William Walters
Department of Political Science
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
CANADA K1S 5B6
william_walters@carleton.ca

Foucault and Frontiers: Notes on the Birth of the Humanitarian Border

> What I produce […] are instruments, utensils, weapons. I would like my books to be a kind of toolbox in which others could dig around to find a tool that they can use however they wish in their own area. (Foucault 1994: 523; my translation)

Introduction

The single word "border" conceals a multiplicity and implies a constancy where genealogical investigation uncovers mutation and descent. Historical research reveals that diverse political rationalities have framed the political means and objectives of state frontiers and borders, just as the difficult work of making borders actual has drawn upon a great variety of technologies and heterogeneous administrative practices, ranging from maps of the territory, the creation of specialized border officials, and architectures of fortification to today's experimentation with bio-digitalized forms of surveillance. This chapter argues that we are witnessing a novel development within this history of borders and border-making, what I want to call the emergence of the humanitarian border. While a great deal has been written about the militarization, securitization and fortification of borders today, there is far less consideration of the humanitarianization of borders. But if the investment of border regimes by biometric technologies rightly warrants being treated as an event within the history of the making and remaking of borders (Amoore 2006), then arguably so too does the reinvention of the border as a space of humanitarian government.

Under what conditions are we seeing the rise of humanitarian borders? The emergence of the humanitarian border goes hand in hand with the move which has made state frontiers into privileged symbolic and regulatory instruments within strategies of migration control. It is part of a much wider trend that has been dubbed the "rebordering" of political and territorial space (Andreas and Biersteker 2003). The humanitarian border emerges once it becomes established

that border crossing has become, for thousands of migrants seeking, for a variety of reasons, to access the territories of the global North, a matter of life and death. It crystallizes as a way of governing this novel and disturbing situation,

and compensating for the social violence embodied in the regime of migration control.

The idea of a humanitarian border might sound at first counterintuitive or even oxymoronic. After all, we often think of contemporary humanitarianism as a force that, operating in the name of the universal but endangered subject of humanity, transcends the walled space of the inter-national system. This is, of course, quite valid. Yet it would be a mistake to draw any simple equation between humanitarian projects and what Deleuze and Guattari would call logics of deterritoralization. While humanitarian programmes might unsettle certain norms of statehood, it is important to recognize the ways in which the exercise of humanitarian power is connected to the actualization of new spaces. Whether by its redefinition of certain locales as humanitarian "zones" and crises as "emergencies" (Calhoun 2004), the authority it confers on certain experts to move rapidly across networks of aid and intervention, or its will to designate those populating these zones as "victims," it seems justified to follow Debrix's (1998) observation that humanitarianism implies reterritorialization on top of deterritorialization. Humanitarian zones can materialize in various situations – in conflict zones, amidst the relief of famine, and against the backdrop of state failure. But the case that interests me in what follows is a specific one: a situation where the actual borders of states and gateways to the territory become themselves zones of humanitarian government. Understanding the consequences of this is paramount, since it has an important bearing on what is often termed the securitization of borders and citizenship.

The chapter offers a preliminary survey of the humanitarian border. I focus on two aspects in particular: the materialization of the humanitarian border within particular forms of knowledge, and the constitutive role which politics plays in making and changing humanitarian borders. But the chapter has a second purpose in addition to this mapping exercise. This is to examine more broadly the contribution which Foucauldian studies, and especially studies in governmentality, have made to the critical and genealogical investigation of borders and frontiers. Here I observe that Foucault actually had relatively little to say about the relationship of state borders to modern regimes of power. However, this is not the case for many of those who have explored the possibilities for political analysis that he opened up: border studies has been a significant area of interest for governmentality studies. In the first part of this chapter, and as a prelude to my discussion of humanitarianization, I argue that for all its important insights, Foucauldian writing about borders has often stuck rather rigidly to the concepts which Foucault left us. But is this Foucauldian vocabulary of power adequate to the mapping of emergent and unusual formations of power – in border studies or elsewhere? I don't think so. The chapter argues it is not a matter of dispensing with concepts like neoliberalism, biopolitics, sovereign power, and so on. But there is a need to supplement these terms with new concepts. One challenge for future studies in governmentality, then, is

that of overcoming the attitude that all the tools we need are already there, in Foucault's toolbox. It is with this aim of adding to the toolbox that I take up the question of the humanitarian border.

Foucault and Frontiers

It is probably fair to say that the theme of frontiers is largely absent from the two courses that are today read together as Foucault's lectures on "governmentality" (Foucault 1991; 2007; 2008). This is not to suggest that frontiers receive no mention at all. Within these lectures we certainly encounter passing remarks on the theme. For instance, Foucault speaks at one point of "the administrative state, born in the territoriality of national boundaries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and corresponding to a society of regulation and discipline" (Foucault 1991: 104).[1] Elsewhere, he notes how the calculation and demarcation of new frontiers served as one of the practical elements of military-diplomatic technology, a machine he associates with the government of Europe in the image of a balance of power and according to the governmental logic of *raison d'état*. "When the diplomats, the ambassadors who negotiated the treaty of Westphalia, received instructions from their government, they were explicitly advised to ensure that the new frontiers, the distribution of states, the new relationships to be established between the German states and the Empire, and the zones of influence of France, Sweden, and Austria be established in terms of a principle: to maintain a balance between the different European states" (Foucault 2007: 297).

But these are only hints of what significance the question of frontiers might have within the different technologies of power which Foucault sought to analyze. They are only fragmentary reflections on the place borders and frontiers might occupy within the genealogy of the modern state which Foucault outlines with his research into governmentality.[2]

Why was Foucault apparently not particularly interested in borders when he composed these lectures? One possible answer is suggested by Elden's careful and important work on power-knowledge and territory. Elden takes issue with Foucault for the way in which he discusses territorial rule largely as a foil which allows him to provide a more fully-worked out account of governmentality and its administration of population. Despite the fact that the term appears prominently in the title of Foucault's lectures, "the issue of territory continually emerges only to be repeatedly marginalized, eclipsed, and underplayed" (Elden 2007: 1). Because Foucault fails to reckon more fully with the many ways in which the production of territory – and most crucially its demarcation by practices of frontier marking and control – serves as a precondition for the government of population, it is not surprising that the question of frontiers occupies little space in his narrative.[3]

-- *end of page 140* --

But there is another explanation for the relative absence of questions of frontiers in Foucault's writing on governmentality. And here we have to acknowledge that, framed as it is previously, this is a problematic question. For it risks the kind of retrospective fallacy which projects a set of very contemporary issues and concerns onto Foucault's time. It is probably fair to speculate that frontiers and border security was not a political issue during the 1970s in the way that it is today in many western states. "Borders" had yet to be constituted as a sort of meta-issue, capable of condensing a whole complex of political fears and concerns, including globalization, the loss of sovereignty, terrorism, trafficking and unchecked immigration. The question of the welfare state certainly *was* an issue, perhaps even a meta-issue, when Foucault was lecturing, and it is perhaps not coincidental that he should devote so much space to the examination of pastoralism. But not the border. The point is not to suggest that Foucault's work evolved in close,

unmediated correspondence with shifts in the political issues of his day. But it is to observe that any genealogy of the state will inevitably bear the traces of its political time.

Foucault may have lacked the inclination or the political motivation to offer anything like a systematic analysis of frontiers and their relationship to modern rationalities and technologies of rule. Nevertheless, this has not inhibited the emergence of a sizeable body of work which has begun to ponder the government of borders, and found in Foucault's work, and subsequent studies in governmentality, a series of concepts and analytics to advance this theoretical project.[4] Not the least significant accomplishment of this work has been to advance current debates about the securitization of borders, and the governance of migrations and mobilities more generally. Securitization has typically been understood in terms of the social construction of threat, and the legitimation of exceptional administrative measures (e.g., Buonfino 2004). Foucauldian and governmentality-inspired research has opened up a different angle. It has done this largely by examining the particular rationalities, technologies and strategies which currently rationalize and invest the space of borders in western states

Yet a glance over this impressive body of work reveals that its accomplishments are somewhat uneven. There are two things in particular which stand out. The first concerns the temporal scope of many of these investigations. It is overwhelmingly the case that studies in the governmentality of borders and bordering have trained their attention on the immediate present. While investigations of biometrics, smart cards, and detention abound, we know very little about, say, historical practices of quarantine in ports or the techniques of partitioning that were used in the demarcation of colonial and postcolonial territories (but see Crampton 2007). Perhaps a certain "9/11" effect has been at work here, drawing research into the orbit of very contemporary and highly visible concerns at the expense of those that seem more remote. But whatever the specific causes, the outcome is that thinking about borders has yet to profit from historical and genealogical framing in

-- *end of page 141* --

the way that studies in the governance of, say, poverty (Dean 1991; Procacci 1991), certainly have. Of course, this obsession with the immediate present is hardly inconsistent with main currents in the social sciences where a certain presentism is the norm. But it is at odds with the tenor of much work in governmentality studies where a commitment to historical work has been important.

Nevertheless, it is not this point but a second criticism of Foucauldian studies of borders that will form the basis for the remainder of this chapter. This concerns what I take to be a somewhat restricted analytical imagination at play in this body of work. If they have been overwhelmingly confined to the immediate present, these studies have also been at times conservative in the range of concepts they have employed to make sense of practices and logics of power. To develop this point I want to turn to the quote with which I started. Here we find Foucault musing, somewhat modestly perhaps, that he would prefer his work to be treated like a toolbox. Rather than a philosophical relationship where his works would operate within games of interpretation and explication he proposes a far more pragmatic, even utilitarian relationship. Not concepts that might be debated as to their precise meaning, as many would in the world of professional political theory, but tools (others can use them "however they wish") to be put to work in the study of different phenomena. In a vaguely Nietzschean sense, whatever value they might possess would follow from their application and effects.

Now it could be said that the literature on borders has been quite faithful to Foucault in this regard. If anything, it could be accused of being too faithful. For it has sometimes proceded as though the *only* tools necessary or even available for the job of investigating borders were already at hand. It is as though most of the necessary concepts were already there - in the toolbox. It is just a matter of reaching in and taking a few. It is perhaps this attitude which explains why so many studies have rather similar and familiar conceptual coordinates such as discipline, sovereign power, biopolitics and governmentality. This is not to say there have been no attempts to connect Foucault with other strains of thought. Indeed, there have been creative fusions and dialogues. The use of Agamben to make sense of the exceptional character of detentions and controls springs to mind (Butler 2004; Isin and Rygiel 2007). Nevertheless, it remains the case that on the whole this literature has proceeded as though most of the concepts needed to do the work of a genealogy of bordering were already in existence.

Given the fact that Foucault commenced the critical investigation of neoliberalism long before it had become a theoretical concern for most leftists, it could be argued that he offers a more than passable guide to themes that continue to frame our politics today. At the same time, it has to be said that the world we inhabit has changed in countless and profound ways from the world that Foucault confronted up until his untimely passing. While we should avoid the epochalist stance which posits the birth of an entirely new

--- *end of page 142* ---

order, we can nevertheless not adequately capture new forms, identities, and power relationships if we work with the unexamined assumption that all the terms we need are already in existence. This is of course true in a general sense, but it is particularly true in the area of borders and migration, an institutional domain that has undergone rapid expansion, experimentation and complex transformations in recent years. As such, there is a strong case to be made that future research in the area of borders, territory, security, etc. might start with a question about its relationship to Foucault's toolbox. In short, we can only get so far with the contents of Foucault's toolbox. It is not a matter of throwing out the toolbox, but of recognizing its limits. Since it was never assembled with the intention of being an all-purpose set of instruments, it seems prudent to consider more explicitly in what ways and in what circumstances it is necessary to craft new tools. With this point in mind I turn to the question of borders and humanitarianism.

Humanitarian Government

Before I address the question of the humanitarian border, it is necessary to explain what I understand by the humanitarian. Here my thinking has been shaped by recent work that engages the humanitarian not as a set of ideas and ideologies, nor simply as the activity of certain nongovernmental actors and organizations, but as a complex domain possessing specific forms of governmental reason. Fassin's work on this theme is particularly important. Fassin demonstrates that humanitarianism can be fruitfully connected to the broader field of government which Foucault outlined, where government is not a necessary attribute of states but a rationalized activity than can be carried out by all sorts of agents, in various contexts, and towards multiple ends. At its core, "Humanitarian government can be defined as the administration of human collectivities in the name of a higher moral principle which sees the preservation of life and the alleviation of suffering as the highest value of action" (Fassin 2007: 151). As he goes on to stress, the value of such a definition is that we do not see a particular state, or a non-state form such as a nongovernmental organization, as the necessary agent of humanitarian action. Instead, it becomes possible to think in terms of a complex assemblage, comprising particular forms of humanitarian

reason, specific forms of authority (medical, legal, spiritual) but also certain technologies of government – such as mechanisms for raising funds and training volunteers, administering aid and shelter, documenting injustice, and publicizing abuse. Seen from this angle humanitarianism appears as a much more supple, protean thing. Crucially, it opens up our ability to perceive "a broader political and moral logic at work both within and outside state forms" (ibid.).

If the humanitarian can be situated in relation to the analytics of government, it can also be contextualized in relation to the biopolitical. "Not

-- *end of page 143* --

only did the last century see the emergence of regimes committed to the physical destruction of populations," observes Redfield, "but also of entities devoted to monitoring and assisting populations in maintaining their physical existence, even while protesting the necessity of such an action and the failure of anyone to do much more than this bare minimum" (2005: 329). It is this "minimalist biopolitics," as Redfield puts it, that will be so characteristic of the humanitarian. And here the accent should be placed on the adjective "minimalist" if we are not to commit the kind of move which I criticized above, namely collapsing everything new into existing Foucauldian categories. It is important to regard contemporary humanitarianism as a novel formation and a site of ambivalence and undecideability, and not just as one more instance of what Hardt and Negri (2000) might call global "biopolitical production."

The Birth of the Humanitarian Border

In a press release issued on June 29, 2007, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) publicized a visit which its then Director General, Brunson McKinley, was about to make to a "reception centre for migrants" on the Mediterranean island of Lampedusa (IOM 2007). The Director General is quoted as saying: "Many more boats will probably arrive on Lampedusa over the summer with their desperate human cargo and we have to ensure we can adequately respond to their immediate needs…. This is why IOM will continue to work closely with the Italian government, the Italian Red Cross, UNHCR and other partners to provide appropriate humanitarian responses to irregular migrants and asylum seekers reaching the island."

The same press release observes that IOM's work with its "partners" was part of a wider effort to improve the administration of the "reception" (the word "detention" is conspicuously absent) and "repatriation" of "irregular migrants" in Italy. Reception centers were being expanded, and problems of overcrowding alleviated. The statement goes on to observe that IOM had opened its office on Lampedusa in April 2006. Since that time "Forced returns from Lampedusa [had] stopped."

Lampedusa is a small Italian island located some 200 km south of Sicily and 300 km to the north of Libya. Its geographical location provides a clue as to how it is that in 2004 this Italian outpost first entered the spotlight of European and even world public attention, becoming a potent signifier for anxieties about an international migration crisis (Andrijasevic 2006). For it was then that this Italian holiday destination became the main point of arrival for boats carrying migrants from Libya to Italy. That year more than 10,000 migrants are reported to have passed through the "temporary stay and assistance centre" (CPTA) the Italian state maintains on the island. The vast majority had arrived in overcrowded, makeshift boats after a perilous sea journey lasting up to several weeks. Usually these boats

are intercepted in Italian waters by the Italian border guards and the migrants transferred to the holding center on the island. Following detention, which can last for more than a month, they are either transferred to other CPTAs in Sicily and southern Italy, or expelled to Libya.

A particularly notorious instance of these expulsions occurred during the first week of October 2004. Using military airplanes to move more than 1,000 migrants from Lampedusa to Libya, Italy undertook what many critics have labeled an illegal act of collective expulsion. This expulsion remains one of the most notable fruits to be born from a bilateral readmission agreement signed between the Italian and Libyan governments, an accord aimed at fostering collaboration in matters of irregular migration. It came in the context of an improvement in political relations between Libya, Italy and Europe. It is perhaps no coincidence that, as Human Rights Watch (HRW) has reported, very shortly after the expulsion, the EU's eighteen-year long arms embargo on Libya was lifted (HRW 2007: 107).

But there is, as one might expect, another side to the story which the IOM press release does not communicate. Ever since Lampedusa first became a new front in the EU's "fight against illegal immigration," the practices of the Italian government had been the subject of sustained scrutiny and outcry from a range of NGOs, delegations and inquiries. In addition to protesting the expulsions, these interventions also condemned the conditions suffered by migrants in the center and expressed alarm at the difficulties they faced in registering claims for asylum. The IOM presents its expansion of services as a matter of providing "humanitarian assistance for many exhausted migrants who arrive after perilous journeys on unseaworthy vessels." As such, it reproduces key elements of a humanitarian script in which intervention is mobilized as an act of charity and protection (Aradau 2004). A more politically conscious reading would see it as, at least in part, a response to negative publicity generated by the NGOs. It would perhaps regard the enhanced presence of the IOM, along with other humanitarian agencies, not simply as a gesture of care, but as an instance where humanitarianism was being operationalized in an attempt to manage a political crisis and neutralize some of the controversies which Europe's ongoing confrontation with mass migration is now facing (Albahari 2006; Aradau 2004). One might even say that the outcome of IOM's intervention was a certain normalization of this border practice.

Holding together in an uneasy alliance a politics of alienation with a politics of care, and a tactic of abjection and one of reception, the case of Lampedusa offers in microcosm a series of elements, contradictory processes and events that I am calling the birth of the humanitarian border. Lampedusa is of course not an isolated case. While it exhibits certain unique features, it also contains many elements that are being repeated at other sites and on other scales.

Much has recently been written concerning the securitization of borders. Among other things, this has highlighted their renewed function as nodes

which filter and distribute (im)mobility, sorting population in terms of risk profiles (Sparke 2006). Highlighting the extensive bureaucratic investments which have been made in digital technology and surveillance, Amoore (2006) identifies such developments with the appearance of a new kind of frontier, an event she calls the biometric border. Bonditti (2004) goes further, suggesting that the advent of new surveillance systems, coupled with data-sharing between national security agencies, points us away from a regime of borders based on territorial space to an order of "pixellated" borders actualized in digital networks. In speaking of humanitarian

borders my point is not to take issue with the tendencies which such arguments identify. On the contrary, it strikes me that biometric and other surveillance technologies are extremely important and troubling, even if the nature of the relationship of this biodigital technology to the Foucauldian idea of biopower requires further theoretical attention (Epstein 2007). My point is a different one. It is to register a note of caution. To focus only on new developments in surveillance and control risks a rather linear and developmentalist narrative about borders, an argument in which we go from lines to points, from contiguous territories to distributed networks, from the material to the immaterial, etc. If I speak of a humanitarian border it is not just to insist on the emergence of a domain which deserves to be taken seriously in its own right. It is also to complicate the linear narrative; to suggest that at the same time that borders seem to become more like this, they are also taking other forms, materializing along other lines whose trajectory is difficult to predict.

It is for the aforementioned reasons we need to think more carefully about the humanitarian border. With this end in mind, I want to make four points which are intended to clarify my understanding of the humanitarian border.

First, the humanitarian border does not present us with a general process that is acting to transform all borders. It is not something universal but quite specific. The humanitarian border is materializing only in certain places under quite specific circumstances. It is tempting to speculate that geography is an important factor here. The humanitarian government of migration is becoming common at what Freudenstein (2000) calls the world's "frontiers of poverty." These are the zones like the US-Mexico borderlands (Doty 2006), or the complex space formed by the Mediterranean, North Africa and the southern European states of the EU (Pugh 2004). These spaces can be likened to faultlines in the smooth space of globalization where it seems that the worlds designated by the terms Global North and Global South confront one another in a very concrete, abrasive way, and where gradients of wealth and poverty, citizenship and non-citizenship appear especially sharply. Yet it would be wrong to treat the humanitarian border as merely a second order phenomenon determined by this primary reality because there are all sorts of other elements that are critical in accounting for the emergence and the variation in the humanitarianization

-- *end of page 146* --

of borders. One is, of course, the political agency of NGOs. As important studies are beginning to show, there is a political and a moral economy to the NGO world (Dezalay and Garth 2006; Ron, et al. 2005). Possessing scarce resources, NGOs have to make strategic decisions as to which issues they will publicize, which situations of injustice they will politicize, and which experiences of human suffering they will seek to aid. For such reasons it is fair to say that the humanitarian border is a complex, overdetermined phenomenon.

Second, the humanitarian border is the effect of a particular governmental strategy, but one that can only be understood when situated alongside other ongoing strategies. If certain border zones are becoming spaces of humanitarian engagement, this is only because border crossing has been made, for certain segments of the world's migratory population, into a matter of life and death (Albahari 2006). And if border crossing has become a matter of life and death, this is because we have a situation where military tactics, advanced surveillance technology, naval patrols, armed guards and guard dogs, watchtowers, razor wire, and much else are all deemed politically necessary and legitimate elements in the "defence" of the borders of the Global North faced with an "invasion" of migrants and asylum seekers. As research in migration consistently shows (Sassen 2003), it is the need to circumnavigate this vast, costly and often brutal apparatus

of control that drives migrants to risk their lives, taking their chances with an underground economy which sells false identity, or a place on a rickety boat.

But if humanitarian government operates on a space that appears to be already securitized, militarized, fortified, etc, it should not be understood as a simple two-step process, a matter of action and response – as though first there is securitization and then humanitarianization, which comes along to sweep up the human collateral damage. While such a view is not without justification, it fails to capture the way in which tactics and counter-tactics play themselves out at a more molecular level. For instance, there are frequently occasions on which security practices and effects materialize within the institutions and practices of humanitarian government. For example, Albahari (in press) documents the way in which there was a politics of "reception" concerning irregular migrants arriving on Italy's southeastern shores from nearby Albania. The Catholic diocese of Otranto and the local branch of the charity *Caritas* had offered to host migrants with families in the region. However, the local police prefect of Lecce rejected this offer because it implied a dispersal of the migrants. Instead, he welcomed the offer of the diocese of Lecce which proposed to assemble the migrants on a single site, a former seaside resort for children called the "Regina Pacis." Here it would be much easier to manage and monitor this population. In this way we see that the humanitarian sector is certainly not a monolithic space but one traversed by its own politics and even rivalries. But we see also how security practices and effects can materialize in

-- *end of page 147* --

different ways – more intense here, less so there - depending on the ways in which humanitarian assistance is structured.

Third, the humanitarian border is not a fixed border but something which fluctuates. Its geography is determined in part by the shifting routes of migrants themselves. It has to be remembered that their movements constitute an irreducible social element in making and unmaking global borders (Mezzadra and Neilson 2003: ¶ 8). To return to the case of Lampedusa, if the humanitarian border appears here, it is in part because migrants and their facilitators have targeted this outlying fragment of Italian/EU territory not least because of its geographical proximity to the Libyan coast.

But if the humanitarian border is not fixed, then neither is it contiguous. Rather than imagining it as a line resembling the political borders of cartographic space, it might be more useful to liken it to the distributed space Barry has called a technological zone. One form of the technological zone is a "zone of qualification." This exists when "the qualities of objects or practices are assessed in order that they meet more or less common standards or criteria" (Barry 2006: 240). Zones of qualification have been discussed in relation to the governance of environmental standards and food products circulating within, and at the margins, of a European space (Dunn 2005). But there is an element of the zone of qualification at stake in the formation of humanitarian space, and in my case, the humanitarian border. As we will see, one of the primary modes of action of humanitarian NGOs is to investigate particular sites such as detention centers, airport waiting zones and reception practices in order to reveal precisely the extent to which they fail to meet more or less commonly recognized, and sometimes legally encoded standards and norms for the treatment of migrants and refugees. Like other zones of qualification, it becomes apparent that the humanitarian border is contentious for it "generates active and passive forms of resistance to [its] construction" (Barry 2006: 241).

Finally, there is a point to be made about humanitarianism, power and order. Those looking to locate contemporary humanitarianism within a bigger picture would perhaps follow the lead of Hardt and Negri. As these theorists of "Empire" see things, NGOs like Amnesty International and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) are, contrary to their own best intentions, implicated in global order. As agents of "moral intervention" who, because they participate in the construction of emergency, "prefigure the state of exception from below," these actors serve as the preeminent "frontline force of imperial intervention." As such, Hardt and Negri see humanitarianism as "completely immersed in the biopolitical context of the constitution of Empire" (Hardt and Negri 2000: 36).

There is certainly no shortage of evidence for the view that humanitarianism is susceptible to co-option and capture by official strategies of policing and control. However, it would be rash to assume this is always the case. Here it might be better to rethink the relationship between humanitarianism and the state, much as earlier Foucauldian research examined the

-- *end of page 148* --

government of the social (e.g., many of the essays in Burchell, et al. 1991). This literature revealed how social knowledges, techniques and strategies were invented across a great variety of institutional sites - whether by trade unionists, industrialists, cooperatives, amateur surveyors and moral reformers, etc. - and for multiple ends. Certainly the crystallization of this social field would offer a set of rationalities and technologies by which the state would, at the start of the last century, reinvent itself as a welfare state. But such acts of colonization and appropriation did not exhaust the social field, if for no other reason than the fact that social knowledges would continue to provide a standard by which the state could be criticized and reformed. Perhaps it would be more insightful to approach humanitarianism in this way as well – as a field which exists in a permanent state of co-option, infiltration but also provocation with the state (but also with other supranational and international entities as well).

Borders, Humanitarianism, Knowledge

Certainly there exist a number of excellent studies exploring the idea and the transformation of frontiers in history (Anderson 1996; Lefebvre 1973; Maier 2002). Yet the genealogy of the border, understood as a technology of power, remains largely unwritten. Such a genealogy would surely accord a central place to the study of the changing regimes of knowledge in terms of which borders have been marked out and accorded particular aims and functions, and which projects to govern (through) borders have been pursued. For instance, it is known that what we understand as a modern frontier – that is, "not a disputed region or a zone of control, but a line" (Hirst 2005: 37) – only became widely established in the eighteenth century. The fact that it became a common and defining feature of statehood and modern territoriality might be attributed to the inception of a "Westphalian" system of international relations. But more concretely the linear frontier was only able to emerge once states began to acquire particular forms of knowledge, and administrative capacity which allowed them to survey, map and mark their frontiers (Hirst 2005: 37; cf. Black 1997: ch.5). Perhaps it comes as no surprise that the German geographer Friedrich Ratzel was quick to claim the invention of this new kind of frontier as yet one more mark of European civilizational superiority, made possible by its mastery of sciences like cartography and geodesy (Cuttitta 2006: 34).

Particular knowledges also play an integral and constitutive role in making up the humanitarian border. What are these knowledges? What kind of territory do they mark out and

how do they populate it? What plane of reality do they help to constitute? A quick survey of the vast output of reports and inquiries generated by human rights groups and humanitarian agencies offers some answers to these questions. Clearly we are dealing not with knowledges which aim at drawing borderlines themselves, as did

earlier cartographic practices. Nor are these knowledges which, as in the case of risk management approaches, make it their aim to optimize the movement of population across borders while securing against the mobility of dangerous agents. Instead, they are knowledges which problematize the border as a site of suffering, violence and death, and a political zone of injustice and oppression.

As we noted previously, Redfield uses the term "minimalist biopolitics" to describe the kind of medical humanitarianism associated with MSF operating in disaster zones. There are certainly grounds for seeing aspects of a similar minimalist biopolitics in operation at the humanitarian border as well. This significantly attenuated biopolitics perhaps finds its saddest and starkest expression in those projects that make it their sober task to document the death of each border crosser and its circumstances.[5] It is here, in this grim reckoning of loss, that the theme of the border as a threshold of life and death is given hard empirical form, both quantitatively and qualitatively. If certain governments now regard deportation ratios as a privileged index of the effectiveness of their border control strategies (Fekete 2005: 66), the death rate has emerged as the number which is frequently used in criticism of such projects. As with the current wars of occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan one sees the counting of the nameless, the faceless, the collateral damage of the game of security, as emergent within a politics which aspires to call political government to account for its actions.[6]

However minimalist, this biopolitics nevertheless does in fact, extend some way beyond the grim empirics of fatality because there is also a concerted attempt to document the medical condition of the migratory space. This is both for the purposes of rationalizing the provision of medical aid, and protesting the political regime which, whether intentionally or unintentionally, visits such suffering on the individual and collective migratory body. In certain circumstances this knowledge offers clues about shifting tactics of border transgression. For instance, there is the case of those particular physicians who tend to migrants on the coastguard jetty, immediately as they disembark the boats that have ferried them from North Africa to Europe's shores. An International Red Cross bulletin cites the case of one such physician working on the island of Lampedusa who keeps a careful record, and notes how he hasn't had to use an intravenous drip for months. He speculates that the absence of dehydration amongst migrants may be a sign that people-smugglers are using larger vessels to cover the bulk of the distance from Libya, then transferring migrants to smaller boats which are too fragile to be turned back by the Italian authorities (Red Cross 2006).

Yet it is not only the shadowy world of people-smuggling which is glimpsed by the medical gaze. It is not just the shifting tactics of border transgression which are being diagnosed from the migrant body. Perhaps more significant is the way in which the documentation of physical and psychological trauma will be mobilized as medical evidence of systemic violence perpetrated against migrants by various agencies of border control, migrant detention,

and deportation. For instance, a recent MSF (2005) report documents the situation in Morocco. Focusing on "illegal sub-Saharan immigrants" who have tended to see this country as a transit stage en route to Europe, this report itemizes not just the various forms of illness suffered, often resulting from poor living conditions and exposure during epic trans-Saharan journeys. Crucially it also serves as a record, including many personal testimonies, regarding the violence inflicted on migrants by Moroccan and Spanish security forces. In the case of the former it is alleged that violence is in fact a strategic and systematic component in its policing activity.

If medical expertise provides one axis for knowing the humanitarian border, a second axis is constituted by certain forms of legal know-how. This is manifested in the numerous ways in which the border is documented as a regime which is violating certain norms of treatment and denying certain rights to migrants; a regime where political authorities fail to exercise or even recognize their legal and/or moral responsibilities. This might take the form of observations that particular immigration officials and justices of the peace, responsible for authorizing expulsions, are not properly trained or qualified in the relevant human rights situation of the countries of origin/destination of certain deportees (HRW 2006: 108). It might take the form of observations that interpretation and translation services at a given reception centre are not "in conformity with international and regional standards," thereby undermining the ability of migrants and asylum seekers to register claims for protection (HRW 2002: 4). And it might also find expression in the work of undercover journalism when this finds, for instance, that the phone booth in a particular detention center was frequently out of order; that, contrary to the relevant Charter for detained migrants, the authorities had failed to provide detainees with a telephone card worth 5 euros every 10 days; and that a clandestine market whereby such cards were sold at inflated prices was operating in the center – all of which obviously hinders the detainee in her ability to remain in touch with relatives and legal assistance (Gatti 2005; cited in Andrijasevic 2006: 5).

These are but a few of the ways in which the humanitarian border is configured as a sociolegal space, and its subjects governed if not as, then certainly in the image of rights-bearing individuals. Two points should be made in this respect. First, these few examples reveal that although human rights are frequently discussed as a philosophical issue, they also take a governmentalized form. If this issue has been framed as a matter of elevated ideals, it will nevertheless also configure itself around what might seem the most mundane details of institutional life. This governmentalization finds expression in the meticulous anatomization of abuse and denial. I noted above that the humanitarian border is dynamic in the sense that it moves geographically. But it is dynamic in another sense: one can observe how knowledge spreads out across its surfaces, documenting facilities, authorities, procedures, and practices; conferring a certain discursive depth and volume to the border.

-- *end of page 151* --

Second, these few examples suggest that it would be insufficient to treat the birth of the humanitarian border as but one more instance of an ever-widening regime of biopower. As we have seen, there certainly is a concern with the migrant as a living subject/population. But if terms like biopolitics and biopower are to have any critical purchase, we should also note all those instances where they combine with other forms of power and other specifications of the subject. Foucault once noted how the "welfare state problem" involved the "tricky adjustment" between a pastoral power exercised over living individuals and a political power wielded over legal subjects (1988: 67). This tricky adjustment between different powers and subjectivities is not confined to the welfare state; it is also evident in the humanitarian border. The overall thrust of humanitarian intervention is certainly towards the protection of subjects understood as vulnerable groups. But as the seemingly minor case of the phone cards makes evident, this move

is also cross-cut with the presumption of subjects who are able, or are to be capacitated, to mobilize for themselves. To suppose that the humanitarian border is configured only around the identity of the victim, as some have for humanitarianism more generally, is perhaps too simple (Debrix 1998).[7]

In discussing the ways in which the humanitarian border is constituted as a field of knowledge, as a positive domain, I have been at pains to stress that we need to avoid the reflex action that treats contemporary forms of border regime as one more expression of a given repertoire of powers. Indeed, my use of the term humanitarian border is designed in part to emphasize that we are dealing here with a singularity, something new. This is not to suggest that the kinds of analytics which have proven so useful in studies of power and governmentality have no place. Clearly they do. Instead, the task is always one of specifying how they might combine, mutate, transform in specific circumstances. With this point in mind, I want to raise one more point concerning the relationship of knowledges to borders. This concerns what we might call its dominant modes and styles of truth production.

As we have already seen, the inscription of the humanitarian border into discourse involves a specific production of truth. Not unlike the production of truth in other domains, it is buttressed by various forms of modern expertise, principally medical, legal, and social, as we have seen, but also psychological and spiritual.[8] But our case is qualitatively different from the production of truth concerning, say, industrial productivity or unemployment. For one thing, the production of humanitarian knowledge takes place in highly-situated ways, structured by the temporality of unfolding crises, moving in fits and starts which shadow the shifting geography of migratory control strategies. This is not the systematic gaze within which social and economic fields are mapped, on the basis of permanent statistical apparatuses and routinized reporting procedures. Instead, it is a knowledge which depends much more upon the work of ad hoc missions, delegations, and visits whose task it is to gather data and testimony in the field. In this

--- *end of page 152* ---

respect, it is interesting to note how the practice of missions and visits to places of detention, or islands and coastlines of migrant arrival, comes to be a site of careful governance in its own right, whether in the form of manuals advising on methods of visiting detained refugees (Gallagher et al. 2006) or the documentation of the levels and degrees of "transparency" which surround specific border control practices.[9]

But it is different in another sense for we are dealing here with projects whose aims are more complex than merely expanding the realm of social knowledge. What is at stake here is the making visible of a world that is understood as being hidden, a "space of nonexistence" (Coutin 2003) where the very fact of opacity is deemed a constitutive and integral element in the perpetuation of injustice and suffering.[10] It is this condition that requires that any attempt to know this sphere acquires a high degree of ethicality. It entails a labor of bearing witness, and its style is typically that of a "motivated truth" (Redfield 2006) forged in the heat of politics.[11] As one of their epistemic strategies, humanitarian inquiries frequently incorporate personal testimony and eyewitness accounts from migrants. The move is significant both in that it accords "voice" to subjects who are presumed to have no place as political subjects in official debates (Nyers 2003), and that it acts as a tactic of empathy. But it could be said that humanitarian reporting of borders is also an act of testimony in its own right. As such it could profitably be situated in terms of the wider "witnessing fever [that] has taken hold in a variety of fields of intellectual endeavour" (Kurasawa 2007: 24).

Humanitarianism, Borders, Politics

Foucauldian writing about borders has mirrored the wider field of governmentality studies in at least one respect. While it has produced some fascinating and insightful accounts of contemporary strategies and technologies of border-making and border policing, it has tended to confine its attention to official and often state-sanctioned projects. Political dynamics and political acts have certainly not been ignored. But little attention has been paid to the possibility that politics and resistance operate not just in an extrinsic relationship to contemporary regimes, but within them.[12] To date this literature has largely failed to view politics as something constitutive and productive of border regimes and technologies. That is to say, there is little appreciation of the ways in which movements of opposition, and those particular kinds of resistance which Foucault calls "counter conduct," can operate not externally to modes of bordering but by means of "a series of exchanges" and "reciprocal supports" (Foucault 2007: 355).

The humanitarian border is interesting because it presents us with a domain where it is especially clear that governmental practices emanate not from a given centre of official authority but in contexts of contestation

--- *end of page 153* ---

and politicization. Political contestation and governmental invention frequently proceed hand in hand. It offers a promising site where the observer can follow what O'Malley has called – in a somewhat different context – "indigenous governance" (O'Malley 1996). This is to say that the policing of borders today cannot be understood solely on the basis of the study of official schemes and inventions, be these emergent technologies like biometrics or novel institutions like Homeland Security. For humanitarianism, insofar as it operates as a source of governmental innovation, has made the policing of borders a much more complex, polymorphous and heterogeneous affair. Fassin has written of a militaro-humanitarian moment (Fassin 2007: 155), a term succinctly expressing the fact that at a certain point one sees war and humanitarian action, typically presumed to be forces opposed to one another, enter into a tense but mutually supportive relationship. My point is that the humanitarian border involves similar transactions and imbrications between official governance and certain moves which contest it.

Let us examine a particular case. One area where this emerging imbrication can be studied quite clearly is in the management of detention and reception centers for migrants. The field of NGO activity is quite diverse, with different agencies specializing in different areas. In this context the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) has made the question of the conduct of detention and the condition of the detainee into one of its specialist domains. For instance, it has initiated and/or participated in a series of major cross-national research projects examining detention practices and conditions. These studies are notable for the way they combine strong criticism of particular national practices with highly specific recommendations for improvement. So, in one report on detention in Belgium, the Belgian government is taken to task for such things as the lack of transparency in its detention and deportation practices, and the lack of autonomy of doctors working in the detention system (JRS 2006). And yet the overall thrust of JRS's intervention in this area is not to condemn the practice of detention and deportation as such, as might be the case with radical activism. Instead, it is a more reformatory end which aspires to "provide essential services to this population [detainees], raise awareness of their plight and lobby for improved treatment in line with human rights standards" (JRS 2007: 1). A series of practical steps as to the latter are offered in one report on detention in the new member states of the EU

(JRS 2007). The instrument of "best practice" may have originated within management circles, but here we see it transposed to the world of the management of human suffering. Here we encounter the itemization of various detention "best practices": these range from encouragement for monitoring and reporting activities by "civil society actors" to the free provision of psychological care where needed. Elsewhere, JRS is involved in training social workers to better equip them for work with asylum seekers and irregular migrants in detention. For instance, with funding from the EU's own European Refugee

-- *end of page 154* --

Fund, its Reception and Detention Centre Training Project has run training sessions in such places as Bucharest, London, Valetta and Rome. It has also published a specialist handbook targeted at visitors and social workers in detention centers (Gallagher et al. 2006). In these and no doubt other ways, it can be said that JRS constitutes a source of expertise on migrant detention. While it is critical of existing practices, it is at the same time not outside the institutional matrix of the contemporary border regime. On the contrary, insofar as it subjects the latter to critical and technical scrutiny, receives funding from the EU, and participates in the training of authorities, it is a partner, however uneasily, in this state of affairs.

Of course, NGOs and humanitarians occupy a range of political and ethical positions. Many would refuse to take state funding, or participate in matters of day to day administration. With that said, many others do participate. As a consequence, we cannot understand contemporary border regimes without recognizing their agonistic character. This is partly due to the irreducible subjectivity of the migrants themselves, as those who write of migration as an autonomous movement and a "struggle for the border" rightly insist (Rodriguez 1996). But it is also due to the presence of the NGOs and others. Border regimes are composed not just at the level of strategies and technologies of control, but also at the level of strategies which combine elements of protest and visibilization with practices of pastoral care, aid, and assistance. Politics is therefore immanent to the border regime and not something which merely comes to it from outside. Colin Gordon has clarified what is at stake in Foucault's argument that liberalism is founded on "a notion of society as a 'transactional reality', a mobile surface of engagement between the practices of government and the universe of the governed which constantly tends to escape their grasp" (Donzelot and Gordon 2008: 51; see also Foucault 2008: 297). It is just this sense of a transactional reality which is at issue here, and which future explorations of the governmentality of borders would do well to take more seriously.

The theme of politics is important to the study of the humanitarian border because of the fact that politics is generative and immanent to it. But politics is important in a second sense: it serves to define the very boundaries of the humanitarian. Thus far we have proceeded as though the meaning of humanitarianism were relatively clear, and the identity of humanitarian actors relatively settled. But this is far from always being the case. In my final comment on the theme of the humanitarian border, I want to suggest that the very boundaries of the humanitarian are determined by political struggles. We should not assume that the humanitarian exists only as a settled terrain on which politics takes place. It is also possible to speak of political struggles which delimit the scope and the limits of the humanitarian. This is evident in a number of recent conflicts which are ongoing.

The limits of the humanitarian are often drawn in very minor and perhaps barely perceptible ways. In some respects they could be said to be set from within. Take the case of the following reflection on the problem

of providing aid offered in a recent International Red Cross bulletin. It notes that while there is an urgent need to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants crossing the Mediterranean and the Atlantic in their quest to reach Spanish territory, "no one wants to create a 'pull factor' that attracts more irregular migrants into making deadly voyages" (Red Cross 2006). For this reason, it observes, "National societies – especially Red Crescent Societies in the Maghreb – have to think carefully before doing anything beyond providing basic humanitarian services to migrants." Humanitarian reason may embody a critique of the existing border regime, a critique it will level in the name of its commitment to protecting all human life. Yet this little remark reveals the way in which this universalist ambition is cross-cut by a logic of liberal government. In this little expression "pull factor," it is just possible to detect the distant echo of those older debates about the poor law and charity which so dominated the nineteenth century's encounter with poverty (Dean 1991; Procacci 1991): how to offer aid without creating a regime that would "demoralize" the poor. If humanitarianism practices a minimalist biopolitics, confining itself to the provision of bare necessities, this is not solely out of expedience, or a reflection of the scarcity of resources. As the Red Cross seems to suggest, it is also out of liberal political calculation.

In other circumstances the delimitation of the humanitarian by politics is more visible and pronounced. Such is the situation with ongoing legal cases which see the captains and crews of ships being prosecuted under Italian law on charges of assisting illegal immigration or even human trafficking. In some cases these are vessels operating under the auspices of humanitarian movements like Cap Anamur (Statewatch 2007). In others they are Tunisian fishermen who picked up shipwrecked migrants and landed them in Italian harbors (No Racism 2007). While the circumstances may vary, the common thread is that the practice of humanitarian intervention is revealed to be contestable. It is contested under law, where the prosecution seeks to redefine humanitarian action as "trafficking." It is contested in political and media realms when, for instance, reputable German newspapers allege that Cap Anamur's activities are not so much rescue missions as publicity stunts undertaken to raise the organization's profile and attract donations (Kreickenbaum 2004). In the latter instance, one sees the attempt to neutralize the moral and political charge of humanitarian action: by emphasizing its immersion within the grubby world of commercial self-interest and organizational self-promotion, the humanitarian claim to be acting according to "higher moral purpose" is undermined.

A recurring theme in my discussion has been the fluidity of the humanitarian border. It is not fixed or given once and for all. But the aforementioned cases reveal a different aspect of this fluidity. If the humanitarian border can be said to be an assemblage, it is a precarious one. In these instances logics of security, policing and law seek to eclipse and neutralize its presence. They seek to deactivate its elements, and contest their field of operation.

My last point concerns the question of the contested identity of humanitarian agents. If the status of particular acts *as* "humanitarian" is not beyond politics, then neither is the identity of particular agents. In other words, there is the question of who can act in the name of the humanitarian and how. One place such disputes have come into view is with the ongoing conflict between HRW and IOM. The latter is conventionally defined as an intergovernmental organization which specializes in the management of migration. Yet as we saw in earlier discussions of its growing profile in Lampedusa, IOM has come to describe key aspects of its own activities in the language of humanitarian assistance. Yet HRW has challenged such attempts to reposition and rebrand the IOM. For instance, it alleges that "IOM has no formal mandate to

monitor human rights abuses or to protect the rights of migrants and other persons, even though literally millions of people worldwide participate in IOM-sponsored schemes and projects" (HRW 2003: 1). Not only is the IOM charged with lacking such a mandate, it is accused of participating in activities which actually violate the human rights of migrants. These range from its participation in the asylum determination process "imposed" on Haitian asylum seekers (HRW 2003: 1) to its facilitation of "voluntary-assisted returns" from closed detention centers, returns which are alleged to be less "voluntary" than the name suggests (HRW 2003: 7). Elsewhere, IOM pressure has seen HRW move to retract some of its criticisms. For instance, in one report on the situation facing migrants in Ukraine, HRW alleged that IOM was receiving funds from the EU to develop migrant detention centers in the north of the country, despite the weakness of Ukrainian law in this field (No Border 2006). But following complaints, the original report was removed and a revised version, acknowledging certain errors, released in January 2007. In the latter the section on IOM has been excised (HRW 2007).

Such controversies can no doubt have a basis in certain entrenched patterns of inter-organizational rivalry. But the bigger point here is that, to return to a remark made in an earlier section, like the zones of qualification which Barry (2006) has theorized, the humanitarian border is a contentious space. Some would no doubt see humanitarianism as a kind of anti-politics which obscures the reality of social and global inequality. While there is no doubt whatsoever that the humanitarian crystallizes in the midst of complex relations of inequality, far from neutralizing political conflict it should be seen as an emergent zone of politics in its own right.

Conclusion

There is a certain paradox involved when we speak of Foucault and frontiers. In certain key respects it could be said that Foucault is one of our most eminent and original theorists of bordering. For at the heart of one of his most widely read works – namely *Discipline and Punish* – what does one

-- *end of page 157* --

find if not the question of power and how its modalities should be studied by focusing on practices of partitionment, segmentation, division, enclosure; practices that will underpin the ordering and policing of ever more aspects of the life of populations from the nineteenth century onwards. But while Foucault is interested in a range of practices which clearly pertain to the question of bordering understood in a somewhat general sense, one thing the reading of his lectures on security, governmentality and biopolitics reveals is that he had little to say explicitly about the specific forms of bordering associated with the government of the state. To put it differently, Foucault dealt at length with what we might call the microphysics of bordering, but much less with the place of borders considered at the level of tactics and strategies of governmentality.

Recent literature has begun to address this imbalance, demonstrating that many of Foucault's concepts are useful and important for understanding what kinds of power relations and governmental regimes are at stake in contemporary projects which are re-making state borders amidst renewed political concerns over things like terrorism and illegal immigration. However, the overarching theme of this chapter has been the need for caution when linking Foucault's concepts to the study of borders and frontiers today. While analytics like biopolitics, discipline and neoliberalism offer all manner of insights, we need to avoid the trap which sees Foucault's toolbox as something ready-made for any given situation. The challenge of understanding the

emergent requires the development of new theoretical tools, not to mention the sharpening of older, well-used implements. With this end in mind the chapter has proposed the idea of the humanitarian border as a way of registering an event within the genealogy of the frontier, but also, although I have not developed it here, within the genealogy of citizenship.

What I have presented previously is only a very cursory overview of certain features of the humanitarianization of borders, most notably its inscription within regimes of knowledge, and its constitutive relationship to politics. In future research it would be interesting to undertake a fuller mapping of the humanitarian border in relation to certain trajectories of government. While we saw how themes of biopolitical and neoliberal government are pertinent in understanding the contemporary management of spaces like the detention center, it would seem especially relevant to consider the salience of pastoralism. Pastoral power has received far less attention within studies of governmentality than, say, discipline or liberal government (but see Dean 1999; Golder 2007; Hindess 1996; Lippert 2004). But here again, I suspect, it will be important to revise our concepts in the light of emergent practices and rationalities. For the ways in which NGOs and humanitarians engage in the governance of migrants and refugees today have changed quite significantly from the kinds of networks of care, self-examination and salvation which Foucault identified with pastoralism. For instance, and to take but one example, the pastoral care of

-- *end of page 158* --

 migrants, whether in situations of sanctuary or detention, is not organized as a life-encompassing, permanent activity as it was for the church, or later, in a secular version, the welfare state. Instead, it is a temporary and ad hoc intervention. Just as Foucault's notion of neo-liberalism was intended to register important transformations within the genealogy of liberal government, it may prove useful to think in terms of the *neo*-pastoral when we try to make better sense of the phenomenon of humanitarian government at/of borders, and of many other situations as well.

Notes

---

[1] In the more recent English translation of this lecture Burchell omits the reference to national boundaries (see Foucault 2007: 110). For still another translation of this passage, see Elden (2007: 567) who phrases it as "the administrative state, born in the frontier [*de type frontalier*] (and no longer feudal) territoriality… "

[2] But see Foucault's comments on military ports in *Discipline and Punish* (1977: 144), which could be read as pertaining to the disciplinary power of borders. He describes a special space characterized by the quest for circulation and the danger of "smuggling, contagion…[and] dangerous mixtures." As such, the port, and especially the military port, would become a key node in the development of disciplinary spaces and techniques. Not the least of these was the invention of the naval hospital, as at Rochefort in northern France.

[3] Foucault may have written little that explicitly addresses the matter of state frontiers, and more broadly, as Elden suggests, does not explore questions of territory with anything like the attention he would devote to the tactics of governmentality and biopower. That said, Foucault does offer us some intriguing observations about the history of territoriality, and more specifically, the function of knowledge and expertise in making space. For example, see his remarks about "the technicians or engineers of the three great variables – territory, communication, and speed" (Foucault 1984: 244). These experts are the engineers who built railways, bridges, roads and viaducts. If the political dream of governing the state in the image of the city found its exemplary figure in the

architect, then the project of liberal governmentality was to affirm the engineer as one of its most important experts.

[4] Key works here include Bigo (1998; 2002; 2006) who skillfully combines a Foucauldian concern with technologies of security with Bourdieu's notion of socio-institutional fields; a series of studies which examine the governance of borders in terms of neoliberal rationalities of risk and regulation (Epstein 2007; Gilbert 2007; Inda 2006; Muller 2004; Sparke 2006); research which examines particular sites of control such as airports (Salter 2007) and places of sanctuary (Lippert 2004); and more geographically-oriented work exploring the changing spatiality of borders and security practices (Barry 2006; Amoore 2006; Bonditti 2004; Walters 2002; 2006). Mention should also be made of Huspek's (2001) study which adroitly uses the Foucauldian conception of strategy to challenge the statism of conventional accounts of border control.

[5] Amongst the most extensive is the work of UNITED for Intercultural Action, which describes itself as a "network against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees." As of 6 May 2008 it documents the staggering number of 11,105 persons (it identifies all of them as "refugees"). The incidents of death include those who commit suicide while awaiting refugee hearings, those who perish during sea crossings, and those who die in detention due to a lack of medical attention. See http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/pdfs/actual_listofdeath.pdf

[6] E.g., see http://www.iraqbodycount.org.

[7] One reason to question the assumption that the subjects of humanitarian government are powerless victims is that such a view entirely neglects those circumstances and occasions when these subjects generate what Rancière (2004) calls "dissensus"; when they act as subjects "who have not the rights that they have and have the rights that they have not" (2004: 302). On the dissensus of refugees see Nyers (2006). I am grateful to the editors for alerting me to this connection to Rancière.

[8] For example, see the work of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. This is the arm of the Vatican tasked with providing "pastoral care to 'people on the move'" a constituency which embraces a wide assortment of subjects including fishermen, circus people, pilgrims and refugees. The exercise of pastoral care within detention centers and airport waiting zones is identified as one of its particular challenges. See http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/index.htm

[9] For example, note how the Jesuit Refugee Service documents the highly discretionary way in which Cypriot police regulate the access of NGOs to detention facilities. But note also how JRS will mobilize the principle of the EU's European Transparency Initiative as a norm to contest such practices; see JRS (2007: 168-9).

[10] But see the history of governing poverty, which is marked by episodes where the investigation of the poor displays many of these features, whether at the end of the nineteenth century or with the "rediscovery" of poverty in the midst of the postwar boom (e.g., with the publication of Harrington's *The Other America*).

[11] On the place of witnessing and spectacle within humanitarian politics, see Boltanski (1999: ch.3), Chakrabarty (2000), and Kurasawa 2007 (ch.2).

[12] On the problematic place of politics within governmentality studies, see Hindess (1997) and O'Malley, Weir and Shearing (1997).

Bibliography

Albahari, Maurizio. 2006 'Death and the Modern State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe', *Centre for Comparative Immigration Studies, UCSD, Working Paper* 137.

— In Press. 'Charitable Borders? Religion, Policing and Belonging on the Italian Maritime Edge', in Jutta Bacas and William Kavanagh (eds) *Asymmetry and Proximity in Border Encounters*, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

Amoore, Louise. 2006 'Biometric Borders: Governing Mobilities in the War on Terror', *Political Geography* 25: 336-351.

Anderson, Malcolm. 1996 *Frontiers. Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*, Cambridge: Polity.

Andreas, Peter. and Biersteker, Thomas. (eds) 2003 *The Rebordering of North America*, New York: Routledge.

Andrijasevic, Rutvica. (2006) 'How to Balance Rights and Responsibiities on Asylum at the EU's Southern Border of Italy and Libya'. Brussels: Centre for Policy Studies.

— 2006 'Lampedusa in Focus: Migrants caught between the Desert and the Deep Sea', *Feminist Review* 82: 120-125.

Aradau, Claudia. 2004 'The Perverse politics of four-letter words: risk and pity in the securitization of human trafficking', *Millennium* 33(2): 251-77.

Barry, Andrew. 2006 'Technological Zones', *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2): 239-253.

Bigo, Didier. 1998 'Frontiers and Security in the European Union: The Illusion of Migration Control', in Malcolm Anderson and Eberhart Bort (eds) *The Frontiers of Europe*, London; Washington, DC: Pinter, 148-164.

— 2002 'Border Regimes, Police Cooperation and Security in an Enlarged European Union', in Jan Zielonka (ed.) *Europe Unbound: Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of Europe*, London: Routledge, 213-239.

— 2006 'Protection: Security, Territory and Population' in Jeff Huysmans et al (eds) *The Politics of Protection*, New York: Routledge, 84-100.

Black, Jeremy. 1997 *Maps and Politics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Boltanski, Luc. 1999 *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bonditti, Philippe. 2004 'From Territorial Space to Networks: A Foucauldian Approach to the Implementation of Biometry', *Alternatives* 29(4): 465-482.

Buonfino, Alessandra 2004 'Between Unity and Plurality: The Politicization and Securitization of the Discourse of Immigration in Europe', *New Political Science* 26(1): 23-49.

Burchell, Graham, Gordon, Colin and Miller, Peter. 1991 *The Foucault Effect : Studies in Governmentality*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Butler, Judith 2004 *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, London: Verso.

Calhoun, Craig 2004 'A World of Emergencies: Fear, Intervention, and the Limits of Cosmopolitan Order', *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 41(4): 373-395.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2000 'Witness to Suffering: Domestic Cruelty and the Birth of the Modern Subject in Bengal', in Timothy Mitchell (ed.) *Questions of Modernity*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 49-86.

Coutin, Susan B. 2003 'Illegality, Borderlands, and the Space of Nonexistence', in RichardPerry and Bill Maurer (eds) *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 171-202.

Crampton, Jeremy 2007 'Maps, Race and Foucault: Eugenics and Territorialization following World War I', in Jeremy Crampton and Stuart Elden (eds) *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 223-244.

Cuttitta, Paolo 2006 'Points and Lines: A Topography of Borders in the Global Space', *Ephemera* 6(1): 27-39.

Dean, Mitchell 1991 *The constitution of poverty: toward a genealogy of liberal governance*, New York, NY: Routledge.

— 1999 *Governmentality: power and rule in modern society*, London: Sage.

Debrix, François 1998 'Deterritorialised Territories, Borderless Borders: The New Geography of International Medical Assistance', *Third World Quarterly* 19(5): 827-846.

Dezalay, Yyves and Garth, Bryant 2006 'From the Cold War to Kosovo: The Rise and Renewal of the Field of International Human Rights', *Annual Review of Law and Social Science* 2: 231-55.

Donzelot, Jacques and Gordon, Colin 2008 'Governing Liberal Societies - The Foucault Effect in the English-Speaking World', *Foucault Studies* 5: 48-62.

Doty, Roxanne 2006 'Fronteras Compasivas and the Ethics of Unconditional Hospitality', *Millennium* 35(1): 53-74.

Dunn, Elizabeth 2005 'Standards and Person-Making in East Central Europe', in Aihwa Ong and Stephen Collier (eds) *Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Anthropological Problems*, Malden, MA: Blackwell, 173-193.

Elden, Stuart 2007 'Governmentality, Calculation, Territory', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 25: 562-580.

Epstein, Charlotte 2007 'Guilty Bodies, Productive Bodies, Destructive Bodies: Crossing the Biometric Borders', *International Political Sociology* 1(2): 149-164.

Fassin, Didier 2007 'Humanitarianism: A Nongovernmental Government', in Michel Feher (ed.) *Nongovernmental Politics*, New York: Zone Books, 149-160.

Fekete, Liz 2005 'The Deportation Machine: Europe, Asylum and Human Rights', *Race and Class* 47(1): 64-91.

Foucault, Michel 1977 *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*, London: Allen Lane.

— 1984 'Space, Knowledge, and Power' in Paul Rabinow (ed.) *The Foucault Reader*, New York: Pantheon, 239-257.

— 1988 'Politics and Reason', in Laurence Kritzman (ed.) *Foucault: Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, New York: Routledge.

— 1991 'Governmentality' in Burchell, Graham et al (eds) *The Foucault Effect*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 87-104.

— 1994. ', "Prisons et asiles dans le mécanisme du pouvoir," in Michel Foucault, *Dits et Ecrits: 1954-1988*, vol. II, Paris: Gallimard, 521-25.

— 2007 *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-78*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

— 2008 *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Freudenstein, Roland 2000 'Río Odra, Río Buh: Poland, Germany, and the Borders of Twenty-First-Century Europe', in Peter Andreas and Timothy Snyder (eds) *The Wall around the West: State Borders and Immigration Controls in North America and Europe*, Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield, 173-184.

Gallagher, Anna Marie, Ireland, Helen, and Muchopa, Naboth (2006) *Handbook for Visitors and Social Workers in Detention Centres,* Brussels: Jesuit Refugee Service.

Gatti, Fabrizio 2005 'Io, Clandestino a Lampedusa', *L'espresso,* 6 October.

Gilbert, Elizabeth 2007 'Leaky Borders and Solid Citizens: Governing Security, Prosperity and Quality of Life in a North American Partnership', *Antipode* 39(1): 77-98.

Golder, Ben 2007 'Foucault and the Genealogy of Pastoral Power', *Radical Philosophy* 10(2): 157-176.

Hardt, Michael and Negri, Antonio 2000 *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hindess, Barry 1996 *Discourses of Power: from Hobbes to Foucault*, Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell Publishers.

— 1997 'Politics and Governmentality', *Economy and Society* 26(2): 257-72.

Hirst, Paul 2005 *Space and power: politics, war and architecture*, Cambridge ; Malden, MA: Polity.

Human Rights Watch (2002) The Other Face of the Canary Islands: Rights Violations against Migrants and Asylum Seekers. Human Rights Watch Volume 14, No. 1(D).

Human Rights Watch (2003) The International Organization for Migration (IOM) and Human Rights Protection in the Field: Current Concerns. A Submission to the IOM Governing Council Meeting, 86th Session, 18-21 November, Geneva. New York: Human Rights Watch. Available online: www.hrw.org/backgrounder/migrants/iom-submission-1103.htm

Human Rights Watch (2006) Stemming the Flow: Abuses against Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees. Human Rights Watch Volume 18 No. 5(E). September.

Human Rights Watch (2007) Ukraine: On the Margins. Rights Violations against Migrants and Asylum Seekers at the New Eastern Border of the European Union. Available online: http://www.noborder.org/iom/display.php?id=367 (accessed 2 October 2008).

Huspek, Michael 2001 'Production of State, Capital, and Citizenry: The Case of Operation Gatekeeper', *Social Justice* 28(2): 51-68.

Inda, Jonathan 2006 *Targeting Immigrants: Government, Technology, and Ethics*, Oxford: Blackwell.

International Organization for Migration (2007) 'Director General Visits Reception Facility on Island of Lampedusa', IOM Press Briefing Notes, June 29. Archived by Migreurop at http://archives.rezo.net/migreurop.mbox/200706.mbox/%3C9CA3DF28-7E56-4E87-9A91-425503490845@kein.org%3E

Isin, Engin, and Rygiel, Kim, (2007) 'Abject Spaces: Frontiers, Zones, Camps' in Elizabeth Dauphinee and Christina Masters (eds) *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 181-203.

Jesuit Refugee Service (2006) Belgium: Detention Centres not Transparent. 19 October. Avaiable online: http://www.jrs.net/reports/index.php?lang=en&sid=1443 (accessed 2 October, 2008)

Jesuit Refugee Service (2007) Detention in the 10 New Member States (summary). Available online: http://www.jrseurope.org/publications/10%20NMS%20report%20summary.pdf (accessed 2 October 2008)

Kreickenbaum, Martin (2004) European governments make an example of Cap Anamur refugees. 22 July. Available online: http://www.wsws.org/articles/2004/jul2004/anam-j22_prn.shtml (accessed 2 October 2008).

Kurasawa, Fuyuki, 2007 *The Work of Global Justice: Human Rights as Practices*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Lefebvre, Lucien, 1973 'Frontière: The Word and the Concept', in Peter Burke (ed.) *A New Kind of History: From the Writings of Lefebvre*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Lippert, Randy, 2004 'Sanctuary Practices, Rationalities, and Sovereignties', *Alternatives* 29: 535-555.

Maier, Charles, 2002 'Does Europe need a Frontier? From Territorial to Redistributive Community', in Jan Zielonka (ed.) *Europe Unbound. Enlarging and Reshaping the Boundaries of the European Union*, London: Routledge, 17-37.

Médecins sans Frontières (2005) Violence and Immigration: Report on Illegal Sub-Saharan Immigrants (ISSs) in Morocco. Available online. http://www.msf.org/source/countries/africa/morocco/2005/morocco_2005.pdf

Mezzadra, Sandro, and Neilson, Brett, 2003 'Né qui, né altrove - Migration, Detention, Desertion: A Dialogue', *borderlands e-journal* 2(1).

Muller, Benjamin, 2004 '(Dis)Qualified Bodies: Securitization, Citizenship and "Identity Management"', *Citizenship Studies* 8(3): 279-294.

No Border (2006) IOM Watch: HRW Report on IOM Role in Ukraine. 21 May. Available online: http://www.noborder.org/iom/display.php?id=367 (accessed 2 October 2008).

No Racism (2007) Trial in Agrigento: No to the criminalization of solidarity. Available online: http://no-racism.net/print/2254/ (accessed 2 October 2008).

Nyers, Peter, 2003 'Abject Cosmopolitanism: The Politics of Protection in the Anti-Deportation Movement', *Third World Quarterly* 24(6): 1069-1093.

O'Malley, Pat, 1996 'Indigenous Governance', *Economy & Society* 25: 310-326.

O'Malley, Pat, Weir, Lorna and Shearing, Clifford, 1997 'Governmentality, Criticism, Politics', *Economy and Society* 26(4): 501-17.

Procacci, Giovanna 1991 'Social Economy and the Government of Poverty', in Graham Burchell, et al (eds) *The Foucault effect: studies in governmentality*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 151-168.

Pugh, Michael, 2004 'Drowning not Waving: Boat People and Humanitarianism at Sea', *Journal of Refugee Studies* 17: 50-69.

Rancière, Jacques 2004 'Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man?' *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103(2/3): 297-310.

Red Cross (2006) 'Deadly Passage', Red Cross, Red Crescent, 2006-2. Available online at http://www.redcross.int/EN/mag/magazine2006_2/12-14.html

Redfield, Peter, 2005 'Doctors, Borders, and Life in Crisis', *Cultural Anthropology* 20(3): 328-361.

— 2006 'A Less Modest Witness: Collective Advocacy and Motivated Truth in a Medical Humanitarian Movement', *American Ethnologist* 33(1): 3-26.

Rodriguez, Nestor, 1996 'The Battle for the Border: Notes on Autonomous Migration, Transnational Communities, and the State', *Social Justice* 23(3): 21-37.

Ron, James, Ramos, Howard, and Rodgers, Kathleen, 2005 'Transnational Information Politics: NGO Human Rights Reporting, 1986-2000', *International Studies Quarterly* 49(3): 557-588.

Salter, Mark, 2007 'Governmentalities of an Airport', *International Political Sociology* 1(1): 49-66.

Sassen, Saskia, 2003 'A Universal Harm: Making Criminals of Migrants', OpenDemocracy 21 August. http://www.opendemocracy.net/people-migrationeurope/article_1444.jsp

Sparke, Matthew, 2006 'A Neoliberal Nexus: Economy, Security and the Biopolitics of Citizenship at the Border', *Political Geography* 25(2): 151-80.

Statewatch (2007) Criminalising Solidarity – Cap Anamur trial underway. Available online: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2007/apr/03italy-cape-anamur.htm (accessed 2 October 2008)

Walters, William, 2002 'Mapping Schengenland: Denaturalizing the Border', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20(5): 561-80.

- 2006 'Border/Control', *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2): 187-203.