The biopolitics and geopolitics of border enforcement in Melilla

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Abstract:

This article uses the multiple and contradictory realities of Melilla, a pene-enclave and -exclave of Spain in North Africa, to draw out the contemporary practice of Spanish, European Union, and Moroccan immigration enforcement policies. The city is many things at once: a piece of Europe in North Africa and a symbol of Spain's colonial history; an example of the contemporary narrative of a cosmopolitan and multicultural Europe; a place where extraterritorial and intraterritorial dynamics demonstrate territory's continuing allure despite the security challenges and the lack of economic or strategic value; a metaphorical island of contrasting geopolitical and biopolitical practices; and a place of regional flows and cross-border cooperation between Spain, the EU, and Morocco. It is a border where the immunitary logic of sovereign territorial spaces is exposed through the biopolitical practices of the state to 'protect' the community from outsiders. In light of the hardening of borders throughout European and North African space in recent years, this article offers a rich case study of our persistently territorial world.

Keywords: Territory | borders | Spain | European Union | Morocco | biopolitics | geopolitics

Article:

INTRODUCTION: OSAMA AND ABOU

> Body of immigrant minor found dead in the lighthouse area of Melilla. (Headline, Gálvez, 2015)

On our first day in Melilla we were meeting with an activist at a café when a teenage boy approached our table and asked for change. He was one of a few dozen youth who live on the rocks along the ocean beside the port and try to sneak onto the ferries or climb into containers headed for mainland Europe. It is a desperate and unlikely route, and the activist noted that many

of the same boys she worked with in the city had been there when she arrived five months earlier. The activist shook her head, 'no', and said to the boy with a sad smile, '*mañana, inshallah*', tomorrow, god willing. He ran off and re-joined his friends who were heading in the direction of Melilla Vieja, the port area.

The next morning the Guardia Civil, Spain's gendarmerie, raided the makeshift camp at the port, using boats, helicopters, and agents on the ground to round up and detain the group of homeless boys. In the raid, which was front page news in Melilla, the Guardia Civil captured over 30 'Magrebi' youth, built a new observation cubicle, and installed new locks on the gates. Nevertheless, when we visited the site the morning after the raid there were three boys sleeping on the rocks, suggesting that the boys had accepted the challenge that the new gates and fence posed by taking a presumably more treacherous path (Figure 1). The new observation cubicle was empty, but there was a Guardia Civil on duty at another nearby observation point. He barely looked up from his cell phone to say *buenos días* as we – two white academics who evidently aroused little suspicion – walked by. It is unlikely that Osama, the boy who fell to his death along the rocky shore some two months after we were in Melilla, was the same boy who had asked us for change, but like the young men we saw sleeping on cardboard mats atop craggy limestone outcroppings, Osama represents the utter senselessness of people dying at the 'gates' of Europe and the callous indifference of states seeking to restrict mobilities (Vazquez, 2015). In December 2015 and March 2016, three more boys drowned attempting to stowaway on ships at the Melilla port (The Local, 2016).

Figure 1. Boys sleeping on rocks near Melilla's port.

The lengths to which some migrants will go to cross the border was demonstrated by the case of another boy snared in Spain's North African security regime.[1] In May 2015, Abou, an eight-year-old from Ivory Coast, was discovered crammed in a suitcase by an x-ray machine at a border crossing in Ceuta in an attempt to be reunited with his father in Spain (Kirkpatrick, 2015). The experiences of Osama and Abou illustrate the multitude of indignities endured en route to Europe: scaling the multi-layer fence that has made Melilla and its sister enclave Ceuta (in)famous; deportation and starting the journey to Europe again; begging for change and food; and enduring abuse at the hands of smugglers and police. The hardening of border enforcement and the disinclination of some European leaders to ensure safe crossing has resulted in Europe's borders becoming the deadliest on earth with over 20,000 deaths in the past 10 years (Bialasiewicz, 2011; Brian & Laczko, 2014; Ferrer-Gallardo & Van Houtum, 2014). The international media spectacle of border crossings draws sporadic waves of coverage before the waters calm and the quotidian life of living with the border goes on, mostly unnoticed.

For migrants there are real material impacts from the expansion of security services, the construction of walls and fences, and the deployment of a wide range of new military technologies at borders (Saddiki, 2012; Vallet, 2014; Vallet & David, 2012). It is much harder to cross this border – and many other hardened borders around the world – than it was two decades ago, a fact that points to the partial success of these practices. Border forces are also cracking down on the locations where migrants gather to attempt to cross a border, as demonstrated by the clearance of the Melilla port camp on 10 March 2015 and the earlier clearance of migrant camps on Mount Gurugu in Morocco on 17 February 2015, which is discussed in depth below. However, while they may send a message that authorities are taking action, the fact is that these crackdowns do not solve the problem. This is evident in the appearance, the very next day, of the teenagers at the port. It is also evident in the migrants who continue to walk the streets of Nador, Morocco, looking for food or spare change, preparing to rush the fence around Melilla. The main camps in Morocco were destroyed and burnt down, but some migrants evaded the crackdown and more will continue to come. Indeed, on the same morning we observed the aftermath of the raid on the port, a group of migrants had rushed the fence with five making it across. Dozens more were caught on top of the outer fences, and after sitting there for twelve hours, they were eventually forced to return to Morocco. The dramatic raids by the Guardia Civil with air, land, and sea units make for good headlines, but also demonstrate that despite the hardening of the border and the pushing of the border out into Morocco, migrants will still attempt to cross into the EU.

This article uses the multiple and contradictory realities of Melilla to draw out the contemporary practice of Spanish, EU, and Moroccan immigration enforcement policies. It is based on fieldwork in Melilla and Nador in March 2015 that included interviews with activists, residents, and migrants, observational visits to the border fence and border crossing sites, and analysis of government documents. The paper uses three different metaphors of Melilla as Europe, as a possession, and as an island to illustrate the central argument that the territoriality of borders in and around Europe is composed of a highly variegated geography of special zones and legal

[1] In this paper, we use the term "migrant" to refer to anyone who is moving from one place to another. We chose not to use "refugee" because it is a state defined category from the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) that legitimates some movements, largely those for political reasons, while delegitimizing others, such as environmental or economic reasons.

regimes, what Mountz (2013, p. 830) has conceptualized as the 'ambiguous spatial arrangements or "gray" zones through which sovereign power operates and is produced'. In the case of Melilla, the spatial ambiguity of the migration regime is rooted in a colonial history that established an extraterritorial presence of the Spanish crown, a presence that was consolidated during the period of modern Westphalian state-making as an integral appendage of Spain's sovereign territory, and then most recently the legal status of which has been tied up with the Schengenization of European space. As a result of its unique geographies, Melilla offers evidence of the extraordinary spatial tactics of border control that the anthropologist Coutin (2010, p. 200) has observed in other immigration receiving states.

The first substantive section describes the political and geographical position of Melilla as an enclave of Europe in North Africa, which illustrates Spain's colonial history and the contemporary narrative of cosmopolitan and multicultural Europe. The second section considers why Spain continues to hold onto Melilla, and other extraterritorial possessions, which are security challenges and provide little economic or strategic value. The section theorizes the militarization of Melilla through the lens of territoriality, especially drawing on Murphy's notion of territory's continuing allure. The final section theorizes the contrasting geopolitical and biopolitical practices through the metaphor of Melilla as an island. It is at the border where Esposito's immunitary logic of sovereign territorial spaces is exposed through the biopolitical practices of the state, which include the regulation of migrant bodies and the outsourcing of immigration enforcement and policing to Morocco, in order to 'protect' the community from outsiders who might pose a threat. The joint-funding and cross-border cooperation demonstrate that although Spain and Morocco continue to disagree on the status of Melilla, and also Ceuta, they increasingly see the border itself not as a site of conflict but of mutual interests in regulating and policing unauthorized movements.

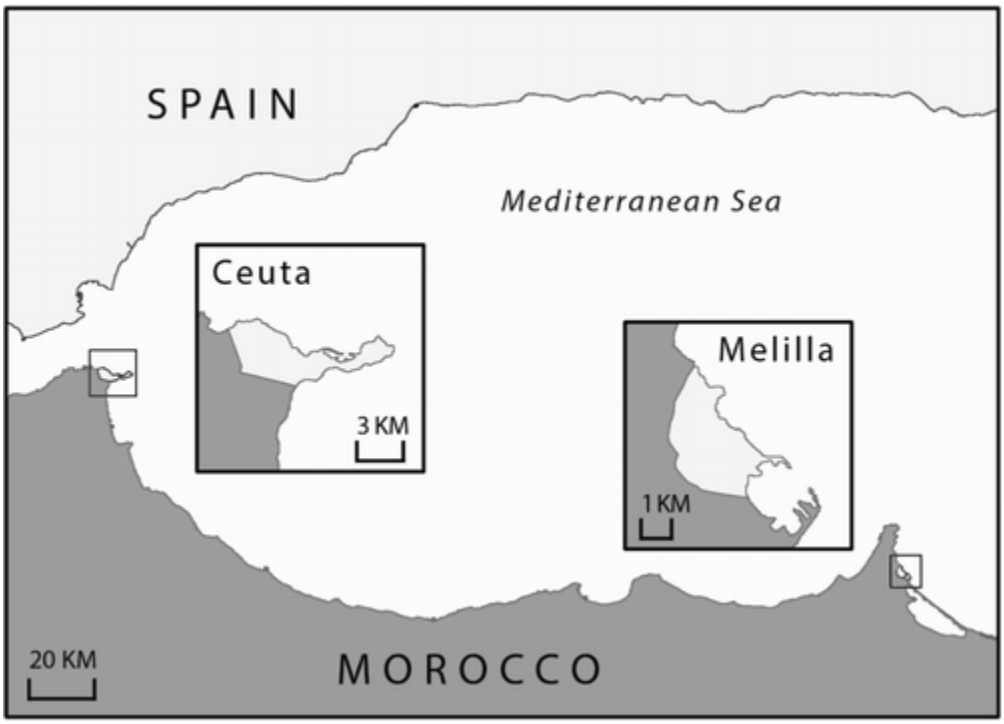

Figure 2. Locations of Melilla and Ceuta.

MELILLA AS EUROPE: COLONIAL OUTPOST AND COSMOPOLITAN SPACE

Melilla (*Maliliyyah* in Arabic) is an autonomous Spanish city on the North African coast with a population of approximately 85,000 people, 15% of whom are classified as foreigners (Ine, 2015). It is one of the five North African Territories under Spanish Supervision along with Ceuta, Penon de Vélez de la Gomera, Penon de Alhucémas and the Chafarinas Islands; together, these are often referred to as the *Plazas de Soberania* (sovereign territories) or simply *Plazas* (O'Reilly, 1994, for more detailed accounts of the history and geography of Melilla and Ceuta, see Ferrer-Gallardo, 2008; Gold, 2000) (Figure 2).

The city has been inhabited since ancient times and is mentioned in the geography of Ptolemy. It has been a militarized garrison city for most of its existence. Melilla changed hands throughout the centuries in a manner similar to other North African and Southern Iberian cities as Roman, Phoenician, and Moorish empires came and went. For most of that period it was little more than a fort situated on a rock outcrop near the port, what is today known as Melilla Vieja. The high walls and impregnable position on cliffs above the sea demonstrate the legacy of enclaved space and walled exclusion from the surrounding landscape.

Isabella and Ferdinand of Spain captured Melilla in 1497 as they extended their territorial control after the reconquest of the Iberian Peninsula. The strategic goals of having outposts on the North African coast for the Spanish crown in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included defending against *jihad*, providing a logistical hub for the crusades, enhancing prestige as a Mediterranean power, housing inmates, and gaining a military advantage over rivals (Great Britain, Morocco, and others) in influencing the vital chokepoint of the Strait of Gibraltar (O'Reilly, 1994). From within the medieval walls of Melilla, the Spanish planned raids on Rifian Berbers, and the favor was returned by numerous sieges of the presidio by the Berbers (Andersson, 2014). Although relations between the Spanish and local populations could be hostile, from the very earliest days of occupation trading relations between colonizers and locals were also established.

The Spanish maintained control of the city through battles and sieges in 1694–1696 and 1774–1775. Spain and Morocco signed several agreements in the late nineteenth century that guaranteed Spanish sovereignty, but local Rifian Berbers continued to attempt to retake Melilla during battles in 1898 and 1910. In the aftermath of these campaigns, Spain extended its colonial control across northern Morocco, including the cities of Tangier and Tetuan in the form of a protectorate. Melilla has a particularly significant role in Spanish history because it served as the launching point for Francisco Franco's nationalist troops at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. It is the only city in Spain that still has a statue commemorating the Fascist dictator, although it was recently moved to a nondescript roadside location near the old fortress.

Despite its long military history, Melilla's local government emphasizes that the city is a cosmopolitan European space characterized by its modernist architecture and the mixing of four cultures. The symbol of the city is: ומ‌m which incorporates the letter M from Hindi, Arabic, Hebrew, and Spanish. The glossy brochure from the tourist agency explains:

> For those who have arrived from the Peninsula, the first noteworthy feature lies in the ethnical combination of its inhabitants, which manifests itself in the most routine activities and, more especially, n [sic] the cohabitation of its religious celebrations, such as Christian Easter, Muslim Ramadan, the Jewish Januká or the Hindu Diwali. … The magnitude of Melilla is to be measured by this complex social network that brims with vitality, and by its peaceful people, who have inherited the wisdom accumulated over centuries of cohabitation within a regime of diversity.

Why the brochure only calls attention to the diversity to visitors 'from the Peninsula' is not clear, since there are far more visitors to the city from elsewhere in Africa.

In the hotel elevator, a flyer written in the form of a first person narrative of a resident of Melilla projects a similar cosmopolitan image. The author recommends a visit to: ' … El centro commercial de la ciudad, un lugar fantástico para las compras y donde abundan las tiendas de musulmanes, hebreos, e hindúes.' (The commercial center of the city, a fantastic place for shopping and where there are many Muslim, Jewish, and Hindu shops.) Given the equal billing of the various ethnic communities, one might expect that they are each quite large. However, the tourist brochure reports that the population is 65% European and 30% Berber. Other estimates suggest that these two populations are roughly the same size and the Berber population is growing at a much faster rate (Elcano Royal Institute, 2014).

The Jewish population is approximately 1,000 people (1.3%) and the Hindu population, less than 100 (0.1%). The numbers do not quite add up because there is another group that accounts for 3.6%, larger than either the Jewish or Hindu population, that is consistently left out of the four cultures narrative. Later in the brochure it is noted only once that the 'Romany population' of Melilla 'is characterized by its dynamism'. Furthermore, the 1,400 migrants housed at any one time at the Centro de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes (CETI) facility, again larger than the Jewish and Hindu populations combined, are also left out of the cosmopolitan European narrative.

Melilla symbolizes the colonial history of Spain's Golden Age and demonstrates the effort to re-signify the landscape with a political–territorial mythology that connects it to Spain and Europe rather than the surrounding communities. The five-hundred-year Spanish presence in the city and the representation of the people and culture in cosmopolitan, multicultural terms emphasizes that the territory is a European place, although the history and current reality of military occupation belies the cosmopolitan narrative. As the political scientist Hansen (2002, p. 489) argued,

> The heavy symbolism that lies imbued in such a well-lit 'enlightenment' about where the barbed wire frontiers of the European Union lie in Africa, demonstrates how important it is to incorporate these EU 'Non-European territories' into our analyses of current articulations and definitions of Europe and of European identity.

In other words, the institutionalization of Europe and its integration over the past six decades cannot be understood without understanding the 'forgotten outposts of "EUrope"' (Hansen, 2004, p. 60), because the legacies of colonialism and decolonization shaped a geography of Europe that extends beyond the physical confines of insular and peninsular

mainland European space while the withdrawal from empires abroad provided incentives and justification for European integration during crucial moments of the last century (Bhambra, 2009; Hansen & Jonsson, 2011).

MELILLA AS POSSESSION: TERRITORY'S CONTINUING ALLURE

As a border town with little indigenous industry, Melilla is economically disadvantaged. Unemployment is over 30% in the city, and the nominal GDP per capita (€16,426 in 2013) is 26% lower than Spain's average (Eures, 2015). The largest employer is the public sector, and with several thousand military and Guardia Civil personnel based there, the city feels like both a garrison and an extraterritorial transfer economy. Seemingly, the city's main function is to serve as an expensive-to-maintain gateway for migrants who are unwanted in Spain and the rest of Europe. Melilla is the source of an ongoing territorial dispute with an important political and economic partner, Morocco, and the Moroccan state would clearly like the territories back as evinced by at least 36 diplomatic and two militarized confrontations over the territories since 1956 (Wiegand, 2011). The historical strategic military importance of the territories – protecting sea lanes of communication, as a bulwark against *jihad* and base for Christian crusading – appears very outdated. Why, then, does Spain hang on to Melilla and the other *Plazas*?

When Spain and France decolonized Morocco in 1956, Spain maintained control over Melilla and the other *Plazas* by arguing that they were Spanish territories for centuries before the colonization of the rest of Morocco. In recent decades, the Moroccan government requested that Spain return the enclaves as former colonial possessions, although the enclaves are not listed on the UN registry of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Moroccan government reiterated these claims as recently as 2007 in response to a visit to Ceuta and Melilla by the Spanish Monarchs. Mohammad XI, the King of Morocco, wrote:

> Given this act was to overcome a nostalgic and dark era, the Spanish authorities must assume their responsibility for the consequences that could jeopardize the future and the development of relations between both countries. […] Morocco has continued to demand an end to the Spanish occupation of Ceuta and Melilla and nearby islands in the plundered north of the kingdom. (Quoted in Cembrero, 2007)

One possible justification for maintaining control over these extraterritorial possessions is that they provide a purpose for the Spanish military. The threat of Moroccan intervention and the daily incursions by migrants justify the existence of the military and provide a venue to demonstrate its continued relevance. As Andersson (2014) suggests, these territories create an important market for military contractors to continue to sell their wares (see also Jones & Johnson, 2016).

Melilla, along with Ceuta, is part of Spain and the EU, but excluded from some European policies and rules. There is no VAT tax in the cities and they are outside the customs space of the EU, although products from the two cities can enter the EU without customs (European Union, 2006). As part of the agreement with other European states on the accession to the Schengen zone, Spain's north African territories are exempt from passport free travel and therefore there is a passport check for passengers leaving the enclaves prior to admission into

mainland EU (European Union, 1990). Thus, despite the dramatic visual effect of people scaling multi-layered fences to arrive in 'Europe' at Melilla, in fact migrants are not entitled to unencumbered journeys onward in Schengen Europe as one might expect. Quite the contrary, and this helps to explain why young migrants such as Osama spend long periods in the city awaiting onward passage to mainland Spain. Additionally, although Spain is a member of NATO, Melilla and Ceuta are not covered by the NATO Charter, so that any eventual military confrontation between Spain and Morocco over the *Plazas* would not legally compel the involvement of other member states (Wiegand, 2011).

One explanation for Spain's desire to retain Melilla, of course, involves the 'continuing allure' of territory as posited by Alec Murphy (Murphy, 2013). The symbolic value of territory far exceeds any rational, strategic calculus. Hanging on to these territorial pieces is central not only to strategy in a narrow military or economic sense, but also to nationalism, and hence territory's continuing allure is largely rooted in assessments of a set of national interests that are as much emotional and symbolic as strategic (Murphy, 2013). That territory continues to play a central role in human affairs, in spite of academic attention to networks and flows, is confirmed by a daily scan of headlines. Murphy (2013) argues that states are unwilling to give up territory even when the social and economic costs are high, and that non-exclusive territorial sovereignty-based solutions to vexing issues – these might include condominiums, parallel statehoods, etc. – are rarely contemplated.

However, it is also possible in Melilla's case that the territory serves a wider purpose in sovereign states' strategies to grapple with the territorial dimensions of increasingly globalized movements (Agnew, 2005; Sassen, 2013, 2015). A large body of scholarship in political geography and other disciplines has sought to problematize the misalignment of nation-state borders and the territorial strategies states employ to manage mobilities, such as the movement of migrants through space. Mountz (2013) has usefully summarized the 'blurring' of several facets of sovereignty's spatial dualisms of inside/outside, onshore/offshore, etc. Along the same lines, Melilla illustrates the need to problematize the Africa–Europe dichotomy, since each exists within the other; the interface is anything but a near dividing line. All of this underscores the admonition by Hyndman (2012) that scholars should resist the urge to essentialize 'the territorial'.

Melilla and Ceuta are key sites of interface between the extraterritorial and intraterritorial dynamics of contemporary migration enforcement practices (Raustiala, 2009). Numerous studies have looked at the ways in which sovereign practices are mobilized extraterritorially, for example by setting up shop in transit states and compelling the cooperation of these states in managing movements through space (Casas-Cortes, Cobarrubias, & Pickles, 2015; Collyer & King, 2015; Menjívar, 2014). Melilla falls somewhere in-between; Raustiala's use of 'intraterritoriality' is instructive here. This concept refers to the spatial differentiation between a legal core and periphery within the same juridical territory: 'The resulting "borders" are internal, not international. The persistence of intraterritoriality stems not from Westphalian notions of territorial sovereignty, but instead from the challenges of liberal constitutionalism in a global context' (Raustiala, 2009, p. 225). Melilla is an example of this challenge, where it mediates between the authority between Spain and the EU, at sites that are both sovereign territories of an EU member state but which are excluded from some of the legal frameworks EU membership

affords. Melilla is part of a 'graduated zone of sovereignty' (Ong, 1999, 2006) that paradoxically funnels migrants to its imposing fences with the promise of arriving 'in' Europe while at the same time not being truly on the legal or territorial 'inside' of European space. As the below section on the nexus between geopolitics and biopolitics suggests, it is in this 12.3 km^2 place where one can observe, as Nick Vaughan-Williams eloquently puts it, the ' … inherent ambiguity within EU border security and migration management policies and practices that (re)produces the "irregular" migrant as potentially both a life to be protected and a security threat to protect against' (Vaughan-Williams, 2015, p. 3). This highlights the contrast between the humanitarian logic of migrant rescue epitomized, for example, by Médecins Sans Frontières ships saving migrants in the Mediterranean and the continued enforcement of the border when MSF turns these rescued migrants over to state authorities to process their asylum claims (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015).

Figure 3. Migrants on the fence in October 2014. Photo by José Palazón Osma.

Back on the ground in Melilla, the contradictions of the place are hard to ignore. One of the first impressions of a visitor to Melilla is not the cosmopolitanism and diversity, as the tourist brochure suggested, but rather of a militarized and securitized place. On the drive from the airport and on subsequent walks through the city, we passed white and green Guardia Civil jeeps, brown and green Spanish army Humvees and trucks, blue and white local police cars, and the vans of private security contractors, mostly from the Spanish firm EULEN. There are Guardia Civil in the lobby of hotel, there are local police drinking coffee in the cafes, and there are military officers eating churros and chocolate in a restaurant. On the streets, the military men and women are always jogging. Sometimes in the black shorts and gray shirt while on duty. At other times in track gear and high black socks of an athlete in training. Indeed, one of the classic newspaper photographs of Melilla is of two white clad golfers at the military's golf course in the

foreground and the three-layered six-meter high border fence in the background, with migrants perched on top (Figure 3).

MELILLA AS ISLAND: GEOPOLITICS AND BIOPOLITICS AT A EUROPEAN BORDER

The *why* question of the value of this territory, however, remains largely unresolved and under-examined. To understand the political geography of contemporary Melilla, one must consider the geography of extra- and intraterritoriality, on the one hand, but also the nexus of geopolitics and biopolitics on the other. We begin here with an examination of modern state system and the 'political architecture' of Westphalian political order, which was, and continues to be, rooted in sovereign territorial authority (Franke, Weizman, & Geisler, 2003). Although Melilla is not literally an island, conceptually it is useful to think about it as one. The pre-Westphalian political order of feudal Europe saw multiple, overlapping, coexisting political authorities: the church and its physical structures existed as metaphorical islands not subject to the secular authority of the surrounding fief; city-states were islands in that they had their own sets of laws and provided sanctuary and financial havens, legally and physically separated from surroundings (Franke et al., 2003). Sovereign territorial states won out over rival forms of political organization in Europe because centralized, hierarchical administration of clearly defined spaces was more efficient at beating out rivals and lessening fragmentation, and they also were better equipped to manage international relations (they were better able to make credible commitments to foreign rivals and therefore achieve long-term gains) (Spruyt, 1994). As the Westphalian political architecture took hold over centuries, the domestic was domesticated: competing forms of political authority were purged or merged within the borders of the state's territory, populations were disciplined, outsiders excluded, and multiple internal cultures were forcibly merged into one, which came to be known as the nation. The islands of refuge that had existed – church, city-states, etc. – were simply exported to the margins of European geography, thus extending its frontiers. There they appeared, at least from the colonizers' perspective, as the 'outposts of civilization' floating with the sea of yet un-ordered barbarity (Franke et al., 2003, n.p.). The creation of the modern territorially based state system of exclusive authority in Europe helped to create the conditions required for large-scale imperial expansion beyond Europe.

Spain's imperial conquests were vast, and the map of its extraterritorial colonies grew rapidly after the fifteenth century only to shrink considerably from the eighteenth century due to independence movements, wars, and decolonization. Melilla and the *Plazas* are some of the leftovers of extraterritoriality, and as much as some extraterritorial outposts have served as the 'physical infrastructure for the distribution of finance and strategic power', others have become 'zones of humanitarian intervention' or 'military camps' (Franke et al., 2003). The extraterritorial island, as in the case of Melilla, has become an integral part of Spain's and Europe's interior since mass migration turned the garrison to refuge, much like the walled city-states of medieval Europe offered hope of refuge inside their walls. Along these lines, analytically Melilla and Ceuta are tantamount to the literal islands in Mountz's work on an 'enforcement archipelago' of 'front-end border enforcement strategies' (Mountz, 2011, p. 119; see also Baldacchino & Tsai, 2014; Bernardie-Tahir & Schmoll, 2014).

It is at this point where it is useful to consider what this particular case tells us about the well-rehearsed debates in geography about the relationship between biopolitics and state sovereignty, such as whether the two modes of governance are contiguous and coevolving (e.g., Agamben, 1998; Crampton & Elden, 2007; Foucault, Bertani, Fontana, Ewald, & Macey, 2003), or whether biopolitics is modern manifestation along a temporal continuum of state power that displaces the modern, territorial state (Hardt & Negri, 2000; see also Coleman & Grove, 2009). In short, we suggest that Melilla represents the co-evolution of geopolitical and biopolitical praxis, where, for example, the geopolitical and geohistorical macro-scale projects of Spanish imperialism and later European Union expansion and bordering meet the micro-scale biopolitical practices of population and mobility control. The intersection between the geopolitical and biopolitical realms has a long history, perhaps best exemplified by the application of Malthus' work on population in racialized geopolitical projects of imperial expansion and hegemony during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Dillon & Lobo-Guerrero, 2008). In the current era of rapid, globalized mobilities, securitized biopolitics, as Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero write, 'has become the imperial struggle not simply to seize territory, control resources or even reconfigure state apparatuses – although these remain traditional security concerns – but to secure the changing and manifold processes of global circulation as such' (2008, p. 284).

Melilla puts many aspects of the biopolitical and geopolitical on full display: detention facilities and camps both on the Spanish and Moroccan sides of the border (Minca, 2015), tall fences and hypersurveillance, and animalized discursive constructions of alien, diseased, unhygienic invaders (Vaughan-Williams, 2015) coexisting with tourist brochures celebrating cosmopolitanism and EU rhetoric proclaiming 'freedom, security, and justice'. This interplay can also be placed on a historical continuum, since the colonial origins of Melilla was not just a bulwark of an expanding empire designed to protect against any further incursions of Moors into Iberia, but also as a prison (Gold, 2000).

The border between Melilla and Morocco is a striking one, with three layers of fencing on the Spanish side encircling the entire 12 km^2 area of the city and extending a short way into the Mediterranean's waters (Figures 4 and 5). In spite of the border work that targets the bodies of migrants at the edges of Europe, Melilla is also situated in a regional setting in which cross-border connections are vital to the function of the cities on both sides of the border. A new biopolitical control in the form of cross-border cooperation has emerged in the past decade as Spain, the EU, and Morocco have worked together to manage migration flows (Andersson, 2014; Collyer, 2012, 2007; Human Rights Watch, 2014). Most of the migrants crossing into Melilla are from central and western Africa, and typically arrive via the inland route via Niger and Algeria often with assistance of smuggling syndicates (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The first destination in Morocco is the city of Oujda, a sort of staging area for further travel to Nador, Melilla's neighbor city. According to Collyer (2012), during the mid-2000s migrants spent an average of over one year in Morocco, and as a result of Morocco's toughening of its own migration regime, were deported to Algeria 1.73 times on average. The tightening of Melilla's border in the 1990s (when the first fences were constructed) led to sea crossings becoming more common, often in 'rickety wooden *pateras*' that predictably led to numerous shipwrecks and deaths (Collyer, 2012).

The 2005 events in Ceuta and Melilla played a catalytic role in shaping the current relationship between Morocco, Spain, and the EU. In the autumn of 2005, an estimated 1,400 migrants attempted to scale the fences around Ceuta and Melilla, and the reaction of border guards resulted in between 11 and 14 migrants being shot and killed, with conflicting reports as to how many actually died and which side's border guards fired shots (Andersson, 2014; Collyer, 2012; European Commission, 2005; Natter, 2014). Spain pressured Morocco to increase patrols of its own coast, ostensibly as a humanitarian move to prevent migrants from embarking on dangerous boat journeys, but this simply encouraged even more treacherous journeys from more distant points of departure, such as along the Atlantic coast. (Collyer, 2012)

Figure 4. Spanish border fence extending into the Mediterranean.

Largely as a result of the embarrassment of the Ceuta and Melilla crisis, the European Council met in 2005 to develop new policies focused on migration management (Dünnwald, 2015). Subsequently, the EU initiated the Rabat process with partner states including Morocco and other North and West African states in order to integrate them into a more coordinated global, life-cycle approach to migration and convince them that irregular migration was something to be controlled, not ignored (Dünnwald, 2015). The social organization of migrants, as well as the strategies pursued to reach Spain, changed as the Spanish and Moroccan governments – increasingly in cahoots with each other – adapted their migration controls to stem growing numbers. Moroccan patrols of the Algerian border in 2003–2004 led to secondary camps in Morocco far away from Melilla to be bypassed in favor of heading directly to Gurugu. Moroccan clampdowns in the wake of the 2005 events, made transit even riskier, in terms of both the prospects of removal and the threat of mistreatment at the hands of the police (Dünnwald, 2015). The Gurugu camp outside Melilla housed as many as 3,000 migrants in 2004 at its peak – the term camp must be qualified, as this was a campsite with no fixed structures and people living

outside. After 2005, when this entire area of northern Morocco was declared off limits to migrants and patrolled by the army, those migrants who remained dispersed to smaller, more remote camps, until over time the numbers built back up to the estimated 1,200 irregular migrants who were removed by Moroccan authorities in February 2015 (Natter, 2015).

Figure 5. Spanish fences in foreground, new Moroccan concertina wire fence in background.

In February 2014, at least 15 migrants drowned attempting to swim around a seawall separating Ceuta from Moroccan territory as Spanish Guardia Civil officers fired rubber bullets at them prompting much outrage (The Local, 2014). In October 2014, the Spanish Law on Public Security was controversially amended to allow the Guardia Civil to push back migrants at the border

> Por último, respecto al régimen especial de Ceuta y Melilla, se dispone que los extranjeros que sean detectados en la línea fronteriza de intentan superar los elementos de contención para cruzar irregularmente la frontera podrán ser rechazados a fin de impedir su entrada ilegal en España (Finally, regarding the special regime of Ceuta and Melilla, foreigners that are detected at the border line trying to cross without permission may be rejected to prevent their illegal entry into Spain). (EL Congreso, 2015)

The EU has provided resources to support Morocco's migration management system since at least 2000, when the Association Agreement went into force and more recently via the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) (Casas-Cortes, Cobarrubias, & Pickles, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2014). There have been a variety of target programs under the auspices of EU–Morocco relationship targeting irregular migration, including the Aeneas Program of technical and financial assistance (2004–06) and Project Seahorse (2005–08) that entailed joint patrols

between the Spanish Guardia Civil and Moroccan authorities. In addition to thematic funding streams, geographic assistance packages such as MEDA I and MEDA II (assistance to the EU's Mediterranean partners) have provided well over €100 million to the Ministry of Interior to shore up enforcement capabilities (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The last 10 years have witnessed the emergence of 'spatially mobile sovereignties' of states acting to control unruly pathways of migrants beyond sovereign territorial limits (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015). Morocco was the first country to sign a bilateral mobility and migration agreement with the EU in June 2013. The agreement first emphasizes the normalization of student visas for Moroccans, but then addresses what it terms 'irregular immigration'. The press release from the EU states:

> The EU and Morocco will work together in order to combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings and to provide assistance for victims of these crimes. They will work closely together in order to ensure that Morocco can establish a national asylum and international protection system. (European Commission, 2013)

These agreements have shifted the most exclusionary practices of enforcement to the Moroccan side allowing the image of Melilla as a space of cosmopolitan Europe to be partially maintained while the biopolitical control of migrant bodies is obscured on the other side of a barbed wire fence.

Certainly, the existence of the fences gives some suggestion of how the Spanish and Moroccan states view this border, and thus the *geopolitics of border enforcement* in terms of 'controlling access to strategically occupied compartments of topographical space' is manifest in and around Melilla (Coleman & Stuesse, 2014, p. 36). However, a simple reading of the 'spatialization of state authority' around territorial borderlines such as Spain's border with Morocco around Melilla needs to be problematized in at least two ways (Collyer & King, 2015, p. 186).

First, the externalization of border controls by the EU (or 'border outsourcing', see Menjívar, 2014) has transformed Morocco and other North African states into a sort of 'cordon sanitaire' (Ferrer-Gallardo & Van Houtum, 2014; see also Casas-Cortes et al., 2015), while the internalization of border enforcement ('insourcing') has added layers of additional restrictions on migrants' bodies *inside* the juridical territory Europe. In the North American context, Coleman and Stuesse (2014) have referred to this process as the 'implosion' of border enforcement, where the objective of bordering becomes not just geopolitical but also biopolitical. In other words, in their attempts to discipline human mobilities, states seek to inscribe the border on migrants far beyond the actual borderline – to do so, states must seek assistance of a range of complicit authorities from local police and welfare agencies to foreign governments. Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) conceptualize these two modes of bordering as *external qua exclusive* and *internal qua modulating* – seeking to exclude migrations from the territory while also seeking to restrict possibilities of movement and action within the state's borders. Even though the Schengen Treaty supposedly got rid of border checks between EU neighbors, the recent controversy between Italy and France over migrants being turned back by France near Ventimiglia illustrates that internal movement continues to be a politicized issue in the EU. In June 2015, Italian police forcibly removed around 300 African migrants from their makeshift camps along the rocky Mediterranean shore near the French border (Deutsche Welle, 2015). Despite similarities with Melilla's migrant roundup of March 2015, Italy's roundup occurred

along one of the original Schengen borders, far from any external EU border where one might expect shows of state power to protect territorial sovereignty against the perceived threats of free movement. Thus, the intellectual distinction between the external and internal dynamics of borderwork blurs in contemporary European praxis. Further events of summer and autumn 2015 along internal Schengen borders, such as the reintroduction of border checks between Austria, Hungary, and Slovenia, as well as between Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, underscore this point.

Second, by focusing singularly on state actions directed toward migrants, there is a risk of overlooking the importance of migrants themselves as strategic actors capable of various forms of resistance that undermine notions of strict territorial sovereignties or biopolitical controls (Collyer, 2012). However, Vaughan-Williams reminds us that ' … while some commentators rightly highlight the importance of recognizing the agency of some "irregular" migrants in certain contexts, it is equally significant to note other situations in which the capacity for political contestation and resistance may be severely curtailed' (2015, p. 59). Melilla and other similar sites are important to understanding the broader dynamics surrounding, and implications of, contemporary bordering practices. The material aspects of the geopolitical and biopolitical tactics of states are striking precisely because of the seeming irrationality of the entire enterprise seeking to restrict movement to an otherwise strategically unimportant piece of Spanish territory.

Here, the concept of 'immunity', especially drawing on the work of the Italian philosopher Roberto Esposito, can shed light on the meeting place of sovereignty, states, and territory on the one hand, and human mobilities and biopolitics on the other (Campbell, 2008; Esposito & Campbell, 2008; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Esposito is best known for his examination of the relationship between community and immunity, or in other words how things that are shared in groups (community) relate to attempts to exclude or shelter the individual or group from 'expropriative effects' of community (Campbell, 2008, p. 4). Campbell elaborates on Esposito further:

> When its individual members become subject to sovereign power – that is, when it is no longer possible to accept the numerous threats the community poses to itself and to its individual members – the community immunizes itself by instituting sovereign power. With the risk of conflict inscribed at the very heart of community, consisting as it does in interaction, or perhaps better, in the equality between its members, immunization neither precedes nor follows the moment of community, but appears simultaneously as its essence. The moment when the immunitary aporia of community is recognized as the strategic problem for nascent European nation-states signals the advent of modernity since it is then that sovereign power is linked theoretically to communal self-preservation and self-negation. (2008, pp. 5–6)

The immunization paradigm as sketched by Esposito thus derives from a historical co-evolution of sovereignty and biopolitics, which becomes obvious when examining the subject of this paper, namely Melilla and the juxtaposition of Europe's area of 'freedom, security and justice' with the migrant encampments in the surrounding hills where thousands of people await their chance to scale six-meter tall fences to reach 'European' territory. Spain's vanquishing of internal enemies and establishment of territorial sovereignty, including the leftover pieces of empire such as

Melilla, are rooted in the state's power to protect the community, and its territory, from perceived internal and external threats, by a range of means that includes violent exclusion (imprisonment, armed border guards, etc.). Many other scholars, from Gilles Deleuze to Donna Haraway to Niklas Luhmann, have deployed immunization in their examinations of biopolitics, but Esposito most fully developed his thoughts on the co-evolution of sovereignty with biopolitics. Linking biopolitics, sovereignty, and territory to the logic of security that is responsible for the Melilla border fences, Giorgi and Pinkus (2008), drawing on Esposito, explain:

> The 'outside,' then, although represented and 'materialized' in spatial terms, seems to point to another dimension that is not exclusively territorial, geopolitical, or cultural, but fundamentally biopolitical: the dimension or the level at which human life is inscribed, constituted, recognized, and defined within a given sociopolitical order. What is deployed through the rhetorics and the politics of borders and boundaries, what the media stages in the spectacle of the territorial security and perpetual danger […] is a split or division at which 'human life' is separated from the unrecognizable, the residual, life reduced to its 'merely biological status' […]. As the 'outside' becomes more proximate and immediate, violence intensifies. (pp. 99–100)

As Nick Vaughan-Williams' recent work points out, Esposito's immunitary reading of borders builds on various, sometimes irreconcilable, accounts of biopolitics by Hardt and Negri, Agamben, Foucault, and others, by taking a 'historically determined grid' (modern system of sovereign states) inserting biopolitics (2015, p. 103; see also Agamben, 1998; Foucault et al., 2003). It therefore represents a counterpoint to the perhaps overly tidy Foucauldian transitions from territory to population and from sovereignty to security as the focus of the arts of government (Kearns, 2014).

The changing political geographies of Europe over many centuries, from the emergence of Westphalian states to imperial expansion to now European integration, have necessitated encounters with the Other in a variety of contexts in Melilla and elsewhere. Recent high-profile encounters between migrants and European sovereign power in Melilla or in the Mediterranean cannot be separated from European policies ranging from the EU's preferential treatment of Spanish tomatoes and citrus at the expense of Moroccan to structural adjustment policies in Sub-Saharan Africa that have disrupted lives and provided incentives to move across the sovereign states' boundaries. Hence, lives of people on the move such as Osama and Abou hit up against the immunitary logic of sovereign territorial spaces, where the state is allegedly protecting the community from outsiders who might pose a threat to the constitution of community.

CONCLUSION

> Where does Europe actually begin? (Headline, Minder, 2014)

The biopolitical and geopolitical transformation of enforcement is evident in the design of the fences around Melilla's perimeter. Although earlier versions of the Spanish fences, built in the mid-1990s, had barbed wire, the current triple layer fence does not (Davies, 2010; Saddiki, 2012). Instead, it consists of a high outer fence, with wiring designed to prevent it from

being pulled down, a shorter middle fence, and then a medium-height interior fence. Each of these is spaced with only a few meters between them. The fence also includes a road along its length to facilitate the movement of the Guardia Civil and many lights and cameras to identify movement and record events. The Spanish fence is termed a 'humanitarian fence' because it is not designed to injure migrants with barbed wire, concertina wire, spikes, or electrical charges. Instead, it defines the limits of European spaces, projects the power of the state into the border area, and functions primarily to slow down migrants long enough to allow the Guardia Civil to arrive and prevent their entry into Melilla, which only occurs when they make it over the third fence. Indeed, the *International New York Times* headline quoted at the outset of this section asking where Europe *actually* begins reports on a Spanish court case challenging the validity of not allowing refugees to claim asylum after merely reaching out and touching the Spanish fence, since it technically lies on Spanish territory. Reaching out to the border has a double meaning in this context, since the origin of the actual borderline around Melilla is a measurement of the radius from the fortification near the port where a cannonball could reach when fired.

The real biopolitical violence of the border has been shifted to the Moroccan side. In addition to the destruction of camps and detention of migrants, Morocco began constructing its own fence in 2014 with EU funds. The Moroccan fence is in stark contrast to the EU fence and baldly displays its purpose. There are guard posts every 100 m, a ditch to slow movements, and the fence made up of stacks of concertina and barbed wire. The many plastic bags snagged on the barbs warn of the violence it will do to flesh. Although the Moroccan security practices are there to support European exclusionary immigration laws and are paid for by European funds, it allows for the performance of humanitarianism on the European side, while still carrying out the dirty work of the border. The complex and fraught existence of the city of Melilla demonstrates the layers of colonial history and the ongoing territorial project of sovereign authority and the state. In this article, we argued that Melilla is constructed and imagined as Europe, as a possession, as an island, and as a node of interconnection in the Mediterranean region. The city is a contradiction that is simultaneously an outpost of the EU, a border between the EU and Africa, an island of extraterritorial practices, a site of free flowing trade and commerce with neighboring areas of Morocco, a site of the externalization of border work as EU neighborhood projects funnel money to the Moroccan security services, and a site of cooperation between sovereign states as Spain and Morocco have come to see shared interests in security.

Melilla exists in a space where geopolitics and biopolitics meet. The 'spectacle of territorial security' and its accompanying violence (Giorgi & Pinkus, 2008) are most apparent in those places where the community's outside is closest, a place, in other words, such as Melilla. Esposito's immunitary paradigm helps to conceptualize the relationships between community and sovereignty as projected onto territory on the one hand (geopolitics of border enforcement), and human-focused tactics of states seeking to limit potentially harmful or expropriative exposure of the community to outsiders on the other (biopolitics of border enforcement). The Guardia Civil rounding up the usual suspects at Melilla's port, or the x-ray machine discovering the folded up body of Abou in a suitcase at a border crossing help to illustrate the broader relationships between geopolitics and biopolitics as they play out on the margins of European territory. Although humanitarian concern for Osama or Abou is not completely absent, the political discourse in much of Europe suggests that the tragedies and indignities at Europe's increasingly violent, deadly borders are simply the unfortunate side-effects of collective desire to

inoculate and immunize against migrant Others who seek refuge in Europe in ever growing numbers. And of course, Europe is not alone in this trend.

Melilla is a key site to understand the changing practice of border enforcement as neighboring country no longer see borders as only adversarial lines but also spaces for cooperation against issues that affect both (Longo, 2014). At the same time that Morocco condemns Spain's refusal to return Ceuta and Melilla to Morocco, the two states cooperate on regulating the movement of migrants and smugglers along their shared borders. Europe's ability to control migration is now completely dependent upon the willingness of transit states to play their part (Menjívar, 2014). The implementation of sovereign authority over the border is a key concern for all countries and it is increasingly clear that by working together they can address common threats to their performance and practice of control.

Melilla is also a site to witness the callous and violent disregard for the lives of migrants. From the dusty and overcrowded conditions in the *Centro Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes* (CETI) housing center, to the concertina wire of the Moroccan fence; from the triple layered EU humanitarian fence, to new gates and observation points at the rocky shore of the port; from the empty migrant camps on Mount Gurugu to the mostly empty boys' camp at the port; from Osama, who lost his life trying to balance on the precarious rock outcrops, to Abou who was stuffed inside a suitcase to be reunited with his father, the violence of the border is practiced and materialized in and around Melilla. These objects in the landscape and real experiences of human beings demonstrate how migrants are dehumanized and excluded in the EU border regime. The militarized practice of security in the military enclave of Melilla can be a window into the violence of borders and the exclusion of the undesired migrant, but only if we pay attention rather than averting our eyes.

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