Border struggles

_Segregation, migrant solidarity, and ethical politics in everyday life_

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Thomas Tyerman

School of Social Sciences
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Abstract

This thesis analyses borders as sites of struggle in everyday life. Drawing on critical approaches across disciplines including international relations, security studies, citizenship, border, and migration studies, it argues for a perspective on borders as embodied encounters in everyday life as both a method and ethos of critical analysis. Drawing on empirical research in the contexts of the UK and Calais, this thesis presents an account of borders as everyday practices of segregation. In highlighting the everydayness of borders it points to the ordinary and often messy ways in which borders are made real in people’s lives and also come undone. Framing the border in terms of segregation it traces how ongoing global histories of discrimination, domination, and racism underlying contemporary nation-state border-making are reproduced in everyday contexts and ordinary encounters in which we all become complicit.

At the same time, this thesis elaborates a post-Wittgensteinian ‘grammatical reading’ (Pin-Fat, 2010; 2013; 2016) in order to trace how key debates within prominent critical approaches to borders, migration, sovereignty, and (bio)politics continue to be framed by the metaphysical seduction of nation-states and their borders as ontologically ‘hard’. In doing so, it argues that several critical approaches risk reproducing the very borders they are often committed to challenging and risk undermining the possibility of solidarity and struggle. Instead, in turning to everyday life, this thesis proposes to read the ethical politics of borders and migration as ontologically ‘soft’: that is, contingent, socially constructed, and ordinary. Whilst this in no way makes borders less powerfully real or violent such a perspective, this thesis argues, provides critical insight into the politics of borders as sites and practices of struggle as well as into the ordinary ethics of ‘migrant solidarity’.
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Abbreviations

AoM Autonomy of Migration
BCMO Bureau Central de la Main d’Ouvre
CBS Critical Border Studies
CCS Critical Citizenship Studies
CMS Calais Migrant Solidarity
EU European Union
HAC Home Affairs Committee (HC)
HC House of Commons
HRW Human Rights Watch
ICIBI Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration
IOM International Organization for Migration
NCA National Crime Agency
SOCA Serious Organised Crime Agency
UK United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UKBA United Kingdom Border Agency
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
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Finally, I would like to acknowledge the groups and individuals who struggle every day with the borders between us and in doing so remake the world. I write in solidarity.
1. Introduction

This thesis is about borders as sites of struggle. It presents an account of borders in the UK and Calais as messy everyday practices of segregation which people live and struggle with and against. It also frames migrant solidarity as an ordinary and everyday ethical politics against this segregation. In this introduction I contextualise the overall research project by asking ‘why borders matter?’ before explaining how I approach borders by reading them through everyday life as practices of segregation. In doing so, I outline my research questions and explain how this thesis intends to answer them. Finally, I provide an overview of this thesis’ main argument and chapter breakdown.

1.1 Why borders matter?

We encounter borders every day in ways which have powerful personal, ethical, and political effects. Borders are manifold and mark different sorts of boundaries between spaces, places, and people, drawing lines of identity/difference, here/there, beginning/end, as crossing points/dead ends, as open/closed, as freedom/control. Borders can feel familiar, intimate, homely, or they can feel strange, distant, foreign. Borders are a way of relating to others in the world, places to meet and acknowledge others or avoid and disavow them, sites of welcome or hostility, surprise or security, compromise or contestation, a chance to come together or push apart. At/through borders we encounter others in making our selves. Therefore, they are also ways of making the world, of mapping the contours of a particular ethical political reality (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013). Borders make the world by dividing it, demarcating the parameters of the (in)visible, the (un)thinkable, and the (im)possible, delineating who we can/not be, what we can/not do, where we can/not go, and how we can/not live (Pin-Fat, 2010). Borders tell us who or what matters in the world, and so are important sites of ethical political questioning, disagreement, and struggle.

Nation-state borders are particularly seductive and powerful. They seem to express something deep about the world and our place within it by institutionalising a particular order of things and distribution of people into discrete combinations of
territory and population as if these were essentially natural (see chapter 3.3). Borders appear to be deep divisions, foundational to global politics as an international politics and frequently imbued with significance as markers of collective community and individual identity, associating the nation-state with sovereignty and (self)government. This picture, however, is constantly unsettled by the movements of people and things across these borders as well as the diversity of those within them. The divisions of nation-state borders often do not hold firm, they are shallow not deep, the stability of their equations of person and place undone by those whose lives do not fit within and cannot be contained by these cartographies. Some see in borders an embodiment of themselves and their position in the world, others are indifferent, while yet further others encounter them variously as ostracism, incarceration, and displacement. These different ways of encountering borders also point to why and how borders matter, ethically and politically.

These differences express something of the multiple tensions, discrepancies, inequalities, and injustices which are embodied and come alive in our encounters with borders. At borders, the local and global, personal and political, past and present converge and collide in the day to day forming/reforming of our ethical political realities. For instance, reading the UK’s visa restrictions we see represented there all the contemporary upheavals of geopolitics and war, as well as the stark disparities of global economics (Home Office, 2016c). Similarly, throughout the hundreds of detention and deportation sites which dot the European landscape and beyond (Migreurope, 2014) histories of (post)colonialism continue to reverberate, the violent devaluation of (non-European) life still evident in the silent dead mounting up by the thousands in the Mediterranean.

Since 2000 it is estimated over 30,000 people lost their lives along irregular routes of migration to Europe, the vast majority of them drowned in the Mediterranean Sea (Malakooti & Davin, 2015; The Migrant Files, 2016; The Migrant Files & UNITED, 2016). As Malakooti & Davin point out, these numbers make the Mediterranean borderzone between Southern Europe and its neighbours ‘the world’s deadliest border [...] a firm and fatal dividing line between “North” and “South”’ (2015; 1). In 2014 and 2015 respectively an estimated 3,279 and 3,763 people died
crossing the Mediterranean irregularly. As of 1\textsuperscript{st} August 2016 the number of reported deaths along this route was already 4,027 (IOM, 2016).\textsuperscript{1}

In this sense, borders and the subjects/spaces they delimit are arbitrary: contingent, changing, historical, rather than necessary, fixed, or natural (Pin-Fat, 2010). The accident of where we are born is arbitrary, as are the hierarchies of place and person which are then attributed to us. Context is everything. Things could have been, were, and might yet be different. But this makes borders no less powerful in our lives, and no less violent or lethal. It does, however, importantly point to the normativity of borders: they are social, ethical, political practices. Therefore, borders must be done somewhere by someone against some other. Borders are not static but active, they involve a doing, they must be repeatedly made/remade through practices which ‘bind’ us to some people, places, and identities, and ‘unbind’ us from others (Butler & Spivak, 2007; 4-5). Borders matter, therefore, because they are arbitrary, that is, because they are places where we powerfully shape each other’s lives. And this arbitrariness points to our complicity in making the world as it is in our relations with others, but also our power to make it otherwise. We are all complicit in the daily reproduction of borders and the global hierarchies, divisions, and violences they embody. And when the bodies of others wash up dead on our shores we should recognise the work of our own hands.

At the same time, seeing borders as arbitrary, as a doing in relation to others, highlights how borders are never settled but rather constituted through struggle. Borders must be maintained, imposed, defended, and enforced, with/on/against/in spite of others and their mobility. They involve coercion and its resistance or evasion, a struggle over freedom of movement and its control or curtailment. Borders are a struggle because they must constantly be made to work in our lives despite the fact our lives often exceed and unsettle their workings. On the flip side, borders frequently make life, for some more than others, a struggle. Seeing borders as struggles highlights their power, but also brings our attention to how they are constantly

\textsuperscript{1} When I began writing this introduction, the number of deaths recorded for 2016 was 3,024. Between 28\textsuperscript{nd} July and 1\textsuperscript{st} August the number of recorded deaths rose by nearly 1000. They continue to rise.
challenged and undone. Encountering others at the border, there is always a chance of relating to others differently, the possibility to do otherwise, to remake the world.

Borders matter because they are important sites of ethical political struggle in which we are all already implicated. They pose, again and again, basic ethical political questions concerning how we relate to others and what sort of world we want to live in. In the end, given our complicity in their reproduction, the question which matters is how are we to engage with/in border struggles? Will we impose our borders on others, along with all their attendant discriminations and violences? Or will we struggle alongside those who are excluded, alienated, and harmed by our borders?

1.2 Reading borders in everyday life: segregation in the UK and Calais

In this thesis, I analyse border struggles from a perspective of everyday life. Doing so, I argue (chapter 2), provides important insights into how borders work as normative social practices, how they are reproduced while also contested, and highlights what is at stake ethically and politically in these struggles. It is in everyday life, I argue throughout this thesis, that borders become powerfully real for us, where we become intimately bound up in their operation and their effects, and where borders come to mark our relations with others.

My focus on everyday borders is strongly influenced by my own personal encounters with borders and migrant solidarity practices over the years. In particular, it draws extensively on a period of fieldwork in Calais over several months during 2014/2015 to depict the border as a practice of segregation in everyday life.¹ My encounters over this time in Calais with people who struggle everyday against the border have informed every aspect of this thesis and deeply affected me personally and politically. I have been profoundly unsettled by these encounters in Calais, both horrified by the brutality of the border there and heartened by the humanity of those who fight it. These encounters brought me face to face with the daily acts of violence underpinning the border in Calais, the racism pervading its normalisation, and the painful absurdity of its arbitrariness. The injustices encountered here are unavoidable,

¹ This depiction is achieved through writing scenes of encounter in the form of evocative narrative vignettes. See this thesis: 2.6; 3.1; 3.5.
the discrimination naked. I encountered here segregation and my own part in it. But I also encountered ordinary people, vital people, complex people, living, struggling, loving people who forced me beyond myself and my neat boundaries into the messy world where we live together. While remaining uncapturable in words, these people move me to write the way I do, reminding me how writing is never enough.

In addition to my research, I have had involvement with several groups working with, alongside, or in support of migrants and others for whom the border in the UK and Calais is a constant struggle. Through these encounters I have been confronted with the border as a practice of incarceration, destitution, demonisation, discrimination, and segregation.

Every day in the UK the border is carried out in ordinary ways and mundane locations: houses and shops are raided by uniformed officers, identification checks are carried out on high streets and at bus stations, people are arrested, detained, and deported. Every day, all across the country, people queue up outside unassuming buildings to report to the immigration authorities, each time afraid they will be arrested and detained. Every day, people face the humiliation of buying groceries with a Home Office-issued pre-paid card, forced to wear their stigmatisation openly or starve. If they work to earn their own money, they will be arrested, their asylum claim denied. Every day people woken by a dawn raid and incarcerated within a detention centre, while others are forced onto planes, often kicking, screaming, handcuffed and held by private security guards. Every day, some student’s visa is revoked on a technicality, sending them spiralling into irregularity, a couple’s marriage is declared a ‘sham’, a family is broken up, and a landlord refuses to rent a house to a non-European migrant.

In Calais, every day people wake up in the ‘jungle’ after long nights running from police and after trucks. Hungry, cold, tired, traumatised by war, half-starved by

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3 There is a politics to the words we use to label others (see chapter 2), especially words relating to migration. While the distinctions between migrant, asylum seeker, activist, refugee, immigrant, ir/regular, il/legal, often have powerful political effects, and are central to how the border works through segregation, I maintain that people cannot be reduced to such labels. In this thesis, I use the term migrants or irregular migrants to specify that for the most part I am focusing on those whose movements are irregularised by the politics of the border or the ontologies of the nation-state. Obviously within such generalised categories people’s lives, identities, and experiences greatly differ and the usual lines of distinction blur. This is part of what it means to understand ontology as soft (2.5; 5.5; 6.5).

4 The ‘jungle’ is another politically saturated word. Often evoking racialised images of disgust in the British media (3.2–3.3; Howarth & Ibrahim, 2015a; 2015b) the term jungle is also used in everyday parlance by irregular migrants in Calais to refer to self-made camps. Whilst no-one wants to live in the
destitution, thousands wait, often for months, struggling to survive, trying each night to make a journey of 27 miles across the Channel by claspine beneath the wheels of a heavy goods vehicle or hiding amongst its cargo. A bus ticket for this same journey costs less than £20, and it takes just over three hours, weather permitting. All you need is the right passport.⁵

Seen from an everyday perspective, borders appear starkly unequal, their injustices ‘globally intimate’ (Peterson, 2016). Through them international politics is often violently written onto the bodies and social relations of ordinary people. Reading borders in terms of everyday life, I argue, keeps in sight these inequities/iniquities which accompany their specific realisation. At the same time, it reminds us of the constant often mundane work that borders require, the vast amounts of resources, time, and effort necessary to maintain them as powerful realities with deeply personal effects. Reading everyday borders, therefore, foregrounds what is at stake ethically and politically in how they are ordinarily enacted.

I argue in this thesis that borders in the UK and Calais work through practices of everyday segregation and I ask what this means for how we understand their ethical politics. In particular, this thesis is interested in what seeing the border as a practice of segregation in everyday life means for the forms migrant solidarity might take. Underlying much critical writing in International Relations (IR), and across the social sciences and other forums of political research, is a more or less explicit ethical political concern for ‘others’ and/or a commitment to ‘alterity’ (Butler, 2005; 2006; Campbell, 1998; 520; Derrida, 2000; Edkins, 2005; 2011; hooks, 1992). This is also the case with much of the critical work on borders, migration, and citizenship which aims to challenge violent exclusionary framings of migrant otherness, emphasise their political agency, express solidarity with those on the move, and point to sites of potential resistance to the border (for instance, Anderson & Hughes, 2015; Bailey, 2009; Isin, 2002; Mezzadra, 2004; Millner, 2011; Nyers & Rygiel, 2012; Rygiel, 2011; Soguk, 1999; Walters, 2006; 2008). In a similar spirit, this thesis is my attempt to not simply write about migrant solidarity but also to write in solidarity with migrants.

jungle, the term does not necessarily entail dehumanising its inhabitants. As ever, it depends on how the word is used in its context (2.4-2.5).

⁵ These are examples of the evocative vignettes which pepper the thesis.
among others, who struggle against the border every day. By portraying borders as everyday segregation, I hope to do some small justice to the injustices faced by so many people in the UK and Calais, and to invite critical engagement with the ethical politics of/at/against borders. I hope, thereby, to open up space to reflect on the possibilities for migrant solidarity.

1.3 Research question and thesis outline

This thesis offers a critical engagement with the ethical politics of border struggles in the UK and Calais by asking: **how do borders emerge as embodied encounters with segregation in everyday life and how are these borders contested by everyday acts of migrant solidarity?** Analysing a range of empirical material drawn from fieldwork observation, government policy documents, legislation, online and mainstream media, and NGO reports, it engages critically with a number of key debates in the critical literature on security, borders, migration, and citizenship. Here I outline my chapters and their key arguments.

Chapter 2 develops my analytical framework of reading everyday life, setting out what an everyday perspective entails/enables when researching ethical politics and borders. Building on work by Foucault, Butler, Wittgenstein, and Pin-Fat, I argue an everyday perspective is useful for analysing the workings of power, representation, and subjectivity in a context of social norms and relations in the world with others. I argue for adopting a particular ‘grammatical’ ethos and method of reading everyday life which keeps sight of the ordinary untidy contexts in which ethical politics necessarily plays out in relations with others (Pin-Fat, 2010). Following Pin-Fat’s post-Wittgensteinian approach, I lay out two ways of reading ethical politics in which their conditions are seen as either ontologically ‘hard’ or ontologically ‘soft’. Critiquing the ‘hard’ approach for remaining ‘metaphysically seduced’ by the ontology of the nation-state, I argue for taking an everyday perspective in our analyses as an example of a ‘soft’ approach to ethical political ontology. In addition to being a mode of analysis such a reading of everyday life, I argue, is itself a way of relating ethically and politically to the world and potentially of expressing solidarity in our writing.
In chapter 3, I present a picture of how the border in Calais works through everyday segregation as a form of racialised statecraft. Drawing on fieldwork and referencing critical border literature (Balibar, 2002; 2004; 2009; Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 2012), I argue in Calais the border is performed and made real through repeated embodied encounters with segregation in everyday life, a form of segregation which aims to make life for some but not others unliveable whilst simultaneously preventing certain forms of irregularised mobility. I do so by assembling a number of observations, drawn from several visits to Calais between October 2014 and August 2015, into a series of vignettes or scenes of encounter which illustrate the embodied everydayness of the border as segregation. Evoked in this way, I hope highlights the messiness and struggle of everyday borders while raising ethical political questions about the policies of statecraft and deterrence which frame them.

In chapter 4, I examine the messiness of everyday borders further in the UK context. Analysing a wide range of policy documents, primary legislation, monitoring reports, and drawing on critical security literature, I trace the historic development of the UK’s current ‘hostile environment’ agenda concerning irregular migration which seeks to introduce bordering practices into ordinary spaces, routines, and relations throughout society. From renting a house, to driving a car, to getting married, I show how the two Immigration Acts 2014/2016 are a culmination of border security developments which brought the border further into people’s everyday lives than ever before, at the same time as framing everyday bordering increasingly in terms of criminal policing and national security. As irregularity became progressively criminalised in recent years the border has subtly permeated our social relations, blurring the boundaries between the administrative management of immigration and the racialised policing of communities. Once again, I seek to present a picture of everyday bordering as a messy, uncertain, and contested practice of segregation which is nonetheless powerfully productive.

Chapter 5 further analyses the ethical political implications of reading borders in everyday life by critically engaging with the discourse of humanitarianism and Agamben’s theory of biopolitical sovereign exception in the context of the ‘jungle’
camp in Calais. Drawing on Pin-Fat (2010; 2013; 2016), I argue that both humanitarianism and Agamben’s exceptional biopolitics end up seduced by an understanding of politics as sovereign line-drawing which reproduces a picture of the borders of the nation-state as ontologically ‘hard’ and metaphysically ‘deep’. The problem with this, I argue, is it perpetuates a ‘politics of forgetting’ (Pin-Fat, 2016) which obscures the political context of everyday life where borders are done and so denies the political subjectivity of migrants. Alongside this critique, chapter 5 elaborates an alternative ‘soft’ ontological account of the biopolitics of the Calais jungle, situating it within the wider context of everyday bordering. Doing so, I argue, brings our analyses back to the ordinary practices, relations, and politics of segregation and solidarity which makeup the border as an everyday struggle.

Chapter 6 continues to trace the metaphysical seduction of the nation-state’s hard ontologies and borderlines, showing how it plays out within critical approaches to migrant politics and subjectivity. Critically engaging with Critical Citizenship Studies and the Autonomy of Migration literature, I locate within them a tendency to overly circumscribe migrant subjectivity and politics and to project onto them a particular conception of radical emancipatory politics. In these literatures, political migrant subjectivity is equated with either a radical form of liberal rights-claiming (Isin, 2008), or a new proletarian struggle against capitalism (Mezzadra, 2004), or a revolutionary ‘escape’ from representation, power, and subjectivity itself (Papadopoulos, Tsianos, & Stephenson, 2008). Arguing against this tendency, and drawing on accounts that emphasise ambivalence and ambiguity instead, I articulate an account of everyday migrant solidarity arising on the motorways of Calais that attempts to resist the seduction to restrictively overly determine the subjects and politics we encounter at the border. In addition to locating the ethical politics of migrant subjects in their ordinary acts and encounters, I suggest that such an account points to potential ways of expressing solidarity in our writing with those who struggle with/against the borders of the nation-state every day.

Chapter 7 offers an overall conclusion to the thesis, giving a brief thematic summary of the main arguments. It also considers the implications of these for how we think about and engage with the ethical politics of border struggles. Rather than
any fixed answers, this conclusion asks what questions are raised by this research for
an ethical politics which takes as its starting point our ordinary relations with each
other, and for a migrant solidarity which confronts segregation in everyday life.
2. Reading everyday life: (re)encountering ethical politics and border struggles

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contextualises my approach in this thesis towards the border and migrant solidarity, which I call reading everyday life. I argue, this allows us to interrogate closely the workings of power and subjectivity that are fundamental to ethical politics by situating them within our everyday relations with each other. As such, it aims to present a picture of ethical politics in its ‘lived embodiment’ (Ahmed, 2000; 6), acknowledging people as complex, mobile, ambiguous, and showing how international histories and possible futures unfold uncertainly in people’s ordinary lived realities and relations with one another. It tries to resist imposing fixed categories of identity onto people, for example, migrant, asylum seeker, or citizen, as if these determined the boundaries and substance of their political being. Rather than presenting one definitive account of migrant everyday life it rejects the idea that such an account is possible or necessary for understanding the ethical politics of borders. It is interested less in who people are, as if there was something deep to be found out about others, than in how people encounter one another and the parameters of ethical political (im)possibility at work in these meetings. Reading everyday life reminds us that ethical politics is less a question of knowledge (epistemology) about the being of others (metaphysics) than our ordinary relations with each other. Less a truth to be deduced than a practice, always to some extent unfathomable, which forms part of a continuous process of ‘sociality’ (Ahmed, 2000; 15; 48; Butler, 2005; 24; 2013; 4-5; 103). Reading everyday life asks us to remain ‘on the rough ground’ of an ethical politics lived among others (Wittgenstein, 1974; §107). It doesn’t seek perfection, in the form of better government or revolution, but rather sees politics as an ongoing struggle alongside others against inequality and for the unending creation of new ways of living together.

Starting with the work of Foucault, Butler, and Wittgenstein this chapter presents an account of everyday life as ethical political and ethical politics as everyday. Doing so, it frames how and why I read borders through everyday life. Drawing further
on Pin-Fat’s work on ‘grammatical reading’ (2010), as well as Das (2007) and Ahmed (2000), I argue for a reading of ethical politics in terms of everyday encounters which emphasises contingency, messiness, and the importance of remaining open to surprise in our encounters with others. Elaborating a reading of everyday life at the border, I argue for the need to resist the ontological ‘seduction’ of seeing the nation-state and its borders as ‘hard’ or metaphysically ‘deep’, instead emphasising a ‘soft’ ontology of borders as normative social practice in relations with others (Pin-Fat, 2010; 2013; 2016; Walker, 1992; 2010). Finally, I explain how reading/writing everyday life allows us to effectively critique and question the ethical politics of borders and their reproduction. Here I also reflect on the rough ground this thesis starts from, acknowledging the failures and limitations that form its parameters and explain how these have informed my approach to writing everyday borders through scenes of encounter with segregation. Writing in this way I hope opens space to critically engage with border struggles and perhaps express solidarity with those who struggle against them.

2.2 Everyday life as political: Foucault, power, knowledge, and subjectivity

‘Power is not a substance. Neither is it a mysterious property whose origin must be delved into. Power is only a certain type of relation between individuals. Such relations are specific [...] The characteristic feature of power is that some men can more or less entirely determine other men’s conduct – but never exhaustively or coercively’ (Foucault, 2002a; 324)

This statement, even as it problematically reduces ‘individuals’ to ‘men’, is a useful starting point for understanding the importance of Foucault’s conception of power for political analysis. The point, Foucault maintains, is not to ask “what is power?” as if it were an object that exists in itself but rather to see power as the formation of effective (and usually unequal) relations between people that constrain or enable their actions. ‘Power exists only as exercised by some on others, only when it is put into action [...] It is a set of actions on possible actions; it incites, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult’ (2002b; 340-341). Foucault reminds us that when we talk about power we are talking about social practice, the interaction of different people for particular purposes, whatever those might be. Analyses of power should
therefore focus on the question of ‘how’ and ‘limiting oneself to describing its effects’ (336): how is power exercised and between whom? What conditions make this possible? What are the results? Such a “limiting” focus takes us straight into the action, engaging in a constant empirical inquisitiveness as to the historical, social, political, and theoretical conditions for the emergence of certain forms of power.

Foucault’s inquiry illustrates the interplay between forms of knowledge and power, how systems of understanding or rationality and systems of power consolidate and diverge, showing them to be intimately tied up with various struggles in society. Echoing Nietzsche he claims: ‘behind all knowledge [savoir], behind all attainment of knowledge [connaissance], what is involved is a struggle for power. Political power is not absent from knowledge, it is woven together with it’ (2002c; 32). Foucault invokes this weaving of power/knowledge through the phrase ‘regime of truth’ (2002d; 131-132). Regimes of truth are central, for Foucault, to the historical emergence of different forms of power. They provide the knowledge-base for different forms of government such as feudalism, mercantilism, or governmental capitalism, and also become a key site of opposition to these systems of power and control. The notion of a regime of truth highlights how the production of knowledge is always also a production of certain social/political relations as im/possible, necessary, un/desirable, deviant, or il/legal, for example. Knowledge therefore cannot be separated from an exercise of power that attempts to (re)structure the world and how people live in it. Foucault’s genealogical method seeks to bring to light ‘the discursive practice-clash of power’ (2004; 178) and show how truth is not logical but political, ‘a thing of this world […] produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint’ (2002d; 131). Bodies of knowledge and particular ‘truths’ are historical products of conflicts in society and an ongoing means by which these conflicts are negotiated and controlled.

Bleak as this picture might seem, Foucault maintains that power is both a necessary and productive feature of our social relations with each other, and that

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6 This echoes Wittgenstein’s remarks that philosophy ‘must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place’ (1974; §109) and that ‘Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. […] For it cannot give it any foundation either. […] It leaves everything as it is’ (§124). See discussion below (2.4).
power/knowledge is ‘rooted deeply in the social nexus’ (2002b; 343; 345; 2002c; 87). Violence and repression do not disappear from this analysis of power but are situated within a wider continuum of methods of coercion and constraint that play a vital role in directing social relations in particular ways, conducting people’s behaviour, shaping their identifications, and channelling their productivity towards certain profitable social, political, and economic ends. Of course, these power relations remain highly unequal as does the distribution of profits. For example, Foucault shows how a whole host of disciplinary practices of incarceration and regulation of behaviours, surveillance and examination, were tied up with the development of forms of knowledge ‘organized around the norm’ – ‘the “human sciences”’ (2002c; 59). These normalizing regimes perform a coercive regulatory function, extracting from human subjects a knowledge of their nature, psychology, sexuality, sociality, etc., that could then be imposed back upon them as standards of correct or deviant behaviour. Human subjects are rendered ‘knowable’ through the establishment of certain relations of power and control that enable their monitoring and systematisation, a ‘domination-observation’ (1995; 305). In turn the knowledges extracted in these ways themselves become the basis for further exercises of power, such as the formation of a manageable productive capitalist workforce, making labour-power profitable (2002c; 86).

In Foucault’s analysis power works not just through physical restraints on people’s actions and relations but also via the production of certain subjects of knowledge – the worker, the criminal, the population, the free liberal individual – imbued with normative standards of behaviour and criteria for regulation. Such subjects correspond to different ‘rationales’, ‘mechanisms’, and ‘techniques’ of governing people: disciplinary methods as employed in 19th century factories and prisons (see Foucault, 1995; 2002 T&JF), biopolitical mechanisms for the state management of the productive ‘life’ processes of populations (see Foucault, 1978; 2004), and regulatory apparatuses of governmental security and neoliberal economics (see Foucault, 2009 and 2010). Embodying their normative environment subjects act as ‘relays’ of power, as both receivers and transmitters of power effects within a wider network of power relations (2004; 29-30). By bringing to life a ‘system of
differentiations that permits one to act upon the actions of others’ in various ways (2002b; 344) different forms of subjectivity represent and reinforce a particular subjection to an order of power and knowledge. But they are also a site of challenge. Indeed, Foucault’s picture of social space is of a terrain of struggle, historical and ongoing, over meaning, power, identity, and the relations it is possible to have between people. He argues that ‘power relations have been progressively governmentalized’ (345) through ‘individualizing and totalizing’ (332) processes which bring individual subjects increasingly in line with state rationalities of government. Yet this has not been a smooth or deliberate transition, but rather the overall outcome of multiple localised and disconnected conflicts over time. As ‘a “conduct of conducts” and a management of possibilities [...] to structure the possible field of action of others’ (341), government for Foucault doesn’t signal an end or remedy to social conflict but its continuation under conditions of control and regulation. In the seemingly stable institutions of the state ‘we must hear the distant roar of battle’ (1995; 308) and keep our ears to the ground for any of its enduring reverberations.

Foucault’s conception of politics as struggle is firmly located in the everyday spaces of our social reproduction and interactions. He rejects grand narratives of revolution and class conflict in favour of examining how such narratives and subjects themselves are produced in the infinitesimal relations of power at work in the everyday and out of strategies to navigate, manage, and direct them. For Foucault, society is in a constant state of flux, an unresting sea of antagonistic relations, competing political visions, and different ways of living coming into conflict. Social space is permeated by diffuse networks of power relations within which one might take up any number of strategic positions in relation to others (see 1978; 95-97 among others). Foucault repeatedly portrays politics as a series of strategic efforts to form a ‘web’ (2002c; 86; 2002d; 117) of connections across this tumultuous plane of power relations in order to consolidate or harness their productive power and to defend against counter attacks, ruptures, leakages, fractures, or disconnections. An important implication of this strategic conception of power, everyday life, and politics is that ‘[w]here there is power, there is resistance’ (1978; 95). Resistance itself is portrayed as one possible strategic position to take within specific relations of power, a point of
agonism towards or escape from the webs of power built up in order to govern people in their relations to each other. Resistance is not about transcending the world of power, but of challenging its specific operations and effects from within a context of power, from within the world: ‘A society without power relations can only be an abstraction’ (2002b; 343). By looking at sites of resistance, Foucault maintains, we can get a clearer picture of power relations and their operation, as well as what is at stake in them.

2.2.1 Freedom/power: liberal subjects of government

Reading power through resistance allows Foucault to present a nuanced analysis of contemporary liberal government as centering on the liberal subject of freedom. Pointing to specific ‘anarchistic struggles’ emerging in the late 1960s, which challenged both the denial of individuality as difference and the imposition of individuality as an incarceration and separation that ‘splits up community life’, Foucault identified something about the operation of power at this historical moment: its domination by a ‘government of individualization’ in which the formation and management of individual subjectivity lies at the heart of how power and people are effectively conducted (2002b; 30). Importantly, the government of individuality operates not only at the level of state institutions but also diffusely throughout social spaces, working on how people personally and politically relate to themselves and each other. It goes to work on and through the subject. It is a form of government that, whilst maintaining state institutions as privileged sites of power/knowledge production, infiltrates and reproduces itself throughout our everyday lives. We all play our part in perpetuating this government, consciously, willingly, or not.

Here Foucault rejects the liberal picture of political analysis focused on sovereignty, the juridical state, and free participant-citizens. Power and liberal freedom are not antithetical, Foucault maintains, but rather liberal freedom (including the liberal subject) is one of the central means by which power, and the pervasive intrusion of government into our everyday lives, is able to operate. Of course this relation also produces a reciprocal ground for challenging this power, which is why Foucault characterised it as a sort of ‘agonism […] a relationship that is at the same
time mutual incitement and struggle’ (2002b; 342). However, whilst it may offer avenues of strategic contestation, the notion of the free liberal subject remains intimately bound up with the emergence of neoliberal forms of power and control. Developing as a ‘correlative of the deployment of apparatuses of security’ (2009; 48), Foucault argues, freedom has emerged ‘as an element that has become indispensable to governmentality itself’, or at least to a governmentality that seeks to manage and profit from a particular composition of economic circulation and laissez-faire capitalism. The question of what such a ‘freedom’ consists of, and importantly what ‘the specific limits to this freedom’ are to be, becomes a central focus for the operation of governmental practice and thought (2009; 353). ‘The game of liberalism’ sets up a regime of power/knowledge that produces particular sorts of free subjects and governs them on the basis of an ‘economy’ of freedoms and security (e.g.10-11; 48-49). It is ‘the administration of things’ and of people on the basis of their own nature, their own interests, and their own freedoms (49). Management, therefore, is the form of government of the liberal state: its role is as facilitator and guardian of the population, the economy, society, ‘as a set of natural phenomena’ in order to ‘get them to work’ (352-353). This wardenship of the liberal state importantly involves the encouragement and policing of particular norms of economic efficiency and social productivity. For Foucault, the ‘essential function’ of the liberal state becomes that of ‘ensuring the security of the natural phenomena of economic processes or processes intrinsic to population’ (353), and liberal subjectivity is essential to this end. So for Foucault, as an embodiment of its normative principles of freedom the liberal individual subject is captured within neoliberalism’s web of power. Our freedom as liberal subjects is actually the condition for a sort of unfreedom – our subjection to neoliberalism and the rule of economic government. But, as always with Foucault, this doesn’t mean the fight is over.

2.2.2 Everyday politics of power

Foucault’s work draws our attention to the ways everyday aspects of our lives are highly political and the primary field on which power relations are mapped out and policed. History is not seen as a forward march to an inevitable future, nor as punctuated by a series of enlightening or revolutionary moments in thought and
innovation. Instead it is understood as the cumulative effect of different attempts to negotiate, take control of, or escape from the specific relations of power in which people find themselves living. Foucault’s analysis, therefore, involves interrogating the development of ‘macro-power’ (institutions of the state, concepts of political philosophy, changing forms of government) from the perspective of ‘micro-power’: a ‘history of the state on the basis of men’s [there he goes again] actual practice, on the basis of what they do and how they think’ (2009; 358). Central to this analysis of how power works at the micro level of our interactions is an interrogation into the way power works through norms, how power ‘effects distributions around the norm’ (1978; 144). It turns our attention to the manifold ways in which our everyday lives are subject to constant regularisation by social norms which we draw upon in our relations with ourselves and others, and which carry with them the power effects of past struggles and continuing inequalities. Here we are importantly protagonists in our own subjection to a governmental power ‘that applies itself to immediate everyday life [and] categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize and others have to recognize in him’ (2002b; 331). Living among others we are caught up negotiating a system of ‘segregation and social hierarchization’ through which a power that aims at the ‘management of life’ operates to ‘invest life through and through’ with normative regulations and the command of productivity (1978; 139-141). We play out these dynamics of power in our interactions with each other as subjects, reproducing their reality or unsettling it. For Foucault, this constitutes a struggle not only between different subjects but over the very dynamics of subjectivity itself – the power that lies behind the conditions for becoming (un)recognisable as this or that subject at all. Here, then, the free liberal subject is central to the operation of power but also a site of contestation from which a change to power’s configuration might become possible. Either way, Foucault’s picture of everyday life portrays its political complexity and saturation with power, bringing into focus the diverse ways in which we are complicit ourselves in reconstructing and deconstructing the forms of government to which we are subjected.
2.3 Everyday life as ethical: Butler, bringing the other back in

Foucault gives an account of everyday life as political by showing the implication of subjectivity in the operations of governmental power and demonstrating how ‘freedom’ becomes a condition for a sort of ‘unfreedom’ implicated in domination and control. Drawing upon this, Butler takes up the perspective of the governed/governable subject and asks what sorts of ‘freedom’ are enabled or constrained by this condition of ‘unfreedom’. Looking at the relation between subjects and norms in terms of performativity and sociality, Butler evokes how everyday life is not only political but also inescapably ethical. Everyday life, for Butler, is ethical not in the sense of being ‘good’ or ‘proper’ but in the sense of always involving relations of vulnerability and responsibility towards others with whom our lives are inextricably linked. Taking a perspective on the subject as a social being who is exists in and because of a world of others foregrounds questions of ethics and the ethical relations we (fail to) form with each other. Such a perspective emphasises our everyday envelopment in each other’s lives and the ways in which ‘the “I” is invariably implicated in the “we”’ (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013; 107). In other words, in seeing everyday life as ethical Butler brings the other back in.

2.3.1 Normativity, performativity, and sociality

Social norms, for Foucault, function as part of a disciplinary and regulatory system of governance that emerged out of ongoing historical processes of political struggle. Subjects bear the marks of these processes as both their product and that which carries them along. There is something quite mechanical in much of Foucault’s account of power, normativity, and subjectivity, despite his insistence on the importance of analysing micro-practices. Subjects are produced, disciplined, regulated, managed, and governed, using techniques, mechanisms, technologies, and strategies of power. Of course these procedures are complex, open to challenge and change, but often Foucault’s narrative seems to depict history, politics, capitalism and the state, as some developing industrious machine geared towards control and productivity. There are many exceptions to this, and many reasons why his narrative
reads in this way. But it seems to miss some important areas of political inquiry: the experiences of subjects (and the possibilities for creative subjectivity), the social reproduction of norms and power, and relations between different subjects (the presence of others). These areas are, however, the focus of much of Judith Butler’s work leading her to question how we might understand and engage with our ethical political surroundings.

For Butler, subjectivity is a ‘performative’ embodiment of social norms that is ‘reiterative and citational’ (Butler, 1993; 1). We draw upon norms ‘which qualif[y] a body for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility’ in our daily lives as a reference for our meaningful interactions with others (2). As resources in a shared context of social understanding we use norms as a sort of script in our performances of ourselves and in our reading of others, sticking to it or ad-libbing to varying degrees (Gregson & Rose, 2000; Scheel, 2013b; 285). Of course there is only so far off-script you can go before your performance becomes unrecognisable, and there is only so much you can do to influence the scripts others are reading off and applying to you. By acting out these normative scripts we also perform their power effects, faithfully reproducing them as authoritative or subversively calling them into question, or sometimes both at once. As individual subjects we are not the primary authors of these scripts and their normative expectations can be constraining and unwelcome. But they are also empowering: ‘The paradox of subjectivation (assujettissement) is precisely that the subject who would resist such norms is itself enabled, if not produced, by such norms’ (Butler, 1993; 15). For me to be a subject for others, to act as myself in the world, I must draw upon the norms at my disposal in my current situation and negotiate their power ‘in the context of an enabling and limited field of constraint’ (2005; 19). It is in this sense that, for Butler, we establish our ‘being through the citing of power, a citing

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7 We can see Foucault’s work as a conversation with Marx, and also Nietzsche, in the context of his own disillusionment with the politics of contemporary Marxist groups for its seeming inability to challenge the sweeping success of neoliberalism. He is interested in identifying those power/knowledge and disciplinary dynamics that allowed capitalism to develop and which would supposedly need to be challenged for any effective form of anti-capitalism to succeed. See for example: ‘power in Western capitalism was denounced by Marxists as class domination; but the mechanics of power in themselves were never analysed. This task could only begin after 1968, that is to say, on the basis of daily struggles at grass-roots level, among those whose fight was located in the fine meshes of the web of power’ (2002d; 117). For detailed genealogies of Foucault’s work see Dreyfus & Rabinow (1983), Deleuze (1998) *Foucault*, Lemke (2012)
that establishes an originary complicity with power in the formation of the “I” (15). Becoming a subject involves entering into the world of power and knowledge, something we cannot avoid since it is a condition of our living in a world with others.

We can see how for Butler, as for Foucault, subjectivity is inescapably intertwined with power and knowledge. But where Foucault primarily traces this to the historical emergence of mechanisms of governmentality Butler locates the reason for this in our primary social existence, our sociality: ‘The norms by which I recognize another or, indeed, myself are not mine alone, they function to the extent that they are social’ (2005; 24). Indeed, we only begin to make sense of ourselves and the world in which we live after being brought up and immersed in the norms, desires, and fears of others. The norms of others are forced upon us, forming a ‘horizon’ in which we can emerge as subjects for ourselves and others (24). Our sociality means we are first of all subjected to an ‘exposure’ and a ‘dispossession’ as the condition for our becoming a subject (8; 100). We are always to some degree in the hands of others as we attempt to form and live out our lives and our selves since we are open to the power of their recognitions and the violence of their refusals. By showing subjectivity to be performative, Butler displays how it necessarily plays out in relations with others which can often be unwilled and unwelcome. Out of this constraint, Butler argues, arises an understanding of individual agency, and a subject of freedom, that cannot be separated from its social connection and reliance on others: ‘one invariably struggles with the conditions of one’s own life [...] with the unchosen conditions of one’s life, a struggle – an agency – is also made possible, paradoxically, by the persistence of this primary condition of unfreedom’ (19). Furthermore, it forms the basis for a radical understanding of ethical responsibility:

‘none of us is fully bounded, utterly separate, but, rather, we are in our skins, given over, in each other’s hands, at each other’s mercy. This is a situation we do not choose. It forms the horizon of choice, and it grounds our responsibility’ (2005; 101).

2.3.2 Vulnerability, ethical responsibility, and solidarity

For Butler, being at the mercy of others is a necessary outcome of our sociality. It makes us vulnerable to injury (see Butler, 2006), both physical and normative, but is
also the condition for our being a living subject in the world: ‘That we are impinged upon primarily and against our will is the sign of a vulnerability and a beholdenness that we cannot will away’ (2005; 100) and yet ‘our willingness to become undone in relation to others constitutes our chance of becoming human. To be undone by another is a primary necessity, an anguish, to be sure, but also a chance’ (136). In becoming social subjects we risk ourselves through exposure to others and their normative relations of power. We also become complicit in these relations and in the ‘exclusionary matrix by which subjects are formed’ (1993; 3). We are caught up in a shared condition of ‘precariousness’ in our dependence on ‘what is outside ourselves, on others, in institutions, and on sustained and sustainable environments’, that is, our dependence on ‘the conditions that make life possible’ (2010; 23). However, whilst we might all share in this ‘historically contingent ontology’ (2010; 4) its consequences are distributed unequally across the normative orders we are complicit in reproducing in our social political lives.

For Butler, our contemporary political frames demarcate ‘what qualifies as bodies that matter, ways of living that count as “life”, lives worth protecting, lives worth saving, lives worth grieving’ (1993; 16). These frames produce a ‘differential allocation of precarity’ (2010; 3) through the relegation of some ‘others’ to ‘those “unliveable” and “uninhabitable” zones of social life which are nevertheless densely populated’ (1993; 3). For Butler, it is precisely our complicity in the social, ethical, and political alienation of others which also binds us inseparably to them. The conditions enabling my subjectivity are the same conditions enabling the estrangement and precarity of others. Just as I perform my subjectivity by citing the norms of others so I reiterate social divisions of segregation as I live out my life. But, of course, both are open to ‘rupture or revision’ (2005; 132). For Butler this inseparability, that is also vulnerability, forms the basis of an ethical responsibility and political solidarity, providing a productive ground from which to launch a radical struggle for egalitarianism (2010; 165; 182-184).

Butler brings the ‘other’ back into prominence within her intimately social picture of everyday life, something she faults Foucault for neglecting (2005; 23). No matter how much our social relations seem to separate us from each other, Butler
shows there necessarily remains in them a ‘dependency, contiguity and unwilled proximity’ that binds us together (2010; xxvi). This recognition of our subjectivity as ‘unbounded’ and the affirmation of our social exposure (2010; 52-54) leads Butler to posit social relations as infused with ethical implications and concerns for which we are responsible, whether we like it or not. Because of this, Butler argues, ‘it would seem obligatory, if not urgent, to return the question of responsibility to the question “How are we formed within social life, and at what cost?”’ (2005; 136): that is, ethical enquiry must take the form of ‘social critique’ (2005; 82; 2010; 35).

2.3.3 An ‘experiment in living otherwise’: solidarity as struggle

Here Butler presents a conception of ethics as ‘a critical intervention apropos the norms that differentiate between those lives that count as liveable and grievable and those that do not’ (2010; 180). Such an ethical disposition is not about morality or the refinement of ethical rules of behaviour. Rather it entails a struggle with power and with norms against the violence perpetrated by/in the name of a particular social order. It involves challenging framings of social life that discount others, unearthing inequalities entrenched in our understandings of ourselves and our interactions with each other, and working towards a social practice of ‘non-violence’ that champions ‘the apprehension of equality in the midst of precariousness’ (2010; 181). For Butler, everyday life is replete with struggles over subjectivity and sociality that are at once deeply political and profoundly ethical. The ethical obligation is not to attempt to escape these struggles, to remove oneself from a complicity in power, but to join together with others in solidarity ‘as an experiment in living otherwise’ (2005; 100). By engaging in such experimental struggles among others Butler proposes we might find a radical basis for collective politics and equality that makes room for difference rather than ostracising it or demonising it. By placing otherness centre stage Butler shows the conditions for another form of ethical politics, another way of living, are already present in our everyday lives. We just need to bring these conditions to life.

For Butler, everyday life is lived in a world of others, therefore entailing ethical political responsibilities for how we construct this world together in ways which make possible or violate different forms of life. A mutual existence ties us to each other in
our sociality. Whilst this can lead to harm and injury it also offers the possibility of tenderness and solidarity. The limited agency available to Butler’s performative subject is how they conduct themselves in relation to the prevailing norms of their social order: conform or confound. Constrained as our freedom may be, Butler shows, in our relations with others we can certainly become powerful. She asks us to be attentive to the workings of power and social norms which surround us every day and to remain critically vigilant. She asks us to look at the limits of our frames of understanding and to continuously press against them in search of an opening or an inspiration from which new forms of living and ethical politics might emerge. Our limitations are themselves a chance to appreciate our proximity to others and take this as the starting point for bringing our ethical politics to life.

2.4 Reading everyday life: encountering borders on the ‘rough ground’ of ethical politics

For Foucault and Butler everyday life is ethically and politically charged, dense with power and people. Everyday life is a primary focus of governmental control as well as a crucial point of contact with oppositional struggles. I propose that taking an everyday perspective on questions of borders, migration, and ethical politics more generally, is important for investigating the workings of power and possible avenues for other forms of ethical politics. This section looks at how we might go about reading everyday life. Drawing inspiration from Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* I consider reading everyday life as a ‘descent into the ordinary’ (Das, 2007) and ask what this might entail. Focusing on ‘encounters’ (Ahmed, 2000) and employing a ‘grammatical reading’ (Pin-Fat, 2010), I argue that such a reading enables a nuanced analysis of them as sites of struggle, one which is committed to the ethical political complexity of those whose lives are caught up in them. As both an ethos and a method, reading everyday life entails a commitment to the ethical political ‘rough ground’ (Wittgenstein, 1974; Pin-Fat, 2010), that is, to the idea that *ordinarily* we do our ethics and politics on the messy terrain of our everyday encounters with one another. This commitment informs the overall approach of this thesis as a way of bringing to life the possibilities for a different sort of ethical politics.
2.4.1 Wittgenstein’s critique of foundational philosophy: ‘the descent into the ordinary’

Wittgenstein’s *Philosophical Investigations* (1974) proves a fruitful starting point for thinking about everyday life and one that has inspired varied works across a range of disciplines from anthropology, philosophy, to international relations (see Veena Das (2007), Stanley Cavell (1999), and Veronique Pin-Fat (2000; 2010; 2013; 2015; 2016)). Whilst his arguments are centred on issues in philosophy of language, Wittgenstein’s overall critique is of a particular mode of thought and analysis that ‘explores the nature of all things [...] seeks to see to the bottom of things’ (Wittgenstein, 1974; §89). For Wittgenstein, foundational philosophy, typical of a particular sort of essentialist ‘logical investigation’, is characterised by the urge to reveal ‘something hidden’ beneath phenomena (in his case, linguistic phenomena) which will offer a ‘deep’ understanding of their essence (a foundational understanding of the power of language or how language becomes meaningful, for instance) ‘that lies within, which we see when we look into the thing, and which an analysis digs out’ (§89; §92; §111). Searching for foundational essences is not confined to philosophy of language. It is present, even prevalent, in most academic fields and public political discourses. For example, we find similar urges in books on human rights which begin from the question ‘What is a right?’ and proceed from there to the question ‘who is the subject of rights?’ (see in this instance, Vincent 2010; 13; 27). We find the same in textbooks on security introducing the topic by asking ‘four fundamental questions’ ‘What is security?’, ‘Whose security?’, ‘What is a security issue?’ and ‘How can security be achieved?’ (Williams, 2013; 5-10). We also encounter something similar in debates over who should or should not count as a British citizen, and what constitutes ‘Britishness’ (Byrne, 2016; Commission for Racial Equality, 2005; Cruse, 2008; Gray & Griffin, 2015). Why is this problematic for Wittgenstein, and why is it problematic for us?

The problem of foundational philosophy for Wittgenstein is that in searching for meaning below the depths of language we lose sight of how it works as an

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8 This is taken from the title of Veena Das’s (2007) book *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary* which elaborates a Wittgensteinian anthropology of violence.
ordinary practice in everyday life and become lost in misunderstanding, chasing ‘plain nonsense’ (1974; §119). Foundational philosophy is fixated by a particular picture of how language works, that words reveal the reality of the world through naming, and this leads philosophers to try and unearth the essential tie between language and things in order to discover something fundamental about reality. The problem is, Wittgenstein argues, that when we do this we believe we are saying something fundamental about the world when we are ‘merely tracing round the frame through which we look at it’ (§114). A dilemma is reached in foundational philosophy: ‘A picture held us captive. And we could not get outside of it, for it lay in our language and language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably’ (§115). But, for Wittgenstein, this dilemma only arises and causes us concern because we have been seduced by a picture of language as metaphysical. It is an outcome of doing philosophy in a particular foundational way. The answer, Wittgenstein suggests, is to reject this picture of how language works and return our philosophical endeavours to examining language in its ordinary use:

‘When philosophers use a word [...] and try to grasp the essence of the thing, one must always ask oneself: is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home? – What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use’ (1974; §116).

Returning our gaze to everyday scenes where words are given ‘life’ is what Wittgenstein calls for (1974; §432). He asks us to see language, meaning, truth, as features of our social interactions: ‘words are also deeds’ (§546). We use words, we do things with language: we console, charm, or cry out to others, we denounce, deter, deny or devote ourselves to them with our speech. We give, follow, or refuse orders, share ideas and dreams, make mistakes and deliberately mislead. Language for Wittgenstein is not something abstract set apart from reality. Instead it forms a part of our lives. We live with it as we live among others. Its rules are not foundational but ‘grammatical’: what words mean depends and varies with the context of their use. Wittgenstein employs a strategy in Philosophical Investigations of producing ‘grammatical remarks’ (§574) that point out where confusion arises from philosophers taking words out of their context in an effort to find deeper meaning in them. This, he argues, results in philosophers basing foundational generalisations about the essence
of words and their meaning on what amount to category mistakes, making them in a sense meaningless. It also affects what sorts of questions philosophers ask and where they lead them to look for answers.

For example, Wittgenstein famously argued philosophical dilemmas of scepticism over the im/possibility of recognising pain in others are based on a confusion that what is at stake in an expression of pain is a question of epistemological certainty concerning the knowledge of our/others’ inner sensations (§269-304). Wittgenstein suggests this is based on a limited conception of how language works, that words name objects in the world and convey inner thoughts to others, and instead situates the expression of pain within a wider social context in which we are also caught up, where what matters is less ‘truth’ than ‘attitude’ (§304; 310), that is how we relate to one another (Pin-Fat, 2013; 250). As Wittgenstein challenges us: ‘Just try – in a real case – to doubt someone else’s fear or pain’ (§303).

2.4.2 The ‘rough ground’

Wittgenstein’s philosophical turn to the ordinary ‘consists in assembling reminders for a particular purpose’ (1974; §127), the main reminder being that language is social, a way of being in the world, a ‘phenomenon of human life’. Forgetting this leads us down strange avenues where we become stuck in confusion conjured up by trying to fit together grammatical inconsistencies – ‘a grammatical joke’ in which we see ‘the character of depth’ (§111). The dilemmas of philosophy are products of philosophers’ practice, of their neglect of grammar and the ordinary. Turning to everyday life Wittgenstein advocates a different approach to philosophy that seeks not to give foundational explanations but instead offers descriptions of the different scenes we find people living in and using language. He reminds us: ‘don’t think, but look!’ (§66). What we find when we look at language as a social practice is not a foundational truth or reality, the general condition for each specific instance of a word, but rather a series of ‘family resemblances’ (§67), similar features on distinct faces expressing different but related things. This is because when we turn to look at ordinary language we notice the complexity of our everyday lives, how the world we live and use language in is constantly shifting, changing, playing out rather than static.
Because of this, Wittgenstein says, ‘we do not command a clear view of the use of our words’ (§122). We are rather caught up in the middle of things, of language use, of meaning, of ‘civil life’, already ‘entangled in our own rules’ and the rules of others, which of course we do not always fully comprehend (§125). This is what Wittgenstein calls ‘the rough ground’ (§107).

But this does not ordinarily induce a philosopher’s sceptical panic. We just get on living. The difficulty here, Wittgenstein maintains, is ‘to keep our heads up […] to see that we must stick to the subjects of our every-day thinking, and not go astray and imagine […] we had to repair a torn spider’s web with our fingers’ (§106). The task of philosophy is not to explain the whole of language in one go, to patch up the spider’s web, or provide a deeper understanding of language (or other social practices) that could lead to reform and clarification in practice: ‘Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is.’ (§124). For Wittgenstein, philosophy as a form of inquiry should abandon its search for ‘the crystalline purity of logic’ which only leads us to the frictionless ‘slippery ice’ of ideal and abstract thought: ‘We want to walk: so we need friction’, he says, we want to understand language as we use it in our lives and so we must pursue our investigations from in the middle of things: ‘Back to the rough ground!’ (§107).

The call to return to the rough ground expresses an epistemological challenge: give up the search for foundational knowledge understood as a search for essences ‘with its underlying assumption about being able to solve the problem of what it is to know’ (Das, 2007; 6-7). Such a search is a futile endeavour. What we hope to grasp ends up disintegrating in our hands. It also causes us to lose sight of everyday life, the world and everyone in it: ‘The suspicion of the ordinary seems to be to be rooted in the fact that relationships require a repeated attention to the most ordinary of objects and events, but our theoretical impulse is often to think of agency in terms of escaping the ordinary rather than a descent into it’ (6-7). It is exactly this descent into
the ordinary that Wittgenstein calls for, and it has important ethical political implications.\textsuperscript{9}

\subsection*{2.4.3 Encountering everyday life}

Kathleen Stewart in her book \textit{Ordinary Affects} provides one of the most intense and insightful attempts to engage with everyday life in writing. Descending with Stewart into the ordinary we find a \textit{surging vitality}:

\begin{quote}
\textit{a shifting assemblage of practices and practical knowledges, a scene of both liveness and exhaustion, a dream of escape or of the simple life. Ordinary affects are the varied, surging capacities to affect and to be affected that give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergences. They're things that happen. They happen in impulses, sensations, expectations, daydreams, encounters, and habits of relating, in strategies and their failures, in forms of persuasion, contagion, and compulsion, in modes of attention, attachment, and agency, and in publics and social worlds of all kinds that catch people up in something that feels like something} (2007; 1-2).
\end{quote}

Everyday life is ‘eventful’ (Das, 2007; 8): ‘\textit{Something} throws itself together in a moment as an event and a sensation; a something both animated and inhabitable’ (Stewart, 2007; 1). It is alive with intensities, electrified by the infinite ordinary encounters between people, sparks go flying, desire, lust, hatred, dread, boredom. Moments are packed in tight with sensation, bursting with significance, even as they open out onto a vast plane of possibility, unravelling through time, blown by the winds and carried by the currents. A hand reaches out expectantly, only to be clasped tight or sent reeling back with sharp shocks of pain. A smile can mean all the difference. From here, things look different than from above, strange but also more familiar,

\textsuperscript{9} The ethical political implications of Wittgenstein’s work are not uncontroversial (See Pin-Fat 2010; 26-30 for a discussion of this). Whilst it is not clear the extent to which Wittgenstein himself intended, perceived, or took interest in these ethical political implications, when we consider the demand to return to the rough ground in areas other than the philosophy of language, IR for instance, they become hard to ignore. For example, in ‘The Spectacle of the “Other”’ (1997) Stuart Hall discusses how racial stereotyping has historically worked through essentialising ‘difference’, objectifying fetishized others, and thereby naturalising an unequal social, economic, political order of power and representation (257-259). By showing stereotyping to be a \textit{practice} of representation, Hall performs a sort of return to the rough ground, showing ‘that meaning can never be finally fixed [...] ultimately meaning begins to slip and slide; it begins to drift, or be wrenched, or inflected in new directions’(270). Here, a descent to the ordinary level of social practice shows that at stake in everyday life is a ‘politics of representation’, thus opening up space for considering anti-racist ‘counter-strategies’ and interventions in ‘a struggle over meaning which continues and is unfinished’ (277).
certainly awkward to write from within the conventions of academic research. Such an immersion brings on a nauseous hesitancy (‘I don’t know my way about’, says Wittgenstein (1974; §123)), I cannot be sure which way I should be going or where I will end up, or even what it is I want. I look to any others around to get my bearings, to get a grip, faces appear in the dark, a lorry screeches past ... I am caught up in others’ flows, carried beyond myself, spun off track, lost at sea – bodies floating face down by the shore – who are they?:

‘Like a live wire, the subject channels what’s going on around it in the process of its own self-composition. Formed by the coagulation of intensities, surfaces, sensations, perceptions, and expressions, it’s a thing composed of encounters and the spaces and events it traverses or inhabits. [...] Things happen. The self moves to react, often pulling itself someplace it didn’t exactly intend to go’ (Stewart, 2007; 79).

Descending into the ordinary can disorient us, it feels unfamiliar, too intense, it can make us panic. Like arriving somewhere completely unknown to us, a foreign city, it is so full of possibilities yet offers no clear path to follow, we are on the rough ground. Lost we get stuck not knowing what to do. Everything moves too fast. But as with any new place we soon learn our way around, we get with the flow, making connections, following certain routes, perhaps forging our own paths when we feel more confident. We can soon make a life for ourselves. It seems odd that descending into the ordinary can be so upsetting. After all, it doesn’t ordinarily provoke these reactions (although there certainly are times when life’s little intensities become too much). Why is it that when we try to think or write about everyday life in IR or philosophy, in discussions around ethics and politics it seems either too little or too much? Perhaps it is because we are taught that the concerns of Politics or Ethics are loftier things than those of our ordinary everyday lives: states, war, freedom, justice, equality perhaps, or the rule of law, but not a lack of money, having holes in your shoes, the frozen temperatures outside, having to walk for hours each day, our families and friends. Not hope, exhaustion, loneliness, compassion. But, I would argue, these are not so separable. They are caught up in each other since both take form and are brought to life in ordinary everyday scenes. Homelessness and the border, states and their wars, tears for lost family, public parks and prison cells. Everyday scenes are made up of countless encounters like this between people,
idea(l)s, histories, cultures, events, between systems of administration and bodies that move (Scheel, 2013b). The scenes these encounters make up will for sure be importantly different each time and yet such encounters often display similarities that echo recurring dynamics of power and histories.

How might a focus on ‘encounters’ provide for a different way of reading and writing the politics of everyday life, migration and the border? As Sara Ahmed (2000) suggests, seeing everyday life as made up of encounters keeps in view how it always involves negotiating relations with others and so is always a question of ethical politics. She suggests we might ‘think of the encounter as sociality – that “being” only emerges through and with others’ (143). Focusing on encounters brings out the powerful and lively ways we come to be for each other in the world, becoming identifiable subjects in relation to one another at specific times and places in ways imbued with ethical political power and meaning. Reading everyday life through encounters involves seeing how particular identities ‘come[] to be inhabited as living’ in more or less restraining contexts of representation, performance, and recognition which resonate with ongoing historical relations of power (8). Such an analysis explores how we reproduce the borders of our social reality by performing difference and belonging, familiarity and ‘strangerness’, in our ‘lived embodiment’ amongst others (6). These can be borders of difference based on nationality, citizenship, race, class, gender, sexuality, culture, for example, and they play out in encounters ranging from face to face meetings and daily interactions between people to encounters with and through written texts (6-9) or between people on the move and regimes of migration control (Scheel, 2013b; 284-5). These encounters carry with them ‘traces’ and ‘prior histories of encounter that violate and fix others in regimes of difference’, histories of colonialism, domination, exploitation, and division which provide compelling scripts for how we perform ourselves in these scenes of encounter (Ahmed; 8-9). They ‘are determined, but not fully determined’ and they importantly entail ‘surprise and conflict’: we can go off-script, our fixations can fail, and ‘we may not be able to read the bodies of others’ (6; 8). People’s lives may not fit the narratives of otherness attributed to them, their movements may follow paths we cannot anticipate, they might speak in voices we do not hear, or appear where we least
expect them to in unfamiliar guises. Whilst we may try to recognise others and try to fix them in relation to ourselves, we may fail, instead faced with an encounter we do not understand and cannot know what to do. There is always the possibility of surprise in our encounters with others.

This lack of knowledge and certainty, the possibility of encountering surprise, is perhaps another reason why everyday life seems too much for the philosopher to handle. Caught up in encounters with others we cannot obtain the philosopher’s desired clear view from which to make sound ethical political judgments. We cannot stand back far enough. Reading everyday life, however, embraces this uncertainty and partial knowledge as the condition for ethical politics. We could not go about our lives if we had to deliberate upon each action we take and make certain the right course of action. Ordinarily, to do so would not only be practically impossible but ethically and politically dubious as well (Pin-Fat, 2016a; 9-10). Everyday life is messy, contingent, not ideal, but it is what we have. Following Pin-Fat (2010; 2013; 2015; 2016) I argue we should acknowledge the rough ground of everyday life and abandon the search for secure foundations and epistemological certainty. Doing so brings into focus an ethical politics concerned with ‘the difficulties in acknowledging and responding to a life lived with others: a life in the ordinary of every day’ (2013; 243). It is perhaps a very ordinary ethical politics but it might at least have some life to it.

2.5 Ethos of reading grammatically: remaining on the rough ground of ethical politics

Véronique Pin-Fat has developed ‘an ethos of reading grammatically’ which draws upon Wittgenstein’s arguments to bring out their ethical political force (2010; 6). Reading grammatically involves the ‘refusal to be seduced by metaphysics, epistemology, a search for foundations’ and seeks ‘to avoid the seduction of “digging” deep into phenomena to find “reality” and the answer’ (5). The seduction of digging, as we saw with Wittgenstein, leads us on abstract quests for certainty on which, in IR for example, we can safely base an ethical politics. Pin-Fat argues such quests end up postulating foundational pictures about how the world must be which work normatively to ‘regulate possibility and impossibility: what can and cannot be done, what is “real” and what is not, what is “false” and what is “true” […] what is “ethical”
and what is not’ (19). These pictures are foundational of particular language games in IR, discourses and ways of doing ethics and politics, because they ‘seem to represent something deep about the world – the way things are [...] But, the point is, they do not’ (20). They seem to tell us where ethical politics must be found, who the subject of ethical politics must be, and what we must do to achieve it (24). They ‘hold us captive’ in ways which can be highly detrimental for those who fall outside the frames of these pictures, outside the frame of ‘humanity’ and cosmopolitan concern for instance (23). A grammatical reading reminds us that these pictures are themselves ‘grammatical’, showing how they are formed in a language game that follows certain grammatical rules which are ‘arbitrary’, they have no foundation outside of our practice of them (22). Therefore, a grammatical reading critiques the foundational power of certain pictures of the world in international politics by showing how ‘[t]he rules of grammar [on which these pictures are based] are unavoidably and ceaselessly open to question because they have no ultimate justification’ (23). More than this, however, it draws our focus away from a search for foundations in the first place and towards the ways in which our own practices ‘police[] the very boundaries of international politics and ethics’ (23). What is at stake ethically and politically is not finding foundations, therefore, but what we ourselves do in our everyday encounters.

2.5.1 Line-drawing as ethical political practice: hard/soft ontologies and deep metaphysical seductions of nation-state borders

Pin-Fat’s anti-foundational account of representation as arbitrary focuses on how our constitutive practices of framing, or ‘line-drawing’, are ‘(im)possible’, that is, always contingent and contested in their production of the world: ‘because context (the language game) is arbitrary in the sense of its delineation being forever open, complete representation is never possible. A paradox will always make the representation leaky’ (2000; 665). Because how we see the world and others in it is always openly dependent on what lines we draw and our way of drawing them, and because in drawing lines we always leave someone out as the ‘haunting’ exception to our rule, a focus on the ‘(im)possibility’ of line-drawing ‘allow[s] the political to occupy a central, constitutive space’ in our analyses (ibid). How we see the world, represent others, and use language are unavoidably ethical political matters because our
representations lack foundations beyond our line-drawing practices. For Pin-Fat, our line-drawing practices are ontologically ‘soft’ and ‘on the surface’ rather than ‘hard’ and ‘deep’ (2010; 128), representing our contingent ordinary relations with each other rather than something fundamental to our essence. But so often when thinking about International Politics or Ethics we become seduced by the idea that what matters is ‘a particular sort of search: a search to capture what is, ethically, most important about being human’ (ibid). When we search for deep foundations of ethical politics, Pin-Fat argues, we end up establishing very specific grammars as generalizable rules and particular pictures of the world as the only game in town: ‘we begin to draw hard lines and believe that we have, indeed, mapped the world, the subject and our course’ (129). However, when we draw lines as if they were ‘hard’, when we believe we have located the foundations of our humanity, we end up reconstructing a world in which some are drawn beyond the line of the human, excluded from ethical politics.

The seduction of metaphysical depth and the promise of finding foundations for ethical politics is a powerful one. It leads us to see certain lines as ‘hard’, fixed, unchangeable, even natural. But to be seduced in this way is to forget the ethically and politically ‘soft’ ways in which we construct the conditions of our world for and with each other, how the dividing lines between us are our own doings, our responsibility. By drawing hard lines around subjects of ethical politics and imagining they go deep within us we ‘have removed ourselves from the world and each other by theorising’ (2010; 129) and lost sight of how we are already engaged in powerful practices of representation in relation to others. We also lose sight of the conditions for ethical political practice. A grammatical reading asks us, instead, to embrace ‘soft’ ontology and ‘return to the rough ground’ of ethical politics which ‘will keep us where we want to be and where we are anyhow: in the world living with others’ (129). Returning to the rough ground doesn’t bring us to a space where ethical politics is settled but it does bring us back to each other and so raises the possibility of bringing ethical politics to life.

Some of the most seductive and powerful ethical political lines we encounter in international politics are those of the nation-state and its borders between inside/outside, here/there, identity/difference (Walker, 1992; 2010). As R. B. J. Walker
consistently reminds us, the spatial and temporal ontologies of the nation-state are repeatedly rearticulated as dehistoricised and inevitable in accounts of international politics. We often assume the lines of the nation-state to be ‘hard’ lines. For Walker, international politics, as theory, profession, and form of government, expresses a very particular form of metaphysical seduction concerning the ‘boundaries, borders and limits’ of ethical politics (2010), that is, about where, when, and with whom ethical politics becomes (im)possible. In doing so, it ‘reifies an historically specific spatial ontology, a sharp delineation of here and there’ based on the borders of the nation-state and thus delineates ‘the presence and absence of political life inside and outside the modern state as the only ground on which structural necessities can be understood and new realms of freedom and history can be revealed’ (1992; ix).

As Walker demonstrates, the borders of the nation-state and its particular conception of the sovereign subject are historically specific ways of drawing lines of ethical politics in the world, themselves inextricable from how contemporary politics became dominated by state-centric forms of power and violence. Yet the metaphysical seduction of state sovereignty means we continually forget its contingency: ‘[a]s a practice of states, it is easily mistaken for their essence’ (1992; 176). This seductive picture of the world comes to totalise our political imaginations, including our efforts to think otherwise about a world beyond nation-states (179; 182-183): ‘A picture held us captive’ (Wittgenstein, 1974; §115) and, as Walker shows, in international politics that picture is often the nation-state. We forget these lines are our own ethical political doings and instead see them as foundational to Ethics and Politics. Walker’s critique acts as a reminder of the political-historical context behind the nation-state worldview and our implication in its reproduction through our line-drawing practices in contemporary political discourse. As such, he invites us to remain vigilant about how we draw lines of ethical politics and how we continue to be seduced by a picture of nation-states and their divisions as metaphysically deep in order to ‘enable and express other ways of becoming otherwise in worlds that do not end where we have learnt to draw the line with such elegance, and with such violence’ (2010; 258).
2.5.2 Remaining open to surprise: ethical politics of reading everyday life

Drawing on both Pin-Fat and Walker, then, reading everyday life in this thesis involves rejecting the seduction of deep metaphysical foundations on which to base ethical politics. One way this is done is by critically tracing the lines we draw in discourses concerning borders and migration, showing them to be ontologically ‘soft’ even when they appear to be ‘hard’, and by identifying ongoing metaphysical seductions of the nation-state which capture our attention, even within critical approaches (see especially chapters 3, 4 and 5). At the same time, this thesis proposes seeing border struggles from an alternative perspective of the ethical political rough ground of everyday life. Doing so hopefully opens up the possibility of encountering borders differently and seeing our relations with others anew, by ‘rendering the familiar unfamiliar’ (Pin-Fat, 2013; 248). As I have argued, reading borders in terms of everyday life involves refusing to frame ethical politics in terms of epistemological certainty in our relations with others\(^\text{10}\) and giving up the search for secure grounds of ethical politics. Furthermore, this thesis argues that giving this up is actually ethically politically productive because it allows us to focus on our ordinary everyday relations with one another, and to see in them the conditions for alternative ways of living together.

For Pin-Fat, a grammatical reading is an ethical political undertaking that ‘fully embraces contingency and uncertainty’ (2010; 5) and foregrounds an ‘openness to surprise’ in our everyday encounters with others (Diamond, 1995 in Pin-Fat 2010; 29). Returning to the ordinary/everyday, it approaches questions of ethical politics from a position of being in the world already rather than external to it looking in, that is, as already caught up in relations with others. Doing so entails recognising our ordinary ‘exposure’ to each other in our daily encounters, how our openness to the possibility of failing or being failed in our ethical political relations also constitutes the very chance of ethical politics. Rather than try to secure deep foundations beyond ourselves on which to base our ethical political practices ‘we must begin to pay attention to the politics of the multiplicity of ways in which our reading of each other can fail “to grant being human”’ (Cavell, 1999: 397)’ (2013; 252). Being open to

\(^{10}\) See chapter 5 for further discussion.
surprise or failure is to be open ethically politically to others. A focus on the possibility of failure in our representations is also a focus on the conditions of possible success. It shows us where success/failure matters, that is, in our relations with one another. Remaining open to ‘surprise’ in our ordinary encounters highlights how it is we who must take responsibility for how we see and treat others: ‘we have no choice but to take ethical responsibility for our readings of each other’ (252). Rather than a question of epistemology or metaphysics that can be answered, as it were, outside of ourselves and our relations with others, Pin-Fat shows how we treat others is ordinarily a matter of acknowledging or denying their humanity (2016; 11). It is not a matter of knowledge, an issue that can be resolved by theorising about the world, but rather a matter of how we act, the ‘attitude’ with which we receive or reject others, the disposition we take in our encounters with others in the world (11): ‘in the absence of foundational human criteria, a grammatical reading forces us to take responsibility for one another’s humanity in each of our embodied encounters’ (13).

Remaining open to surprise, then, involves assuming a sensitivity to the humanity of others in our everyday encounters. It means resisting the desire to ward off failure by deciding in advance questions of who, what, and where will count or not as properly ethical and political. It means remaining open to all the ways others exceed our understandings of them as the basis for our ethical political relations rather than demanding they conform to our own categories which, however liberal or radical, may not fit them. In terms of reading or writing, as way of being and acting in the world, it means assuming a particular disposition in relation to others that doesn’t seek to capture their essence or definitively fix their form of ethical politics. Instead, I suggest one way we might read/write everyday life is by trying to represent our encounters with others so that we encounter them differently, remaining open to surprise, seeking new possibilities for ‘reading otherwise’ than our usual scripts allow and, if we can, ‘seeing humanity anew’ (2010; 7; 2016).

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11 See chapter 6 for a discussion of this in relation to migrant political subjectivity.
2.6 Reading everyday life at the border: writing from the rough ground

How do I read/write everyday life at the border in this thesis? Primarily I draw on empirical research carried out during a period of fieldwork in Calais, supplemented by research into UK and French legislation, government policy documents, media reports, documentaries, and activist or NGO campaign material including report publications, blogposts, pamphlets, and videos. Out of these I construct throughout the thesis a series of scenes of encounter in the form of narrative vignettes intended to represent various aspects of how borders work in everyday life. More than an empirical base for my arguments, I intend these scenes to be critically evocative and ethically politically provocative, prompting a (re)encountering of borders in everyday life in terms of segregation and struggle. How I write the border as segregation and struggle in everyday life (see especially chapters 3 and 4), therefore, is itself intended as an ethical political intervention, a way of framing these encounters that tries to remain open to the surprise of those subjects who make them up. Paying attention to how border struggles are formed in multiple encounters between people in everyday life brings them into an unfamiliar focus and shows their ordinary practice both reproduces and exceeds dominant contemporary framings, for instance in terms of discourses of security or humanitarianism (see 5.2-5.3). We always draw lines for a particular purpose (Wittgenstein, 1974; §127; Pin-Fat, 2010). The purpose behind how I read/write everyday borders as segmentation and struggle is to accentuate the formative violence underlying practices of border-making and statecraft, and point to their messy and contested daily reproduction, their limits and excesses. Doing so I hope raises questions over the ethical politics of everyday borders, their inherent injustices, their role in perpetuating ongoing inequalities and discriminations, our own ordinary complicity in their daily enactments, and the challenges of confronting or undoing them. The reading of everyday borders I offer in this thesis is not meant only as an analytical account of border struggles, segregation, and migrant solidarity. It is also my attempt to express solidarity in my writing with those who struggle against borders in the UK and Calais. Of course, as ever on the rough ground, I am open to failure.
2.6.1 Writing everyday life in Calais: research failure and the rough ground

Many of the encounters I engage with in this thesis are drawn from a period of fieldwork in Calais over the winter of 2014-2015. I spent a little over three months living and participating with and alongside migrants, activists, local residents, charity workers and others who inhabit the milieu of border struggles in Calais in what we could term ‘solidarity work’ (Calais Migrant Solidarity (CMS) 2014a). I was already familiar with Calais as a site of solidarity work having visited several times over the years to support the ongoing border struggles there, in a personal capacity. The intention during this visit was to participate in this work while also trying to ‘do’ research at the same time. Alongside observation and interviews, I had ideas to set up workshops with different people in Calais to try and bring a collaborative element into the knowledge-production process. Naively I thought that in this way I could ‘contribute’ to the political ‘struggle’, that perhaps the research itself might even be valuable for reflecting on how to oppose the border in Calais. Whilst I believe collaborative research and self-critique is helpful for developing stronger border struggles, and I hope to pursue something similar in the future, I have to admit that in this regard my research was a failure. In fact, my field research generally was a failure on a number of levels. This failure, I want to suggest, foregrounds something important about the ethical political rough ground of everyday life and the messiness of what it means to remain there in our encounters. It has also influenced the way I write everyday borders in this thesis.

My research plans quickly unravelled in Calais. Trying to get the ‘research’ off the ground alongside the ‘activism’ proved impossible as I was caught up in the immediacy of the situation and unable to get a hold for myself of where to start with it. The number of people, the instability and transience of communities, the sheer ‘horror’ (Pin-Fat, 2016b) and urgency of encountering the border in its everyday embodiment, its naked violence, the sense of ‘being there’ and being unable to ‘stand by’, the pull to respond to multiple simultaneously competing crises, all placed on me different sorts of ethical political demands than those of good research practice. It became increasingly impossible to assert an observational distance from my own participation in these events, and to do so would itself have been a questionable
ethical political response. Confronted with such a concentration of the border’s everyday violence, both structural and physically immediate, and encountering such a vital struggle against these conditions by those it targets most, I have to admit I no longer felt my priorities lay with my research project.

Additionally, the details of the project I had chalked up over several years of theoretical grounding and methodological speculation were blown away like dust in the face of tumultuous everyday scenes in this northern French port town. My questions about the ‘power’ of human rights and the ethical political ‘meanings’ or motivations behind people’s actions seemed irrelevant. Ideas that felt important at my desk in Manchester appeared blindly ignorant among the tents in Calais. Rather than capturable in clear statements or grand declarations the ethical politics I found in Calais was made up of the messy sinews of people’s everyday lives. The language of human rights belonged to a different register to the everyday struggles people were engaged in, usually only mentioned alongside condemnations of the false promises and stark racism of Europe. Given these conditions my active pursuit of a clear research agenda disintegrated. I discussed my project with people I was close to, spent time and worked with, but given my own uncertainty surrounding the purpose, let alone content, of my research I felt more and more at sea. Adrift, at some point I submitted to the fast moving current of events and allowed it to wash me along. I threw myself into the practical day to day work of solidarity leaving the issues of writing a PhD for another time and place.

Of course this raises a number of ethical dilemmas. What basis do I have to write about these experiences? More than a question of scientific evidence this is an issue of consent and authorship: was people’s consent and participation sufficiently informed for me to ethically write about the situations I witnessed in Calais? Whose consent is necessary in this regard? Whose is not? Am I not imposing my own authorial voice and analytical perspectives onto others through my representation of the situation? Am I objectifying those people I encountered, fetishizing their otherness? Was I not being self-servingly deceptive in my lack of rigorous partitioning between my identity as an ‘activist’ and my identity as an ‘academic’? Will I not benefit in terms of education and career prospects from the living hardships of
others? Have I not abused and betrayed the friendships I built up? These questions remain with me, hauntingly unresolved. Efforts to continue dialogue and discussion around my writing with those who influence it and who inhabited my encounters can only go so far in addressing them. Here the ‘rough ground’ of ethical politics is truly uneven and there are many potholes I have certainly failed to navigate successfully.

2.6.2 Privilege

‘I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks’ (McIntosh, 1988).

Writing a PhD is, I think necessarily, a labour of love but one that involves a lot of privilege. Access to a lifetime of education, the opportunities to move up within the university hierarchy, the ability to secure funding, to have time and space to research, write, travel, the availability of resources, books, journals, free internet, computers, and the presence of a community of peers to which I can claim belonging, all these and more underpin the possibility of writing a PhD. Universities, as institutions of academic knowledge-production, function to facilitate access to these necessary resources for some but not all. They necessarily limit access to knowledge/education as much as enable it. As a white, British, middle class, male I have a knapsack full of the tools of privilege at my disposal (McIntosh, 1988) which allow me unearned advantages in gaining access to academia and the knowledge market. Furthermore, these academic privileges and the inequalities on which they are based cannot be dissociated from inequalities and discriminations pertaining to borders and migration: concerning freedom of movement, differential rights of non/citizenship, the different degrees of precarious immigration status, the division of subjects along lines of gender, race, class, language, culture, etc. The ways in which borders limit and divide, enabling freedoms for some and denying them for others, continue to play out in the university and the formation of the collective and individual subject(s) of academic

12 Thanks to Rachel Massey for introducing me to this quote.
research(е). The arbitrary coincidence of where I was born plays an important part in my ability to write this thesis.

Academic research itself, in the social sciences and elsewhere, is often mired in a form of ‘methodological nationalism’ and ‘statism’ (Amelina et al., 2012; De Genova, 2013; Wimmer & Schiller, 2002). Especially around borders and migration, much academic output, implicitly or explicitly, reproduces the discourse of migration as a ‘problem’ of governance, reifying ‘migrant’ subjects and their movements as inherently ‘other’, dangerously or tragically out of place, and therefore objects of analysis or intervention (De Genova, 2013; Scheel & Ratfisch, 2014). Even critical research contributes to discursive practices which ‘reaffirm the “normal” territorial order of life activities around the constellation of citizen/nation/state’ (Soguk, 1999; 11-12; Walker, 2010). At the same time, our other roles within the university, as teachers, supervisors, markers, etc. implicate us intimately in the mundane everyday operations of immigration surveillance and border control (Jenkins, 2014). Academic research on migration, therefore, is itself ‘a site of modern statecraft’ (Soguk, 1999; 20). As De Genova (2013) puts it:

‘We are of the connections [...] There is no neutral ground. The momentum of the struggle itself compels us, one way or the other, to “take a side”. Indeed, the larger juridical regimes of citizenship, denizenship, and alienage configure us to be always-already located within the nexus of inequalities that are at stake in these conflicts. Investigating and producing knowledge about these struggles merely implicates us further, more directly, more immediately’ (251-252).

As someone invested in a politics of migrant solidarity, who supports migrant struggles against the discriminatory system of states and border controls, this personal implication as a researcher in the everyday renewal of borders is hard to negotiate (Garelli & Tazzioli, 2013; Kasparek & Speer, 2013). The contradictions encountered here cannot easily be resolved individually but rather form part of the ethical political limitations of doing research from this position (Grappi, 2013; 322). For this reason, whilst efforts to address issues over authorship, representation, voice, authority, and the reproduction of unequal power relations within research are certainly vital, for instance through emphasising mutual collaboration and critical self-reflection (Askins, 2009; Darling, 2014; Ellis, 2007; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Dauphinee, 2010; Gannon,
2006), they often leave intact the borders which maintain hierarchical divisions between researcher/researched. Indeed, unless we critique and dismantle the institutionalisation of particular power relations and dominations within this wider context, the democratisation of academic research can only go so far. What is required, perhaps, is the building of new relations and ways of working linked to wider contexts of social struggles in which the academy is inextricably bound up (See for example Fals-Borda (1987), Gupta & Ferguson (1992), Mato (2000), Mignolo (2002), Santos (2014), and Smith (2012)). Of course, these are questions I cannot pursue at any length here.

2.6.3 Writing from the rough ground: failing to write the lives of others

Various forms of ethical political failure, then, form the rough ground this thesis starts out from to write about everyday border struggles. These limitations necessarily inform how I read everyday life, the questions I ask, and how I approach writing from the rough ground, which is also to say, failing to write the lives of others. In this thesis, I try to avoid writing an ‘ethnography’ of everyday borders that seeks to produce ‘knowledge about others’ (Clifford, 1983), a practice that continues to be associated with ongoing relations of power and inequality which trail behind them long histories of violence and domination (Santos, Nunes & Meneses, 2008). The ‘academic gaze’ that seeks to ‘master what it encounters’ through submitting an observed world, its people, their beliefs, and their behaviours, to a pre-determined order of knowledge can be seen as performing a sort of ethical political and ‘cognitive’ injustice, imposing its own alien truth on others, producing them as meaningful and manageable subjects, in ways which echo supremacist fantasies of colonialism (Dauphinee, 2010; 806; Santos, 2014). At the same time, ethnography is often seen to fetishize ‘otherness’ as an ontological category, constructing essentialised narratives of orientalised ‘strangers’ who become the object of observance and analysis, becoming (un)knowable or (un)representable as utterly ‘other’ (Ahmed. 2000; 5; Said, 1979). Indeed, fieldwork can certainly feel like ‘a strange pornography’ through which academics engage in a more or less concealed voyeurism in others’ lives which they then reproduce for consumption by a wider (still highly selective) audience (Dauphinee, 2010; 816). As Ahmed points out, the seduction of picturing the stranger
'as having a life of its own' or a specific ‘nature’, whether these are positive or negative pictures, overlooks the social, political, historical and epistemic contexts and relations in which such figures are powerfully (re)produced (5). By failing to interrogate the ‘processes of inclusion and exclusion, or incorporation and expulsion, that constitute the boundaries of bodies and communities’ and which underlie the unequal recognition of others as strangers or familiars, we risk perpetuating them (6). By fetishizing otherness, the stranger, as a form of being, a way of life, we risk reinforcing the practices of differentiation essential to multiple forms of ethical and political discrimination (52). Fetishistic accounts of the lives of ‘others’, whether ethnographic or philosophical, further reconstruct the borders between us (72-73; 143).

This quote from bell hooks (1990) forces us to confront the ethical political danger of fetishizing ‘otherness’ when writing from an unequal position of privilege, even if writing critically or in solidarity. ‘Speaking from [the] margins’ hooks addresses those who ‘participate in the construction of a discourse about the “Other”’ admonishing them/us for reproducing (post)colonial relations of marginalisation:

‘I am waiting for them to stop talking about the “Other”, to stop even describing how important it is to be able to speak about difference. It is not just important what we speak about, but how and why we speak. Often this speech about the “Other” is also a mask, an oppressive talk hiding gaps, absences, that space where our words would be if we were speaking, if there were silence, if we were there. This “we” is that “us” in the margins, that “we” who inhabit marginal space that is not a site of domination but a place of resistance. Enter that space. Often this speech about the “Other” annihilates, erases: “No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. […] Re-writing you, I write myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still colonizer, the speaking subject, and you are now at the center of my talk”’ (151-152).

In this thesis I write about border struggles not from a position of having been marginalised by borders but as someone whose privilege is made possible by them. This raises tricky questions for how to write about the ethical politics of border struggles, segregation, irregular migration, and solidarity. Perhaps I shouldn’t write at all and instead relinquish my privileged authorship and voice. But remaining silent is itself a privileged use of voice. The fact is, writing this thesis fails to sufficiently
overcome these dilemmas of framing others or erase the lines of otherness drawn at its margins of representation. It fails to bring the borders down. And necessarily so, because to imagine it could (or should) do otherwise would perpetuate a particular conception of individual sovereign agency/autonomy rather than relationality as the basis of ethical politics, and reproduce familiar fantasies, borders, boundaries, and inequalities in our relations with each other.

These dilemmas of difference, of identity, representation, and power are also commonly encountered in efforts to build practical relations of migrant solidarity (CMS, 2010). They are characteristic of the pitfalls of solidarity on the rough ground of border struggles, solidarity against and across divides of us/them which nonetheless must acknowledge their persistence (Said, 1979; 327). The research underlying this thesis could certainly have been conducted in ways which more creatively deconstructed these borders. But academic work, despite its solipsism, is not and cannot be the sum total of our ethical political engagement in the world and its struggles. Perhaps, for now, all I can do is accept the (im)possibility of ethical politics and the necessary failure of writing the lives of others. As Santos (2014) writes: ‘Given the above circumstances, how is one to write about social emancipation? To avoid misleading anyone and being misled in turn, it would be better to acknowledge the impossibility of being radical and to write from such an acknowledgment’ (3-5).

I write about borders from the rough ground in this thesis by portraying scenes of everyday encounter. In Calais, these scenes are drawn from a combination of encounters which I observed, participated in, read in the media, in official reports, or overheard as part of the constantly circulating stories that accompanied daily life at the border (see chapter 2, 4, and 5). In the UK context (chapter 3) I draw on detainee testimony published in NGO reports and by the Detained Voices project (2015), evidence given to a parliamentary inquiry into detention, as well as government policy documents, reviews, inspection reports into the immigration system reports, as well as Mary Bosworth’s (2014) academic study of everyday life in UK’s immigration detention system. In writing these encounters I focus on portraying the border in its everyday operation which I argue highlights its messiness, its discriminations, and its violences. Brought into such stark focus, this raises some critical questions about the
ethical politics of bordering practice and our complicity in their reproduction. In particular, as I will argue throughout (but see especially chapter 3), paying attention to everyday border encounters shows the constitutive role of segregation within them. Writing in this way, this thesis tries to evoke the border as a practice of segregation in everyday life so that we might encounter it anew. I do not try to capture in my writing what it means to live at the border, what the essence of migrant subjectivity might be, or exactly what solidarity must entail. As well as all the issues already discussed, around authorship, voice, fetishizing otherness, and the need for confidentiality, I have also argued in this chapter that such knowledge is not necessary in the first place. We don’t ordinarily need to know the life stories of others to relate to them ethically and politically, to encounter others with all their differences and similarities and treat them as equals. The fact that we so often revert to treating others as irremediably alien, receiving them with hostility, is not a question of knowledge but a failure that is entirely our own. Writing borders in everyday life, this thesis hopefully offers room to reflect on the possibility of different modes of encounter, different ways of relating to others ethically politically, ‘as an experiment in living otherwise’ (Butler, 2005; 100).
3. Deterrence, segregation, and struggle in everyday life: embodied encounters with the border in Calais

3.1 Introduction: ‘apartheid is alive and well’

On the edge of the old town in Calais, where the shuttered windows of residential houses and tabacs merge with the industrial warehouses and canals surrounding the port, stands an empty building. Squat and grey it bears the signs of weather and disrepair. Covered steps leading up to the entrance offer a few square metres of protection from the wintery sky. Here, behind a patchwork of tarpaulin, around forty people make a space for themselves to rest and sleep. A small stove made from an oil drum is the only source of heat and often remains unlit. The building used to serve as the BCMO (Bureau Central de la Main d’Oeuvre) responsible for the distribution of work on the port docks. Since its closure in the 1990s it has been used as a municipal gym and most recently as a cold weather shelter for the homeless (Aubenas, 2003; Goudeseune, 2014b). Despite the freezing mid-December temperatures, however, the doors to the empty building remain closed. The local government policy only requires the shelter to be opened once the temperature drops below -5°C at night (La Voix du Nord, 2012). Even when the mercury does fall past this arbitrary point no-one rushes to respond. So, forty people remain on the doorstep of a cold-weather shelter, their bodies crammed together in this tight space, sleeping rough in the middle of winter in North Western Europe. To enter is to risk reprisal from the police, the confiscation or destruction of what little items they have with them, and the possibility of arrest and deportation because of their irregular status. Maybe the shelter will open soon, if it gets much colder. At least they will be first in line for some of the 100 or so floor spaces it offers. But this will only be for a few days at most, if at all, and then the doors will be locked again with them on the outside.

Figure 1 BCMO eviction 21/09/2015 (La Voix du Nord, 2015a)
The BCMO had been a continuous presence in my encounters with Calais over the past few years, a constant on the ever-shifting landscape of migrant spaces and trajectories. Whilst the people who stayed there changed, the location remained. On the 21st September 2015 it was evicted and cleared by the French police along with the Syrian camp outside a nearby church (see 3.5.2). This operation marked the completion of a six month process which saw the closure of all unauthorised non-citizen spaces in the town of Calais and their forced displacement out to a single ‘tolerated zone’ (Chrisafis, 2015a) beyond the port and its surrounding industrial sites. This new jungle, alongside the Jules Ferry Day Centre, is now the only location where irregular migrants are able to set up camp in Calais. Writing in October 2015 it was home to around four thousand people, but by August 2016 this had reached ‘a staggering 9,106’ by recent estimates (Help Refugees, 2016c) and numbers keep rising.14 On the day of the evictions, when the police violently pushed the last intransigent groups from the town centre out to the jungle, the solidarity collective Calais Migrant Solidarity posted on their blog ‘Apartheid is alive and well in Calais’ (CMS, 2015e).

This chapter looks at how the border works in Calais through practices of segregation in everyday life. It shows how the facilitation of regularised mobility across this border, predominantly European Economic Area (EEA) citizens, tourists, and goods from the continent, corresponds to a policy of deterrence for those whose mobility is deemed irregular, mostly asylum seekers and non-EEA citizens unable to obtain a visa, usually from countries in which war, conflict, or political oppression were prominent. As well policing who crosses the line between France and the UK (a line which we shall see is far from clear) the border in Calais requires deterring irregular migrants from remaining in Calais itself. What I will argue is that this policy of deterrence works through/necessitates everyday practices of segregation which aim to make life ‘unliveable’ (Butler, 1993; CMS, 2011) for some people but not others in

13 See 5.3.1 for more on this displacement
14 In 2016 the charities Help Refugees and L’Auberge Des Migrants working in Calais began taking a monthly census of the jungle. In July 2016 the census recorded over 7,000 residents of the jungle, predicting it to rise to 10,000 by September (Help Refugees , 2016b)
Calais. In this way the border is implicated in the reproduction of historic and ongoing racialised categories of identity/ethical political subjectivity which underlie postcolonial practices of statecraft and citizenship (Soguk, 1999; Hindess, 2002). Furthermore, I will argue that the border as segregation is made real in people's lives through everyday embodied encounters (Ahmed, 2000; Scheel, 2013b). I do so to highlight the performative relationality and materiality of the border: how it is repeatedly re/made in relations between people, a doing by some against others, and how it powerfully manifests on the bodies of those it targets, often violently. In this way, this chapter contributes to contemporary critical analyses of borders as sites of ethical political contestation and struggle (Anderson, Sharma, & Wright, 2009; Rygiel, 2011; Soguk, 2007; Squire, 2011), and as contextualised social practices which, rather than fixed or natural, require constant work to contingently produce the very subjects they police. Through practices of everyday segregation, borders appear to increasingly work not as 'lines in the sand' (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 2012), lines drawn hard at the territorial edges of states which can be secured against intrusion, but 'beyond the line' in ways which permeate social space and everyday life (Balibar, 2002; 2004; Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012; 731; Vaughan-Williams, 2009a). Pointing this out raises some critical ethical political questions concerning the violences and injustices of practicing everyday bordering. Embodied in these ways, the border in Calais becomes an everyday struggle for some subjects to live, a struggle that too often ends in death.

In order to present this account of the border as segregation in everyday life in Calais, I draw on fieldwork carried out during 2014/2015. As discussed in 2.6, this fieldwork was in many ways a failure. Nevertheless, during this period I came to see how the border was conducted as a daily practice of harassment, exclusion, and violence against migrants and their supporters by police and other residents in Calais. Underscored by hostile policies emanating from local and national government, the systematic segregation of irregular migrants throughout the town was and continues to be striking, with access to housing, public services, commercial services, cafés, transport, the use of public space, and more besides, all regularly curtailed or denied to people without regular immigration status. At the same time, on the motorways
around the port and the Channel Tunnel entrance the police were daily meeting with violence people trying desperately to hide on lorries bound for the UK, using crowd control tactics and weapons to ‘secure’ the border, resulting in numerous injuries. Also, there were regular reports of police engaging in other vindictive acts of individual and collective punishment against migrants, attacking individuals, destroying property, dismantling homes, shutting off water supplies, and arbitrary arrests (see 3.5-3.6). Something which stuck with me from my experiences in Calais is how embodied these encounters seemed, the sheer physicality of the border, how it works directly on the bodies of people, wearing them down physically, mentally, and emotionally, the exhaustion, the freezing cold, the hunger, the immediacy and inescapability of the border’s effects, the struggle it makes of just living for those it targets as irregular. This sense of embodied encounters also indicates how the border must constantly be done somewhere by someone in relation to others, how it is an ethical political practice situated in the world and so open to being challenged or undone.

The way I write the border in Calais in this chapter tries to evoke something of this embodied character of everyday life, by writing and retelling a number of everyday scenes of embodied encounter which serve to illustrate the segregation constitutive of this border in Calais. Drawing on an amalgamation of encounters in Calais I either directly witnessed, participated in, read about in the media, drew from reports by the Défenseur des Droits (2012; 2015) and Human Rights Watch (2015a) into police violence, heard among the stories which constantly circulate in the busyness of Calais, or have taken from blogposts by activists on the ground (Calais Migrant Solidarity and Passeurs d’hospitalités), the scenes I write are exemplary of the everyday embodied encounters which make up the border as segregation. Whilst they are all specific encounters, they are ones that happen(ed) again and again in Calais. Written as evocative vignettes, identified by their indentation and italics, I try to express something of the immersion and immediacy of these everyday encounters with the border, how it is constantly re-enacted in mundane spaces, how it can jump out and surprise someone with a flash of violence, or how it can drag on tiresome and tedious. Dappling my analysis with these scenes I hope elicits something of the
everyday embodied nature of these encounters where the interrelations of power/subjectivity/the border are materialised in the deterrence, segregation, and struggle of irregular migrants. The intention, however, is not to depict migrants as victims requiring sympathy but rather to point out how conditions of everyday struggle form the ethical political rough ground of their contestation of the border. Appreciating this everyday struggle with/of/against the border as segregation is, I suggest, a necessary starting point for any ethical politics of migrant solidarity.

3.2 Encountering dangerous ‘others’: pictures of the Calais border

‘A specter is haunting the “new world order”: the specter of the immigrant. To live with this specter is to live with desires and anxieties of the state and the nation. It is also to live with the heritage and genealogies of empire and imperialism’ (Mahmud, 1997; 633).

The border in Calais is particularly prominent within British discourses around immigration, national security, and border control. Since the days of the Red Cross refugee centre in Sangatte, opened from 1999-2002 to shelter Kosovan refugees but closed after pressure from the UK and Eurotunnel, Calais has repeatedly been framed in terms of British border ‘crisis’: a weak point in the national defences against ever-present influxes of unwelcome people, indicative of asylum policy failure, and synonymous with government loss of sovereignty and control (Buchanan et al, 2003; Hansard, 2001; Schuster, 2002; 2003; Thomson, 2003). Pictures still abound in the UK media of ‘anarchy’ on Calais’ motorways, traffic brought to a standstill by a ‘baying mob’ of dark migrant figures, ‘gangs’, ‘rioting’, ‘swarming’, ‘roaming packs of migrants’ targeting trucks and commuters in a ‘violent rampage’ of criminal desperation to ‘break into Britain’ – a ‘migrant invasion’ (for example, Gutteridge, 2016a; 2016b; Maguire, 2015; Moore, 2016; Sheldrick, 2015; 2016). Several days before the 2016 UK referendum on EU membership15, The Sun newspaper ran a report likening migrant subjects to a swarm of zombies running wild at Britain’s border:

‘HUNDREDS of rioting migrants swarmed Brit cars and lorries at the flash-point port of Calais – in scenes described as “like The Walking Dead”. Crowds pelted cars

15 Whatever the impact of the 2016 referendum, the discourse surrounding it expressed worrying amounts of anti-immigrant /racist sentiment. Of course I cannot explore these implications in this thesis.
with stones, slashed tarpaulin on lorries and charged through clouds of stinging tear gas in a terrifying episode reminiscent of the popular zombie show’ (Royston & Pisa, 2016).

Evoking imagery of ‘lawlessness’, ‘war’, and ‘chaos’ (ibid), these accounts depict the border as a militarised encounter with a dangerous ungovernable body of mobile, racialised, and ‘revolting’ subjects (Tyler, 2013). Hungry, hostile, desperate yet calculating, reckless yet criminally organised, uncontainable and contaminating, irregular migrants are often depicted as embodying an existential threat to the safety of the nation, its citizens, and its liberal law-abiding way of life (Fagge & Wilkes, 2014; Pendelbury, 2014), a ‘ferocious crowd [...] shouting “f*** the UK”’ (Moore, 2016). These depictions of aggressive migrant 'others' correspondingly frame the UK nation-state as 'besieged' and about to be overrun (Fagge & Wilkes, 2014). In response, there have been continuous and increasingly militarised calls for interventions to shore up the territorial border. For instance, consider some of the Daily Express headlines in recent years: 'Keep out, Britain is full up' (Reynolds, 2009), 'Britain must ban migrants' (Hall, 2011), 'Send in the army to halt migrant invasion: call for action to end chaos in Calais' (Reynolds, 2015).

This picture of the Calais border and those 'others' we encounter there is not limited to the tabloid press, however, but permeates mainstream political narratives in Britain. In 2015 the Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron called for stronger border controls at Calais to confront 'a swarm of people coming across the Mediterranean, seeking a better life, wanting to come to Britain' and vowed to 'remove more illegal migrants from our country so people know it’s not a safe haven once you’re there' (Cameron in Elgot & Taylor, 2015). A few days later the Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond made similar remarks, decrying 'marauding' migrants in Calais and claiming that 'Europe can't protect itself, preserve its standard of living and social infrastructure if it has to absorb millions of migrants from Africa' (Hammond in Perraudin, 2015). Within an increasingly exclusionary public discourse around the politics of asylum and migration in the UK the presence of irregular migrants in Calais stands also for the loss of British sovereignty perceived to result from European Union (EU) integration (Squire, 2009; see also chapter three). In Theresa May's 2015
Conservative Party Conference speech as Home Secretary, the EU’s weak external borders and liberal regime of internal freedom of movement and citizenship rights were cited as undermining the UK’s ‘population stability’: ‘Because when immigration is too high, when the pace of change is too fast, it’s impossible to build a cohesive society’ (May, 2015). This perceived loss of British sovereignty to the EU is inextricable from fears over a dilution/pollution of the British population by non-Europeans, itself seen as a sign of the EU’s failure. The proposed solution has been ‘to control immigration and put Britain first’ (ibid; see also the Conservative Party Manifesto, 2015), which become synonymous in this discourse of national security. Recently this has been pursued through the creation of a ‘hostile environment’ within the UK to deter irregular migration (see chapter three) and massive investment in border security at Calais (see also chapter four).

In both UK media and mainstream political discourse there seems to be a ‘pathologization of the other’ which frames ‘irregular’ migrants as a potential contagion at the level of the everyday and poses the border as a means of immunizing the ‘body politic’ against ‘foreign’ intrusion or infection (Vaughan-Williams, 2015; 113; 116-117). The border is there to protect Britain (or Europe more generally) from saturation by foreign others whose ‘absorption’ it purportedly cannot survive. Migrants, especially irregular migrants, are portrayed as parasitic on a presupposed host nation: ‘Like zombies, they are [often depicted as] nightmare citizens, their rootlessness threatening to siphon off the remaining, rapidly diminishing prosperity of the indigenous population’ (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2002; 789). Here, migrant subjects are imagined as figures of ‘disgust’ whose proximity and foreignness ‘are felt as sickening invasions’ of the political body of the nation-state (Ahmed, 2014; 83; 86-87). The body of the nation is produced as fixed and self-contained in moments of disgust which affirm an unfulfillable separation between inside/outside through a denial of exposure: ‘through disgust, bodies “recoil” from their proximity, as a proximity that is felt as nakedness or as an exposure on the skin surface’ (83). As a ‘disgust encounter’ (85) the border is performatively reproduced in the active repulsion of threatening objects of disgust, especially those ‘abject’ subjects whose movements transgress the normal boundaries of the nation-state: ‘borders
need to be threatened in order to be maintained, or even to appear as borders' (87). In the above encounter the various 'witness' videos and testimonies showed this function of disgust at the border, the sheer violence of the police response and the razor-wired security fencing only heightening the sense of danger and revulsion at these migrant subjects' transgressions (see especially Royston & Pisa, 2016). Whilst explicit demonisation of migrants in public discourse is met with condemnation and challenge (BBC News 2015b; Elgot & Taylor, 2015) the underlying assumption of border and immigration policies in the UK has increasingly been that people's mobility poses an intrinsic risk to national security (see 4.2-4.3).

3.3 Race and statecraft

Benedict Anderson famously said the nation 'is an imagined political community', one that is 'imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (Anderson, 2006; 5-6). It therefore must be constantly recreated by us in our daily practices and interactions. One of the ways in which this imagined community is made politically real is through practices of statecraft which institutionalise the imagined identity, sovereignty, and boundaries of the nation. The border as an encounter with 'others' is central to such practices of statecraft and the normalisation of a particular configuration of ethical/political community (Doty, 2003; Soguk, 1999). Dividing between us/them, inside/outside, community/anarchy, security/insecurity, belonging/foreignness, the statecraft practices which make up the border 'reaffirm the “normal” territorial order of life activities around the constellation of citizen/nation/state' (Soguk, 1999; 11-12). As Bridget Anderson (2013) argues, immigration controls are central to the production of a bounded political community, the nation, as 'a community of value, composed of people who share common ideals and (exemplary) patterns of behaviour expressed through ethnicity, religion, culture, or language' (2). The creation, maintenance, and securing of a shared community of value underpins the legitimacy of the nation-state as a political form and entails repeatedly identifying, locating, and regulating subjects of difference, drawing a line between 'us and them' and inside/outside (3-4). Statecraft delimits this community of value by tying identity to place, subjectivity to territory, and invests these links with deep moral and political significance. Statecraft draws a line between inside/outside,
constructing the state as a ‘container’ of the nation (Charteris-Black, 2006; Gielis & van Houtum 2012). However, this line is not simply a spatial marker of difference, designating the limits of where one community of value (us) starts and another (them) begins. It also spatialises a particular hierarchy of value, privileging what is internal and supposedly homogeneous over what is external and different, again ‘us’ over ‘them’ (Walker, 1992; Doty, 1999).

At the same time, constructing the imagined community of the nation-state entails dividing human subjects into hierarchies of value based on their perceived cultural similarity/difference and belonging to a particular place. The presence of others within the space of a national community of value which is not their 'own' is here seen as inherently problematic since it unsettles the valued coupling of fixed homogeneous identity and bounded space. In a global system of states in which everyone is supposedly linked to a territorially bounded and sovereignly governed community, through which they gain access to universal human rights via the institution of citizenship, the differential treatment of 'foreigners' is normalised and potentially required (Hindess, 2000; 1490-1494). Furthermore, in such a system people’s movement across borders is seen as deeply suspicious (ibid), with migrants and noncitizens perpetually framed as 'outsiders' and 'threatening to order, security, and identity' (Doty, 2003; 14). In response, states systematically criminalise noncitizen others, subjecting them to practices of exclusion, control, and policing. For instance, in the UK, visa regulations severely constrain the ability of some people, usually from poorer and less stable regions, to travel to or enter the country, whilst those who do arrive, for work, love, education, or asylum for example, are subjected to increasing levels of monitoring and registration, prevented from accessing public services, jobs, benefits, housing, from exercising civil or political rights, and many are arrested, detained, and forcibly removed for being 'foreign' and having 'no right to remain' (Bosworth & Guild, 2008; see also this thesis 4.2-4.3).

As shown in the above encounter, practices of national statecraft at the border involve identifying the bodies of others as foreign, dangerous, and targeting them for control: 'Statecraft has been and is inextricably linked with “the other”' (Doty, 2003; 25). These practices of othering and the hierarchical ordering of humanity which
constitute national statecraft globally and locally cannot be dissociated from questions of race and racism (Balibar, 1991; Doty, 2003; Gilroy, 2004; Sharma, 2015; Silverstein, 2005; Soguk, 1999). Borders work within a particular 'metaphysics of “race”, nation, and bounded culture coded in the body' (Gilroy, 2004; 123) in which statecraft and the control of migrants express a form of ‘anti-immigrantism’ bound up with multiple histories of racism and 'way[s] of constructing otherness that can lead to exclusion and discrimination' (Doty, 2003; 21-22). As Sharma (2015) puts it:

‘Racism is central to the construction of the ‘others’ of citizenship. This is in no small part because ideas of ‘race’ closely and easily articulate with ideas of ‘nationhood’. While ideas of ‘race’ tell us that each of us belongs to one discrete ‘type’ of people who are inherently unlike those in other groups, ideas of ‘nationhood’ tell us that each of us has a unique place in the world that is ours and ours alone. The ideological practices of racism and nationalism carve the world into separate state territories within which some people are seen to belong while others are not. The immigration and border controls of nation-states enclose us in these enclaves and tell us that our lives will be good, safe and worthwhile if only we can keep ourselves separated from the others’ (98).

3.3.1 (Post)colonialism and neo-racism

As a number of authors have argued (Anderson, 2013; Balibar, 2002; 2004; Doty, 2003; Hindess, 2004; Sharma, 2015), contemporary relations between race, human mobility, and statecraft need to be contextualised within the processes of decolonisation and/or postcolonial consolidation of a global international state system. They point out how European colonial government was characterised by the differentiation of subjects according to hierarchical categories of race, while modern notions of citizenship and rights were similarly underpinned by a discriminatory 'raciology' naturalised with reference to the interconnection of biology, culture, space, and historical development (Gilroy, 2004; 66-68). In this context, the differential treatment of colonial subjects was justified on the basis of hierarchies of racial difference. Central to the unequal operation of colonial power was racialised control over people's mobility, especially evident in the forced displacement of impressed, indentured, and enslaved labour prevalent throughout this period and linked to notions of racial superiority/inferiority (Sharma, 2015; 103; see also Mahmud, 1997).
With processes of decolonisation in the second half of the twentieth century, control of people's mobility remained intimately connected to hierarchical conceptions of racial difference and the maintenance of global inequalities of wealth and power in what Sharma has called 'a postcolonial new world order of nation-states' (2015; 107). In particular, this has centred around the development of restrictive policies to prevent increasing migration from previous colonies to Europe, or from the global South to North (ibid; Anderson, 2013; Doty, 2003). As Anderson details, British immigration controls developed in order to increasingly restrict existing rights of British colonial subjects to migrate and reside in the UK, culminating in the 1981 British Nationality Act which created the category of British citizenship and linked rights of immigration and 'abode' to notions of belonging within the bounded territory of the British state (2013; 39-41). This reframing of British subjects as ‘immigrants’ was part of a wider racialised delimiting of British citizenship which not only restricted Commonwealth subjects’ rights of mobility and settlement but also effectively established unequal classes of British citizenship based on racist notions of what constitutes genuine British identity (Tyler, 2010; 63-64).

If colonialism and the movements of people it entailed was largely supported by a racist ideology of European white supremacism (Fanon, 1963; 43; Mahmud, 1999), Balibar argues that postcolonialism and 'the reversal of population movements between the old colonies and the old metropolises' with which it coincides are characterised by a 'new racism' (1991; 21). For Balibar, this distinctive (though not unrelated) 'neo-racism' is based less on hierarchies of biological race and racial superiority than on 'the insurmountability of cultural differences [...] the harmffulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions' (21). While not based on biological notions of racial supremacy, this 'differential racism' still naturalises boundaries between socio-cultural groups which overlap with and/or signify racial boundaries, and also necessitates the racialised exclusion of cultural 'others' on the basis of their inherent harmfulness: 'if insurmountable cultural difference is our true “natural milieu” [...] then the abolition of that difference will necessarily give rise to defensive reactions' (22).
Neo-racism is a racism particularly preoccupied with borders and the dangers of crossing them. As Doty points out, within neo-racism 'mixing of culture is thus seen as a mistake, which endangers one's identity and can lead to social conflict' (2003; 19). Neo-racism actually frames anti-racism as a cause of racist conflicts in society by supposedly unsettling the natural order of things, transgressing the natural borders between socio-cultural entities, which must instead be respected and protected. Here, immigration is seen as problematic less because of the racial specifics of those who migrate and more because cultural difference itself is seen as dangerous, others’ movements across borders of nation-states inevitably placing pressure on natural ‘tolerance thresholds that are inherent in bounded communities’ (20). Of course, in the context of postcolonial migrations from South to North, the usual focus of paranoid European anti-immigrant sentiment, 'differences in cultural markers and differences in skin color and shades of skin color all to readily blur into one another until it may be impossible to separate them[…] xenophobia today, all too readily shades into racism' (23).

3.3.2 Anti-immigration in the UK

Another speech from Theresa May (2012) shows how neo-racism underlies contemporary UK bordering. Here, May proposed that 'uncontrolled, mass immigration is damaging to social cohesion, puts pressure on public services and infrastructure, and can lead to job displacement and undercut wages' (May, 2012). What becomes clear during this speech is how the 'problem' of migration is not simply numerical, an issue of too many people overburdening state infrastructure or economy, but primarily qualitative, an issue of the sorts of people that make up the population. Quoting Martin Wolf of the financial times May argued that more than economics what is at stake in migration control is 'the sort of country one desires to inhabit'. ‘The point is quite simple’, she continued:

‘It takes time to establish the personal relationships, the family ties, the social bonds that turn the place where you live into a real community. But the pace of change brought by mass immigration makes those things impossible to achieve. You only have to look at London, where almost half of all primary school children speak
English as a second language, to see the challenges we now face as a country’ (May, 2012).

Migration, here, is seen as bringing a destabilising otherness which makes ‘a real community [...] impossible to achieve’. The very presence of difference is problematic itself, epitomised by linguistic diversity in London’s primary schools. Not only is new immigration unwanted here, the cultural, linguistic, and (so implied) racial diversity which already exists in the UK is seen as unworkable and unjust: ‘This isn’t fair to anyone: how can people build relationships with their neighbours if they can’t even speak the same language?’ (ibid). Diversity we are told disrupts community, which can only be truly based on homogeneity. The proximity of people who are identifiably different is here portrayed as inherently politically problematic, the foreignness of migrant 'others' itself seen as causing social tensions between people as well as putting pressure on jobs, state institutions, or services. A 'real community' we are told is 'cohesive', without too much disruptive cultural diversity. Underlying the Conservative Party’s 'one nation' agenda (Cameron, 2015; Conservative Party, 2015), therefore, lies the desire to establish a 'real community' on the basis of a cultural homogeneity that is constantly under threat from the presence of others who may not speak the same, look the same, or share the same values, 'the “swarm” on our streets' (Ellicott & Wright, 2015). This perfectly expresses the neo-racist ‘idealization of purity and the consequent demonization of “mixing”’ which then necessitates restrictive intervention through border controls on foreign others (Sharma, 2015; 109-110).

As a fetishisation of difference and separation, neo-racism (unlike biological racism) is seemingly generalisable within a global system of nation-states and citizenship that works according to the principle of everyone in their right place. Within this context, the mobility of others to cross borders and become proximate is considered dangerous:

‘The immigrant puts at issue the inviolability of borders, territoriality of sovereignty, particularity of jurisdiction, and uniformity of citizenship – fundamental characteristics of the modern state. The immigrant calls into question cultural homogeneity, linguistic commonality, shared history, a sense of belonging, and security of identity – the key ideologies of the nation’ (Mahmud, 1997; 634).
Here, national statecraft and neo-racism share a common politics of anti-immigration: 'as nationalism more firmly fixed “race” to place, migration has increasingly come to be portrayed as a form of miscegenation. For this reason, those constituted as “migrants” are negatively evaluated not necessarily for being “inferior” to national subjects but for being out of their place' (Sharma, 2015; 109-110). Of course, there are degrees of foreignness and danger here, not all migrants are as un/welcomes as others, again expressing the persistent hierarchical racism of the postcolonial international system (Balibar, 2002; 80; 2009; 204). Global inequalities, histories of domination, and ongoing racial discriminations therefore converge in border encounters and immigration controls, shaping the parameters of our everyday ethical political realities. Embedded in networks of political power, capital accumulation, and labour exploitation, nation-state borders work ‘actively to differentiate between individuals in terms of social class’ and race, contributing to ‘a world apartheid, or a dual regime for the circulation of individuals’ (Balibar, 2002; 82). Dividing between subjects in this way, borders are ‘world-configuring’: performing a ‘socially discriminatory function’ they make real the divisions of geo-politics and global economics in people’s individual and collective lives (ibid; 79; 2004; 113). To appreciate how borders create the world in this way, I suggest in this next section, we should analyse them as embodied encounters in everyday life, encounters marked by segregation.

3.4 From territory’s edge to everyday life: borders ‘beyond the line’16

The pictures of the border we encountered above in mainstream UK discourse around migration and Calais echo strongly a neo-racist politics in which the social, cultural, and racial difference of migrants is seen as threatening to the homogeneous make-up of the nation. The border, as an operation of nation-statecraft, is envisaged as a way of securing what is inside (political community) from what is outside (dangerous others) by drawing a hard line around the nation-state forming a protective layer against intrusion. While, much like the rooted nation within, the border as a clear fixed line which can keep external others out is ‘imagined’ (Anderson, 2006), as a practice of statecraft it has powerful effects: 'Any practice of statecraft, any

16 Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012; 731
move toward the never fully realized or realizable concretization of this abstract ideal is inextricably linked with violence’ (Doty, 2003; 13).

Calais is a key site of UK statecraft where the border is simultaneously threatened with transgression by migrant others and forcefully reasserted through violent security practices. In these border encounters in Calais the line is constantly being redrawn as if it were hard in response to its subversion. Daily the border is enforced against people who try to cross it without authorisation, hiding aboard trucks, or beneath their wheels, or jumping onto moving trains in order to evade the border guards. As De Genova (2002) argues, such daily enforcement practices are a necessary part of ‘staging the spectacle of “the illegal alien”’, the border, and the state in such a way that ‘renders migrant “illegality” visible and lends it the commonsensical air of a “natural” fact’ (436). As we saw with the earlier reported encounter in Calais, visible border policing plays an important part in naturalising a picture of the border as a fixed hard line and enabling the arbitrary categories of belonging and ir/regular mobility ‘to be socially inscribed upon the migrants themselves—embodied in the spatialized (and racialized) status of “illegal alien”’ (437). The spectacle of border enforcement, often playing out in scenes of encounter between border controls, security practitioners, and irregular migrants at nation-states’ territorial edges, is necessary for the configuration of a world of nation-states, borderlines, and citizenships, as a political reality (Balibar, 2002). It is not so much the line itself but rather our performance of it as a political marker which is constitutive of the border as a reality (Butler, 1993; Butler & Spivak, 2007). Without this daily practice of reproduction the borders of nation-states would be much less powerful in our lives.

Whilst the spectacle of the border as a fixed line securing the territorial and social integrity of the nation-state remains powerful in public discourse, recently several critical theorists have argued for the need to trouble this picture and reconceptualise the border ‘beyond the line’ (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 2012; See also, Côté-Boucher, Infantino, & Salter, 2014; Johnson et al, 2011; Rajaram & Grundy-Warr, 2007; and Rumford, 2010). Across several disciplines it seems a previous analytical seduction with ‘the territorial line’ is giving way to a more nuanced critical understanding of borders ‘as a verb in the sense of bordering’ that is, ‘a turn from a
focus on boundaries, as political limits of states, to borders as socio-territorial constructs’ (van Houtum, 2005; 672; 674). Rather than assuming the fixity of nation-state borderlines and limiting analysis to a consideration of their (usually military) strategic value, of how open or closed they can/should be, these approaches examine how borders are socially, ethically, and politically (re)produced (675-676). Furthermore, they point to how borders are not only found at states’ territorial limits but are enacted pervasively throughout social space.

3.4.1 Critical Border Studies

Critical Border Studies (CBS), as detailed in Parker & Vaughan-Williams’ ‘agenda’ (2009; 2012), combines insights from across diverse disciplines in the study of borders. Starting from Balibar’s assertion that under contemporary globalised conditions ‘borders are vacillating […] they are no longer at the border’ (2002; 89), CBS highlights ‘the increasing diffusion and complexity of “the border”’ (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 583). Employing a ‘multiperspectival’ focus, CBS attempts to ‘free the study of borders from the epistemological, ontological, and methodological shackles of an ultra-modernistic, “territorialist” Western geopolitical imagination’ which sees the border as a ‘territorially fixed, static, line’ and instead ‘begin thinking of it in terms of a series of practices’ (2009; 584;586; Rumford, 2012). ‘Decentring’ the border in this way, CBS examines how borders are not static, natural, or inevitable but rather fluid, social, and dynamic: ‘Borders do not simply “exist” as lines on maps, but are continually performed into being through rituals such as the showing of passports, the confessionary matrix at the airport, and the removal of clothing’ (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2012; 728-729). In doing so, CBS points to ‘the permeation of bordering practices throughout society’ and everyday life beyond the territorial edge of nation-states (729-730). Overall CBS argues for the importance of ‘developing new border imaginaries, theories, and methodologies’ which go ‘beyond the line’ as a metaphor and capture ‘the thickness of the border in its multiform complexity’ (728-729; 731).

These new critical border imaginaries indicate how bordering practices increasingly take place beyond the borderline itself. Deterritorialised (Andrijasevic,
2006; 2010a; 2010b), disaggregated (Balibar, 2009; Parker & Adler-Nissen, 2012), virtualised (Vaughan-Williams, 2010), borders are portrayed as diffused both externally and internally through multiple practices of security. Borders, such as those of the EU, are exported by ‘offshoring’ and ‘outsourcing’ the processing of migration flows, governing at a distance through blacklists (van Houtum, 2010), or by creating border control ‘buffer zones’ which slow down, intercept, deter, and detain irregular or unwanted migration (Bialasiewicz, 2012; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Similarly, increasingly digitised, borders work by processing of biometric data, risk profiling, continuous monitoring, and preventative intervention (Amoore, 2006; 2011; Bigo, 2006; 2007; 2011; 2014; Broeders, 2007). Not only does this mean a state’s bordering practices have begun outside their territory long before a person’s arrival, it also means that they continue to follow and trace people’s movements and presence within the territory after arrival. As Vaughan-Williams argues, contrary to the picture of the border as a line, ‘bordering practices are rather more diffused throughout society than that modern geopolitical imaginary implies’ (2009a; 117; 2009b; see also 4.2.5). Overall, rather than fixed and natural, CBS points to how borders involve constant work on the part of states to redraw the lines of sovereignty (Minca & Vaughan-Williams, 2012; Salter, 2008; 2012). At the same time, they highlight how borders are not limited to the practices of states themselves but rather brought to life within wider social political contexts and by other non-state actors including security professionals, private companies, citizens, and migrants themselves (Rumford, 2011; 2012; Scheel, 2013b). Finally, CBS emphasises the constitutive role contestation plays within the formation of borders, the ever-unsettled terrain on which borders are performed in relations between people, and how borders are therefore unavoidably political processes whose meaning ‘can only be understood in terms of ongoing encounters’ (Rajaram & Grundy-Warr, 2007; xxix-xxx; See also Bouzas, 2012; Soguk, 2007).

CBS situates borders within a wider field of international relations and global processes which themselves are not limited to the traditional disciplinary inside/outside binary. As such, CBS provides a more nuanced perspective on how bordering practices bring together the global and the local in the political realisation
of the nation-state in everyday life. This body of work is highly influential on my thinking about everyday bordering practices. In this chapter, and throughout the thesis, I draw upon CBS’s insights to elaborate how in Calais and the UK the border works through everyday practices of segregation. In 3.4.2 I show how the border in Calais is made up of a complex topology of juxtaposed controls which enables a particularly powerful operation of British state sovereignty ‘at a distance’ through a thickening of the border and the construction of ir/regular subjects of migration (Bialasiewicz, 2012; Bigo & Guild, 2005; Rose & Miller, 2010). In section 3.4.3, however, I argue that the border can only operate in this ‘remote control’ way (Walters, 2006) by producing and filtering between different subjects of mobility (Balibar, 2004) through ‘embodied encounters’ (Scheel, 2013b) which bring the border powerfully to life in people’s everyday. In the final sections, 3.5 and 3.6, I show how the border in Calais is governed by a policy of deterrence in relation to the presence of irregular migrants and argue that this policy of deterrence necessitates and works through practices of segregation in everyday life.

3.4.2 Exporting the border: juxtaposed controls in Calais

At the French port of Calais cars and lorries queue up by a docked ferry bound for the UK, Dover’s cliffs weakly reflecting the December light twenty-one miles across the Channel. A dog sniffs around the bases of heavy goods vehicles, most bearing Eastern European license plates and bound for England. Holding the dog’s leash is a man wearing the uniform and fluorescent reinforced vest of the British Border Force. Accompanied by several port security personnel the man and dog hurriedly inspect beneath the wheels of each vehicle as more arrive, while bored families in packed cars look on, waiting to embark. Most of the goods vehicles have already passed through large drive-through hangars and been subjected to the mechanical scrutiny of scanners, CO₂ readers, and other checks for concealed bodies within. Inside the port, every day and night, documents are checked, people are profiled, databases are consulted and updated, vehicles are stopped and searched, or waved through. Traffic flows in stops and starts. Searching, the dog leads the others onwards, its hyperactive nose bringing the British border to life one last time on the French coastline before the vehicles roll onto the ferry and off into Dover.

Lots of ‘painstaking work’ goes into making this border in Calais (Walters, 2011b; 53; also Rumford, 2011; 2012), involving bureaucratic coordination across diverse operational teams from different legal jurisdictions, and speaking different
languages. Calais is one of the busiest crossing points for the flow of goods and passengers between the European mainland and the UK. The ferries and Channel Tunnel contribute to 75% of all freight transportation and account for 26% of total EU food imports making Dover-Calais a key commercial route and ‘critical’ to the maintenance of the ‘UK food supply’ (Baker & Morgan DEFRA, 2012; 1). In 2013 10.5 million ferry passengers crossed between Calais and Dover and 18.8 million passengers used the Tunnel (Taylor, 2014; 3-5). These numbers are set to rise with the huge port expansion project planned to begin in 2015/16 in Calais and a corresponding plan for Dover (Arcadis, 2015; Dover Port, 2015; Wilcox, 2016). Train and ferry companies operating this route record yearly turnovers into the hundreds of millions (DFDS, 2012; Hansard, 2012; Price, 2015) while Nord-Pas de Calais remains one of the most economically depressed regions in France with consistently high unemployment rates and continuous industrial decline (European Commission, 2015b). At the same time, the quantity of freight crossing daily from mainland Europe to the UK provides opportunities for mobility to those unable to use regular routes because of their lack of documentation, status, and/or sufficient finances.

The border in Calais owes its specific character to being made up of juxtaposed controls involving authorities from both UK and France on the European mainland. The 1993 Sangatte Protocol, extended by The Channel Tunnel (International Arrangements) (Amendment No. 3) Order 2001 and Le Touquet Treaty (2003), established a system of juxtaposed border controls in relation to crossings to and from the UK and France by train and by boat. This system consists of ‘control zones’ in which officers from the adjoining state are authorised to carry out border controls according to its own national regulations within the other state’s territory prior to departure. In addition to train stations along the route from Paris, and on the train itself, UK officials enact immigration controls within the ferry port and the Channel Tunnel terminal in Calais, directly after the French authorities have carried out their exit controls. These controls include document checks, vehicle searches, even interception and interrogation by British police officers under the Terrorism Act (Stone, 2015).
In the control zones in Calais, the regulations and sovereign authority of the British state are in effect on French territory, and at times the French authorities are called upon to support in their implementation (see for instance *Le Touquet Treaty* 8.1). Importantly, however, this is not British territory but only a space where the British state can act with authoritative force and legitimately compel individuals to comply with its laws and regulations. Through these juxtaposed controls British sovereignty is exported (Vaughan-Williams, 2010; 1073) and deterritorialised (Andrijasevic, 2010b; 153), located beyond the territory of the state in such a way that empowers its border agents to administer bodies and materials according to British law but without certain reciprocal duties. In particular, as the 2001 *Channel Tunnel Order* and the 2003 *Le Touquet Treaty* make explicitly clear (see Article 4 and Article 9 respectively), the receiving state is under no obligation to process asylum claims within these control zones yet can formally refuse a person entry in accordance with its own immigration policies. Therefore, the British state is able to exercise considerable arbitrary power and discriminatory sovereignty at this border. Here irregular migrants can be intercepted, formally refused entry, their information entered into databases and shared internally with the Home Office and Border Force for future reference, then returned to French territory without ever entering the UK and without access to any avenues of appeal. This mechanism prevents asylum seekers from entering UK territory where their claims would have to be processed and could potentially succeed. It also enables information gathering used to refuse asylum for those who make it across and to deport them back to France (ICIBI, 2013; 45-46).

In this way, the juxtaposed controls in Calais mirror how external European borders are increasingly 'off-shored' and 'outsourced' to other locations and carried out by other actors, states, or private bodies, as a form of 'state-making at a distance' (Bialasiewicz, 2010; 852). This creates a specific legal and political topography of the border where UK sovereignty is powerfully present yet elusively distant (Mountz, 2011). The local everyday enactment of the border in Calais is carried out by a number of different actors including British officers, French security personnel, and a range of...

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17 However, as the chief inspector’s report indicates, the everyday bureaucratic failings of UK Border Force means this principle is not always made a reality (ICIBI, 2013; 46)
private security contractors (for example Eurotunnel Ltd. and those hired by Border Force). Through the border work of these staff the sovereign British state is powerfully embodied in Calais and yet curiously disembodied, dislocated and removed. At its constitutive limit the UK territory as a political space is demarcated and continually remade but also deferred. Here you are entering but you have not yet entered. This deferral enabled by juxtaposed controls produces a ‘thickening’ of the border in Calais through ‘layered’ practices of border enforcement prior to arriving at the formal territorial boundary of the UK state (Bialasiewicz, 2010; 844). The process of crossing this border is elongated both in time and space, the border becoming an experience of prolonged exposure to scrutiny and security procedures that serve to filter out different sorts of im/mobility (Minca & Vaughan-Williams, 2012; 767).

When situated within the wider immigration control regime of the UK (as well as the EU), the border in Calais appears even thicker. The Dublin Regulations (European Union, 2013) establish a system whereby the first European ‘safe country’ at which an asylum seeker arrives is responsible for processing their claim. At the same time, the UK visa regime is particularly stringent for citizens of countries producing large numbers of asylum seekers (see Home Office, 2016c), such as Afghanistan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Syria, Sudan, all represented in Calais’ jungle (Help Refugees, 2016a). Since visas are routinely granted/denied in advance of travel (Salter, 2006; Scheel, 2013b), the wider context in which the border in Calais operates necessitates irregular/illegal entry to the UK for most asylum seekers, a feature frequently condemned by solidarity groups in Calais (Calais Migrant Solidarity, 2015a; Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, 2011). Unable to enter the UK directly, most asylum seekers are forced to travel over sea and land to the UK. Therefore, under the Dublin Regulations they are defined as irregular, their efforts to cross to the UK from Calais considered illegal. As Michael Howard expressed it in a Parliamentary debate over Sangatte: ‘Self-evidently, for those arriving from

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18 EU Regulation No 604/2013, aka Dublin III, succeeded the Dublin Convention (1997) and Dublin II (2003) (EU, 2013). Recently, the European Commission (2016) has drawn up plans for reforming the Dublin system into a Common European Asylum System, focusing in particular on relocation of large numbers of asylum seekers across the EU (or through deportation outside of the EU) at moments of crisis. This will entail a major reworking of the ‘first safe country’ principle of the Dublin Convention/Regulations.
continental Europe into this country by any method of transport other than air, that first safe country is never the United Kingdom’ (Howard in *Hansard*, 2001).

Situated in relation to this wider ‘border security continuum’ of deterritorialised bordering practices (Vaughan-Williams, 2010), the border in Calais not only prevents irregular migrants from entering the UK, including asylum seekers, it also actively *produces them as irregular*. The network of practices/processes within which the Calais border is situated forces certain migrants, especially asylum seekers, to travel along irregular routes and then criminalises them for doing so. The effect is to criminalise the possibility of seeking asylum in the UK for those who are not already there, for example, on a student, family, or tourist visa, making the necessary routes of access illegal for many. At the same time, this illegalisation of irregular migration itself justifies intensified border controls in Calais. Subjected to an extremely discriminatory power of British sovereignty, irregular migrants in Calais are presented as perpetual outsiders, never able to properly/legitimately enter the UK. Within this discourse, their relation to the UK can only be one of border transgression and criminality, as illegal entrants, ‘never’ as genuine refugees. Thus, juxtaposed controls in Calais underlie the border spectacle of a disgust encounter with dangerous others by cultivating an elision between illegality and asylum in the figure of the ‘bogus’ asylum seeker (3.2). The border in Calais therefore contributes to ‘a self-fulfilling prophecy’ of securitising and criminalising certain forms of irregular mobility, not least of asylum seekers (Squire, 2009; 16). At the same time, its apparent thickness and impenetrability performs an ethical and political separation from those who seek the UK’s protection under international law whilst maintaining an apparent commitment to its obligations. In this way the specific topology of the border in Calais enables the UK state to effectively police its border ‘at a distance’ and keep external ‘others’ at bay (Białasiewicz, 2010; Bigo & Guild, 2005).

3.4.3 Embodied encounters: differentiation, diffusion, and discrimination

‘Looks like loads of immigrants managed somehow to get into the port. The police have just turned up to try to and rein them all in. But there’s fucking loads of them’ a disdainful English voice can be heard saying as the camera pans across the empty bays of Calais’ port. In the distance a crowd comes into sight, jogging figures
scattering this way and that, calling to one another as they rush round the oncoming security vans, sirens blaring. Jumping out, police and security personnel in fluorescent vests try in vain to grab at them as they move past, breaking apart and coming back together, pressing towards the parked vehicles and docked ferries beyond, trying to evade containment. A voice in the distance can be heard shouting in English ‘Hey! Where you want to go? Where you want to go?’ Truck-drivers and families returning from holiday stand bemused outside their vehicles looking on at the crowd, slowing momentarily to a walk before setting off again with a cry at the approaching police officers. From inside a van, the voice of the cameraman says ‘here you go, they’re gonna make a break for it’ as they move towards the ramp of one of the ferries, the radio playing the lead refrain from the song ‘Baby Come Back’ by The Equals. After the camera stops filming, the crew on board the ferry turn their fire-hoses on the crowd, who are eventually intercepted, evicted, or arrested by the security forces from the port.  

This encounter has clearly taken some of those involved, particularly the person filming, by surprise (2.5.2). What is surprising appears to be the presence within the port of people who are out of place, recognised from afar as ‘immigrants’. Here something very ordinary for some, getting on a ferry and travelling across this border, is seen as extraordinarily wrong for others and met with confused disbelief: ‘where you want to go?’ The self-evidence with which these people are deemed alien and out of place is unsettled in this encounter by their very presence within this space, and by the fact that they and their movements must be contained, corralled, and expelled. This encounter belies the presupposed naturalness of this border at the same moment it is being reaffirmed. These running figures with their anarchic movements are/must be kept separated from the managed stillness of the waiting passengers by chasing security guards and police. Ultimately they are intercepted, removed, and ‘normal’ operations resume, transporting people across the Channel. For me this scene starkly conjures the divisions of regular/irregular mobility, freedom/unfreedom of movement, at work in Calais and how they are brought about through embodied encounters.

Scheel argues borders are made real through ‘innumerable encounters between people on the move and the acts, means and methods of mobility control’

19 This encounter is taken from a video published online in various media sources which covered the event (see Fagge & Wilkes, 2014; Prynne, 2014; Tisserand, 2014a)
such as the one above (2013b; 280). Borders take work, they must be repeatedly done by some against others within specific spaces or contexts. Borders and bordered subjects, (im)migrants or citizens/noncitizens, mutually constitute each other in these encounters: ‘Without borders, there would neither be migration nor migrants, but only mobility and people on the move. Conversely, borders only become actualized and discernible when someone is trying to cross them’ (285). Therefore, Scheel argues, the ways in which ‘borders and migrants are done’ (285) are themselves ‘always embodied and relational’ (280), always involving ‘a particular person in a particular body who tries to appropriate mobility in her encounters with the agents, devices, means and methods of control […] they always feature a particular human body’ (282-283). In other words, borders are constructed in embodied encounters between people in ways which have a specific ‘materiality and situatedness’, that is, they occur in a particular place and time and have particular productive material effects (283). Pointing out the embodied and relational nature of bordering practices, using the notion of embodied encounters, is a way of pointing to how these specifics matter. Borders work on specific bodies in specific ways, differentiating and discriminating between different subjects and mobilities, producing them as regular/irregular, and generating particular effects/experiences for those who cross them. Borders don’t simply mark general divisions between territories, communities, or subjectivities, but are rather more discerningly discriminating, constantly targeting ‘a particular human body that moves, a body which has been classed, raced and gendered’ (283). As such, borders must be constantly enacted anew in diverse encounters, experienced differently by different people.

Seeing borders as embodied encounters allows a focus on their productive ‘world-configuring function’ through repeated performances of differentiation and discrimination (Balibar, 2002; 79-80; 82; 2004; 113). As Balibar argues, borders do not work as ‘lines’ but rather as ‘detention zones and filtering systems’ which enforce differential categories of social, racial, and economic discrimination (2004; 111; 113). Paying attention to embodied encounters allows us to see how borders achieve this global ‘class function’ (ibid), how international relations of power are realised in
everyday life. Borders are ‘polysemic’ meaning ‘they do not have the same meaning for everyone’ and are encountered differently by different people (2002; 81):

‘For a rich person from a rich country, a person who tends towards the cosmopolitan (and whose passport increasingly signifies not just mere national belonging, protection and a right of citizenship, but a surplus of rights – in particular, a world right to circulate unhindered), the border has become an embarkation formality, a point of symbolic acknowledgment of his social status, to be passed at a jog-trot. For a poor person from a poor country, however, the border tends to be something quite different: not only is it an obstacle which is very difficult to surmount, but it is a place he runs up against repeatedly, passing and repassing through it [...] so that it becomes, in the end, a place where he resides’ (Balibar, 2002; 83).

Repeated again and again, embodied encounters with the border in Calais help bind differential statuses of citizenship, mobility, and rights to people on the move, connecting some with a community of value and freedom of movement from which others are excluded. Through these repeated embodied encounters the categories of the border start to ‘stick’ and our social realities become bounded by them (Ahmed, 2014; 91-92). As we saw above, at the port in Calais the border is encountered very differently by different people. Some people are brought home through their encounter with the border. Others become stuck. For some the border experience is one of seamless transfer between countries, a pause in an otherwise continuous journey. There is a sense of freedom and comfort (Bigo, 2011), the bureaucracy of control conveniently invisible, the inside of the port borderzone, with its razor-wired fencing, scanners, and dogs, nothing more than an elaborate pre-embarkation waiting area where you can grab a coffee, use the toilet, or shut your eyes for a while. For others it is a zone of exclusion, a space of illegality where you must enter clandestinely, over the fences or stowed away in another’s vehicle, and conceal your presence from the dogs, the cameras, the scanners and CO2 readers, the security guards and police, all of which are there to find you, grab you, hit you, and expel or detain you (Soguk, 2007; 284). The above encounter serves to highlight these discriminatory dynamics of the border in Calais. Seen in this way, the migrant ‘intrusion’ is perhaps best understood as a ‘carefully crafted “fuck you”’ (Butler, 2010; 182) against such disparities between everyday embodied encounters at the border and the racialised workings of statecraft which they express and enact.
In the rest of this chapter I will show how this border work is not limited to the borderzones of the port or the Channel Tunnel terminal, but rather is increasingly ‘dispersed a little everywhere’ throughout ordinary everyday spaces in Calais (Balibar, 2004; 2). Implementing a policy of deterrence, the border in Calais manifests repeatedly in everyday embodied encounters with a racially discriminatory practice of segregation. Writing scenes of encounter drawn from my fieldwork, as well as reports of police violence from local solidarity groups and the French Défenseur des Droits, I aim to show how practices of segregation permeate everyday life in Calais so as to reproduce the divisions and discriminations of the border as a differently lived reality. Seeing the border in Calais as an everyday practice of segregation, I argue, highlights how the racialised hierarchies of British and European statecraft we have been discussing so far in this chapter become normalised and made practicably real socially, ethically, and politically in people’s lives. At the same time, it forms the ethical political context, the rough ground, for any sort of border struggle and/or migrant solidarity in Calais.

3.5 Encountering the border in Calais: deterrence, segregation, and struggle in everyday life

On 20th September 2014 the British Home Secretary Theresa May and the French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve signed a declaration ‘to combat illegal migration’ focusing particularly on Calais. Their ‘comprehensive action plan’ entailed a commitment to

‘Reduce the number of irregular migrants, through joint or parallel information campaigns […] protect vulnerable people […] Strengthen port security to deter illegal crossings, preserve and promote economic activity in the region and address public order issues arising from the number of illegal migrants in Calais; Increase their operational cooperation to fight against the smuggling of migrants; Stem the flow of illegal migration into Europe […] and ensure that all measures taken will deter illegal migrants from congregating in and around Calais’ (Cazeneuve & May, 2014; 1 – emphasis added).

A policy of deterrence is central to both the border in Calais and the EU’s external border controls (European Commission, 2015a; Hastie & Crépeau, 2014; Médecins Sans Frontières, 2016). As a recent Home Affairs Committee (HAC) report
into the ‘migration crisis’ made clear concerning EU rescue missions in the Mediterranean, ‘[a]lthough the deployments to date have saved lives, it is clear that they are not yet achieving their primary task of deterring migrant flows and disrupting smuggling networks’ (2016; 46 – emphasis added). As shown, the juxtaposed border in Calais is managed in cooperation between the UK and France as established by *Le Touquet Treaty* 2003 (Article 8.1). Successive agreements have developed this cooperation in terms of intelligence sharing, British investment in port security technologies, and establishing a Joint Intelligence Unit and Joint Operational Coordination Centre in 2009/2010 (Cameron & Sarkozy, 2010; Home Office, 2010b), and a new Joint Command and Control Centre in 2015 (Cazeneuve & May, 2015; HAC, 2016; 9). Officially this cooperation is limited to the management of the official border zones and sites, particularly at the port and the Channel Tunnel. However, while the UK frequently insists on French responsibility for law and order in Calais, there is also continuous political pressure for this policing to serve the ends of the UK border (see for example, BBC, 2014f; Collins, 2015; HAC, 2014; 2015a; 2015c). As the then UK borders and immigration minister Phil Woolas commented in 2009, for a border policy of deterrence to be effective it must work beyond the borderline itself: ‘We have been saying to them [the French authorities], “what’s the point of us pulling off all these measures to stop people getting through if you arrest them and let them through further down the road?”’ (cited in Chrisafis, 2009).

Cooperation and British funding are closely linked to making policing in Calais work for the border. More and more, everyday spaces in Calais became a primary site for the realisation of the border with French police tasked to enforce it. As Mayor of Calais Natacha Bouchart stated in her evidence to the Home Affairs Committee in 2015, ‘it is the French police authorities who are doing the job of the Border Force in Calais’ (HAC, 2015b; 16:26:40). Calling for more direct British intervention in policing the border, the Calais police union chief claimed: ‘we are doing Britain’s dirty work here in France’ (Bruno Noel in Samuel, 2015b). This ‘dirty work’ of deterrence, I argue, involves everyday practices of segregation which aim to make life unliveable for

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20 However, as Vaughan-Williams (2015) points out, humanitarianism and deterrence often work in tandem with rather than opposition to each other. See also chapter 5.
irregular migrants in Calais. Backed up by daily exposure to police violence, deterrence permeates everyday life for irregular migrants in Calais in the form of a segregation which shapes their everyday social and material environment: limiting access to shelter, food, clean water, or access to healthcare, exposing them to harassment or abuse in public spaces and encounters with others, and constraining or criminalising potential relations of solidarity. It is through these multiple everyday embodied encounters with segregation, I argue, that the border in Calais is powerfully realised and irregularity is imposed onto migrant subjects. Encountering the border in this way, everyday life becomes a struggle for irregular migrants, and sometimes these encounters can kill.

3.5.1 ‘Weapons of dissuasion’: segregation, deterrence, and ‘making life unliveable’

The police in Calais form the basis of French/British collusion in a border policy which works through deterrence and segregation. The intention of this ‘firm politics of dissuasion’ has been for years to simultaneously prevent irregular mobility across this border and discourage migrant settlement within the region itself (Louis Guédon, report to French Assemblée Nationale, 2003, cited in Migreurope, 2009; 63; see also Bouchart in HAC, 2014). Since the closure of Sangatte refugee centre in 2002, police in Calais have been repeatedly accused of systematic harassment, intimidation, and violence against migrant populations, ‘making life unliveable’ (CMS, 2011; Howarth & Ibrahim, 2015b). The overall policy of deterrence supposedly works in two ways: first by making the clandestine crossing at Calais unappealing to potential new arrivals, so dissuading them from coming, and second by creating an experience of ‘French inhospitableness’ discouraging settlement in Calais by potential asylum seekers (CMS, 2011; 3-3.1; Migreurope, 2009; 65-70). These two aspects of deterrence in Calais both complement and at times contradict each other, this tension underlying the daily production of this border. In combination with local, national, and regional policies governing asylum, Dublin removals, housing support, and healthcare, the policing of Calais’ streets produces an everyday experience of segregation that brings the border to life. Different aspects of the border, as physical barrier, as differentiation between citizen/non-citizen, as social and political exclusion, as ‘weapon of dissuasion’ and tool
of governmental power, are made real through the everyday practices of segregation (Migreurop, 2009; 70; CMS, 2011; 3.1).

Deterrence necessitates segregation to create an inhospitable environment which specifically targets and interrupts irregular migrants while facilitating the ‘normal’ life of regularly mobile subjects and citizens. The border must make life unliveable for some but not others and keep these populations apart. Deterrence ostracises irregular migrants from social, economic, and political life, limiting their autonomy, their capacity to cross the border, or their willingness to remain. Therefore, the border’s segregation must permeate the mundane and everyday places and practices of migrant living so they might not find shelter or peace in their exclusion. Segregation must be everyday, ongoing and constantly exercised over the most ordinary banal aspects of everyday life. To make life unliveable for certain people the border’s reach must extend to wherever those people are, over whatever they are doing, so everyday life becomes an encounter with segregation. In Calais, everyday encounters with police, local government policies, shopkeepers, and security guards, produce this segregation as a lived reality. Segregation shapes the practicalities of living in various ways, from the spaces that migrants can inhabit to the routes they must take to avoid harassment or control, from the disrupted rhythms of their daily routines to the depleting physical and psychological pressures they come under. Day in day out the border is brought to life through exhaustion, fear, the inability to stay warm or dry, the denial of rest or respite. Everyday segregation not only excludes migrants from the spaces, practices, and rights reserved for citizens; it also forces them to live constantly on the move, to embody their irregularity as a form of restless transience that denies them any ability to settle yet traps them in a sort of immobility, unable to move along their desired path. In these embodied encounters with everyday segregation the border is realised as a ‘fixation of mobile people in limbo through exclusionary processes’ (Mountz, 2011; 383), acting as a deterrence by making everyday life a struggle with irregularity. In this way the borders’ categories of regularity/irregularity are daily imposed on mobile subjects as an embodied reality through which they must live.
Highlighting segregation in this way allows us to see how borders are embodied in relations between people in more diffuse and pervasive ways than simply at the territorial limits of nation-states (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 2012). At the same time, seeing the border as segregation allows a more ‘embodied and relational’ (Scheel, 2013b; 280) understanding of bordering practices as diffuse and diversely discriminatory, ‘capable of materializing at different sites and levels’, than many contemporary critical accounts which focus on how borders operate through data processing as a ‘remote control’ technology (Walters, 2006; 195; see 4.2). It also, I suggest, emphasises the ethical political implications of these embodied encounters by showing how borders perpetuate longstanding inequalities and injustices which make up the history of Western statecraft in relation to ostracised others.

3.5.2 Everyday segregation: living spaces

Since the Red Cross camp at Sangatte closed in 2002 following political pressure from UK/French press and politicians, and legal challenges from Franco-British company Eurotunnel (Buchanan et al, 2003; Schuster, 2003; Thompson, 2003), migrants in Calais were forced onto the streets. Required to squat buildings, private land, or sleep rough, migrant living spaces were more easily criminalised. On top of terrible living conditions, migrants in Calais were therefore increasingly open to local hostility and police interference. The spatial segregation of where migrants can live has always been intimately tied up with the policing of their behaviour and the enforcement of a separation between citizen and non-citizen subjectivities. As both a condition for and product of segregating practices in Calais, the spatial policing of migrant presence frames their everyday lives in accordance with the logics of the border. Yet migrant spaces also regularly emerge at strategic locations: jungles appear alongside motorways leading to the port and Tunnel, squats open up near enough to crossing sites but not too far from town where important resources and services are provided, and where the residents can maintain connections with friends and compatriots who live nearby. Thus, while segregation in Calais frames everyday life as an encounter with the border, people struggle with these conditions continuously as they go on living.
The ‘Tioxide’ jungle was the largest autonomous migrant camp in Calais. Established in the summer of 2014 after a series of evictions around the city centre (CMS, 2014c; 2014d) it was set up on disused land beyond the titular factory, owned by international chemical manufacturers Huntsman Corporation, which produced titanium dioxide pigment (Calais Promotion, 2015; La Voix Du Nord, 2015b). From its tall chimneys smoke poured down over hundreds of tents and temporary structures made from salvaged wood and plastic sheeting, encircling a football pitch which stood empty. At one end of the pitch a disused sports hall housed yet more hundreds of tents, crammed in tightly in the cold dank dark, a decision having been taken to prohibit lighting fires inside because of the fumes. Outside along its wall a number of larger structures had been set up as shops, cafes, restaurants, and a bar/dance tent, forming a sort of mini high-street, the muddy ground often sodden and churned up by passing feet. With the factory to the West, to the east the camp stretched out into empty scrubland which in some parts became slick with milky-white clay-like mud that smelled slightly sulphuric and clung to shoes and clothing. Over one hundred men, women, and children were living here despite fears of pollution. To the north between the camp and the sea ran the motorway leading to the port, to the south a road leading from the industrial zone into town. Across this road, among the trees of a small forest, was another jungle camp. Whilst the populations of the two camps could cursorily be divided into distinct communities and nationalities, these lines often blurred, with people passing between the two. The only water source for a population of several thousand was a fire hydrant on the corner of a junction between the two camps. Even this was repeatedly shut off by the council, only to be opened again by someone else. Every day and night along the road police vans crawled menacingly, armed officers inside often bursting out to ‘control’ those they suspected of being migrants, pushing them against a fence or corralling them on the ground, on the pretence of checking their documents. Rumours abounded of early morning raids on tents in the forest camp, of property destruction, physical assault, and arbitrary arrest.

On the other side of town, situated beneath the motorway embankment just prior to the Channel Tunnel entrance, behind a Leader Price supermarket was another large jungle camp. Several hundred tents sat on disused land which frequently flooded in the winter rain. While most residents were from Sudan the jungle was also where people congregated before or after going to the motorway, the police seemingly reluctant to enter the camp itself, instead remaining on the embankment above or on the streets leading back into town. There was no water source, so people relied on volunteers to refill a trailer-mounted water tank. Occasionally charities would set up a small kitchen too. Otherwise, residents of the camp had to walk twenty minutes to the nearest and largest squat in Calais, just on the edge of town. Nicknamed ‘Fort Galloo’ the squat was set up in an abandoned factory as a joint collaboration between
migrants, locals, and international activists affiliated with the No Borders Network (CMS, 2014)). The space comprised two enormous open courtyards either side of a central warehouse to which was attached a small three-storey house. On one side 30ft high steel walls covered in artwork and graffiti looked out over train tracks, on top of which the words WE WANT FREEDOM were spelled out in large yellow letters. On the other side, a large metal gate stood at the end of a cul-de-sac, reinforced with makeshift barricades. In the courtyards people put up tents, some provided by Médecins du Monde, or built small shelters out of discarded materials. Some people slept crammed together on the floors of the house, others set up tents in the hangars, the air inside asphyxiating, toxic with pollution from the factory’s previous work and from the railroad sleepers burned for warmth. However, with a large number of migrant communities represented among the residents, and with a fire hose serving as a water tap, some weekly serviced chemical toilets funded by a French charity, and an electricity generator kept in fuel by local solidarity activists, Galloo was a hub of daily activity.

Beneath the port in the old town, the broad doorway of a modernist church served as the sleeping space for around thirty people per night, mostly from Syria, everyone huddled together between donated blankets. Around the corner beneath an overhang by a warehouse service-entrance around sixty more people slept in tents or simply under sleeping bags, among them families and young children, many fleeing the war. Most days charities, individuals, and neighbours would come and talk with the Syrians at the church, bringing food and drink to share. One morning, people were awoken by a car driving slowly, windows down, men shouting and gesturing violently in French. A few days later the car returned, this time silently spraying the church doorway with an airgun, the pellets lodging deep in the wooden door narrowly missing the faces of the attack’s intended targets.

In 2015 all these camps, squats, and jungles were served with eviction notices and slowly emptied as people moved to the new tolerated zones around the Jules Ferry day centre under threat of violence (see 5.3.1). Migrant spaces, squats, camps, jungles, in Calais are often caught in a state of limbo between cycles of eviction and destruction and resettlement. Targeted by police raids, racist attacks, early morning ID controls, constant surveillance by riot police, migrant spaces exist for a while as semi-tolerated but always subjected to repeat encounters with the border. Nonetheless, people try to make a home, even if only a temporary and far from ideal one (CMS, 2011). Religion, commerce, social life, and political expression, all make up the vibrant fabric of these migrant spaces. But the border constantly interjects to frame life here
as an encounter with segregation, whether in the form of a storm that brings with it flooding or the upheaval of eviction.

22 September 2009, one day after Ramadan, six hundred police officers descended on the jungle camp in Calais to evict and destroy it (Allen, 2009; Chrisafis & Siddique, 2009). The camp had been at the centre of an increasingly hostile media discourse and anti-immigration campaign in the UK (Howarth & Ibrahim, 2012; 2016; Ibrahim, 2011) and its demolition ‘became a major news event for British media, where the spectacle of police brutality provided a theatre of cruelty with images of riot police and mighty bulldozers juxtaposed against flattened tents and tearful refugees’ (Howarth & Ibrahim; 2016; 1). Confronting the police on arrival, two hundred jungle residents held banners, one protesting: ‘The jungle is our house, please don’t destroy it. If you do so then where is the place to go?’ The police responded by beating their way into the crowd, snatching and grabbing and pulling people to the ground, while migrants and solidarity activists tried to stop them (Allen, 2009). They rounded up 278 people, including 231 children, put them on coaches and drove them to different detention centres around northern France, then brought in bulldozers to demolish the houses in the jungle with their large mechanical claws, piling them up in a heap, leaving only barren earth and mud behind (Chrisafis & Siddique, 2009). A hundred or so people were deported or remained in detention. The rest were released and slowly returned to Calais, forced to sleep on the streets and under bridges around town. The ensuing months saw weekly evictions and dismantling of squats and small camps all over Calais. Each week a building was demolished or a fence was erected around a doorway or the tiniest bit of shelter, and as winter set in the police increased their snatching raids to fill up the newly agreed charter flights being run in cooperation with the British state (Calais Migrant Solidarity, 2009b). As a collective declaration by the associations observed: ‘It is persisting in the error of 2002 (the closure of the Sangatte camp)’ (CMS, 2009a).

3.5.3 Everyday segregation: public spaces

Public spaces too were actively segregated in Calais. Public parks, squares, train stations, bus stops, shopping centres, public facilities such as libraries or swimming pools, or simply the streets themselves became sites of bordering through segregation. As successive reports by the Défenseur des Droits have highlighted, police controls were routine on anyone suspected of being an irregular migrant, a suspicion undeniably based on racial profiling, and always carried the threat of detention and deportation (2012; 9-11; 2015; 71-74; see also CMS, 2011; 2014b). The police practice
of arresting individuals or small groups, driving them several miles out of town, and releasing them on the side of the motorway, was commonly reported (ibid).

Opposite the opulentHôtel de Ville, the seat of local government, newlyweds posed for a photographer in their lavish outfits among the fountains of the Parc St Pierre. Several young men from Egypt were sitting on the grass beneath a statue commemorating the “heroes” of French colonial conflicts in Algeria, smoking and absently watching as the photographer professionally choreographed them out of the happy couple’s memories. Having spent the last few nights there they sat among sleeping bags and a few personal items, ignored by all except the police officers who had just entered the park behind them. The officers approached and stood around them, gloved hands pressing holstered gas-canisters, demanding to see their papers. After a few minutes they ordered them to gather their things and move out of the park. Similar encounters with police were frequently less innocuous, especially at night where police would sometimes sweep through the park, gassing and beating those they found sleeping there, throwing them violently out into the streets without their possessions, which they found on returning have been contaminated with CS, useless.

In September 2014 the local government banned migrants and their supporters from using a public pitch to play football, the police interrupting their usual Sunday match. The deputy mayor declared that the pitch was for licensed clubs and young children only, not for ‘migrants playing with No Border, en masse, without warning. [...] We do not play ball in the park, at least not that way! If they ask permission, the Mayor will decide. Me anyway, I would not give a favorable opinion to No Border: these convicts are clearly my enemies’ (Emmanuel Agius, cited in La Voix du Nord 2014b). Similarly in November 2015 the Mayor’s office introduced new access cards for the public swimming baths, already a requirement for the local library. Requiring proof of address and identity documents these measures prohibited migrants from accessing these public amenities. In the case of the public baths the justifications given evoked racist stereotypes of sexually predatory foreign men, referring to concerns over ‘obscene behaviour on the part of men who find themselves facing girls in bathing suits’ despite no actual incidents being reported (Salomez, 2015).
3.5.4 Everyday segregation: relations with others

‘Ni minarets, ni charia! France aux Français!’ the words shout out from a line of posters advertising Le Parti de la France, a far-right nationalist organisation with ties to the Front National. Someone has sprayed a response across the face of the posters in black paint: ‘non aux fachos’. The streets of Calais are filled with these silent pronouncements. Throughout town posters of Marine Le Pen adorn the walls, her stern gaze framed in the Tricolore displaying patriotic resolve, whilst hastily painted slogans appear overnight decrying the border, calling for ‘solidarité avec les réfugiés’ and ‘No Borders! No Nations!’. At one roundabout ‘fight the border’ and ‘fuck privilege’ are scrawled on a road sign, and where it marks ‘no entry’ the sign reads ‘justice’. In September 2014 there had been two prominent anti-migrant attacks a week apart. First the free showers for migrants were yet again burned down, then a week later a migrant squat in town was firebombed (Nord Littoral, 2014a; 2014b).

Alongside the terrible living conditions, police harassment, and systematic exclusion from public spaces, racist abuse and street attacks had multiplied since the founding of extreme-right anti-immigration group Sauvons Calais (CMS, 2014b; SauvonsCalais, N/D). Numerous far right demonstrations took place in which people expressed racist opposition to the presence of migrants in Calais, openly performing Nazi salutes, and burning the Koran (CMS Blog: 2014f; 2015j; See also chapter four). At the same time, however, local support for migrants in Calais has continued and developed, with a number of collectives set up, such as Calais, Ouverture et Humanité (Calais, Openness and Humanity), to organise demonstrations, events, and day to day practical support (see Dufosse, 2015; La Voix du Nord 2014a; Passeurs d’hospitalités, 2014b).

Ever since the closure of Sangatte, charities, NGOs, and informal groups of local residents, provided aid and support to migrants forced to live on the streets. However, such solidarity work has a history of suppression and criminalisation in Calais. In addition to daily police surveillance and intrusion, laws were applied punitively to those who demonstrated solidarity with migrants. Since its introduction in 2004, several volunteers had been arrested and charged under Article L622-1 of the

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21 The involvement of Sauvons Calais in racist violence and intimidation in Calais is documented in 2015 evidence submitted to the Défenseur des droits (see CMS, 2014b).
Code de l’entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d’asile (CESEDA). Intended to target people smugglers the article stated that

‘Any person who has, through direct or indirect “aide”, facilitated or attempted to facilitate the irregular entry, circulation or sojourn of a foreigner in France will be punished with 5 years imprisonment and a fine of €30,000’ (Allsopp, 2012; 15; Legifrance, 2013).

This became known as the ‘délit de solidarité’ (the ‘crime of solidarity’). In practice the law was used to criminalise humanitarian charity so that sharing food, distributing clothing, charging phones, housing a non-citizen, or helping them receive a money transfer from their families were now potentially criminal acts (Allsopp, 2012; 3; FIDH & OMCT, 2009; 20). Even without a final conviction and prison sentence for their ‘crime’, the fact that those providing aid to non-citizens faced arrest and severe bail conditions proved ‘intimidating and dissuasive’ and contributed ‘to create a climate of fear that discourages solidarity and fraternity’ (FIDH & OMCT, 2009; 21).

Segregation in Calais not only works spatially but also socially, disrupting/dismantling relations and interactions between citizens and noncitizens, aiming to maintain distinct lived realities for different subjects. The délit de solidarité targeted the ability of people in Calais to develop social relations and mutual interactions that challenged the segregation of everyday life by criminalising them in accordance with the regulations of border control. Of course, such segregation is never complete but always being challenged either overtly or more subtly in the course of people’s everyday lives. Indeed, the use of the law in this way itself became a focus of political contestation in 2009 and the article was effectively repealed nationwide in 2012 (see Allsopp 2012).

Segregation, therefore, involves a struggle over the formation and reformation of everyday social relations. However, despite ongoing political contestation, the criminalisation of aid remains a strategy employed locally for the purposes of segregation. In January 2015, with the day centre opening on the edge of town, the Mayor of Calais Natacha Bouchart introduced a bye-law prohibiting the distribution of food to migrants anywhere except the new centre (Pecqueux, 2015a; see also 5.3). Intimidation, physical harassment, and criminalisation continue to frame the context
of migrant solidarity in Calais, subjecting those who practice it to frequent repression and abuse. For example, in November 2015, a number of individuals were arrested and charged as ‘No Border’ activists for incitement to riot following months of demonisation of migrant solidarity activists in the media, by police and public officials (CMS, 2015k; Pecqueux, 2015b). In 2016 French authorities at Dover prohibited an UK aid convoy from crossing the border to Calais (McVeigh & O’Carroll, 2016). We can see, therefore, how the border in Calais involves a struggle over segregation which plays out at the level of everyday social and political relations between people across divisions of citizen/noncitizen.

3.5.5 Everyday segregation: subsistence

Segregating living spaces, public spaces, and social relations forces a majority of migrants in Calais to rely on charities for basic subsistence. Over the winter of 2014/15, every evening one free meal a day was distributed by charities Salam and Auberge de Migrants. For years, until July 2014, the food distribution had been located on a site near the port, an empty concrete lot surrounded by fences and ringed with a basic corrugated plastic roof under which people queued or sat eating the meagre food. In May 2014 several hundred people occupied the food distribution site in response to the eviction and destruction of their nearby camp. After initial success in repelling eviction the occupation grew in size becoming a rallying point for protesting the border. Several people went on hunger strike and the occupation garnered some media attention from both sides of the Channel (BBC, 2014a; Kleinfeld, 2014; Sparks, 2014). However, on 2 July 2014 heavily armed squads of CRS (the riot police) stormed in and, despite resistance, evicted the site, removing busloads of people to various detention centres around northern France (BBC, 2014b; CMS, 2014d; Passeurs d’hospitalités, 2014a). The site was closed, the gates locked, another empty space keeping people out. The food distribution continued, however, moved to one of two locations depending on the weather: if there was too much rain it took place where the Syrian camp was situated near the port, otherwise food was distributed in a large open area of disused land between the port and town centre.
With the gaudy clock tower of the Hôtel de Ville rising up behind, gothic and menacing, thousands of people stood waiting between the canal and train tracks for two battered white vans to pull up. As plastic containers with the lukewarm pasta were being handed out volunteers, wearing blue bibs emblazoned with the symbols of charity, tried to marshal the crowd into a long looping line. Seagulls circled, screeching and tugging over discarded scraps, while six vans of CRS watched from a distance, their headlights on full beam casting silhouettes and shadows scattering over faces in the crowd, some squatted down in huddles to eat, dust rising from the ground scuffed up by worn trainers and tired feet. Cars heading home from the day’s work moved slowly past, driver’s eyes fixed straight ahead at the traffic lights. A few children kicked a ball about with some volunteers, while voices called out across the subdued hum of the crowd to friends departing for the evening’s efforts at the motorway.

A stone’s throw away from the main streets of Calais, full of brightly lit restaurants, cafes, and shops, over a thousand people, some of them children, were forced to stand in line for over an hour in the evening winter darkness to receive what for many would be their only meal that day. Often the food ran out too soon. Many people had to walk the couple of miles back to the jungle, or on to the motorway near the Tunnel, still hungry. In late November, as the early Christmas decorations were being set up around town, the charities announced they would no longer be distributing food in town once the government-funded day centre opened in early 2015. Those living in squats or camps in town or by the Tunnel would have to walk two or more hours to the new day centre for a meal, or else risk starvation. This meant many people had to choose between eating and crossing.

What had been a constant on the daily map and routine in Calais, a persevering symbol of migrant presence in the town, is now gone. The spaces that Salam once used sit empty and lifeless. Whilst they were always signs of the inequality and division at work in Calais, these absented spaces now speak of a deeper segregation that the day centre has enabled (see 5.3). Moved beyond the everyday spaces of city life in Calais the jarring encounter with a separation of citizen and non-citizen worlds confronts us less directly now with its hypocrisy and violence. The streets of Calais have become eerily quiet whilst nights in the jungle are increasingly filled with flames (CMS, 2015i).
3.5.6 Everyday segregation: encountering police violence

In Calais the border policy of deterrence manifests through the segregation of spaces, social relations, and means of subsistence. As segregation, the border involves more than encountering security practices or technologies around the port, it is also embodied in the hunger and the cold, in the long hours spent walking to and from the jungle, in the sleepless nights spent running after a ‘chance’ on the motorway. This embodiment, I have been arguing, is central to how the border is produced as a powerful social/political reality. One of the main ways in which the border is embodied in Calais is through everyday encounters with police.

Late one night a man was walking down the side of a road leading out of town through the industrial estates that petered out into sand dunes and scrubland beyond the port. He had been walking all day in the cold rain and now his weary feet carried him slowly back to a cramped, leaky tent to sleep. He was a long way from home. Another man was driving along with his colleagues (a policeman and no doubt sleeps indoors, in a bed). Spotting the first man, the policeman drove the wing of his car into his back, knocking him to the floor. Pulling to a stop he jumped out and hurriedly began beating the man who was lying on the ground with a broken leg, spraying him with burning CS gas and shouting racist obscenities in his face. After this ejaculation of violence he got back in the car. His colleagues did nothing. They drove away together, leaving the injured man in the road. Eventually someone found him and called an ambulance to take him to hospital. After a few days he was discharged from hospital back to the jungle and the streets of Calais.

This incident was reported to activists in Calais after the man was released from hospital. He did not report it to police. Similar reports of sudden brutal police attacks on migrants were common in Calais, especially during the winter of 2014/15. Along with routine violence on the motorways, inside the trucks, and by the train tracks, and the daily controls on the street, these random attacks contributed to an atmosphere of hostility and precarity for migrants who appeared to be irregular in Calais, where the border would literally jump out in a surprising moment of extreme violence. The ever-present possibility of encountering such violence contributed to the embodied materialization of irregularity by which ‘the [migrant] subject is constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection’ and made to inhabit ‘those

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22 ‘Chance’ is a French term appropriated by migrants in Calais to refer to trying to cross the border clandestinely. I discuss the politics of this term in 6.5.3
“unlivable” and “uninhabitable” zones of social life which are nevertheless densely populated’ (Butler, 1993; 2-3). Here the border marks certain bodies with its identification and power through the everyday possibility of encountering violence. That a Channel 4 journalist filming an in-depth documentary about migrant experiences of crossing in Calais encountered this first hand does little to undermine the sense that these attacks are primarily about enforcing the border.23

In 2012 the French human rights ombudsman denounced police practices of daily identity checks, recurring arrests, property damage, physical assault, and ‘covert evictions’ in Calais as ‘reprehensible’ and tantamount to humiliation and ‘harassment’, stating

‘Sometimes, it is the repetition of an intervention or an act of law enforcement in quick succession, on vulnerable people who are migrants, which makes them disproportionate and open to criticism. The Défenseur des droits considers that in such circumstances these practices are likely to create a climate of insecurity and fear’ (Défenseur des droits, 2012; 16; 25 – my translation24).

In 2015 the Défenseur des droits again denounced the prevalence of everyday police harassment and the ‘strategy of displacement [non-implantation]’ against migrants and their supporters (72). The ombudsman also noted that in migrant testimonies these everyday forms of harassment had seemingly become ‘banal’ and ‘more everyday’ or mundane with the ‘multiplication and intensification’ of violent incidents especially on the motorways (75). ‘No one’, the ombudsman concluded, ‘can conceal the existence of the violence committed against migrants present in Calais, especially with the aid of tear gas’ which the report decried as part of a wider tendency in European migration policy towards ‘the primacy of control over respect for fundamental rights’ (81-82).

Many migrants in Calais visibly bear physical scars of their embodied encounters with the border, bruises and broken limbs, stitches in their heads, fingers missing. But substantiating accounts of police violence in Calais is notoriously hard (See Défenseur des droits, 2012; 13; 16; 24). The responses of various authorities to

23 This is one of the rare occasions on which a police officer has been prosecuted for such violence, although they were given a suspended sentence (see Rudz, 2015)
24 Unless otherwise cited, all translations from French are my own.
accusations of systematic police brutality are revealing, however, of the insidiousness of the violence of everyday segregation. The French Interior Minister’s response to the human rights ombudsman’s 2012 report is typical: he rejects the claims of widespread violence on the basis that they are based on ‘unverifiable remarks and concern[] old facts which no objective evidence can support today’ (Ministère de l’Intérieur, 2013). In answer to a Human Rights Watch report detailing ‘what appear to be routine abuses by police officers’ during the winter months of 2014, the local authorities in Calais similarly replied that ‘everything that can be said is unfounded. There have been no injured and there has been no violence against the migrants’ (Chief of Calais police, cited in HRW 2015a). Human Rights Watch were assured that police violence would not be tolerated and that ‘any allegations based on precise facts would be investigated’ (ibid).

Establishing such precision in relation to routine and everyday acts of violence is evidently difficult in Calais’ chaotic and transient conditions. This is something which the group Calais Migrant Solidarity has been trying to achieve, over the years gathering and submitting evidence to the Défenseur des droits, and posting testimony, photos, and videos online of police violence in the name of the border (CMS, 2011; 2015a; 2015b; 2016a; Défenseur des Droits 2015; 77; Howarth & Ibrahim, 2015a). In the process they often experience police violence, property damage, and arrest themselves, making gathering evidence of police abuse on migrants incredibly hard (Rudz, 2015). But the invisibility of police violence at the border in Calais is perhaps also to do with its banality, its very everydayness, hiding it from scrutiny. In August 2015, as UK media attention was focused on Calais, a police union spokesman Gilles Debove claimed that ‘if there was any police brutality, it would be all over the news’ arguing instead that these reports were the work of ‘extreme Left elements here to manipulate the migrants’ who ‘want to depict us as savages’ for their own gain (cited in Samuel, 2015a). But surely this neglects how the fact that such violence is unspectacular and mundane is partly what makes it not newsworthy. Repeated in low level but widespread acts of gassing in the face, kicking, punching and throwing

25 Since 2014 there have been a number of court cases concerning police violence (Rudz, 2015; Nord Littoral, 2016) and more complaints continue to be filed by NGOs in Calais (Blavignat, 2016). However, even when found guilty the police officers usually receive suspended sentences.
people to the ground, this violence is simply part of ordinary police work at the border. Indeed, this point was reiterated when a recent court case found three CRS police officers not guilty after being charged with violent conduct and property damage against someone trying to film them. As a local newspaper reported ‘The defendants, hardened to methods of intervention, pleaded not guilty. For them, [it was] a normal intervention’ (*Nord Littoral*, 2016). Police violence at the border in Calais is *normalised* as a necessary part of ‘the difficulty of policing’ (ibid). Furthermore, thinking back to the spectacle of disgust in border encounters (3.2), police violence is hardly unseen but rather seen as legitimate.

Often, when the injuries suffered by migrants in Calais are pointed to as evidence of police violence, the response is that they are the fault of the migrants themselves, not the police. Human Rights Watch reported an argument being made by Calais Prefect Denis Robin, that ‘while there were injured migrants in Calais, their injuries were sustained during attempts to cross over to the UK or inflicted by other migrants. He denied that any were due to excessive and unjustified use of force by police’ (2015a). Of course, not all injuries suffered by migrants in Calais are direct from the hands of police. Many of the worst injuries are sustained by falling from trains, climbing razor-wired fences, or running across busy motorways. However, comments such as Robin’s carefully avoid contextualising these injuries within the context of everyday embodied encounters with segregation by which the border is enforced, and the central complicity of the police in its reproduction. Instead responsibility is placed on the migrants themselves for risking their lives by engaging in criminal activity. It is their persistent illegality that is dangerous, to their person and to the smooth operation of the border.  

**3.6 Conclusion: ‘this border kills’**

In 2014 CMS was aware of nineteen people killed trying to cross the border in Calais. By October the number of deaths in 2015 had reached twenty-one (CMS,

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26 Here we can see how the discourses of humanitarian concern and border security can be made to overlap and their agendas aligned in a call for more intervention and control into the everyday lives of migrants. I explore this further in chapter 5.

27 Taken from the title of CMS dossier (2011) compiled for their submission to the human rights ombudsman.
These are likely to be conservative estimates, and the count continues (Howarth & Ibrahim, 2015a; 10). People are dying trying to jump onto moving trains, or falling beneath lorries, their bodies sometimes unidentifiable from the devastation inflicted upon them (CMS, 2015f; Nord Littoral, 2015). Many have died from hit and runs on the motorway, from drowning whilst attempting to swim round the security into the port, from electrocution, from injuries sustained trying to jump onto a moving train from an overhead bridge. Yes, these deaths are due to people taking increasingly risky measures to avoid the security services and cross the border illegally. But this must be put in the context where their movements are criminalised by both the official policies of the UK and French states and the daily practices of police enforcement. These dangerous routes are the only ones open to people subjected to the borders’ everyday segregation. In taking these risky routes they are not simply evading the law in some abstract sense but actually avoiding the often violent embodied encounters with police and security personnel that bring the force of law to life. Here the systematic violence of segregation and the physical violence of encountering the police intersect as a barrier to movement that leads people to their death. These embodied encounters with police violence are central to the realisation of the border as a form of everyday segregation in Calais. And they can kill.

Whether reported or not, many of the deaths in Calais follow from either direct encounters with police or attempts to avoid such encounters. One such example is the death of a woman from Eritrea in July 2015. She was killed by a car on the motorway leading to the Tunnel. According to the CMS blog:

‘Witnesses say that immediately before this young woman lost her life she had been in contact with the police. They say that she along with a group of five other people had been caught by police and then sprayed in their faces with CS gas. Afterward the people then fled across the highway one by one. However, because the gassing had irritated her eyes so much the young woman could not see when she went to cross the highway. This meant that she did not see and could not avoid the car speeding towards her which hit her’ (CMS, 2015c).

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28 On 16 October 2015 the body of a young man was reportedly ‘torn apart over 400m’ by the train he attempted to jump onto (ibid).
Here, in this embodied encounter, the lines between legitimate border security, police brutality, accident, and murder blur. Immigration policies, systematic segregation, everyday enactments of violence, and death combine here in the realisation of the border in Calais. This raises questions about which deaths are acceptable, accidental or incidental, and which are not. It raises questions about whose lives matter, and whose do not, and how this plays out in the regulation and control of people’s freedom of movement. It raises questions of responsibility for these deaths, for the dangers associated with living irregularly, and for the ongoing effects of segregation. And it raises questions for how we see and react to the everyday violence of the border.

I argued in this chapter for seeing the border in Calais in terms of everyday embodied encounters. Doing so, I suggested, allows us to see how the policy of deterrence pursued at this border becomes embodied in practices of segregation which make everyday life an almost unliveable struggle. Everyday life in Calais wears people down. It chills, and drags, and drains, and drenches. It starves people of food, of sleep, of shelter, of space, and of peace. It displaces and detains, disrupts and derails, disturbs and depresses. It kills, instantly or incrementally over time. Some people watch their body deteriorating as the border bears down on them day by day others have the border beaten into them at the hands of police or racists. The border here disempowers people physically and inflicts psychological wounds by imposing near impossible conditions of survival, tying people up with everyday preoccupations of food and shelter, restraining their pursuit of freedom, draining their will to go on. In Calais certain people have to carry the border on their bodies, in the scars on their faces and hands, the braces and casts on their broken legs, the emotional and physical bruises from daily encounters with a specifically European hostility. But also, in the detours they take, the nocturnal hours they must try to cross, the distances they walk, in their bones which ache and their tears which flow from the gas, in their daily routines of meeting and making friends, calling family, finding cigarettes, finding a place to rest, in their stories and their perseverance, migrants in Calais confront the daily workings of the border as it forms and enforces spaces and subjects of segregation. These embodied encounters involve a struggle in which barriers to
people’s movement are practically built up and reproduced at the same time they are undermined and renegotiated. Everyday life in Calais involves a continuous struggle with segregation and the border.

In this way the border in Calais does more than prevent people from crossing into the UK. By subjecting migrants to segregation in every aspect of their daily lives it constrains them wherever they go, whatever they do, even if they remain in one place. They are constantly forced to confront a whole series of borders placed in their way preventing them from eating, sleeping, talking to loved ones, going for a walk, or simply sitting on a bench. They are marked as subjects of segregation wherever they are in Calais and must constantly struggle with its effects in going about their daily lives. Both the freedom to move and the freedom to remain are severely constrained by this segregation because wherever they are, especially within the spaces of Europe, they will be faced with the borders of citizenship being played out in mundane and ever present ways. The border infuses the social spaces of Calais to such an extent that segregated migrant subjects are simply not allowed to live, not allowed to form the relations with others that enable them to live their lives, to shape their future, to pursue their dreams, or to change their present. Everyday segregation in Calais is structured in such a way that makes life for certain people near enough unliveable. And sometimes it kills.
4. Everyday borders and segregation in the UK: creating a ‘hostile environment’

4.1 Introduction

UK migration policy since 1998 saw the proliferation of everyday bordering practices throughout different locations in public space and different moments in people’s lives. Increasingly, nationality and/or immigration status are grounds on which the ability to work, study, rent a house, marry someone you love, drive a car, own a bank account, or walk the streets without interference from the authorities is scrutinised and either allowed, refused, or revoked. The Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016 noticeably extended powers immigration control powers over people’s everyday lives in order to make it ‘more difficult for illegal immigrants to live in the UK’ or ‘establish a life in the UK’ (See Home Office, 2013). The use of detention too greatly increased, expanding threefold since 2001, marking an enlargement of the detention estate of more than fifteen times its size in 1993 (Hajela & Silverman, 2016; Home Office, 2001; 2011a; Global Detention Project, 2011). At any one time between September 2014 and September 2015 around 3,500 people were incarcerated under Immigration Act powers (Hajela & Silverman, 2016)29. Over this period 32,000 people passed through one of the UK’s 19 detention facilities (including 13 Immigration Removal Centres, 5 Short Term Holding Facilities, and 1 Pre-Departure Accommodation Centre for families and children), while 12,000 people were forcibly removed from the country. At the end of September 2015 there were 409 people detained in prisons across England and Wales solely under immigration powers (Home Office, 2015a).

Since 2010 the UK immigration agenda has prioritised creating ‘a really hostile environment for illegal migration’ (see Kirkup & Winnet, 2012 and Travis, 2013; Home Office, 2010a; 7). The aim is to control access to basic requirements such as healthcare, housing, bank accounts, as well as employment and welfare provision, in such a way that makes life for irregular migrants close to unliveable by targeting ‘the

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29 Immigration detention is an administrative rather than criminal procedure carried out under the powers provided by the Immigration Act 1971 (as amended by subsequent legislation).
very tools they need to conduct a life here as well as commit further offences’ (Home Office, 2010a; 18). As well as operating on a more law-enforcement model, this agenda increasingly implicates ordinary people in the everyday workings of the border. Employers, teachers, landlords, bank staff, even fiancés, are now held personally (and potentially criminally\(^{30}\)) responsible for checking and monitoring the immigration statuses of those they encounter in their daily lives. Thus, we are witnessing the infusion of everyday interactions with the power-effects and (re)productive work of the border. Within the racialised context of British statecraft under the Conservative government this ‘borderwork’ (Rumford, 2012) increasingly works through segregation of everyday life in its redrawing of spatial and racial boundaries of the ‘socially cohesive’ nation (3.3).

In the previous chapter I showed how the border in Calais implemented a strategy of deterrence through everyday segregation. A combination of police violence, destitution, and social political exclusion reproduced the border in everyday life as an embodied encounter with segregation, with occasionally fatal effects. I argued, seeing borders as everyday embodied encounters blurs a number of ethical political lines and raises a number of questions about the purpose of border controls and the legitimacy of their violent discrimination.

In this chapter, I consider how similar policies of deterrence came to characterise everyday bordering in the UK. By tracing policy developments concerning migration in the UK since 1998, I show how the border became increasingly encountered in everyday life not just at the edge of the state. Drawing on critical security and migration literature, I argue (4.2) everyday bordering in the UK forms part of a wider remodelling of the state under conditions of globalisation, a way of doing the state in which sovereign power is dispersed and encountered throughout everyday life. This literature provides a picture of a pervasive biopolitics increasingly subjecting everyday life to the logic of sovereign exception. Here, through everyday practices of security, risk management, the use of surveillance technologies and policing

\(^{30}\) The introduction of criminal penalties to those who fail to ‘border’ properly was one of the main intentions of the new and supplementary Immigration Bill 2015-16 which became law in May 2016 (Immigration Act, 2016)
techniques the UK state is seen as remaking itself in the governance of ir/regular (im)mobility, the differential construction and administration of regular/irregular immigration status. Tracing these developments, I argue current UK border policy works through enforcing segregation to create a ‘hostile environment’ for irregular migrants in ways which resonate with ongoing histories of discrimination and inequality. This chapter then (4.4) critically engages with literature on borders as sovereign biopolitics, arguing this misses something of their everydayness. In particular, I argue that in emphasising the decision on the exception, this literature frames everyday bordering as an act of drawing hard lines and, in doing so, loses sight of the messier, less determined, ways bordering is done in everyday life. Looking at some everyday encounters where borderlines blur in their enactment, I argue (4.5) for a picture of everyday bordering as ‘opaque’ as a way of understanding the productive power of the border as segregation. Doing so, I argue, points to our ordinary complicity in reproducing this segregation, offering a chance to critically engage with the ethical politics of everyday borders and the possibilities of migrant solidarity.

4.2 New diagrams of governmentality: globalisation, borders, and biopolitics

4.2.1 The ‘Dial’

‘The Dial is a visual representation of our strategic objectives showing the wide range of tactics that we need to deploy in order to effectively drive down immigration crime. Our collective use of intelligence is at the heart of the approach which we then use to select the most effective responses to any given threat...a flexible system that we can ‘dial up’ in response to emerging threats or ministerial priorities’ (Home Office, quoted in Grayson, 2015).

Reportedly (Grayson, 2015) handed out by the Home Office at a meeting with voluntary migrant support groups in Sheffield in 2015, ‘the Dial’ (Figure 2) visualises the contemporary border in the UK. The Dial appears as an interactive instrument, a guide for the practice of border-making, a hand-held versatile device operable by anyone. At its core are the twin foundations of ‘intelligence’ assessment and ‘organisational capacity’ from which it is possible to ‘[b]uild a responsive, flexible system that is driven by intelligence and can respond to changing circumstances’. From these central tenets the Dial offers four possible strategic avenues of response:
protect, prevent, pursue, prepare. In turn these offer numerous interrelated tactical options seemingly focused on a proactive policing and enforcement agenda that targets the community: ‘strengthen community resilience’, ‘community engagement’, ‘ensure compliance through face to face action’, ‘communicate [...] the consequences of non-compliance’, ‘carry out enforcement operations’, achieve ‘swift removals’ and ‘swift deportations’, ‘prosecute and disrupt Organise Crime Groups’, ‘deny and switch off services’ and ‘create an environment that makes it harder to enter and live in the UK illegally’.

Who the Dial imagines is doing this ‘borderwork’ (Rumford, 2012), or what exactly it entails, remains an open question, emphasising as it does flexibility and adaptability across different scenarios. However, whilst this potential ambiguity is maintained, the diagram does offer a detailed picture of contemporary bordering...
practices. The Dial displays the logos of several key border practitioners including UK Visas & Immigration and Border Force (both part of the Home Office), HM Revenue and Customs, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, the Department of Work & Pensions, the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency, HM Prison Service, the National Crime Agency and Experian. It presents a picture of co-operation and co-ordination across a number of government departments aimed at implementing Home Office operational priorities concerning border control and organised crime policing, also incorporating a ‘global information services company’ who specialise in data analysis and risk management (Experian, 2016). The primary targets of these strategies, while not specified, seem to be anyone involved in ‘immigration crime’, variously ranging from (potentially) failing to comply with immigration procedures, entering or living ‘illegally’ in the UK, to organised criminal networks. While the what, who, and where of these strategies involve remain ambiguous, they appear to combine immigration enforcement with intelligence gathering, criminal policing tactics, and social exclusion whilst seemingly targeting the multiple spaces of everyday life, encompassing people’s communities, workplaces, and public services.

As this chapter will show, the Dial represents the UK’s current agenda of pursuing border control through the creation of a ‘hostile environment’ for irregular migrants. Based on the identification, criminalisation, and aggressive policing of irregular mobility the borders of citizenship and the state are redrawn and reinforced again and again every day. In this sense, we could perhaps see the Dial as part of a new ‘diagram of power’ for statecraft (see 3.3) based around governing (ir)regular (im)mobility in which new subjects, new configurations of power relations, and new methods of control, are emerging (Deleuze, 1988; 35-37; 84; 1992; Walters, 2004; 2006). In this chapter I argue, whether new or not, this power works increasingly through the segregation of everyday spaces and social relations in accordance with the discriminations of the border between ir/regularity and im/mobility.

4.2.2 Governmentality, biopolitics, and statecraft

Foucault’s work invites us to consider ‘the state as a way of doing’ (2009; 357) especially focused on the regulation of mobility. In particular, his analysis of
government(ality) as a form of power arising from the interworking of multiple techniques of control and bodies of knowledge presents a busy picture of state-making or statecraft: the state emerges as a way of identifying and responding to a series of ongoing managerial problems concerning the well-being of a population, the efficient working of an economy, and the policing of social (dis)order (2002; 219-220; 2009; 354; see also Soguk, 1999). Governing, or the practice of government, primarily involves management rather than making or enforcing law: ‘disposing things’ so their overall function is optimal (2002; 211). It entails ‘an administration of things’ that takes a multiplicity of ‘mobile elements’ or variables (people and goods, for instance) and attempts to not simply shape/control them individually but rather regulate their interrelations, their relative flows and circulations, by encouraging the ‘natural’ movement of ‘positive elements’ and ‘minimizing what is risky and inconvenient’ (2009; 19; 49). For Foucault, the neoliberal state is a distinct mode of government characterised by practices of ‘security’: these aim to predict and/or respond to ever-changing material conditions of society by identifying, dividing, filtering, and (re)directing its constitutive flows. Neoliberal government involves managing (both ‘immanently’ and as a totality) a populated ‘milieu’ understood as ‘a multiplicity of individuals who are[,] and fundamentally and essentially only exist biologically[,] bound to the materiality within which they live’ (2002; 217; 2009; 21). Neoliberal government is therefore linked to a biopolitics that continuously tries to secure and control the conditions of everyday life (Dillon & Reid, 2001; Foucault, 2010; Lemke, 2010; Rose, 2006; Tyler, 2013). And central to such efforts is a discriminatory regulation of the freedom of movement of people and things (Foucault, 2009; 48-49). For Foucault, governing mobility in everyday life is therefore central to the ongoing (bio)politics of statecraft.

States are constantly creating themselves anew, being done differently at different times. In recent years, Foucault’s concepts have been drawn upon to explain contemporary bordering practices in terms of a wider shift towards new forms of governmentality in response to, or as part of, processes of globalisation. In an era supposedly defined by the dominance of market relations and commodification, marked by greater circulations of capital, information, and people, and which upholds
values of speed, immediacy, interconnectedness, and mobility as the highest of virtues (see Bauman, 1998) the state appears thrown into crisis. As globalisation sees the overflowing of traditional territorial borders the configuration of political power according to nation-state sovereignty is destabilized. New conglomerations of power and inequality become entrenched across differently aligned spaces and topographies, challenging the monopoly of the sovereign state form. Yet at the same time, it seems state power is constantly reasserted in anxious and reactionary practices of border construction and walling (Brown, 2010). Rather than a scenario wherein state power, borders, and territorialis ed polities are either disappearing or being vigorously reaffirmed, McNevin argues we are witnessing ‘a complex rescaling of state space’ whereby borders are simultaneously liberalised and subjected to extensive policing (2011; 3). Here a restructured ‘globalizing state’ is seen to be emerging as a ‘new terrain’ of sovereignty, citizenship, and political practice in line with the tenets of neoliberalism (41; 45; 53). Shifts in location and effects of state borders perhaps indicate a new or incipient ‘diagram of power’ encompassing these various tensions in society within realigned relations of power, novel modes of governing, and evolving practices of control (Bigo, 2011; 47; Darling, 2011; 264; Deleuze, 1988; 35-37; 84; 1992; Walters, 2004; 256; 2006). Reading developments in UK immigration policy alongside critical security literature, this section considers to what extent we can understand these developments as part of a shift in forms of governmentality from geopolitics to biopolitics focused on the pursuit of security through the management of risk (Amoore & de Goede, 2008; Campbell, 2005; Dillon, 2007; Dillon & Lobo-Guarro, 2008; Hyndman, 2012; Minca, 2006; Topak, 2014; Tyler, 2010; Vaughan-Williams, 2010).

4.2.3 Managing migration: (ir)regularisation of mobility and the ‘banopticon’

In 1998 the Home Office, under the newly-elected Labour Party, published a White Paper entitled Fairer, Faster and Firmer setting out ‘a long-term strategy’ for modernising governance of immigration and asylum. The proposals centred on reshaping and extending the operation of UK border controls in the face of ‘dramatic changes in the speed, relatively low cost and easy availability of international travel and telecommunications’ (Home Office, 1998). The emphasis was on establishing new
levels of control on mobility capable of being ‘exercised more flexibly to speed the passage of genuine travellers and target resources on potential abuse’. Along with expanding immigration control powers pre, on and after-entry, for example strengthening the external reach of the Immigration (Carrier’s Liability) Act 1987 and providing new powers to immigration officers internally, the White Paper specifically identified asylum as a key target site of ‘abuse’. ‘A new covenant’ was suggested between asylum seekers and the government, on the basis of the latter’s ‘commitment to fairness’, involving the reduction of avenues of appeal, faster decision making, limitations to welfare support, more detention and increased removal rates. At the same time, this new covenant chimed nicely with the other two commitments: by developing an ‘integrated approach’ through the establishment of ‘a single management structure in the UK’ that would unite ‘modern technology’ and ‘multi-agency cooperation’ the Home Office aspired ‘to maximise efficiency and minimise the scope for abuse’ across the immigration system, making it ‘faster and firmer’. With the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 many of the white paper’s initiatives passed into law, marking a general shift in UK immigration policy towards a ‘discourse of control’ characterised by a distinctively restrictive approach towards asylum (Squire, 2008).

The next white paper on immigration appeared in 2002. Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain developed these earlier themes in greater detail but with more emphasis on (re)constructing British national identity and citizenship. Immigration control was portrayed here as central in government efforts to open up the UK, as an economy and a society, to the benefits of ‘global flows’ of capital, goods, and people at the same time as reconstructing, those ‘traditional boundaries’ supposedly threatened and ‘broken down’ by these flows (Home Office, 2002; Foreword). The white paper identified three key target areas requiring ‘integration with diversity’: citizenship, the UK economy, and humanitarian/refugee protection. For each it called for the creation of ‘more legitimate routes’ of mobility and access through naturalisation, employment schemes and work visas, and through a ‘fundamentally reform[ed] asylum system’ (11-12;13; 15). While ‘enhancing’ these routes it also called for ‘tightening procedures’ against ‘abuse’ or ‘misuse’ of the
immigration system and its efficient operation (12-13). The white paper therefore presented an agenda for extensive border (re)construction through the creation of numerous regularised routes of entry to the UK. Rather than closure, the principal operation of the border was good management focused on ‘disentangling’ and ‘make sense of’ the multiple global flows, distinguishing their beneficial and abusive components, re-routing them accordingly into separate channels and subjecting them to different sorts of control (13; 27). This ‘holistic approach’ (79) to immigration control intended to ‘bring order to the disparate flows of people by developing legal routes to those who will benefit our economy and those who need protection’ and at the same time ‘crack down on those who would undermine or abuse our system’ (20; 26).

The white paper set out a plan for rebuilding the British state through practices of border-making. The creation of more regular routes for immigration and integration also necessitated increased policing against irregular migration into the UK. The white paper envisaged border controls as a sort of sieve for the filtration of global flows into desirable/undesirable, welcome/dangerous, profitable/costly (Sales, 2005), and their selective targeting for acceleration or impediment:

‘The challenge here is to allow those who qualify for entry to pass through the controls as quickly as possible, maximising the time spent on identifying those who try to enter clandestinely […] Increasingly we are looking at new methods of detecting and deterring […] to disrupt those who do not qualify’ (Home Office, 2002; 17).

The white paper therefore announced numerous new bordering measures and immigration regulations from Airline Liaison Officers, new visa regulations, immigration officers working abroad and other mechanisms for screening people prior to departure, controls on ‘transit routes’, the introduction of new technologies of surveillance and identification, from scanners and CCTV to biometric technology ‘such as iris or facial recognition or fingertips’ (18; 92). These measures were designed to combat abuse of especially vulnerable routes of entry: asylum, marriage, visa overstaying, the use of false documents, or clandestine entrance and smuggling. The ‘new approach’ (79) offered here combined preemptive regulation ‘upstream’ (Bigo & Guild, 2005; 252) and ongoing management after entry aimed at creating ‘seamless’
channels within which diverse flows of people could be contained and effectively regulated or controlled (Home Office, 2002; 22). For asylum seekers in particular, the aim was to create a singular streamlined ‘process of induction, accommodation and reporting and fast-track removal or integration’ through which all asylum seekers would pass and be ‘both supported and tracked’ (14). Their movements would be regulated and controlled throughout the process (‘end-to-end’ management) using identification techniques, dispersal policies, reporting requirements, and expedited decision-making procedures in order to facilitate their classification as ‘genuine’ or not and their ultimate integration or removal (15).

In several ways, then, Secure Borders, Safe Haven embodied a new form of liberal governmentality, what Bigo terms the ‘banopticon’ (2002; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2011). The banopticon marks a shift from more direct panoptic surveillance practices, disciplinary mechanisms, and territorial borders towards a form of governing that works by ‘policing at a distance’. That is, the banopticon works on flows of mobile subjects to filter out good from bad, desirable from undesirable, safe from risky in ways that maintain global hierarchies of power and racialised, socio-economic inequalities (see especially Bigo, 2005). Utilising ever-advancing technologies of surveillance, identification, databasing, profiling, and tracking, ‘professionals of insecurity’ implement a ‘policy of remote control, of preventive policing, of preemptive defence or of deterrence’ (2005; 9; 50) which anticipates and intercepts those mobile subjects who potentially pose a threat prior to their movement. In doing so they aim at maximising freedom of movement for highly valued subjects through the selective application of control only to those mobile subjects with ‘banned’ profiles, those whose status and mobility is deemed ‘abnormal’ or disruptive (2005; 73). The maintenance of mobile flows requires the focused and discriminating exclusion only of specific ‘dangerous’ elements ‘without checking everybody’, for otherwise mobility is compromised (2007; 30). Governing (im)mobility, therefore, involves administering the conditions for ‘a differential freedom of movement (of different categories of people)’ and this, Bigo argues, entails new forms of contemporary bordering by ‘creat[ing] new logics of control that for practical and institutional reasons are located elsewhere, at transnational sites’ (2007; 9-10).
Furthermore, based on identification and profiling techniques, such practices produce new categories of identity and subjectivity as politically charged and saturated with risk. The ‘bogus’ asylum seeker, the ‘irregular’ migrant, those who in their movements, potentially/actually, deliberately/accidentally, might subvert, evade, or exceed the frames and instruments of control, become prefigured as dangerous within a governmentality focused on (im)mobility. For Bigo, the threat of irregular migration is derivative of the governing of (im)mobility: ‘[s]ecuritization of immigration is the result and not the cause of the development of technologies of control and surveillance’ (2002; 73). With neoliberal governance equating freedom with the speed and comfort of properly ‘regulated mobility’, these figures emerge as spectres of risk or ‘unease’ (2002; 65). They are themselves products of fantasies of control, the nightmarish irregularities that persistently recur, unsettling and disrupting “the dream of perfect management” (2011; 37; 46-47; See also Bigo & Guild, 2005; 260). The banopticon, then, is centrally implicated for Bigo in wider practices of ‘the management of unease’ (2002; 74) seeking to sell a utopian vision of complete security and unbounded freedom (of movement) made possible through the invisibly ubiquitous bureaucratic neutralisation of risk. For Bigo, this is a new governmentality, less spatially fixed and more pervasive: ‘Nowadays, it is governments and their bureaucracies (and not the territorial form of states) that strengthen their control of society and that extend further than before’ (2002; 83). As practices of professionalised bureaucratic administration of bodies, rather than markers (and makers) of territorial boundaries, borders proliferate throughout new and productive areas of everyday life as part of a wider governing of (im)mobility.

For Bigo, then, ‘the incremental securitisation of everyday life’ (2011; 41) is the result of shifting modes of government away from the traditional territorial state model towards a new ‘diagram of power’ appropriate to the managing of the productive forces of globalisation, that is, ‘the governmentalization of freedom through management of mobility in a life environment’ (2011; 47). Here, he argues, the prominent sovereign actors are less the ‘professionals of politics’ and more the ‘professionals of (in)security’: less the representatives of the nation concerned with democratic community/population and liberal rule of law than the police concerned
with enforcement of a secure and controlled order (Bigo, 2005; 86). The emphasis on mobility as a value, or even an ‘imperative’ (Bigo & Guild, 2005; 260), reflects new hierarchies of power in a globalising era that are shaping the development of new modes of governing. However, how new these emphases are is debatable. While Secure Borders, Safe Haven sets out a vision of unbounded borders dispersed technologically throughout everyday life, they still serve to secure the territorial sovereignty of the nation-state. Rather than replacing the state these new governmental security practices might be seen as a different way of ‘doing’ the state. As I will argue, the professionalisation of (in)security and the deterritorialisation of border controls indicate less the waning of state power/politics than a neoliberal transformation of statecraft through embracing globalisation and governing international (im)mobility.

4.2.4 Embracing globalisation: sovereignty, territory and ‘dompolitics’

Secure Borders, Safe Haven sought to open up the UK to global flows of migration and simultaneously strengthen a cohesive national identity through reinforcing border controls. Accepting migration as ‘an inevitable reality of the modern world’ it sought to ‘manage it properly’ through controlling integration and levels of diversity so it might benefit ‘our [the UK’s] social well-being and economic prosperity’ (2002; Foreword). As a project of government it sought to ‘square the circle’ (Ibid): to reconcile the multiple tensions of globalisation and state sovereignty (see Brown, 2010), to affirm both a cosmopolitan and communitarian identity, to meld national and international market interests, to establish homogeneity amidst heterogeneity, to achieve a uniform multicultural society based on ‘integration with diversity’.  

This supposedly impossible task was to be accomplished not by drawing the border as a hard line and shutting the nation off from the world but by embracing it: ‘we need to be secure within our sense of belonging and identity and therefore be able to reach out and to embrace those who come to the UK’ (2002; Foreword, emphasis mine; see also 10; 29-30). Statecraft, sovereignty, national identity and economic interest, the boundaries of belonging between us/them, were to be shaped

31 Noticeably different to the ‘neo-racism’ of later Conservative immigration policy we encountered (3.3) although not unrelated, as we shall see (4.3).
and secured by embracing global mobility, welcoming it in and bringing it under close control, rather than shutting it out. As such, the white paper did not advocate *laissez faire*, nor did it relinquish authority to security professionals. Instead it proposed massively extending the reach of border controls (and state power) internationally and throughout the UK’s everyday spaces.

According to Walters (2004) this ‘re-bordering’ and a re-territorialisation’ of the state in *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* needs to be understood within the context of a diagrammatic reorganisation of power from a governmentality based around social security towards one based around ‘domopolitics [...] a fateful conjunction of home, land and security’ (241). Rather than the state’s disappearance and replacement by diffuse networks of security professionals, domopolitics involves ‘a reconfiguring of the relations between citizenship, state, and territory’ around the notion of the ‘home’ with its connotations of belonging, identity, intimacy, shelter, and possessive protectionism (241-242). Moreover, rather reactionary death-throws of ‘waning sovereignty’ (Brown, 2010), domopolitics explains the revitalisation of bordering practices as part of an attempt to redefine the state, and secure its sovereignty, through the ‘domestication’ of global flows of mobility (Walters, 2004; 242). Reimagined as a corporate entity securing ‘our’ interests on the international (market) stage, the state reconstructs itself through practices of good business management, marketing the nation, promoting its interests, encouraging investment and regulating the workforce for maximum productivity and profit (244). It offers a different sort of contract on which to base nation-state sovereignty. Domopolitics attempts to reconcile the twin political forces of nationalism and neoliberalism under a regime of governmentality by reconfiguring the state and citizenship in relation to global flows of mobility (252): ‘[t]he task of governing is to disentangle, to tap the energies of one flow while taming and suppressing the other’ and in this process ‘the government must itself become more transnational’ (245). At the same time ‘its logics of sorting are fed down into more prosaic practices and spaces’ of everyday life in order to render mobile subjects knowable according to categories of domopolitical governance (Darling, 2011; 269-270). Here, the everyday proliferation of borders, as well as at strategic international locations, forms part of wider processes of ‘re-bordering’ and
‘re-territorialisation’ by which ‘the state is actualized as a territorial state, albeit in a new form’ (Walters, 2004; 249-251).

This agenda for managing migration by embracing mobility was brought into law by the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. The Act made naturalisation into British citizenship further conditional on the ability to demonstrate certain cultural knowledges and language skills; tied eligibility for asylum support to compliance with the new asylum system of dispersed accommodation and regular reporting; removed support from those whose asylum claims were refused or who did not apply for asylum ‘as soon as reasonably practicable after their arrival in the UK’; increased the powers of removal while limiting rights of appeal, and even removing the right to in-country appeal entirely or certain cases certified as ‘clearly unfounded’ where the claimant could be returned to country deemed to be ‘safe’; introduced biometric information requirements for applications to enter or remain in the UK; established immigration control powers at ports in the European Economic Area; and created a series of new offences relating to assisting unlawful immigration, trafficking, entering the UK using forged documents, and new powers to search business premises for the purposes of arresting immigration offenders (see explanatory notes to the Act, 2002). As this demonstrates, the embrace of the globalising state is not always a welcoming one as different forms of control are applied selectively to mobile subjects discriminated in terms of their ir/regularity.

Under New Labour the UK state seemingly reconfigured itself by embracing globalisation and reconceiving the business of government as a biopolitical neoliberal engagement in the global market. Central to this reframing of state sovereignty was effective government of (im)mobility according to logics of ‘risk management’, entailing a massive expansion of bordering practices throughout everyday life, especially via biometric technologies of identification, profiling, and control (Amoore, 2006). Key to how the neoliberal/biopolitical/globalising state is ‘done’, therefore, is through ‘embracing the risks of globalization via information technology’ in pursuit of a mobile form of security (339). Technologies of data gathering, analysis, and identification are therefore central to understanding how biopolitics and everyday bordering are intimately bound up together.
4.2.5 Sovereign technologies of security: making everyday life biopolitical

In 2005 the Home Office produced a ‘five year strategy for asylum and immigration’ entitled *Controlling our borders: Making migration work for Britain*. It portrayed Britain’s ‘traditional tolerance’ as ‘under threat from those who come and live here by breaking our rules and abusing our hospitality’ who must be ‘root[ed] out’ (5). The strategy document presented a more overtly restrictive stance on immigration and coercive stance on integration, tightening access to regularized migration routes, increasing enforcement practices against irregular migration, and investing extensively in identification/surveillance technologies as the basis for expanding immigration control. The strategy sought to limit who could enter and remain to ‘skilled’ migrants by introducing sponsorship requirements for economic migration, reducing avenues to long term settlement for the ‘unskilled’, making refugee protection ‘temporary’ and revocable after five years, introducing further language tests and restricting family reunion (in its terms, ‘ending chain migration’) (2005; 9-10). It called for the collection of fingerprints and other biometric data from all visa applicants before their arrival, the introduction of ID cards for ‘all foreign migrants staying in the UK for more than 3 months’ and the introduction of ‘pre-boarding electronic checks of all persons entering and leaving the UK by air’ (10). It proposed a New Asylum Model which integrated the UK asylum process further with the European asylum databases such as Eurodac, enabling asylum seekers to be identified and tracked across Europe using their biometrics, facilitating removals to ‘safe’ third countries and beyond under the Dublin Agreements. It also sought to expand the use of detention and deportation as ‘the norm’ for failed asylum cases, establishing a detained fast-track process for cases deemed ‘clearly unfounded’ or capable of a ‘quick decision’, and a ‘non-detained tightly managed approach’ that combined fast decision-making with more restrictive procedures of monitoring, registration, accommodation, and tagging (10; 35-36). Finally, it detailed a five year plan to ‘transform our immigration control’ through extensive use of ‘new borders technology’ centring on gathering, storing, and sharing biometric information (8). Combined with external border checks pre-departure or on arrival and internal checks on migrant workers and asylum seekers, these new...

32 See European Union, 2013; Fekete, 2011; Schuster, 2011
technologies and databases sat at the heart of government plans ‘to create a fully integrated control before entry to the UK, at our borders and inside the UK’ (27). Faith in information technology became key to pursuing ‘a joined up modernised intelligence-led border control and security framework’ in the form of an ‘e-Borders Programme’ (33).

For the next five years this strategy of establishing an all-encompassing seamlessly integrated system of identification to support and supplement a fast-tracked enforcement process continued to form the basis of government efforts to square the circle: ‘to attract the brightest and the best from across the world, while at the same time being more robust against abuse’ (Home Office, 2006a; foreword). Numerous new policies and legislation extended biometric technologies, risk profiling, and pre-emptive controls, increasing immigration enforcement powers, developing detention and deportation capabilities, whilst simultaneously retracting appeal rights, minimising support provision, and criminalising immigration abuse.33 During this time, the use of ‘new technology’ to collect, store, analyse, and share information on all persons moving across UK space in order to identify potential risks, profile suspects, and ultimately ban (Bigo, 2002) or intercept known threats, also became the cornerstone of a variety of security agendas beyond immigration control relating to serious organised crime and terrorism.34

A broad national security agenda was emerging around investment in a ‘technological “arms race”’ to combat a wide range of threats in conjunction with proposals for greater integration across different security sectors around information sharing and operational cooperation (Home Office 2004, SOCA, 2010; 11-12). In this context, border controls were seen as crucial locations for gathering individual information pertinent to a wide range of security and law enforcement practices while being extended internationally and expanded internally (Home Office, 2007; 2-3). Dreams of implementing an ‘e-Borders’ programme which could capture information


on all travellers into, out of, and across UK space, combined with projects to roll out ID cards for all UK nationals (HAC, 2009; Identity Cards Act 2006; LSE Identity Project, 2005), were linked to a context of ‘transformational government [] enabled by technology’ across the board in terms of public services, tax collection, benefits, and policing (HM Government, 2007). Continuous surveillance, information gathering, and technological monitoring of mobile bodies became the basis of government policy aimed at the management and policing of state functions and the population through ‘the electronic footprint which people leave in their daily lives’ (The Information Commissioner Richard Thomas, quoted in HAC, 2008; 11). As Amoore has argued, these technologies played a fundamental role in making everyday life biopolitical. In this context, the ‘biometric border’ seems to serve a key biopolitical function ‘as a mobile regulatory site through which people’s everyday lives can be made amenable to intervention and management’ (2006; 337). Through these technologies of biometric bordering and surveillance the priorities of biopolitical government and risk management are ‘inscribed’ on people’s bodies and played out in everyday life (338; Amoore & de Goede, 2005; Amoore & Hall, 2009).

The proliferation of borders throughout social space, then, is associated with everyday life’s saturation by sovereign biopolitical power. In particular, Vaughan-Williams has argued this massive expansion of technological means of identifying, differentiating, and pre-empting potentially ‘risky’ mobilities comprises a ‘border security continuum’ stretching externally and internally in time and space from the traditional boundary line of the state and subjecting everyone to a ‘generalised suspicion’ (2010; 1076-1077). In this way, the UK border becomes ‘globalised’ at the same time as it ‘works in part by precisely permeating everyday life’ through the routinisation of acts of exceptional sovereign decision (or ban) in increasingly banal and mundane locations (1073; 1077). Drawing on Agamben’s account of biopolitics and sovereign power (1998, 2005), Vaughan-Williams argues for a reconceptualisation of the border as ‘a decision or speech act about whether certain life is life worth living or life that is expendable’ (2009a; 116) which, he explains, places everyone under a ‘generalised state of exception’ (108). In such a situation, the sovereign power to define the limits of political community and belonging is no longer realised at states’
territorial limits but rather enacted repeatedly throughout social space in the form of a ‘generalised biopolitical border’ (2009a; 2009b). The exception becomes the norm as globally bordering practices are increasingly ‘infused through bodies and diffused across society and everyday life’ (2009b; 733). The biopolitical account of security depicts an everyday political order in which we are all potentially vulnerable, anywhere anytime, to the exceptional exercise of sovereign power to decide on the un/worthiness of life and to kill in the name of security (Amoore, 2006; Vaughan-Williams, 2007).

According to both the policy literature and the critical security literature, technologisation is seen to have facilitated the infusion of everyday life with borders’ powers to discriminate between citizen/noncitizen, ir/regularity, and im/mobility, between safe/risky subjects, good/bad migrants, deserving/undeserving asylum seekers, political/non-political being. In some sense, then, both perspectives frame everyday bordering as involving the sovereign power to draw and redraw hard lines of the state within the community itself (Pin-Fat, 2010; and Edkins & Pin-Fat, 2005). In attempting to embrace and control globalisation and all its flows the UK state is seen to be incessantly redrawing its borders throughout social space through biometric and surveillance technologies of ir/regularisation. In the next section I will show how, corresponding to this picture of proliferating technologies of security, there has been a shift in UK immigration policy towards a more explicit policing agenda, involving the construction of irregularity itself as a security threat and the conflation of irregular mobility with criminality. Adopting the form and tactics of policing, everyday bordering involves more than technological surveillance and management of mobile subjects as it increasingly resembles practices of segregation.

4.3 Policing irregularity: criminalisation, securitisation, and segregation in everyday life

Corresponding to the technologisation of border controls are two further related developments. First, for these technologies to be effective the information that underlies them must be shared across a wide spectrum of security practices and sites of intervention. The mobility of the biometric border relies on the free flow of
information and ‘intelligence’. So, technologisation of security has coincided with integration of diverse security agencies and actors in terms of access to databases, enforcement co-operation, and strategic planning. As I show, this has meant the incorporation of bordering practices within wider security and policing frameworks which place greater emphasis on their role in countering organised crime and terrorism. Second, within a framework of governing (im)mobility that links control with knowledge through regularisation, irregularity itself becomes a problem (both epistemologically and practically). As this section will demonstrate, irregular (im)mobilities, for example noncompliance with administrative regulations of immigration control, clandestine border crossings, or other activities which hinder the expedition of border controls, were increasingly located on a spectrum of criminality and insecurity. As a result, the management of abuse gave way to the policing of crime as the primary framing of border controls within a networked vision of UK national security, the key strategy of which has been the creation of a ‘hostile environment’ for irregular migrants through various practices of segregation and policing in everyday life.

4.3.1 Institutionalising suspicion: credibility, asylum seekers, and foreign national prisoners

The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 played an important role in the criminalisation of irregular mobility, especially in relation to asylum claimants. The Act greatly restricted appeal rights under the premise of ‘unifying’ and streamlining the system, created a new offence criminalising entry to the UK without a passport, extended immigration officers’ powers of entry and arrest, introduced regulations and restrictions on non-EEA nationals marrying in the UK, extended removal provisions while restricting bail from detention and introducing electronic tagging for the purpose immigration control, and perhaps most importantly designated specific behaviours as ‘damaging to credibility’ in asylum cases. The infamous Section 8 introduced the requirement that certain behaviours deemed ‘designed or likely to conceal information […] mislead […] obstruct or delay’ should be taken into account in decision-making procedures as undermining the ‘credibility’ of an asylum seeker’s claims. Behaviours detrimental to effective immigration control
and administration, such as failure to present valid documents, answer questions, or claim asylum in another safe country, destruction of a passport, or failure to make an asylum claim in good time, would now count against an asylum seeker’s general ‘credibility’ and be taken as evidence of the unfoundedness of their claim. Most of these are not only common amongst asylum seekers but are often characteristic of those fleeing persecution, for example where people have to pay to be secretly transported out of the country (UNHCR, 2013; 211-216). But since the 2004 Act they have been presented as deceitful, and used as grounds to reject numerous asylum claims despite lacking relevance to the case’s material facts. Instead they are almost exclusively behaviours that are a nuisance and hindrance to the speedy and effective operation of immigration procedures. In effect, the 2004 Act enshrined in legislation an image of asylum seekers as inherently suspicious and potentially ‘bogus’ by equating ir/regularity of movement with in/credibility. The language of ‘designed or likely’ left ambiguous the issue of asylum seekers’ intentions to deceive whilst asserting their moral culpability for the actual obstruction or delay to border control procedures. Given the reliance on irregular means of movement by many asylum seekers into the UK (3.4.2) this act served to further link asylum with criminal abuse of the immigration system and to expedite their refusal and removal as threats to control and security.

Section 8 contributed to the ‘de facto criminalisation of asylum’ already evident in the control measures applied to all asylum seekers throughout their process and especially the use of arrest and detention as an administrative procedure (Bosworth & Guild, 2008; 709). As immigration control became more bureaucratised and focused on fast effective management of the overall system, any noncompliance and/or interference with the efficient administration of mobile bodies was increasingly criminalised. At the same time, irregular mobility was becoming securitised and depicted as inherently dangerous in virtue of its lack of regulation. The government of (im)mobility, therefore, was increasingly carried out ‘through the prism of crime’ as punitive policing measures were rolled out to monitor and control noncitizens as a collectively stigmatised ‘risky’ population (2008; 710-711; 714).
With the *UK Borders Act 2007*, automatic deportation was introduced for non-EEA nationals sentenced to 12 months or more in prison and the ambiguous yet highly racialised figure of the ‘foreign national prisoner’ became central to public discourse and government policy on immigration control (Bosworth, 2011; 2012; HC Public Accounts Committee, 2015; de Noronha, 2015). In this context, with deportation orders often included as part of criminal sentencing, immigration control becomes an extension of the criminal justice system and frequently results in ex-prisoners facing long periods of indefinite detention after serving their prison sentence, prior to deportation.

As borders are incorporated into wider practices of policing and punishment in UK society, and in turn immigration offences are increasingly criminalised, border controls starkly reproduce certain histories of the racialisation of crime and the criminalisation of race (Bosworth, 2011; Fassin, 2001; Fekete, 2005; 2015; Webber, 2012; 13-14). Given that a large proportion of foreign national prisoners are citizens of countries with historic colonial or commonwealth ties to and established communities within the UK, such as Jamaica, Nigeria, India, Pakistan, and Somalia (Ministry of Justice, 2015), their specific and unequal targeting in terms of policing and immigration enforcement appears reminiscent of previous eras of heightened ‘state racism’ and exclusionary citizenship (see Tyler, 2010; also 3.2-3.3). For example, and bearing in mind which communities are most affected by these measures, recent collaborations between police and the Home Office on ‘Operation Nexus’ to intercept and remove ‘those who pose a risk to the public or who are not entitled to be in the UK’ (ICIBI, 2014c; 2) have raised concerns over the institutionalisation of differential access to justice (Luqmani Thompson & Partners, 2014). Embedding immigration officers within police stations, Operation Nexus seeks to identify immigration offenders or foreign nationals considered to be a threat to the ‘public good’, ambiguously defined, and refer them for removal or deportation proceedings, for which there are very limited appeal rights. In this way, targeting foreign nationals, who may have regularised status or leave to remain in the UK, immigration powers are being used to replace or supplement the punitive capacity of the criminal justice system in an inherently unequal manner. Two people can live in the same
neighbourhood, commit the same crime, serve the same sentence, and then one is free to return to their life while the other is deemed a threat to society and forced to remain in detention to await deportation, often to an unfamiliar country. The second person need not have committed an additional immigration offence to warrant this differential treatment, their supposed ‘foreignness’ itself suffices (Ibid).

Such explicit discrimination of foreign nationals within the criminal justice system and by police on the ground has serious implications in terms of the potential scope for institutional abuse but also in terms of the everyday relations between individuals, communities, and state authorities. The segregation of the criminal justice system on the basis of vague and racialised concepts of ‘foreignness’ relies on and institutes a differential policing of particular communities within the social space of the UK. The practical linking of irregularity and criminality, then, plays out as an institutionalised segregation and racialised policing, forming one way in which the border is powerfully embodied in everyday encounters.  

4.3.2 Creating a hostile environment: border policing and segregation in everyday life

Also in 2007, the Cabinet Office published a paper entitled Security in a Global Hub: Establishing the UK’s new border arrangements which laid out a large-scale structural reorganisation of border controls, specifically situating them within wider processes of integrating national security (Cabinet Office, 2007; 10-11). They were to be at the forefront of securing against organised crime and terrorism as well as managing migration: ‘The United Kingdom’s border controls need to protect us against terrorism and crime, while encouraging the flows of people and trade on which our future as a global hub depends’ (2007, Foreword by PM Gordon Brown). This shift was operationalised with the establishment of the UK Border Agency (UKBA), an executive agency bringing together visa, customs, and immigration matters under the oversight of one government department, the Home Office, rather than three:

‘The new organisation will have to continue to balance the full range of aims being pursued through work at the border [...] It should improve the UK’s security – defined broadly as security from the range of risks – through strong border control,

35 Similarly, fear of arrest and deportation severely limits access to justice for those with irregular immigration status, who are therefore more vulnerable to exploitation and violence (Bloch, 2014).
responding collaboratively to the interests and needs of security, law-enforcement and revenue agencies’ (2007; 10).

The UKBA was to be one of the largest enforcement organisations in the UK employing around 25,000 people, working throughout the UK and in over 135 countries internationally (2007; 16 Home Office, 2010a; 4). It was intended ‘to improve the depth and breadth of protection provided to the UK’ through combining all immigration administration and border enforcement within one organisation and conferring a wide range of ‘customs, immigration, and police powers to officers of the new organisation’ (2007; 11-12). Conceived as a sister organisation to the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), also under Home Office oversight, from the beginning the UKBA formed close operational partnerships with SOCA, UK police, and other organisations to target ‘organised immigration crime’ locally, nationally, and internationally (see 2007; 14-15; SOCA report 2009/10; 15; 23; 25). In addition to expanding the scope of border operations, the UKBA was tasked with ‘deliver[ing] increased visibility of the UK border, improving confidence and enhancing deterrence’ (17). At the same time, ‘irregularity’ increasingly became the focus of border controls, both as practice and as spectacle, primarily conceived as a matter of policing everyday spaces and creating a hostile environment (Squire, 2011).

With the UKBA the immigration agenda changed emphasis from managing regular migration, where the central problem was identifying and rooting out abuse of the system, towards policing irregular migration, where the central preoccupation became the problem of irregularity itself. This new shift was evident in the final Home Office white paper on immigration under Labour (2010) entitled: Protecting our border, protecting the public – The UK Border Agency’s five year strategy for enforcing our immigration rules and addressing immigration and cross border crime. It explicitly located border control within a broader field of national security policy and placed irregular migration on a continuum of criminality and threat alongside terrorism and organised crime: ‘The United Kingdom faces a complex and constantly evolving array of threats from terrorism, organised crime and illegal immigration which, left unchecked, can cause untold harm to our communities, businesses, public services and economy’ (4). Emphasising inter-agency partnership and cooperation, the white
paper also presented a more proactive policing and security agenda in response to irregular migration, identifying four key objectives (7-8):

- **Deter** – *Strengthening UK resilience against immigration and cross border crime*
- **Disrupt** – *Breaking up criminal activities and organised criminal groups*
- **Detect** – *Identifying and locating those responsible for criminal activity and the smuggling of illicit goods*
- **Deal** – *Taking action against those engaged in all levels of criminal or non-compliant activity*

Here, irregularity and non-compliance with immigration rules were located within a wider context of criminality of differing sorts and levels of organisation, from smuggling drugs and firearms, human trafficking, and even ‘gang related crime and violence’ (10-11; 27-28). Correspondingly, the UKBA’s immigration policy became increasingly framed in terms of ‘law enforcement’ strategies intended to ‘cut crime and make the UK a hostile environment for those that seek to break our laws or abuse our hospitality’ (7). Disrupting criminal organisations and their profitability was operationally linked in the white paper to dismantling networks which enable people to live and work in the UK irregularly through the effective implementation of border controls. At the same time, access to everyday public and private services was criminalised for irregular migrants and targeted as a site for border/law enforcement: driving licences, health services ‘credit cards, bank accounts, mortgages and mobile phones’ and other such mundane amenities in the hands of (irregular) migrants were portrayed as potential apparatuses of crime and border subversion, ‘the very tools they need to conduct a life here as well as commit further offences’ (18). The creation of a ‘hostile environment’ for irregular, or potentially irregular, migrants continues today to characterise a shift in border policy towards a deterrent law enforcement agenda that is ongoing today. And it fundamentally involves the proliferation of bordering practices throughout ordinary spaces and across routine relations in such a way that segregates everyday life along the divisive lines of ir/regularity and non/citizenship.
With the election of a Conservative-led coalition government in 2010 this hostile environment agenda for irregular migrants has continued apace, chiming with a vigorously revived anti-immigration discourse (3.3; May, 2010). In 2013 the UKBA was disbanded amidst accusations of ‘catastrophic leadership failure’ and ‘a closed, secretive and defensive culture’ (HAC, 2013a; 16; Travis, 2013). Immigration control was divided into Immigration Enforcement, Border Force, and UK Visas and Immigration and incorporated directly under Home Office oversight. At the same time, the National Crime Agency (NCA) became fully operational in 2013. As ‘a powerful new body of operational crime fighters’ the NCA is primarily ‘accountable to the Home Secretary’ yet straddles a number of different security agencies and ‘set[s] the national operational agenda for fighting serious and complex crime and organised’ (Home Office, 2011b; 5). In the spirit of multiagency security it is intended to cover a broad range of security concerns, to ‘tackle organised crime, defend our borders, fight fraud and cyber-crime, and protect children and young people’ (4). By 2013 the Home Office had brought serious organised crime policing and border control under its direct supervision, emphasising cooperation in terms of intelligence and enforcement in an effort to lay the grounds for an increasingly integrated national policing and security approach under the four P’s of the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy: Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare (For the UK’s CONTEST strategy see HM Government, 2011; see also Home Office, 2011b; NCA, 2015). With the policing of organised crime focusing on cross-border and transnational networks, covered by the NCA’s Border Policing Command, border control was increasingly framed in terms of law enforcement.

As the Home Office Improvement Plan (Home Office, 2014) indicates, border control became increasingly conceived within a wider strategy for policing and a general restructuring of state security networks centred on the Home Office: ‘Immigration Enforcement will have a culture of responsiveness, collaboration and flexibility, with law enforcement at its heart’ (18). This links immigration control with the policing of social space, especially the policing of fraud, gang membership, and radicalisation, at the same time as borders are being extended throughout everyday life by the Immigration Act 2014. As the community becomes an important site of
bordering practices, they are taking on the form of police tactics, community ‘engagement’, building ‘resilience’, and law enforcement. As the Conservative majority government pursues an economically austere and socially exclusionary restructuring of the British state and citizenship, everyday bordering practices are increasingly relied upon to police the ‘social cohesion’ of the ‘multiracial’ nation (see respectively May, 2012; Cameron, 2015; also 3.3).

This situation is exacerbated with the new Immigration Act (2016) which criminalises noncompliance with the new regulations introduced in 2014. For example, failure to comply with the new ‘right to rent’ scheme, which requires landlords to check tenants’ immigration status and to refuse, evict, and/or report those who show some sort of irregularity, now potentially constitutes a criminal offence and could result in imprisonment (Home Office, 2016a; 2016d). As the border is carried out in more mundane ways by ordinary people, yet simultaneously subject to increased policing and criminalisation, everyday life is becoming securitised in ways which proliferate the multiple discriminations of the border. Ordinary social relations at home or work, daily interactions in public spaces and student campuses, and a range of activities from grocery shopping to marriage applications, are now routinely scrutinised for signs of irregularity and policed according to the border’s divisive criteria (see British Red Cross, 2014; Darling, 2011; Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, 2015; Justice4Sanaz Campaign; Mayblin, 2016; Turner, 2016).

Therefore, everyday bordering increasingly looks like segregation as it divides people in ways that resonate with ongoing and historic forms of racialised discrimination and socio-economic inequality (chapter 3). Immigration status becomes another reason for the removal of social welfare provision without the possibility of employment, another cause of destitution, for more stop and searches being carried out in particular communities, profiling and targeting particular people, another way for landlords to evict their tenants, or for employers to exploit their employees, another ground for the separation of families and the incarceration of friends (Bloch, 2014; Detention Action, 2014; Fitzpatrick, et al (2015); Red Cross & Boaz Trust, 2013). In a diverse and unequal society such as the UK, and in the context of a government discourse blaming the foreignness of migrants rather than their own dismantling of
social welfare for undermining ‘social cohesion’ (3.3), efforts to separate ‘regular’ mobility from ‘irregular’ mobility by targeting particular migrant communities for criminalisation and intrusive policing measures appear to do more than simply enforce the law.

Here I have traced how everyday bordering in the UK has entailed the criminalisation and securitisation of irregularity, resulting in proliferating practices of segregation across social space. In doing so, I have argued, the creation of a hostile environment for irregular migrants as a form of everyday bordering combines with already existing social and political tensions around the ‘racialized, classed and gendered processes of selective inclusion and exclusion’ of belonging in contemporary Britain (Bosworth, Bowling & Lee, 2008; 265-266). In this sense, analysing everyday borders through segregation we can see, following Vicki Squire, ‘irregularity as a stake within a wider politics of mobility’ (2011; 5), as at the heart of a political contest between a ‘politics of control’ and a ‘politics of migration’. Importantly, we can also see how this contested politics of mobility plays out in a variety of spaces and encompasses a number of issues beyond the borderline. As the basis of UK bordering practices, the explicit targeting of ‘irregularity’ in everyday life for police-like intervention and deterrence at the same time highlights persisting tensions in the globalisation of the state, raising questions about ongoing inequalities and histories of discrimination as they play out in contexts of increased mobility (see also Bosworth, 2011).

4.4 Sovereign Seductions: everyday biopolitics as line-drawing

4.4.1 The seduction of line-drawing

What picture of everyday bordering do we come away with from the above analysis of UK immigration policy? Here I argue that both policymakers and critical scholars, in their focuses on technologies of biometric security, see everyday bordering in terms of the exercise of (bio)political sovereignty, understood as a practice of line-drawing, over a shifting uncertain terrain. In different ways, they are both seduced by the promise of technologies of security to ground the sovereign decision, the former seduced by the sovereign promise of fixing border controls to
mobile subjects, the latter seduced by the horror of an arbitrary and uncontained sovereign power of exception over everyday life. Both, I argue, therefore present a picture of everyday bordering as the sovereign practice of drawing hard/clear lines of (bio)political community, albeit in less territorially defined locations (Edkins & Pin-Fat, 2005; Pin-Fat, 2010). In other words, for both policy and critical biopolitical literature what is at stake in everyday bordering, what defines their operation, is the capacity to draw hard lines of inclusion/exclusion, inside/outside, citizen/noncitizen, even if these practices are diffused and ultimately arbitrary. This perspective, I argue, misses something of the everydayness of everyday borders. In contrast, I argue that everyday borders are messier, less clear, and more opaque in how they are brought to life in embodied encounters with segregation. Opacity, I suggest, characterises the bureaucratic and segregating practices which make up border controls, and helps illuminate the politics of their reproduction, our ordinary complicity in them, and the potential for their undoing. Paying attention to this opacity highlights the rough ground on which everyday borders are done, how their lines blur even as they are supposedly drawn hard, how life’s complexities get in the way of the border’s smooth administration, and how the injustices of segregation belie the clarity of nation-state boundaries of belonging. This does not mean borders are any less powerful, productive, or effective, but it does allow us to situate them within wider contexts of ethical political contestation where they are already open to challenge, disruption, and surprise, and to make sense of some everyday acts of solidarity with which they are met.

4.4.2 The hard lines of the ‘generalised biopolitical border’

‘I went to the salon to get my hair done in Croydon. The Immigration officers came in and asked for our papers. I felt like I wanted to fall down and die because I didn’t have them. They took my prints and they said I’ve been here since 2007 and asked why I don’t want to go home. Well I have no one at home. They put handcuffs on me and the man said I was rude. But I didn’t want to run away because I was scared: there were like 8 officers inside the shop. I wanted to go to weewee but I couldn’t go – I weeweed on my trousers there in the shop. So I was cold I needed my jumper. And then they told me I was a liar and that I wasn’t cold. And they put me on the van and took me to home office in Croydon and then to Heathrow for three days.'
I had a bad ulcer and they gave me some medicine to take and then they took me to yarls wood. They give us chips but I’m not meant to eat chips. It’s so hard for me to eat because what I want to eat is not here. They don’t want to do anything about. They’re not giving people tickets anymore. They’re not giving information. Now they come in the night they will tell you they are waiting and tell you to pack. […] I have been here 8 years, I’ve lost my brother and lost my dad who are in the UK, I don’t have any family in Nigeria’ (Posted by Detained Voices, 2015).

A surprise encounter brings the border to life in the everyday setting of a Croydon hair salon as fear, humiliation, and handcuffs. Immigration officers enter a shop demanding members of the public prove their right to be in the UK, check their identities using portable biometric devices, and detain those they determine to be irregular. Once identified as ‘irregular’, the narrator becomes a suspect. Branded ‘rude’ and ‘a liar’, she is restrained and degraded before being taken in a locked van to a detention centre. Incarcerated, she waits, facing an uncertain future separated from her family: ‘They’re not giving information. Now they come in the night…’

At first this encounter seems to encapsulate the biopolitical border of ‘the Dial’ from the start of this chapter. The border here is far removed from the territorial boundary line of a nation-state (Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 2012; also 3.4). Instead it is mobile, flexible, and responsive, intervening within the community to disrupt, deny, and deter irregular life. Supported by biometric technologies a decision is seemingly made on the spot, a person’s life is laid ‘bare’ (Agamben, 1998), irregularised and rendered disposable by the sovereign power of inclusion/exclusion. Biometrics enable the border to be embodied anywhere anytime by fixing an identity and status to mobile bodies, helping construct a biopolitical order where we are all subject to sovereign power and the ‘normalisation of a series of geographies of exception’ (Minca, 2006). On this biopolitical security account, we are witnessing the emergence of ‘a new and important geographical imagining’ in which the sovereign power to define the boundaries of political community is extended throughout everyday life as the lines of inclusion/exclusion are being repeatedly redrawn (Amoore, 2006; 338).

For Vaughan-Williams, this new terrain of everyday life takes the form of a ‘generalised biopolitical border’ in which the sovereign exception, understood as the
ability to decide on the borders of the ethical and political (community, space, or subject), has become the norm (2009a; 112; 116; 2009b). The sovereign ability to draw such borderlines in everyday space relies on ‘new virtual cartographies of total knowledge and vision’ made possible by the technologies of identification and biometric control (2010; 1078). Importantly, he argues, the sovereign exception is ‘virtual’ and ‘operates via a logic of simulation’, meaning the extent of its power comes not from any one actualisation but from its potential to be actualised anywhere and anytime (1081; 2009; 105). The biopolitical border is in this sense a spectacular border, a ‘necessary fiction’ of total security amidst porosity and mobility, one that ‘envisages drawing a clear, clean and unambiguous line between legitimate/low risk and illegitimate/high risk mobilities (a line that cannot be drawn, but is always in process of being drawn)’ (Amoore, 2006;339; 348). Nonetheless, it has powerfully discriminatory effects in its selective ir/regularisation of mobile subjects, as the connections between migrant ‘deportability’, socio-political precarity, and economic exploitability make clear (De Genova, 2002; 2010; 2012). On the biopolitical security account, then, everyday life has been colonised by a sovereign power capable of continuously drawing and redrawing the borders of the state, of non/citizenship, ir/regularity, and il/legality, with any one of us potentially drawn on the wrong side. Whilst these borders are never fixed ontologically prior to their performance, they are nonetheless depicted as being drawn hard in practice and barely contestable. Thus, the pursuit of security through the technological management and pre-emption of risk has led to a generalised condition of uncertainty and suspicion in which we are all potentially risky and all open to the border’s violent exclusionary effects. The dream of managed mobility has become a nightmare of biopolitical capture and arbitrary state power.

The above account certainly depicts the power of the state to intervene in our everyday lives, to walk into a hair salon in Croydon and decide on the ir/regularity of those present on the spot, their bodies technologically registering their immigration status. But we should be wary of this seductive picture of sovereign power and decision. The seduction of technology is that it promises ‘total knowledge and vision’ (even if only virtual) and that through this knowledge we can achieve security by
drawing the lines of the nation-state hard. Both policymakers and critical biopolitical theorists are seduced by this picture of technology and sovereign power, albeit differently.

On the one hand, policymakers see in information technologies the chance to secure mobility by tracking its constituent parts, monitoring their past and present, predicting their future. The knowledges afforded by these technologies underwrite effective administration, judgement and control in the realisation of an entire border/security system. The borderlines of the nation-state can therefore be fixed, secured, and enforced under conditions of globalised mobility. And yet, as I will demonstrate, these systems constantly fail and are riddled with inaccuracies, relying as they do on human coordination and interpretation, thus undermining their ability to determine where the border lies, to draw the lines of the state hard. On the other hand, whilst critical theorists of biopolitical security see this practice of line-drawing as indeterminate, in the sense that the line is never ontologically fixed prior to its being drawn, they remain seduced by a picture of everyday bordering as a moment of sovereign decision and capacity to draw lines through the use of technology. In showing how borders have become unfixed from the state’s territorial limits, biopolitical security approaches certainly contribute to our understanding of how borders are increasingly carried out in everyday life and how we routinely encounter state sovereign power. But by fixating on the moment of sovereign decision these approaches end up simply relocating the border as a practice of line-drawing between inside/outside that now happens everywhere, ‘resituat[ing] the constitutive outside of sovereign territory in a far more generalised way’ (Vaughan-Williams, 2009a; 112). Everyday borderings, on this account, become moments of the reproduction of an abstract logic of sovereign power, defined almost tautologically as the capacity to decide on the exception and to draw the (border)lines of political community.

The problem is, in simply relocating the logic of sovereign line-drawing from territory’s edge to everyday life, and by defining everyday life in terms of the sovereign exception (the decision or ban), this account overdetermines everyday bordering practices in terms of sovereign power and biopolitics, potentially missing something of their everydayness. As Connolly states in his critique of Agamben,
‘Biocultural life exceeds any textbook logic because of the nonlogical character of its materiality. It is more messy, layered, and complex than any logical analysis can capture’ (2007; 31). Framing everyday borders in terms of sovereign line-drawing overlooks some of this material messiness. Seeing borders as everyday means looking beyond how everyday life is subjected to pervasive sovereign power to how borders have also become more mundane in their enactment, how the texture of sovereign power changes with its routinisation, and how everyday encounters throw up resistance. As Walters points out, ‘what is often missing from these accounts is the sense of the unexpected’, a consideration of how bordering practices often fail, or produce unintended consequences (2011; 66). After all, ‘migration control does not run on autopilot. It requires this constant work of tending, fixing and rebooting’ (66).

In this final section, I tentatively demonstrate how we might avoid this seduction of sovereign line-drawing in our analyses of borders by paying closer attention to the everyday encounters in which borders are enacted. In doing so, what we find is that whilst everyday borders are at times exceptional and biopolitical, they cannot be reduced to these conditions, and cannot be fully characterised as practices of line-drawing. Instead, everyday bordering often entails a more opaque exercise of power within limited horizons of bureaucratic possibility and knowledge. The sovereign state appears less a homogeneous entity or linear logic than a disjointed assemblage of different people, practices, and relations, a mix of laws, policy initiatives, enforcement teams, administrative staff, detention guards, security firms, police, teachers, bankers, landlords, hospital staff, and members of the public. Depending on where the border takes place it looks very different. A raid on a shop looks different to a landlord checking her tenants’ passports or a university teacher registering attendance, but the border is produced in each of these encounters. Indeed, each of these encounters can take place entirely separately from each other, involving different people carrying out their own personal routine, and yet they might all form part of the same process of irregularisation, of a foreign national student for instance (see Webber, 2012; 152-155). The point is, as part of their everyday proliferation, borders appear to become more opaque in their localised enactment.

See 5.4 for a more developed critical analysis of Agamben
Reminding ourselves of this is important because it allows us to make sense of how bordering becomes routinised and normalised in everyday life: as yet another administrative procedure, for example, another form to fill out, just another piece of information to hand over. In these ways the border embeds itself in the mundanities of everyday life, enabling its recurring reiteration through our complicity. We can see, therefore, how everyday bordering is a messy and opaque practice, involving other things besides sovereign line-drawing, and where lines are drawn they are often blurry.

4.5 Everyday borders and opaque power

Mary Bosworth’s (2014) account of everyday life within UK immigration detention centres provides valuable insight into these paradigmatic sites of border control as places of encounter and interaction as much as abandonment and exception. She presents a picture of diverse, ambiguous, and uncertain institutions, internally inconsistent, contradictory, and volatile spaces without clear aim or conclusion despite their proclaimed purpose in controlling the nation’s borders (16-18; 85; 160; 164). She argues that, rather than biopolitical camps, detention centres work ‘as sites of estrangement […] where relationships are sundered and individuals are forced out’ and which aim to ‘recast those among us as “strangers”, unrecognizable no matter how familiar’ (216). Incarceration of irregularised persons doesn’t simply facilitate their physical control by the state but also segregates them from their ordinary lives and breaks their ties with others. Thus, the irregularisation of familiar subjects literally estranges them from their friends and family as their social relationships fragment under the pressure of separation. As one of the ex-detainees in the 2015 Parliamentary Inquiry into detention expressed:

‘people who have lost their relationships because they’ve been locked up. […] If anybody was locked up in a detention centre, they lose their families, they lose their friends. Because if you call your friend, for instance, and say, ooh, I’ve been locked up, please can you start seeing what you can do, if you call that number back, you cannot get through. It is that bad because they are scared. The people who are there are scared. […] So, in effect, we become isolated, we become depressed, we have mental torture’ (2015; 17 see also Bosworth, 2014; 174-175).
Here we can see how the border is not simply a matter of sovereign decision over bare life, of the state in relation to the mobile subject, a matter of being drawn outside the line (see 3.4), but fundamentally plays out upon a wider field of social relations between people. The decision on ir/regularity alone is not enough, it must be made real in people's lives through practices of segregation that disrupt and dismantle the social relations on which they depend and through which they become identifiable. That is perhaps why detention is such an integral part of UK bordering practices: by segregating those it incarcerates from their everyday lives through a combination of isolation and stigmatisation, detention performs a double estrangement (2014; 89).

Documenting everyday routines and encounters within these institutions, however, and drawing on interviews with both detainees and staff, Bosworth shows how these processes of estrangement come undone in their very enforcement. She shows how detainees' identities, including their identification as citizen/noncitizen, are messier and more complex than bordering practices and legislation convey, tied up with lived personal histories and wider social markers of race, class, and gender. Those tasked with detaining irregular migrants struggle to make sense of their immediate situations, to square their belief in border control as just and necessary with what, and whom, they encounter in detention, people with whom they might identify and yet are being asked to lock up for being strangers. Encountering the messiness of people's everyday lives and identities brings out 'the familiarity of strangers' and means staff often found that 'detainees were not [...] so difficult to recognize' (101–102). Recounting a story told by one of the detention centre staff, Bosworth encapsulates the embodied visceral nature of this struggle in which everyday borders are realised:

'Yet, this man whom he was wrestling to the ground was not unfamiliar. He was a father. He had a wife. He was someone whom Allen was physically grappling, touching, coercing. A man whose pain and resistance he was witnessing and being asked to deny' (2014; 197).

Despite the stark physicality with which the border is brought into being in this encounter, Bosworth shows there is considerable ‘confusion’ and ‘uncertainty’ at the
exact moment sovereign power is enacted. It is unclear what lines are drawn in this instant, where they lie, what they achieve, or whether they are justifiable or not. Yet, the border is nonetheless made in this moment, and countless others like it every day in detention centres across the UK. Bosworth shows us how the same encounters which make up the border, then, are always also its undoing: ‘custodial and onsite Home Office employees must forge relationships with those judged unwelcome in order for the institution to run. In these messy, human encounters, staff sometimes find that those deemed unsuitable for residence, are familiar after all’ (205). Paying attention to how borders are produced in everyday and embodied encounters between people allows us to notice their radical contingency and inconclusiveness. It serves as a reminder that bordering is laborious work and that ‘[f]orcing out those who have been living among us all along is not straightforward’ either practically, ethically, or politically (208).

4.5.1 Deferring (sovereign) decisions

These troublesome dynamics of everyday embodied encounters are, however, contained and limited within the field of border control and detention by its bureaucratisation and systematic outsourcing of particular roles. Most detention centres are privately run by global security companies such as Serco, G4S, GEO, Mitie, and Tascor, a subsidiary of Capita (Corporate Watch, 2016). Day to day interaction with detainees is almost entirely the responsibility of employees of these private firms rather than Home Office representatives. Their job is limited to the daily business of detention, not the determination of immigration decisions. Furthermore, the caseworkers who actually make decisions concerning detainees’ status in relation to their asylum claims, bail applications, or deportation, for example, are based ‘elsewhere’, far removed from the encounters that characterise detention (2014; 159-160). The distance established by this bureaucratic and privatised separation is productive and gives the impression of an unaccountable, detached and seemingly automatic sovereign power enforcing the law. As Bosworth notes,

‘power without human contact is difficult to restrain. The estrangement, inherent in the bureaucratic organization of the immigration system, in other words, is integral to control. In this separation the purpose of detention is made clear’ (207).
Bosworth provides a picture here of a power working opaquely under various conditions of unknowing rather than through ‘total knowledge and vision’. This opacity is productive and powerful. With the actual moment of decision deferred, kept separated from those who must carry it out and those who must bear it, things seem to work almost automatically. Decisions and orders are communicated and enforced by people who have no authority to change it, and therefore offer no avenue of appeal. The decision is insulated from the disturbing/surprising effects of human encounter. In this way the power of everyday bordering comes from its opacity as much as from technologies of total vision and knowledge associated with it. Indeed, perhaps the specific character and power of detention and the sovereign decision is not so much its capacity to draw hard lines of exclusion and abandonment as its deferral. The deferral of a clear decision creates an opaque environment in detention of inevitability and uncertainty, setting up the encounter between mobile subjects and the state as an apparent powerlessness in the face of unassailable sovereignty. No wonder indefinite detention, and the impossibility of knowing when it will end, is repeatedly cited as one of the most torturous effects on detainees (Public Inquiry, 2015; 17-20\(^{37}\)). Indefinite detention works not simply to segregate irregular migrants from others but also to separate them from a fixed past and predictable future, disempowering them in the present (Bosworth, 2014; 183; Mountz, 2012).

‘I was in detention for three and half years. At first, I would look for signs it would end. I would get hopeful when I saw my solicitor or when other people were released. Or when they took me to the embassy. But slowly that hope faded into the walls around me. After one year, the waiting got too much. I had rejected the Home Office’s offers to sign for voluntary return many, many times. But just waving goodbye to the days had become too hard. It was a tough decision, but I actually felt great relief after I did it – “at least I can have control of my own destiny again”, I said to myself. I thought my hell in detention would end there and then. But I waited a week and heard nothing. Silence. Another week. They told me they were waiting on travel documents. Another week. Another week. Another week. Another week… Indefinite detention. Lots of people around me collapsed mentally. They cut their wrists or hung themselves. They couldn’t take the endless not-knowing. They couldn’t take the sense of hopelessness that is the younger brother of indefinite detention – it’s always

\(^{37}\)Such painful deferral exists throughout the immigration system, especially in relation to asylum seekers who may live for years in ‘limbo’ without a decision on their status (Bloch, 2014; British Red Cross, 2010)
following it around, the two come together. I gave up thinking about life outside of Colnbrook. I told myself “Colnbrook is your home now – that is the only way to survive”. My cell became my bedroom. The canteen became my kitchen. When I look back now, it’s crazy to think how normal it became to be locked up at night, every night. *Those three and half years in detention served no purpose*’ (Souleymane, in Detention Action 2014; 7).

Souleymane, like many others, was released back into the community after several years in detention (Detention Action, 2014; 8). His testimony shows how, despite the disempowerment achieved by detention, it remains hard for the state to arbitrarily draw lines of inclusion/exclusion once and for all. Many deportations are resisted by detainees themselves, stopped by lawyers filing for last minute judicial reviews, or held up by the slow moving or inept bureaucracies of embassies and the Home Office (see Webber, 2012). Almost every aspect of the daily working of border controls are resisted and disrupted in some way. But as appeal rights and legal aid are gradually legislated out of existence for detainees the ability of those in detention to intervene in the border’s sprawling bureaucracy is increasingly circumscribed as bordering becomes more opaque.

4.5.2 Enforcing everyday borders: routinisation, discrimination, and segregation

At the same time, especially since the Immigration Act 2014, the possible routes to detention have multiplied as everyday situations become bordering encounters. Again, the bureaucratisation of bordering practices and their opaque character facilitates their normalisation within people’s everyday routines. For instance, the deceptively named ‘right to rent’ scheme plays a central role in the creation of a ‘hostile environment’ for irregular migrants by turning the landlord/tenant relation into a border control encounter. Requiring landlords to check citizenship/immigration status for all tenants, and report and evict those without regular status or leave to remain, the border is powerfully reproduced in a form of segregation achieved through multiple everyday activities. Indeed, key to this scheme is how this new bordering function can be incorporated neatly into people’s everyday lives without noticeable inconvenience. Already existing relations and activities concerning landlords and tenants are simply imbued with a new significance, function, and powerful bordering effect. As the Immigration Minister James Brokenshire has
emphasised introducing the scheme: ‘Right to rent checks are quick and simple, and many responsible landlords already do them as a matter of routine’ and indeed ‘Those with a legitimate right to be here will be able to prove this easily and will not be adversely affected’ (Brokenshire, quoted in Home Office 2015b). The routinisation of everyday bordering practices relies in this case on the opacity of their bordering function: they are ‘straightforward and do not require any specialist knowledge’ (Ibid, 2016). Landlords’ complicity in systematic discrimination and segregation against irregular migrants is facilitated partly by the fact it doesn’t necessarily look like or feel like bordering but just another bureaucratic exercise, one they may well have been undertaking already. With the border so deferred, ‘we are all border enforcers now’ (Webber, 2012; 161) but are often only minimally aware when we are doing it.

Of course the opaque bureaucratisation of border controls does not mean they are always successfully realised. But even when they fail or have unintended consequences, such practices are often productive of everyday borders in some form. For example, the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (2015) report No Passport Equals No Home revealed how widespread confusion concerning the new right to rent scheme has resulted in increasing ‘unintended discrimination’ against seemingly foreign tenants by landlords (8). According to the report, 42% of surveyed landlords were ‘less likely to consider someone who does not have a British passport’ because of the new regulations, and there was evidence that landlords were only carrying out checks on people who were not ‘White British’ in appearance (11). For some, additional paperwork and risk of civil/criminal penalties meant they were only renting to UK nationals. Whilst such discrimination may be ‘unintended’ it was hardly unforeseen, as indicated by the simultaneous publication of an additional ‘code of practice for landlords’ on avoiding discrimination alongside the rules for carrying out right to rent checks (Home Office, 2016a). But such discrimination, intended or not, actively contributes to the creation of a hostile environment and serves to reinforce the intended deterrent impact of this scheme, whilst deferring official government responsibility for the direct discriminatory effects of their policies. Here we see how the power of everyday bordering comes as much from the opacity of its operation in multiple settings by ordinary people as from the moment of sovereign decision which
so predominates the generalised biopolitical picture. A preoccupation with sovereign exception and line-drawing misses some important features of the *everydayness* of everyday bordering, and therefore limits our understanding of how borders are (re)produced and made powerfully real.

Finally, looking at everyday immigration enforcement operations by the Home Office we might expect to find something resembling the biopolitical sovereign ban at work: ‘Like border policing, the raid is a practice that seeks to securitize the nation through the abjection and exclusion of individuals and populations deemed threatening to the social body’ (Inda, 2011; 79). As we saw with ‘the Dial’, immigration enforcement is conceived as intelligence-led, targeted, and responsive, based on ‘the 4Ps approach (Prevent, Pursue, Protect, Prepare)’ (ICIBI, 2015; 4). However, reading reports by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (ICIBI) offers an untidier picture of enforcement practices. Various reports into the detection and disruption of ‘sham marriages’ (ICIBI, 2014a), searches of business premises with a warrant (2014b), police/immigration enforcement cooperations (2014c), the handling of visa ‘overstayers’ (2014d), and raids on illegal working (2015) all indicate how, despite its self-image as a smooth almost automated process, the immigration system is actually often disjointed and uncoordinated, a complex shifting muddle of competing priorities and differing agendas. Much like detention centres, the overall immigration system ‘does not work seamlessly’ (Bosworth, 2014; 107). We find in these reports a picture of disparate enforcement teams inconsistently employing search and arrest powers, even at times doing so ‘unlawfully’, carrying out enforcement raids on the basis of speculation and without sufficient justification (2014b; 2; 4; 14 Yeo, 2014). We find ‘a lack of co-ordination and co-operation’ and a ‘lack of alignment’ between the teams tasked with making decisions on the removal of overstayers and the enforcement teams who actually carry these out (ICIBI, 2014d; 2; 6). Across the board there is a lack of resources, training, communication, record-keeping, transparency, effective management, reliable statistics or information (2014b, 4; 2014c; 2014d; 2015; 2). The smooth operation of information sharing and identification technologies are consistently hampered by inaccurate or missing data entries, and new policy initiatives are often met with ‘widespread misinterpretation’,
‘ignorance’ or even staff simply ‘choosing to ignore it’ (2014b; 4; 2014d; 64). Repeated failures to communicate, cooperate, seek the correct authority, or follow procedure make up much of the UK’s everyday bordering practices.

These failures of procedure, however, do not indicate a failure of the border. Rather, this is how the border works, inconsistently and selectively, sometimes blindly, in repeated everyday embodied encounters. Vans driving down highstreets and into neighbourhoods with large minority ethnic populations, searching for signs of irregularity, surveilling properties, following ‘low-level allegations’ from members of the public that migrants are working illegally in restaurants and takeaways, random ID checks at bus terminals, train stations, and in town centres, questioning or detaining suspected illegal immigrants (ICIBI, 2015; 5). These everyday bordering practices are no less powerfully discriminatory, however, because of their procedural inadequacies, nor do they avoid any of the more systematic injustices of the border. Particular ‘nationalities’ are routinely disproportionately targeted for enforcement operations, suggesting a widespread reliance on racialised profiling of groups and individuals rather than ‘intelligence’ in everyday bordering encounters (5-6). Pointing out the opacity and inconsistency of everyday bordering, then, is not to point to a weakness but rather to locate the productive force and power of borders in repeated embodied encounters in everyday life which make them up. It shows how bordering practices must be constantly repeated to be productive, and situates them within wider ethical political contexts where these policing practices become caught up and resonate with continuing struggles over race, class, and belonging (3.3). Here we see less a generalised biopolitical condition defined by the sovereign ban than a messy ‘rough ground’ where borders are drawn/redrawn in ways which blur lines between decision and discrimination, policing and segregation.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented a picture of how the border works in the UK through everyday practices of segregation. At the same time, I argued, looking at everyday encounters where bordering is done we find a picture of struggle. Reading UK immigration policy alongside critical security literature, I traced how everyday
bordering has developed since 1998. Doing so I showed how the UK state remodelled itself in response to globalisation by embracing and governing (im)mobility. This entailed proliferating technologies of security for surveilling, monitoring, and discriminating between regular/irregular flows, internally and internationally. While much critical security literature has valuably framed these developments in terms of new/emergent governmentalities and the colonisation of everyday life by sovereign biopolitics, I suggested we must also contextualise UK’s everyday borders within specific developments around national security and policing agendas in which the hostile environment strategy emerged. Doing so, I argued, identifies several intersections between everyday bordering and ongoing histories of discriminatory policing and resemblances with forms of segregation. It also starts to blur the lines everyday bordering supposedly draws between regularity/irregularity and citizenship/noncitizenship. I argued that the sovereign biopolitical account is limited and that its focus on the sovereign decision misses some of the messiness and complexity of everyday bordering practices. Finally, I sketched out several ways a focus on borders as everyday encounters identifies a more opaque power that is nonetheless highly productive and discriminatory in its effects.

I suggest that reminding ourselves of these messier encounters comprising everyday borders enables a better understanding of how they proliferate but also how they are constantly unsettled and resisted. It allows us to evoke how borders’ everydayness facilitates our widespread complicity in practices of segregation, but also to consider how borders might be encountered as particular forms of discrimination and violence in everyday life. Unless we take this perspective, I suggest, it becomes harder to understand the ethical political significance of the everydayness of migrant solidarity and how it arises through a struggle with practices of segregation.
5. Politics of forgetting: humanitarianism, Agamben, and the seduction of borders

5.1 Introduction

On 2 March 2016 a video was posted on the Calais Migrant Solidarity blog alongside news from the third day of a massive coordinated operation by police, demolition and disposal companies, and humanitarian groups to evacuate and destroy half of the migrant ‘jungle’.

The video begins at the back of a crowd, walking forward, some in a hurry like the person filming, pressing through bodies similarly wrapped up against the cold, trying to get in front of a line that is forming of around twelve men. Clasping each other’s arms and hands, their faces covered with hats and scarves, some of these men have obscured their eyes whilst revealing their mouths, their lips sewn shut. Together they edge slowly over the rubble and mud loose beneath their feet, guiding one another across the derelict terrain, holding each other up.

Facing these quiet figures, a few steps in front, photographers walk backwards capturing the moment, one of them stumbling on the debris. Ahead lie the demolition teams and police lines of the eviction, and as they approach several of the men hold up small hand-written signs questioning the whereabouts and existence of human rights, democracy and freedom. As the marchers pause for the photographers, one message in particular comes clearly into view. It simply reads: ‘NOW WILL YOU LISTEN?’

What is being asked in this moment and of whom? What sort of ethical political demand is made here? Is it a request for us to hear something, and someone, we missed before? Does it claim a new voice, previously unheard until now, expressing a new form of politics? Is it citizenship, or something else? Or might it be an indictment for our repeated failure to listen or to care? And what is at stake in this encounter and our response to it?

This chapter considers some of these questions through a discussion of humanitarianism, biopolitics, and recent debates concerning exceptional sovereignty and ‘the camp’. First, I consider what a humanitarian response to Calais, in the context of a wider European migration or refugee ‘crisis’, asks of us. Drawing on Didier Fassin (2001; 2005; 2007) and Véronique Pin-Fat (2010; 2013; 2016), I argue that rather than being apolitical humanitarianism expresses a ‘politics of forgetting’ (Pin-Fat, 2016a) that simultaneously obscures and facilitates its implication in border biopolitics and

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38 (CMS, 2016b)
segregation. Second, I consider the dominant contemporary account of biopolitics and borders which takes as its starting point Giorgio Agamben’s conception of ‘the camp’, ‘bare life’ and the exceptional ‘sovereign ban’ (Agamben, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004). I argue, while much of the debate over the politics of the camp is highly critical of Agamben’s apparently overly deterministic, fatalistic, and disempowering account, in trying to re-politicise migrant spaces/subjects much of the contributions to this debate remain seduced by the problematic grammars of Agamben’s language game. After a grammatical reading of Agamben I argue that what we find is a similar ‘politics of forgetting’ to that of humanitarianism. Getting lost in the depths of ontological line-drawing, we are seduced by a picture of the nation-state border drawn ontologically hard, dividing separate political spaces, subjects, and lives. Refusing this seduction allows us to return to reflect on the more ordinary and everyday ways we discriminate, segregate, and violate each other and in this way are responsible for each other’s humanity. It brings us back to our encounters with each other in everyday life which offer no assurances but put us in a good place to start contesting divisions we continually and violently construct between us, and to make room for solidarity.

5.1.1 Humanitarian Disaster Survey: Losing Sight of Humanity

In September 2015, with the Calais Jungle still growing, a report was published by academics in the UK, working in collaboration with NGO Médecins Du Monde, entitled ‘An Environmental Health Assessment of the New Migration Camp in Calais’ (Isakjee, Dhesi & Davies, 2015). The foreword by Doctors of the World UK Executive Director Leigh Daynes begins:

‘This welcome new study – the first of its kind – starkly presents the unarguable reality about the conditions that men, women and children are enduring in the Calais camps. It highlights that this issue is worthy of the public uproar that has been growing increasingly loud since the beginning of 2015. [...] This is a blight on Europe, who should and can do better. [...] we can no longer turn a blind eye to the dreadful humanitarian disaster on our doorstep. I hope it provokes action as well as debate’ (Ibid).

As ‘the first independent scientific study of the new Calais migrant Camp’ the report presents itself as ‘responding to anecdotal reports’ of the terrible living
conditions of people in the jungle by presenting a properly scientific ‘environmental and public health survey’ that focuses on assessing the following criteria: ‘food and water’, ‘hygiene’, ‘physical injury and mental trauma’, ‘poor living structures’, and ‘safety and security’ (1-3). The expressed aim is to provide useful (and usable) information: ‘Understanding the risks environments can pose allows policy-makers and residents to provide protection and mitigation, therefore preventing both immediate and long-term physical and mental harm’ (3 – emphasis in original). Whilst the report acknowledges the role of ‘structural barriers’ and ‘political tension and discourses’ in ‘slowing institutional responses to the problems being encountered’ it goes on to state that ‘[t]his report is not intended to analyse the wider set of problems; instead it aims to provide an objective assessment of migrant living conditions’ and to ‘emphasise the humanitarian and health-related challenges that camp living conditions are producing’ (4). It details the ‘hunger’ that is rife in the camp, the inadequate facilities to safely store or prepare food, resulting in high levels of infection by ‘pathogenic bacteria [...]causing the vomiting and diarrhoea suffered by the camp residents’ compounded by ‘faecal contamination’ of water sources (1). The report documents health hazards arising from having only 40 toilets for 3000 people (if not more) and the prevalence of ‘scabies, bedbugs and lice’ resulting from the lack of washing facilities, while ‘poor living structures’ and overcrowding are said to be leading to ‘the spread of communicable diseases, pests such as lice, and parasites’ and increased dangers from outbreaks of fire (1-2). Health risks and the danger of violent and/or sexual assault, including by locals and police, are compounded according to the report by a lack of lighting, sanitation, and access to medical care or therapy, as well as by the requirements of survival (for instance the need to burn wood which releases dangerous particulates into the air, contributing to respiratory complications and cancer) (2).

The picture of the ‘‘New Jungle’ camp’ presented by the report is of a dangerous, disease-ridden, infested space in which the physical and mental health and security of the human subject, any human subject, is at constant risk (3). What we find in the jungle camp is a humanitarian crisis. The purpose of the report is to identify these risks in order to secure the environment for the human subject, as such, and so
alleviate this humanitarian crisis – ‘The importance of environmental and public health lies in its potential to identify hazards and risks within living and working environments, which can then lead to illness or injury’ (3).

We might be sceptical of any claims to objectively assess the living conditions for irregular migrants in Calais that fail to take into account the political conditions relegating certain people to this way of life. Surely these are important conditioning factors contributing to ‘the existing realities of the camp’ (26). Relatedly, we might also be wary of how this report and its pretension towards scientific knowledge work to shore up and reassert those very political formations of state power it refuses to question in an effort to be policy-relevant (Bakewell, 2008). However, what I find most striking about this report is the evacuation of people from its picture of the Calais jungle. The researchers gaze is focused on the necessary objects of living, or more precisely their absence, on food, water, shelter, hygiene facilities, fire, and lighting at night, those conditions that make up the terrible environment of the camp. Where people do come in they are considered only as a health concern, as the bearers of ‘physical injury and mental trauma’ or the victims of their surroundings. Interestingly, however, a small number of quotes from residents of the camp pepper the report, disengaged and unanalysed yet hauntingly juxtaposed against the mundane statements preoccupying the study: ‘Many informal structures give little protection from the elements’ sits awkwardly opposite a quotation that reads ‘Some people say their life is a lot worse here than in Afghanistan…[Here] is one old man who was banker in Afghanistan; he has come here, to live in the Jungle. It’s crazy! You know?’ (20-21). Next to a discussion of the installation of better lighting in the camp another simply reads ‘I don’t need money. I need security’ (25).

What is expressed in these statements? What are we meant to take away from the claim that ‘life is a lot worse here than in Afghanistan’? What is it that makes the reality of an old man, a banker, living rough in the jungle ‘crazy’? What sense of self is presented here, conveyed in the disbelief at the situation’s madness, the experience of being out of place, a jarring discord, the feeling that something is seriously wrong with this scenario? How are we also being invited to question this scene, to ask how it could possibly happen, incited to share in the affront and perhaps be outraged by it,
‘you know’? We are confronted with an ethical politics in these quotations that stands in stark contrast to the report’s limited focus and analytical objective of human security, of securing the human subject as such. Such an ethical politics asks why some people are forced to live under these unliveable conditions but not others, a point I shall suggest is neglected from a humanitarian perspective, and challenges our ability to make sense of this as a conscionable state of affairs.

This report’s account of the jungle empties it of people understood as more than biologically precarious victims of their environment beset by health risks and in need of securing by the state. Framing the situation in Calais as a humanitarian crisis in this way loses sight of the complex, personal, ethical, political, emotional relations that make up people’s lives and, ironically perhaps, the multifaceted texture of their humanity. It also loses sight of the wider political forces underpinning the jungle’s existence as a space of precarity and insecurity in the first place. Indeed, the report expressly refuses to engage in any discussion concerning the political contexts in which the ‘crisis’ has arisen whilst hoping to influence policy decisions. But doing so means to deny much of the lived realities, voices, and agency of those human subjects they claim to be concerned with/for. Importantly, it seems to neglect the most obvious, and perhaps most politically significant, aspect of the Calais jungle which stands in plain sight, staring us in the face: that some people but not others are forced to live in these conditions. In this sense it illustrates the implication of humanitarianism in what Veronique Pin-Fat has called a ‘politics of forgetting’ (Pin-Fat, 2013; 2016). In the rest of this section I will explain what is at stake in Pin-Fat’s critique of such a politics of forgetting for how we can analyse humanitarian responses to the ‘crisis’ in Calais as an ethical political denial of humanity. At the same, I suggest this politics of forgetting facilitates the complicity of humanitarian work in wider practices of biopolitical governance and everyday segregation that make up the border in Calais.

5.2 ‘Humanity washed ashore’: reading humanitarianism as a ‘politics of forgetting’

‘They’re not people: nobody would tolerate hearing about the drowning of human beings over and over again. At best they are bleak but intangible statistics [...] For others, they are an unwanted and uninvited swarm that Fortress Europe must keep
out [...] In the hierarchy of death, anyone labelled “migrant” must take their place somewhere near the bottom. It is a dehumanised word’ (Jones, 2015).

5.2.1 Seeing others’ humanity

During the summer of 2015 a ‘crisis’ was seen to have struck Europe and which has continued to frame national and regional politics. It received various labels, ‘migrant crisis’, ‘migration crisis’, ‘refugee crisis’, ‘humanitarian crisis’, ‘European crisis’, and whether or not it was new it was certainly depicted as a pivotal moment (Human Rights Watch, 2015b; International Rescue Committee, 2015; Kingsley, 2015; Medecins Sans Frontiers, 2016; Spindler, 2015). With the deaths of migrants in the Mediterranean reaching unprecedented levels (International Organization for Migration, 2015), and with European state politics inflamed by reactionary nationalism and securitising gestures, some voices among the media, international NGOs, charities, and the UNHCR were questioning how this crisis had been dealt with and calling for a different, more humanitarian, response. Whilst maybe not the pre-eminent voice in this debate, Owen Jones’ Guardian newspaper article from which the quote above comes is usefully illustrative of what this call to humanitarianism entails. The problem, he suggests, is we have ‘forgotten’ that refugees are human: ‘It is only when we strip the humanity from people – when we stop imagining them as being quite human like us – that our empathetic nature is eroded. That allows us either to accept the misery of others, or even to inflict it on them’ (Jones, 2015). The problem, on this understanding, is a failure of humanity: a failure to see the humanity of others and a resultant failure of the empathetic humanity of European society and its citizens. The solution, therefore, is to (re)discover the humanity in others and in so doing recover our own. Before we can respond ethically and politically to others with humanity we must apparently first see them as human:

‘We have to do it with stories, humanising otherwise faceless refugees [...] we need to show the reality of refugees: their names, their faces, their ambitions and their fears, their loves [...] If we want to help them, we need to change public attitudes by humanising refugees. If we fail, then more and more women, men and children will spend their last few hours drowning in seas or suffocating in lorries. It is as bleak as that’ (Ibid).
On 2 September 2015, it seemed just such a revelatory moment had arrived when pictures of a drowned toddler, Alan Kurdi from Syria, circulated widely across traditional and social media. The photograph of a child lying face down amidst the receding waves on a Turkish beach was quickly assigned the moniker (originally in Turkish) ‘humanity washed ashore’. As The Guardian article running the story stated, with this image ‘[t]he full horror of the human tragedy unfolding on the shores of Europe was brought home’ (Smith, 2015). In a later reflective article justifying their decision to publish the graphic images, The Guardian called them ‘potentially history-changing and consciousness-shifting’ (Fahey 2015). Even the Daily Mail tempered its usually unsympathetic coverage to run a full front page photo with the headline ‘Tiny victim of a human catastrophe’ (Allen, 2015). The apparent power of the image was that it made us see the humanity of these others where we had not done so before: ‘It felt like the moment a crisis defined by abstract debates over ideology, statistics and terminology suddenly shifted to one about people’ (Fahey, 2015). As Jonathan Freedland put it, ‘we can’t pretend we didn’t know. But somehow, it seems, we needed to see those little shoes and bare legs to absorb the knowledge, to let it penetrate our heads and hearts’ (Freedland, 2015).

A similar conception is shared by several new humanitarian groups formed in the UK in response to publicity garnered by the worsening situation in Calais and the prominence of the ‘New Jungle’ in the media. These ‘grass-roots’ organisations, such as CalAid and London2Calais, aim not simply to provide direct aid but also to change public perception and opinion in the UK (and perhaps Europe more widely) regarding refugees and migration. Central to their activities is learning to see migrants as human, gaining the knowledge of their humanity that enables us (the citizenry) to care for them (the non-citizenry) ethically and politically. As the CalAid website states: ‘In addition to offering support and assistance, we hope to change the perception of this crisis from one of hostility and fear to one of concern and compassion’ (CalAid, 2015). The humanitarianism found in these groups, as well as larger charities and in the media, expresses a particular (liberal) picture of the political world, of civil society, the state, and the (human) subject of ethical politics which informs a particular view of what lies behind the recent ‘crisis' and what needs to be done ethically and politically.
to resolve it. In this picture, such knowledge is necessary for informed collective
decision-making and accountability characteristic of social democratic political agency,
and for encouraging a form of cosmopolitanism in public discourse. We must come to
know others as human if we are to act ethically toward them. Without this knowledge
we can guarantee nothing.

5.2.2 Politics of forgetting

As Véronique Pin-Fat (2013; 2016) points out, there is something very odd in
this humanitarian assertion that we can have 'forgotten' the humanity of others –
ordinarily we do not fall prey to such skepticism in our everyday encounters. Indeed,
she argues, demanding we see others as human is already to be complicit in practices
of denial and violence towards them. The humanitarian position above reflects the
world view of liberal cosmopolitanism which Pin-Fat argues amounts to a ‘politics of
forgetting’ (2016; 47). Seeing the humanity of others as an epistemological issue that
must be settled before we can relate ethically and politically to them, as a problem of
ignorance or a lack of recognition, liberal cosmopolitanism asserts ‘a radical
separation of oneself from seemingly external others [...] there is a (knowledge) gap
between us’ (2016; 49-50; also 2013, 251). Whilst it aims to take humanity as the
foundation of a universalising ethical politics, in asking us to ‘see each other as
human’ liberal cosmopolitanism ends up assuming the possibility of ‘doubt’ about
others’ humanity (2016; 53-54). If we can see others as human we can also, therefore,
see others as nonhuman and enact horrors upon them (2013; 252-253).39 In
cosmopolitan philosophy, such skepticism is responded to with attempts to establish
foundational criteria for being human, to decide on the limits of humanity by drawing
a line between the human/nonhuman so we might encounter each other on the firm
ground of certainty in our ethical political humanity (Pin-Fat, 2013). But as Pin-Fat
reminds us we do not ordinarily feel the need to settle the question of the humanity
of those around us in this way, indeed the urge to do so would likely be seen as

39 A similar view is expressed in Agamben’s reading of Arendt (1979) and the holocaust: ‘one of the few
rules to which the Nazis constantly adhered during the course of the “Final Solution” was that Jews
could be sent to the extermination camps only after they had been fully denationalized (stripped even
of the residual citizenship left to them after the Nuremberg laws’) (1998; 132). As I argue in this
chapter, the idea that the line between human/nonhuman or non/political subject is the fundamental
political question is shared by both humanitarianism and Agamben.
pathological (2016; 55-56). Furthermore, by making humanity an epistemological issue we miss how it is us who are responsible for each other’s humanity in how we treat each other, including ways we deny that humanity: ‘the ordinary, horrifying knowledge is that slavery, refoulement, torture and the like are “a way in which certain human beings can treat certain others whom they know, or all but know, to be human beings. Rather than admit this we say that the ones do not regard each other as human beings at all” (Cavell 1999: 377)’ (Pin-Fat, 2016a; 58).

In this way, liberal cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism are expressions of a ‘politics of forgetting’ our unavoidable implication in each other’s lives and our responsibility for each other’s humanity:

‘A politics of forgetting human embodiment promotes and enables the mistreatment of others as a category mistake. We say that people don’t recognise each other as human as though such an attitude were, in all seriousness, possible. Such a view can gently lull us into the comfort of (a) a clear diagnosis of the difficulty and therefore, (b) an uncomplicated remedy. The difficulty, apparently, is not properly regarding someone as human and consequently the corrective is to simply to regard him or her as human. And, of course, it is precisely the injunction to regard all members of humanity as human that liberal cosmopolitanism expresses’ (Pin-Fat, 2016a; 58).

Forgetting in this way is also a highly ethical political practice of avoidance and denial of human others and our complicity in the violence we do to them. It is not a question of knowledge but rather of the ordinary and everyday ways we exclude, injure, and subordinate other people according to ‘a hierarchy of humanity’ (59): ‘The problem isn’t that some people are regarded as human and some are not. The problem is that everyone is seen clearly but that some people matter so little that we can exclude them from our realm of justice’ (59). In some ways, the discourse of humanitarianism and the appeal to see others as human and treat them with compassion ends up absolving us for all the ways we kill, torture, maim, and violate human others: as if we didn't know.

Another related refrain in humanitarian discourse is the claim that humanitarian work is non-political, or apolitical, that the moral business of humanitarianism is separate from the political business of nation-states, power, and
government, and as such is the most ethical response to moments of crisis. Humanitarianism here is ‘conceived of as an unchallenged good characterised by impartial charity for a common humanity, and something which transgresses the confines of state sovereignty [...] the domain for compassion’ (Campbell, 1998; 498). This assertion of being beyond political bias similarly expresses a politics of forgetting as the basis of humanitarianism. In Calais, various humanitarian groups, especially from the UK, explicitly assume such a stance in how they frame their engagement with the situation there. For instance, on the website of UK-based charity Care4Calais they make clear the separation of their humanitarian work from a political engagement with the situation, stating that:

‘Care4Calais was founded by a group of UK volunteers with the sole aim of supporting the people of the Calais refugee camps. Its core focus is to ensure that the 5,000 and growing refugees are supported directly with a focus on providing fresh meals, warm clothing, heating and important legal and medical support. We are not politicians; we are people like you who simply believe that every human has the right to be treated in a fair and dignified way’ (Care4Calais 2016a).

Humanitarianism here is set in opposition to the politics of politicians through an appeal to ordinariness, ‘we are people like you’, and faith in a moral principle of universal equality to rights of life and dignity. The implication here is that Care4Calais are motivated not by self-interested state politics or prejudicial nationalism, they have no alternate agenda, but only by altruism and compassion for human others, ‘the sole aim of supporting the people of the Calais refugee camps’. Acting morally and altruistically entails, according to this humanitarian world view, leaving politics to the politicians and getting on with providing ‘direct’ aid and support to those in need because they are human. This engagement happens on an everyday level (here, understood as a separate realm to that of political practice) focusing on providing to others the necessities of human life and human bodily survival like food, shelter, clothing, and medical support. Such humanitarianism also sees this moral turn to humanity itself as a way of overcoming the negative politics of nation-states. In hoping to bypass the messiness of a politics seen as failing migrants in Calais, humanitarianism attempts instead to ground a more moral encounter on the recognition of the human subject in danger: ‘Although governments do not recognise
this as a humanitarian crisis, you can. Please give what you can to relieve these people of the conditions they are subject to each and every day’ (Care4Calais, 2016b).

In its self-proclaimed political impartiality, this humanitarianism enacts a politics of forgetting that amounts to an ‘avoidance’, or perhaps an ‘annihilation’, of our ethical political relations with each other (Pin-Fat, 2013; 249-251). Firstly, the refusal to become embroiled in the dirty business of state politics corresponds with a refusal to engage with those people in the Calais jungle as political subjects themselves, ending up actually doing some of the state’s (ontological) dirty work for it. In making it about the failure of (our) state politics to recognise and respect their humanity, and in calling for a resolution that entails our taking direct ethical responsibility for their humanity through acts of remembrance and expressions of compassion, humanitarianism reproduces as it denies the underlying political conditions for the Calais jungle. Humanitarianism forgets as it sustains numerous interrelated histories of discrimination, violence and exploitation which make up the highly political reasons why and context in which some people, some humans, but not others are made to live in these ways (3.3). Political histories of racialised, gendered, and socio-economic divisions and inequality, in which the violent subordination of certain people’s political subjectivity has long played a part, continue to frame and play out in the humanitarian encounter itself understood as our altruistic response to their suffering. In this way, ‘as one gets deeper into humanitarianism a series of dimensions of what may be called a complex ontology of inequality unfolds that differentiates in a hierarchical manner the values of human lives’ (Fassin, 2007; 519).

The humanitarian encounter plays out and entrenches a divisive and unequal ontology of otherness as a seemingly fixed and insurmountable difference between “us” and “them”, fetishizing the historically resonant figure of the (desperate/vulnerable/volatile) stranger as the basis for relations of aid and compassion that simultaneously redraw the borders of cultural, ethical and political belonging (Ahmed, 2000; 12-13; 79). Far from avoiding the pitfalls of statist politics, then, humanitarianism expresses a ‘politics of forgetting’ that remains caught up in the same historical processes that have led to ‘the dogged persistence of an international division of humanity’ (Williams, 2010; xvi; See also Bhambra, 2015).
Denying the political conditions underlying encounters like those in Calais, and therefore denying the politics of irregular migration, citizenship, and border controls, humanitarianism essentialises the figure of the migrant ‘other’ as perpetual victim:

‘The ontological principle of inequality finds its concrete manifestation in the act of assistance through which individuals identified as victims are established. They are those for whom the gift cannot imply a counter-gift, since it is assumed that they can only receive. They are the indebted of the world’ (Fassin; 2007, 512).

5.3 Humanitarianism and the border: forgetting segregation in everyday life in Calais

This humanitarian politics of forgetting plays out in specific ways in Calais. Framing the crisis as one of forgotten humanity, and therefore as an epistemological and moral issue rather than a political one, humanitarian responses to the situation in Calais miss ‘something that is hidden in plain view’ (Pin-Fat, 2016a; 47; 2010): the border. As I have argued throughout this thesis, the border is produced through practices of segregation in everyday life. The existence of the Calais jungle, in its current manifestation, cannot be understood outside this ongoing context of border control and everyday segregation. I argue in this section that, as a politics of forgetting, humanitarianism in Calais fails to address the border as everyday segregation. Furthermore, by placing the ‘New Jungle’ in the context of events surrounding its emergence, I will demonstrate how, in their focus on the human subject as social, biological, but not political body, several humanitarian organisations actually serve a crucial role in creating and maintaining the current jungle in Calais as a technique of segregation and border control. I then consider how humanitarianism and racialised border controls can both be understood as expressions of a biopolitics that increasingly dominates the divisive governing of bodies. This sets up the conversation for the rest of the chapter, in which I critically engage with dominant debates around the biopolitics of borders and migration control which take as their starting point Agamben’s theorisation of ‘the camp’, ‘bare life’ and the ‘sovereign ban’. I conclude by arguing that Agamben’s theory, and to an extent the debates it has sparked, replicate a similar politics of forgetting I have identified with humanitarianism. Rather than follow Agamben into the depths of his exceptional ontology to analyse the ethical politics of borders, and their often horrific workings, I
suggest we need simply remain where we are already, on the rough ground where we encounter ordinary, but no less shocking, practices of segregation, racism, and violence in everyday life.

5.3.1 The Calais ‘Jungle’: deterrence, segregation and the Jules Ferry Day Centre

As I argued in Chapter 3, the border in Calais works through everyday practices of segregation as a way of governing mobility through dissuasion and deterrence. Such segregation permeates every aspect of irregular migrants’ daily life, the border literally being encountered at every turn in the form of police harassment in public spaces, isolated and criminalised living spaces, and divided social/political relations. Through the struggles of everyday life the border is repeatedly made real in the embodied encounters of the irregular migrants it seeks to control, embodied encounters that sometimes kill. The ‘jungle’, a term used to designate a camp where irregular migrants establish a, hopefully temporary, place to live whilst trying to cross the border, cannot be dissociated from the strategies of deterrence and segregation that make up the border in Calais.

As I discussed in chapter 3, since the closure of Sangatte in 2002 the history of border control in Calais has involved continuous efforts to maintain conditions of uprootedness and transient immobility, through constant evictions punctuated by periodic ‘tolerance’ of migrant living spaces by the authorities, which in no way lessened the daily abuse and disruption targeted against irregular migrants in these places. The border in Calais has been enacted continuously in response to fluctuations in the migrant population attempting to cross at any one time, itself tied to wider geopolitical events, as well as developments in British, French, and EU policy initiatives, through cycles of dispersal, concentration, and eviction or removal. Particularly prominent moments in these cycles included the eviction of the Pashtun jungle in 2009, the repressive policing in the lead up to the 2012 Olympic Games in the UK, and the large scale evictions of 2014 which began a contested process of more rigorously segregating the spaces of Calais in which we should situate our understanding of the current ‘Jungle’ as anything but ‘New’ (see Calais Migrant Solidarity blog).
Out of these cycles of border struggle, the map of irregular migrant spaces in Calais remained relatively stable during the second half of 2014, the various locations, jungles, camps, and squats diffusely linked up according to the rhythms and practices of everyday life (3.5.2). The jungles served as living spaces and also waiting points from which to take advantage of traffic jams or escape worsening police violence on the motorways. Local charities and other groups offered access to important resources and support at various locations through town. *Medecin du Monde* and *France Terre D’Asile* had offices near the historic centre of Calais, a matter of minutes from the ‘Syrian church’. Across the street in the evening a Turkish-run cafe was usually full of Syrians drinking tea and discussing politics. In addition to the food distributed by charities *SALAM* and *L’Auberge des Migrants*, a Christian charity *Secours Catholiques* ran a large store of donations in a church hall near the town centre, which was opened twice a month to distribute donated clothes, shoes, sugar, and other staples. On the other side of town, on a quiet suburban street leading towards the hospital, the same charity ran French lessons and other activities designed for those seeking asylum in France. A little further out, the charity *Solid’R* ran a shelter for women and children which had opened to replace the evicted squat *Victor Hugo* previously opened by No Borders activists (although its limited spaces and inconvenient location meant many women were still living in the jungles around Calais).

During this time, many of the everyday places used by migrants in Calais were found throughout the town itself, serving also as points of engagement between those with and without documents. However, with this increased proximity and visibility of the irregular migrant population, and with growing numbers of people reaching Calais, their presence became hotly politicised and polarising. In August 2014 the UK media reacted with panic at the rising numbers of people stuck in Calais, running headlines about ‘ethnic riots’ and a ‘vicious turf war’ as tensions spilt over into fighting (see Chapter 3, but also BBC News, 2014c Morrison, 2014; Penketh, 2014). More CRS police were sent to Calais in early September after a protest by irregular migrants who broke into the ferry port and attempted to board a ferry (3.4.3, BBC News, 2014e; Prynne, 2014; Topping, 2014a). That same weekend Calais Mayor Natacha Bouchart
made provocative statements about blockading the port to pressure the UK into intervening (BBC News, 2014d; Samuel, 2014; Topping, 2014b). Meanwhile the UK immigration minister announced a security fence used for the Newport NATO summit would be sent to bolster port security in Calais (Brokenshire, 2014). That weekend also saw several hundred people attend a far-right demonstration in Calais organised by local group Sauvons Calais (‘Save Calais’) specifically against migration, locally, nationally, and across Europe. Signs read ‘Foutons-les dehors’ (‘Let’s get them out’) and ‘l’insécurité, l’insalubrité, le désastre économique’ (‘insecurity, unsanitariness, economic disaster’). Prominent members of extreme right wing organisations delivered speeches evoking racist imagery and white supremacy, one stating that ‘the future of the white world is thrown into question’ and calling for a ‘a war for the survival of our country and our people, to make France for the French’, while another declared ‘That’s what makes my anger turn to joy today [...] that the people are rising up to say no to the invasion of our continent’ (Agence France-Presse, 2014; CMS, 2014f; Chazan, 2014).

Following the demonstration violence aimed at irregular migrants increased, including an attack in which petrol bombs were thrown at a migrant squat in town (see LA Voix du Nord, 2014c). Later in October 2014 Marine Le Pen visited Calais. Surrounded by protective supporters and police, she was continuously heckled by opponents as she walked through the town centre, several of whom in turn were violently assaulted by undercover police officers. At a press conference Le Pen presented the very presence of irregular migrants in Calais as a threat to the security of the nation itself, calling for their deportation irrespective of their asylum needs: ‘The law no longer applies in Calais, there is no more rule of law, there is nothing more than the rule of the jungle, violence and the law of the strongest. In short, the opposite of the Republic’ (Pecqueux, 2014; Soullier, 2014). She continued: ‘Immigration is a true poison, the most visible and most shocking consequence of which is Calais. The clandestines are illegal, they are criminals in terms of the law, who have no business on our national territory’ (Ibid).

However, other messages could be heard in Calais in late 2014 aside those of fear, security and xenophobia. For over twenty days, Syrian migrants protested by the
port calling attention to their condition and denouncing how the border requires them to enter the UK illegally to seek asylum. In a statement they announced: ‘We want to end our suffering here in Calais. Although we are very thankful to everyone in Calais who has helped us, we need more than blankets and tents. We just need the freedom to go to the UK legally to claim asylum’ (CMS, 2014g; Passeur D’hospitalités, 2014c).

Also in November local charities and activists organised a week of cultural events, including film showings, exhibitions, music and sports to bring together local Calaisiens and migrants in a spirit of ‘fraternité’. As one of the organisers told the local paper, ‘[t]he goal is to ease tensions and open dialogue with people. That is, to both encourage fraternity and show solidarity with migrants but also to talk with Calaisiens about their difficulties and the way in which their town can become livable with regard to these tensions’ (Tisserand, 2014b). 40

In this increasingly politicised and often hostile atmosphere towards irregular migrants in Calais the idea of a humanitarian day centre was proposed by the Mayor’s office and eventually accepted by the French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve. In August 2014 Natacha Bouchart, whose staunch anti-immigration stance had been cultivated against the backdrop of Front National gains in the region (Willsher, 2014; Willsher & Penketh, 2014) 41, announced her proposals for a reception centre to provide support to the irregular migrant population in Calais. Calling the existing arrangement ‘untenable’ she argued that centralising aid services in a single location under state supervision and ‘away from homes’ was essential to allowing the authorities to ‘empty 80% of the phenomenon (i.e. the migratory presence) in the town’ and thereby ‘relieve the Calaisiens who have a right to a bit of serenity’ (Bouchart quoted in Goudeseune, 2014a). The reception centre was, therefore, offered from the start as a solution to a perceived problem of migrant presence in the town, a way of keeping citizen/noncitizen spaces/subjects separate, and of effecting greater state control and management over the irregular migrant population. Despite

40 It is interesting to note these public vocalisations of migrant solidarity reject both an exclusionary nationalist and an inclusionary humanitarian framing.

41 Of course, the increasingly restrictive state policies towards migrants in Calais have not diminished the allure of the far right. Indeed, by the end of 2015 the Front National were receiving unprecedented support in the first round of the French regional elections (although they could not continue this in the second round) (see Chrisafis, 2015b; 2015c)
initially rejecting the idea because of still politically toxic memories of Sangatte, the Interior Minister announced government support for the project the same week in September that migrant protestors stormed the port, and a French-British working group was established to draft an agreement on new border security measures in Calais (Vincent, 2014). The day centre would be located at Jules Ferry, a disused summer camp past the Tioxide jungle beyond the motorway leading to the port and surrounded by sand dunes and heathland. Whilst providing only limited shelter it nonetheless would assume responsibility for providing aid to irregular migrants, replacing the work previously carried out by local associations. Over the next few months, and in the name of Calaisien security, Bouchart continued to frame the day centre within an overarching strategy for dismantling irregular migrant support networks within the town itself and forcing their exclusion to its peripheries (Nord Littoral, 2014c).

I suggest this shows the day centre was from the beginning at least partially conceived as a strategy of segregation. On 4 November 2014, Cazeneuve unveiled the finalised plans for the new day centre to be run by the charity La Vie Active, which had no prior experience with migrants in Calais. At the same time he announced yet more CRS riot police would be permanently stationed in the town. Local associations and activists denounced the measures saying a ‘ghetto’ was being created to make the migrant population ‘invisible’ by isolating them on the edge of town and minimising their contact with local residents (La Croix, 2014). As if in confirmation of this fear, in January 2015, coinciding with the day centre’s opening, Bouchart utilised a local bye-law to prohibit the provision of aid in Calais outside of the officially sanctioned day centre at Jules Ferry (Pecqueux, 2015a). Over the next few months eviction notices were placed around the entrances to jungles, squats, and camps around Calais and authorities made frequent visits, accompanied by police, to encourage people living there to move voluntarily to the area surrounding the day centre. An area of land previously used to dispose of industrial waste, labelled ‘the moor’, was designated by local authorities as a semi-official ‘tolerated zone’ for migrant dwelling. Any other camps around Calais would be prohibited and immediately evicted. Reacting to this news local associations and activists denounced this ‘new jungle’ as a ‘biondville par
l’État français’, a state-sponsored ghetto deliberately designed to empty the town of migrants and set in place a policy of segregation separating those with papers from those without (Salomez, 2015).

Looking at the wider context in which the day centre was realised we see how from the start it was envisaged as a key component in a strategy of management and control based around a policy of segregation between migrant/non-migrant populations in Calais. As Bouchart stated in November 2014, whilst the Jules Ferry day centre ‘was not a solution to everything’ it was a necessary ‘element of a larger plan […] a piece of the puzzle whose pieces must fit together’ (Nord Littoral 2014d). The larger puzzle of which the day centre is a part, I suggest, is the border and the border security enlargement being envisaged at this time. It is in relation to this agenda that the role of the day centre as a technique of segregation continues to make sense. Indeed, speaking in front of the UK Home Affairs Committee on immigration and border control in 2014 Bouchart explicitly located the necessity of the day centre within the framework of securing the British-French border in Calais: ‘What would you prefer? We think that the problem is going to get worse anyway so we need to do something to contain it. Perhaps the solution is to set up this day centre as a Franco-British co-operation project’ (HAC, 2015a; 6 – emphasis added).

Whilst the day centre itself does not receive UK funding directly, as politicians repeatedly make clear (Ibid; 6; HAC, 2015c; 4), I suggest it should be situated within a wider field of border security cooperation in Calais with which it coincides and in important ways complements. On 20 September 2014 Theresa May and Bernard Cazeneuve signed a Joint Declaration in Paris on French-British state cooperation over ‘cross-border security’ and migration control, in particular at Calais. The declaration reiterated both states’ commitments to ‘Reduce the number of irregular migrants […] Respond to health emergencies and protect vulnerable people […] Strengthen port security to deter illegal crossings […] Increase their operational cooperation to fight against the smuggling of migrants […] Stem the flow of illegal migration into Europe […]and to] Ensure that all measures taken will deter illegal migrants from congregating in and around Calais’ (1). To do this the UK promised to contribute £12million over three years to develop port security with new technology, fencing, management, and
joint intelligence operations involving the National Crime Agency and OCRIEST (a French police unit dedicated to combatting irregular migration and employment) aimed at ‘dismantling criminal networks’ linked to smuggling. Importantly, it also asserted that both states should ‘[e]nsure effective measures are taken to protect vulnerable persons such as the victims of human trafficking’ and identified the need to work ‘together with relevant NGOs where possible’ to run ‘information campaigns’ designed to deter irregular migrants from crossing to the UK.

I suggest that from late 2014 onwards in Calais a developing border control regime was emerging that brought together humanitarian and security objectives to manage a number of disparate and sometimes competing political pressures that were local, national, and international, social and economic, about security, democracy, the balance between rights and responsibilities of both individuals and governments, as well as the rule of law and the role of race. The day centre sits uncertainly at the heart of this managerial effort as a way of addressing these multiple conflicts whilst also realigning the practicalities and possibilities of everyday life in Calais, especially for irregular migrants and their supporters. As it offered (minimal) support in terms of food, medical assistance, legal aid, and shelter, the Jules Ferry day centre also worked to contain the migrant population outside the ordinary places and public spaces of Calaisien citizenship. This also worked, deliberately or not, to constrain the capacity for migrant mobility at the level of everyday life by tethering basic subsistence to an isolated location away from key avenues for irregular border crossing, especially the Channel Tunnel. Whilst it claimed to offer new routes to asylum and regularisation within France (see below and also Cazeneuve, 2015b), the new arrangement established around the day centre extended the ongoing policy of making life unliveable for those whose movements are deemed irregular. In this way, despite appearing a progressive step in terms of the state taking responsibility for irregular migrants’ welfare in Calais, after years of refusing to do so, the opening of the day centre nonetheless implemented a significant shift towards a regime of segregation that remained central to a practice of bordering premised on deterrence. Here, complicit in the realisation of a regime of segregation in Calais, humanitarianism goes hand in hand with state border control of irregular migration.
5.3.2 ‘Humanity and Firmness’: humanitarian border security

I suggest the Jules Ferry day centre in Calais reflects what Walters (2011a) has called ‘the birth of the humanitarian border’ which is characterised by the ‘[h]olding together in an uneasy alliance a politics of alienation with a politics of care, and a tactic of abjection and one of reception’ in a context where ‘border crossing has become a matter of life and death’ (145; 147). In Calais, this ‘humanitarianization’ of the border has seen both ‘the reinvention of the border as a space of humanitarian government’ and the incorporation of humanitarian practices within the ‘official strategies of policing and control’, which is not necessarily to say their ‘co-option and capture’ (or even ‘colonization’) by the state (148-149). Here, the day centre embodies the humanitarian impulse to manage the ‘crisis’ through direct provision of material aid to migrant subjects, to maintain their human survival, and at the same time functions to establish conditions of segregation fundamental to their deterrence and control according to the border security regime. This functional aspect of the day centre is not lost on UK/French policy makers and politicians. For example, the second UK/France Joint Ministerial Declaration, ‘Managing Migratory Flows in Calais’ signed in Calais on 20 August 2015, makes explicit the multiple strategic connections between providing humanitarian aid and effecting secure border controls through deterrence. Several passages are particular revealing of this (Cazeneuve & May, 2015):

‘[For many years] France and the United Kingdom have worked intimately together on arrangements for border control and protection [...] In 2015, the effect of global migratory pressure has created the need for significant additional intervention, in relation both to security and to humanitarian provision, to secure continuing and effective operation [i.e. of the border] for both states.

In the Nord Pas-de-Calais, our two states are determined to reinforce security[...] to address the criminal exploitation of migrants in Calais who are exceptionally vulnerable, and to provide international protection or humanitarian relief to those in genuine need. But our two countries cannot tolerate illegal and dangerous attempts to circumvent border controls, human trafficking, or abuse of the immigration system. Our joint approach rests on securing the border, identifying and safeguarding the vulnerable, preserving access to asylum for those who need it, and giving no quarter to those who have no right to be here or who break the law.’

Amidst protests that I discuss further in 6.3.1
From this moment on, the repeated phrase used to refer to this joint strategy, by both the French Prime Minister Manuel Valls and his successor as Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, has been ‘humanité et fermeté’ – ‘humanity and firmness’ (Valls quoted in Pascual, 2015; Cazeneuve, 2015b). As a strategy it promotes the pursuit of humanitarian and security agendas as mutually complementary and as the twin ethical political responsibilities of effective state government. In October 2015 Cazeneuve gave two particularly illuminating speeches announcing the plan to enact this policy by setting up state-run accommodation in Calais, increasing police presence in the town whilst securing the port, and ultimately removing the migrant population from Calais to be dispersed around France or removed from the territory (Cazeneuve, 2015a; 2015b). Here humanitarianism and practices of border security are seen as co-dependent on each other but always only to the extent they establish or maintain state control and government over the situation, the different populations and political tensions. Humanitarianism without security and deterrence is portrayed as irresponsible since the resulting loss of control would apparently lead to greater humanitarian suffering and more insecurity for everyone, the state, the Calaisiens, and the migrants themselves. But security without humanitarianism is also represented as irresponsible, not simply because of the state’s republican and international duties towards fellow humans but importantly because people who are desperate are seen as more likely to resort to irregular ‘criminal’ means of mobility, undermining border security: ‘the choice of lucidity and responsibility […] is also the choice of humanity and firmness. The choice leads us to seek and develop long-term solutions to regular immigration flows, to humanely accommodate migrants to meet our obligations on asylum and the fight against criminal networks of smugglers’ (Cazeneuve, 2015b).

Within this context of humanity and firmness the Jules Ferry day centre has been crucial in extending practices of everyday segregation and consolidating the deterrent border control policy in Calais. The day centre is part of a package of measures to control and ultimately remove the migrant population in Calais for the sake of border security. Its opening coincided with the eviction of all migrant spaces in Calais as the presence of migrant subjects, and any support they might receive, was
increasingly ‘tolerated’ by the authorities only in the surrounding vicinity. Over the next six months the jungle around the centre grew and began resembling the *bidonville* (shanty town) that had been predicted, with shops, restaurants, houses, communities coalescing into diverse identifiable districts, basic facilities, nurses, libraries, destitution and unsanitary conditions, but also night clubs, mosques, churches, high-streets, a place filled with life, active, passionate, and volatile. Meanwhile, huge fences were extended along the motorway from the port, enclosing one side of the jungle, the motorway bridge resembling a gateway subject to periodic closure by police. Then, at the same time as officials were declaring a policy of humanity and firmness, police tolerance of the jungle began to turn violent, with daily incursions into migrant spaces and repeated night-time barrages of tear gas fired into people’s homes lasting hours (CMS, 2015i). By late 2015 areas of the jungle were forcibly cleared and people displaced in order to set up the *Centre d’Accueil Provisoire* (CAP), the provisional housing centre for 1,500 people, announced as part of the new humanitarian border policy. Opening in January 2016 it was to be managed by the same charity as the day centre *La Vie Active*. According to *La Vie Active*’s own publicity, the container camp would provide water, showers, lockers and beds, a sense of security and organisation, which resemble ‘a village’ rather than the jungle and therefore ‘a sense of real home to the residents’ (*La Vie Active*, 2016a; 2016b; 2016c). However, made from used shipping containers and ringed by fencing, access was restricted to the CAP for those who register their identities and controlled using palm-print readers, strengthening suspicions over its potential disciplinary purpose (Allen, 2016; Barrett, 2016; Blamont, 2016). Understandably the CAP has been rejected by many for whom mobility is the priority and likened to a prison camp (BBC News, 2016; Chrisafis, 2016).

As the CAP opened, more areas of the jungle where cleared by the authorities and over 1000 people were forced to move by police in order to create a ‘buffer zone’ along the motorway (Kingsley, 2016). All through this period the jungle in Calais was being contained, reduced, and remodelled with the migrant population increasingly squeezed into spaces where they could be managed and monitored. More and more the boundary fence of the humanitarian project, a literal container camp, was
becoming the boundary between tolerated and intolerable migrant presence, between legitimate and illegitimate migrant subjects. Humanitarian organisations served as one mechanism for removing people from the space of Calais to ‘reception centres’ around France for regularisation through the asylum process in ‘dedicated facilities, a significant distance from Calais, to supplement provision for those whose claim is being considered by France and draw pressure away from close to the frontier’ (Cazeneuve & May, 2014). In addition to the CAP, several NGOs and associations were called upon by the new policy to aid in identifying ‘those people who are especially vulnerable or who potentially are victims of trafficking’ with the aim of ‘removing them briskly to places of safety’, and to partake in information campaigns designed to persuade migrants to abandon their objectives by ‘provid[ing] migrants with a more dissuasive and realistic sense of life for illegal migrants in the United Kingdom’ as well as to promote ‘voluntary returns’ (Ibid). Several NGOs were furthermore complicit in facilitating the carrying out of successive evictions without the need for physical coercion, offering them a facade of nonviolence. At the same time, security practitioners were vigorously expediting another mechanism of arrest, detention, and deportation in accordance with the new policy aim to ‘maximise the number of illegal migrants who return home’ from Calais (Ibid; See also CMS, 2015h).

5.3.3 Hierarchies of humanity: biopolitics and the humanitarian border

These twin mechanisms represent two sides of the humanitarian border policy announced by the Interior Minister in October 2015, and point to how segregation lies at the heart of its operation: ‘It is through these combined means, in terms of humanitarianism and security, that we will manage to empty this moor, which cannot be a sustainable living space for migrants and which cannot be accepted for long by Calaisiens’ (Cazeneuve, 2015a). On 29th February 2016 hundreds of CRS riot police accompanied private demolition firms and NGO workers to begin forcibly evicting and destroying the half of the jungle furthest from the areas of humanitarian aid and containment (Passeurs d’hospitalités, 2016). However, this eviction was not just a security measure against irregular mobility, illegal migrants and criminality. According

43 These scenes evoke for me Booth’s famous characterisation of human security as ‘the velvet glove on the iron hand of hard power’ (2007; 324)
to Cazeneuve it was also a ‘humanitarian operation’ aimed at protecting and improving human life (La Voix du Nord 2016; Chazan, 2016).

As odd as it seems, by tracing the context in which the day centre and the jungle emerged as both a humanitarian space and a mechanism of containment, control, and dispersal, we can see how this statement perfectly encapsulates the working rationale of the humanitarian border. In contrast to the reading of liberal humanitarian observers, the border in Calais does not involve a failure to recognise the humanity of irregular migrants but rather works by knowing their humanity only too well. Both deterrence and aid work on the basis of an intimate knowledge of the human subject, human needs, weaknesses, or breaking points, human vitality and human mortality. The twin operations of security and charity, violence and ‘compassion’, ‘humanity and firmness’, work on the same human subject(s) ‘(re)produc[ing] the “irregular” migrant as potentially both a life to be protected and a security threat to protect against’ (Vaughan-Williams, 2015; 3). As Vaughan-Williams points out, it is not a question of the ‘rhetoric’ of humanitarianism being used as a smokescreen for the ‘reality’ of border security. Rather, these two frameworks comprise dual aspects of a contemporary ‘moral economy [which] defines the scope of contemporary biopolitics as the politics that deals with the lives of human beings’ (Fassin, 2005; 366). For Fassin, this is a moral economy which revolves around ‘the recognition of the body as the ultimate site of political legitimacy’ (2001; 7), what he elsewhere calls ‘biolegitimacy’ (2005), and one centrally concerned with ‘otherness’. In this biopolitical economy ‘the legitimacy of the suffering body proposed in the name of a common humanity is opposed to the illegitimacy of the racialized body, promulgated in the name of insurmountable difference’ (2001; 3-4). It is in relation to these two poles that the (bio)political order of the French state is reproduced as fixed and legitimate and against which the political subjectivity of foreign ‘others’ is given or denied value.

In Calais we can see how this biopolitics plays out in the form of the humanitarian border, epitomised by the humanitarian eviction of the humanitarian ghetto. The humanitarian ghetto segregates ‘us’ from ‘them’ according to racialised criteria of otherness whilst the humanitarian eviction is designed to ‘save’ them from
themselves, forcing migrant subjects to ‘choose’\textsuperscript{44} either to submit themselves as suffering bodies to biopolitical care, control and regularisation or to remain illegal, irregular, and criminal. In this way, the humanitarian border articulates and polices a particular distinction between legitimate/illegitimate political subjects in which racialised others are increasingly only acceptable to the extent they relinquish their living agency, their pursuit of a life for themselves through autonomous unauthorised mobility, and assume the role of the victim (Fassin, 2007; 512). Unless they do so, irregular migrants are deemed threatening to the legitimate political order, a danger to ‘us’ and a danger to ‘themselves’. The humanitarian policing of the border in Calais is framed as a way of both ‘ensuring the safety of Calaisiens’ and ‘protecting migrants against the dangers they face in attempting the passage to the United Kingdom at the price of serious injury and even at the cost of their lives’ (Cazeneuve, 2015a). In this case, the humanitarian eviction intervenes in the migrant population in the same way as liberal humanitarian interventions so often do (Fassin, 2007; Orford, 1999), to save the racialised other from themselves and to (re)impose ‘our’ (bio)political order. Of course, within this moral economy, if they fail to be saved they only have themselves to blame:

‘It is therefore clear. The State will ensure that the basic needs of present migrants in Calais are met in meticulous and dignified conditions. The government will make every effort to help these migrants out of Calais. However, migrants who refuse this outstretched hand, continuing their fruitless and dangerous attempts to join the United Kingdom face a deportation or criminal penalties. The State must be attentive to their needs, as it should be firm’ (Cazeneuve, 2015b).

We can see therefore how both humanitarianism and border security function together in Calais to maintain a racialized biopolitical order which hierarchically differentiates and discriminates not only between national citizen and non- (national) citizen, conceived respectively as ‘rooted and rootless’, but also between ‘rooted and rootless migrants, regular migrants and migrants who cannot be regularized’, and finally between ‘legitimate circulatory networks, and shadow circulatory networks’ (Topinka, 2015; 9-10). In doing so, the humanitarian border echoes historical understandings and techniques of (post)colonial domination that continue to inform

\textsuperscript{44} And, as a liberal moral economy, it is framed as a ‘choice’.
the biopolitical governance of populations through the division and management of differentiated bodies on the move according to ‘a complex assemblage of racial techniques and structures’ of il/legitimacy, il/legality, and ir/regularity (Ibid; 12; Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991; Bhambra, 2015). As well as drawing on these historically embedded knowledges of discrimination, the humanitarian border also works according to specialised understandings of the human subject at the level of everyday life, the day to day of subsistence, survival, and sociality that informs both the strategies for providing aid and assistance to migrants in Calais and the strategies of deterrence that seek to make their life unliveable. Of course these everyday practices and understandings of human subjects and the development of (post)colonial forms of (bio)political domination cannot be separated. And indeed, as is repeatedly shown (Agathangelou, 2010; Agathangelou & Turcotte, 2015; Balibar & Wallerstein, 1991; Bhambra, 2015; Sajed, 2013), throughout history they frequently manifest as some form of racialised segregation.

It is in this context, then, that the politics of forgetting expressed by humanitarianism is shown to be so problematic. By seeing the plight of migrants in Calais as an epistemological question concerning their humanity, a humanitarian frame has forgotten all the ways particular knowledges of human life have historically grounded the often violent discrimination and exploitation of some people by others, and how they continue to do so. As I hope to have shown, the humanitarian appeal to concern and compassion for the human suffering of others does nothing in itself to challenge the racialised biopolitical workings of the border as a form of everyday segregation. Indeed, it can in certain contexts become integral to its realisation. Focusing instead on the border as everyday segregation identifies a different reading of the situation. Rather than encountering an absence of (the knowledge or recognition of) humanity we encounter a ‘hierarchy of humanity’ (Pin-Fat, 2016a; 46-47) and ‘the inequality of lives’ (Fassin, 2007; 520). Rather than encountering a relation of ‘exclusion’ from humanity we encounter a relation of ‘domination’ among humans (Allen, 2005). In doing so, we are faced less with a conceptual/perceptual challenge to include those drawn outside ethics or politics than to engage in ongoing ethical political struggles over segregation, racism, and biopolitical violence in which
we are already implicated anyway. Unless we are attentive to the ways histories of (post)colonialism continue to resonate in our current encounters at the border (Ahmed, 2000; also 3.3) we will fail to make sense of the reasons why some people but not others are made to live in the ‘jungle’ in the name of, rather than despite, their humanity. At the same time, it is important to remain at the level of everyday life in order to see how even in humanitarian encounters the starkness of segregation in Calais presents numerous opportunities to throw up surprises and for charity and compassion to spill over into solidarity and outrage.

I turn now to discuss critical migration literature which takes as its starting point Agamben’s theory of exceptional biopolitics and the sovereign ban in order to consider the de/politicisation of ‘the camp’ as a space and the noncitizen migrant as a subject. I will argue that, in starting with Agamben, this debate risks being seduced by his metaphysical reading of sovereign line-drawing in such a way that reproduces the borders of nation-states as ontologically hard. I do so to offer a reminder of the ways we continue to reproduce a politics of forgetting even when we try to unsettle the political borders in our analysis. This then sets up the context for the analysis in my final chapter of how critical literature theorises migrant solidarity in ways which reproduce this metaphysical seduction and depoliticisation of migrant subjectivity.

5.4 (Bio)politics of ‘the camp’

5.4.1 The terms of the debate: Foucault, Agamben, and the paradox of biopolitical sovereignty

‘The camp, which is now securely lodged within the city’s interior, is the new biopolitical nomos of the planet’ (Agamben, 1998; 176).

‘[T]he ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die’ (Mbembe, 2003; 11).

‘That is the first function of racism: to fragment, to create caesuras within the biological continuum addressed by biopower’ (Foucault, 2004; 255).

According to Foucault, biopolitics involves ‘taking control of life and the biological processes of man-as-species’ through ‘the power of regularisation’ which
‘consists in making live and letting die’ (Foucault, 2004; 246-247). hugely influential among critical theorists across a range of disciplines from IR to sociology, philosophy, anthropology, geography, critical border studies, citizenship studies and beyond, it is a way of framing ‘power’s hold over life’ that is attentive to ‘the population as political problem’ and those mechanisms for productively governing people ‘insofar as they are living beings, and their environment, the milieu in which they live’ in ways which maximise, secure, and increase life (Foucault, 2004; 239; 245). In this sense, then, biopolitics entails ‘the manifestation, protection and perpetuation of life’ and can be understood as involving ‘a politicisation of embodiment and life; and a production of life – vitality, creativity, health, reproduction, security, and evolution – as values, inspiring and motivating ethical, epistemological and political work’ (Blencowe, 2012; 1; 3). However, with the emergence of biopolitics as a form of power which emphasises vitality the question of sovereignty, traditionally understood as the right to decide on life and death, apparently presents a political dilemma in the form of a ‘paradox’ (Foucault, 2004; 241; Lemke, 2001; 36-39). The question of biopolitical sovereignty is: ‘under what practical conditions is the right to kill, to allow to live, or to expose to death exercised?’ (Mbembe, 2003; 12).

The contemporary figure most associated with the question of biopolitical sovereignty is Giorgio Agamben (1998; 2000; 2002; 2004; 2005; 2013). Whether seen as insightful or obfuscating, messianic or misguided, radical or reactionary, Agamben’s work certainly presents a seductively ‘dark picture’ of global biopolitics and exceptional sovereign power in the context of post-9/11 (in)security (Ross, 2008; 9; Dauphinee & Masters, 2007). For Agamben, biopolitics understood as power’s hold over life can be traced to a ‘foundational event of modernity’ that supposedly arises with ‘the entry of zoe into the sphere of the polis – the politicization of bare life as such’ thus throwing into question the classical distinction between zoe and bios by which natural reproductive life had been excluded from the space of politically qualified life (Agamben, 1998; 4). Biopolitics is a politics that takes life itself as a primary object, ‘the center of its calculations’ (6), but at the same time maintains the

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45 In 2016 Agamben released a supposedly final book in the Homo Sacer series The Use of Bodies. As ever with research, something new comes along demanding immediate attention but which must be left aside for the sake of deadlines and sanity.
defining opposition between bare life and political life: ‘In Western politics, bare life has the peculiar privilege of being that whose exclusion founds the city of men’ (7).\textsuperscript{46} Biopolitics is therefore founded on an exception, ‘an inclusive exclusion (an exceptio) of zoe in the polis’ (7), and the biopolitical subject is fundamentally schismatic: ‘There is politics because man is the living being who, in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion’ (8).

Sovereignty, for Agamben, is realised in that moment where the line between non/politics is drawn and the decision over who or what counts as bare life or political life is taken, and because this decision is always already a political one, sovereignty is always already biopolitical: ‘the inclusion of bare life in the political realm constitutes the original – if concealed – nucleus of sovereign power. It can even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power’ (6). The modern democratic state, for example, arises from an originary and exceptional relation between different forms of life and distinct spheres of existence: ‘The fundamental categorial pair of Western politics is not that of friend/enemy but that of bare life/political existence, zoe/bios, exclusion/inclusion’ (8) and ‘modern democracy presents itself from the beginning as a vindication and liberation of zoe [...] constantly trying to transform its own bare life into a way of life and to find, so to speak, the bios of zoe’ (9). What we have then, on Agamben’s account, is a metaphysical ‘fracture’ between two forms of life ‘between zoe and bios, between voice and language’ which modern biopolitics is a failed attempt to heal (11): ‘In the “politicization” of bare life – the metaphysical task par excellence – the humanity of living man is decided’ (8). Modern democracy is only capable, for Agamben, of reconciling these two spheres of life in the form of an aporia of ‘exception’ which then comes to define the entirety of political space as biopolitical space and sovereignty as exceptional sovereignty, with democratic society assuming a ‘post-democratic spectacular’ form and revealing ‘an inner solidarity between democracy and totalitarianism’ (10):

\textsuperscript{46} And yes, for Agamben as for so many others, it is the city of men, which might perhaps make us wary when we encounter his later claims concerning the radical potential/necessity of becoming ‘whatever singularity’ and ‘form[ing] a community without affirming an identity’ (Agamben, 2007a; 86)
‘together with the process by which the exception everywhere becomes the rule, the realm of bare life – which is originally situated at the margins of the political order – gradually begins to coincide with the political realm, and exclusion and inclusion, outside and inside, bios and zoe, right and fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction’ (9).

In politicising (bare) life, therefore, biopolitics is portrayed as an intrinsically exceptional politics in which we are metaphysically trapped by our inherited and institutionalised history of political thought (and also, for Agamben, our existence as ‘beings-in-language’ (1998; 21; 50-51; 2007a; 95-96; 2009b; 14))\textsuperscript{47}.

For Agamben, this foundational metaphysical exception means multiple features of modern (bio)politics, the juridical order/sphere of law, the borders of the state, the boundaries of political community and subjectivity, and the (im)possibility of politics itself, are subject to arbitrary sovereign decision (1998; 15-20; 2005). Modern biopolitics is everywhere defined by a ‘state of exception [which] comes more and more to the foreground as the fundamental political structure and ultimately begins to become the rule’ (1998; 20) and in which the ‘sovereign ban’ holds sway over life: ‘it holds life in its ban by abandoning it’ (28-29). The ban is the condition under which the sovereign has the power to decide on a series of limits between inclusion/exclusion, law/life, life/death, rule/exception, bare life/political life, worthy life/unworthy life, human/nonhuman, man/animal, and more (1998; 83; 2002; 2004; 37; 2005). Indeed, sovereignty consists in the repeated decision over life, the drawing of a line between different spheres of life and different valuations of life, by which bare life is (often violently) created as the founding exception of the political order: ‘What is captured in the sovereign ban is a human victim who may be killed but not sacrificed: homo sacer [...] in this sense, the production of bare life is the originary activity of sovereignty’ (1998; 83). For Agamben then, in the biopolitical state where life becomes the primary object of political governance and (popular) sovereignty ‘we

\textsuperscript{47} The metaphysics of Agamben’s ontological commitments are central to his conception of biopolitics and our potential emancipation from it. In brief, it requires a philosophical revolution through the revelation of the ‘thing itself’ at the heart of our ‘being-in-language’ that undoes our metaphysical capture within the exception to reveal our collective ‘being-thus’ and out shared ‘exposure’ to the world (2007a; 93; 95-96; 98-99). I am unable to expand on this here but I explore it elsewhere in more detail.
are all virtually *hominis sacri*, even as citizens, since in the moment we become political subjects we also become objects for the ban of an exceptional biopolitical sovereignty (11; 115): ‘Thus, life originally appears in law only as the counterpart of a power that threatens death. [...] state power[] is not founded – in the last instance – on a political will but rather on naked life, which is kept safe and protected only to the degree to which it submits itself to the sovereign’s (or the law’s) right of life and death’ (2000; 4).

Agamben comes to define contemporary biopolitics, then, entirely in terms of the sovereign decision on the exception, understood as the capacity to (re)draw the lines of political (im)possibility. The problem for Agamben, and where he locates the terror of biopolitical violence, is that this sovereign decision can be taken anywhere, anytime, to the extent that the distinctions between the political/non-political, life/nonlife, ‘enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction’ (9):

‘Along with the emergence of biopolitics, we can observe a displacement and gradual expansion beyond the limits of the decision on bare life, in the state of exception, in which sovereignty consisted. If there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones. This line is now in motion and gradually moving into areas other than that of political life, areas in which the sovereign is entering into an ever more intimate symbiosis not only with the jurist but also with the doctor, the scientist, the expert, and the priest’ (1998; 122).

Biopolitics seemingly constitutes a sphere of absolute potential abandonment of political subjects to conditions of bare life. With no ‘stable border’ to clearly demarcate the spheres of law, politics, and life, we are all subject to the possibility of being drawn outside the line. Exemplary of this condition for Agamben is the model of ‘the camp’ which is ‘the space that opens up when the state of exception starts to become the rule’ (2000; 38 – italics in original): ‘From this perspective, the camp – as the pure, absolute, and impassable biopolitical space (insofar as it is founded solely on the state of exception) – will appear as the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity’ (1998; 123). For Agamben, this dismantling of categorical borders that has exacerbated the move from biopolitics to thanatopolitics and the emergence of ‘the
camp’ corresponds with what he perceives as the dismantling of actual state borders as part of the increasing dis-function of the nation-state order:

‘the birth of the camp in our time [...] takes place when the political system of the modern nation-state – founded on the functional nexus between a determinate localization (territory) and a determinate order (the state), which was mediated by automatic regulations for the inscription of life (birth or nation) – enters a period of permanent crisis and the state decides to undertake the management of the biological life of the nation directly as its own task’ (2000; 41-42).

For Agamben, following Arendt, the figure of the refugee epitomises this crisis of the nation-state system, as evidenced by the failure of states to respond to large numbers of refugees except through the construction of camps and the systematic denial of fundamental rights (2000; 17-19). The refugee supposedly ‘unhinges the old trinity of state-nation-territory’ because ‘by breaking the identity between the human and the citizen and that between nativity and nationality, it brings the originary fiction of sovereignty to crisis’ (20-21). With the dismantling of traditional precepts of the nation-state as the defining spatial and political order, the nomos in which a biopolitical order is founded on the exceptional inclusion of birth as nationality, ‘[t]he political system no longer orders forms of life and juridical norms in a determinate space’ (34). Instead, the camp and the generalised state of exception are the new structuring principles for ‘the inscription of life into the order’ (42), ‘the new biopolitical nomos of the planet’ (1998; 176). Rather than seeing a diminishing of sovereign power, Agamben sees the apparent deconstruction of the nation-state as a context for its exceptional proliferation: ‘The camp intended as a dislocating localization is the hidden matrix of the politics in which we still live’ (2000; 43).

So, in a sense, Agamben flips the initial problematisation of biopolitical sovereignty which asked how a politics dedicated to valuation, preservation, and promotion of life could legitimise the sovereign right to kill and answers: how could it not? From the start, biopolitical sovereignty is thanatopolitical because it expresses an aporetic ontology of exception in which the sovereign decision is repeatedly brought to bear on life, drawing lines between bare/political life, non/human, non/citizen, and between life/death. Biopolitics is therefore unavoidably violent and antithetical to a properly political ‘form-of-life’ or a ‘life of power’ (2000; 7-8). Furthermore, since
‘[t]here is no return from the camps to classical politics’ (1998; 188) we must instead attempt a radical, even metaphysical, break with our forms of (un)ethical (bio)politics and their underlying ontology:

‘until a completely new politics – that is, a politics no longer founded on the exceptio of bare life – is at hand, every theory and every practice will remain imprisoned and immobile, and the “beautiful day” of life will be given citizenship only either through blood an death or in the perfect senselessness to which the society of the spectacle condemns it’ (11).

5.4.2 Metaphysical seduction and hard ontologies: sovereign line-drawing and a politics of forgetting

Agamben’s account of exceptional biopolitics and the sovereign ban has been highly influential as well as contentious, inspiring wide-reaching debates in relation to migration, border controls, migrant solidarity, and limits of citizenship or human rights. Understandably, his concepts of bare life, the camp, and sovereign ban seem to present a suitable language and analytical framework through which to explore the proliferation of border controls and the state of exception throughout everyday life (see Duaphinee & Masters, 2007; Minca, 2015; Vaughan-Williams, 2009a; 2010), especially in their more thanatopolitical manifestations (Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Nonetheless, before I consider these debates it is important to remark on the ontological commitments Agamben’s framing commits us to which, I argue, are problematically reproduced in the debate around migrant politics and the camp.

As shown, within Agamben’s ontology subjects and spaces are always determined in relation to sovereign power understood as the decision on the exception, that is, the ability to decide on who or what counts as a political/non-political subject or space at all. In this sense, then, I agree with Vaughan-Williams that ‘the ban deserves special attention and arguably more than has been devoted to it in

the secondary literature’ (2015; 50) but I am far more critical of what this attention brings to light. The primary examples of such subjects drawn by sovereign power are homo sacer and other paradigmatic examples of ‘bare life’, whilst the prominent biopolitical space is ‘the camp’. Both are ‘threshold’ figures in the sense that they arise at the overlapping intersection between two bifurcated spheres of being, in this case properly political being and non-political being, and relatedly biopolitics and ethical politics49:

‘One of the essential characteristics of modern biopolitics (which will continue to increase in our century) is its constant need to redefine the threshold in life that distinguishes and separates what is inside from what is outside. Once it crosses over the walls of the oikos and penetrates more and more deeply into the city, the foundation of sovereignty – non-political life – is immediately transformed into a line that must be constantly redrawn. [...] And when natural life is wholly included in the polis – and this much has, by now, already happened – these thresholds pass, as we will see, beyond the dark boundaries separating life from death in order to identify a new living dead man, a new sacred man’ (Agamben, 1998; 131).

The problem is that this assumes firstly that it is, or at least was at some time, possible to make a distinction between inside/outside, politics/non-politics, secondly that making such a decision is what comprises sovereign power, and thirdly that such distinctions are metaphysical ones. I argue this shows Agamben is ‘metaphysically seduced’ by the grammars of his own language game (Pin-Fat, 2010; 118-120). These grammars are the distinctions between politics/non-politics, bare/political life, language/world, being/being-such, and more, which make up the philosophical aporias of modernity according to Agamben and produce the nation-state’s exceptional biopolitics. They are the rules of the game. What we find in Agamben’s account of biopolitics is a world that is fundamentally divided into two separate spheres which nevertheless endlessly interrelate in the form of a ‘threshold’, ‘zone of

49 This bifurcation is tied up with other ontological divisions in Agamben’s language game between language/the world and being/being-such, with one hidden beneath the other. His philosophical-archaeological method (‘paradigmatology’) is designed to ‘dig’ beneath language to uncover the being as such lying at the foundational centre of onto-logy (being-in-language) and which might be emancipated from its biopolitical capture (see Agamben, 2009a; 2007b; Pin-Fat, 2010).
indistinction’, ‘suspension’, ‘ban’, or ‘exception’ and more. This spatialisation\(^5\) of his grammatical distinctions exhibits his metaphysical seduction, which necessitates a particular form of biopolitical sovereignty as ‘a line that must be constantly redrawn’ (Agamben, 1998; 131 — emphasis added). In other words, Agamben equates biopolitics with a particular grammar of the (im)possibility of politics, the lines of which he draws ontologically hard at the same time as he ascribes the drawing of these lines to the sovereign power of the state apparatus. As Pin-Fat states, ‘it is only if we are metaphysically seduced that we draw distinctions as hard lines that go deep into reality and deep into us as subjects so that we can neatly separate the world into its component elements and features’ (2010; 118). In being seduced by a picture of politics as sovereign line-drawing imbued with metaphysical power, Agamben reproduces the ontology of the biopolitical nation-state as a political (albeit a violently depoliticising) necessity. Hence why, in order to free ourselves and the possibility of a properly ethical politics from our biopolitical capture, we must bring about a revolution in thought and the transcendence of line-drawing: ‘to bring the political out of its concealment and, at the same time, return thought to its practical calling’ (Agamben, 1998; 4-5).

Why does this matter? I suggest it matters because in his metaphysical seduction Agamben reiterates a similar politics of forgetting to that of humanitarianism discussed above. Assigning metaphysical weight to the divisive lines drawn by sovereign power Agamben’s framing of biopolitics assumes an ontology in which it is actually possible to draw someone outside the realm of politics and to render someone ‘bare life’, and that it is in this production of a ‘bare life’ that the violence of biopolitics consists. But this misses all the highly political ways in which we carry out biopolitical violence on each other, not because the lives of others are ‘bare’ but precisely because of how much we value or despise them. We reduce people to horrifying conditions of rightlessness and inflict exceedingly brutal harms on them; we ostracise and ghettoise, incarcerate and dispossess, criminalise and securitise large populations of people on the basis of ethnicity, race, or some other perceived

\(^5\) In human geography this spatialisation in Agamben’s theory is championed for its analytical potential (see especially Ek, 2006; Diken & Lausten, 2006; Minca, 2006; 2007; 2015). As Minca states: ‘Agamben’s theoretical edifice should be conceived of, above all, as a grand spatial theory’ (2006; 388).
characteristics of difference; and in doing so we undoubtedly draw some lines. But such practices cannot be reduced in their entirety to line-drawing and none of our line-drawing practices can ‘fully capture’ the subject it delineates ‘because, whatever it might be, language does not serve to name or locate what is essential/deep about us’ (Pin-Fat, 2010; 128). If instead we follow Pin-Fat’s advice, that ‘[r]ather than seeing the lines that form pictures of the subject as hard, deep lines, we would see them for what they are: as soft’ (128), we might find ourselves better positioned to confront our own political complicity in the lines we draw between ourselves and others.

Seeing line-drawing as ontologically ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’ means seeing it as ongoing and socially constructive, as a performative practice, something we do. This therefore serves as a reminder of our ordinary responsibilities for how we identify and treat each other and the frailty of our ethical political relations on the ‘rough ground’ of everyday life (129). To see, with Agamben, the lines of political (im)possibility as ontologically deep and the necessary result of inherited metaphysical aporia is to relinquish such a responsibility. It is also to have separated the practice of line-drawing from its political context in which it becomes meaningful: ‘if I draw a boundary line that is not yet to say what I am drawing it for’ (Wittgenstein, 1974; §499; Pin-Fat, 2016a; 49). On Agamben’s account, it doesn’t seemingly matter who the sovereign is or who the sovereign decision is violating since (bio)political violence is simply the expression of the underlying metaphysics of modernity. But surely this is to void sovereign power and the sovereign decision of all (bio)political content and to relinquish any chance of making sense of the situation (Wittgenstein, 1974; §119; §464). Because these details do matter, they are what make up the ‘embodied and relational’ context of ethical politics and the reproduction of power (Scheel, 2013b; 3.4.3). As Foucault consistently reminds us (1978; 94-97), if power is relational then the specifics of those relations are fundamental to power’s operation and our understanding of it. Agamben’s metaphysical seduction results in perpetuating a politics of forgetting that loses sight of the people who make up the world and our (bio)political relations within it. If we follow him in adopting his analytical framework we might find we ‘have removed ourselves from the world and each other by theorising’ (Pin-Fat, 2010; 129).
Here, it is perhaps useful to highlight the difference between Agamben and Foucault’s conception of biopolitical line-drawing and violence. Whereas Agamben focuses on sovereign and metaphysical line-drawing, which occurs at some meta-level by distinguishing between the spaces, subjects and (im)possibility of politics/non-politics, Foucault’s discussion of biopolitical violence leads him to discuss the much more ordinary issue of racism. Problematic and limited as his specific take on racism might be (Lemke, 2011; 43) it nonetheless captures exactly what is at stake in the distinction between hard/soft line-drawing in relation to biopolitics. As Foucault states ‘[t]hat is the first function of racism: to fragment, to create caesuras within the biological continuum addressed by biopower’ — ‘In a normalizing society, race or racism is the precondition that makes killing acceptable’ (Foucault, 2004; 255; 256 – emphasis added). Racism here is clearly not a matter of producing bare life or abandoning life to a zone beyond the political. Rather, it is highly normative and bound up with making killing acceptable by creating divisions (‘caesuras’) within the space of (bio)political praxis. Racism is a relation we are in with, among, and against others. In opposition to Agamben, racism is unavoidably ethical and political and of this world. It entails the lines we draw in our daily relations with others.

Racism is, unfortunately, not exceptional but rather a very ordinary occurrence and one that is bound up with the same histories and understandings as the biopolitical nation-state, but not entirely determined by them. A complex, shifting, multi-faceted phenomenon, racism has not evolved smoothly out of the philosophical aporias of modernity but rather has always been confronted by struggle and contestation (Linebaugh & Rediker, 2000; Gilroy, 1993; 2002). The lines of racism we draw are soft not hard, challenged and resisted, but no less powerful because of it. Furthermore, whilst racism does involve division and discrimination it cannot be reduced to a practice of sovereign line-drawing. Indeed, on Foucault’s understanding it is racism that enables the biopolitical sovereign decision of life/death, not the other way round (Foucault, 2004; 256). The injustices of racism and the violence it entails are about more than sovereign decisions and they unfold in ordinary mundane ways which are, however, no less shocking. Racism is a disposition we take in the world through which we annihilate others (Pin-Fat, 2016a). It is also something that is and
must be struggled against everyday rather than something we can make disappear simply with new concepts. As Blencowe succinctly puts it: ‘For all his pertinence, however, Agamben’s analyses of political processes seems strangely removed from political experience; from economies of bodies, desires and connections; from the subjective eventful practical stuff of political life’ (2012; 104). Emptied of any sense of life as living, populated, and everyday, Agamben offers a radically ahistorical, depoliticising, and disempowering account of biopolitics: ‘It is, in the end, to grasp at impotence. The reaction of horror – not the action of revolt’ (124).

Finally I discuss Agamben’s influence in critical debates over the politics of migration/border control. Analyses of the politics of (particularly irregular) migrant spaces and subjectivities are often carried out as a debate over the de/politicisation of ‘the camp’ and whether within it migrant subjects are reduced to ‘bare life’ or not. I will argue, in potentially reproducing the metaphysical seduction of Agamben’s account of sovereign line-drawing, this debate risks perpetuating a politics of forgetting that imbues nation-state borders with metaphysical power. I want to suggest there is something ‘rather odd’ in the assumption underlying this debate that in migrant camps, detention centres, or other sites of bordering practices we might actually find an absence of politics (Pin-Fat, 2016a; 56). In attempting to ‘disprove’ Agamben through an appeal to ‘empirical evidence’ of the presence of politics in the camp (Vaughan-Williams, 2015; 59), even those who reject his bleakly totalising analysis remain committed to an ontology where at stake in these spaces is the decision over the line between politics/non-politics. To an extent they reproduce the nation-state’s seductive ontology and continue to attribute to national sovereignty a metaphysical power of decision over where the line between political/non-political life can be drawn. This continues to be relevant, as we will see in the next chapter (6), for how we might engage critically with the literature which draws on Isin and Rancière to articulate a politics of migration and migrant solidarity in terms of disruptive or transformative acts of (non)citizenship, and what might be limiting about this approach.
5.5 De/politicising the camp: sovereign seductions

Most contributors to this debate can be, somewhat reductively, characterised as taking one of two positions, either politicising or depoliticising ‘the camp’: either it is a space of extreme, violent and at times lethal, disempowerment (Edkins, 2000; Edkins & Pin-Fat, 2005; Khosravi, 2010), ‘de-subjectivation’ (Minca, 2015), dehumanisation (Vaughan-Williams, 2015) and abjection or abandonment (Bigo, 2007; Isin & Rygiel, 2007; Nyers, 2003; 2006; 2010) or a site of struggle, solidarity and transgression (Rygiel, 2011; 2012; 2014) resistance and refusal (Bailey, 2009; Jones, 2012), non-citizen agency, autonomy, and ‘escape’ (Johnson, 2013; 2014; Mezzadra, 2004; Papadopoulos et al, 2008) and (‘impossible’) protest (Ziarek, 2007; Tyler, 2013; Rigby & Schlembach, 2013). In many ways this apparent division mirrors another in the literature between autonomy of migration/border control, what Squire has usefully labelled ‘the politics of migration’ and ‘the politics of control’ which make up the ‘contested politics of mobility’ (Squire, 2011). But in relation to ‘the camp’ space in particular, the debate is often framed in terms of whether migrant politics, agency, and subjectivity is possible within it or whether the depoliticising effects of biopolitical sovereignty predominate. As Vaughan-Williams has noted,

‘[w]hile there remain nuances within and between both “sides” of the debate, critical border and migration studies are nonetheless in a state of crisis because the field as a whole remains caught in an impasse between these two poles: the analyst must seemingly “choose” either to privilege border control (“negative” biopolitics) or migrant agency (“positive” biopolitics), respectively’ (2015; 8)

Whilst I am not sure many theorists can be simplistically assigned to one ‘pole’ or another, and very few simply assume Agamben’s account without problematising it at all, I suggest this debate nevertheless persists as a tension within different theorists account of sovereign power, bare life, and the camp in relation to migration. Most of the literature on camps and migration appears concerned with something akin to the question “under these conditions can there be migrant politics?” and wanting, for the most part, to answer in the affirmative. Far from a rejection of Agamben’s framework, however, this takes up precisely the task set by his ontological commitments and to answer the question he so urgently poses: ‘Is today a life of power available?’
(Agamben, 2000; 8). Despite there being much of value in this critical migration research, I suggest, in trying to answer this question scholars commit themselves to Agamben’s problematic ontology and end up seduced by a picture of politics as sovereign/foundational line-drawing. Offering a subversive re-reading of Edkins & Pin-Fat’s (2005) call for a ‘refusal to draw sovereign lines’ I conclude by suggesting that if we don’t start with Agamben we might be reminded that there is more to politics that sovereign line-drawing.

5.5.1 Bare/political life and resistance in the camp

Edkins & Pin-Fat seemingly offer a ‘negative’ and depoliticising conception of sovereign biopolitics and the camp. They argue that Agamben’s conception of sovereign power ‘is not a properly political power relation [...] but a relationship of violence’ (2005; 9) and that in the camp ‘power relations vanish [...] All we have is the administration of bare life’ (11). However, Edkins & Pin-Fat are primarily interested in exploring possibilities for resisting such a biopolitics and answering in the affirmative the question of ‘whether sovereign power can be challenged at all’ (2).

They suggest resistance to sovereign power entails ‘a return to properly political power relations’ through either ‘a refusal to draw lines’ or ‘the assumption of bare life’ (12): ‘it is only through a refusal to draw any lines at all between forms of life (and indeed, nothing less will do) that sovereign power as a form of violence can be contested and a properly political power relation (a life of power as potenza) reinstated’ (14). They point to asylum seekers’ practices of lip-sewing in detention as an example of assuming bare life in such a way that does not simply demand sovereign recognition as politically qualified life but rather performatively ‘unmask[s] the relationship of violence’ between the state and the refugee, showing the practice of sovereign line-drawing to be already highly political and contestable, and one they ultimately refuse (20; 23). Edkins & Pin-Fat, therefore, suggest a strategy of resistance to sovereign power in the camp which aims ‘to overturn the denial of politics that has taken place

51 This aspect of their argument is often missed in analyses in the wider literature which usually overlooks the nuance of the re-reading of Agamben they are attempting to provide (e.g. Johnson, 2014; 149-150; 166; McNevin, 2011; Puggioni, 2014).
under biopolitics and to reinstate properly political power relations, with their accompanying freedoms and potentialities’ (24).

In stressing the assumption of bare life, Edkins & Pin-Fat have been criticised for presenting an overly negative picture of migrant politics in the camp which concedes too much to the ontology of sovereign power and neglects the multiple ways in which camps are never spaces devoid of power relations or resistance (Zevnik, 2009; Puggioni, 2014). Others have instead sought to present a more ‘positive’ response to Agamben’s theorising of the camp by pointing to examples of resistance, solidarity, protest, and other signs of political agency from ‘the empirical world’ to show the presence of politics in the camp and to ‘disprove’ the idea that migrant subjects are reduced to bare life (Bailey, 2009; 118; Rygiel, 2011; 2012; 2015; McNevin, 2013; 184; Redclift, 2013; Johnson, 2014; Vaughan-Williams, 2015; 54; 59).

For instance, Rygiel explores how in Calais migrant camps are highly politicised places where different logics of control and autonomy are constantly coming into conflict and in which ‘the struggle over the meaning of the camp is itself integral’ (Rygiel; 2011; 2). Such an analysis importantly highlights migrant agency but also shows how this agency itself expresses a politics that ‘puts the social back into the space of the camp’ as the basis of an alternative, transient, and transgressive space for solidarity and the enactment of citizenship (2; 11; 12-13; See also 2012; 2014). In this way Rygiel’s account, far from accepting Agamben’s account of the camp as a depoliticised space of bare life, ‘politicizes the camp space as a lived space, a space in which people are placed in positions of abjection but also in which people negotiate, cooperate, fight, resist, and ultimately live. [...] camps like “the jungle” also show how people on the move practice citizenship, literally, in motion through their own resourcefulness to create communities (however temporary and desperate) while on the move’ (15).

In this way, the literature associated with the autonomy of migration is surely correct to point out the capacity of people on the move ‘to create new possibilities out of extreme hardship’ and to reject the notion that camps are spaces of bare life (Rygiel, 2011; 9; see also 6.4). However, showing life in the camps to be social, political, and agentic does not necessarily mean these spaces are any less defined by sovereign biopolitics or violence. As Vaughan-Williams has critically argued, ‘it is
because of a recognition that “irregular” migrants have “agency” that such populations are performatively identified and targeted by such authorities in the first place’ (2015; 67). Similarly, as this chapter has tried to demonstrate, an intimate understanding of migrant subjectivity and sociality is central to the realisation of border security strategies of segregation, containment, and removal. Indeed, on a Foucaultian rather than Agambenian understanding of biopolitics, the capacities and potentialities of migrants as living social subjects (not as bare life) is precisely the condition for their government as a population (Foucault, 2004; 2009; 2010). But what is more important here, if perhaps less immediately apparent, is how the effort to disprove Agamben’s depoliticising account of the camp by appealing to empirical examples of political life in migrant camps still remains caught up in a debate that assumes what is at stake is primarily the sovereign decision on political/non-political life. Whilst I agree these spaces are highly political and full of life, and in this sense Agamben’s reading of the camp as a space of bare life is problematic, and whilst I find much inspiration in these accounts of migrant solidarity and struggle (see chapter 6), I feel the way the debate is framed to begin with concedes too much to Agamben’s conception of exceptional biopolitics. To an extent, I suggest, ‘it is not a challenge to sovereign power per se as it still tacitly or even explicitly accepts that lines must be drawn somewhere (and preferably more inclusively)’ (Edkins & Pin-Fat, 2005; 15). In other words, to me there is something odd in the way so many conversations about migrant politics and solidarity feel the need to start with, or are even fully taken up by, an argument over the possibility that such a politics might exist at all. Was the fact that migrant spaces and subjects are political really ever in question? But ‘we’ do feel this need, more often than not, to repeatedly argue that noncitizen migrants (should) qualify as political. And that we do is, I suggest, ethically and politically, as well as analytically, relevant because it expresses a latent ontological assumption about the proper (ordinary) place of politics and the idea that (nation-state) borders can actually draw a line between political/non-political subjects and spaces.

Starting with Agamben requires us to start from a position that metaphysically prioritises the political ontology of the nation-state and its borders, and to work our way out. It makes us feel like we need to settle first of all the question of who or what
is non/political, the sovereign question of where to draw the line. I don’t think this is entirely Agamben’s fault. The appeal of Agamben’s theory is likely partly down to how his seductions mirror our own. It is these seductions which mean we are surprised to encounter solidarity at the border between those who the border targets most violently. Rygiel evokes this well when she states her surprise at the ‘resourcefulness’ of migrants in Calais: ‘visiting Calais I was struck by the fact that, despite the clear desperateness of the situation, there was nevertheless a functioning, if precarious, system of assistance in place’ (11). I am not critiquing Rygiel here, or anyone else, since this is an ordinary response to encounters at the border, one I have shared myself. Indeed, that it is ordinary tells us something about how particular political ontologies and power relations infuse and inform our concepts and our interactions even when we try to escape them. That we are surprised by the living subjects and lived spaces we find in our encounters at the border tells us something about the politics of forgetting which still haunts these encounters (Auchter, 2014), a politics that remains tied to a metaphysics of national borders and divisions and forgets our shared political exposure with others in the world. To be surprised in this way is certainly not a bad thing, for it can remind us to return to the rough ground of ethical politics. Finally, in light of the above, I will conclude by arguing for a re-reading of Edkins & Pin-Fat’s refusal of sovereign line-drawing as a return to the ordinary ethical politics of our everyday encounters.

5.5.2 Hard lines/soft refusals

Edkins & Pin-Fat’s (2005) account of how to resist sovereign power has been critiqued simultaneously for being overly negative and restraining, ‘trapped within an exclusionary frame’ (Squire, 2009; 158), and for being utopian and ‘self-defeatingly extreme, if not outright inconceivable’ (Prozorov, 2005; 103-104). Their call to refuse sovereign line-drawing has been understood as a demand for a radical escape to a non-sovereign politics, ‘a call to dispense with the very principle of order’ (Ibid; 104), and therefore expecting too much from political resistance: ‘Perhaps one could say that Edkins and Pin-Fat become lured by the promise of transcending sovereign power to the point that their privileging of the negative moment of refusal becomes excessively limiting’ (Squire, 2009; 158). Refusing sovereign line-drawing is seen as an
unrealistic and impossible basis for resistant politics because it simultaneously reaches too far and yet not far enough. Other critiques trace this dynamic to a paradox of line-drawing from which Edkins & Pin-Fat are unable to escape. As Zevnik puts it,

‘the idea of refusal [...] is of no use in providing a successful challenge to sovereign power, because the refusal of sovereign power line-drawing ethics implies their initial acceptance and then – through a direct confrontation with sovereign power – also their refusal’ (2009; 11).

Similarly, Vaughan-Williams argues that

‘the ambiguity lies in the issue of whether Agamben’s call for a logic of the field implies the need for the abandonment of all forms of borders, distinctions and separations, or just some. If it is the former case then the ‘metadistinction’ Edkins and Pin-Fat rely upon in their argument – between certain types of distinctions that are to be refused and other types of distinctions that are to be embraced – surely falls prey to the very logic they are ostensibly seeking to displace. If it is the latter then the question arises, how do we know which borders, distinctions and separations should be refused? We are then back to familiar questions located within the framework of sovereign politics: Who draws the line? Where? On what grounds?’ (2009a; 145).

Important here is how we understand Edkins & Pin-Fat’s response to Prozorov’s critique in which they state: ‘We are specifically referring to the drawing of lines between what amounts to forms of life as “politically qualified” or as “bare life”. This strategy of refusal (of the drawing of sovereign lines) removes the possibility of opting for one side of the sovereign equation or the other, be it bare life or indeed politically qualified life, as a strategy of contestation’ (2005; 14 note 59). What is at stake here is our understanding of what a refusal of sovereign line-drawing between political/non-political life entails so that it ‘removes the possibility for opting for one side of the sovereign equation or the other’. That there might be an ambiguity in how we read this refusal is understandable since the two authors themselves are not always in agreement on this, Edkins favouring a politics without or beyond line-drawing (2007) and Pin-Fat more interested in the political implications of ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’ line-drawing (see Pin-Fat, 2010; 128; and 140 note 10). Re-reading the refusal to draw sovereign lines as a refusal of hardness allows us, I argue, to make more productive sense of this claim, and also bring us back to a politics of everyday life.
Critiques of Edkins & Pin-Fat assume that at stake in resisting sovereign power are *hard* lines, lines drawing deep ontological distinctions between forms of life, identities, non/politics. Here refusing line-drawing is after all presented as a *re*politicisation of *bare* life. As such, it appears to remain caught within sovereign practices of line-drawing between forms of life, either within the sovereign (bio)political order or between this (bio)political order and some externalised other political order to come. But this understanding of *sovereign line-drawing and its refusal* remains seduced by a picture of line-drawing as hard, as deep and ontological. The entire discussion seems to have already assumed that sovereign line-drawing has deep metaphysical effects, and is the central (hard) question of politics which must be answered, and therefore the same must be true of its refusal. However, if we take a ‘softer’ ontological understanding of line-drawing, I suggest refusing sovereign line-drawing can be understood not as concerned with resolving, escaping, or remaining trapped within a line-drawing or sovereign ‘order’/framework, but rather as a refusal to be metaphysically (and politically) seduced by sovereign lines and their requirement that we choose sides. Rather than try to decide on an answer to the question “is it (im)possible to have a politics without line-drawing?” a ‘soft’ refusal of line-drawing acts as a reminder that there is ordinarily more to political life than where to draw the line between non/politics, a concern for which is usually the preserve of philosophers and jurists. A refusal to draw *sovereign* lines is not necessarily a rejection of all line-drawing, indeed lines are drawn *ordinarily* all the time, but not all lines are sovereign (i.e. metaphysically deep). Not even, we might suggest as ‘poststructuralists’, the lines of the nation-state. Understood softly, refusing to draw lines is to refuse the metaphysical seduction of sovereign power which so often starts and ends with a picture of nation-state borders as the borders of the political itself (Walker, 1992; 2010).

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, drawing on Pin-Fat (2010; 2013; 2016) I have argued both humanitarianism and Agamben’s theory of the exceptional biopolitical sovereignty express a politics of forgetting. What is at stake in this politics of forgetting, for both, is an understanding of nation-state borders as ‘hard’ or metaphysically ‘deep’. Both
humanitarianism and Agamben’s theory assume, in differing yet similar ways, that practices of nation-state sovereignty can draw some people outside the line of ethical politics, political life, or humanity. In this way, both risk contributing to the reproduction of a particular ontology of (bio)political sovereignty, embodied in the nation-state, as the lived reality in our encounters at the border. Instead, I have argued for taking a ‘soft’ ontological understanding of borders and line-drawing, as this allows us to remain attentive to the manifold ways we are complicit in reproducing everyday practices of segregation. This calls for an already ethical political engagement with those struggles against racism, inequality, and violence which persist in challenging the daily work of the biopolitical border. This is what it means to stay on the rough ground of everyday life. As I will argue in the next and final chapter, it is important to be attentive to this constant risk of denying the politics of others in our theorising of migrant politics and advocating for possibilities for solidarity. In particular, in relation to the critical migration literature that draws upon notions of ‘acts of citizenship’, ‘autonomy of migration’ and ‘dissensus’ to conceptualise migrant political subjectivity, I will argue that it is important to interrogate the ways in which a politics of forgetting continues to reassert itself.

Finally, in light of the above argument it is perhaps possible to begin making sense of the message which confronted us at the start of the chapter: ‘NOW WILL YOU LISTEN?’ To me this is not a demand to be recognised as human or as a political subject, as if these statuses were ever in doubt. The power of this message comes not in the form of a request but a reprimand, as a critique and a challenge. It is not the assertion of a new form of citizenship, a political subjectivity ex nihilo or a voice from nowhere, breaking through into the sphere of politics. It is rather a condemnation of our politics of forgetting. They’ve been speaking, even shouting, for a long time. We just haven’t been listening.
6. Everyday solidarity: encountering the subject of migrant politics

6.1 Introduction

Throughout this thesis I have explored various ways the border plays out in everyday life as a form of segregation in both the UK and Calais. I have argued for a perspective which sees the border as an everyday embodied encounter. From this perspective, I argued, we see how in Calais daily encounters with destitution and police violence, as a policy of deterrence, literally enforce the border’s segregating categories on the bodies of certain subjects, marking them and their mobility as ir/regular, il/legal, im/possible, and im/ permissible (Chapter 3). However, this perspective also highlights how the border must be constantly recreated and redrawn in scenes of encounter between subjects which are often messy and uncertain. In other words, I argued, it points to how the border in its very realisation is opened up to contestation and sometimes undone. Perhaps we can say borders seem to blur when seen from the perspective of everyday life. Yet this blurriness in no way undermines the productive or violent potency of borders but rather is central to their opaque and pervasive proliferation across increasingly ordinary and mundane spaces and practices (Chapter 4). As the UK example showed, constantly reiterated in everyday life borders become implicated within broader contexts of ongoing and historical discrimination and struggle around race, class, and belonging. So too, I argued (Chapter 5), does humanitarianism, as we can see from the central role played by the humanitarian day centre in the development of segregation as a border security strategy in Calais. In this context, I suggested humanitarianism perpetuates a ‘politics of forgetting’ (Pin-Fat, 2016a) that reproduces the nation-state’s (bio)political ontology by neglecting how its conceptions of political space, subjectivity, and practice are grounded in histories of racialised discrimination, colonialism, and violence that continue to shape our encounters at the border according to particular hierarchies and inequalities of humanity and life (Ibid; 46-47; Fassin, 2007; 520). Finally, pointing to the persistent risk of this ‘metaphysical seduction’ (Pin-Fat, 2010) of the nation-state and its borders even within the critical migration literature, I suggested taking a
'soft’ ontological perspective on borders and line-drawing in order to critically interrogate and challenge the everyday workings of the (bio)political border. This involves, I proposed, shifting our focus from the ‘deep’ lines between politics/nonpolitics towards more ‘soft’ line-drawing and other ordinary practices which make up everyday struggles against segregation, racism, inequality, and violence. It is to these ordinary practices I now turn in this final chapter in order to consider what migrant solidarity might entail when we encounter the border as everyday segregation.

To do this I engage with two approaches which frame much of the critical debates concerning migrant politics/subjectivity and their radical potential to challenge the global (bio)political order of contemporary capitalism, nation-state government, and/or (neo)liberal citizenship. Firstly, Critical Citizenship Studies (CSS), which focuses on the transgressive and disruptive potential of ‘acts of citizenship’ by noncitizens (Isin, 2008; 2009; Isin & Nyers, 2014; Ní Mhurchú, 2014b; Nyers, 2010; Rygiel, 2011; 2014; Rygiel, et al. 2015) and, secondly, the Autonomy of Migration approach (AoM), which emphasises the primary constituent power of the collective mobility of disparate autonomous subjects as a social force or movement running counter to neoliberal capitalist and state control (Hardt & Negi, 2000; Mezzadra, 2004; 2011; 2013; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012; 2013; Papadopoulos, Tsianos, 2007; 2013; Papadopoulos, Tsianos & Stephenson, 2008; Scheel, 2013a; 2013b; Stierl, 2016). Whilst these two fields frequently overlap they are nonetheless internally heterogeneous and importantly distinct in how they interpret migrant politics and subjectivity as a form of border struggle (Ataç et al. 2016; McNevin, 2013; Nyers, 2015). Whilst they both to some extent identify a progressive political element within migrant politics and subjectivity they differ on the form it takes. They offer different readings of the emancipatory potential of migrant politics and subjectivity playing out in encounters with the border and border struggles. As Tyler & Marciniak (2013) put it, the current critical debate around ‘migrant activisms’ concerns the possibility of other ways of being political (see also Isin, 2002; Nyers, 2007; Nyers & Rygiel, 2012) and often centres around the question of ‘[w]hether we attempt to think citizenship “beyond the state” or reject citizenship as the constitutive ground of the political by
highlighting alternative forms of political solidarity, and cultivating alternative vocabularies’ (154). At the same time, this debate over political subjectivity should be understood as playing out alongside and intertwined with another over borders and the boundaries of the non/political which, according to Nick Vaughan-Williams, has reached ‘something of an intellectual and practical impasse, which is often presented in zero-sum terms as a simple interpretive “choice” between privileging borders over migration, control over escape, closure over openness, violence over agency, and death over life, rather than seeing these as being mutually constitutive’ (2015; 123; see also chapter 5).

In this chapter I will explore what is at stake in these debates by unpacking their conceptions of migrant politics and subjectivity in relation to several scenes of encounter with border struggles in Calais. I ask what sort of politics do we encounter in these scenes and what forms might migrant solidarity take in them? I draw upon both CCS and AoM to see what answers these approaches might give, identifying their insights and their limitations for thinking about migrant solidarity. What I hope to trace is how, in their efforts to identify an emancipatory subject and form of politics that transforms or transcends the framework of the (neo)liberal (bio)politics of the nation-state, both CCS and AoM, albeit in different ways, risk inadvertently reproducing a statist ontology as metaphysically seductive (Pin-Fat, 2010; see 5.4.2). At the same time, I argue that despite their commitment to context, complexity, mobility and their invaluable contributions to theorising the contingency and performativity of political being, they nonetheless express a tendency to overly circumscribe what can be understood as properly political migrant subjectivity and a properly radical form of political practice. Specifically, migrant politics is either conceptualised in terms of activist ‘rupture’ and rights claiming (see especially Isin, 2008) or in terms of ‘escape’ (Mezzadra, 2004; Papadopoulos, Tsianos, & Stephenson, 2008). Furthermore, in both CCS and AoM certain familiar figures repeatedly re-emerge as the exemplary political subject, in particular the citizen, the proletariat, and

52 That these conceptualisations of migrant politics resemble the pictures of liberal and Marxist emancipation respectively should come as no surprise given how their genealogies can be traced back to debates within Citizenship Studies (Nyers, 2007) and the Italian Autonomist movement (Mitropoulos, 2006; Mezzadra, 2011).
the indecipherable/uncontainable nomad. This tendency across the literature, I argue, limits our ability to encounter migrant solidarity as an everyday phenomenon in our analyses and risks imposing our own political rationales onto the lives of others. As well as posing a problem for critical analysis this also brings us further away from migrant solidarity and all the hard work that this entails.

Critiquing these approaches, I don’t intend to refute them or their undoubtedly valuable critical insights into the politics of borders and migrant solidarity. Instead, my argument is meant as a ‘reminder’ of what we are doing in our analyses when we think we are analysing politics, or when we think we are thinking politically (Pin-Fat, 2010; Wittgenstein, 1974; §127), and in particular, a reminder of the continuing metaphysical seductions we face when critiquing and confronting borders. I also argue for a ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’ ontological approach to borders and the politics of migration (see also 2.5; 5.5.2). In doing so I draw on recent work concerning how ‘ambivalence’ and ‘ambiguity’ figure prominently in encounters with irregular migrant subjects and border struggles and how they relate to, navigate, unsettle, struggle and play with lines of identity, belonging, citizenship and the state (see McNevin, 2013; Ní Mhurchú, 2014a; 2015; 2016a). Here I also consider recent work that analyses the ways in which ‘irregularity’ itself becomes a central political stake in contests over im/mobility (Squire, 2011; Johnson, 2013; 2014) as a way of framing the everydayness and ordinariness of political encounters with the border.

I propose taking an everyday perspective on the border in the UK and Calais allows us to attend to how these ‘ambivalences’ and ‘ambiguities’ are politically relevant. In particular, I argue it allows us to see how migrant solidarity arises in the everyday encounters presented in this chapter in ways which are perhaps unfamiliar and surprising. Rather than emancipatory subjects or acts of political rupture, I suggest we find in these everyday encounters ordinary people coming together across ‘soft’ lines of identity, status, and belonging in messy and uncertain moments of life, solidarity, and struggle against the border. Seeing this aspect of everyday border struggles and migrant solidarity leaves everything as it is whilst opening us up to our own implications in ordinary daily practices of segregation (Pin-Fat, 2010; 2016). It brings us back to the rough ground, where we are already in the world with others.
whose proximity we did not choose but for whom we are intimately and mutually responsible (Butler; 1993; 2005). We are all already implicated in the segregation of everyday bordering, but it is open to us to act in solidarity with the struggles of others which may yet contain a surprise. Whilst seeing the lines we draw at the border as ontologically soft means we can see how they are capable of change and confrontation, it in no way makes this task any easier. In fact, if anything, it points to how hard we must work if we want to struggle for migrant solidarity. In short, whilst I argue border struggles involve soft lines, I want to suggest that the work of migrant solidarity remains a necessarily hard task. It involves doing ethical politics ‘the bloody hard way’ (Wittgenstein in Pin-Fat, 2010; 6).

6.2 Pictures of politics

I begin by considering two pictures from Calais (figures 3 and 4, p195). The first, from late November 2014, appears on a Calais Migrant Solidarity blogpost (CMS, 2014h) reporting a demonstration organised by the Sudanese community, at which I was also present (see figure 3). It shows a few hundred people, mostly men, mostly from Sudan, marching through the streets near the port to protest recent news of a mass rape of three hundred women in Darfur by supposedly government-backed forces. Holding banners and chanting ‘No rape in Darfur, No War in Darfur, No War in the World’ they passed through the town towards La Mairie (the town hall). Moving down the main street of the old town, the demonstrators’ voices rose louder, their message echoing in English off the shop windows and reverberating around the tables of cafes and bars where mostly French people sat watching, surprised. The usual calm of the afternoon unsettled, people paused momentarily in their habitual visit to the bank, or looked up from espressos and newspapers, as hundreds of people ordinarily othered and ostracised from French public spaces and discourses (3.5) made their presence loudly felt, proclaiming their solidarity with their Sudanese compatriots and calling for international condemnation of their oppressive government. Arriving at the town hall they protested until a representative for the mayor emerged to accept their statement of demands. Later posted online (CMS, 2014h), along with demands for the International Criminal Court to indict president Omar al Bashir for genocide and for intervention by the international community, the statement read:
We have been made refugees by the barbarism and violence of the regime in Sudan and we continue to feel the suffering of those who remain there. Many still endure killing, rape, and forced expulsion from their villages which are then burned to the ground. Even though we are far away we stand beside them in solidarity to demand their human rights are respected. We call on all Sudanese people, both inside and outside the country, to stand up and demonstrate against what has happened there. We call on all the opposition parties to support and to stand with the victims in Darfur. We call on everyone around the world who cares about human rights to condemn these horrible acts. The government of Sudan is to blame for these atrocities [...] The world is full of genocide and sexual violence against women. We must put a stop to this!

Yes to humanity! No to rape! No to forced expulsions!

The voice of the Sudanese refugees in Calais, France’

The second picture (figure 4) shows people on a motorway leading to Calais’ port walking towards oncoming trucks as a traffic jam forms, one man holding his arms outstretched directly in the path of the nearest vehicle, forcing it to slow down or stop so that others can climb aboard and attempt to hide themselves amongst the cargo or between the wheels in the hope of bypassing the border controls and reaching the UK. The picture is a still shot taken from a BBC news documentary aired in early 2015 (BBC News, 2015a) entitled Our World – Calais: The Final Frontier. Reporting that ‘[e]very week thousands of illegal migrants are trying to break into Britain’, it depicts a situation of rising political, humanitarian, and security crisis with mounting tensions locally. This scene on the motorway is framed in the documentary as a ‘battleground’ of clashes between migrants and police run through with tension and on the brink of violence. Mundane visuals of people waiting, walking, or avoiding heavily armed police are enhanced by an anxiously pulsating musical accompaniment. The voice over from Gilles Debove, a spokesperson for the Calais Police Union, is translated into subtitles superimposed over the images: ‘I think unfortunately at this point your sympathy evaporates’. He continues, ‘And we will be more strict and repressive. We have to maintain order, it’s our job’.
Figure 3 Sudanese Protest Calais 22/11/2014 (CMS, 2014h)

Figure 4 Traffic Jam in Calais (from BBC News (2015a) Our World - Calais: The Final Frontier)
What sorts of politics do we encounter in these two pictures? The first seems familiar in how it looks politically, the protesting, the demand for human rights, the appeal to international criminal courts and political authorities, the declaration of international solidarity, just perhaps with ‘unfamiliar’ subjects (Ní Mhurchú, 2016a). The second, however, offers a murkier picture, harder to locate the politics at play. There are no demands, no banners, seemingly little effort at all to engage in discourse or (re)present a political position. Instead we see apparently illegal activities of obstruction, property damage, and subversion of the UK’s border controls. The subjects appear to be ‘unfamiliar’ in the first picture, and ‘criminal’ in the second. The first picture seems to show an encounter with an emerging ‘transnational citizenship’ (Ashutosh, 2013) or ‘abject cosmopolitanism’ (Nyers, 2003) in which noncitizens become unlikely political subjects laying claim to a voice, agency, and rights usually denied to them: ‘the public acts of citizenship of these noncitizens’ take on the appearance of ‘an impossible activism […] because the non-status do not possess the “authentic” identity (i.e. citizenship) that would allow them to be political, to be an activist’, and so when they do occur they seem to fundamentally challenge the boundaries of political (im)possibility making up the sovereign order of citizenship (1080; 1090). But it is not clear we encounter anything similarly political in the second picture, rather only self-interested people breaking the law to subvert controls on irregular migration. However, perhaps the very fact of irregular migration itself can be considered political if we interpret it, along with Hardt & Negri (2000), as an instance of the ‘autonomy of the mobile multitude’, the ‘autonomous movement’ of people in ways which exceed and bypass the boundaries and controls of contemporary capitalism and sovereign state power (398). Here we might possibly see in the accumulation of multiple and diverse individual migrations ‘a reclaiming of a “right to escape”, which, even if most of the time unconsciously, constitutes a material critique of the international division of labour and marks profoundly the subjectivity of the migrant’ (Mezzadra, 2004; 270).

I suggest taking these two pictures together highlights the differences between Critical Citizenship Studies (CCS) and the Autonomy of Migration approach (AoM) in terms of how they conceptualise migrant politics and subjectivity. Whilst they both
see (irregular) migrants as centrally important political subjects, there is disagreement over the sort of politics they see them prefiguring and, relatedly, over how and what progressive political change might arise. This chapter proceeds firstly by outlining in more detail these two approaches, before unpacking their potential limitations in the context of particular encounters of migrant struggle and solidarity at the border. I argue that both CCS and AoM end up overdetermining migrant politics and subjectivity according to their own picture of emancipatory politics. Whilst they both provide important insights into how migrant subjects challenge the border and boundaries of contemporary politics, I trace throughout how they also remain seduced by a picture of borders as hard and the ontology of the state as metaphysically deep. In the end, migrant subjectivity and politics is defined by its radical capacity for transformative change which I suggest neglects the ambiguity and ambivalence of migrants’ everyday lives, and therefore limits our capacity to engage in an ethical politics of solidarity in our encounters with them.

6.3 Critical Citizenship Studies: liberal paradox and migrant activism

Critical Citizenship Studies (CCS) has been highly influential in recent debates over migrant politics and activism. In particular, the notion of ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin, 2008) has been enthusiastically adopted for theorising border struggles as important sites of contestation over the im/possibilities of political subjectivity and being: ‘citizenship is fundamentally about political struggles over the capacity to constitute ourselves as a political subject’ (Isin & Nyers, 2014; 8). In contrast to traditional citizenship studies, seeing citizenship as an ‘act’ focuses our attention less on institutionalised practices, such as voting, and more on the contingent, dynamic, and creative ways in which people enact themselves as politics subjects of rights in relation to others (Isin, 2008; 2009; White, 2008). For Isin, ‘the “sites” of citizenship are fields of contestation’ on which subjects emerge for each other as possessors of rights and responsibilities or not, something that is constantly ‘in flux’ as contemporary conditions of globalisation see the boundaries of political identity and belonging shift and blur (Isin, 2009; 370). An act of citizenship is defined primarily by its capacity to interrupt the dominant alignment of subjects and to innovatively unsettle the boundaries of rights and non/political being. As Isin puts it: ‘the essence
of an act [...] is that an act is a rupture in the given’ (2008; 25). Emphasis, therefore, is placed on the capacity of ‘activist’ citizens to produce new modes of political being as opposed to ‘active’ citizens who reproduce already existing political relations and divisions (Ibid; 16; 2009;368; 381): ‘We define acts of citizenship as those acts that transform forms [...] and modes [...] of being political by bringing into being new actors as activist citizens (claimants of rights and responsibilities) through creating new sites and scales of struggle’ (2008; 39). Seeing citizenship as a field of contestation and political subjectivity as a creative performative process allows us to appreciate the constitutive role of people ordinarily excluded from the legal and political institutions of the state within a wider political struggle over rights and freedoms. Indeed, Isin inverts the usual picture by framing modern citizenship as ‘neurotic’ (2004), an anxious and uncertain ground for rights, and instead privileges the noncitizen as the exemplary creative ‘activist citizen’ in his analysis: ‘To recognize certain acts as acts of citizenship requires the demonstration that these acts produce subjects as citizens. Time and again we see that subjects that are not citizens act as citizens: they constitute themselves as those with “the right to claim rights”’ (2009; 371).

‘Acts of citizenship’ therefore offers a useful conceptual framework for analysing the multiple ways noncitizens contest their exclusion from the political sphere of rights and belonging (McNevin, 2011). It offers a ‘new vocabulary of citizenship’ (Isin, 2009; 368) with which to speak about otherwise ‘paradoxical’ subjects (2008; 16; Nyers, 2010; 129; Tyler & Marciniak, 2013) and to challenge the epistemically violent ways in which they are drawn outside the frame of politics, agency, and power. For instance, drawing on this new vocabulary, there has been excellent research on migrant politics and activism as ‘a form of citizenship “from below”’ (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012;2; Rygiel, 2015) and in terms of ‘transnational citizenship’ (Ashustosh, 2013) or ‘transgressive citizenship’ (Rygiel, 2014). The emphasis in these analyses is on how, in constructing themselves as political subjects of rights and by making claims to justice in these ways, noncitizens engaging in migrant activism disrupt, challenge, and potentially transform citizenship as an exclusionary institution and mode of political being. Examples include anti-deportation campaigns in Canada (Nyers, 2003; 2006b), migrant demonstrations and
general strikes in USA and Italy (Butler & Spivak, 2007; 58; Oliveri, 2012), the Sans Papiers and No Border movements in France and the UK (Isin, 2009; McNevin, 2006; 2011; Squire, 2009), the 2005 Declaration for the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe (Aradau, Huysmans & Squire, 2010), as well as everyday migrant solidarity practices on the move and in camps at the borders of Europe (Johnson, 2014; 2015; Rygiel, 2011; 2012). As Rygiel argues, '[t]ransgressive citizenship disrupts the readily accepted equations of who is and is not and should be a citizen and the ontological borders underpinning modern citizenship of whose lives should count, that is of who should be recognized as a political subject with the rights to have rights' (2014; 70). In these moments of rupture, when the borders of citizenship are actively contested and unfixed, we also supposedly gain a privileged insight into new possible forms of political being, new subjects and relations of community, beyond the nation-state (Nyers & Rygiel, 2012; 11; Stephens & Squire, 2012).

What sort of political subject do we encounter in these moments of rupture? What limitations are there to the non/citizen activist model offered here as exemplary of a new sort of politics? What might we miss by focusing on acts of radical rupture as the epitome of politics? I consider these questions, and possible critiques of the critical citizenship literature, in relation to a scene of encounter at the border in Calais. This encounter involved a protest by irregular migrants in response to a visit by the UK Home Secretary Theresa May in 2015 to finalise the new border security agreement with French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve (5.3). I argue that, despite first appearances, this encounter highlights a number of limitations with CCS's picture of political agency/ activism and its emphasis on radical rupture/transformation. In the end, I argue, it reproduces a particular picture of politics and the subject which potentially redraws the borders of the nation-state and liberal citizenship. Interpreting this encounter in terms of acts of citizenship, I argue, misses some of the everyday context in which it takes place and in which it becomes politically meaningful.

6.3.1 Scene of encounter: motorway blockade August 2015

On the 20th August 2015 Theresa May visited Calais to sign an agreement with French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve for the implementation of further border security measures. The agreement called for ‘[s]trong, visible and effective security, at
the Channel Tunnel railhead at Coquelles and at the Port of Calais’ (2015; 10) through increased mutual cooperation between the security forces and governments of both states, building on earlier agreements in 2014. The expressed intention was ‘to eliminate any sense, particularly amongst criminal gangs exploiting migrants, of there being value in bringing people to Calais’. A protest was called the previous day by local activists in response to the visit’s last-minute announcement and as word spread around the ‘jungle’ several residents there decided to organise to join the demonstration in town. The next morning small groups assembled by the motorway bridge which formed the entrance to the jungle. Gradually they started moving into town while a few remained behind to encourage others to follow. As it was early, most residents had been trying all night for the UK and were unlikely to want to walk back into town to face the police again in hope their shouts would not fall on deaf ears. After a while around twenty people set off to link up with the demonstration, starting soon in the centre of town, nearly an hour’s walk away. The group comprised people from different countries, some friends and compatriots, all attempting each day to cross the border irregularly to the UK, and all forced to reside in the ‘jungle’ until they did so. Upon setting off they decided to march down the centre of the road behind several makeshift banners. One depicted a figure behind bars, reading in English ‘we shall overcome’; another, in French, demanded an end to apartheid ghettoization. After several hundred metres police cars pulled in front of the marchers, bringing them to a stop and forcing them off the road. The marchers protested loudly and tried to continue on into town. For the next hour police, now reinforced by heavily armed CRS riot squads, held them on the side of the road where they continued their protest. During this time, anyone suspected of being a resident of the ‘jungle’ was prevented from crossing the police line into town, whether they were part of the protest or not. People had appointments at the hospital, or with asylum caseworkers, but were turned back despite having letters and other evidence to prove their purpose. One man on a bike, unaware of the situation, was struck by an officer as he tried to cycle past, dragged to the ground, and shoved back in the direction of the jungle. All the while cars and trucks, carrying people who seemed predominantly distinguishable for being white, were allowed to pass unhindered. Meanwhile, the group on the side of the road grew in number, continuing to hold up the banners for the passing cars to see.

After an hour or so, and some heated discussion, the group turned away from the police lines and marched back towards the ‘jungle’, again taking the road and disrupting the traffic. Approaching the bridge again, at first a few people, and then more and more, climbed up onto the motorway occupying both lanes and bringing to a halt all traffic heading to or from the port. As they blocked oncoming trucks, others began cheering and soon were calling down to the ‘jungle’ below for support in making the traffic jam. Moments later, hundreds of people were running and whooping towards the motorway from all through the camp. As numbers swelled and
the traffic tailed back for miles the police lines formed and the cameras arrived. Holding the banners, holding each other, the crowd pressed against the police and chanted into the cameras: ‘We are not animals, we are human beings, we are migrants, we are not criminals! We have rights to live anywhere! Open the border! Open the border!’ (CMS, 2015d; Channel 4 News, 2015). Soon a fleet of CRS arrived and, marshalled by a man wearing the tricolour sash of the Republic, they beat their way into the crowd using their weaponry of gas and batons, pushing people backwards down the steep slope to the ‘jungle’ below. Despite coughing and crying from the gas, over the next few hours hundreds of people rallied at the base of the motorway bridge, once again raising their voices and banners in protest, shouting out their resistance to the racism of the border in the faces of the riot police and the slowly moving traffic above.

Figure 5 Protest at the base of the motorway bridge, Calais 20/8/2015 (CMS, 2015d)

6.3.2 Acts of citizenship: politics as liberal claims-making

To what extent can we make sense of this encounter through the frame of ‘acts of citizenship’? Here we do seem to have ‘immigrant protests’ against the border policies in Calais, “acts” against the exclusionary technologies of citizenship, which aim to make visible the violence of citizenship as regimes of control’ whilst nonetheless paradoxically relying on ‘the idiom of the regime of citizenship they are contesting’ for the expression of their demands (Tyler & Marciniak, 2013; 146). We
see demands for ‘rights’ and assertions of humanity loudly vocalised, we see marching subjects holding up political messages, intervening in public discourse. From this perspective, all of these acts seem like ‘familiar’ acts of citizenship rendered ‘unfamiliar’ here by the subjects behind them who thereby disrupt, transgress, and perform a transformation of the political order. As Ní Mhurchú argues,

‘Within migration studies, the emphasis in this area has tended to be on the unfamiliarity of the irregular migrant subject. While unfamiliar “acts” do emerge [...] their unfamiliarity is often based on contradictions across familiar acts rather than unfamiliar acts per se. [...] It is the way in which irregular migrants make these demands [...] that is unfamiliar [...] It is the unfamiliarity of familiar acts therefore which is disorienting in this existing literature rather than unfamiliar acts themselves’ (2016; 158).

But might there be a problem with focusing too hard on unfamiliar subjects engaging in familiar political acts? How might this limit our ability to engage in the politics of more unfamiliar acts themselves (Ní Mhurchú, 2015; 2016) and simultaneously attribute too much significance to certain acts with which we are familiar? In short, we can perhaps ask, as Hindess (2004; 206) provocatively does, ‘what’s so great about citizenship?’

The definition of political subjectivity put forward in the acts of citizenship literature envisages a particular sort of political creativity and becoming, that of ‘becoming activist citizens’ (Isin, 2009; 381), framed in terms of claiming rights. Whilst this literature focuses on principally disruptive and subversive moments, often characterised by irregular migrants claiming the rights denied to them (Nyers, 2010), the form of political subjectivity we nonetheless see repeatedly emerging in these encounters is a highly liberal one, even if characterised as a distinctly paradoxical variant or transmutation. It is the active, vocal, self-constituting rights-claimant. What we find in the acts of citizenship literature is that, at the very moment when the boundaries of non/citizenship and state-centric polity are unsettled or transgressed by noncitizens, ‘it is precisely this moment of disconnection that seems to provide the impetus to reinstate the citizen as the political subject par excellence’ (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; 257).
Whilst it is certainly necessary and valuable to see citizenship as a contested field and a contingent subject position open to appropriation and adaptation, too narrow a focus on those acts characteristic of a particular sort of liberal citizen, understood as a claimant of rights, means we can end up neglecting other pertinent ways of being political that might also challenge the inequalities of contemporary borders and state institutions of community and political belonging. As Walters (2008) points out ‘there is a risk that in placing acts of citizenship at the centre of our analytical strategies one specific kind of politics will be overlooked […] a politics in which subjects refuse the identity of citizen’ (193). Yet, in order to take this risk seriously, I suggest, we need to be aware of how familiar acts constitute familiar subjects and pay closer attention to how unfamiliar acts can also be political (Ní Mhurchú, 2016). One way in which we might do this is, following Johnson, to ‘start from the non-citizen’ rather than the citizen (2014; 1) and to start from the possibility of distinct noncitizen ways of being political: ‘To apply the framework of citizenship to noncitizen action risks missing key elements of the politics that are being articulated within noncitizen protest and engagement. Within such ‘acts’, migrants find a voice on their own terms, demanding an equality of place that is excessive of a return to citizenship and that requires new frameworks for political action’ (2015; 957). Starting from noncitizenship therefore requires us to do more than simply look at ‘acts of demonstration’ involving noncitizen subjects (Walters, 2008; 193-194) and instead to engage with ‘the question of what counts as “activism”’ in the first place in such a way that brings to light other ways of being actively political (Johnson, 2014; 197).

Rigby & Schlembach (2013) offer a valuable intervention on this point. Recounting the 2009 No Borders camp in Calais, from which the Calais Migrant Solidarity group subsequently arose, they show how participation in a planned demonstration was literally policed according to non/citizenship status by officers demanding protestors show their passports, declaring ‘no passport – then back to the jungle’ (quoted in Rigby & Schlembach, 2-13; 161-162), thereby actively reinforcing the borders of political subjectivity. Drawing on Rancière, they argue that

‘The police defended the very perimeters of the possible and the impossible, a certain “distribution of the sensible” determining “the place and the stakes of politics
as a form of experience” (Rancière 2004, p. 13). The politics of the noborder camp did not begin in some pre-established domain of the political, but in the struggle over whether or not migration could be a site of politics at all’ (2013; 162).

Moreover, they point to how certain assumptions around what constituted ‘activism’ and resistance to border policing, ‘those moments when injustice was “obviously” challenged’ (167), actually became complicit in its reproduction. As they insightfully argue, ‘the spectacular opposition between noborder activists and the police, dramatized by both sides, in fact masks a more fundamental identity between them. Invariably in this picture what gets presented as “activism” essentially remains defined by the state’ (168). In particular, they identify in the noborders camp a framing of political activism which distinguished between two forms of movement, one entailing protest and overt resistance to state authorities as a movement against the injustice of the border, the other involving irregular movement across borders in such a way that literally subverts them (163). Whilst the former was seen as explicitly political, as ‘activism’, the latter was not. Identifying political agency with visible confrontation of state authority, Rigby & Schlembach argue, the noborder camp remained confined within a particular state-centric paradigm of political activism, thereby reproducing the legitimacy of the citizenship order whilst rendering acts of noncitizens politically invisible and unfamiliar. Policing the borders of citizenship, therefore, entails not just preventing certain subjects from engaging in certain political acts, such protesting and claiming rights, ‘but also framing protest and “activism” in a particularly statist way’ (168).

In contrast to this understanding of “activism” found in the noborder camp which actually ends up policing ‘the borders of the political itself’ (Ibid; 166), Rigby & Schlembach offer a particular account of the ‘autonomy of migration’ which aims ‘to make migration not simply visible, but visible as an activity: the act of an equal will and intellect’ in order to show how migration itself is a highly political act of contestation and struggle against the border (167). In doing so, they present a critique of CCS framings of migrant politics as acts of citizenship for reasserting a hierarchical division between forms of political subjectivity. Instead they to see in migrant movement itself the assertion of a radical and disruptive ‘equality’ that challenges not
just specific borders, but which also more fundamentally ‘disrupt[s] the tentative ways in which the borders of the political are policed and produced’ (170). For them, a focus on the autonomy of migration ‘reintroduces dissensus into the border struggle in Calais’ (167).

6.3.3 Dissensus: politics as radical democracy

Rigby & Schlembach draw here on Rancière’s work on ‘dissensus’ and political aesthetics of democracy (Rancière, 1999; 2001; 2004; 2006; 2010; 2011). For Rancière, politics is aesthetic (2006; 2011) essentially involving a contest over the ‘partition’ (1999; 2001) or ‘distribution of the sensible’ (2006; 2011), who or what is visible, sayable, thinkable, or recognisable within a particular political order or arche: ‘Politics is first and foremost an intervention upon the visible and the sayable’ (2001). In other words, politics is primarily concerned with the lines of political (im)possibility, who or what will count politically as a part of that political order, and how these lines are to be drawn: ‘Politics is primarily conflict over the existence of a common stage and over the existence and status of those present on it’ (1999; 26-27). For Rancière, this conflict involves two antagonistic ‘logics’ or ‘two ways of counting the parts of the community’ (2001) variously named: police/politics, consensus/dissensus, dialogue/disagreement, arche/rupture (1999; 2001; 2004; 2011). Police and consensus are mutually implicated ways of ordering society, ‘[c]onsensus is the reduction of politics to the police’ (2001), and can be understood as a particular way of ‘count[ing] the community as the sum of its parts – of its groups and of the qualifications that each of them bears’ (2004; 305). For Rancière, police should not be understood as an institution of law enforcement but rather works at a more fundamental level:

‘The police is, essentially, the law, generally implicit, that defines a party’s share or lack of it. But to define this, you first must define the configuration of the perceptible in which one or the other is inscribed. The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task; it is an order of the visible and the sayable that sees that a particular activity is visible and another is not, that this speech is understood as discourse and another as noise. [...] Policing is not so much the “disciplining” of bodies as a rule governing their appearing,
a configuration of occupations and the properties of the spaces where these occupations are distributed’ (Rancière, 1999; 29).

Integral to the operation of such an order of things is that all parts of the social body are accounted for and assigned their proper function. Therefore, ‘there is no place for a void’ within this police order, meaning no place for anything that cannot be properly quantified according to its aesthetic (socio-economic-political) criteria of value. Whatever cannot be assigned a proper function is excluded from sight. For Rancière, then, the distribution of the sensible which comprises the police order is radically depoliticised, an impoverished spectacle of democracy that is almost empty of politics: ‘Whether the police is sweet and kind does not make it any less the opposite of politics’ (1999; 31). Instead, according to Rancière, politics is limited to those moments which fundamentally disrupt and pose a challenge to the aesthetic workings of this police order by bringing to light what has been rendered invisible and excluded from the possibility of political participation:

‘Politics is a specific rupture in the logic of the arche [...] The essence of politics is dissensus. Dissensus [as opposed to consensus] is not the confrontation between interests or opinions. It is the manifestation of a distance of the sensible from itself. Politics makes visible that which had no reason to be seen, it lodges one world into another’ (2001).

For Rancière, politics arises only when a disagreement is enacted over the (im)possibilities of being a political subject at all in such a way that disrupts the ‘common sense’ of the political order as a whole by showing it to be fundamentally divided and contingent: ‘Politics exists when the natural order of domination is interrupted by the institution of a part of those who have no part [...] It defines the common of the community as a political community, in other words, as divided’ (1999; 11-12; 2004; 304). Politics as dissensus is also a radically egalitarian politics for Rancière, since rupturing the police order and establishing a common ground of political contestation asserts ‘the equality of speaking beings’ which is nothing less that ‘the equality of anyone at all with anyone else [...] the absence of arkhê, the sheer contingency of any social order’ (1999; 15; 38).

53 The connection between proper politics and the politics of property implied here indicates how for Rancière police is a capitalist as well as statist way of ordering the world, socio-economic as well as juridical.
Rancière’s picture of politics as dissensus, then, involves a contest over the lines of non/politics at stake in the very idea of community: ‘The point is, precisely, where do you draw the line separating one life from the other? Politics is about that border. It is the activity that brings it back into question’ (2004; 303). Anything which falls short of such a profound challenge to the boundary lines of political discourse is not politics for Rancière but police (1999; 32-33). Only those acts which radically unsettle and reconfigure the aesthetic order itself, redrawing the lines which frame it, can be considered political: ‘This is what I call a dissensus: putting two worlds in one and the same world. A political subject, as I understand it, is a capacity for staging such scenes of dissensus’ (2004; 304).

Looking again at the encounter in Calais above, I think Rigby & Schlembach’s critical engagement with the limits of ‘activism’ and ‘protest’ is particularly relevant. In the encounter, active engagement in protest became a conduit for the arbitrary policing of irregular migrants’ movements by spatial confining to the ‘jungle’ anyone identified with that population. It presented the means and opportunity for the police to carry out in this specific moment the wider policy of deterrence by which the border in Calais is practiced everyday as segregation (chapters 3 and 5). It didn't matter if specific people were protesting or not, it provided the pretext for a temporary escalation of control over this particular population in Calais, reinforcing the continuing power of this border to irregularise and discriminate against them. Therefore, a particularly familiar form of liberal citizenship activism, protest, was implicated in the policing of migrant subjects and the denial of their rights. Once again, the liberal citizen subject seems to reappear as internally riven by the borders of the state which are subsequently reinforced (see also Nyers, 2003). With Rigby & Schlembach, perhaps we can see the resulting motorway blockade as a rejection of this citizenship framework in favour of a performance of migrant autonomy. Perhaps we can interpret this scene as the enactment of a dissensus, a rupture in the political order, carried out through the literal disruption of the ordinary flows of mobility, traffic, in order to assert a radical equality of migrant subjectivity that challenged the very borders of the regular state-centric order.
However, I want to raise a few concerns with the use of Rancière’s model of radical democracy for interpreting migrant subjectivity and politics. Firstly, in working with a stark opposition between police/politics what counts as political from this perspective is reserved only for those radical acts seen to fundamentally challenge the dominant order of meaning and power in society. Whilst much migrant politics and solidarity certainly does pose such a radical political challenge to the dominant governing order of the nation-state, citizenship, and neoliberal economics, I think that requiring such radicalness by definition from migrants risks both romanticising the disruptive impact their movements can have, not least for themselves, and risks placing too great a burden on migrant subjects as the standard bearers of a new and potentially revolutionary politics. This critique applies to the autonomy of migration approach more generally (See Sharma, 2009; and Scheel, 2013a) so I discuss this in more detail below (6.4). Secondly, I want to suggest that articulating a radical migrant politics and subjectivity in terms of dissensus and rupture actually reproduces the ontology of liberal citizenship it sees as problematic and tries to open up. Rancière’s conception of politics as dissensus, the capacity to stage a disagreement that disrupts the dominant order of government by challenging the lines of what counts as non/politics, I suggest, assumes a surprisingly liberal understanding of how politics works. Here politics involves an intervention in the public sphere to contest what is visible and sayable within this public sphere. It stages a critique of the political order for excluding from representation a particular sector of society. In this sense, it is similar to the idea of a transgressive act of claims-making, a claim to the right to have rights (Rancière, 2004). What seems to be at stake in this intervention, and at the heart of its radical nature for Rancière, is the issue of democratic participation in the process of drawing the boundary lines of the political community. Whilst it is always focused on the ways that such an ideal of democracy has failed to count ‘the part of those who have no part’ (1999; 30; 2004; 305), Rancière’s dissensus seems to involve a very liberal conception of government as a form of representative mediation of societal conflicts and a very liberal picture of the political subject as a participant in the collective process of popular democratic sovereignty, ‘the equality of speaking beings’ (1999; 38).
Framing migrant subjectivity and politics in terms of acts of citizenship or a rupturing dissensus seems to make their political character derivative of the dominant political order which they supposedly unsettle. Whilst both perspectives highlight the self-creative agency and constituent power of migrant subjects, they are only perceived as political to the extent they cause a deep shift in the workings of the governing order, either a transformation of this order by unfamiliar subjects its rupture and radical reframing by those whose part has not been properly counted. Both, I argue, therefore end up overdetermining the political significance of the lives of migrants and their practices in terms of the state-centric framework they supposedly unsettle. Similarly, Mezzadra has argued that ‘[t]here is a tendency to conceive of politics in contemporary critical and radical debates exclusively in terms of rupture or in terms of the event’ which he finds problematic because it cannot properly account for the political efficacy these moments might have (2011; 137). Furthermore, as Mezzadra and Neislon (2013) argue, ‘the partial subject of politics [espoused by Rancière] seems to be deduced in a negative way from the concept of police’ resulting in an account that offers limited understanding of ‘the materiality of the practices and struggles that produce the conditions for the emergence of the political subject and for its constituent action’ (255). While for Mezzadra, as we shall see, this materiality is primarily an issue of how mobility is tied up with economics and ‘the composition of living labour’ (2013; x), I want to argue here that what is missed in these accounts is the everydayness of the migrant politics we see in this encounter as a struggle against the everyday segregation by which borders are made real.

6.3.4 Ordinary noncitizen subjects, everyday border struggles

The focus on transgressing, disrupting, or reshaping the lines of non/politics espoused in both acts of citizenship literature and Rancière’s account of radical democracy continuously brings our political attention back to issues of sovereignty understood as the delineation of a polity, a space or community of politics. In this way, I suggest, these approaches remain somewhat seduced by a metaphysics of the nation-state understood as involving drawing deep lines. Here, migrant subjects are repeatedly defined only in relation to these deep lines, and usually only from the negative starting point of being the subject-excluded-from-citizenship or, at best, the
paradoxical citizen asserting ‘the rights of those who have not the rights that they have and have the rights that they have not’ (Rancière, 2004; 302). But this misses some important ways in which, as I have been arguing throughout this thesis, borders are (re)produced in everyday life and therefore misses the everydayness of the politics of migrant struggle and solidarity which we encounter at them. Acts of citizenship and acts of dissensus both picture political subjectivity as involving practices of line-drawing that are somehow deep: constitutive ‘acts’ through which they become political subjects. These are deep acts because they fundamentally trouble the lines of political community and/or (im)possibility in such a way that creates a new site for or way of doing politics. But this loses sight of all the ways in which subjectivity plays out as an ordinary and everyday phenomenon, rather than metaphysically deep, and that such everyday practices of subjectivity form the context in which specific acts become political rather than the other way round.

For instance, in the scene above, unless we situate this encounter within the context of the border as everyday segregation, and not simply in terms of acts of or exclusion from citizenship as rights-claiming, we potentially miss what makes it powerfully political. In many ways, what we see in this encounter is the failure of acts of citizenship to properly confront everyday segregation in Calais. But this failure does not doom the noncitizen to political irrelevance. The impotency of these familiar acts means they were as easily abandoned as they were picked up, a different course of action chosen. Not only does CCS perhaps overly value acts of citizenship as powerful political tools but also, by connecting them with the possibility of becoming a political subject at all, they attribute a depth to performances of these acts which betrays a certain metaphysical seduction by the ontologies of the state. But the way in which noncitizens in this encounter, many half-heartedly or disinterestedly, took up the mantle of the activist protestor with ease, only to put it aside in favour of something else, shows that their subjectivity cannot usually be defined simply in terms of this line between citizen/noncitizen. Nor can their acts of protest be so defined. Whilst the policing encounter which Rigby & Schlembach discuss involved linking the freedom to protest with the possession of a (particular sort of) passport, in the encounter I am discussing the discrimination was not so explicitly based on non/citizenship status,
with racialised markers of identity instead of official documentation sufficing for the practice of segregation. Indeed, even those with French citizenship protesting in town were corralled and contained by riot police, their acts of citizenship also proving to be limited in scope and force. In light of this, I suggest the motorway blockade is not best explained in terms of acts of citizenship, but rather as a response to its failure through a distinctive practice of non-citizenship. This requires us to situate the act of blockading the motorway to the port in the context of struggles over the border playing out in the everyday lives of irregular migrants in Calais.

The motorway is a primary site where migrants in Calais encounter the border most keenly as a form of segregation and police violence, an encounter in which they are forced to embody their irregularity as an experience of denied mobility. Yet it is also where irregular migrants are able to most successfully subvert the border by stowing themselves away on vehicles bound for the UK. The dynamism of this antagonistic relation is highlighted well by the autonomy of migration approach which I discuss in the next section. However, unless we situate the scene above within the context of these everyday encounters which make up the border as a site of struggle we miss the political significance of this turn away from acts of citizenship and towards the creation of a traffic jam on the motorway. In this context, stopping traffic, both symbolically and practically, challenges this segregation and its enforcement through bordering practices. It challenges the equation of im/mobility with non/citizenship line-drawing by grinding all mobility to a halt, replicating the irregular migrants’ everyday experience of border closure for everyone, while at the same time creating a practical opportunity, a ‘chance’ (6.5.3), for people to clandestinely cross the border by smuggling themselves onto trucks. But perhaps, more mundanely, we can see in the traffic jam a tactic developed out of a very specific context of border struggle, a tactic that facilitates the exercise of mobility by a few people under conditions explicitly designed to prevent it (see Scheel 2013b and 6.6). Pointing to such an ordinary everyday explanation does not diminish its political significance, however. Certainly, it does not require us to posit some radically new political subjectivity or to see in the actions of migrants at the border a kernel for some potentially revolutionary order of politics, or even a transformation of citizenship.
Where the subjectivity of those engaged in blockading the motorway was explicitly expressed, it was done so using quite ordinary and familiar terms, ‘human’ and ‘migrant’, and in order to highlight quite familiar political inequalities and violences which persist around race, belonging, and mobility.

In light of this, I suggest it is not necessary to postulate a moment of radical rupture or find a new language of transgressive citizenship to appreciate the politics of this encounter or these subjectivities. Instead, we can see how questions of the borders of non/citizenship are themselves already caught up in wider practices of everyday segregation understood as a particular political way of living with others discriminated against for being identifiably different. That is, segregation as a particular way of bordering the world and how we live among others. The migrant subjects and politics I see in this encounter are much more ordinary than either CCS or Rancière would advocate, but for all that they are no less powerfully troubling for the borders and boundaries of the (neo)liberal nation-state order. Indeed, as I have been arguing throughout this thesis, seeing migrant politics at the border in terms of everyday segregation provides an important perspective from which to consider the ways in which migrant solidarity can and does emerge as a form of struggle.

6.4 Autonomy of Migration: The politics of ‘escape’

I have argued the CCS literature, which aims to explain migrant subjectivity and politics in terms of either acts of citizenship or dissensus, risks reproducing the ontologies of the liberal nation-state in such a way that misses the everyday complexity of border struggles and the nuanced, indeterminate politics of irregular migrants themselves. In this section I examine the extent to which the autonomy of migration literature (hereafter AoM) offers an alternative framework which is more attentive to the intricacies of migrant politics and more capable of articulating a conception of solidarity beyond the nation-state. I argue that whilst this literature provides a welcome shift of perspective towards centring the politics of migrant subjectivity around their own movements and relations, situating it to some extent in the everyday, AoM ultimately envisages migrant politics and subjectivity as prefigurative of some revolutionary form of politics of ‘escape’, either in terms of
social movements and the multitude (against capital/Empire), or in terms of imperceptibility, a politics beyond all representation and identity. What I argue is that AoM also ends up overdetermining migrant subjectivity in terms of a particular picture of politics while at the same time remaining seduced by a conception of the borders of the nation-state as metaphysically deep. In the end, AoM surprisingly leads us further away from the subjects we are interested in expressing political solidarity with.

6.4.1 The multitude: migration as a social movement

The concept of ‘autonomy of migration’ draws on debates within the tradition of Autonomist Marxism, which sought to emphasise the constitutive role of autonomous working class struggles in the (trans)formations of global capitalism in contrast to conventional economically deterministic accounts (see for an overview, Mitropoulos, 2006; Mezzadra, 2011; 123 Scheel, 2013a; 581), and can be traced to more recent conversations arising from the alter/anti-globalisation movements which incorporated analyses of biopolitical (re)production and labour mobility into its critique of an emergent mode of globalised neoliberal capitalism and Empire (see especially, Hardt & Negri, 2000; Mezzadra, 2004; 272). As Mezzadra states, the autonomy of migration approach (AoM) emphasises ‘the subjectivity of living labour as a constitutive and antagonistic element of the capital relation’ and points to the centrality of migration and its control in the formation of this contested terrain (2011; 123). Arguing that ‘[t]here is no capitalism without migration’ AoM focuses on the struggles over migration, suggesting these provide privileged sites from which to analyse contemporary neoliberal capitalism and the autonomous movements against it (125). Hardt & Negri (2000) argue that under modern conditions, in which capitalist productivity depends on the mobility of large numbers of people, goods, and capital, a new collectivity is emerging, a ‘multitude’ of mobile bodies which ‘cannot be completely subjugated to the laws of capitalist accumulation – at every moment they overflow and shatter the bounds of measure’ (396-397). They argue the autonomy of the multitude lies in how, through this excessive mobility, it comprises itself as a constituent socio-economic force capable of shaping the world anew: ‘Through circulation the multitude reappropriates space and constitutes itself as an active
subject[...] Everywhere these movements arrive, and along their paths they determine new forms of life and cooperation’ (397).

The multitude, then, is taken as a new form of diverse collective subject driving postmodernity, ‘a new proletariat’ of biopolitical capitalism, whose collective being is inseparable from its pure productive power, its ‘posse’ (402; 408). The task of critical analysts and potential revolutionaries is to try to ‘recognize (and reveal) a constituent political tendency within and beyond the spontaneity of the multitude’s movements’ (398 – emphasis added). In other words, to locate within the autonomous movements of individuals, understood through the prism of living labour, a revolutionary form of ‘biopolitical self-organization’ (411) and the basis for a radically emancipatory postmodern communism: ‘This is a revolution that no power will control – because biopower and communism, cooperation and revolution remain together, in love, simplicity, and also innocence. This is the irrepressible lightness and joy of being communist’ (413).

Perhaps one way to understand the constituent power of the ‘multitude’ is to consider migration as a ‘social movement’ which runs alongside but also against the exploitation of ‘living labour’ by the capitalist system (Mezzadra, 2011; 135; 2013; 315). AoM frames contemporary migration in such a way that ‘the very movement itself becomes a political movement and a social movement’ by exceeding and evading capitalist control, if only temporarily, but also by forming new productive relations and subjectivities in the process (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013; 184). It is this creative overflowing force which capitalism supposedly tries to control, channel, and exploit for profit. Therefore, the autonomous movements of the multitude drive the development of capitalism at the same time as they continually elude its control: ‘Instead of conceiving of migrational movements as derivatives of social, cultural and economic structures, the autonomy-of-migration lens reveals migration to be a constituent creative force which fuels social, cultural and economic transformations’ (Papadopoulos, Stephenson & Tsianos, 2008; xix). In light of this autonomy of migration as a motor for socio-economic change, or even ‘transformation’ (Ibid; xiii; Mezzadra, 2004; 271), AoM seeks ‘to discover a new concept of the political’ (Mezzadra in Garelli & Tazzioli, 2013; 309).
AoM writers reject citizenship as a framework for understanding migrant politics and subjectivity, instead arguing for a focus on capitalism and the role citizenship has played in institutionalising the divisive mechanisms necessary for a global form of labour exploitation through a control of mobility (Hindess, 2000; 2002; Mezzadra, 2006; 39-40; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; 7; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013; 181). Here they point to how borders and the institutions of citizenship work to effect a ‘differential inclusion’ by which mobile labour is regulated and productively irregularised in ways which facilitate the economic exploitation of migrants and the overall management of ‘domestic’ labour markets (Mezzadra, 2011; 131; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; 132-133; 159-161). Instead of reappropriating or transforming citizenship, AoM asks us to take the divisive and discriminatory role of citizenship, understood as an international bordering mechanism (Hindess, 2000), as the basis for analysing and articulating the continuities between diverse subjects of labour globally, across national boundaries and between migrants/non-migrants (Mezzadra, 2004; 274; 2011; 124). AoM takes the border as a paradigmatic ‘site of struggle’ inextricably implicated within wider socio-economic struggles around the general flexibilisation, precaritisation, internationalisation, and ‘multiplication’ of labour characteristic of neoliberal ‘processes of production, dispossession, and exploitation’ (De Genova, 2002; 438; Mezzadra, 2004; 274; 2011; 126 Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; 18; 23).

In this way, AoM posits a material and political relation between migrant movements and traditional emancipatory social movements of labour against capitalism. Furthermore, AoM literature identifies in the figure of the migrant the ‘paradigmatic’ subject of biopolitical labour and especially its capacity for autonomous resistance against the capitalist hegemony in which it is supposedly captured (Mezzadra, 2011; 135; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007; 234). Embodying ‘the right to escape’ in their very mobility, (irregular) migrants are seen as exemplary of struggles against capitalism to the extent they enact ‘a reclaiming precisely of a “right to escape”, which, even if most of the time unconsciously, constitutes a material critique of the international division of labour and marks profoundly the subjectivity of the migrant also in the country where she/he chooses to settle down’ (Mezzadra, 2004; 270). Autonomous migration, understood in this way as a radical and even potentially
revolutionary social movement, becomes the privileged site for exploring possibilities of a new form of politics, ‘an other globalisation’, and is depicted as ‘a formidable laboratory’ for studying ‘globalisation from below’ (2004; 272; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007; 230).

6.4.2 The politics of escape

Although the emphasis on ‘escape’ can be found across AoM literatures there are different conceptions of what escape might actually entail, as well as different visions of what the emancipatory migrant subject and its associated revolutionary politics might actually look like. At the same time, these differences correlate to specific understandings of the ‘control’ from which migrants are supposedly escaping. Despite repeated misgivings and assurances that they are not locating a new revolutionary subject in or romanticising the autonomy of migration, both AoM models I consider in this section end up reading into a politics of escape the constituent conditions for a radically new emancipatory form of political being beyond the control of borders, states, capitalism, and even beyond the strictures of subjectivity. The first form of escape I address sees in migrant subjects some new embodiment of living labour, an successor to the figure of the ‘citizen-worker’ which had come to dominate revolutionary Marxism (Mezzadra, 2004; 2006; 2011; Mezzadra & Neislon, 2013). The second form of escape seeks to project onto the movements of migrants a nomadic politics of ‘imperceptibility’ through which a new world, ‘World 2’, is formed which not only radically transcends the controls of capitalism and the state but also profoundly undoes the ontology of representation itself (Papadopoulos, Stephenson & Tsianos, 2008; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007; 2013). Both these approaches to the politics of escape seek a new ‘common’ on which to base their radical political visions, and both search for the grounds of this new common space in the deep workings of migrant subjectivity. In doing so, I argue, they both end up positing a deeply reductive picture of the migrant subject and its radical political potential. Whilst the first ends up over-determining migrant subjectivity in terms of a Marxist ontology of anti/capitalist struggle and living labour, the second evacuates migrant subjectivity of any ordinarily identifiable content whatsoever, reducing the experiences of those on the move to a radically vacuous nomadic non-subject whose
political power derives from its endless capacity for ‘becoming’ in an ontology of escapism.

I will argue that in the end, and despite their commitments to autonomy and the radical constituent power of migration as a complex and multifaceted social movement, both these accounts present a picture of migrant subjectivity that is overly determined by (even if negatively defined in relation to) the hard ontologies of the nation-state, understood rather simplistically as a homogeneous category of ‘control’ (McNevin, 2013; see also Vaughan-Williams, 2015). This, I suggest, is a reminder of the continuing metaphysical seductions we face as critical scholars and which are inherent in some revolutionary ambitions, or fantasies, of escape. The problem with these seductions is that they often lead us on a search for the proper grounds for politics, the genuinely radical, truly ethical, completely new politics, usually sought in the depths of our being in the form of an authentic and essential form of subjectivity. The problem with this desire for deep ontological excavation and radical break is the vision of emancipation it offers leads us away from the difficult work of engaging with people and struggles in the everyday contexts in which we live. It risks losing sight of the very people we are most concerned to relate to, instead imposing our own particular political requirements of radical militancy and coherence on mobile, shifting, fluid subjects and the living turbulence of their politics (or perhaps the political turbulence of their lives). I conclude by arguing for taking an everyday perspective on border struggles as a way of appreciating the ambivalence/ambiguity of migrant subjectivities (McNevin, 2013; Ní Mhurchú 2014a; 2015). This requires a certain ‘political modesty’ (Walters, 2008) which I suggest is important if we are to take seriously the call for migrant solidarity. It requires us to engage with others on the messy rough ground of our everyday lives and to struggle against the ordinary borders we encounter there which will either continue to segregate us from one another or, in their undoing, bring us closer together.

6.4.3 Mezzadra, living labour, and the new common

Sandro Mezzadra’s work (2004; 2006; 2011; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012; 2013) is at the forefront of analyses of the autonomy of migration. In exploring the politics of
migration, especially irregular migration, he emphasises the importance of situating these movements within the context of contemporary capitalist socio-economic relations. However, in contrast to more economically deterministic accounts of migration, apparent in both Marxist and liberal literatures, Mezzadra argues for ‘a different gaze’, foregrounding the autonomy of those who move by concentrating on ‘the subjectivity of living labour as a constitutive and antagonistic element of the capital relation’ (2011; 121; 123). Mezzadra’s AoM approach attempts to articulate a general critique of contemporary capitalism through a specific focus on irregular migration and subjectivity, in particular, through a focus on ‘the production of subjectivity (with all the tensions, violences and struggles that characterize it) as a strategic stake in the politics of mobility [which] in turn allows us to critically analyze contemporary capitalism’ (134). Irregular migration, for Mezzadra, is therefore the privileged site to analyse new possible formations of subjectivity generally and so specifically articulate new forms of politics. In this respect, the autonomy of irregular migration raises pertinent questions for ‘our very understanding, imagining, and reinventing of political community, that is, of the common conditions of social cooperation’ (137). However, Mezzadra assures us that ‘proponents of the autonomy of migration approach do not in any way contend that (irregular or regular) migrants can be thought of as a kind of avant-garde or as revolutionary subjects’ (ibid). Instead, irregular migration is centrally placed ‘within a wider analytical framework that examines the transformations of contemporary capitalism from the point of view of living labour and its subjectivity’ (ibid).

Mezzadra & Neilson (2013) trace how developments in the material conditions of capitalism have similarly entailed changing forms of subjectivity and modes of social/political relations. They suggest the term ‘the multiplication of labor’ to cover the shifting geographies, social relations, and means of production, commodification, and consumption, which coincide with a proliferation of borders and the increasing mobility of people, products and profit to make up the characteristic conditions of contemporary globalisation. Using the concept of ‘the multiplication of labour’ as ‘a conceptual tool for investigating the composition of living labor in a situation characterized by a high degree of heterogeneity’, Mezzadra & Neilson hope to
‘materially ground a new theory of political subjectivity’ capable of expressing the productive tensions in contemporary capitalism and potentially pointing the way to a new revolutionary politics (2013; 21). In particular, they argue for a focus on the mobility of living labour to evoke this condition of heterogeneity and to ‘open up spaces’ of possibility for ‘liberating political imagination from the burden of the citizen-worker and the state’, which have for too long dominated and constrained efforts to envisage ‘the organization of new forms of political subjectivity’ (xi). Analysing living labour through the shifting subjectivities of irregular migrants, then, lies at the heart of a project aimed at ‘reconstructing the material basis of a new communist politics’ (283). Since autonomous migration is seen as a constituent force within contemporary capitalism, it is depicted as being central to ‘struggles for the production of the common’ by living labour against capitalism’s neoliberal colonisation of life (21; 310).

The analysis of migrant subjectivity as living labour, then, is key to this ‘elaboration of a new concept of the common’ (ibid; 17). Drawing on Marx, Mezzadra & Neilson define labour power ‘in terms of movement and unrest’ and ‘as the quintessence of the potential creative and productive attitudes that are contained in a living body’ (204). It is this potential productivity of the living body epitomised by its mobility which ‘capital’ supposedly seeks to capture and control: ‘From the point of view of capital, this movement must at once be exulted and restrained to render it productive within the networks of capital accumulation’ (ibid). On this autonomist (re)reading of Marx, then, the migrant subject epitomises the embodiment of living labour, its mobility, creativity, and productive power locked in a struggle with the mechanisms of capitalist accumulation and alienation, what they call ‘the sovereign machine of governmentality’ (ibid). Here, their analysis is similar to that of Nicholas De Genova (2010) who argues that ‘state power institutes its putative sovereignty and may appear as “power” in general only by gathering together and objectifying the innumerable and diverse potentialities of living labor’s restless subjectivity’ (48). For De Genova, this means that the irregular migrant subject is in an especially stark relation with the machinery of capitalism and the state:
'The “illegal” migrant is conscripted, after all, for the raw productive capacity of her human life as living labor (commodifiable, in Marx’s telling formulation, as labor-power). This sheer productive and generative capacity of human life (the power to transform itself, as well as its always already social configuration, by transforming its objective/external circumstances), becomes politically apprehensible, in Agamben’s terms, as bare life’ (De Genova, 2010; 47).54

Whilst themselves highly critical of Agamben for his disempowering and reductive exceptionalism (2013; 149; 189), Mezzadra & Neilson nevertheless base their understanding of migrant subjectivity exclusively within a picture of the mutually antagonistic entanglement between living labour and the sovereign governmentality of capitalist state control. Indeed, this definitive struggling dialectic of capitalism delineates the conditions of subjectivity itself: ‘Subjectivity, we might say, is the battlefield in which power comes head to head with power, creating a line of conflict drawn precisely by the alternative between the capture of life’s potentiality and its appropriation as a common basis for a multiplicity of exit and escape strategies’ (204). For Mezzadra & Neilson, then, irregular migration stands as a stark yet paradigmatic example of what is a generalisable condition, the material socio-economic base of political possibility. In the autonomous irregular migrant subject, therefore, we find the figure who simultaneously most embodies the exploitation of capitalism and the promise of escape, the figure who presents us with the possibility of a transformative new communism of the multitude, ‘a political subject that is at once multiple and potent’ (311).

Despite Mezzadra’s rejection of a teleological account of revolutionary change and his insistence that ‘it is nonsense to speak of a singular migrant subjectivity, since such a concept can only be defined in the plural’ (2011; 124) his account nonetheless points to migrant subjectivity as a singularly definitive figure embodying conditions of contemporary capitalism and capable of providing hopeful glimpses of some radical emancipation in the future. I find this problematic for two reasons. Firstly, in overdetermining migrant subjectivity in terms of living labour, this account risks a form of ‘oversimplifying economic reductionism’ that fails to take into account the

54 See also De Genova 2012 for a detailed re-reading of Agamben’s theory of bare life in relation to mobility and Marx’s theory of alienation and labour power.
multiplicity of rationales and motives, the diverse fears and desires, that go into both people’s practices of migration and its control (Scheel, 2013a; 591-592). Whilst it is certainly important to reflect on the workings of contemporary capitalism, indeed at the border it is hard to avoid confronting its pervasive and recurring inequities, we should remind ourselves that there might be more to life than labour. There is more to mobility and people’s movements than control by/escape from the machinery of production and profit. Certainly, the (in)ability to become an economically productive subject has serious implications for someone’s life prospects, and borders undoubtedly work to stratify subjects into more or less economically exploitable bodies, but is this the entire story? For example, whilst it may well be the case that the division of the world into distinct national states and polities serves to facilitate a particularly neoliberal brand of political/economic global government (Hindess, 2000; 2002), there are certainly moments when the distinct political rationalities of nationalism and capitalism come into conflict, although not necessarily total opposition.\footnote{‘Brexit’ could perhaps be seen as an example of this. However, see footnote 11} Furthermore, whilst economics is a factor in why people migrate, and in government policies aimed at controlling migration, are these the only dynamics at play in these movements? For instance, whilst the economic implications and rationales of the UK’s prohibitively high ‘financial requirements’ for family migration are important (see Home Office, 2016b), we would miss a large part of the story here if we focused only on these factors. Indeed, in doing so we would miss precisely what it is that is so aggrieving about this violation of ‘the right to love’ in the name of economics (Detention Action, 2013).

Secondly, in framing migrant subjectivity in this way, Mezzadra & Neilson risk imposing on irregular migrant subjects a politics they might not express and investing in them the hope of a progressive militancy likely impossible to live up to for anyone, and which few of us even try enact ourselves. In particular, I find disconcerting Mezzadra’s assertion that when irregular migrants enact a ‘right to escape’ and carry out a ‘material critique of the international divisions of labour’ through their autonomous movements they progress a radical politics ‘even if most of the time unconsciously’ (2004; 272 – emphasis added). Whilst we can see in this another

\footnote{‘Brexit’ could perhaps be seen as an example of this. However, see footnote 11}
example of what Sharma identifies as a ‘now-long list of theorists looking to migrants and their mobilities as being the proverbial canaries in the mineshaft of capitalist social relations, the holders of a privileged epistemic position within such relations’ (2009; 469), I want to suggest that this ‘privileged epistemic position’ and its revolutionary insights are often reserved for, and exploited by, the theorist looking in and proselytising ahead to the coming community. The political implications of a perspective that reads into the lives of others a radical political meaning and power of which they themselves are apparently ignorant would seem to me to be highly troubling, especially as a starting point for anyone interested in solidarity. Of course, this is not to say that irregular migrants never express a radical anti-capitalist politics, whether overtly or more surreptitiously in their everyday lives, but it is to suggest that such a politics is not necessarily something innate to who they are, something deep within them. Finally, both of these critiques point to a general limitation of AoM conceived in this way. Framed as the driver of both capitalist progression and the source of its potential revolutionary overthrow, migration remains politically overdetermined by the very control it supposedly seeks to escape, its diversity and multiplicity attributed meaning and potency only ever negatively in terms of being defined in its opposition to the homogeneity of capital.

6.4.4 Papadopoulos et al, imperceptible politics, and ‘World 2’

The work of Papadopoulos & Tsianos (2007; 2013), and their collaboration with Stephenson (2008), offers a more radical understanding of ‘escape’ intended to avoid the pitfalls of economic reductionism and political overdetermination (Papadopoulos, Tsianos & Stephenson, 2008; xix; 208). For them, framing migrant autonomy in terms of a dialectic multitude/capital does not account for the autonomy behind the radical ‘constituent force’ of autonomous migration (202; 210). Migration is not, for them, ‘a mere response to economic and social malaise’, as it arguably remains for Mezzadra, but rather autonomous migration ‘has the capacity to develop its own logics, its own motivation, its own trajectories that control comes later to respond to’ (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013; 184). As they argue:
‘we cannot understand social change and people’s agency if we always see them as already entangled and regulated by control. We can understand the formation of power only from the perspective of escaping people, not the other way round. [...] People do not escape their control. People escape. Control is a cultural-political device which comes afterwards to tame and eventually to appropriate people’s escape. Social struggle comes first’ (2008; 43).

For Papadopoulos et al.’s AoM involves focusing on how individual acts of people on the move combine independently to produce a transformative force that challenges the dominant social, cultural, political and economic structures of ‘control’:

‘we argue that people are often moving, creating, connecting, escaping the immediate moments and given conditions of their lives, and that it is only after the imposition of control that some of these actions come to be seen as responses to regulation. Escape comes first! People’s efforts to escape can force the reorganisation of control itself; regimes of control must respond to the new situations created by escape’ (2008; xv).

Key to their interpretation of AoM is a repudiation of the position, seemingly taken up by Mezzadra and others, which sees in migrant subjectivity the privileged grounds for a new revolutionary politics. For Papadopoulos et al. ‘[t]he spectre of migration will never become a new working class [...] Migrants do not hold the place of a historical or a political subject as such, rather they tend to become imperceptible to history’ (2013; 187). Not only do they explicitly reject the problematic ‘avant-gardism’ of AoM approaches which attempt ‘to realign migrants with the working classes and to resurrect a new social protagonism of migration’ (189), they also reject subjectivity itself as a basis for any sort of emancipatory politics: ‘Social transformation [...] is not about the production of subjects, but about the making of life. It is not about subjectivity, it is about experience’ (2008; xii). Papadopoulos et al.’s account, then, sees migrant autonomy as ‘escape’ not only from the structures of capital and/or the state but perhaps more fundamentally from the almost totalitarian control of frameworks of subjectivity and representation itself (xv): ‘Migration can be understood as a force which evades the policing practices of subjectivity’ (xviii). Instead they read into autonomous migration the expression of an ‘imperceptible politics’, referring to the operation of ‘social forces which are outside of existing regulation and outside policing’ (xv).
Papadopoulos et al. argue this escape from representation and subjectivity is necessary because these are essentially implicated in the reproduction of power understood, borrowing from Rancière, as ‘police’ (2008; 69). Combining a critique of liberal citizenship rights, identity politics, and a reductive ‘melancholic’ interpretation of Foucault’s conception of power/resistance (12-13; 44; 80; 2007; 229), they argue that ‘[p]olicing stands in for politics in contemporary times’ (2008; 68):

‘Naming and representing – the core moments of the egalitarian principle – are the primary political tools for controlling society. They reinsert excluded social actors into the subject-form by constructing them as majoritarian subjects […] Naming and representing under the guidance of the political principle of equality are thus the main means of restraining escape and of reincorporating it into the workings of power’ (69).

Transformative political emancipation, therefore, necessitates a radical form of escape from the workings of representation itself, since to do anything else would reproduce the workings of power by which we are policed and controlled, and our politics smothered. So they suggest that ‘[t]o escape policing and start doing politics necessitates dis-identification – the refusal of assigned, proper places for participation in society’ (ibid; 69). In this way, we can escape to a world beyond representation, a world of emancipation from power, a purer politics:

‘Outside politics is the way to escape the controlling and repressive force of contemporary politics (that is of contemporary policing) […] Outside politics is the materialisation of the attempt to occupy this space outside the controlling force of becoming majoritarian through the process of representation’ (70).

This purer more radical politics beyond representation is an ‘imperceptible politics’ which ‘constructs new material realities where it operates’ but disengages from efforts ‘to build a better society in general’, and in doing so ‘it cunningly subverts everything which is there to maintain the integrity of a given field of power’ (75): ‘Imperceptible politics is the moment when the void of mobility […] becomes subversive’ (80).

As we can see, therefore, Papadopoulos et al. literally advocate a form of political escapism that is simultaneously an ontological escapism to a world outside power/representation/police, a radically egalitarian world, ‘World 2’ (2008; 221; 2013;
This is the world of the mobile commons. This is a second world, World 2, and beyond the world most of us experience as subjects of rights, as citizens, and as political activists [...] the world of transmigrants [...] the world that exists as a common world in the making’ (2013; 190). For Papadopoulos (2006) World 2 must be understood in terms of its immanent materiality beyond representation, language and discourse, ‘a world which is radically incommensurable with the commitments of our discourse’ (166) made up of ‘[t]hat which remains unarticulated [...] nothing more and nothing less than bodies which simply do not match, bodies which cannot be accommodated into our discourses but are active in making the world’ (173). And it is in this unspeakable materiality where the potential for radical political transformation is located: ‘World 2 is a refusal from the very heart of dominant globalisation, a refusal which unfolds in impure [...] immanent [...] and imperceptible ways [...] by manufacturing new, ordinary, everyday social spaces which defy representation in our existing discourses’ (166). Papadopoulos continues:

‘World 2 is a world which revolts without saying why, it is a world which instigates an immanent and imperceptible change of social life beyond the given positive articulations in the coordinates of a neo-liberal matrix of existence. World 2 is an insurgency against the idea that we can all emancipate’ (2006; 177).

World 2 is depicted as an ever changing material accumulation of all the different strategies, tactics, and relations that are re/made and lived through by people forging irregular paths of movement for themselves, ‘a world of knowledge, of information, of tricks for survival, of mutual care, of social relations, of services exchange, of solidarity and sociability that can be shared, used and where people contribute to sustain and expand it’ (2013; 190). And in these often mundane everyday practices a new ‘mobile commons’ is supposedly emerging that challenges the operation of the modern ‘postliberal’ governing order:

Papadopoulos et al. (2008) present an extensive analysis of the workings of contemporary capitalism, offering a revisionist interpretation of ‘transnational governance’ in terms of ‘postliberalism’ and ‘liminal porocracy’ (16; 33; 162; 199). Much like other AoM accounts, it shows economic-political ‘control’ to have diversified, multiplied, and proliferated throughout society, with a particular focus on migration/mobility, and points to the role of borders in hierarchically ordering an increasingly precarious labour force through differential inclusion capable of increased capitalist exploitation (see Section V; 222). Whilst there is some interesting analysis in this, it is not central to my argument in this section.
'The mobile commons, that is the real world of moving people, is assembled and materialised in these fields of everyday life [...] A materialist autonomist perspective on migration is about betraying the discourse of security and citizenship in defence of everyday sociability of mobile people and the worlds they are creating. The mobile commons is the ontology of transmigration' (192).

6.4.5 Who migrants ‘really’ are/what migrants ‘really’ want

I find this effort to think politically about migration through an ontology of everyday life interesting in so far as it points towards how mundane networks and practices of people on the move have important creative and generative material effects. I also find inspiring how it gestures towards the mutuality and solidarity that arises in ordinary ways along the escape routes of irregular migration, and proposes the possibility of seeing a ‘politics of care’ at the centre of the mobile commons (2013; 191-192). Having said this, however, there are a number of serious possible critiques of Papadopoulos et al.’s theorisation of migrant autonomy.

Firstly, in attempting to articulate a political being beyond subjectivity Papadopoulos et al., despite themselves, end up presenting a generalised picture of migrant subjectivity that is empty of life and evacuated of any sense of ordinary mobile people. ‘Dis-identification’ is seen as a tactic against control because, in becoming imperceptible, migrants are supposedly able to escape capture within the power/identity framework of neoliberal police:

‘Becoming imperceptible is an immanent act of resistance because it makes it impossible to identify migration as [a] process which consists of fixed collective subjects. Becoming imperceptible is the most precise and effective tool migrants employ to oppose the individualizing, quantifying and representational pressures of the settled, constituted geopolitical power’ (2007; 228-229).

Behind the politics of imperceptibility is an ontology of immanent becomings inspired by the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007; 223). Becomings are practices by which ‘social actors escape their normalized representations and reconstitute themselves in the course of participating in, and changing, the conditions of their material existence’ (2007; 223). Migrant becomings are, for Papadopoulos & Tsianos, characterised by ‘various modes of nomadic becoming’ by which migrants become ‘imperceptible’, escaping power in politically
innovative ways (224): ‘Instead of being perceptible, discernible and identifiable, current migration puts on the agenda a new form of politics and a new formation of active political subjects whose aim is not to find a different way to become or to be a political subject, but to refuse to become a subject at all’ (229). So, we have a nomadic figure who rejects all representational categories, refuses subjectivity itself, and whose political being comprises nothing more than their self-creative momentary, fleeting, and fluctuating becomings on a plane of immanence.

Whilst such a picture might correspond to some of the everyday strategies of clandestine irregular movements across borders, and might capture something of the contextual fluidity of identities, how migrants obscure, erase, or take on new identities as they subvert different controls, and Papadopoulos et al. provide some excellent examples of this (2008; 216), it is not clear that such explanations necessitate a rejection of subjectivity in its ontological entirety. Indeed, I think to maintain this makes very little ‘sense’ at all (Wittgenstein, 1974; §119). It is hard to understand what it means to be beyond subjectivity and representation, to engage in ‘outside politics’, and raises the unanswered question, if not subjects then what do migrants ‘become’? Ultimately, the imperative to escape from subjectivity simply presents us with an evacuated picture of the migrant subject, a nomadic, faceless, interchangeable, and depoliticised. As Sharma critically puts it:

‘the subjectivities of which they speak contain no bodies and smacks of objectification and romanticization. [...] “Migrants” and their “escape” become categorical abstractions. In the authors’ attempt to not name their naming, migrants’ classed, racialized, gendered, sexualized, territorialized bodies, as well as people’s historical, geographical and metaphorical dislocations and relocations are emptied, both of people and meaning’ (2009; 474).

As we can see, therefore, this emptying of migrant subjectivity and the world is highly politically problematic. My second critique unpacks Sharma’s charge of romanticisation a bit further. Despite their protestations against framing migrant subjects as emancipatory figures, Papadopoulos et al.’s move to the plane of immanence and focus on migrant becomings seems motivated by a similarly deterministic desire to project onto imperceptibility a universal political relevance and radical potential. As they state, ‘Becoming imperceptible is the immanent end of all
becomings, it is a process of becoming everyday/everything [...] Becoming indiscernible, impersonal, imperceptible is Deleuze and Guattari’s universal political project’ (2007; 223) – ‘What migrants really want is to become everybody, to become imperceptible’ (2008; 219). Therefore, despite themselves, Papadopoulos et al. propose an evacuated picture of the migrant (non)subject as the paradigmatic figure of an emancipatory political ontology, reading into imperceptible emptiness the promise of a better, more radical, more communal, world of politics to come. And of course, far from escaping the power of representation as they desired, they end up actually imposing very specific identities, meanings, and politics on the diverse multiplicity of migrant subjects. Projecting a romanticised image of nomadism, vagrancy, and escape onto the mundane movements and everyday struggles of migrant subjects, they subsume what are otherwise valuable insights concerning the materiality of irregular mobility within a metaphysical teleology of revolutionary social change that is entirely their own. Again, as Sharma points out:

‘centering the figure of ‘the migrant’ instead of actual migrants in all their multiplicity, constructs a solidarity among them and with them [which] has no material grounding. Such a move is a form of symbolic violence; it allows us to readily ignore their actual bodies and the meanings they give to their lives, meanings that may neither be in concert with those we would like them to be the standard bearers of, such as ‘escape,’ nor the meanings imposed on them by ruling groups. Of course, as with all forms of symbolic violence, it also ignores how the lives of many migrants are distorted, disfigured and often just plain destroyed, in the process of controlling them and containing their movements’ (2009; 474).

So, in trying to uncover who migrants really are and ‘what migrants really want’, Papadopoulos et al. end up imposing on irregular migrants a romanticised and radically empty identity and politics. In doing so, they express/reproduce a dangerous seduction that we can escape from a world of power to a world of politics. The idea that emancipatory politics is metaphysical, that it requires a radical overhaul of our ontological categories or their replacement with another ontology entirely (2013; 191), is a prevalent one. As I have already argued, we see something similar in the liberal desire for a politics based on humanity as well as in Agamben’s invocation of the radical potential of ‘whatever being’ (Agamben, 2007a; see also 5.4). It dictates we must locate something in common on which we can ground a properly ethical politics
(Pin-Fat, 2010), usually located deep within ourselves. It is a highly seductive idea, but one I argued in (2.4-2.5) usually leads us on philosophical journeys into the depths of ontology away from everyday life and each other. It is based on a problematic picture of language as the relation between words and objects, thought and things in the word, rather than an understanding of language as practice, words as deeds done in the world with others (Pin-Fat, 2010; 2013; 2016; Wittgenstein, 1974; §546). And as Wittgenstein reminds us, when we try to get beyond language and representation in our search for meaning we often bump our heads ‘running up against the limits of language’ and come out speaking ‘plain nonsense’, which is why he insists ‘I must speak the language of every day’ (1974; §119-§120).

If we follow Papadopoulos et al. (2008) on a similar route, in the case of irregular migration we end up reproducing the soft divisions of ir/regularity, socially performative practices within contexts of power relations, as hard lines between distinct ontological worlds, the perceptible world corrupted by power and the imperceptible pure world 2 of autonomous political becomings. The problem is, far from bringing us closer to an appreciation of the common world in which we live it actually entrenches the separations between us as metaphysically deep. The very political militancy of imperceptibility is derived from its unrecognizability within the realm of subjectivity and an ordinary politics of power (Foucault, 2002b)57. If this is the case, then that radically limits the possibility of migrant solidarity, and certainly doesn’t seem the most productive place to start. Ultimately, it reproduces the ontology of the neoliberal nation-state and its borders of inside/outside as metaphysically deep (Walker, 2010), necessitating an escape from the grasp of control to the autonomy of the imperceptible. Unfortunately, this unintentionally reproduces the very divisive categories of ‘control’ we were supposedly interested in challenging. We can see this in how, for Papadopoulos et al., the imperceptible migrant anybody

57 At work here is a misinterpretation of Foucault’s analysis which equates a politics of power with an all pervasive power politics, and so subjectivity with biopolitical state capture. But Foucault explicitly rejected such an equation of power and control: ‘Omnipresence of power: not at all because it regroups everything under its invincible unity, but because it is produced at every instant, at every point, or moreover in every relation between one point and another. Power is everywhere: not that it engulfs everything, but that it comes from everywhere’ (1978; 93). This misinterpretation runs throughout Papadopoulos et al.’s analysis, resulting in an overly homogeneous view of ‘control’ which ultimately necessitates an ontological ‘escape route’.
often becomes indistinguishable from the dehumanising racist depictions of migrants we find in the British tabloids (see 3.2):

‘The moving packs of migrants traversing continents create uncountable continuous experiences, which are unlabelled, untamed, unidentified. People act together and make world [sic] without giving any permanent name to their alliances and conditions of existence [...] Without ever intending it, this multiplicity of subjectivities is tantamount to univocality. It is a moment where social control is exercised from below, where social change is subjectless, where the new elusive historical actors dwell in the world of imperceptibility and generate a persistent and insatiable surplus of sociability in motion, a new world in the heart of the old world [...] World 2’ (2008; 221).

In the end, then, our efforts to find common ground for political solidarity across borders seem to end up reproducing the same divisions and segregations we struggle against. The problem with this desire for a deep ontological excavation and radical political break is the vision of emancipation it offers leads us away from the difficult work of engaging with people and struggles in the everyday contexts in which we live. It risks losing sight of the very people we are most concerned to relate to, instead imposing our own particular political requirements of radical militancy and coherence on mobile, shifting, fluid subjects and the living turbulence of their politics. If we are serious about the politics of migrant solidarity, perhaps we should follow the invitation for some ‘political modesty’ in our analysis of autonomous migration, as suggested by Walters (2008): a modest political analysis would be one which ‘purposefully leaves open the question of the identity of the actors’ and ‘resists the political urge to impose identity upon a fluid and ambiguous scene. It refuses the tendency in public as well as much academic debate to proceed as though we already know who and what we are dealing with’ (203). In the final section of this chapter, then, I explore this invitation by asking how an everyday perspective allows us to attend to the ‘ambiguity’ (Ní Mhurchú, 2014a; 2015) and ‘ambivalence’ (McNevin, 2013) of migrant solidarity, and whether ‘this could actually be considered a timely and genuinely political move’ (Walters, 2008; 203). I conclude by arguing that taking such a perspective allows a critical engagement in the politics of migrant solidarity and how it unfolds in everyday encounters with segregation. Rather than offering escape, this perspective brings us back to the rough ground of our ordinary lives and everyday
relations with each other where the borders between us are constantly remade and undone. It is here that the hard work of solidarity must play out in struggles against the everyday segregations which border our lives.

6.5 Ambivalence/ Ambiguity: irregularity, everyday life, subjectivity

In this chapter I have traced the presence of a number of figures in the literature through which authors have tried to make sense of migrant subjectivity: the citizen, the activist, the worker, the multitude, the nomad. Whilst they are all invoked to show how the irregular migrant subject unsettles, disrupts, transforms, transcends, or escapes the political ontology of the (neoliberal) nation-state, I have argued they all remain seduced by its character of metaphysical depth and end up reproducing its borderlines and boundaries in unexpected ways. Whilst all are attentive to the contingency, multiplicity, performativity, and everydayness of political subjectivity, and ascribe to the idea that borders of identity, belonging, and political space are blurry and contested, they nonetheless, in different ways, appear seduced by the notion that we can locate in migrant subjectivity the conditions for a new, more radical, more essential, and more generalizable, ethical politics. As McNevin (2013) puts it:

‘Despite frequent references to the ad hoc nature of human mobility and imperceptible politics, these scholars tend to ascribe an orientation (at best) or a telos (at worst) to “unauthorised” mobility as if it were necessarily geared towards system overhaul and normatively weighted towards more just arrangements’ (193-194).

In this sense, they are seduced by the notion that our pictures of subjectivity ‘name or locate what is essential/deep about us’ and that in doing so they provide us with secure grounds for ethical politics (Pin-Fat, 2010; 128-129). But this simply reproduces the belief in ‘language as deep’ and ‘the lines that form pictures of the subject as hard, deep lines’ (ibid), a belief that lies at the heart of the historical mythology of the nation-state system, especially as an embodiment of collective national sovereignty, and underpins the acceptance of its borders as the political ontology of the world (Walker, 1992; 2010). In this chapter I have tried to present a reminder of how we continue to reproduce the ontologies of the state even as we try to escape it.
In this final section I sketch an approach to migrant subjectivity and politics that tries to keep their ambiguity and ambivalence in view. Doing so, I suggest, allows us to better attend to how the borders and boundaries of our forms of political being, subjects and states, spaces and communities of belonging, are ontologically soft rather than hard. I argue for this approach by adopting an everyday perspective in relation to an encounter with migrant solidarity at the border in Calais. Here I want to return to the motorways on Calais to describe an encounter which I think captures something of an everyday perspective on migrant solidarity. The politics we encounter in this moment is, I argue, ambiguous and ambivalent, what I refer to as a politics of ‘chance’. A politics of ‘chance’ does not present an emancipatory political subject nor does it pose an obviously radical or deep ontological challenge to the nation-state order. In fact, it is unclear exactly what it presents. And yet, given what I have argued throughout this thesis, in this moment I suggest we can see a form of everyday migrant solidarity taking place at the border in which ordinary subjects, whose lives have brought them to this point, come together to struggle against the border as a practice of segregation.

6.5.1 Ambivalence

Whilst Anne McNevin (2013) remains predominantly interested in engaging with migrant rights practices and claims-making, what is distinctive about her approach, and what contrasts with both CCS and AoM accounts I have traced above, is her emphasis on ‘ambivalence’. She critiques much of the literature for ascribing ‘an ambition to mobility and migrants that is not necessarily there’ stating that too often ‘[s]cholars conflate what may be their own strategic agenda for a politics of migration with an actual equivalence of struggles’ (193-194). Similarly, she is critical of theorists, in particular Agamben, who outright reject any transformative political potential to acts framed in terms of human/citizenship rights for presenting ‘a reductive reading of power’ mirrored by an overly restrictive view of emancipatory struggle (185; 193). Instead, McNevin suggests we acknowledge the ambivalence with which irregular migrants perceive and draw upon discourses of rights in their political activities ‘as a political resource, rather than a strategic handicap’ (185). The point is for theorists not to assume that by claiming rights irregular migrants are blind to the limitations of
these institutions, or unaware of their paradoxes, contradictions, and risks. In other
words, theorists should not presume irregular migrants who claim rights are naive or
unable to critically reflect on the practical political dilemmas they face and make their
own strategic calculations (195-198). McNevin points to how irregular migrants, like
others, often engage with the institutions of the state, citizenship, and rights in highly
ambivalent ways, playing the game as best they can given the risky and restrictive
conditions they find themselves in. Focusing on ambivalence allows us to appreciate
how irregular migrants are neither fully captured and disempowered by the biopolitics
of the state (as for Agamben), nor can they always embody the radical agency
espoused by AoM, but also how this makes them no less political or active:

‘Ambivalence rather than agency (at least when the latter is read in opposition
to victim status) seems to me to be a far more useful sentiment for approaching
irregular migrant activism, which in so many cases is, at once, purposeful, political and
born of a certain desperation’ (195).

The ambivalence of irregular migrants’ strategies of survival and politics also
suggests to us how ambivalence can play a role in a more politically modest form of
academic analysis that does not seek to impose its own politics on those it encounters
(Walters, 2008; 203). As McNevin argues: ‘Attention to ambivalence, from the point of
view of the theorist, alerts us to the transformative potential of irregular migrant
struggle without pre-empting the terms of transformation’ (2013; 185).

Whilst McNevin draws on this ambivalence to consider its implications for
rights claims made by irregular citizens, and for understanding new political ways of
claiming rights more generally (ibid; 198), I want to suggest this ambivalence can point
us in the other direction too, that is towards ambivalent acts of noncitizenship
(Johnson, 2014). Acknowledging the ambivalence of people’s engagement in acts of
(ir/regular) citizenship points to how in our everyday lives we embody an excess of
political subjectivity beyond the lines of dominant political categories. Whether
citizen/noncitizen, this does not encompass all our political existences or the
performative practices making up our everyday lives. Citizenship is something we do
rather than something which delineates who we are. As subjects we can be many
things to many people, not just in relation to the state, and a focus on everyday life
and ambivalence allows us to recognise this. It also, therefore, shows how ‘irregularity’ is not simply a space of abjection but rather entails a sort of ‘irregular agency’ and a subjectivity that is distinct from, although not necessarily separate or in opposition to, citizenship:

‘An agency and politics at the level of the “everyday” is constituted in momentary decisions, confrontations and exclamations – or whispers. Irregular agency is sometimes simply a defiant presence or arrival. It is different from the political subjectivity we have come to expect from the space of the citizen, but it is no less powerful or potentially transformative of our understandings and engagements with the politics of borders, migrations and asylum’ (2014; 175).

Appreciating ambivalence in everyday life importantly points to the softness of lines of political division, including borders of the state and non/citizen subjectivity. This in no way diminishes the segregating effects of these lines in people's lives. Indeed, as this thesis has argued, this softness is constitutive of their powerful proliferation and our participation in them (4.4-4.5). But it does point to their limits and to where they come undone. It reminds us that despite their subjection to exceptional conditions of exclusion in everyday life, political discourse, and the theoretical mainstream, irregular migrants are ‘ordinary people’ too (2014; 203). To recognise this ordinariness in ambivalence is to recognise the presence of others in everyday life, and to take responsibility for the ways we are personally involved in practices of segregation and bordering. Acknowledging ambivalence, therefore, asks us to see the conditions for migrant solidarity in ‘the everyday struggles of irregular migrants’ rather than search for them in ‘utopian projects of what is yet to come’ (McNevin, 2013; 200).

6.5.2 Ambiguity

I want to suggest this focus on ambivalence importantly indicates the ‘ambiguity’ of everyday political subjectivity (Ni Mhurchú, 2014a; 2015). Aoileann Ni Mhurchú presents a nuanced reading of migrant subjectivity as something expressed and experienced in everyday contexts in ways which challenge, unsettle, and even ‘refuse’ the ‘citizenship/beyond citizenship binary’ that informs our dominant political understandings and characterises the ontology of the nation-state (2016a; 167;
Looking at ‘unfamiliar’ and creative ways, for example producing ‘vernacular music’, in which migrants express hybrid identities and ambiguous belongings that do not fit the narrative of inclusion or exclusion but rather lie somewhere ‘in-between’, Ní Mhurchú shows how political subjectivity, including citizenship subjectivity, often involves more than just the familiar practices and institutions of claiming rights (2016a). Her work ‘emphasises how citizenship can be experienced in terms of overlapping, fragmented and incomplete experiences which combine elements of both inclusion and exclusion, belonging and not belonging, past and present – in more or less permanent ways – without being reducible to either’ (2014a; 13). In doing so, Ní Mhurchú also asks us ‘to recognise how political subjectivity is experienced outside a statist political discourse’ as a matter of ordinary everyday life and practice rather than something requiring transcendent escape to a new alternative ontology (229). This everyday perspective involves a ‘refusal of a certain kind of subjectivity which has monopolised our understanding of ourselves – as beings which exist in terms of our relationship with the state – as the only kind possible’ (22) but precisely because of this it does not require a refusal of subjectivity in its entirety, as Papadopoulos et al. would have it. Rather, focusing on the ambiguity of political subjectivity as it emerges every day ‘highlights the decentred role of the state in this process’ pointing instead to ‘how political subjectivity works beyond state-centric linearities (us/them, inside/outside, citizen/migrant)’ (2015; 161).

The ‘beyond’ gestured to by a focus on ambiguity is not a metaphysical one, not some new ontological space or political time yet to come. Instead, this gesture acts as a reminder that there is ordinarily more to what we do every day than the nation-state. It contextualises the nation-state in terms of the everyday practices which constitute it rather than taking the state as the context. Put simply, it sees the borders of the state as part of our political life rather than its precondition. In other words, it gestures towards the ordinary, the everyday, the rough ground (Pin-Fat, 2010; Wittgenstein, 1974; also 2.4-2.5).

Seeing irregular migrants’ subjectivity as ambiguous points to how their lives, and ours as well, are not entirely defined in terms of the either/or divisions of state-centric identity, belonging, or space. The lines of the nation-state are shown to be
neither decisively drawn nor clearly demarcated in everyday life but rather something people encounter, something they struggle with, play on, appropriate or avoid, borders to be negotiated, unsettled, or circumvented. In other words, seeing subjectivity as ambiguous involves seeing everyday line-drawing as part of what it means to inhabit the world we live in with others. As Ní Mhurchú argues, drawing on the work of Julia Kristeva, it asks us ‘to move away from defining the politics of citizenship in terms of drawing lines in continuous time across space between “us” and “them”, here and there, old and new citizens, selves and others [...] forces us to rethink the need to associate the politics of citizenship with the ability to draw lines in this manner in the first place, and the possibility of inhabiting such lines instead’ (2014; 223). Seeing ambiguous subjects, then, means working with soft rather than hard ontological lines and attending to how line-drawing takes place within wider ethical political practices on the rough ground of everyday life (Pin-Fat, 2010). As subjects we are never fixed in place, never ‘fully captured by language’ or by the lines of our hastily drawn pictures of politics, because the lines we draw in everyday life are soft, ordinary, contingent, and for a particular purpose, rather than essential or deep (2010; 128). Therefore, as McNevin points out, seeing the boundaries of our identities as soft, social, performative, that is normative, opens up space for critical reflection and brings to light the possibilities of ‘inhabiting norms differently and in socially transformative ways’ (2013; 197). As Pin-Fat puts it:

‘Rather than seeing the lines that form pictures of the subject as hard, deep lines, we would see them for what they are: as soft. So soft, in fact, that their significance to us as markers of what ontologically divides us from one another and/or from what is possible and legitimate may vanish never to be encountered as such a “thing” again. It’s an opportunity to kick away the ladder once and for all and do something else’ (2010; 128).

What this ‘something else’ might be is obviously, and necessarily, an open question and one that cannot and does not need answering in advance. If the borderlines of political being are soft and ambiguous then how these borders are challenged is itself never a settled matter but one that must be considered in relation to specific encounters within contexts of ongoing struggle. The politics of border struggles, therefore, must be considered from an everyday perspective which attends
to the messiness and multiplicity of factors at stake within those particular moments rather than one which aims to provide a generalizable narrative of political identity, power, or progression. It requires a constant awareness in our political analyses that those we encounter in these struggles exceed our expectations of them and confound our neat categorisations. Acknowledging ambiguity involves trying to appreciate how people’s lives are always fuller, richer, and more intricate than we or our analyses can grasp. But it also involves seeing this ambiguity not as a problem for politics but as a condition of its possibility. Ambiguity brings us back to the ordinary and the everyday where we must necessarily live and play out our politics, often (inter)acting without knowing (the other), without epistemic or political certainty (Pin-Fat, 2013; 2016), and where we often do so ambivalently regarding the structures of the nation-state and citizenship.

Whilst a perspective of everyday life and ambiguity cannot tell us much about the content of subjectivity, it does not give us a firm picture of the migrant subject, for example, it does invite us to approach the question of subjectivity differently. In particular, as Ní Mhurchú suggests, it invites us to consider practices of political subjectivity as ‘less-than sovereign’ (2014a; 17). With the phrase ‘less-than sovereign’, Ní Mhurchú points not only to the decentring of the state in determining the contours of political subjectivity but also to how the ambiguity of subjectivity itself entails a different sort of disposition in relation to the world and to others. Rather than the dominant picture of the political subject as a firmly bounded sovereign agent who exists independently and unchanging across different contexts, time or space, ‘idealised as solid bodies analogous to the image of the sovereign territorial state’ (214-215), the soft ontology of ambiguity points to a picture of subjectivity that is necessarily social (Butler 1993; 2005; 24) and so necessarily incomplete, a collective work in progress. Ambiguity provides ‘a way of thinking about how the subject can be reconsidered as inherently bound up in the symbolic or social order, rather than simply engaging in it according to varying degrees of inclusivity and exclusivity’ (Ní Mhurchú; 223). It points to how our practices of line-drawing, at the same time as dividing us, implicate us in each other’s lives. As Ní Mhurchú argues, it points to
‘how foreignness is integral to the formation of the self and the possibility of being with others, as opposed to that which merely undermines the self and its coherency and/or distinguishes the self from the Other’ (223-224).

As a consequence, what defines ambiguous political subjectivity is less a question of agency or autonomy, a capacity to act or to become a political subject, which remains in the end a question of sovereignty, but rather our relations with others. This loss of sovereignty is perhaps ‘no loss at all’ (Pin-Fat, 2013; 252) since it relinquishes the often violent myth that we can settle or secure the lines of ethics, politics and subjectivity, that they can be drawn deep within us either in the form of liberal citizenship and national sovereignty or some new common yet to be realised. Instead, appreciating the less-than sovereign ambiguity of our political being ‘will keep us where we want to be and where we are anyhow: in the world living with others’ (Pin-Fat, 2010; 129) which, whilst not necessarily leading to a better politics (Ní Mhurchú, 2014a; 216), still leaves room for hope:

‘the hope that our desire to live in the world with others remains with us and that we seek to take every opportunity to remind each other, and ourselves, of what it is that we do (politics as the drawing of lines) that closes our hearts to the possibility of letting some one just live and be’ (Pin-Fat, 2010; 129).

6.5.3 The politics of ‘chance’: everyday migrant solidarity

Having argued for the need to appreciate the ambiguity and ambivalence of everyday political subjectivity, I conclude this chapter by considering how this perspective we might help make sense of the politics of everyday migrant solidarity. I do not locate the politics of migrant solidarity in its transformative resemblance to citizenship or its subversive disruption of the state-centric order, following CCS, nor do I locate it in the expression of some new revolutionary mode of being, following AoM. Whilst these approaches provide valuable insights into contemporary border struggles, they nonetheless at times risk presenting an overly generalised picture of migrant solidarity that can be located by reading between the lines of migrant subjectivity. Instead, I suggest we can see the politics of migrant solidarity in the

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58 Relatedly, engaging the AoM literature Scheel (2013a) has written convincingly that ‘[a]utonomy has to be rethought as a relational concept’ (599). I interpret his argument as complementary to my own but do not have the space to explore this in more detail here.
everyday practices in which it arises, ‘on the surface of language’ as it were (Pin-Fat, 2010; 129). In this, I am motivated by an ethical political reading of Wittgenstein’s assertion: ‘Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is’ (Wittgenstein, 1974; §124). For me, this offers the opportunity for ‘political modesty’ in our analyses which, as we have said, ‘purposefully leaves open the question of the identity of the actors’ and ‘resists the political urge to impose identity upon a fluid and ambiguous scene’ (Walters, 2008; 203). This is important in order to understand everyday migrant solidarity and what is at stake in it, but also as an effort to show some form of solidarity in analyses, a way of reading politically or perhaps reading in solidarity. And so here I describe an encounter with everyday migrant solidarity on the motorway in Calais as expressing a politics of ‘chance’, from which I then draw some hopefully modest conclusions in a spirit of solidarity.

In late 2014 the sight of large groups of people descending on traffic jams on the motorways leading to the port or the Channel Tunnel terminal in Calais to break into lorries bound for the UK was a relatively recent phenomenon. At least since the period of Sangatte over a decade ago (see 3.5; 5.3), such scenes had been rare. Their prominent re-emergence now was not simply because of the large influx of people seeking refuge across Europe that summer, as if these ‘mobs’ were some sort of inevitable tidal overflow from an ‘unstoppable flood of immigrants’, as the right wing British press (and even government) tend to depict it (Booker, 2015; McKay, 2015; See also 3.2 and Feteke 2015). Instead, I want to suggest that ‘mobbing’ the motorway during a traffic jam can also be seen as a tactic developed in the specifically desperate conditions people find themselves at this border.

Between 2014 and 2015, as I have shown in this thesis (3.4; 5.3), Britain and France invested huge amounts on developing security apparatuses targeting irregular migration in Calais. One of the immediate consequences of this was the almost overnight hike in prices which smugglers (known as ‘mafia’ by irregular migrants in Calais) charged for their services, doubling in a matter of weeks to up to €3,000 in
2014. With the parking areas, gas stations, and rest-stops used by truck drivers around Calais strictly and often violently controlled by different ‘mafia’ groups, the most effective clandestine routes across the border were increasingly limited to those few who could pay the extortionate prices. Given that few people arriving in Calais expected such long delays in crossing to the UK, a wait now becoming longer for more people because of the new security measures, what little money people had with them soon ran out. Unable to afford the services of smugglers people were increasingly resorting to their own initiative to cross the border irregularly. One of the main ways they did this was by taking advantage of the traffic jams regularly forming on the motorways. Hundreds of vehicles, slowed to a crawl or at a standstill, offered multiple opportunities for people to hide themselves on a truck, for example by breaking into its main container or by climbing underneath and holding onto the chassis between the wheels, in the hope that the dogs, scanners, and guards would not intercept them at the border.

At the same time, it was during motorway traffic jams that violent encounters with police were most likely to arise. Whilst being alone meant it was easier to remain hidden throughout, increasing the chance of crossing the border undetected, it also dramatically increased the risks of violent injury if caught or intercepted by police, smugglers, or even overly vigilant drivers. Going en masse to a traffic jam, therefore, provided some form of security for individuals even if it was often met with heavy policing, since it invited crowd control tactics rather than more individually targeted attacks that led to the worst forms of violence and injury. The need to maintain control of the situation in order to manage the continuation of traffic flows, as well as the perceived possibility of retaliation, had the overall effect of limiting the degree of individual police violence against irregular migrants on the motorways, although in general it still remained a ubiquitous feature of these encounters. At the same time,

59 Prices of course varied depending on route and method of smuggling, and writing now in 2016 the situation is very different to two years ago, but undoubtedly the cost will have risen even further.
60 One story I heard was of three women who were found by a driver at a petrol station outside of town trying to stow away on his truck and severely beaten by him, despite one of them being heavily pregnant. Stories such as this were common, as were stories of malicious police violence against individuals (see 3.5; CMS, 2015b; 2016a). When we also remember that access to medical services is severely restricted from irregular migrants in Calais, the risks of such violence is only multiplied.
these encounters were highly visible and taking place in full view of the public. The visibility of this tactic would seem to go against an underlying principle of clandestine movement across borders. Indeed it usually resulted in a rapid and forceful response by the police. But it is in this activity that I think we encounter the politics of an everyday migrant solidarity at work.

A December Sunday morning, the church in the Calais ‘jungle’ was full, latecomers standing in the entrance way, holding back the blankets which served as a door while a sermon was given over the loudspeaker in Tigrinya. Warm candlelight shone softly on colourful drapes and small religious ornaments which congregation members had saved up to buy, stark contrast to the grey skies and sodden ground outside. Next to the church someone’s dog picked through the charred remains of a tent, burned down the night before when its occupant fell asleep smoking. While he was unharmed, the unfortunate man was now doubly homeless and what little he had had the day before was now lost. The church fell silent, still figures deep in prayer. In the distance the wind carried the sound of traffic across the empty no-man’s land sprawling beneath the towers of the Tioxide chemical factory belching out thick clouds of fumes blanketing the camp. The rain kept coming down. Suddenly after a few minutes the church erupted from its trembling silence, filling the air with song, a call and response punctuated by shrill ululations and low steady drumbeats as the whole congregation began dancing circles around the tent’s interior. Outside the strains of religious reverie mixed with the subdued bustle of the camp.

Minutes later, calls went up from one side of the ‘jungle’ and people began moving, walking, running, alone or in groups, beckoning for others to follow. Heads popped out from behind the blankets of the church, and slipping their shoes on, several people jogged off to join them. A traffic jam was forming along the motorway to the port bordering the ‘jungle’. Several groups were already moving along the line of traffic and between the vehicles, trying the back doors of lorries, working fast: while one person distracted the driver behind, another opened the doors of the truck in front and closed them again once people had climbed on board. Then they moved on, trying the next, no luck, the next, it opened, repeat. All along the traffic jam different groups were doing the same. Once they passed by drivers beeped out a warning to the vehicles in front or got out and checked their own trucks. Some were confrontational while others seemed to turn a blind eye. Soon the flashing lights and sirens of the CRS vans arrived, driving up the hard shoulder, police jumping out with gas at the ready. From front to back they checked the trucks, looking for signs of entry, drivers sometimes alerting them to people inside. Others chased after groups still trying to climb aboard the vehicles, spraying them with gas or lashing out with batons when close, people running in all directions, across traffic, to avoid the violence and
potential arrest. Meanwhile, on the mounds separating the ‘jungle’ from the motorway (where 20ft fences now stand) a gathering crowd watched while several police vans parked below in order to dissuade people from joining the ‘chance’. Despite this, several groups and individuals moved further up the side of the motorway, locating a gap before dashing towards the traffic. Those remaining called out and whistled warnings at the others on the motorway when the police were bearing down on them.

For over an hour this continued. Several individuals caught by police were sprayed in the face, given a kick, and then pushed down the hill in the direction of the ‘jungle’. During one such incident the police appeared to be arresting a woman and her young child. A man ran over towards them, shouting only to be tackled to the ground by police. An officer kicked the man as he lay pinned, shouts of anger breaking out from the watching crowd. Looking up the police seemed suddenly aware of being watched. They sat the man up and waited for the arrest van. Meanwhile one of the commanding officers radioed for more CRS. Soon after, several vans arrived, riot officers emerging with shields and armour threw teargas grenades into the crowd, eventually clearing the mounds and forcing people back towards the ‘jungle’. Walking back towards the tents someone said wearily but with a smile, ‘No chance today. Tomorrow, inshallah’.

In Calais the term ‘chance’ was commonly used to refer to crossing to the UK in this way. Appropriated from the French, ‘chance’ means ‘luck’ while in English it connotes opportunity. The daily refrain ‘no chance today. Tomorrow, inshallah’ repeatedly expressed both a weariness and a hope simultaneously. It also, I want to suggest, points to a particular sort of everyday politics of solidarity, one that is highly ambiguous and run through with ambivalence. What we see in this encounter on the motorway is a collective practice that is unorganised, spontaneous even if ritualised through everyday repetition, and frequently, for most who participate in it, unsuccessful. We don’t see here some common identity or subjectivity being championed or some commitment to a particular image of politics being put into practice. Indeed, in these moments irregular migrants continue to play out persistent divisions of race, class, nationality and gender between themselves to greater or lesser extents. But here also these divisions are momentarily put aside. I suggest, we can see in these moments ambiguous subjects coming together, each for their own sake, their own reasons, their own selves, trying to cross the border, and out of necessity having to work together in small and mundane, but also effective, ways:
calling friends to alert them to a traffic jam forming, sharing spaces in the truck, opening and closing doors for others, distracting drivers by asking for cigarettes, staying silent when caught and asked by a driver if there are still people hiding inside, calling out warnings and intervening when the police get violent. These small acts are just some of the ways in which everyday migrant solidarity emerges in these moments. Without them, no one would cross the border. Because of these ordinary acts, some will cross today, others tomorrow, although some may never make it: ‘chance’. In these everyday encounters many things are down to luck, some people cross first time while others give up after half a year. As we saw (3.6), others may die in these encounters. ‘Chance’ is indiscriminate and frequently unjust but without the minor acts of solidarity which make up these scenes of irregular migration there would be no chance at all.

6.6 Conclusion: ordinary acts of solidarity

It is in these ordinary acts, then, I suggest we can see a politics of ‘chance’ at work in encounters at the border as a form of everyday migrant solidarity. The way in which ‘chance’ is figured in everyday understandings and practices of migrants in Calais presents an active politics that unsettles and crosses many borders and boundaries between people and places, whilst still leaving them in some ways intact. The forms solidarity takes in this instance do not require a foundational identity or a complete escape from identities and representation in general. People here do not embody some new political subjectivity or enact some new ethical politics, whether or not defined in terms of citizenship, labour, or the rejection of subjectivity itself. Instead they seem to come together in the practice of their everyday lives in ways that, more or less successfully, unsettle and undermine the borders standing in their path. Here solidarity repeatedly appears and evaporates in the practices of individuals following the rhythms of their everyday lives. This is a solidarity which is not necessarily grounded in subjectivity but in the ambiguous everyday practices of people on the move coming up against and struggling to overcome lines of segregation.
What is perhaps surprising about this politics is just how ordinary it looks. It is in this ordinariness, I have been arguing, that we should try to locate and engage with a politics of migrant solidarity. It does not require us to search for something deep within the subjectivity of irregular migrants on which to ground a better future politics. Instead, it requires us to remain on the surface in our encounters with those struggling against everyday borders, to take them at face value and resist the urge to impose our politics on their ambiguity (Walters, 2008). In doing so we might be able to remain open to the ordinary everyday ways we are already caught up in the reproduction of the borders of race, nation, citizenship, and so on, in such a way that acknowledges their softness and points to where we might work towards their undoing. For it is only by remaining on the rough ground that we can engage in the hard work of standing in solidarity with others who are struggling against the everyday bordering practices of segregation.
7. Conclusion

In this thesis I presented an account of how borders in the UK and Calais work through everyday practices of segregation. In doing so, I have tried to draw attention to some of the ethical political ‘rough ground’ on which these borders are constructed and contested (Pin-Fat, 2010). That is, I have tried to show these borders as everyday sites of struggle. In this conclusion, I briefly summarise the main arguments of this thesis. Engaging with them thematically I show how several key arguments were pursued throughout the thesis, and reflect on their implications for how we understand and approach the ethical politics of everyday border struggles. I suggest that starting from everyday life keeps us situated in the world in our analyses and our relations with others. It allows us to see the ordinariness of our ethical political practices, of the racism, segregation, and violence which makes up the border, and therefore our own complicity in these forms of power. It asks us to take seriously the ambiguity of people’s everyday lives and political subjectivities and to acknowledge the limits of our knowledge as the condition for ethical politics. Ultimately, it raises the question of how to struggle, and with whom. That is, it raises the question of migrant solidarity.

7.1 Reading everyday life: ethical politics, borders, and the rough ground

This thesis is an attempt to read everyday life in relation to ethical politics, in particular the ethical politics of border struggles. As I argued in chapter 2, reading everyday life allows us to focus on the contexts in which power, subjectivity, and ethical politics take place, that is, our ordinary practices and everyday encounters with one another. Following Pin-Fat (2010) and Wittgenstein (1974), I have offered an anti-foundational account of nation-state borders as social rather than metaphysical, something we do in our relations with each other rather than something that exists outside of us (2.4-2.5; 3.4). Rather than ‘hard’ fixed lines which express something ‘deep’ and essential about us, I argued that borders are ‘soft’, conditional, performative, uncertain, open to change and challenge, yet constantly recreated. Throughout I have argued for a refusal of the ‘seduction’ of borders’ seeming intransigence and metaphysical depth in favour of seeing them as contingently
produced through ordinary everyday encounters between people (2.5; 4.4-.45; 5.4.5.5; 6.4.5). This is not to argue, however, that nation-states and their borders are today less powerful or politically relevant than before. Instead, reading everyday life actually highlights the presence of power in the workings of contemporary borders, how borders are unavoidably powerful, inextricable from wider relations of power of which they are both an effect and a continuation. For instance, it allows us to trace how histories of colonial racism continue to be expressed in contemporary forms of statecraft through discriminatory everyday bordering practices in the UK and Calais (3.3; 4.3). It also allows us to see how forgetting the persistence of such historical hierarchies of humanity impoverishes our abilities to engage ethically and politically in our present with those we encounter there (5.3). As we saw with humanitarianism in Calais, unless we confront the ways in which histories of power and violence reproduce themselves every day at the border, we can end up complicit in their repetition.

Reading everyday life, therefore, aims to keep power in sight, to demystify naturalised categories such as the nation-state, the border, the citizen, noncitizen, migrant, or human, showing them to be instead specific social constructions and ongoing ethical political practices. This thesis sought to read borders as everyday encounters (Ahmed, 2000) and emphasise the ‘embodied and relational’ (Scheel, 2013b) ways they become powerfully real in our lives (2.4; 3.4). It showed throughout how the border in the UK and Calais plays out in encounters between ordinary people. Here, it argued, the border is necessarily done somewhere by someone in relation to/against some other, and it is through these encounters that borders become powerfully real for us as we embody as subjects their categories and divisions. Reading everyday borders in this way, however, not only enables an analytical focus on how borders are powerfully reproduced in practice but also serves an ethical political purpose. In pointing to the embodied relationality of borders, this thesis repeatedly raises the question of responsibility and confronts us with our own complicity in their reproduction.

Reading everyday life, I argued, is both a method and an ethos which situates us on the ‘rough ground’ and in relation to others (2.5; Pin-Fat, 2010). As a method it
reminds us of the constant messiness of social construction in a world lived among others, the imperfection and failure which accompanies our practices of ethics and politics, and the frequently violent ways in which we encounter, represent, and relate to one another (2.6-2.6; 4.5). It reminds us that our concepts are fragile, our understandings limited, our knowledge uncertain, our institutions unstable. It reminds us that the foundations of our ethical politics do not stand outside of us but are our own doing. Seeing ethical politics as embodied and relational, then, reminds us of our inescapable implication in each other’s lives and therefore our responsibility for how we frame, name, and encounter others (Butler, 2005; 2010; Pin-Fat, 2013; 2016). At the same time, it reminds us how others always exceed our conception of them, our attempts to make sense of them, to capture them with our concepts and our borders, and also that we are ourselves never finished bounded sovereign subjects but irremediably social, exposed and given over to others (5.5; 6.5; Butler, 2005; 2006; Ní Mhurchú, 2014a). As an ethos, it asks us to acknowledge these conditions on the rough ground and embrace them as necessary for the possibility of ethical politics. Accepting that our ethical politics is foundationless beyond ourselves and our practices, that how we see/treat each other is ultimately up to us, we are confronted with the ethical political responsibility for the world in which we live. The world is made by us in our ordinary everyday relations with one another. An ethos of reading everyday life therefore asks us to be attentive to how we relate to others, and in doing so seek to create new relations, new worlds, and new ways of living otherwise. We are reminded it is up to us to do ethical politics differently, that it is us who have the power to change the world, but that we cannot do so alone. It reminds us that such a goal requires struggle and that a life without others is a life without power.

7.2 Reading everyday borders: deterrence, segregation, and struggle

In this thesis I have shown how borders take the form of segregation in everyday life. In the UK and Calais I traced how policies of deterrence in relation to irregular migration are central to the operation of the border. This border deterrence, I argued, is realised through practices of segregation aimed at making life for irregular migrants unliveable (3.5; 4.3; 4.5; 5.3). Throughout the thesis, and especially in chapter 3, I drew extensively on fieldwork and other research to demonstrate how the
border in Calais (and the UK) is reproduced through policies of isolation, destitution, discrimination and daily acts of harassment, violence, and exclusion (3.5.2-3.5.6). As I showed, the border as segregation is repeatedly enacted throughout everyday social spaces and by multiple ordinary actors: not only border guards, security professionals, and police, but also by truck drivers, shop keepers, library staff, landlords, teachers, private security firms, ordinary people on the street, even charity workers and academics. In this way, this thesis contributes to debates in and around Critical Border Studies concerning the proliferation of borders beyond the territorial edge of nation-states as well as efforts to reconceptualise borders beyond the image of the ‘line’ in terms of different sorts of border ‘work’ (3.4; Balibar, 2002; 2004; 2009; Parker & Vaughan-Williams, 2009; 2012; Rumford, 2011; 2012).

What is distinctive about this thesis, however, is its focus on borders as practices of everyday segregation. Focusing on everyday life, it emphasised the mundane, opaque, messy, ambiguous ways the border is enacted, and how this has resulted in a particularly pervasive extension of bordering practices throughout our social relations in ways which start to blur the lines between policing immigration, racial discrimination, and segregation (4.3). Foregrounding segregation, this thesis has emphasised the constitutive violence and injustice which underlies practices of border-making and statecraft in the UK and Calais, a violence which regularly leads to death (3.5). In doing so, it demonstrated how historical racisms and hierarchies of subjects are persistently reproduced in contemporary bordering practices, even as borders evolve and take on humanitarian characteristics (5.3). In this way, it contributes to debates around biopolitics and humanitarian borders (Fassin, 2001; 2007; Vaughan-Williams, 2009a; b; 2015; Walters, 2011a). However, emphasising the everyd

dayness of practices of segregation, I argued, keeps in sight how borders are sites of struggle, involving multiple relations of power, historical oppressions, and ordinary prejudices combining in contested encounters between subjects. It reminds us that border struggles are often ordinary rather than exceptional, embodied and relational rather than abstract and definitional, everyday and practical rather than metaphysical. I argued, seeing borders as everyday segregation raises different sorts of questions about how to engage ethically politically with borders struggles in ways which link
them to wider contexts of ongoing inequalities, racisms, and violences (5.6; 6). This importantly keeps us situated where we are in the world among others when considering how to act ethically politically rather than searching for some abstractly revolutionary escape to a more properly political future (5.4-5.6; 6). As I argued, reading everyday borders requires refusing sovereign seductions.

7.3 Refusing sovereign seductions

Throughout this thesis I have cautioned against the metaphysical seduction of sovereign power (2.5.1; 4.4; 5.4-5.5; 6.3.4; 6.4.5). Dominating much of the critical literature on nation-state borders and security is a focus on biopolitics and exceptional sovereignty, especially influenced by Giorgio Agamben (1998; 2000). What this thesis has argued is that, even where critical of Agamben, debates in this literature are overly seduced by a picture of sovereign power as the power to draw lines ontologically hard, that the (border)lines of the nation-state are metaphysically deep (4.4.1-4.4.2; 5.4.2-5.5.2). One problem, I argued (5.4.2), with this seduction is it empties analyses of borders and sovereign power of ethical politics by making them metaphysical. Such a metaphysical frame misses all the messy, embodied, relational work that form borders as sites of struggle. In addition to this depoliticisation another related problem is how, in becoming metaphysically seduced by sovereign power, we often end up reproducing in our analyses the ontologies of the nation-state, its borders/divisions of non/political subjects and spaces. Seduced, we can end up doing much of the borderwork (Rumford, 2011) ourselves, despite our efforts to be critical. For instance, I argued (5.5) that while contributors to critical debates over de/politicising ‘the camp’ explicitly challenge the borders’ denial of political rights and subjectivity to irregular migrants, instead emphasising the lived political struggle of migrants themselves in these spaces, they nonetheless assume that borders, as expressions of sovereign power, can and sometimes do draw hard lines between non/politics. As I argued is also the case with Critical Citizenship Studies (CCS) (6.3), this reproduces (albeit inadvertently) a picture of normal or proper politics corresponding to the divisions of the nation-state and its borders.
Similarly, I argued that theories of migrant ‘escape’ from nation-state and/or capitalist ‘control’ are equally captured by sovereign power’s metaphysical seduction (6.4). Here, I argued, the problem with Autonomy of Migration (AoM) theories of migrant politics and subjectivity was that their (different) conceptions of radical political emancipation, in envisioning a revolutionary metaphysical break with capitalism/nation/state/and borders, reproduced the hardness and depth of the nation-state ontologies they sought to overcome. For instance, in arguing for an ‘imperceptible’ politics ‘outside’ the ontologies of the nation-state and the policing of subjectivity, a ‘world 2’ separate from the problematic world of citizenship, Papadopoulos et al. (2008) actually reproduce the depth and power of the statist divisions between citizen/noncitizen, inside/outside, politics/non-politics they critique, hence the necessity (and political potency) of escape (5.4.4-5.4.5). As with Mezzadra’s (2004) theorising escape in terms of the dichotomy between ‘capital’/‘living labour’ (5.4.), I argued Papadopoulos et al. end up overdetermining the political subjectivity of migrants in terms of the control they sought escape from, at the same time imposing an unreasonable expectation of radicalism upon them, and neglecting the ethical political complexity of migrants’ everyday lives.

Throughout, this thesis has argued instead for a ‘soft’ rather than ‘hard’ approach to ontology, and a refusal of sovereign seductions (2.5 4.5; 5.5.2; 5.5). I argued we need to situate sovereign power and line-drawing practices within their historic and everyday contexts rather than see them as definitive of those contexts (4.4-4.5; 6.5). Doing so points to how sovereign power unravels in its enactment (4.5.1-4.5.2), how the lines drawn at the border are messier, blurrier, less certain than our conceptions of sovereignty often assume (3.6; 4.5; 5.5), and how the ethical politics of borders cannot be reduced to exceptional sovereign drawing of lines between politics/non-politics but is more multifaceted, mundane, ordinary, unclear, yet also more powerful (5.5.2-5.6; 7.1). It also, I argued (6.5), allows us to appreciate the ‘ambivalence’ (McNevin, 2013) and ‘ambiguity’ (Ní Mhurchú, 2014a) of migrant subjectivity and politics, and to resist imposing our own interpretations onto the rough ground of the lives of others. In short, I argued, there is more happening in border encounters than the exercise of sovereign power and the delineation of the
limits of political community, and there is more to people on the move than their relations to sovereign (state) apparatuses of control. Reading everyday borders, therefore, involves trying to appreciate the living complexity of people’s lives, with all their nuanced ambiguities, uncapturable within neat lines of analysis. So, I argued (5.5.3), reading everyday borders and refusing sovereign seductions requires a certain ‘political modesty’ (Walters, 2008; 203) in our analyses and encounters with the border struggles of irregular migrants. Paying attention to the details of everyday life, then, and letting our encounters speak ambiguously to us without trying to read too much into them, is both an analytical and ethical political way of reading and writing about border struggles, and one which I suggested might offer room for expressing migrant solidarity in our work.

7.4 Migrant solidarity as ordinary politics

Finally, this thesis has been about migrant solidarity. It has inquired after the conditions for migrant solidarity and considered its possible forms as ethical political practice. Seeing the border as an everyday practice of segregation, I argued migrant solidarity should also be envisioned as arising on this rough ground of ethical political struggle. Locating migrant solidarity on the rough ground of everyday life, I argued, draws our attention to the specifics of it as a form of everyday struggle: it is hard work usually carried out in unspectacular places and mundane ways, in those everyday encounters between people where power relations are reproduced and/or deconstructed. Migrant solidarity mirrors how the border as segregation permeates everyday life in the UK and Calais, taking many forms, from protests to sharing meals, causing traffic jams, and more. Rather than define the essence of migrant solidarity, this thesis has offered an account which sees migrant solidarity as something arising contingently in particular contexts in relations with others, necessarily specific to each border encounter, which in the UK and Calais manifest through everyday segregation.

In this sense, this thesis has tried to refrain from being overly prescriptive about what an ethical politics of migrant solidarity might look like. At the same time, it has critiqued tendencies in critical migrant literature (especially among CCS and AoM scholars) to overly determine what counts as properly political migrant subjectivity. As
I argued in chapter 6, whether we frame migrant subjectivity and politics in terms of ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin, 2008), ‘dissensus’ (Rancière, 1991; 2001; 2004; Rigby & Schlembach, 2013), ‘multitude’ (Hardt & Negri, 2000), ‘escape’ (Mezzadra, 2004), or ‘imperceptibility’ (Papadopoulos et al., 2008), in critical academia we often end up imposing on others our own particular conception of what politics looks like or, perhaps more accurately, what we would like it to look like. Instead, I have suggested that reading everyday life, as a critical method and ethos (2.4-2.5), allows us to be more alert to the complexity, ambivalence, and ambiguity of those we encounter in border struggles (6.5). Starting from the acknowledgment of our inability to fully represent the lives of others (2.6) it asks us to embrace uncertainty and failure in our relations with one another. In doing so, it hopefully encourages us to remain open to surprise in our encounters with others, ethically politically attentive rather than prescriptive, and on the rough ground where things are messier than we would like.

Firstly, this is important, I have argued, because it keeps us focused on the sites where border struggles happen, the everyday contexts in which power, subjectivity, and the contours of ethical politics, of the world, are contested and might be remade. Reading everyday life warns us against over-generalising and asks us to pay attention to the specifics. Here I demonstrated how migrant solidarity emerges in unexpected but decidedly ordinary ways, for instance in the small everyday acts of mutual support on the motorways of Calais (6.5-6.6), formed in/informed by the struggling encounters of multiple individuals with the border as segregation. As I argued, we do not find in these moments a new form of collective political migrant subjectivity, something radically new on which to ground a future better ethical politics. Rather, we encounter the persistent everyday struggle which constantly, limitedly, softly, unsettles and challenges the b/order of the nation-state.

Secondly, reading everyday life is ethically politically important because it keeps us as writers, researchers, or activists, situated on the rough ground in our analyses in relation to the border struggles we encounter. It requires us to remain aware of our implication and complicity in the ethical political contexts we study, how we too are already caught up in the reproduction of the border as a form of segregation. Acknowledging our complicity in this way, however, should not paralyse
us with guilt or send us searching for the purity of an ethical politics elsewhere, a
move which as we have found in this thesis usually fails (5.4-5.5; 6.4). Instead, we
should see in this complicity the condition for our ethical political engagement in
border struggles and a call to migrant solidarity, in our writing and elsewhere.

Reading everyday borders, I have argued, therefore requires us to engage with
borders as sites of struggle, as sites of segregation but also solidarity. It also, I have
suggested, invites us to consider how we want to engage in these struggles since we
cannot avoid being implicated. Reading everyday life poses the unavoidable ethical
political question of how we will relate to others in the world. This question is
summed up for me in David Campbell’s (1998) article ‘Why fight’: it is a question of
the ‘recognition of the radical interdependence of being and our inescapable
responsibility to the other […] one in which the overriding concern is the struggle for –
or on behalf of – alterity rather than a struggle to efface, erase or eradicate alterity’
(513). Reading everyday borders confronts us with our immersion in practices of
segregation, and raises the question, the accusation, the demand, of migrant
solidarity, inciting us to struggle. Whilst reading borders in everyday life as I have done
in this thesis cannot tell us how to go about migrant solidarity, or what it necessarily
entails, it can tell us where it must happen, in the world among others. It also,
perhaps, points to a number of places where we might start out from.
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