

Visualizing Migration in Times of Crises: Governing Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian Border Movement - Perspectives from Poland

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Abstract

This study delves into the visual narratives surrounding border movement during times of crisis, particularly focusing on the Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian borders. By examining the perspectives from Poland, this analysis unveils the intricate ways in which these border crises are depicted and governed. Four key dimensions of differentiation in the visual narration of the two crises are explored: the role and type of uniformed services, the material objects featured, the depiction of the people on the move, and the ambience and symbolism conveyed in the visuals. The study offers an analytical discussion of the findings formulating three directions for further investigation of the differences in the two border crises' depictions: the construction of a patriarchal myth of a deserving refugee, the performance of a border spectacle, and the role of racialization in shaping governmental narratives. It highlights how the responses to both crises align with broader EU de facto immigration policies.

Key words: Visualising migration, migration governance, Poland, EU, Belarus, Ukraine

Introduction

Biography

Karolina Nikielska-Sekuła is Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center of Migration Research, University of Warsaw and Assistant Professor at the Institute of Intercultural Studies, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland. Her current scholarly research focuses on migration studies (Central and Western Europe, and Turkey), visual and sensory sociology, and heritage studies. Nikielska-Sekuła received an MA degree in Sociology from AGH University of Science and Technology in Krakow, and her PhD in interdisciplinary Culture Studies from the University of South-Eastern Norway. Her previous posts include Associate Professor in Human Geography at the University of South-Eastern Norway, and Marie Curie ESR at the Migration Research Center at Koç University (MiReKoc) in Istanbul and the Pedro Arrupe Human Rights Institute at the University of Deusto. Karolina co-edited the book *Visual Methodology in Migration Studies: New Possibilities, Theoretical Implications, and Ethical Questions* (2021, Springer IMISCOE Series).