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Material practices of power – part II: forged passports as material dissents

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ABSTRACT

While mundane for the privileged few, passports, as discussed in the first part of this paper (DPP vol. 13, no. 2), are rather strong, thick and extensive devices of articulating, partitioning and producing possibilities of access, movement and inhabitations in the world. They have emerged from a certain intersection of social and material forces and continue to produce and provide new environments of power relations. It was proposed that these articulations are better to be renamed as passporting, which recognizes the regimes of practices involved in such environments beyond the single artifact of passport. Part II takes much further this analysis through proposing four lines of reading the passporting regime: materialities; sensibilities; part-taking; and translating. These lines, which point to the ontological qualities of passporting, can also be enacted for intervening into the passporting regime which articulates to the current hegemonic order of mobility. I trace such possible interventions in the acts of forgery of passports. Forgery uses, enables, dissents and rearticulates these very four lines of the passporting regime in other directions than the ones imagined by their initial design. By discussing the practices of passport forgery in relation to the passporting regime, this article offers a material and critical understanding of the notions of citizenship and nationality.

KEYWORDS

Passports; material articulations; forgery; materialities; sensibilities; part-taking; translating

Passporting and forgery: four lines of reading and intervening

In the first part of this article (Keshavarz 2016), I argued that passports are not isolated from the environments that they function in and the environments that they produce, and because they are in constant change and are contingent articulations of power, because they are always-already in interaction with bodies – biological and artificial – they rather should be renamed according to recognitions of their doing and what their doing does. Passporting therefore refers to the regimes of practices to which the artifacts of passports are central. The reading, analyzing, criticizing, intervening or subverting of the passporting regime then requires an understanding of passports as artifices, as *materially* made articulations that produce *sensibilities*. The modes of production and particularly the circulation of senses are mediated by two particular practices: *translating* and *part-taking*. These four lines thus can

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be understood as a critical-analytical framework for discussing design and politics and the material articulations they produce through their internal, mutual and co-productive relationship. These analyses are built around stories and accounts told by border transgressors and passport forgers whom I met during my research since 2011. I have changed their names and the locations of our meeting except one person who wanted me to use his real name: Amir Heidari.

Materialities

If you browse common video-sharing websites, you will find videos in which the narrator presents her or his passport as the protagonist of the film. The goal of many of these videos is to show what stamps and visas one has been able to obtain or 'collect' over a short period of time through traveling, or often, backpacking. In one particular video on YouTube entitled 'Pride of the Passport' (Hoffman 2013), which is narrated by an American woman, she shows her passport page-by-page and states that she is proud of it as she has collected so many 'rare' visas and stamps, to the extent that she is afraid to renew it. She wants her passport to be alive and in circulation. She also mentions the 'thickness' of her passport (min: 0:53). The thickness is evidence of her freedom of movement. More visas mean more papers have been added to the passport, which makes it thicker, richer and more valuable. In one of the comments posted on the video one can read:

You have good travel history, lady. Actually what I noticed is that page with personal information is very very thin. I am a Kazakhstani national, and personal information page in our passports is the same thin as in an American one. I'm not really satisfied with the quality, because I think quality of travel documents could be much higher for money we pay for it. I really like Irish passport for that very hard laminate film they use to protect it.

The materiality of passports therefore offers value, both in a symbolic, but also in a pragmatic way. Everyone who has tried to obtain a passport in an irregular market knows that a passport with more stamps is more expensive, because the thickness, the weight of the passport and the traces left by many governments on it, assert that it has been tested enough. It has traveled enough. It is an experienced passport. The thinness of pages or the thinness of a passport in contrast resembles less value, less authenticity and less respect. This was a feature frequently discussed by many of the border transgressors I met.

Timothy Mitchell (2006) argues that the state is manufactured as 'an almost transcendental entity,' as a 'nonmaterial totality that seems to exist apart from the material world of society' (181). Passports unhinge the so-called non-materiality of the state and point to forces of relations manufactured by states and through individuals.

What gives the narrator of the film the ability to narrate her passport in this particular way? Perhaps it is the form and materiality of her passport, as it is the materiality of the event of border crossing in the form of a book that matters. It is a form of thing-power (Bennett 2004) that speaks for itself without a direct relation to the concept. The pocket book sized thing that can be re-written and re-read over time through material practices makes her able to construct that narration. But the narration that such materiality allows us to construct, in many cases, is only an affirmative and homogeneous one: that there is, and should be a 'rational' material link between the body, the citizen and the nation-state. Even though the thickness of the American citizen's passport allowed her to remember her individual experiences of border crossing and her trips, often presented as 'exotic' and 'funny,' the narration

is still dominated by the fact that having an American passport in hand, as a low-risk traveler, matches the current regimes of identification and representation: an American is free to make her passport thick enough. Passports are books with one dominant narration. Making other narrations however, is not impossible.

The form and design of passports offer resistance to, for instance, the narrative of the way they are made, produced, constructed and articulated (Burt 2013). As a book and an e-book, passports' actual production, like their circulation, is also subject to transformation. First, they are generic material; the cover and digital parts are cheaply produced. Then they become national books, American, Swedish, Iranian and so on, by the coat of arms, graphic designs of the papers and information embedded into chipsets and locked in. Finally they become personalized by attachment of photos, biometric data, signatures and such like. The process of production of such an artifact from a 'transnational' commodity to a highly nationalized and personalized device reveals the artificiality of nationality and citizenship. It affirms that citizenship is a process of material articulation, both in terms of protecting individuals through a book, and in terms of giving access to nationalized material infrastructures. It affirms that it is the materiality of government practices that can shape politics. When possibilities of mobility are materialized and persuaded in the form of a passport, the product can transfer the border onto the passport's bearer her or himself. The border is not actually there, outside, but here and omnipresent, encrypted onto the body of the passport's bearer. When the right to move is summarized and materialized in the practices of passporting, the lack of such material presence would result in the lack of exactly that right which has been manufactured through the passport: the right to move freely.

As certain passports have the potency to become thicker and thus more valuable, the history of passports has told us that this possibility of adding visas, stamps, pages and new information both digitally and visually can produce different political bodies and subjectivities. The example of the Nazi regime in Germany stamping German Jewish citizens' passports with the red 'J' sign is an important one. The stamping of pages transforms the blank passport into a book, an archive with stories of crossing, of being validated or invalidated by various states and actors. In all these, it is the paper and the materiality of passports that can be re-appropriated over and over again to change or sustain one's individual legal or political status in the global passporting regime. Governments therefore re-appropriate passports constantly through the acts of stamping, visa imprinting, placement of special signs and adding temporary clauses into these books.

Forgery uses these possibilities as well. Forgery is an act of material re-appropriation. However it is not a legitimate re-appropriation compared to those of states as unauthorized actors carry it out and are thus able to disrupt the monopoly of the articulations of power that states conduct. For instance, forging a passport out of a blank passport, meaning adding information to an authentic blank passport is about giving it a history and bringing it to life. Pretty much like the ways in which states make certain passports livelier than others, a lively forged passport passes smoothly as well. This history, however, is not just any history but a particular history engraved into the blank booklet. A forged passport in one way creates a trustworthy history for the traveler. A history of authorized and regularized movement. The forged passport articulates a material history appropriated for the material regime of recognition of the right to move.

Amir Heidari, political activist and perhaps one of the most well-known migration brokers in the Middle East and Europe during the 1980s and 1990s whom I had a lengthy conversation

with in June 2015 told me that in 2001 Sweden introduced brand new passports that were more secure and harder to forge. A journalist asked him to comment on the security of the new passports:

The journalist wanted to know my opinion about the newly designed passport. I asked him in return, who has made these newly secured passports? 'Authorities' he replied. I told him in return, who are the authorities? Human beings, right? Then humans can forge them too. These concepts are abstract. Once citizenship and nationality are made with things such as passports then they can become rematerialized ... An Iranian becomes an Italian, an Iraqi becomes a Turk, an Afghan becomes Japanese and so on.

Forged passports therefore create a rupture not only in the order of things but also in the constructed history of them through material interventions that they exercise. In reality, it is the very materiality of the world that allows passport brokers to perform such rearticulation in the form of rupture.

Sensibilities

As it was discussed, materialities of passports define and transform passport bearers over time. Fabricated and artifactual relations and interactions of power, being made tangible through materials and persuaded by their specific design, define and distinguish various 'regimes of senses' (Rancière 2006) in which one should be recognized within, and by doing so she or he has to play the role or identity that has been assigned to her or him. This can be called the 'sensibilities' of passports. Thus, by having such material-sensible associations in hand there are some visible and invisible, sayable and unsayable, audible and consequently, inaudible subjects. Passports, therefore, distribute senses according to the materiality they impose, offer or manipulate. Distribution of senses, for instance, can be seen in the way that those with better and more valuable passports spend less time in checkpoint lines compared to those with less valuable and less recognized passports. It occurs frequently at airports, where one looks at the passports in the hands of other travelers and recognizes them with an established sensual regime that has previously been ingrained.

In February 2014, on my way to New York via Reykjavik Airport in Iceland, I was selected 'randomly' for a special security search. Thus I was guided to a room in the corner, which was not noticeable at all to those who were passing quickly without being taken aside. After the procedure finished, one of the officers, while looking at my passport's cover said:

'Hmm, I have never seen this before!'

'What?' I asked the officer.

'An Iranian passport! It is good to see what it looks like!' He smiled while returning it to me.

The regime of passporting of course creates certain visibilities and invisibilities. It does it through already established constraints, affordances and validities. Some passports get to travel more than others. Consequently some are more seen than others. Some passports are more visible while some others are conversely, invisible. Nonetheless, there are the invisible ones that come under a certain light in a certain time and space, recall their dominant and homogenous narrative and betray the bearer's individual narrative.

The officer in the airport did not open my passport at all, but there was something strange in his hand that made him react in that way. Suddenly a new item was introduced to his regime of sensibilities of passports.

Passports, therefore, can be devices for the manipulation of time and space of a traveler by establishing and meaning-making in interrelation with others as well as governments. On one hand, the seen and recognized passports often resemble the seen and recognized bodies, whereas on the other, an unseen and unusual passport often warns that an unusual body is around. In the core of passporting, a regime of sensibility emerges in which passports can be designed and manipulated or deliver certain experiences but also prevent certain bodies from experiencing time and space in the way they wish to. Thus passporting distributes a regime of the sensible. Jacques Rancière (2006) calls this distribution and redistribution of time, space and, consequently, experience and collectiveness a configuration of the visible and invisible, the audible and inaudible, the sayable and unsayable, the 'distribution of the sensible.'

In the logic of the distribution of the sensible, distributing the communal or shared space and time of the society, and ways of participation and contribution to spacetime, takes place through the perceptible. Therefore through a pre-defined and pre-ridged realm, the sensible can perceive and experience something defined and cannot perceive or experience the non-defined:

The distribution of the sensible reveals who can have a share in what is common to the community based on what they do and on the time and space in which this activity is performed [...] it defines what is visible or not in a common space, endowed with a common language, etc. (Rancière 2006, 13–14)

In everyday life, this realm of sensibility is pre-defined, pre-established or, to put it better, already articulated. Within this realm some sensory possibilities can be perceived and others cannot. Sensible orders reproduce and enforce divisions within a society – who is qualified to see, listen or discuss, and who is not. For Rancière, this is not a matter of good taste, but about the sensibility, through which some parts of society come together while others are excluded or ignored (Keshavarz 2011). That is to say, there is an established 'community of sense,' through which others are not recognized or valued and this results in the invisibility of those others. However, a forged passport redistributes established regimes of sense in its own particular way. The forging of passports by material manipulation offers other regimes of sense that could not be experienced otherwise.

Nemat was an unaccompanied minor when boarding an airplane bound for Oslo from Athens with a South Korean look-a-like passport. I met him in 2012 in Malmö when he was undocumented because first the Norwegian and then the Swedish authorities did not believe that he was a minor and thus rejected his asylum application. Despite him not being entitled to move freely from Greece to Norway – he would only have been able to move legally by having a Schengen visa in his Afghan passport – he exercised his freedom of movement with the service of a forged passport albeit momentarily with lots of fear and anxiety. Viewing this from a global perspective and out of context, an Afghan citizen traveled all the way from Ghazni to Oslo without fulfilling any of the expectations held by international and nation-states' regulations on the way. In this sense, he disrupted the regime of senses that tried to keep him in his place of birth and make him play the role assigned to him by hegemonic order of mobility. He managed such a disruption because of the several refusals he made in the regime of senses. His power and ability to walk for several days and nights through mountains, his social networks in learning strategies of traveling and living clandestinely and the materially re-appropriated artifacts that he used enabled him to achieve his goal to

some degree. The later part that enabled him to perform such refusals is explicitly in the field of design and thus should matter for designers the most.

Designers, in fact, take part in forming a regime of sense, or sensory perception, that takes place in spacetime. There are, however, many ways in which designers may approach the sensible order. As in the case of current politics of movement, design is complicit with an established sensible order that engages in the processes of distributing spacetime, which affirms or enforces the organization of mobility in terms of existing groups and communities of those included and recognized. In contrast, a disruptive sensibility can intervene within the existing or established sensible order, in which those involved actively redistribute the sensible order, thereby also intervening in the social and political order. In this way, an interruption or intervention into the realm of materiality and sensibility can constitute a redistribution of sensible.

The forged passport is one device, that in its devising, offers possibilities of enacting parts that are not supposed to be enacted by individuals who actually carry those passports in their pockets. The modification of spaces and time to be opened to other bodies are often registered as a 'willful imposition on those spaces' (Ahmed 2014, 147). That is why in subverting the sensible regime of movement, the image of migrants with forged passports so readily goes hand in hand with criminals and terrorists. These images are powerfully circulated media and public discourses because the legalized inhabitants of the spaces restricted to certain illegalized bodies would like to see such subversions as an imposition on and invasion of their space, rather than seeing it as a political act of opening up other possibilities of moving.

Part-taking

The sensibilities of the passports that are articulated through their materialities, take us to another layer of the complexity of passporting. This layer is part-taking in which passports dictate who is part of an established and defined territory (the European Union for instance) and therefore, who is sharing a part, taking that part and therefore acting or enacting his or her own part. Passports participate in the same world that their bearers inhabit. They also participate in the pre-defined and already articulated realm of visibility and invisibility. They take part in the reproduction of unequal distribution of material infrastructures and rights. They share their thing-power in a control society, and enact violence by stopping bodies in situations when the body, the name and the passports visibly mismatch each other. In this sense, passports are strong participants of the world that we have made and continue to make. At the same time they offer the possibility of participation in, for instance, the labor market (Anderson 1994). They participate in the regime of citizen-making, which consequently makes individuals legal participants of that regime (Breckenridge and Szreter 2012; Caplan and Torpey 2001). Passports are documents of a nation that are often presented as a whole (Anderson 1994). Citizens take part in this whole by carrying passports (which themselves are part of the whole) while moving outside the whole. In response, paper and material parts, such as passports carry bodies that represent the whole, and thus the nation. Passports and bodies therefore make both the whole, and parts, meaningful in a mutual relationship from the sovereign's point of view.

In this regard, passports are strong and pragmatic devices of both facilitating and also preventing participation in the world. They are designed and enacted through a

classificatory logic. The classificatory logic of passporting can be understood as ‘ways of distinguishing and grouping the holders according to a set of clear rules about the relationship between people, territories’ (Caplan 2001, 51) and nations, between parts and wholes. Passports are participatory devices that make things partake in a way that a desired ‘order of things’ should be achieved. Passports, as participatory devices, then distribute parts in an uneven way. Étienne Balibar (2002) argues, for example, that for a ‘rich person from a rich country,’ the passport ‘increasingly signifies not just mere national belonging, protection and a right of citizenship, but a surplus of rights – in particular a world right to circulate unhindered’ (83).

Sajjad is a young Afghan man, who has never seen the country he technically belongs to. He was born and raised in Iran where he lived partly undocumented for at least eight years. He moved to Europe in 2009 and has lived in Europe first as an asylum seeker, then as an undocumented migrant and today as a legalized resident; a process that took five years of his life during which he did not have legal access to education, work and, to some extent, health care. I met him in 2012 when he was still undocumented and waiting to be eligible to apply for asylum again. He told me about the harsh time he had in Iran and how he had been subject to various types of racism, both from the state and authorities, and from people in streets in everyday life or in the sweatshops he worked in. After he was granted asylum in Sweden he planned a trip back to Iran in the hope of finding his sister whom he had no contact with for more than seven years. Now, with a Swedish refugee passport in hand – which almost looks like a Swedish citizen passport – he is planning his trip to Tehran, but also to some tourist zones that many Afghan migrants in Iran are only spectators of. The northern cities of Iran are often called ‘the North – *Shomal*’ by Tehrani residents, and are among the most desirable weekend vacation destinations for Iranian middle class and particularly Tehrani citizens. Undocumented Afghans due to their economic conditions, the security bans on movement from one city to another and certain hostilities that cannot tolerate, or recognize them as tourists in a dominantly Iranian entertaining social space, do not have the same opportunities Iranians do to enjoy ‘the North.’ Afghans have to play their parts in Iranian society only as cheap labor, and are not welcome to share a part in the North as tourists.

‘With a Swedish passport in hand, I can go there, book a room in a hotel, and ask for the hospitality I deserve since I am Swedish now,’ Sajjad told me. While understanding his joy, I was thinking how possible this could be in his situation. The receptionist at any hotel may perhaps register him as a Swedish resident and let him book a room, which would not have been possible at all for him without a Swedish passport. At the same time, the receptionist, or anyone else in the North’s tourist industry will identify his appearance as ‘Afghani,’ a humiliating word used for Afghan migrants in Iran. A passport grants him a part in the global regime of nationalities, but does not guarantee him the same attitude or hospitality that an Iranian would extend toward an ethnic white Swede. The role that his body takes in this context contradicts the part he has obtained through the law. Certainly, participation plays a role here, but there are several contradictions between parts and their duties or tasks that come into play. He enacts the part that he has taken on now, that is being a Swedish citizen, however his look shares and brings forward another part. The Iranian subject however enacts his first part in the legal context but enacts the other part through the social context.

This complexity affirms that a new term may be used instead of participation. Part-taking is what I call the many shared encounters such as the one in Sajjad’s story. Part-taking,

contrary to the concept of participation is not flat. It reminds us that a part is, and can be, by its condition separable from the action that makes it identical to the process of participation in the whole. Like the story of Sajjad and his encounter with the Iranian national subject, part-taking can remind us that there are other forms such as part-sharing and part-acting simultaneously involved in shared and participatory situations. Parts involved in participation interact with multiple contexts and actors and thus preform heterogeneous interactions of parts. The articulations produced by passporting in this context, then should be understood through the variety the acting parts, perceived parts and performing parts have. This challenges the given, self-evident notion of participation. A non-white body, whose appearance in the easy regime of ethnic translation already fixes him as 'Afghani' within an Iranian social context cannot socially enact and show his other parts that is, Swedish legal residency. It is no matter that he holds a legal residence permit from a European country, in the form of a passport in his hand. He will only be allowed to participate according to the part he has already been given. This teaches us, design researchers, that participation is not merely a process of facilitation but importantly acts of partitioning the possibilities of acting and moving for those who participate in any shared situation. Passports and passporting thus like many other designed artifacts and actions not only define and distribute senses, roles, identities and parts that are to be taken, shared or performed in particular situations but also partition spaces and times of participation.

Forged passports, by subverting the regimes of the sensible, re-partition the parts that can be taken, enacted or shared. They offer other capacities of part-taking than the ways in which we have to participate in the mobility regime where our bodies are assigned to certain nationalities.

Nations are often represented as a sacred whole, a transcendental entity or, in secular terms, as a body. To feel that one is a member of a body, parliament or gathering, she or he should remember that she or he is a part of a body as well. Ahmed 2014, in her discussion on 'willfulness,' states that willfulness refers to the part that through its willing against the will of the whole has forgotten that it is just a part and not more than that.

In order for parts to become parts they need to acquire a duty. This duty can be thought of as a life duty; that is, they must be willing to preserve the life and happiness of the whole body. This means that parts should be sympathetic to each other in order to remain a part or member. This thus demands a form of obedience. Therefore, if a part is not willing to be only a part, a part that follows its duty as a part, then it threatens to break the whole apart. Ahmed makes this clear when she says: 'a rebellion is a rebellion of a part' (100).

The rebellion or the break in the whole, in the body that calls for certain types of participation, therefore is not a mere conflict of interests but a willful rebellion of a part as it performs its opposition to its duties, roles, identities and attributions, which would perhaps be perceived as a threat to other parts and the will of the whole, to the smoothness and fluidity of participation. Consequently, it is a form of 'illegal' occupation in the spacetime of partaking. It is a refusal to obey, to be governed.

However, in the realm of passporting there are ways in which the destruction of the passport, as only one part or participant of the regime, can give new spaces to other parts. The lack of a passport is not always an oppressive axis. It can be a strategy. Many undocumented migrants that I know or have met told me about a moment in which they tore apart or disposed of their real or forged passports during their journey; they burnt or flushed them down the toilet. They did this as a strategy to materially remove their traceable trips in order

to avoid deportation to their own countries or to transit countries (third countries) that they came from.

Before 1991, any Moroccan wishing to travel to Europe could do so with an appropriate passport; since the introduction of the European Union's Schengen Agreement, however, this passage has effectively been closed off to all but a chosen few. In this introduced regime of participation designed by the Schengen Agreement, the space of participation is partitioned heavily to the degree that those Moroccans who have made the journey irregularly are referred to as the 'burnt ones' because they burn their passports before embarkation. One can see this gesture as a strong act of refusing to take one given part while being willing to take other parts that they desire themselves. In fact, 'the burnt ones have effectively waived their rights as citizens to legal redress' (Downey 2009, 119).

Thinking about taking a part, refusing a part, sharing a part, acting upon a part and risking a part is not a matter of reflection on participation but rather, the very essence of participation itself understood through the concept of part-taking.

Translating

Passporting by its materialities distributes certain regimes of sense that define who is taking what part in such relations. This is done through the acts of translating the regime of presentation of things to a mode of interpretation of their meanings based on the accord that is desired, set and designed by power relations and articulations. Furthermore, if technical practices enacted by passports such as writing and reading are central to passporting, then translating is at stake every time such practices are exercised in situations between individuals as well as between individuals and sovereign powers. However the concept of translating in the context of passports can be approached from various perspectives. Here I try to discuss it based on the idea of representation by continuing Sajjad's story.

After he came back from his trip, Sajjad recalled his experience of the airport in Tehran:

Once I had approached the passport control, the officer looked at my passport, looked at me and asked in Farsi, 'Where does this passport come from? Is it Chinese?'

'No! It is from Pakistan,' I replied. The officer became furious and asked me to behave, otherwise he can send me off to another room for interrogation.

Sajjad is Hazara, an ethnic minority from Afghanistan, who has a similar appearance to East Asians in the easy regime of ethnic translation that many of us use. The officer surely knew that the Swedish authorities issued his passport, but he did not want to believe that he could be Swedish rather than Chinese. He preferred to read him according to symbolic ethnic translation rather than the legal translation that is demanded by his profession.

At the same time, Nemat, who departed Athens for Oslo, told me that while in Greece, because of his skin color, his size of body and his eyes and looks, he was able to obtain a South Korean passport and fly to Oslo without being caught. As a designed device that mediates a series of actions – writing/reading – to happen, passports have to bridge the gap between the individuals, their bodies and their representations on paper. They therefore try to be a good and honest translator, while also giving possibilities of 'good' translations to their readers as much as they can. The recent implementation of biometric technologies, beyond security and surveillance discourses (Lyon, Ball, and Haggerty 2012) and commercial benefits that they promote, can be realized in this way as well. Brand new passports aim to

provide a space of translatability between the subject, the body, the booklet, the database and the agent of control interchangeably. But there has always been a hiatus in such a regime and there will be always a hiatus between the person, the nationality he or she is bound to and the paper. This is why governments are still desperate to stop the so-called 'imposters' despite their claims on production of highly secure anti-counterfeiting passports. This hiatus is where forgery, counterfeiting or camouflage practices intervene. While they keep the regime of translating in place, at the same time they cause an internal error in good translation that is not always discovered by international and national legal readers. The fact that an Afghan body can be granted the right to pass as a South Korean body is the internal error of translation, which yet again affirms the artificial relations between a body and its bound citizenship. By the simple change of body, the passport still operates very well and the border guard who is responsible for the translation also thinks that the elements match in the way that they should: 'This person "looks" Korean!'

Translations that are made possible through passporting are not always in terms of affirmation, but also in terms of questioning. It happens frequently that migrants, who have obtained the citizenships of a country in which their bodies or the color of their skin represent a break in the represented image of that country, become question marks in the process of translating. One becomes questionable when one does not fulfill an expectation of an accord between known regimes of representation and interpretation. Shahram Khosravi (2010), anthropologist, in his auto-ethnographical work on borders writes about how he is subject to questions in comparison to other ethnically Swedish citizens, at Swedish borders, which is not just a physical or administrative frontier but a 'color bar':

When returning to Sweden, the border requires me to live up to my passport. While others pass through, I am asked some 'innocent' questions to prove that I do speak Swedish, that I can identify myself with my passport. Ironically, the same authority that approved my citizenship and issued a passport in my name mistrusts the relationship between my body and my passport. (98)

Passporting as a form of confession (Adey 2009; Salter 2006) establishes examples of good translations, translations that communicate quickly and deliver the desired meaning in the shortest amount of time. In this context, the body comes to testify together with the passport, intentions, sexual representations and social and economic origins: '[i]f we do not confess in a way that echoes with the story that the examiner has told him/herself about us, then we are suspect' (Salter 2006, 183).

Translating happens through a mix of socio-material associations. The US Department of Homeland Security, after 11 September 2001, started a procedure that asked citizens from so-called terrorist sponsored countries to fill out extra forms when they apply for visas and write their full names both in their native alphabet and all other possible spellings. In the UK for instance, the British Passport Office faced the 'problem' of reading and spelling non-western names with the immigration and 'naturalization' of colonial subjects whose original language was non-European. In response to this problem, the Passport Office used fingerprints to uniquely identify the bearers (Salter 2003, 94).

Building on the other three lines of reading passporting, one can establish that 'good translation' is a kind of agreement or consensus to match regimes of sense that are basically confronted with each other. Thus, a good translation implies a form of consensual politics of translation where 'the accord made between a sensory regime of presentation of things and a mode of interpretation of their meaning' (Rancière 2010, viii) is in place. One can say that another politics of translation aiming to interrupt or break such agreement and matching

can be conducted in order to rearticulate the passporting regime. Forged passports are an example of these rearticulations. Forged passports are particular devices of translation that do not entirely reject that pre-established regime of translation but are rather, through minor manipulation and rearticulations, able to offer practicalities to escape from it.

A forged passport, or a forged relation to a passport, is a mediating device of translation in the sense of translating a body, a performance, an interaction and an appearance to a book or/and to a database. In the case of successful crossing, what happens is a good translation but at the same time cracks and shortcomings of the artifact and its artifactual relations are revealed. These cracks and shortcomings however are only revealed to the traveler and the forger. The readers – the agent, machines and other passengers in line – accept that this body can be simply South Korean, but the body himself knows that he is not supposed to be a South Korean. Therefore, while a good translation concerned with delivering established and known meanings from the origin to a destination is at work, yet another form of free or literal translation is performed that is concerned with the form. The second thus reveals the cracks embedded in historically made concepts such as nations, territories and borders. In this reading, I am inspired by Walter Benjamin's short essay on 'The Task of the Translator' (1969 [1921]) in which he talks about the translator as someone who the light of the content (text) is crossing through her or his body and language, but the cracks and shortcomings of her language are visible as well. A forged passport, if it works well, acts as a transparent device where the agent is able to see and read the body of its bearer as matching with the nationality declared by the same device. However, the traveler with a forged passport knows that that passport is not transparent and the cracks and shortcomings of his or her body, the passport and the system become visible to him or her at the moment of crossing and to others after the event of crossing. Translation is connected not only to the original text but also to the afterlife of the text, Benjamin (1969 [1921]) argues: 'just as the manifestations of life are intimately connected with the phenomenon of life without being of importance to it, a translation issues from the original-not so much from its life as from its afterlife' (71).

In the context of forged passports and translation, the following story is significant:

The plan was to go by cruise from Patras to Italy. I have obtained an Israeli Passport. When I approached the border guard before boarding the cruise, he looked at my passport for a while and then he became suspicious. 'Where are you from?' he asked. 'I am an Israeli,' I replied. The border guard looked at the lines of passengers waiting to be checked and boarded, then shouted 'Is there anyone from Israel here?'

Another friend of mine who had also obtained an Israeli passport was in the line. He stepped out and replied: 'I am from Israel.' The guard asked him to come closer and talk to me in Hebrew to see if we understand each other. We started speaking in Farsi for few seconds. The border guard asked him if I knew Hebrew and my friend confirmed it. We both crossed the border.

What is fascinating about this true story is the break that was introduced to the mobility regime and its close associations to nationalities as legal subjects at that moment, partly due to the border guard's inability to speak Hebrew. The translation that those two forged passports offered simply affirm the cracks in notions such as being Israeli or Iranian and the technical devices of recognition of these notions such as passports, border guards and machines.

Quite different from Bruno Latour's formulation on translation (2007), which supposes to take us into a form of association or transformation, 'a relation that does not transport

causality but induces two mediators into coexisting' (108), Benjamin's translator is not necessarily interested in the co-existence of two sides or 'traceable associations,' but rather the cracks and shortcomings of the two and multiple sides that become visible only through the specific form of translation as a political practice: a form of practicing and performing a mismatch in the regimes of sense that might be perceived as a threat to established and recognized territories, parts and wholes.

Forged passports: affirmative criticalities

The operation of the passporting regime as well as forgery through materialities, sensibilities, part-taking and translating, affirm two main points: first, any intervention into the passporting regime is not possible unless from the inside and from its own ontological condition. Second, these rearticulations assert that there has been a limit to the materializing and designing of the artifacts and artifactual relations regulating mobility of people and things. But more importantly there still is and there always will be a limit to any act of designing, any material articulation of mobility. As Amir Heidari, the migration broker, argued in our long exchange when I asked him about the highly securitized biometric passports:

The new biometric passports are also subject to forgery. Time is an important factor here. You cannot keep all passengers in line to check their biometric data, scan their iris pattern and so on. The biometric is made of something, right? A chipset, new technologies, or whatever. They are not truthful; they all are artificial and thus can be reworked. You know it's like a building, you design it and the building shows its fragility, problems and shortcomings over time. That is where we enter. Before the failed passports get to be redesigned we send a few thousand over the border.

Even though Amir does not work as a migration broker any longer since his deportation from Europe in 2011, his view is insightful in pointing to the limits of any artifactual relation.

During the course of my research I met several travelers without the right papers who had manipulated or in other words 'forged' their bodies in order to make themselves appear identical to the booklet they had obtained. They had also forged certain rituals and performances in order to live up to various established images of travelers. In line with the discourses of visibility and seeing, there are some types of bodies, performances and interactions that are seen more compared to others. Forgery is partly about recognizing those seen and frequently mobile types in order to adopt and re-inhabit them. In the case of Nemat, the young Afghan traveler who obtained a passport from South Korea, the migration broker told him that young Korean people of his age and at Athens airport would usually be middle-class high school students who are there for vacation, often traveling within Europe for a while. Nemat had to adhere to that accepted image; otherwise he would not manage to cross. This was the scenario that he had to work and perform, with the role given to him by the articulation of a forged passport, his body and knowledge of migration broker. He managed to articulate a relationship that did not exist – him being Korean – without speaking one single word of Korean. He dressed in certain ways, and wore certain shoes and gadgets in order to convince border guards that he was like many other Korean travelers.

The state, by defining people through their passports, articulates a specific relationship to be performed and interacted at national and international borders. Any young Korean crossing an international border performs a Korean subject but more than that a Korean

body with a specific class. What Nemat did was to perform his role as Korean with the help of his body, a lookalike Korean passport and a specific choice of airport and airline provided by the migration broker. Nemat rearticulated his body within the international regime of mobility. He affirmed that in truth, he was just like many other young men traveling. However he had to pay for this rearticulation and had to wait in Athens for several months in order to find a passport in which the bearer's photo looked like him because his body from the beginning was not legalized and recognized within the mobility regime as Korean but as Afghan.

Nevertheless border transgressors, undocumented migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are not the only ones who buy the passports that do not 'belong' to their initial nationalities in which they were born into. In 2014, the Maltese government announced that it would be selling passports to individuals classified as 'high value' for €650,000. However, this is not a new practice. Accessing first permanent residency and later citizenships through financial investment is a common practice in many countries, particularly western or 'desirable' ones. Foreign investors who hold £10 m of their total money in the UK can apply for permanent residence after two years of living in the country. In the USA, Immigrant Investor Visas are awarded to foreign nationals who invest \$1 m in the economy and create 10 full-time jobs for US citizens within two years of arrival. Those who do so are awarded permanent residence and, after three more years, can apply for full citizenship. Greece, Cyprus and Macedonia offer what have become known as 'fast-track resident permits' to foreign investors who spend a minimum of €250,000 to €400,000 in the country. The EU, US or UK passports are high value commodities as they are granted to high value foreign nationals.

Moreover, the movement of people across borders is not only facilitated by legalized and illegalized commercial drives but also by the individuals having certain power positions within international relations and politics. Historically, we know of stories of diplomats and other powerful actors who, by having access to governmental infrastructures, were able to issue papers for Jews fleeing Nazi occupation and saving them from the Holocaust. Technically speaking they were 'smugglers,' but today they are recognized by various states and institutions as 'heroes.' Further, in the case of moving between territories, states do accept the issuance of false and incorrect passports when engaging in espionage. American diplomats were smuggled out of Iran on false Canadian passports during the hostage crisis in 1979. Canada recently discovered that Israel had been using its passports in order to insert agents into Jordan and Palestine (Salter 2004).

Passports as commodities offer a possibility of crossing borders with less or more constraints and affordances, but more importantly, offer legal protection to their 'owners.' They guarantee citizenship, however, as discussed in Part I, they do not guarantee citizenship rights all the time to certain bodies. This is a form of exchange value that legally sold passports offer, something that apparently cannot be identical to a set price or fixed amount of money. However, a look at legal markets of passports can show how various countries set their prices according to various criteria such as their financial situation and migration policies.

Quite differently from the legalized traded passports, forged passports in fact function only in the moment and for the act of border crossing that the forged passport holder is not legally entitled to. Forged passports grant a right through a forged material relation. This however, is a momentary right. If forged and fake passports are able to grant this, then they also disarticulate the political economy of freedom of movement monopolized by

governments. Forged passports, by their doing, essentially pose a simple but important and critical question: if freedom of movement is a right which has become commodified then why can passports, the material evidence of such rights, not be bought and sold in their imitative versions provided by the forgers?

Different in their exchange-value, both regular and forged passports affirm the materiality of citizenships and freedom of movement. While the expensive, real, authentic, high value and long term passport is an affirmative material practice, the less expensive, counterfeit, forged, low value and momentary one is a critical one. However, it is not a critical artifact of negativity. It criticizes through the affirmation of the ways in which the passporting regime works. They can be seen as a sort of 'affirmative criticality' to borrow Clive Dilnot's (2008) term. This affirms that freedom of movement facilitated by forged passports is a material critical practice because it produces its own space of functioning by refusing to engage in the legal space that is dominating and hegemonic. In fact, they affirm that despite states' attempts to totalize and monopolize the space and time of governance over mobility, there will always be spaces left or spaces produced that escape from such governance. These spaces are the 'space between bodies, law and discipline' (Asad 2004, 279). The contribution of forged passports is to re-appropriate such spaces and turn them into other productive spaces of economy, politics and criticality however informal or illicit.

The call that forged passports are able to make for subversive intervention turns what is supposed to be untouchable into a threat against the source of issuing and protecting it. They 'profane' (Agamben 2007) not only the current order of mobility but also notions such as citizenships and nation-states. In this sense, forgery as a political practice of materiality enacts and releases other forces of material, of thing-power, that are suppressed and packaged under certain forms of sensory regimes, designs and technologies. A forged passport as an internal contract – that is the inauthenticity of which is visible only to the forger and the user – is a form of material dissent and yet another material declaration of the fictitious and at the same time artifactual relation between the nation and the body. Since they target certain areas, forged passports reveal such absurdities and also resist and refuse obeying certain ways of moving or participating in the world. Forged passports can be understood as the ways in which material articulations of design and politics are rearticulated, not through any universal condition, but through very situated, specific and local practices and knowledge.

Final remarks

Passports and the complex environments of passporting are telling instances of understanding how design and politics works in myriad ways. If design as a mode of acting and a practice of material articulation is concerned with concrete problems 'to be solved' in localities and through artifice; and if politics tend to deal with construction and 'infrastructuring' of regimes of sense, defining who takes what part and how things are supposed to be translated from one context to another, passports, passporting and forgery affirm that there is no external force nor distinction between design and politics in terms of one being only material and not political and the other being only social and not material. There is no design 'and' politics rather design-politics. Understanding and framing passports, passporting and forgery and their operability as acts of design and politics simultaneously, inform us of how design and politics operate as twofold in a shared world: a passport while designed by specific politics,

simultaneously designs certain politics to take place; a forged passport also designs a possible politics derived from specific politics.

Pre-established attributes, roles, identities and duties make possible a functioning participatory flow in the current form of political and economic governance over mobility regimes. In such participation, we often forget that not all the parts perform or share what have been imposed on them according to their gender, class, race and their spatial or temporal movement across borders and territories. They willfully might enact a part that is not given to or reserved for them. This stops the flow. To continue the flow, a system needs to be designed in order to render those offending and willful parts invisible, thus making the flow more pleasurable, persuasive and valuable for the rest. At the same time, this system makes those willful parts visible by criminalizing their will and act of moving.

By shifting to forgery as design practices produced and consumed by those willful or offending parts, I argued that forged passports rearticulate their own space of part-taking and power relations, their own pragmatism and their own politics beyond that of policing of the status quo. Forgery in practice forges relations. It brings non-relationships into relationships. It rearticulates existing relations of passports to bodies, machines, border agents, crossing rituals and performances and so on. In doing so it shows that existing articulations are fragile, limited and temporary. Forgery is about forging new relations that affirm the artifactual relation between body, nationality, citizenship and sovereignty. If these relations are artifactual, then citizenship can be thought of as an artificial and material matter. To change the way citizenship is distributed today is to consider its artificial and material essence, to reconfigure and rearticulate it.

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