist with the self-fabricated prosthetic artefacts crafted by people on the move in order to climb the fence, as well as with the human-non-human symbiotic formations that emerge when migrants attempt to cross the land border camouflaged in the interior of cars, boats or suitcases. We will discuss the political and cultural implications brought about by such material formations, as well as the human and non-human hybridizations that emerge as part of the border assemblage. In these scenarios, not only “border struggles” unfold, but it is the very definition of the human underlying them what is at stake, with the latter becoming the product of what can be considered as a “racializing assemblage”.