Editorial

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1 Introduction

The increase in migrant deaths and humanitarian crises proliferating at the edges of the Global North – whether in the Mediterranean Sea (IOM, 2016), along the US-Mexico border (Carlson and Gallagher, 2015), or along Myanmar's border with Bangladesh – indicate the failures of current migration policies that have reduced access to migration and asylum for the majority of the world's population (Hyndman and Mountz, 2008). Despite the proliferation of walls and barriers ringing the First World, people continue to move, driven by conflict, poverty, and instability, and forced to take more dangerous journeys across seas and deserts (Brown, 2010; Cornelius, 2001).

Within migration studies, questions of governance have traditionally been explored from within the confines of the nation-state (cf., Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002). Scholarship on international migration governance has only recently started to emerge (e.g., Betts, 2011; Koser, 2010; cf. Ghosh, 2000). It remains, however, focused on governance emanating from traditional centres of power. Yet, migration policies and politics often play out at the geopolitical margins of the nation-state: at the border, in airports, in detention centres, and increasingly offshore as externalisation practices push migration controls further outside state territories (Boswell, 2003; Mountz, 2011a; Salter, 2007; Walters, 2006). Even when policies are decided upon within global centres of power, these policies are interpreted by street-level bureaucrats and border guards as they implement them, negotiated and resisted by migrants and refugees, and circumvented by migration intermediaries such as smugglers (Côté-Boucher et al., 2014; Satzewich, 2014).

Margins demarcate the edge of something, and thus contribute to the stability of the centre; "margins are a necessary entailment of the state, much as the exception is a necessary component of the rule" [Das and Poole, (2004), p.4]. To stabilise, territory, sovereignty, and entrenched power, the margins must be continually re-inscribed and reinforced if they are not to be radically reimagined. Currently, this process of re-inscribing and stabilising borders is nowhere clearer than in the politics of migration, a politics that seeks to balance the fortification of borders with the management of human mobility. Despite the emphasis on border walls and non-entrée policies, borders are porous and offer violent forms of 'differential inclusion'. Migrants are increasingly "crossed and cut, more than circumscribed, by borders" [Mezzadra and Neilson, (2013), p.6].

Bringing together scholars from different disciplines, this collection explores the failures of migration policies on the ground, analysing how policies and discourse can heighten migrant vulnerability and justify restrictive measures that curb access to asylum and migration. A major theme running throughout the issue is that of borders and bordering. Contributors examine how border controls operate in practice and how they include discursive, spatial, and temporal dimensions. The border and its associated controls construct particular migrants, especially those unable to access legal channels of mobility, as risky subjects to be feared. The contributors analyse how such labels and categories are tools of governance that work to include and exclude; and how humanitarian language and logic is employed to justify restrictive measures and obscure the violence of border controls.

The special issue also includes contributions that move beyond state policies and practices to the everyday experiences of migrants. The contributions span many geographic regions, including Central America, Indonesia, Turkey, the Mediterranean, Mexico, the USA, and Canada. By analysing the margins, the special issue thus provides

a global picture of the current challenges, failures, and consequences of migration governance in the 21st century.

The special issue starts with contributions that analyse the spatial and temporal aspects of borders and bordering practices in different parts of the world. Anne McNevin and Antje Missbach offer us a powerful indictment of how structures of violence in refugee containment practices can take temporal as well as spatial forms. They reveal how time is central to the governance of migration. In the case of asylum seekers held in Indonesia who hope to be resettled in Australia, waiting has become a technology to provoke ‘case resolution’ in the refugee process: torturous limbo encourages migrants to agree to assisted voluntary return. Drawing upon their extensive research in Indonesia, McNevin and Missbach demonstrate how asylum seekers left in limbo lose valuable time that could have been used to enhance their own skills. Moreover, the compounding effect of waiting can construct the refugee as non-admissible. When migrants show agency by intensively resisting and protesting this extended limbo, their action is used by the Australian state as evidence of ‘unsuitability’ and thus becomes “circular justification for the security rationale underwriting migration management” (see McNevin and Missbach, this issue). Less intense forms of migrant agency and resilience in the face of interminable waiting are also instrumentalised for migration management purposes: in these instances, the waiting can be portrayed as tolerable and not ‘that bad’, removing pressure to achieve refugee resettlement and to find long-term solutions. McNevin and Missbach’s argument is carefully constructed to avoid the depersonalisation often found in work on asylum seekers, and instead presents intimate portrayals of torturous waiting.

In addition to understanding the temporal architecture of border control, Julie Young offers us a conceptualisation of a spatial policy imaginary in the form of the Canada-Mexico border, which permits the development of ‘anticipatory interdiction’ by Canadian officials to manage the geopolitical and diplomatic ‘threat’ posed by asylum claimants from Mexico, an important trading partner. By naming this border construct, Young makes visible its implications for refugee and migrant movements across the wider Central American region. Young argues that Canada’s various policy moves – the safe third country agreement, the Mexican visa imposition, and the Designated Countries of Origin list – construct barriers to migration from Mexico to Canada by delegitimising Mexican mobility in the region. Media and political discourse that focuses on ‘bogus’ or ‘economic’ refugees similarly delegitimises this mobility. The construction and regulation of a Canada-Mexico border emerges through a set of policy changes that Young argues remakes the North American asylum space. Canada has developed policies to narrow refugee claimant options for Mexicans at the same time as it engaged in efforts to improve Mexico’s anti-crime capacity. Rather than contradictory, Young suggests, “the policies function through a coherent framework of anticipatory border control…” They are not contradictory as much as unified in their attempt to remake North America’s asylum space.

In a further critical analysis of how policies remake spaces of asylum and how humanitarian actions can fail refugees, Suzan Ilcan, Kim Rygiel, and Feyzi Baban present their interpretation of the ‘ambiguous architecture of precarity’ through status, space, and movement for Syrian refugees in Turkey. Drawing on the concept of precarity from labour market studies, the authors apply it to the conditions Syrians experience in Turkey. In both the labour market and refugee policies, structures and policies create precarity for vulnerable subjects. However, precarity is also constantly open to transformation, which

is why Ilcan, Rygiel, and Baban focus on its 'ambiguous architecture'. The simultaneous presence of vulnerability and ambiguity are revealed through status, space, and movement. In terms of status and associated rights, Turkey's Law of Foreigners and International Protection Act and the Directive of Regulation on Temporary Protection create significant uncertainty for Syrians and for government officials. In terms of space, Syrians must register for identity cards before they can access social services. However, government changes to the registration process denied Syrians the ability to access social services or to move to different locations for several months. Their temporary status and the policy confusion around what rights they might access together with bureaucratic issues with identity cards, registration cards, and numbers combine in manifold ways to enhance precarity. Movement is also key to the wider precarity of Syrians in Turkey, since temporary waiting in Turkey is interpreted as evidence of a lack of immediate danger for Syrians, and the EU-Turkey deal has formalised this notion of safety. However, as permanent settlement in Turkey is out of reach for most Syrians, many feel that to move on with their lives they must undertake dangerous boat journeys. While McNevin and Missbach demonstrate how the temporal is an important and violent element of containment, Ilcan, Rygiel, and Baban show how this interminable temporariness in Turkey propels some Syrians to engage in movement across the sea, despite the risks.

Moving across the Atlantic, Noelle Brigden brings to light the interplay between visibility and invisibility along clandestine migrant journeys from Central America to the USA. Her article analyses how migrants navigate a social and material terrain filled with uncertainty and violence in order to travel towards the USA. Focusing particularly on the train yard and the migrant shelter, Brigden uses innovative map-making workshops with migrants and rich ethnographic material to demonstrate how these 'public images' are practical resources for migrants making the journey north, signposting the route and providing important information. However, as they are made visible these resources also attract criminal predators and state enforcement, thus potentially eroding their utility to migrants traversing a hostile terrain. Moreover, 'public images' such as crowded trains are not only tactical resources but also symbolic resources deployed in the politics of migration: they are used to signal a humanitarian and security 'crisis' and to justify further state controls. Brigden thus cautions that although visibility provides a platform for demands for migrant rights, it does not equate with political recognition. Tactical invisibility is essential to the clandestine migrant journey.

Olivia Ruiz reviews the precarious situation of unaccompanied minors who travelled from Mexico and Central America to California in 2014. As with McNevin and Missbach, Ruiz's analysis also reveals how the agency of asylum seekers is interpreted in a manner that justifies denial of protection and greater border securitisation. These children demonstrate agency in journeying across Central America and into the USA without their families. Their reception was constructed through the powerful discourses driven by histories and geographies of the US southern borderlands. Echoing the discourse seen in Canada around 'bogus economic refugees', the children crossing into the USA were framed as 'illegal migrants', a discourse that overshadowed counter narratives on childhood and innocence. The fact that these children undertook these journeys without their families made it possible for the media and the public to interpret them as non-children, since their journey was not dependent upon in-situ family protection. Ruiz argues that this discursive portrayal of the migrants as non-children allowed their authenticity and right to protection as children to be challenged. As Ilcan,

Rygiel, and Baban reveal in the case of Syrians in Turkey, the policy ambiguity around protection (who provides it, who deserves it) can compound precarity and ultimately results in the denial of protection to those who do not fit the tightly prescribed criteria of deserving.

Cynthia Wright examines the intersections between migrant and LGBT rights in Canada to ask how and where a transformative politics might emerge. Wright begins by positioning the emergence of a concern over LGBT migrant rights in parallel to the rise in anti-immigrant sentiment and the intensification of state enforcement measures against migrants. While migrant rights were not a key concern of LGBT activist communities in the 1980s, awareness of the lack of services available to migrants without status living with HIV/AIDs pushed the issue up the LGBT agenda in the 1990s. Coupled with the homonationalist discourse of the conservative government, led by Stephen Harper, in the 2000s, the HIV/AIDs issue spurred LGBT activists to become more engaged with the experiences of refugee claimants. Wright contends that self-organising within LGBT undocumented communities has also occurred in response to the intensification of deportation strategies, and that productive alliances have emerged. Yet, mainstream LGBT advocacy has shied away from challenging 'illegality' more fundamentally and has thus replicated the nation and its borders. In light of this, Wright argues that we "need a politics that addresses the full spectrum of migrant trajectories, including conditions of 'illegality' and precarious status rather than one that assumes an eventual pathway to permanent residence, citizenship, and inclusion in the nation." An important site for resistance is the city, where solidarity and sanctuary movements offer hope and demands for the regularisation of migrant status, albeit with limits. Wright carefully and thoughtfully ponders the political limits of equal rights approaches in the context of the violence manifest in the current refugee system, and poses a political challenge to researchers and activists to de-border our political imagination as we seek productive and transformative alliances across diverse political and cultural communities of interest.

In what remains of this short introduction, we analyse three themes that emerge from this collection of papers: shifting borders, violent humanitarianism, and the limits of resistance. We conclude by returning to the importance of the margins and the everyday in scholarship on migration governance, as well as responding to Wright's call to de-border our political imagination.

2 Shifting borders

As a collection, the articles in this special issue examine the different forms that the border takes and how the border is produced (cf. Johnson et al., 2011). McNevin and Missbach remind us that alongside the material expressions of the border that we are accustomed to – walls topped with razor wire, armed border guards, and customs booths at airport – there are important and often overlooked temporal mechanisms through which the border is constituted, the prolonged indeterminacy of the 'humanitarianism of waiting'.

As with their spatial counterparts, the temporal features of modern migration controls affect different migrants differently: skilled migrants are provided fast-track visas for limited periods, while refugees face detention and backlogs in asylum application decisions. Deportation can be 'fast-tracked' for those deemed unwanted, with appeal

processes limited or removed altogether. Thus, to adopt the language used by Griffiths (2014), the migrant experience is shaped by different speeds: time is sticky or suspended in moments like those described by McNevin and Missbach, where people feel unable to move forward with their lives due to migration controls that deny them access to labour markets, family reunification, or resettlement. Sticky time is interspersed with moments of frenzied time. Fast track procedures settle on life-changing decisions very quickly: in the UK, for instance, the 'detained fast track' concludes asylum decisions within two weeks; appeals must be made within four days and judged within a further two days. Migrants also generally have only 72-hours' notice of their deportation, sometimes even less. In these instances, time accelerates as migrants face life-changing events and temporal ruptures: friends, family, solicitors and MPs must be contacted to challenge or even prepare for deportation. The short time periods associated with 'fast-track' processes make such challenges much more difficult (Griffiths, 2014).

The collection of papers also points to how the border is a symbol. In our fast-changing globalised world, where transnational security threats are regularly evoked, the border has become a symbol of order and the power of the sovereign states (Brown, 2010). Thus, the fortified border becomes the apposite response to clandestine migration journeys, framed as disorderly and chaotic. By analysing how the Canadian-Mexican border is constructed, Young eloquently reminds us that the border is in fact an imaginary, a constructed line that superficially and violently separates 'us' from 'them'. Even more 'naturalised' borders, such as the Canadian-US or US-Mexican borders are constructed, contested, and historically-specific. They are re-made and redrawn by the powerful rather than objective reflections of divisions between territories and people.

The border's symbolic power at once constitutes and justifies its ability to cast those people at the losing end of the global hierarchy of mobility as illegal, to deny entry, and to contribute to migrant deaths. Thus, the border expands and contracts depending on who crosses it: while thousands die at sea on the edges of Europe, citizenship is sold to the super rich providing not only seamless travel but seamless changes of residency. The border fluctuates and is also mobile: 'borders are everywhere' (Balibar, 1998; cf. Mountz, 2011b). Ruiz reminds us of how the border stigmatises those who cross it without authorisation and how the 'illegal' label follows people within a state's territory and easily trumps other characteristics and grounds for refugee protection. Young adds to this analysis by demonstrating how the mobility of the border is not only discursive – the labelling of Mexican refugees as 'bogus' – but also material: through safe country agreements, countries reproduce their border beyond their territories, establishing barriers to mobility along entire migration routes. Similarly, Ilcan, Rygiel, and Baban remind us that migration controls move not only beyond the border but within it as well. In Turkey, policies deny people the ability to move to other cities and countries. Wright also highlights how "the proliferation of bordering practices has made the urban one of the key scales of immigration enforcement, racialisation, and migrant precarity." Thus, the contemporary border occupies 'a multiplicity of sites' and 'seep[s] into the city and the neighbourhood' (Amoore et al., 2008). In this way, the mobile border shrinks spaces of asylum and reinforces global inequalities by denying people access to refugee protection as well as economic opportunities.

Yet, the border is also site of contestation, one where migrants negotiate with border guards, smugglers, and other migrants in order to slip through the cracks in the fortress (Mainwaring, 2016; Squire, 2011). Wright analyses challenges to state violence, controls on mobility, and the migrant/refugee binary by examining how the issue of LGBT asylum

seekers has moved up the agenda of the LGBT movement in Canada. She examines the successes of this movement in placing the issue of asylum claims based on gender and sexual orientation on the political map, but ultimately argues that the mainstream LGBT movement's failure to challenge illegality prevents it from embracing more transformative possibilities, including the No Border work championed by migrants and their allies. Again, the city is important for her as a place of border enforcement and resistance to hierarchical immigration statuses with differential rights.

3 Violent humanitarianism

Migration scholars have analysed the alternating enforcement and humanitarian spectacles occurring at the border (e.g., Andersson, 2014; Brown, 2010; De Genova, 2013). The enforcement spectacle of border guards and border walls produces the 'illegal migrant' and projects a sovereign power that states do not actually exercise [Brown, (2010), p.25; De Genova, (2013)]. Similarly, the humanitarian spectacle of, for instance, high-profile rescues at sea operates to obscure the violent and often temporary inclusion of those who are rescued (Andersson, 2014). Indeed, De Genova (2013, p.1181) reminds us that the spectacle of exclusion at the border produces and is accompanied by the "large-scale recruitment of illegalised migrants as legally vulnerable, precarious, and thus tractable labour." Thus, the border and its associated policies and practices is not only about inclusion and exclusion but about differential inclusion, an inclusion that is predicated on marginalisation and precarity within the state. Similarly, Mezzadra and Neilson's (2013) work on border as method analyses the violent separation that can occur when social cooperation connects heterogeneous groups. This violent separation can be evidenced in the forms of resistance that emerge at the border, in the camp, and in other spaces. The violence of separation can be mediated through the processes of differential inclusion, where migrants are partially incorporated into systems deemed humanitarian in their intention but always partial and limited in their power to reimagine the bordering of human interaction.

In addressing how the border is (re)produced, the collection of papers contributes to these discussions in two ways: they reveal how humanitarian discourse can obscure violent policies and practices, and how humanitarian practices are set within wider structures of inequality and violence that undermine their effectiveness. First, the authors highlight how humanitarian rhetoric cloaks migration governance and justifies further enforcement measures that disenfranchise migrants in a multitude of ways (cf. Walters, 2011). Indeed, others have argued that the efforts to 'save migrant lives' in the Mediterranean cause migrant deaths at sea (Heller and Pezzani, 2016a, 2016b). In a circular logic, deaths at sea are then pointed to as evidence for the need for further enforcement measures. Border controls at and beyond the border produce the need for migrants to take longer and more dangerous journeys. Moreover, migrants continue to make these journeys not only because of but also despite these fortified borders (Mainwaring and Brigden, 2016).

In their article, McNevin and Missbach demonstrate how 'humanitarian' efforts legitimise longer waiting periods. Humanitarian language cloaks non-custodial alternatives to detention in Indonesia and works to make invisible the violence involved in being stuck in 'luxury limbo'. Similarly, Ilcan, Rygiel, and Baban reveal how policies

in Turkey aimed at providing protection for refugees simultaneously produce forms of precarity and ambiguity. Finally, Ruiz reminds us that even when humanitarian language is present, security anxieties easily eclipse these ‘softer’ concerns, and refugees may be quickly dismissed as ‘bogus’. Young shows how Canada’s focus on improving Mexico’s law enforcement practices within the state is not read as evidence of a lack of safety for Mexican citizens, but as a policy that can diminish the call for humanitarian compassion at the border.

Second, the articles not only reveal how humanitarian discourse obscures and justifies violent state practices but also illustrate how humanitarian practices are set within wider structures of violence and inequality and are thus limited in their effectiveness. For instance, McNevin and Missbach’s analysis highlights the improvements made to refugee living standards in Indonesia as part of an alternatives to detention project that undertook a ‘metamorphosis’ of Sekupang refugee shelter on the island of Batam “from a prison-like facility to one of an apartment complex.” Nevertheless, the positive effects of these ‘luxurious’ spaces are undermined by the limited relocation spaces allocated by first-world government and thus the long-term confinement of migrants in Indonesia. Similarly, Wright demonstrates how advocacy efforts by LGBT groups in Canada replicate the nation and its borders. Brigden shows how humanitarian spaces like shelters along clandestine migration routes in Mexico also attract predators.

4 Limits of resistance

The special issue includes contributions that move beyond state policies and practices to the everyday experiences of refugees and migrants. Analysing the politics of survival, these contributors explore the ways in which migrants negotiate and resist displacement, marginalisation, and exclusion en route, and in countries of transit and destination. An analysis of more formal migrant activism reveals how such resistance may simultaneously challenge particular forms of inequality while reinforcing others. It also hints at what we consider as the limits of resistance.

What emerges from these contributions is how the many manifestations of the border make resistance difficult. Indeed, despite the important focus on migrant agency, there are limits of resistance within the established political imaginary. Wright is optimistic, but also aware of the limitations of intersectional activism between LGBT and migrant rights groups. She demonstrates the potential for co-opting LGBT activism through homonationalist dialogue, and how activism focused on new scales and through new articulations is still limited in its ability to address structural forces of global capitalism that continue to determine the stratified incorporation of migrants. Through her case study, Ruiz reveals the difficult task of humanising child migrants in the face of violent anti-migrant discourses in the USA. Ilcan, Rygiel, and Baban offer a detailed analysis of how Syrian migrants face an ambiguous architecture of precarity that limits their rights and their ability to claim them. State policy confusion and failure deny them opportunities to organise their lives across diverse spaces in Turkey. International agreements restrict Syrian migrant mobility and encourage dangerous sea crossings. In McNevin and Missbach’s contribution, the use of ‘luxury’ limbo represents temporal violence. It is difficult not to want more humane conditions for those in prolonged detention, but when ‘luxury’ becomes a means to detract from the failure of our humanity, we have to forge new political imaginaries and creative forms of activism.

Clearly states are already developing new political approaches to restrict particular forms of mobility, as Young shows us in the case of Mexico and Canada, where contradictory policy moves (e.g., denying the existence of persecution in Mexico, while contributing to improving Mexican policing) are accompanied by the creation of a new securitised border space. These papers also reveal how migrant resistance is also used to justify the very infrastructure of securitisation. When people move in order to seek security, safety, and opportunities, if they do so outside of the limited permissible (and increasingly non-existent) channels available to them, their agency becomes reason to detain, deflect, and refoul them. Indeed, Brigden reminds us that although making the clandestine migrant journey visible is an important first step for activists and migrant rights groups, images of the journey are co-opted by the state and exploited as evidence of the migration 'crisis' and the need for further enforcement measures. The experiences of unaccompanied minors discussed by Ruiz reveal how their subjectivity as children was eclipsed by their agency (or that of their parents) in making the journey alone in the first place. Thus starts the process of stripping migrants from the right to have the 'gift of protection' [Moulin, (2012), pp.60–61]. The very act of asserting oneself as an individual who might have some kind of right or freedom to move is interpreted by the machinery of bordered security as an incursion upon sovereign space. All the papers in this collection clearly articulate this problematic: the problem is not the migrant body that moves, but the differential stratification that the state can apply to those bodies. How to challenge this through political, social, and community activism remains a key preoccupation of all the authors involved in this special issue.

5 Conclusions: the everyday in migration governance

As a collection, the papers in this special issue reveal the importance of taking seriously the everyday in migration governance (cf. Côté-Boucher et al., 2014). Indeed, the collection fills a gap in the migration governance literature that has by and large taken a top down approach in its analysis (cf. Rother, 2013). In contrast, by looking to the experience of migrants and the way migration governance plays out in everyday practice, the articles in this special issue demonstrate how borders and migration policies generate exclusion and precarity. They remind us that migration governance does not merely involve objects to be governed by first-world policy makers (Hage, 2000), but human beings with their own agency.

The special issue thus reveals how borders shift and manifest in a variety of ways, and how those borders are violent, despite the humanitarian rhetoric that now often cloaks managed migration policies at the border. The articles also reveal how humanitarian practices can be inadvertently violent due to wider structures of inequality and immobility. This collection thus points to not only the agency of migrants, but also the limits of resistance, the ways in which migrant agency is harnessed and exploited by the state to justify further migration controls and how mainstream activism can be similarly co-opted by nationalist discourse.

Thus, the collection points to the need for new imaginaries of the border and the state that do not contribute to the violence and inequality inherent in our global capitalist system. Recognising the relationship between global capitalism and state borders, a No Border politics emerged in the 1990s and has called for the universal right to mobility, as

well as the right to not move. Across North America, Europe, and elsewhere this movement has challenged the legitimacy of borders and the nation state, and continues to reimagine meaningful humanitarianism.

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