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BORDERS OF SOCIAL WORK

Detention centre in the light of citizenship, criminalisation and state power

The article is a reflexion on a visit in a detention centre and on the EU policies of migration. It discusses the idea of establishing border from four different starting points: space, gender, social work and citizenship. It shows how borders extend beyond territorial ones and are internalised by state's organisation. Foucault's concepts of biopower and criminalisation are presented as a generator of the unmaking of citizenship. Authors point out how genderization of the Other moulds the differences in the perception of migrant bodies. Compatibility of social work practice and a detention centre is discussed. The concept of citizenship as resistance is suggested and a need for redefinition of citizenship is proposed.

Key words: human rights, exclusion, migration, control, triple mandate, transmigrant.

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MEJE SOCIALNEGA DELA: CENTER ZA TUJCE V LUČI DRŽAVLJANSTVA, KRIMINALIZACIJE IN MOČI DRŽAVE

Članek je refleksija o obisku centra za tujce Veliki otok pri Postojni in o politiki EU do migracij. Avtorji razpravljajo o ideji razmejevanja iz štirih zornih kotov: prostora, spola, socialnega dela in državljanstva. Pokažejo, da meje presegajo ozemeljske meje in da so zaradi organizacije države ponotranjene. Foucaultov koncept biooblasti in kriminalizacije predstavijo kot gonilno silo pri odvzemanju državljanstva. Pokažejo, kako genderizacija drugega vpliva na doživljanje teles migrantov. Razpravljajo o združljivosti med prakso socialnega dela in centrom za tujce, na koncu pa razmišljajo o državljanstvu kot uporu. Poudarijo, da bi bilo treba definicijo državljanstva spremeniti.

Ključne besede: človekove pravice, izključevanje, migracije, nadzor, trojni mandat, transmigrant.

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Introduction

From the outside, the detention centre in Veliki otok near Postojna, Slovenia, looks insular.¹ The first things we saw were a fence and surveillance cameras. After entering the building, the police-chief welcomed us. After he had explained some facts and before we got a guided tour through the detention centre, he expressed his gladness, as this would be the chance for

¹ The article was written as a part of the process of visiting a detention centre and discussing policies of migration during the course of Independent advocacy in practice. The course was run by Jelka Zorn and Ana Marija Sobočan at the Faculty of social work, University of Ljubljana, in the second semester of 2013/2014.

him to clarify some things and we would get the possibility to see and hear the 'truth' about the detention centre. The 'truth' was that the image of the centre is bad, but this negative view would miss the actual situation. During the guided tour through this labyrinth of corridors, he stressed out that this would not be a prison and that most detained people would like to 'return' voluntarily anyway and the detention centre would be a part of the providing structure to afford their return².

During the visit we were also accompanied by one of the social workers employed by the detention centre. The first thing that caught our eye was her appearance – she was wearing a light-blue, nurse-like uniform. During the tour we heard the police-chief in a hushed tone telling her: 'You can say, what you wish...', but soon it became obvious she knew about which things she is and is not allowed to talk about, choosing her words carefully. From the way she spoke – using words like 'we here', 'us' when talking about the employees – it became obvious she was identifying with the detention centre. This raised a question for us: how can the work done by social workers still be called social work, if they themselves represent an extension of the controlling state?

We did not have the chance to talk to any detainees. But the grilled windows, the fence, the camera surveillance within the building and the police-officers carrying guns reminded us, somehow, that we nevertheless saw a prison from the inside.

The article discusses the idea of establishing border as a process, conceptualizing border as more than strict division between nation-states (or other political organizations) but rather as a complex set of mechanisms bordering and constructing our realities. Each part of the article tries to revise the concept of bordering as a process from different starting points: space, gender, social work and citizenship. The first part of the article will try to show how borders are not merely of territorial nature, but go beyond that, how they are internalized by state's organization and also influence the organization of the welfare state. Also, we will briefly try to show how these processes create new migrant subjectivities.

The second part tries to revisit Foucault's concept of biopower through processes of criminalization of bare existence of human beings and tries to point out how bordering continues internally (within nation states), within the public space and functions as a generator of the unmaking of citizenship. Thus, we demonstrate how Foucault's concept, in the context of citizenship, needs to be redefined.

Analysing the concept of border through genderization of the Other, we will try to point out how the construction of gender moulds the differences in the perception of migrant bodies (inside the detention centre and the society as a whole) and discuss how genderization continues and perpetuates the process of bordering.

Towards the end of the article we focus on the borders of social work and discuss how social work can(not) be done within institutions such as a detention centre. We try to demonstrate how bordering is a process that moulds (and limits) the profession of social work and why the abolition of the border regime should be a goal of social work as a profession. We will, additionally, finish the article by discussing the concept of citizenship as resistance and think about ways of redefinition of citizenship and doing politics.

² This statement needs to be contextualized in the 'European Return Fund' programme of the European Union until 2013 (*Official Journal of the European Union* 2007). Additionally, it needs to be mentioned that one argument for this fund is, that it is cheaper and more humane compared to deportation. The economic paradigm of migration-policy of the EU is obvious here.

Borders as space

This part of the article should clarify and analyse the introduced thoughts about the relation of borders as material and discursive structures. Borders are neither natural nor a strict line between two states (Balibar 2004). We find borders as discursive power within oneself, within societies, within nations and between them. We will concentrate here on the geopolitical dimension of borders and focus on the relation between EU borders and migration. This relation is not just one-dimensional (migrations depends on borders), but dialectical. It needs to be emphasized, that migration questions borders constantly and that politics³ reacts. This reaction in the EU politics is currently based on the idea of 'protection' and 'control'⁴: protection of welfare, protection from terrorism and organized crime or simply protection from the 'other' and, in addition, of controlling population, demographic changes and the flow of human beings (*op. cit.*). It is therewith an extrapolation of post-colonial circumstances, too (Hess 2012: 10).

However, the controlling aspect implies the semi-permeable effect of current border policy. The aim is not to stop every single border-crossing, but it is a selecting approach. In current border policy, migrants are distinguished as 'desirable' or 'undesirable' ones. This differentiation takes place under the hegemonic economic paradigm of migration. By this official perspective migration should lead to a balance of economic and demographic aspects within the EU and is, thus, part of ensuring national prosperity (Castro Varela, Mecheril 2011).

As we mentioned above, borders around the European Union are constructed as spaces and as discourses that concern literally everyone – inside and outside the EU. Borders within the European Union and on the edges have changed their meaning for the nation-state drastically:

The state is no longer the proverbial Westphalian nation-state in which sovereignty and territoriality are exclusively combined (Overbeek 2002: 7).

While borders within the EU have become highly permeable and for most citizens of the European Union nearly non-existing, borders on the edges are affected by the control of human flows and, furthermore, they expand to other countries outside the EU.

Protection strategies and migration policy of the EU focused, especially at the beginning of the 21st century, on south-eastern Europe. For instance, Turkey was demanded to generate an asylum law and a civilian frontier defence; or Greece and Serbia were claimed to construct 'reception camps' and detention centres (Hess 2012: 14). This adjustment of border policy and the growing of new local and international (non- or semi-governmental) institutions in this area produced a new actor: the transmigrant. He/she is characterized by a mobile existence and flexibility (*ibid.*). The transmigrant is the figuration of the 'transit migration dispositif', which is 'something new – a dispositif formed around time, space, economy and culture of transit' (Walters 2009: 136).

The aspect of the 'transmigrant' produced, moreover, the classification of 'transit states'. This classification closes the gap between 'countries of arrival' and 'countries of origin' and, hence, all countries are potentially part of the European border policy (Hess 2012: 14). The premise of this is the perspective of borders as large areas and not as lines on the map. The controlling policy of the EU

focused not any longer to the concrete crossing of a borderline, but takes explicit focus on the transnational routes and the mobility of migration (*ibid.*).

While we analysed above the aspect of the extension to the outside, borders are also extending to the inside. The detention centre in Veliki otok near Postojna is one part of this border extension within the country. Detention centres in general, the 'Schengen Information System

³ 'Politics' as the general term of 'doing politics'. As a differentiation, 'policy' is used here with a connotation to its substance meaning.

⁴ The discursive aspect of protection and controlling concerns mainly human beings. Border politics concerning goods, commodities and information work differently in times of globalization and neo-liberalism.

(II)⁵, as well as airports, and their 'transit-zones', (border-)police or customs or welfare social agencies are all part of the internal border control. We need to consider both internal and external border spaces as two parts of the same. As the European Commission describes it:

Internal security [...] is therefore important to ensure coherence and complementarity between the internal and external aspects of EU security (European Commission 2010 a).

Therefore, it is important to have in mind, that borders are not somewhere far away, but that they are part of our daily life, too.

We can notice them not only when talking about the internal border control, but also when talking about accessibility of social services or social rights in general. The access to most of health services and social welfare agencies is conditioned with citizenship (or another form of a status in a county), thus (re)creating inner borders between those who deserve it and those who do not. Social work as a profession should not allow itself to reproduce internalization of borders and it should critically assess its own role in the process of internalizing borders. If social workers are to work in accordance with the ethics of their profession, rethinking and redefining the structures of social agencies are necessary (Humphries 2004).

Criminalization of the Other

In this next part of the article we try to revise the concept of biopower, point out some of the paradoxes and put it into the context of citizenship. We will discuss biopower through concepts of border as a process, criminalization and citizenship as resistance. Foucault (2003: 239–265) defines biopower as a set of regulatory mechanisms focused on the population ('man as species') and the prolongation of its life, elimination of accidents and diseases (or at least reducing their costs and consequences); it is, in short, the power to make life. Its focus is the well-being of the population, rendering it available to extract labour, disciplinary force for as long as possible. Biopower must not let die. Foucault differentiates it from the sovereign, disciplinary power that centralized on the individual body, the power as force; where the sovereign had complete power to take life.

Establishing border as a process

As mentioned above, border should not be equated with something static, an entry point – rather it should be thought as a process. As Aas (2005, in Rygiel 2010: 53) explains it:

The border is a much thicker, more complicated site of practices; it is not 'primarily a place, but a process'.

We understand the mechanisms of control and subjugation to the borderlines to be multiple and embedded in our bodies, social tissue and the spaces we navigate through. Governance of territory is no longer one of exercising sovereign's force over the population; rather it is a deterritorializing biopower affecting our bodies through multiple power relations. Restriction of movement, detention and patrolling borderlines are just the most visible aspects of structural violence sustaining the existing border regime. However, there is a set of less visible violent forces constructing everyday reality; border as a process functions through constituting the Other, but also through bordering the public space, enclosing it from transgressive bodies.

⁵ The 'Schengen Information System' is an intergovernmental database in the EU. 'It is used by border guards as well as by police, customs, visa and judicial authorities throughout the Schengen Area. It holds information on persons who may have been involved in a serious crime or may not have the right to enter or stay in the EU' (European Commission 2010 b). 'Schengen Information System II' is an extension and has enhanced functions, for instance it uses biometrical data.

Citizenship has historically been constructed and constituted on the basis of exclusion of the Other (the constitutive Other was changing through time, assuming different identities: women, slaves, homeless, vagabonds, barbarians, *sans papiers* etc.) (Beznec 2009), denying the Other the right to political participation. Today, while the situation is similar, we are also witnessing the process of the unmaking of citizenship: excluding those formerly included, creating more and more of those 'who have no part' (Rygiel 2010). What Sommers names 'the statelessness of citizens' (in Pajnik 2009: 142) is in reality systematically denying an ever greater majority the rights to exist in public space; it is an extension of border process:

Following Margaret Sommers the contemporary statelessness should be revised through exclusion from public sphere, the absence of certain parts of the population, like the jobless and poor, in the public space. Belonging to a nation-based community doesn't condition stateness.

Pajnik questions whether citizenship is really a means of obtaining other rights. She argues (and we agree with her) that this is not the case.

Here we have in mind Foucault's idea of biopower and the first paradox we encounter. We summarised biopower earlier as a set of practices, intended to prolong the life of a population and its well-being; but when thinking of the process of the unmaking of citizenship, we cannot ignore how this is in contradiction to the idea of biopower. Austerity measures exercised now are forcing states to undergo the privatization of public services – these being the institutions of the state where biopower was typically exercised – thus systematically disallowing a growing number of citizens access to these services.

In Greece, public hospitals are being privatized (reducing numbers of beds, staff, wards, even medical supplies). In Spain, the changes in legislation concerning health care, define long-term illness as an 'expense', therefore forcing afflicted individuals to pay for the treatments, regardless of their economic situation. On the other hand, all attempts to self-organization of autonomous services, needed for population's well-being (e.g. alternative clinics, social centres), are facing repression and dismantlement by the state. In the latter case, social centres of Athens faced systematic evictions in the last few years, autonomous spaces of Ljubljana are constantly harassed and fined by the police and just recently the oldest social centre in Barcelona (Can Vies) has been demolished, although it provided services for the needs of the whole neighbourhood.

Here it is evident that biopower as a practice is transformed by the interests of capital accumulation (in the case of privatization) and state's fear of the multitude (in the case of repression of autonomous organization). Rather than functioning as a service for the citizens, the state is a transmitter, providing capital the infrastructure and organization for easier accumulation – so it is relevant to start questioning the legitimacy of the state.

Foucault does offer a useful reflection on regulating anomalies, deviations of the population from the norm (he mentions criminality and madness), which allow biopower to exert violence over the parts of social tissue in order to ensure the well-being and prosperity of the rest of the population. In these cases biopower functions as a justification of the right to take life, to kill. He defines killing as

[...] not simply murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection and so on. (Foucault 2003: 256.)

Although useful to some extent, it does not resolve the paradox of disallowing access to services that provide well-being. Especially since an ever greater majority of the population is falling into anomalies⁶ over which violence can be exercised (we could say that anomalies are becoming the prevailing state): as more and more living world becomes criminalized, the

⁶ The process goes two ways: firstly, the concept of *anomalies* broadens so as to include more and more different categories of the population (variety of living worlds), and secondly, the number of people fitting into specific anomaly is growing (social issues are accompanied by strategies of survival defined as criminal).

number of those who can be let die is outgrowing the number of those lives worth preserving. We believe evictions, poverty, precarity, growing unemployment, working without exercising workers rights, lack of housing, isolation are all manners of 'indirect murder', affecting and criminalizing the majority.

Unmaking of citizenship is done through the process of criminalization – pushing human bodies into a permanent state of transgression, under constant threat of being penalized, detained, left to die. The state creates situations in which segments of population are forced to use illegal strategies of survival ('grey economy', sex work, stealing, squatting, crossing borders illegally) in their everyday life, individualizing the blame and criminalizing them. Through process of criminalization of existence, public space is becoming cleansed of all bodies not creating profit or of those whose living worlds transgress invisible borders (the homeless, prostitutes, junkies, migrants, the poor and the resisting).

The streets of European cities are facing heavy surveillance, police presence, enclosure and changes in legislation, disallowing the presence of bodies in public space. In Hungary, sleeping in the streets is criminalized; in Spain, dumpster-diving and street vending (a source of income for a great number of migrants) are criminalized; in the UK, constructions on the floor (spikes) are being built to prevent homeless from sleeping there; in Slovenia, begging is criminalized. Just like territorial borders are employed to regulate movement of bodies according to the needs of capitalist system (cheap labour force, surveillance of labour force etc.), in the same way these deterritorialized borders function to extract profit from public space and control the access to it. Public space is becoming bordered, the entering of those 'who have no part' in the public space (what Rancière defines as doing politics) is increasingly important to challenge the power structures emerging from the territory⁷, where mere existence in the space becomes a form of political articulation, challenging criminalization and systemic violence. We agree with Zdravković (2013: 65) who explains the intentions of criminalization:

[...] its sole intention is to camouflage the state's, objective, economic violence that is sustaining the 'natural' state of things as a state of inequality.

Individual bodies are being sanctioned for demonstrating (and challenging) the effects of systemic violence. We believe that social tissue is reconfiguring in a way (through criminalization, anomalies and resistances) that biopower as a practice is disintegrating. The state's response to this is the strengthening of a violent, sovereign-like power, manifested in the right to take life. Disallowing access to public services, criminalization of living worlds and the unmaking of citizenship create tears in the existing order as more and more resistances are erupting in countries with biggest scarcity (Turkey, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Slovenia, Spain). Economic scarcity is followed by politicization of needs (a resurfacing of the personal is political) which build a perspective of self-reproduction, constructing the basis of counter-power. Social centres, squats, alternative economies, social clinics are all forms of radicalizing everyday life – when even self-reproduction becomes a tool of resistance. Also these places/projects offer time-space where the Other(s) can come together and politicize their experience of otherness. We believe that these processes show how capital accumulation modified biopower⁸ to the extent that it no longer controls the population in order to ensure its well-being but also, how it is politicizing and radicalizing everyday life of those 'who have no part'. Although these tears are being brutally repressed (through direct violence or administrative procedures) and repression is spilled in everyday life, they function as a perspective of destituting power, calling for the redefinition of citizenship.

⁷ See the concept of city as a battleground (*Metropolis*), where Agamben (2005), through Foucault, reflects on the territory as a battleground, where different forces collide and create dynamics in the space.

⁸ This process might be accompanied by processes of re-traditionalization of the society – some states (Spain, Lithuania) are launching an attack on woman's reproductive rights – where biopower is penetrated by sovereign's power to take life (the state having monopoly here).

Gendered Other

In the following part we will try to shortly elaborate on how the body of the Other is gendered and how social construction of genders influences the way the Other is (not) seen as a (potential) political subject.

The EU migration policies⁹ create a discourse describing and producing not only the political Other (the non-citizen), but also the symbolical, dangerous Other – the Other who should be feared (as a threat), detained (to contain this threat) and removed (to prevent any harm). These processes are done through different policies and practices from border control (e.g. averting persons with ineligible papers), assignment of work permits (e.g. enforcing policies and strict regulations to limit the access to permits, forcing migrants to work either as seasonal or temporal workers administratively completely subjugated to the employer, etc.), gentrification processes in cities (pushing the poor and unwanted to the outskirts, making room for the ‘wanted’ – the rich), deportation policies and other. Media portrayal often describes the Other as dangerous, if not for anything else, for the ability to stain the space and people (Kuzmanić 1999). But this danger applies to persons, who are socially perceived as male. Masculinity is socially constructed and portrayed as progressive, forward-thrusting, even revolutionary, whereas

[w]omen are represented as atavistic and authentic body [...] (inert, backward-looking and natural) (McClintock et al. 1997: 92).

We believe that even though the Other male does not (yet) have the access to (political) power, he is believed to carry the potential to become a political subject. The female, on the other hand, is not perceived as a political subject and is thus far less threatening. This might derive from historical development of European nation-states, starting with Code Napoleon as

[...] the first modern statute to decree that the wife's nationality should follow her husband's [...] (*op. cit.*: 89).

Female bodies became a political subject only through the political agency of their husbands.

After visiting detention centre in Veliki Otok, Postojna (which, ironically, is called Centre *for* Foreigners), it became apparent how many borders it has and how the otherness is constructed, how the situation inside reflects the way our society works.

As mentioned, the police was ‘kind enough’ to give us a guided tour through the maze of the centre. Our small group of eight was accompanied by two policemen carrying weapons, which were always near us, firstly allowing us to move in a more relaxed group as we were moving through spaces at the time not occupied by the detainees. But as we came closer to the ‘living’ areas they started herding us into an ever tighter group. In the area where persons socially perceived as women and children are staying we were still allowed to move in somewhat free manner, but before we were to enter the male side of the building, we were told to stay together and not to move away from the group. The explanation went somewhere along the lines of (and without much paraphrasing):

These men can be very dangerous, you really need to be careful, one can never know what kind of thoughts they have in their minds and what they might do to you.

Here we can see how persons socially perceived as male are seen as a much more serious threat, or as Fanon puts it (in McClintock, 1997: 94)

There can be no further doubt that the real Other for the white man is and will continue to be the black man.

Even though Fanon is talking about colonial histories, we believe his claim can still be applied here. The bodies constructed as the Others go through the process of otherization and

⁹ We focus here on the EU only to describe the regional situation, which in any case does not mean this discourse occurs only in EU or only in Europe for that manner.

ethnicization. The bodies in the detention centre are ethnicized and gendered – the female does not inhere enough agency to propose menace both to the visitor as well as to the system. Whereas on the other hand the male is the one carrying the potential for having agency and the power. A similar construction of the genders can be seen in the portrayal of the danger of immigrant ‘overflow’ done by FRONTEX¹⁰, which in its promotion videos mainly shows racialized male bodies crossing borders (and the white man courageously defending the borders), always emphasizing the illegality of the process and picturing it as a new phenomena, following the general discourse of increased immigration to Europe, whereas the narrative of long distance and even massive migrations can be found already in ancient Egyptian papyrus (Papastergiadis 2000) and is certainly not a new phenomenon. This kind of discourse – with the constant threat of the Other – is used to create a ‘unity’ among the ‘Europeans’ and to justify the immense expenses used in migration control.

On the other hand, female migration is rarely mentioned, even in public discourse. This reproduces the invisibility of many migrant workers, who work in the domestic sphere and often have no access to any kind of rights and are at the same time abused under cover of privacy of domesticity. Fabjančič (2006) shows how female domestic workers are often illegalised twice, firstly as illegal immigrants and secondly as illegal workers. She is talking about Germany, but this is a common phenomenon in many countries.

We believe detention centres are a good point to observe not only how the discourse of migration defines lives of migrants, but also how structures of state control, patriarchy and nationalism work.

Borders of social work

The aim of this part of the article is examination of the situation of social work inside the detention centre. We will try to connect the theory of the triple mandate – which was introduced by Silvia Staub-Bernasconi (2007) – with the practice of social workers in the detention centre. Our idea is to revise the relevance of the concept within the setting of the detention centre and analyse it critically. We will also try to reflect on the borders of social work and set an emancipatory perspective of the practice of social work in the field of citizenship.

The social workers move between the axis of ‘assistance’ and ‘control’. Social workers try to offer support and have to accept the state controlled environment at the same time. On one side social workers should empower the persons to find possible strategies for their self-organization (help for self-help). But then again they implement sanctions of social control, exclusion and disciplining. On the one hand they should convey ethic values like solidarity or empathy. On the other hand they accept the separation of socially integrated from socially non-integrated persons (e.g. citizens and non-citizens, employed and reluctant to work/unemployed, legal and illegal migrants, etc.) (see Dimmel 2006).

Silvia Staub-Bernasconi (2007) developed a third mandate – the commitment to the profession of social work. And this mandate can assist professionals of social work to handle the difference between ‘assistance’ and ‘auxiliary guidance’ reflective (see Hafen 2008: 456). This liability includes a reference to scientific methods and adherence to the code of ethics of the social work professionals¹¹.

To achieve these objectives, the social work profession has the possibility, indeed the duty to invoke to the code of ethics of social work professionals. In many countries human rights are ratified and as a consequence incorporated into the constitution. Thus, human rights stand above all other laws and social workers are morally obliged – and due to the professional code

¹⁰ FRONTEX – European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (see more at <http://frontex.europa.eu>).

¹¹ Code of Ethics of Social Work: <http://ifsw.org/policies/statement-of-ethical-principles>.

of ethics – to defend human rights before the constitutional court and beyond. Gore (1968: 67) describes thus the human rights dictate as one of the possible targets for social work in the long run. These fundamentals may irritate those social workers who admit their satisfaction with the prevailing values and norms in society.

The human rights can be seen as a tool to encourage professionals to clearly take position on relevant social issues (*ibid.*). Often social work professionals are aware of these ethical principles but the power and force of the institutions (like detention centres), politics or state is too overwhelming for a single person. For that reason contact points (like offices for ombudsman) were established to which they can refer in cases of social or human rights violations. These are also educational institutions, professional associations, international organizations or NGOs, which help social workers to enforce their professional attitude (Hafen 2008: 457). Although we highlight the importance of the concept of human rights (and their respect), we believe relying simply on this rhetoric can also be part of the problem. Human rights might be used as an excuse to divert from the criticism of the whole system of detention and social workers should remain aware of this paradox in order to avoid settling for small improvements.

Flynn (2013) describes this paradox as follows: experience of recent years has shown that reports about detention practices, done by highly respected human rights activists, can lead to another global phenomenon in dealing with detention. Rather than demanding the abolition of detention methods, sovereign states throughout the world adapt and modify its methods of detention to better meet the demands of the advocates. For example, there is a worldwide trend of separation between detention centres and conventional incarceration, even though the operation of these ‘protective’ measures¹² is fundamentally not different in a prison. Furthermore, many nations try to hide deportation facilities behind trivializing names like ‘guesthouses’ in Turkey, ‘centres for foreigners’ in Slovenia or ‘welcome centre’ in Italy. Modern deportation centres, that present themselves outwardly as humane and non-penal, are arising¹³. (Flynn 2013: 3 ff.)

Even the police-chief told us during the visit of the detention centre: ‘The human rights are very important and always in our minds.’ Endeavour to respect human rights does not mean abolition of detention of (non)citizens as such and thereby deprivation of freedom – as one of the fundamental human rights – will not stop.

We try to connect this with social work methods of social workers inside the detention centre. A social worker told us about individual care plans for every person. An individual care plan is part of the method of case management. The important point is to develop a person-centred plan based on the client’s goals, strengths and needs (NADA 2013). But how can somebody develop their own goals when the fundamental right for freedom is not guaranteed? To establish an individual care plan, it is necessary to have the possibility to ensure (together with the clients) the best options of services or assistance for the clients. In these circumstances of detention centres social workers are only authorized to fulfil basic existential needs and emotional support for the detainees which are monitored by the police. This points out the main border of social work, when authoritative, oppressive environment in the context of detention conditions the practice of social work and renders it impossible. Social workers decide, following the dictate of human rights to guarantee the criminalized individuals the most comfort in a repressive situation and obviously fail to see their work as a problem.

Even if we make sure that the living conditions inside the detention centres will be improved and will become more ‘human friendly’, nothing changes the fact that this form of criminalization of non-citizens persists and the people’s right to freedom is denied.

¹² In comparison with incarceration (real prison) detention procedure is supposed to be only an administration act. It is not a punishment because of a criminal act but rather a protective measure to fulfil this administration act faster and more efficiently.

¹³ It’s the same with other institutions as well: big asylums that detain people with mental illness/disability are now called ‘homes’ and the wards are named after animals, flowers etc.

Instead of spurring states to create special institutions [like detention centres] – or standard operating procedures – for keeping migrants in their custody, advocates should work to ensure that any limitation on freedom remains the exception to the rule. (Flynn 2013: 11.)

Calling for the abolition of detention and remaining critical towards ‘improvement of conditions’ should be the goal of social work as a profession. Developing our thoughts further, we find useful what Zdravković (2013) explains, following Šumić Riha, as the difference between the demand for having and the demand for being. The first concept accepts the existing authority and hierarchies and demands from them within the frame of what is possible. This is manifested, in case of detention, in constant aspiration for the improvement of conditions, endeavouring human rights and making the repressive power less visible. It is a way for the state to give up some of its control and violence, embedded in the structures in order to maintain its power over the criminalized bodies. Demand for having is therefore a way of easing social conflict and social workers should remain aware to not fall in that trap. On the contrary the concept of the demand for being allows us to think outside of what is possible in this very moment because it does not rely on authority, it does not demand a better, friendlier authority, but rather ‘the space where we can exist’ (2013: 69) and find new, non-hierarchical ways of being together. The demand for being is therefore

[...] really emancipatory, revolutionary. It is a demand for fundamental equality that the state cannot fulfil, since the demand implicitly assumes the abolition of the state or any other hierarchically superior, authoritative Other and therefore creates a situation in which everyone takes the responsibility for the price of freedom. (2013: 70.)

The demand for being can therefore be translated into the abolition of borders, the abolition of military, police, surveillance and detention centres.

Considering the above arguments it may be concluded that the triple mandate is impossible to fulfil. It is because the fundamental right to freedom is not resolved neither in theory nor practice. Individual goals such as self-chosen place of residence, work ability or individual leisure activities limit the possibilities of assistance to the minimum. This fact also includes that the professional ethical access of social work is virtually impossible. Furthermore, social workers fail to recognize the usefulness of their knowledge of the authoritative environment to provide analysis of how other, less visible structures of state power condition and border the practice of social work in other settings. We see the role of social work in facilitating emancipation, empowerment of people, not in replicating state’s oppression.

Developing this notion, we underline the importance of the concept of citizenship. We agree with Foucault’s consideration on state power and its influence on citizenship – as he remarks that citizenship immanently means the subjugation to power structure (in Rygiel 2010). Obtaining citizenship does not mean escaping oppression or escaping the effects of borders, since it represents a

[...] tacit but increasing inscription of individual’s lives in the state order, thus offering a new and more dreadful foundation for the very sovereign power from which they wanted to liberate themselves. (Agamben 1995 in Rygiel 2010: 99.)

Furthermore, as Arendt (1968 in Rygiel 2010) explains – citizenship is defined through the right to exist as a political subject; therefore it is this performative aspect of citizenship that should be the starting point for its redefinition – especially since historically the right to exist as a political subject has been constructed on the basis of exclusion. Citizenship should not be seen as an end goal but rather as a tool of transformation of the society. Citizenship as resistance means analysing the mechanisms of governance and oppression exercised by the state (on everyone), finding commonalities and using the knowledge to dismantle the existing violent concepts of state and borders. It is analysing what it means (or what it could mean), today, to be one ‘who has part’. The commonalities between citizens and non-citizens lie

in the terrain of struggle for a redefinition of citizenship, whereas the role of social workers should lie in strengthening this struggles and articulations.

Conclusion

Borders are not static points or strict lines between national countries or other political organizations. They are constructed as material and discursive power that spreads well into the territory and is internalized by the state's organization. Through this process a new subjectivity of transmigrant is created, closing the gap between 'states of arrival' and 'states of origin' thus subjecting the entire territory to the effects of border policies. Detention centre in Veliki Otok, that we visited, is one example of this internal extension of the border-as-process. But it is also demonstrated in the way of how social welfare agencies are constituted, creating hierarchies between those who deserve to have access and those who do not. We are critical to this notion of social work as it reproduces state's authority and disciplining of the population.

Another extension of the border-as-process is the criminalization of bare existence, the unmaking of citizenship (excluding those formerly included), whenever groups of the population are denied the access to healthcare, social services, education and even the access to public space, to the right of political expression. On the other hand any kind of autonomous organizing of this structures is met with state's repression. We juxtapose this developments with Foucault's idea of biopower to demonstrate that the concept might be disintegrating because of the needs for capital accumulation and its counterpoint – the emerging resistances.

A brief encounter with the structure of detention pointed out the ideology of human rights dictate with police officers, who constantly highlighted the importance of endeavouring human rights and the praise of the improvement of the conditions of detention. We remain critical to this notion and point out how it diverts the attention from focusing on the real problem – the claim to abolish detention centres as inhuman results of border-crossing. Through setting this claim at the beginning of our analyses we recognized the limitations detention imposes on the profession of social work, reducing its practice to catering to the basic needs of detainees. Starting from the concept of triple-mandate (introduced by Silvia Staub-Bernasconi), we analysed and deconstructed the concept to show that social work cannot be done in the context of detention. And, furthermore, how analysing this context can serve to unveil the borders of social work in others, less visibly authoritative environments.

As mentioned above, the brief encounter with the structure of detention exposed us to some of the mechanisms that structure the society. The difference in treating detainees socially perceived as male and those perceived as female (the first are considered as dangerous whilst the second ones are not considered as a threat) is a reflection of the patriarchal power relationships ruling the society in general – showing how sexism and racism are particularly intertwined concerning migration. We demonstrate the link between the construction of gender and political agency as potent factors in determining the treatment of detainees.

We try to conclude the article on a more positive note, demonstrating the need of social work to claim for the abolition of detention. We do this by introducing the difference between the demand for having (e.g. demanding a better, friendlier authority, improving conditions of detention and endeavouring human rights) and the demand for being (abolition of detention, borders, surveillance) as key concepts in this distinction. We invite social workers to reflect on these two positions and start to question their role in redefining citizenship as resistance.

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