

Networks, Territories, and Boundaries : The Politics of (Im)mobility and (In)visibility

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Abstract

Around the turn of the century, it was often supposed that market liberal capitalism and digital technology would usher in a new historical era of all-round mobility and connectivity. In this new era, it was claimed, nationalism would be to be consigned to the dustbin of history . Three decades later, we see new regimes of border surveillance and mobility control as increasingly dominant features of both the physical and virtual geographies in which we exist. The reconstitution of Europe's own borders, in response to the perceived threat posed by refugees from the wars in the Middle East, puts a quite new perspective on the events of 1989, when the removal of the 'Iron Curtain' rewrote the geography of Europe. In this context I will offer a non-media-centric analysis of the differential politics of mobility and connectivity, both within Europe and at its borders, from my position as a member of a post-Brexit nation. In this context I shall also address the rise of nationalist populisms among the relatively immobile, long-term unemployed, denizens of the depressed, post-industrial regions of Europe.