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Care-tizenship: precarity, social movements, and the deleting/re-writing of citizenship

Maribel Casas-Cortes

Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, NC, USA

ABSTRACT

A series of activist efforts across Europe have been organizing under the umbrella concept of precarity, with a long trajectory of movements facing flexibilization policies, austerity programs and migratory restrictions. The rise of precarity activism in Spain has worked at the intersections of increasing vulnerability and mobility producing a prolific body of activist literature and rich repertoire of strategies. This paper explores how alternative concepts of citizenship have developed within debates among precarity organizing prior to and after the financial crisis in Europe. Concretely, feminist precarity collectives in Spain came up with the play-on-words of 'Care-tizenship' to evoke a different notion of political belonging with updated collective rights. The original Spanish term is arguably the result of a typo: an accidental switching of the order of vowels in the word ***ciu****dadanía* resulted in ***cui****dadanía*, which totally changed the root word: from city to care. Caretizenship suggests a community of practice forged by ties of caring relationships, mutually attending to basic needs in a context of increasing vulnerability among local, migrant and emigrant populations. While far from a working institution, this activist theorization provides a 'horizon' to work toward constituting an opening of political imagination.

Introduction: delete precarity! delete borders!

The implementation of flexible labor policies in Spain beginning in the mid-1980s made fixed-term and part-time contracts the new normal, resulting in several expressions of resistance against the neoliberal move toward labor casualization. Since then, a concatenation of activist initiatives have been mobilizing under the umbrella term of *precarity*, including the recent anti-austerity mobilizations known as *Indignados*, or 15-M movement in city squares around Spain. The peak of these national 'occupy mobilizations' coincided with the first efforts to politicize emigration as a direct result of growing levels of precarity in Spain.

The rise of precarity activism, far from limited to the case of Spain, unfolded as a pan-European process, since similar economic policies were implemented under directives of the European Union resulting in similar expressions of discontent framed as 'struggles against unemployment and precarity', to eventually become 'movements by and for the

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precarious youth' including a variety of struggles, including those fighting against the increasingly restrictive EU border and migratory policies. This long-term process of politicizing and re-signifying precarity, somehow 'stretching' its meaning beyond a strictly labor-centered view of vulnerability, has developed a multi-layered understanding of the radical uncertainty brought by the neoliberal conditions of (no) work and life (Casas-Cortés 2014).[1] During this period, precarious struggles also worked at connecting and supporting migrants coming to Spain mainly from North and West Africa, as well as Latin American countries, especially the 'undocumented', understanding the 'Sans-Papiers' o 'Sin Papeles' (those without proper migratory documents organizing under that identity) as an icon of socially produced vulnerability. This search for commonalities lead to interesting alliances between collectives, though a rather rigid imagination of what constitutes a 'migrant' (non EU citizen) and 'a local' (EU citizen) remained.[2] Now, some of those politicized under the banner of precarity who developed solidarity with non-EU migrants are migrating themselves to other countries. This growing emigrant population is re-encountering conditions of labor insecurity and overall vulnerability abroad accentuated by their 'foreign' status. This situation led some to found 'precarious offices' (currently existing in London, Edinburgh, Berlin, Paris, Prague and Vienna). Figure 1.

These activist spaces also contribute to the organizing of international campaigns about precarious emigrants, such as La *Marea Granate*, an effort to articulate Spanish youth located in different countries to organize for labor, voting and health rights abroad.[3] Contemporary emigrants coming out of a Spain in political and socio-economic meltdown are often represented as young university graduates in search for adventures and learning opportunities (Bygnes 2015; López-Sala 2017). Still, increasing although neglected numbers of Spaniards are emigrating in search of bearable conditions of life to destinations in the global North and South (Domínguez-Mujica, Díaz-Hernández, and Juan 2016; Jendrissek 2016). Escaping financial instability and rampant unemployment in post-2008 Spain, some of those migrating now were part of a generation of activism organizing against precarity in the context of their 'home' country (Casas-Cortés and Cobarrubias 2017).
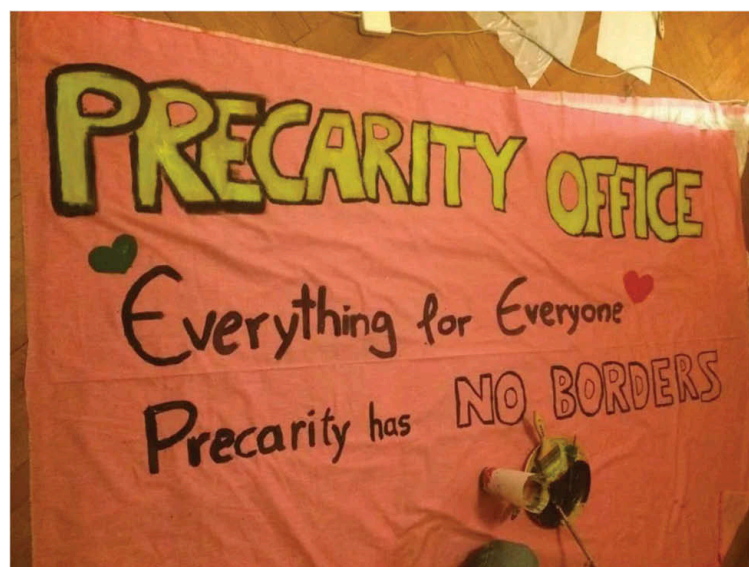
Figure 1. Welcoming poster, precarity office, Vienna 2015.

There are two waves of precarity social movements in Spain that paid particular attention to questions of migration: (1) precarity movements in the 2000s, bringing together foreign-born migrants and the native born; and (2) precarity movements in the 2010s, led by Spanish emigrants. This paper traces a thread through these two different waves of struggle, namely the consistent link between precarity and migration: Spanish youth identified with the precarity of foreign-born migrants in the first wave, and then that precarity turned them into international migrants in the second wave. In each case, precarity and migration represented the point of departure for collective action. In this process, I argue that precarity movements dealing with the erosion of labor rights, the crisis of the welfare state implementing cuts on social state provisions as well as the increasing hardening of the national borders have been rethinking the very concept of citizenship. Looking for sustainable ways of social organization and political forms of belonging able to accommodate different localities and nationalities, and linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, some movements developed a series of political propositions. Based on the urgency to address the erosion of previously enjoyed benefits and entitlements as citizens of Spain and the EU, anti-precarity organizers advocated for 'una ciudadanía-otra' (a citizenship otherwise). This call also comes from witnessing the vulnerable conditions lived by citizens of other countries working or searching for jobs in Spain. Precarity movements craved for a creative updating of national citizenship and conventional charters of rights, usually contained in single-country frameworks. Indeed, their critique to modern institutions, including representative democracy, capitalism and the nation-state, led some groups to reject what was considered 'old-fashioned demands' and elaborate a whole 'Precarious Lexicon' with novel rights adapted to changing needs.[4] Within this prolific phase of producing political vocabulary, some feminist precarity groups based in Spain started to tinker with the term of citizenship, coming up with the neologism of 'cuida/danía' (care/tizenship). Such linguistic innovations and conceptual productions are worth considering in more length. For the purpose of this paper, it is my contention that the different interpretations of precarity by grassroots efforts, including those put forward by the more recent campaigns around emigration, have been able to re-signify and re-politicize conventional understandings and practices of citizenship in creative ways. I highlight the notion of *caretizenship* as a concept that ties in the critique of a precarity/migration nexus. Furthermore, such theorization from below on alternative notions of citizenship holds strong resonances with critical citizenship studies' debates around the theoretical and strategic relevance of this institution in contemporary politics. I propose to understand the activist concept of *caretizenship* as a creative 'erasure' and 'democratic re-iteration' of the conventional notion of citizenship.

These movements respond to an increasingly precarious citizenship, which manifests itself in lessening social rights for those who are already considered nationals, increasing legal discrimination toward immigrants, and a growing distinction of rights between emigrants and local residents. It is in understanding citizenship as an increasingly precarious category that these social movements engage in a rethinking of the concept, clamoring for a 'citizenship otherwise' that can link these disparate experiences into new demands and practices. In particular, the notion of *caretizenship* becomes a response to precarious citizenship.

This paper opens with a brief introduction to the activist concept of precarity. Then, the section 'Citizenship under erasure' highlights some of the critical yet loyal approaches to the concept of citizenship among critical citizenship scholars. The bulk of the paper focuses on the case of pan-European precarity movements in the context of rapid transformations in Spain regarding shifts in the labor market and international migrations. I examine the concepts developed by activist collectives as to how labor transformations and shifts in migration could be thought together through the notion of precarity. Finally, I discuss mobilizing efforts around recent Spaniard emigrants, and how they mobilize precarity and citizenship claims as a diaspora, while mingling with other non-EU migrants elaborating pro-freedom of movement demands for all. In both waves, movements are working in parallel terms to those described in the field of Critical Citizenship Studies. This paper investigates whether this long period of precarious movements have been, or not, relying upon the notion of citizenship in their reformulation of rights and production of their own political lexicon. The driving research question that motivated this paper inquired about the relationship between precarity movements and the concept of citizenship: are these anti-systemic activists rejecting citizenship totally as a failed institution for arranging political belonging and social organization of state provisions? Or, are they tinkering with it, rethinking and advancing a political horizon beyond conventional understandings of citizenship?

The analysis presented in this article relies on extensive fieldwork with Spain-based precarity movements and their related international networks.[5] Based on ethnographic approaches to collective action, this paper draws on *observant participation* and in-depth interviews with members of these activist organizations: *Precarias a* La *Deriva* and *Ferrocarril Clandestino (Madrid), Asociacion Sin Papeles (Zaragoza) and Marea Granate (USA nodes)*. Also, this paper draws from engagement with the different types of sources produced by these movements themselves, including books and reports, public statements about actions and campaigns as well as websites. My work follows anthropological approaches to processes of collective action, which engage movements' own production of knowledge, including concepts, terminology and everyday life practices. This relational approach entails the 'blurring of boundaries' between scholarly and social movements' productions, putting academic discussions in relationship to debates happening on the ground and vice-versa (Casas-Cortés, Osterweil, and Powell 2008). In particular, in this paper, such goal of 'building bridges' between knowledges (Escobar 2008, 25) is centered upon the notion of citizenship, finding fascinating commonalities and complementarities between certain concepts of critical citizenship studies and activist notions of political belonging through the lens of mobility and precarity.

Precarity from below: a concept from the ground up

Starting in the late 1970s to nowadays, precarity has become a political statement popularized initially in Italy, then spreading to other European countries. The activist use of precarity has been a way of politicizing the controversies around the increasing casualization of labor markets in the European Union and the everyday life impact of austerity policies mainly in Southern Europe. Around the 2000s, a kind of precarity identity emerged across European activists through the street parades known as *Euro MayDay* celebrated annually in several cities (Neilson and Rossiter 2008).[6] Self-named

as 'precarity movements' (*movimenti precari, mouvements de la precarieté, luchas* de La *precariedad*), this series of local yet internationally networked collectives have been organizing and writing about precarity, in different waves of mobilizations. Such a politicization of insecurity under the term of precarity has become a source for collective agency and political creation in Southern European countries.[7] Besides the scholarly debates in English sparked by Guy Standing's discussion of the 'precariat' and 'denizens' (2011; 2014); on the ground, precarity struggles have for long been speaking in those terms to forcefully organize against, and imagine beyond, neoliberal transformations. In this process of critique, precarity struggles developed alternative conceptualizations of labor leading to a series of everyday life propositions and policy suggestions to adjust to socio-economic developments.

Indeed, the grassroots development of precarity has undergone multiple processes of re-signification and conceptual proliferation, with a long genealogy expanding beyond the initial focus on labor contracts to introduce aspects of knowledge production, migration as well as reproduction. In this vein, the current trend of emigration in Spain, including both precarious 'national' youth and more recent immigrants (both visa holders as well as those that have obtained Spanish citizenship), called for a reconceptualization of the link between precarity, mobility and citizenship on the part of precarity movements. Contesting assumed divides based upon national and racial coordinates, current emigration dynamics invite those movements to explore how the notion of precarity is re-articulated when formally 'European citizens', nationals born and raised in member-states of the EU, are in a position of 'becoming migrants' themselves in their everyday lives and struggles. Who is a migrant in this emerging geography of precarious mobilities? What concepts and practices of citizenship are movements able to hold to, if any?

Citizenship under erasure and its democratic iterations

In their introduction to the *Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies*, editors Engin Isin and Peter Nyers review several critiques to the concept of citizenship as based on an inner logic of exclusion:

> The citizen stands for inclusion, membership, and belonging, but at the expense of others who are excluded, non-members, and outcasts […] The citizen stands on one side of the political, social, and cultural borders of the polity, with non-citizens on the other. The inside/outside logic of this narrative has not surprisingly generated significant criticisms, […] declar[ing] citizenship to be an unsustainable category through which to organize modern political life. (Isin and Nyers 2014, 4)

They feature one of the boldest critics stated by the political philosopher Santiago Lopez-Petit, himself active in autonomous, precarity and occupy movements in Catalonia, quoting his statement: 'the citizen becomes the prisoner of the state', and his daring question: 'what if we refuse to be citizens?' (S. Lopez-Petit 2001, in Isin and Nyers 2014, 5). In fact, Isin and Nyers recollect similar critiques coming from the most anti-systemic movements and the political tradition of Autonomous Marxism, calling for political strategies not within the system and beyond the legal bonding of citizenship: 'exit', 'refusal', 'the outside' (2014, 6). Isin and Nyers disagree with this total

rejection of citizenship, as being unresponsive to current urgencies on the ground. Instead, they identify with what they see as one of the main traits of critical citizenship studies, as they put it. Critical citizenship scholars seem to engage citizenship in a dual movement, somehow following Derrida's approach of putting concepts 'under erasure':

> For Derrida to write under erasure is to [..] script and cross-out, [...] to create and destroy. Erasure allows one to posit something affirmatively and yet remain skeptical and question it as a problematic. (Isin and Nyers 2014, 5)

Also, Isin and Nyers explain their ambivalent attachment to the notion of citizenship (2014, 4–5) as one based on a critical distance building upon these two theoretical concepts: one from Balibar as a questionable institution in 'permanent reinvention'; and one from Arendt about having a unique temporality, as in 'between no-longer and not-yet', further explaining this impasse:

> The 'no-longer' implies that we can no longer think of citizenship in the way we used to; the 'not-yet' reminds us that we are not quite at the situation where it no longer applies. (Isin and Nyers 2014, 6)

In fact, reflecting on such conjuncture, globalization debates in the late 1990s and 2000s brought insightful discussions on how multi-layered systems of governance and trans-national mobility were transforming notions and practices of both sovereignty *and* citizenship. Seyla Benhabib insists on this dual transformation, calling to pay attention to how citizenship is being reinvented or reconstituted:

> Today we are caught not only in the reconfiguration of sovereignty but also in the *reconstitutions of citizenship*. We are moving away from citizenship as national member-ship increasingly towards a citizenship of residency, which strengthens the multiple ties to locality, to the region, and to transnational institutions. (Benhabib 2007, 22)

While under mandatory reconstruction with the emergence of transnational arrange-ments, citizenship still appears as the inevitable framework for political organization in the midst of globalization. Despite emergent international actors and jurisdictions, the notion of a Westphalian nation-state remains central adjusting differently to structural changes. Still, its main institutional arrangement of belonging, that is citizenship, no longer serves as it was framed in relationship to a modern worldwide order based on nation-states. In the current historical conjuncture, scholars have been rethinking alternative notions of citizenship, delinking it from its conventional foundations on a bounded territory with a single national identity. Citizenship scholars have been advancing theories of post-national citizenship (Soysal 1994); flexible citizenship (Ong 1999); alien citizenship (Bosniak 2008); cosmopolitan citizenship (Benhabib 2007); de-nationalized citizenship (Sassen 2002); post-territorial citizenship (Ragazzi. 2014); inter-national citizenship (Stierl 2016). Many of these re-conceptualizations call for flexible understandings of territory when redefining citizenship as a political community able to provide a sense of membership and collective entitlements in a context of intense international mobility and global reconfigurations. In this way, citizenship might be 'under erasure' in Derrida's terms, authors both deleting and retaining some of its key elements; getting rid of some of its foundations, without throwing it out completely. This allegiance to the notion of citizenship speaks to the belief that even if aware of

citizenship as a limited institution, it is nonetheless seen as holding political influence, practical consequences and conceptual legitimacy.

While scholarly debates on post-national citizenship are well known, similar efforts at 'erasing citizenship' a la Derrida – both deleting and retaining it – are taking place in the midst of activist struggles on the ground. The same way that critical citizenship scholars have been questioning and expanding the original criteria for the acquisition or transmission of citizenship, precarity struggles in Europe have been able to bring locals, migrants and emigrants together under a reformulated collective identity – which I refer to elsewhere as a 'certain precarity pride' (forthcoming). Through their knowledge practices in multiple locations, activists have been advancing a reconceptualization of political subjectivity in the midst of austerity policies. In a similar vein, contestation is at the heart of Isin and Nyers definition of citizenship, which 'is fundamentally about political struggles over the capacity to constitute *ourselves* as political subject' (2014, 8).

Precarity struggles are relevant interlocutors of critical citizenship debates not only in terms of how they are advancing original forms of political subjectivity, but also because of their less well-known efforts to advance political demands and redefinitions of rights attentive to the transformations afoot. These debates within movements were often framed as discussions around 'new social rights', some of them being '*flexicurity*', 'freedom of movement' or '*commonfare*' (Nomada 2012). The general discussions in movement circles would often coalesce into specific institutions such as 'Offices for Social Rights' and novel vocabularies that reflected ongoing struggles at the moment.[8] For this paper, I am focusing on the explicit choice of working through the very term of citizenship, tinkering with its own spelling: 'care-tizenship'. This activist theorization of citizenship also embraces the double movement of Derrida's erasure, both deleting and holding to it. Furthermore, given its site of enunciation, that is, how this concept comes out of movements' grassroots debates, I would say it constitutes what Seyla Benhabib calls a 'democratic iteration' of the citizenship concept:

> By 'democratic iterations' I mean complex processes of public argument, deliberation, and exchange through which universalist rights claims and principles are contested and contextualized, invoked and revoked, posited and positioned throughout legal and political institutions, as well as in the associations of civil society. (2007,31)

Building on Seyla Benhabib, I point to how in this case, segments of civil society greatly affected by austerity policies in Europe are engaged in repeating and re-appropriating the concept of citizenship. These movements are in the process of enhancing, transforming and twisting the original meaning of the authoritative notion of citizenship. In this sense, such democratic iterations resemble Derrida's way of erasing, since these repetitions are 'invocations which are also revocations' (2007, 32). I identify here the potential of collective action in the precarity–migration–agency nexus, emphasizing the capacity of movements to theorize and become prolific producers of concepts and norms:

> Through such iterative acts a democratic people who considers itself bound by certain guiding norms and principles re-appropriates and reinterprets these, thus showing itself to be not only the subject but also the author of the laws. (Benhabib 2007, 32)

The creative appropriation of citizenship as *caretizenship* was coined first by feminist groups based in Spain, which were also active participants within networks of European precarity struggles. Such 'democratic iteration' has become a key reference for slogans and demands among recent international women's marches and campaigns.[9] This paper shows how this notion renders a unique sense of belonging and collective rights trespassing criteria usually assumed to constitute the polity of subjects under the institution of citizenship. This reformulation was imperative at a time when 'locals' were feeling how their rights as citizens were being threatened by privatization, flexibilization and an overall wave of 'precarization', as well as when recent immigrants to Spain felt their entitlements as citizens of third countries exercising their 'Right to Migrate' as new comers contributing to the Spanish society were increasingly disrespected under more restrictive migratory policies and discriminatory laws.

Precarity movements in Spain: migrants and locals coming together

Spain went from being historically a country of emigration to become one of the top receivers of international immigration during the early 2000s (Domínguez-Mujica, Díaz-Hernández, and Juan 2016). This time period coincides with Spain's entry into the EEC/EU, transforming Spain into an external border of the EU. Further, these transitions coincide with intense changes toward labor flexibilization and the mass arrival of temporary work. During Spain's recent real estate boom, migration from Latin-America and Africa was on the rise. Around the year 2001, intense mobilizations by many migrants took place to demand rights, documentation and the repeal of the new Foreigner's Law. Marches, hunger strikes and occupations of sympathetic parishes occurred over many days and became a top news item (Suarez-Navaz, Garcia, and Preja 2007). This moment signified the arrival of the 'migrant' as a political actor in the landscape of the Spanish state. These self-organized efforts by immigrants became an increasing point of interest and reflection to social movements in the country, and in a special way to those working on questions of precarity. Efforts to demonstrate solidarity with those named 'illegal' migrants included actions at migrant-detention centers and at several points along the fence of the increasingly securitized southern border. Gradually, there was a search for common points of struggle between 'migrants' and 'locals' engaging in shared organizing experiments. In particular, after the collective attempts in 2005 to jump the border fences in Ceuta and Melilla (two Spanish enclaves on the North African mainland) and the heavy repression that was meted out by Spanish and Moroccan security forces, a protest caravan was organized to denounce the violence at the border. The following reflection from a participant in the Caravan signals the beginning of the intermingling of precarity and migration struggles in Madrid:

> We heard the testimonies of some of those who trespassed the border fence. Also, what we saw at the border got hammered into our retinas. Still, what we witnessed at the border fence was not so far away. It was right by us, in our own neighborhoods in Madrid. We had to do something about the situation. This something though needed and wanted to be in line with emergent notions of solidarity we were working on within our precarity struggles: not one based on *assistentialism* (welfare or service based), but rather on processes of mutual support that go back and forth, today I can give you a hand, tomorrow you will help me out … this is where we start linking and thinking through *our own precarity*. (Interview: *Caravan* participant, October 2007, my emphasis)

These attempts to understand the border as something 'close by' and to create non-hierarchical forms of solidarity developed into spaces where 'immigrants' and 'locals' could organize together, each one from and against its 'own precarity'. The realization that border and migration policies could affect everyone and proliferate precarious conditions opened the possibility for a horizontal weaving of struggles that would address how to best strengthen 'migrant' situations while working on challenges faced by 'autochthonous' precarious youth. An emblematic example of this kind of cooperative organizing in Spain, and emerging directly out of the *Caravana* of 2005, was *El Ferrocarril Clandestino* (the Underground Railroad).[10] Goals of this group included the legalization of migrants; denouncing the growth of migrant-detention centers; and making common events of survival – such as weddings for documents – into micro instances of struggle.

These efforts led to different analyses and formulations of the precarity + migration equation, trying to articulate a common ground among distinct struggles. For instance, *Precarious and Migrants Unite* was a provocative slogan used to evoke growing commonalities between local precarious youth and non-EU migrants to Spain and the EU (Figure 2). Over time, this call for a symmetrical alliance – one based not on

Figure 2. Poster for EuroMayDay 2008. EuroMayDays are annual street parades celebrating a kind of "precarity pride" during May 1st, the International Workers' Day, in several European cities.

compassion from an affluent European citizen toward an undocumented foreigner, but on an understanding of shared precarious conditions – came to be known among activist collectives as the 'prec-mic hypothesis'. There was also a concern that this coming together should not homogenize differences, nor ignore important hierarchies and privileges. Such an interweaving of struggles developed a whole political lexicon that began to circulate among activists. What follows is a description of the conceptual developments that provided the background from which *caretizenship* emerges:

'The Becoming Migrant of Labor': For some activists, the experience of migrant work is not just similar to current forms of precarious labor but rather migrant conditions are actually becoming the paradigm to define contemporary practices of production:

> When we talk about the paradigmatic character of migrant labour, rather we want stress the fact that migrants are experiencing in advance the general conditions of contemporary labour, all the forms of depreciation and precarization. At the same time we want to point out that migrants' practices of mobility express a radical challenge to these processes of deprivation. (*Frassanito Network* 2005)[11]

Thus, the analysis of the paradigmatic character of migrant labor is understood as a process denominated 'the becoming-migrant of labor' which means:

> Mobility (both in a geographical or functional sense) is central in labor today. Working conditions suffered by migrants today (such as informality in the contract, vulnerability, intense links between territory and employment, low salaries, lack of union rights, temporality, total availability, etc.) are spreading today to the rest of workers. (Toret and Sguglia 2006, 108)

The experience of migration then becomes a productive site of analysis capable of offering unique insights of contemporary transformations as well as proposals for other kinds of politics. But in order for migration to gain such an explanatory and propository role, social movements approached it in at least two ways: on the one hand as internally multiple, impossible to capture with a homogenous category; and on the other hand, not just as the entrance of 'the other' at home coming from far away, but mobility as a growing possibility for all, where becoming migrant appears in the life horizon even for 'European' citizens. Engaging migration not as a single issue but as an analytical prism to read broader social processes is what *Frassanito* network refers to as 'migration as a point of view':

> In recent years, the transformations of citizenship and precarization of labour constituted two strategic fields around which the left and the social movements in Europe organized their struggle against 'neoliberalism'. In both of these fields, the movements and struggles of migration provide a crucial input in disentangling the radical political imagination from the impossible dream of a return to an alleged 'golden age' of social state citizenship and of the 'fordist' compromise between labour and capital. (*Frassanito* 2006)[12]

'Lo común singular' (the common in singular): An initial notion of commonality emerged out of an awareness of sharing concrete conditions, that is, realizing the instances of similar everyday experiences and spaces in a given local geography:

> There is a common sustained on tangible elements, rather than ideological ones, such as the way of inhabiting the city, the incoherent relationship between salary and work, the lack of guarantees for basic rights, cuts on freedom and militarization of the territory […] It is obvious that migrants are situated in this context in a singular and differentiated way due to the status of non-citizenship and a general trait of lack of security and invisibility. (*Entransito* 2004)[13]

The understanding of an undocumented person went from someone excluded, to someone who was rather participating (albeit unequally) in a given city, labor market or social system Figure 3. A political debate went on about how to go beyond fights for solving legal status to a focus on issues of collective empowerment participating fully in the many 'commons' of receiving cities. For instance, gaining access to health services, IDs and education, with and without official state-level documentation. For these precarity activists, practices of citizenship are not limited to the nation-state boundaries, but are linked to the question of everyday access and rights to the city, reclaiming the original spatial referent in '*city*/zenship' (Casas-Cortés, Cobarrubias, and Pickles 2014, 464). The 'common' to be had here was a shared place (e.g. a given urban neighborhood), though the possibility of a shared mobility was not yet explored.

'Ciudadanía Otra' (*Another citizenship*): The articulation of migrant mobilization and precarity struggles signaled the necessity of a re-signification of citizenship, rights, labor protections and more:

> We would like to highlight that the status of citizenship (as is the case with 'worker') tied to certain guarantees of inalienable rights, is going through a terminal crisis. What use is there for me to have documents that names me a citizen if I inhabit Europe but cannot have access to housing, if I produce Europe and I have to do a balancing act just to subsist? An erosion of social, labor and civil rights associated with the status of citizenship exists, such that the demand for recognition as citizen on the part of the immigrant population passes automatically through a battle to redefine that status that has today been emaciated. Citizenship, from now on, should be linked to obtaining a new charter of rights of living labor. *It will be another kind of citizenship or it will not be.* (Entransito 2004)

This call for a 'citizenship-otherwise' would be the basis to re-think a new set of rights, participating in the debate about a necessary updated *charter of social rights* from the very experience of extreme mobility and vulnerability. In this way, pro-migration movements were indeed expanding the notion of precarity and its demands. Furthermore, in linking the conditions of precarious labor and precarious access to social services under cuts, to the struggle for citizenship and rights on the part of migrants, there was an implicit

Figure 3. **Poster for EuroMayday 2007 in Southern Spain: 'New Social protagonists'**. Among all the precarious figures, the second one starting from the left is named as the one 'without contract, without papers'.

attempt to redefine what citizenship might come to mean for migrants or non-migrants. The focus was not only on exclusion, but also on acknowledging and promoting practices of citizenship that take place even under conditions of illegality. One response to the desire to articulate a 'citizenship-otherwise' consisted in opening *Precarious Offices* offering information and support to all those sectors which the main unions kept ignoring, that is, unemployed youth, undocumented migrants, domestic workers, etc. under the framework of 'we all have the right to have rights'.[14]

Cuida-danía : opening the political imagination beyond borders

Finally, building on these previous conceptual developments, a specific iteration of this 'citizenship otherwise' was the notion of *care/tizenship*. Feminist initiatives within precarity movements made the concept of care a central piece to understand how precarity went beyond the workplace to affect the overall existence. Since the International Womens' Day march of 2008 onwards, the main sign preceding the dancing multitude in the streets of downtown Madrid has been: *'Por una reorganizacion social* de *los cuidados'* (Toward a social reorganization of care). In the flyer distributed among the thousands of participants, the new and play-on-words term of 'cuida/danía' was defined as following:

> …from the experience of fragility and isolation that produces the process of generalized precarization, the rights that we want to instantiate are rights of *cuidadanía*: right to resources, spaces, and times that permit the placing of care in the center and, with that, the possibility of constructing the common in a moment in which the common is shattered. (flyer 2008)

This call for a care-based citizenship is made in the midst of organizing domestic workers – mostly women, some with EU citizenship and others not – under a framework of shared precariousness. As such, collective affinities are not dictated by national borders or ethnic coordinates. Calls for '*cuidadanía*' advance an alternative vision of community based on practices of care and mutual support, regardless of place of origin or family history. While there are not extensive writings about the notion of *cuidadanía*, it is used in several settings, mainly among organizers within what is known as 'care struggles'. They called for the need of extending 'citizenship rights' to those undocumented workers taking care of the most vulnerable but still precious members of receiving societies, children and elders. This paper explores how this term of *caretizenship* came to existence and ponders upon its conceptual potential.

The Spanish term itself is arguably the result of a typo, an accidental switching of the order of vowels in the word *ciudad*anía resulted in *cuida*danía, which totally changed the meaning: from *city to care*. This accident occurred back in 2005 at a Plaza in Seville, officially titled '*Plaza* de La *Ciudadanía*' (Citizens or Citizenship Square). The new sign was written with the 'i' and the 'u' switching places on the street plaque without notice. This was observed by local feminists working on precarity and migration issues and identified in it not a mistake but a potential opening. This initial suggestion was taken up and further developed by activist networks in Madrid working out of the feminist squat La *Eskalera Karakola* as a new demand articulating the critiques of feminists toward an overly labor-focused language around precarity, and as a way to open spaces of contact with migrant struggles through 'care'.

While having a clear referent to 'care work', the multiple networks around 'care struggles' expanded the notion of 'care' into a broader notion of mutual support and bonds of solidarity made concrete through practices aimed at addressing vital needs:

> We are talking about the sustainability of life, that is to say, the daily activities of affective engineering that we propose to visibilize and revalorize as the prime material of the political. (*Precarias a la Deriva*, Huelga de mucho cuidado 2003)[15]

As such, by putting care in the center, the notion of the political also gets transformed, shifting conventional terms of the discussion to prioritize the feminist and environmentalist concern around the sustainability of life at large. Figure 4. Then, when care becomes part of the term citizenship, this play-on-words provokes a refreshing rethinking of this historical institution for political organization and identity production. Philosopher Tomeu Sales Gelabert writing about how feminist notions of care influence the modern concept of citizenship explains that by integrating care as a valuable activity and political relation, this leads to the necessary reformulations of citizenship as socio-
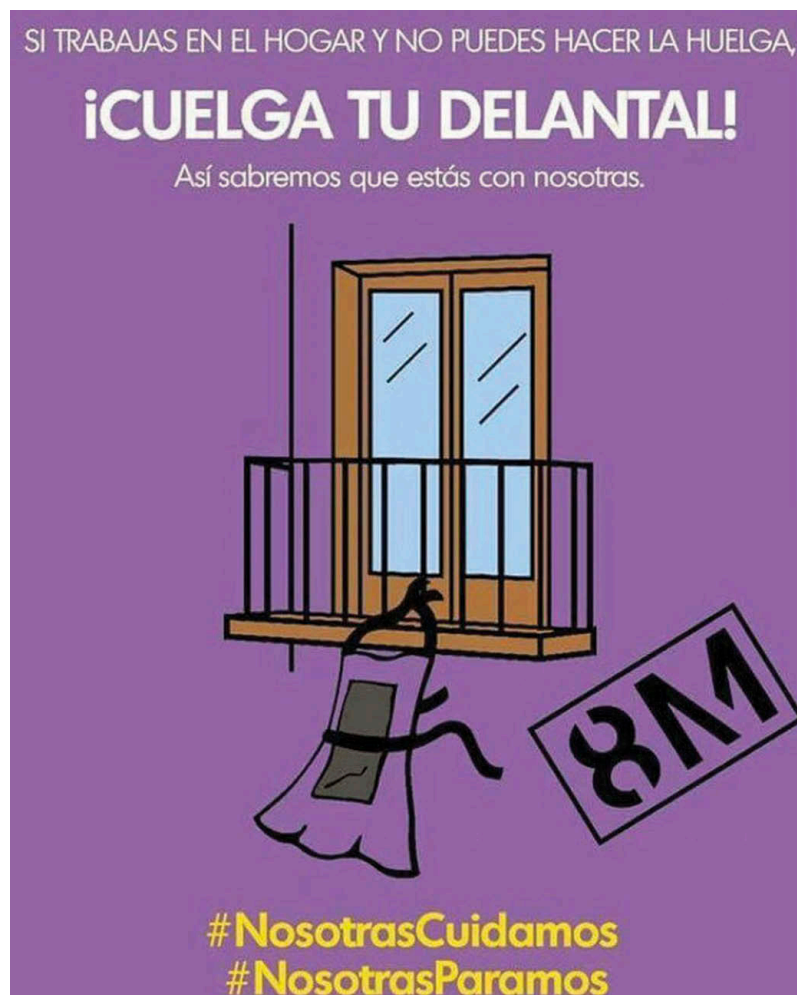

Figure 4. Flyer calling for Feminist Strike at the national level in Spain during March 8, 2018. 8M refers to 8Marzo, the annual celebration of the International Womens' Day.
Translation of slogans in the flyer: "If you work at home and you can not strike, HANG YOUR APRON! This way we will know you are with us." #wetakecare#westrike"

political identity, historically linked to the capitalist mode of production and to the nation-state model (Gelabert 2014). As such, *cuidadanía* captures a long trajectory of feminist critiques against the limits of modern citizenship, offering a renovated horizon for political articulation. While lacking specific policy contents, this neologism suggests the need for a redefinition of a mainstream concept yet fraud with exclusionary practices, even more so when facing current conjunctures of rising austerity and mobility. In fact, *caretizenship* came out of precarity struggles during the 1990s and 2000s that were thinking at the crossroads between vulnerability and migration, when both local- and foreign-born activists were finding commonalities and experimenting with new political demands after concluding that 'citizenship as we know it was not enough'. The next step was to insert the rapid levels of emigration in the equation to keep rethinking possibilities for social and political re-organization.

The politicization of emigration: the precarious generation reloaded abroad

Kind of unexpectedly, a growing emigration pattern was particularly notable by 2011.[16] While many youth were thinking about leaving the country in search for better conditions, the peak of anti-austerity mobilizations took over the streets in Spain. First, social movements organized long-term urban camps in main squares across the country similar to other international mobilizations that year. Known as the '15-M Movement', this was the local expression of the so-called 'Occupy' wave of mobilizations, which gathered inspiration from the epicenter of the Arab Spring in *Tahrir* Square, traveling across both shores of the Mediterranean. These activist mobilizations also reached the other side of the Atlantic, and become known as *Occupy* and the *We are the 99%* movements. Coordinating tactics such as the use of tents and twitter, all these movements shared critiques against two hallmarks of modernity, mainly, representative democracy and neoliberalism (Dabashi 2012). They also hold similar demands, including calls for basic income and open borders. Furthermore, according to Judith Butler, she identifies a common denominator to these expressions of resistance, *precarity*, in the sense of a shared condition of induced vulnerability (Butler et al. 2016). This mobilization had a longer time span in Spain, developing sectorial organizing into *Mareas Ciudadanas* (Citizens' Tides) focused on different struggles with concrete objectives (e.g. *White Tide* for Public Health and *Green Tide* for Public Education). It is out of that energy that the politicization of Spanish emigration emerges, concretely through a citizens' tide focused on the rising numbers of precarious Spanish youth going abroad:

> The *Maroon Wave* is a transnational movement formed by Spanish immigrants who fight from abroad against the causes that originated the economic and social crisis that forced us to flee our country. Our collective was born in the light of other recent social movements in Spain over the last years. We are somehow the extension of them abroad. Our wave is maroon like the *color of our passports*, the symbol of our forced migration. (http://mareagranate.org)

During the Spanish wave of occupations of public squares, one of the main messages sent across focused on the increasing precarious conditions affecting all sectors in Spain. Precarity was understood as the lack of access to many resources, services and hopes

recently expected and enjoyed in Spain. By using the Spanish word '*sin*' (without), movements pointed to the problematic situation of being without jobs, without home, without pensions and, thus, without future. This negation also implied an assertive message: 'without fear' (Figure 5). One of the main organizers of these mobilizations was the collective *Juventud sin Futuro* (JSF-Youth without Future), which was one of the first ones to connect precarity with emigration by calling for a day of networked protests in 2013 under the *No nos vamos, nos echan* campaign. The campaign website states: 'We are not leaving, they are kicking us out! is an initiative that denounces the situation of forced exile of precarious youth', making an explicit link with the language of precarity (Figures 6 , 7 and 8).

From 2014 onwards, *Marea Granate* and JSF had gradually established a network of activist centers under the name of *Oficinas Precarias* (Precarity Offices) in countries where Spanish emigrants had recently arrived. These offices orient newcomers in finding employment and navigating new labor legislations. They also provide a wide range of information and assistance on housing, healthcare, voting, consulate registrations and other services. This organizing responded to the recent approach taken by the

Figure 5. During the Occupy mobilizations in Spain, a specific campaign 'Youth without Future' started to politicize the question of precarious youth having to leave the country due to economic recession.

Figure 6. Emigration campaign propaganda: Fake plane ticket.

Figure 7. Performance action of the emigration campaign 'No nos vamos, nos echan' in London, 2013.

Spanish government toward emigration: not only ignoring its dimensions but also implementing restrictive policies affecting the residency, voting and healthcare rights of Spanish citizens abroad. According to a recent analysis, the Spanish state has become an 'illegalizing device' for its own citizens, leaving Spanish emigrants in legal

Figure 8. Map of actions by self-identified as 'precarious youth in exile', 2013.

uncertainty (Cobarrubias 2017). Countering those attacks, emigrants' organizing conveys a call for non-partial citizenship:

> This network based on a shared identity of forced economic exile provoked by austerity policies in Spain, is reclaiming the genuine and effective citizenship rights of Spanish emigrants in the face of legal, political and institutional constrictions.[17]

While primarily conceived to address recently arrived Spanish emigrants, at least in the cases of the Berlin and Vienna offices, there is an explicit openness to migrants from other countries. The Precarity Office of Vienna organized a series of events where attendees were asked to self-identify as 'Mobile' or 'Migrant' opening a discussion about the differences and similarities between intra-EU immigration alongside immigration from outside the EU, and what these struggles can mutually learn. The *Vienna Precarity Office* organizing intentionally questioned the divide between labels such as 'Mobile' (often used for intra EU citizens) vs. 'Migrant' (referring to extra-communitarian populations). As such, productive alliances are emerging where prevalent national/racial divides are explicitly rejected. According to the organizers, it is pressing to ignore the nation-state's legal and governmental divisions between local workers and migrants into reified and reductive categories (Hansen and Zechner 2017).

In fact, a key example where emigrant and migrant are thought together is around the question of access to healthcare in the campaign *Vuelve sin Sanidad* (return without healthcare). As part of the austerity measures taken by the conservative Spanish government, a law was passed in 2012 that stipulated the loss of regular access to the Spanish health system for people who had left the country for extended periods (90 days in a 12-month period under current legislation). Emigrant organizations fought this measure, pointing out that many emigrants have limited access to the healthcare of their countries

of destination, and that even emigrants to other EU countries are prevented from accessing the European Health Card due to the temporary nature of the employment they find. The *Marea Granate* joined the ongoing pro-migrants campaign in Spain called *Yo sí Sanidad universal*. Its goal is to criticize cuts in public money to healthcare and specifically the increasing exclusion of (mainly undocumented) immigrants from those services in Spain. Thus, a specific and explicit organizational link was made between immigrants' *and* emigrants' access to healthcare:

> The policies of exclusion from healthcare have targeted the most vulnerable groups of people in the Spanish state, immigrants in an irregular situation, *and* emigrants. We are the weakest collectives and with whom it is hardest to identify with, thus we're the easiest to attack. […] *Marea Granate* struggles for the rights of all people to public and universal healthcare, making no distinction based upon place of birth, skin colour or maternal language. (http://mareagranate.org/author/marea-granate-sanidad/)

Here again, the emigrant population is somehow questioning the conventional acquisition of rights by territorial and national citizenship. In a sense, Spaniard locals, non-EU migrants and EU emigrants have been somehow sharing a kind of 'precarious citizenship', each one with very different connotations and implications. While aware of distinctions, there is a desire to think all of those together in an effort to erase citizenship as we know it and create a non-borders politics for the basis of collective rights. In this framework, the feminist calls for putting 'care' at the center of the political imagination are endorsed by *Marea Granate's* explicit support to the 'Feminist Strike' of 2018. After all, the notion of care helps to redefine the political understanding of modern citizenship beyond nation-state limits and individual rights. Feminist precarity activists recognize that even if citizenship was historically necessary to acquire certain improvements, citizenship, as we know it, is placed on the left side of the gendered divisions of public/private spheres and individual/interdependent community. *Caretizenship*, by redefining membership along practitioners of mutual support both in the public and private sphere, attempts to erase those ingrained divisions. The goal is to imagine creative forms of organizing rights and entitlements, which are both post-national as well as beyond individual rights, mainly to address the increasing yet not fully addressed levels of mobility and vulnerability.

Toward *caretizenship*? Local, migrants and emigrants 'occupying' the concept of citizenship

Precarity movements – from classic squatter movements to the recent occupy mobilizations, from the historical migrants' hunger strikes to the ongoing transnational campaigns by *Marea Granate* – are indeed re-appropriating what they might criticize as the 'old-fashioned' notion of citizenship. Especially feminist groups within precarity struggles are refilling citizenship with alternative meanings, and delinking political belonging and collective rights from modern totems such as a nation-state's territory and a single-country's government. Suggestively, I propose that this act of erasure and iteration of citizenship constitutes a kind of 'conceptual occupation' of sorts taking place in the architecture of political modernity. While the terminology seems maintained, nonetheless the concept is squatted and occupied by unexpected understandings and suspicious subjects. European precarity movements – formed by both EU citizens and 'extra-

communitarians' – are undertaking the urgent task of rethinking citizenship in the midst of unemployment, vulnerability, mobility and criminalization. Such processes of rethinking collective rights and political identities are founded, on the one hand, on a brutal critique of national borders and citizenship as institutions of exclusion. On the other hand, this creative appropriation and reconstitution of citizenship is based on the shared experiences of precarity lived by locals, migrants and emigrants in a shared space, usually concrete neighborhoods within large European cities. It is from this common ground of living under conditions and practices of precarious citizenship that a need to delete, but still to hold to the basic premise of citizenry as the 'right to have rights' becomes imperative.

During the rise of globalization debates, Soysal pointed to how the rise of 'human rights' discourses focused on the individual's worth was for the first time legally or discursively stronger than 'state-granted rights' linked to the notion of national citizenship and defined by close notions of collective belonging (1996). It is in that human rights conjuncture when the author called for a post-national citizenship back in the 1990s. Today, security arguments prioritize state mandates for strict guarding of national borders and regimes of citizenship based on biological (*Ius Sanguinis*) and territorial (*Ius Solis*) criteria, surpassing in practice human rights jurisdictions (including *Ius Migrandi*). Furthermore, any idea close to multiple alliances and flexible citizenships seems unthinkable, as if these suggestive and legitimate calls for post-national, post-territorial and cosmopolitan citizenship would only be imaginable in the normative sphere, even losing their legitimacy and feasibility. In this impasse, social movements formed by formally Spanish citizens (although losing some of the social, political and economic rights associated with EU passports) as well as formally non-EU citizens (but enacting practices of citizenship and accessing socio-economic and political rights at the local level) are articulating 'democratic iterations' of the notion of citizenship. These movements – firmly grounded in a no-borders and anti-capitalist mindset – are struggling to constitute a novel political subjectivity, fueling collective agency, necessary to advance a distinct world order beyond Westphalian lines and cultural practices away from exclusive profit-making, but focused on sustaining all forms of life.

In the neologism of 'CARE-tizenship', there is an erasure of the 'city', the original spatial delimitation of the polity which later on was linked to a broader territorial entity, the nation-state. This erasure speaks to the rejection of an arbitrary territorialization of rights, whether at the urban or national scale. Such de-coupling of a fabricated territory from polity and community was advanced by theories of post-national citizenship. All those re-conceptualizations call for a flexible understanding of territory in relationship to the definition of a political community, flexible as going beyond abstract country limits, but capturing concrete spaces of everyday life, including transnational itineraries and trans-local family arrangements. While building on that, the notion of *caretizenship* goes a step forward in that it is still attached to a concrete collective entity beyond individual experiences of mobility. Many of those post-national iterations of citizenship are linked to the prominence of the human rights as an emerging global jurisdiction, which, for the most part, centers around individual rights, including the Right to Migrate. Going beyond legalistic terms, and rejecting the abstractions of both the individual and the nation-state, *caretizenship*, captures a community of practice, made by ties of caring relationships, mutually attending to basic needs in a context of

increasing vulnerability – precarity. *Caretizenship* is a call to reorganize the ties among the subjects of a polity not based upon sharing a national territory, nor certain ethnic blood or abstract individual rights, but founded upon the urgency of place-based responses to situations of shared needs. On the ground, the austerity crisis in Spain has been lived by many as limited access to housing, to employment, to healthcare, to childcare, etc. evolving into a radical awareness of interdependence and leading to informal yet politicized practices of mutual support. Beyond specific calls to the government, the feminist notion of *caretizenship* does not revolve around welfare state provisions, since this would limit the scope of the desired entitlements to a given nation-state and the imagined community to a given national group. Rather, while welcoming some of those welfare state services and using them strategically, the still-in-the making concept of *caretizenzhip* evokes a 'post-borders' horizon of intervention and imagination. Far from a full-functioning institution, thinking in terms of *caretizenship* contributes to open the political imagination enabling alternative horizons of political belonging, which might be attractive for constituencies in need, sharing experiences beyond normalized identities – e.g. nationals vs. foreigners.

For groups like *Precarias a La Deriva*, which contributed to develop the term 10-years ago, the notion of *caretizenship* functions in a similar way to Anderson et al.'s discussion on *Why no Borders?* (2009).[18] A key element to their argument was that a 'No-Borders politics' is 'ambitious […], but it is not utopian. It is in fact eminently practical and is being carried out daily' (Anderson, Sharma, and Wright 2009, 12). For those authors, enacting a *No Borders* politics did not require the granting of visa-waivers for all, nor the prior abolition of border control on the part of national authorities or international organizations. *No Borders* rather, serves as a horizon that guides decisions and orientations in much more everyday political and social decisions and campaigns, from labor organizing to playground activities (Anderson, Sharma, and Wright 2009). Furthermore, the pursuit of a *No Borders* politics requires above all a 'nurturing of relationships of mutuality' (Anderson, Sharma, and Wright 2009, 12). In this sense, *caretizenship* becomes an imminently practical project: it entails putting care, as in practices of mutual support and nurturing the commons, at the center of a political project engaged by any group of people.

While for *Precarias a La Deriva*, *caretizenship* was enacted primarily in the neighborhood and city-wide efforts they were involved with, for collectives that have embraced this interpretation although are mobilizing as emigrants in other countries (i.e. *Marea Granate*), a no-borders and care-centered notion of organizing entails a weaving of networks and collectives beyond one static place. For instance, the *Precarity Office* in Vienna aims at 'caring' for upcoming emigrants from Spain as well as using that organizing space to bridge with others migrants, coming both from the EU and elsewhere. This extensive threading of networks connects emigrant organizing abroad back with precarity efforts in Spain, which are mobilizing on issues such as healthcare access for both non-EU immigrants and returning Spaniard emigrants.

This paper ultimately argues that precarity movements are enacting both an erasure and a democratic iteration of the conventional notion of citizenship, which, in turn, clashes and suppresses its inherent exclusionary logic toward radical inclusion. It is still to be seen how exactly these practices and institutions of *caretizenship* would look like if developed. Nonetheless, as a theory of political belonging, this article points how the

concept of *caretizenship* enables to think outside the box of modernity, especially to imagine beyond borders and its corresponding national citizenships as *the* taken-for-granted institutions of political and social organizations.

Notes

1. The author developed a genealogy of precarity pointing how the notion opens up from its original meaning linked to labor, reaching to issues of knowledge production, life styles, mobility, housing and health. See: Casas-Cortés 2014.
2. The author first addressed this tension in her participation to an edited volume on the intersection on precarity and resistance. See Casas-Cortés and Cobarrubias 2017: 170–183.
3. This point was made in a *Citizenship Studies* article I reviewed under a blind review process. At the time of writing, the article was still in the review process and I am unable to cite the author directly.
4. https://caringlabor.wordpress.com/2010/12/14/precarias-a-la-deriva-precarious-lexicon/ (Last accessed 31 July 2018). This is one example of precarious lexicon. Still, the whole glossary of mostly invented terms is yet to be compiled in its entirety. Those vocabulary words are geared to grasp and cope with the deep transformation afoot, naming and criticizing multiple instances of neoliberal flex-exploitation and dispossession of the commons. They also envision political possibilities within and beyond flexible policies, austerity programs and restrictive migratory policies. The author further elaborates those in her book manuscript in process for press submission.
5. Doctoral dissertation fieldwork (2007–2008) founded by the US Anthropology Wenner-Gren Foundation, and post-doctoral research (2009–2011) founded by the National Science Foundation.
6. On the 'trans-European' character of precarity organizing, notice how the main day of action of these movements, *Euro Mayday*, while starting in Milan in 2001, was eventually celebrated in over 20 cities across Europe. Also notice how activist publications on precarity count with contributions by organizers from different countries, for instance see the following issues: 'Precariat' in the Vienna-based online journal *Transversal* (2004); 'Precarity' in the Dutch *Green Pepper Magazine* (2004); and 'Precarity Reader' in the British journal *Mute* (2004/2005).
7. Agency is a key topic in the discussion around precarity in the articles of *Citizenship Studies* 2016 Issue 20, n.3–4. Paret and Gleeson (2016: 277–294) introduce the tripartite framework of precarity–migration–agency nexus focusing on analyzing different migrant experiences and how their efforts of politicization in the midst of precarious conditions. While my paper intersects with these problematics, I engage a different case of activism: one which self-identifies as a 'precarity movement', making precarity its own political motto and identity, and one which not only involves migrants, but one whose participants are mobilizing under their different national affiliations as locals, migrants and emigrants.
8. See '*Oficinas de Derechos Sociales: Experiences of Political Enunciation and Organisation in Times of Precarity*' (2008) available at http://eipcp.net/transversal/0508/lopezetal/en.
9. The term and notion of 'care' has increasingly become central to the discourse of precarity-feminist movements in Spain and resonating in other European countries as well as Latin America. In fact, demands over 'care' were the main protagonist during the 2018 International Women's Day celebration. On 8 April, slogans and signs all over Spanish cities were calling for a 'care strike', 'a social reorganization of care' and 'caring rights', all around the more abstract notion of new kind of rights under a desired regime of '*caretizenship*'. See https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-43324406.
10. The name makes reference to the historic network in the US that organized to help enslaved Africans escape from bondage to freedom. http://www.ferrocarrilclandestino.net/.
11. The *Frassanito* network was an activist initiative based on numerous European countries including Spain. This text is entitled 'Euromayday and Freedom of Movement'. Available

at: http://precariousunderstanding.blogsome.com/2007/01/05/euromayday-and-freedom-of-movement/#more-45 (accessed 24 October 2017).

12. *Frassanito Network*. 2006. 'We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us. Movements and Struggles of Migration in and around Europe'. Text distributed in European Social Forum in Athens.

13. *En Transito*. 2004. 'Migrantes y precarios. Señales de un devenir *común*'. Available: http://www.sindominio.net/metabolik/alephandria/txt/casa_iniciativas_migrates_y_precarios.pdf (accessed 8 May 2017).

14. First, they were called *Offices of Social Rights* and *Precarity Agencies*. They started to spring up in the late 2000s in different Spanish cities as the product of years of precarity struggles attempting to create organizational forms outside of traditional union organizing.

15. The text is available in English 'A very Careful Strike' at: http://www.commoner.org.uk/11deriva.pdf.

16. Banco de España. 2014. *Boletín Económico*. Madrid.

17. See note 3.

18. Bridgit Anderson, Nandita Sharma and Cynthia Wright argue that rethinking migration as human activity leads to a deep questioning of the territorializing of people's subjectivities and as in nationalism: 'No Borders politics rejects notions of citizenship and statehood, and clarifies the centrality of borders to capitalism'. This discussion is further developed as a book chapter '"We are all foreigners": No Borders as a Practical Political Project' in Nyers and Rygiel (2012).

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ORCID

Maribel Casas-Cortes 🆔 http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9390-4022

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