

Security and Self: Identity Construction from Above and Below in the Refugee Crisis in Europe

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Abstract

Belonging and inclusion are at the heart of increasing tensions in modernity regarding insecurity. In this paper I seek to examine how security is constituted through discursive framings of the Self and Other that juxtapose the inclusion of Self into a group versus the threat of the excluded Other. To do so, this paper looks at Agamben's (1998) concept of the sovereign ban that excludes individuals from the *bios* (life common to a political group) and resigns them to 'bare life' (life without rights). Although the paper agrees that this Foucauldian approach offers insight into the securitizing nature of exclusion in the current refugee crisis in Europe, it still suffers from a central conflation that simultaneously overstates and obscures the structural agency of the sovereign. Instead, this paper argues that Archer's (1995) concept of analytic dualism offers a way to distinguish how constructions of the Self and Other are not fixed or passive, but a space of transformation vulnerable to change from below. This paper considers how the refugee crisis permits use of this analytic dualism to understand how (in)security can be constituted through the sovereign ban and how it can be resisted by individual acts of inclusion. It concludes that while identity construction is necessary to constitute the threat of the Other, the process of construction is one that occupies several levels of agency. Limitations of resistance will be discussed, taking into account the historical and constrained nature of agency that underlies the context of what is happening in Europe today.

Keywords: Sovereign ban, Identity construction, Resistance, Security

Introduction

According to Zedner (2003), security and insecurity in the era of late modernity poses difficult concepts where the constant sense of insecurity becomes a permanent fixture in a world of restless uncertainty. However, security and insecurity are not extrinsic forms of the world; they are constituted by our understanding of what is threatening or uncertain. Identity is formative in the construction of security and insecurity; that which is excluded, outside, alien to us is what threatens. The concepts of anarchy and insecurity are built through the boundaries of Self and Other. Looking at the current refugee crisis in Europe, even an uncritical eye can see how tensions have spilled from the arrival of new waves of migrants, but more critically, how construction of the illegitimate through a 'logic of exception' (Bourbeau 2011, pg. 7) has justified suspension of rights and increased restrictions on movement. In order to better understand the nature of identity construction as a form of exclusion within the context of this ongoing crisis, I find it useful to look at Agamben's (1998) work, analysing identity construction through the sovereign ban that divides the individuals in the *bios* (the citizens), and individuals resigned to 'bare life', a life without rights (the refugees). In order to set the foundations for this analysis, this paper maps out how the nature of security and insecurity is constituted through the demarcation of Self and Other. I will also outline Agamben's theory of the sovereign as a response to Foucault's (1990) distinction between sovereign power and bio-political power and how the sovereign ban addresses these theories of identity construction and security.¹ I will argue that the sovereign, by exercising the ban in regards to incoming refugees, constructs and constitutes Self and Other through measures taken to detain, control, and identify refugees.

However, while Agamben's work offers a critical perspective on how governments and European states as sovereign entities have exerted securitising power in creating a state of exception for the incoming refugees, it offers little space for resistance or push back against this identity construction. Therefore, I find it useful to consider Archer's (1995) analytic dualism to understand how both structure and agency interact in the identity construction of refugees as Other. Rather than reify the power of the sovereign ban, I would argue that everyday acts of reconfiguring the Other can also create new pathways of inclusion for refugees as a form of identity construction from below. To this end, this paper considers the actions and narratives of

¹ Foucault considers sovereign power the power to kill or let live and bio-political power the power to foster life or disallow to the point of death (Foucault 1990, pg. 138).

groups and individuals that have sought to relocalise the refugee Other within the included ambit of European society. This analysis recognises the limitations of agency and the understanding that those with access to power, opportunity, and legitimacy (the already included) have a much greater chance to exert influence in reshaping the identity of the (excluded) Other. However, this argument understands that Archer's (1995) analytic dualism precisely calls for both analyses of structure and agency, understanding that neither is reducible to the other and both are valuable forms of understanding how dynamics of power can function.

Literature on Security and Identity Construction

The net of scholarship on the subject of identity and security has been cast wide and deep. Campbell (1998) argues that security is not an objective condition that states seek to provide for the well-being of citizens through methods of territorial defense. Instead he contends that it is 'first and foremost a discursive practice through which states demarcate the ethical boundaries of identity' (1998, pg. 200). Identities in this case are not given, but rather emerge 'out of a process of representation through which individuals [...] describe to themselves and others the world in which they live. These representations – narratives, collective memories, and the imaginaries that make them possible – define, and so constitute, the world' (Weldes 1999, p. 14). In regard to security, practices of identity construction distinguish between forms of life deemed normal, civilised, and worthy of inclusion in society, and forms of life deemed barbaric, abnormal and dangerous, and which in being so are seen as posing a threat to the constitution of the life of society. Security becomes part of a Foucauldian language game, a discursive framing of the Self and Other that situates danger into the life that is excluded from the group or community. As Stump and Dixit (2013) argue, identity is an 'ongoing contextually dependent process that is established and reestablished in relation to difference' (2013, p. 7). The Self is only understood in how it is not like the Other, an ongoing 'performative process' not as the act by which a subject brings into being what she/he names but rather as that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains' (Butler 1993, p. 2). Therefore, the discourses of states both define the citizens and the restrictions of the citizens by creating the ideal of 'the national (in whose name they operate) and the notion of other, otherness and difference (when naming danger)' (Alvarez 2006, p. 74).

As Campbell (1998) points out:

Danger is not a thing that exists independently of those to whom it may become a threat ... [It is] an effect of interpretation...danger bears no essential, necessary, or unproblematic relation to the action or event from which it is said to derive. (Campbell, 1998, pp. 1-2)

Without critically unpacking the context and identity of those who speak of threat and danger and insecurity, there cannot be a complete understanding of security. Security and identity construction are inherently intertwined, ‘for security is a package which...tells you what is right as it tells you what is wrong’ (Dillon 1996, p. 33). Without identity construction to constitute what is a threat to existence, concepts of security and insecurity would be meaningless. Therefore identity construction creates a sense of insecurity by pitting two (or more) potentially antagonistic selves against each other through threats of existence.

Agamben and the Sovereign Ban

The theory of the sovereign ban emerges from Giorgio Agamben’s (1998) theories of bare life, a response to Foucault’s (1990) bio-politics and Schmitt’s (1922) state of exception. The concept of bio-politics was developed from the notion that industrialisation had reformulated the nature of power from control over territory to power over ‘subjects’ very bodies and forms of life’ (Agamben, 1998, pg. 5). Bio-power is central to understanding securitisation as it is an ‘imposition of a power over life itself’ (De Genova and Peutz, 2010, p. 12). While Foucault (1990) claims that the sovereign as the body that exerts the power to execute citizens has been replaced by a more complex bio-political mechanism of control, Agamben (1998) argues that biopower and sovereignty are fundamentally integrated, to the extent where, ‘it can even be said that the production of a bio-political body is the original activity of sovereign power’ (1998, p. 6). Sovereignty according to Agamben (1998) is defined in its power to include or except; it is constitutive of the political body by deciding who is to be incorporated into it the *bios*² (the political life) and who is to be excluded. The sovereign ban is therefore the exclusion that consigns an individual to the non-grievable state of bare life, which is ‘the life of the homo sacer...those who can be killed without sacrifice’³ (1998, p. 8). Here individuals consigned to

² Agamben developed the terms ‘bios’ and ‘zoe’ from the Ancient Greek distinction between what Aristotle considered natural life—*zoe*—and a particular form of life—*bios*, as explicated in Aristotle’s account of the origins of the polis (the city) (1998, p. 7).

³ *Homo sacer* (sacred man) is defined as "human life...included in the juridical order solely in the form of its exclusion (that is, of its capacity to be killed)" (Agamben 1998, p. 8).

homo sacer are neither *bios* (valued life) nor *zoe* (natural life); they are bereft of political rights but still at the mercy of sovereign will. The ban functions as a mode of identity construction where rejecting individuals from *bios* creates a new form of life, bare life, that separates the lawful from the unlawful (1998, pp. 1-2).

Agamben (1998) would argue that insecurity, emerging from dangerous identities: Does not exist prior to civilisation. The outlaw, and the forest, is established through the ban, through a sovereign act creating both civilisation and the state of nature. (1998, p. 6)

The sovereign is by definition the power that can include or exclude an individual, which in turn (in)securitises the Other, describing the ‘uncertainty and ambiguity of the world and the threats that it poses to man’ (Campbell 1998, p. 50). The state then offers itself as ‘the appropriate solution to deal with this uncertainty’ (1998, p. 51), intervening into security tensions by both constructing the Other discursively and defining him/her through its politics. The state becomes both the constructor of that which is outside itself and that which it contains, offering forms of identification that serve to separate valued lives from *homo sacer*. This critically examines the argument by Schmitt (1922) that the sovereign can decide in exceptional cases of insecurity to ‘break the rules’ of normal civil society; instead Agamben’s work derives from Benjamin’s (1973) argument that ‘states of emergency’ have in fact become the rule. As Neocleous (2006) argues, the current ‘state of exception’ that has followed 9/11 and the emergency measures wrought in its wake are not a suspension of traditional law and order, but the product of historical developments that ‘have placed emergency powers at the heart of the rule of law as a means of administering capitalist modernity’ (2006, p. 194). Similarly, Zevnik (2009) argues that an intrinsic aspect of the ‘Western political system and its juridical order, whose task is to strengthen security by dividing, excluding and generalising’ (2009, p. 88).

Therefore this concept of the sovereign ban and bare life becomes useful in examining how individuals or groups of people such as refugees can be legitimately stripped of their rights and rendered non-grievable in the name of security (Southcott 2011). The sovereign is defined by its ability to distinguish between valued lives (citizens) and *homo sacer* (refugees), and it exists simultaneously because of and above its own structure (Zevnik 2009, p. 86). When the sovereign labels an individual or group as *homo sacer* (non-grievable life), they are cast from the *bios* and in their expulsion initiate the ‘state of exception [and] zone of indistinction between inside and

outside, exclusion and inclusion' (de la Durantaye 2009, p. 212), the zone of refugee camps (Edkins and Pin-Fat 2005, p. 2)

This is precisely why Agamben examines the logic of the Camp (based on the model of the Nazi internment camps in World War Two) as a place where suspension of the law creates a 'state of exception' that expels threats to the state until they can be reincorporated within the socio-political order (1998, p. 128). Bigo's (2006) banoptic regimes place all under the scrutiny of the sovereign, that operates through 'professionals in the management of unease' (2006, p. 14), disciplinary omnipresence and normalised exclusion (2006, p. 61), and through these practices takes those perceived as threats to camps as zones of indistinction where they are held indefinitely and without access to legal aid (Diken and Lausten 2002, p. 4). Therefore, rather than explaining loss of rights as an exception in pursuit of security, Agamben (1998) argues that the sovereign's most fundamental power and role is to resign individuals to bare life through the label of dangerous Other.

Agamben and the refugee crisis

Within the case of the current refugee crisis in Europe, the Camp is once again manifested in a very physical presence of refugee camps such as the Jungle in Calais or Grand-Synthe. Even the name of the 'Jungle of Calais' is used by the refugees to highlight their poor living conditions, such as problems of waste disposal due to insufficient lavatories that have led to gangrene and dysentery. One refugee asserts, 'No jungle! A jungle is for animals – we are people. Can't people see that we are people?' (Charlton 2015), a cry for legitimacy that Agamben's (1998) sovereign denies. The Jungle's borders are carefully surveilled; when one group of tents are set up a little bit apart from the main group, they are bulldozed without warning, 'under the watchful eye of police in riot gear', while 'belongings, identification papers and dozens of passports are destroyed' (Charlton 2015). Attempts to leave the camp are risky: from June 2015 to July 2015 alone nine people died attempting to enter the Eurotunnel from the camp (Elgot and Wintour 2015). Currently the demolition of the southern portion of the camp has been approved by a judge, with its over one thousand residents evicted 'by force if necessary' (McVeigh 2016). As Agamben could argue the judge is acting as sovereign with the power to ban the refugees (*homo sacer*) even from the Camp itself.

Outside refugee camps, measures taken by various European countries in response to the influx of refugees have heightened this sense of controlled and contained exclusion. The Hungarian government proposed, ratified, and completed by September 2015 the construction of a 175-kilometer razor wire fence along its border with Serbia and Croatia in order to deter illegal entry into the country (Samuels and Birnbaum 2015). Denmark, facing one of the highest numbers of refugees, seeks to pass a bill that would permit the search of migrant's personal belonging and the seizure of their valuables by the Danish government (Al Jazeera 2016). In the Czech Republic, the authorities came up with the idea of writing identification numbers in indelible ink on the forearms of refugees, seemingly oblivious of the 'visual connotations with the Holocaust, when prisoners at Auschwitz were systematically tattooed with serial numbers' (Cameron 2015). In Cardiff, measures taken to ensure that refugees had to wear red wristbands ensured a physical labeling of the refugee's status has resulted, among other things, in 'their harassment and abuse by members of the public' (Taylor 2016). The wristbands, distributed by Clearsprings Ready Homes, a private firm contracted by the Home Office, were a requirement for the refugees housed there; otherwise, the firm informed them that they will not be fed (Taylor 2016). As noted by one of the refugees, Edward Ngalle, the inability to take off the wristband (because once off it can not be put back on), is a daily reminder that they 'are still wearing the garments of an outcast' (Taylor 2016). The implications and parallels with Agamben's work on the *homo sacer* are stark, as is the vivid imagery and reference to similar bio-political manipulations of human life in Europe seventy years ago. Neither policies nor politics are identical, but at their core they correspond with a similar method of governance, one that intervenes intensively in the bio-political and daily functions of human life. That is, where the sovereign becomes the entity that, not through immediate or directed violence, but rather structural and administrative control can define, constrain, label, and exclude the Other in the name of security.

As the power of the sovereign to label and resign an individual to bare life is manifested through the various European state policies in regulating the bio-political selves of the refugees, so has the cooperative sovereign power of exception of the EU manifested itself through Frontex. Frontex, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at External Borders, was created in 2004 and functions as a decentralised EU regulatory agency with administrative, legal and financial autonomy that promotes a 'pan-European model of integrated

border security' (Vaughan-Williams 2008, p. 65), the extension of the various sovereignties of European nations. The Agency's role in regards to the refugee crisis reflects Bigo's (2006) professionals in the management of unease. The Italian Operation Mare Nostrum that focused on rescuing migrants attempting to reach Europe by sea was soon replaced in 2014 by Triton, a Frontex mission whose main concern was to secure the external borders of the EU. The shift in operational focus meant that since November 2014 when Triton began, the number of migrants who drowned while crossing the Mediterranean has dramatically increased. The April 2015 Libya migrant shipwrecks resulted in over 1,000 deaths alone, and deaths at sea have risen nine times after the end of Operation Mare Nostrum (Denti 2016). Frontex's Risk Analysis Unit (RAU) maintains a discretionary power to decide which individuals attempting to cross into European borders constitute a risk; for those that do, Frontex can detain and deport them back to the countries where they may have been at risk themselves. At such times the Frontex Situation Centre can thus initiate a '24/7 emergency response mechanism [...] when a situation is critical and needs a high level of attention' (Frontex 2009, p. 18). Frontex maintains the right to determine appropriate levels of civility at its own discretion without laying out clearly what this decision-making process involves. This makes the decision dependent on the professional risk-assessors judgments, both as proxy and manifestation of the broader and deeper power of the sovereign ban in deciding the exception and relegating and regulating an individual to bare life, a life without rights.

Everyday identities, resistance, and analytic dualism

Despite how the power of the sovereign ban has manifested itself in European policies of intervention, control, and exclusion, many have argued it should not remove the possibility of resistance. In refugee camps or detainment centres, the sewing of eyelids or lips to represent resistance in its purist form of use, where voice cannot be heard and only the body serves to communicate the futility of their position (Edkins and Pin-Fat 2005, Zevnik 2009, p. 10). The issue of identity construction is central to this form of resistance; Edkins and Pin-Fat (2005) argue that the recognition of bare life as such, in refusing to draw lines between forms of life, is essential to resistance to the power of the sovereign ban. They argue for a reconstruction of identity that does not remove the concept of bare life but creates it as a new form of commonality where life is shared by all, without constructed oppositions of binary identities.

However, this recognition of identity is not so easily conceptualised within Agamben's theory of sovereign exception and bare life. By definition it is only the sovereign who has the ability to distinguish or exclude legitimate life, and through doing so reasserts its sovereignty. In the case of the refugees, resistance is not manifested through the act of eventually attaining citizenship, but in rejecting the sovereign ban as a form of identification. For resistance to be meaningful, it must assert itself against the sovereign-imposed constructions of legitimate and illegitimate. Therefore, one must consider the question of agency versus structure tantamount. Sibeon (2004) warns on the reification and simplification of control of Foucauldian theories, arguing that these theories of power collapse 'distinctions between agency and structure and between micro and macro' (2004, p. 72). Epstein (2011) also warns that there is a fallacy of composition that imagines that state actors are subject to the same psychological processes of identity construction in an individual (2011, p. 16). Archer (1995) argues that a central conflation of agency and structure means that in the dual agency-structure paradigm of society, primacy of analysis is given to structures of power. In the case of Agamben, structural power and control is embodied in the form of the sovereign, neither wholly agent nor wholly structure but somehow capable of the bio-political intervention into human life that labels an individual illegitimate. This can lead to an analysis that risks society becoming an, 'unreal abstraction and 'the individual' an equally unreal one [...] and there is the problem of 'reconciling' them' (Dewey 2008, p. 86). If the sovereign is defined by its power to label an individual as Other and ban them to bare life, it becomes an ahistorical nonentity: it exists as a system, yet fitted with all the characteristics of an agent while both individuals and groups are simultaneously stripped of theirs. Therefore, Archer's (1995) concept of analytic dualism is a way to balance structural influence and power in identity construction, and the power and influence of individual choices made to exclude or include the Other. In the case of the refugee crisis, this paper argues that by re-evaluating agency through everyday construction of identities we can invoke resistance to the sovereign ban. This can be more usefully understood through contestation-through-solidarity (Squire 2009), where grassroots efforts to support refugees become acts of resistance from below. This identity construction from below, at the community and individual level, seeks to resituate Otherness through inclusion and thus deconstructs the insecurities of opposing identities.

Beyond the charitable organisations that seek to assist refugees and offer aid and resources, I outline actions that have pushed back against sovereign bans placed on refugees. In the case of the asylum seekers in Cardiff forced to wear wristbands, the exposure brought by Taylor's (2015) article was enough to incentivise refugee groups and public support for dismantling the process (Taylor and Johnston 2016). Another example of attempting to restructure awareness, humanise, and find new ways of including refugees into the ambits of the *zoe* is through the work of photographer Brandon Stanton and his project, Humans of New York (HONY), which began when the photographer began taking photos and quotes from strangers on the street of New York to offer the world glimpses into strangers' lives through his blog and Facebook page on the internet (HONY 2016). The project has become wildly successful, but most interesting is how its humanizing power (as a platform that has permitted marginalised people to reconstruct their Otherness into a Self) has provoked widespread positive reaction, and often offers of aid and assistance from complete strangers. The creator of the website and project, Brandon Stanton, recently did an extended piece on several Syrian refugees, garnering praise for its detailed and humanizing coverage of their stories (Mosbergen 2015). The stories resituate the refugees away from the *bios* and become both figures of empathy and sympathy as lives within *zoe* (natural life common to all). These intimate portrayals resist bio-political exclusion of refugees as *homo sacers* and evoke responses of shared humanity. The format of HONY in many ways makes it a more everyday form of resistance; its easily accessible internet platform permits those who might not have otherwise volunteered to find themselves drawn to helping a stranger, with offers to set up donations to ease their transition (HONY 2016).

Another example, and one that exemplifies the language and action of resistance-from-below through the reassertion of the Other as human, is a piece published by the Guardian which documents the decision of a British woman to invite a Syrian refugee to live with her while he finds a job and better footing in his new life (Pidd and Al Jassem 2016). The narrative offers an example of identity construction from below that re-evaluates the threat of Otherness. Sarah, the author of the piece and the host to Yasser, opens by explaining the trepidation that her way of life (her Britishness is inscribed early in the piece by her desire to be allowed to eat bacon butties and drink alcohol within the space of her home) would make it impossible to coexist with a Syrian refugee. In fact, she even remarks on the fears that others had for her own safety, the risk

the dangerous oriental Other posed for her safety within her home.⁴ However, the arrival of Yasser proves largely uneventful. There are difficulties in adjustment for both parties, but what is meaningful in the story is how both parties describe acts or recognition of inclusion. Sarah notes, ‘I think it takes a whole community to integrate a refugee’, referring not to the procedures of what constitute redefining a body as in the *bios* (a job, a citizenship, a recognition by the sovereign) but in the everyday acts of welcoming a person, whether teaching someone how to ride a bicycle, inviting someone to dinner at one’s home, or even simply socializing at parties. The acts are small, seemingly insignificant, but in their own ways meaningful. Yasser notes that these acts challenged the perceptions he had previously held of the British. Instead of the cold and unwelcome society he expected to encounter, he found that ‘people are loving, thoughtful and compassionate, both here in Britain and back in Syria’ (Pidd and Al Jassem 2016). The article itself is co-authored; both Sarah and Yasser are given the space to explain their perspective and thoughts on the process of integration.

However, these narratives should be approached critically. Like HONY, both the perspective and impact of these actions may seem myopic; their impact could reach no further than satiating a public eager for gentler stories. Sarah’s actions do not replace the reality of refugee camps and razor wire fences, and are not enough to engage with the deeper structural problems of the crisis. More cynically, these stories could even be considered an integral part of bio-political power itself, permitting the feel-good glow of moral progress that pulls attention away from addressing the systemic issues. However, even if these stories demonstrate these limitations, it would be too easy, and too lazy, to resort to structural determinism. The popularity of these stories indicates the power of a discursive tool in evoking new ways for individuals to reconstitute identity and remove distinctions of Self and Other, not erasing difference, but expressing commonality of humanity, recognizing, as Edkins and Pin-Fat (2005) termed it, life as such. The resonance that these stories have confirms that narratives of everyday acceptance and resistance to exclusion, are powerful not in its bio-political power to control life, but in its power to redefine it. These acts and narratives of inclusion, however small, are about reassessing the Self and Other without the permission afforded by the sovereign to determine life as grievable or non grievable. As Archer (1995) argues, the social world is made up of both the

⁴ More detailed analysis of the construction of the oriental Other can be found in Edward Said’s seminal work, *Orientalism* (1979).

structures that inscribe sovereign power, and of agents; and neither side should be given priority in analysis (Archer 1995, p. 62). The totalizing grip of Agamben's sovereign power can be met with a more nuanced understanding of the agency of reconstructing identity from below.

Squire's (2009) contestation-through-solidarity, for example, permits those within the political community to enter into a relation of mutual contention with those outside the community. In doing so the identity of the Other is reconsidered as one that can and should be included with the Self. In the tension between structure and agency, while social interaction may be structurally conditioned, the actions of individuals, not only in deed but also in thought, remind us that agents also possess 'their own irreducible emergent powers' (Archer 1995, p. 90). If the sovereign is the emergent property of the state in constituting Otherness, then actors on the local level, such as Sarah or Brandon from HONY, can engage a dialectic of control, able to 'intervene in the world or to refrain from such intervention, with the effect of influencing a specific process or state of affairs' (Giddens 1984, p. 14). Fundamentally, Archer (1995) rejects the view that transfactual structures can be investigated as emergent entities, existing in the world conceptually as a matter of study, and instead argues that such properties (such as Agamben's abstract concept of a sovereign that labels life meaningful or not) only possess a 'virtual existence' until they are 'instantiated' by actors' (1995, p. 63). In the context of the refugee crisis, if the sovereign power to label Others as non-grievable is understood as a concept exercised through the actions of certain agents (and reproduced through state structures), then the actions of other individuals in resisting these categorisations should also be considered agentic. To this end, her call to not permit overly deterministic analysis to reduce human agency or reify the sovereign is summed up in the following excerpt:

For it is part and parcel of daily experience to feel both free and enchained, capable of shaping our own future and yet confronted by towering, seemingly impersonal, constraints. Those whose reflection leads them to reject the grandiose delusion of being puppet-masters but also to resist the supine conclusion that they are mere marionettes then have the same task of reconciling this experiential bivalence, and must do so if their moral choice is not to become inert or their political action ineffectual. (Archer 1995, p. 65)

Understanding that we are neither the ones with the power to pull the strings, nor are we helpless to our strings being pulled, opens a space to contest this 'experiential bivalence'.

As Archer points out, if we wish to provoke change, then our moral imperative is to reject fatalism for hopeful pragmatism.

Historicism and unequal agency

Finally, while I seek to resituate a space for resistance from the state's ability to decide which lives are worth grieving and which are not, and therefore demarcating identities in a way that build security tension, it should be noted that resistance is not a level playing field. As Mitchell (2006) argues, sovereign exceptionalism operates 'without seeming to undermine the legitimacy of the neoliberal project because it is immanently differential, based on broad-based, widely articulated, common sense understandings of race and sex in western society' (2006, pg. 98). Within the *bios* there are already hierarchies of inequality and Othering; these acts of exclusion are not only defined by citizenship and non-citizenship, but also by various layers of acceptability within a bio-political society.

Sanchez (2004) critiques Agamben's reduction of individuals to bare life since it 'implies both a prior 'placement' in citizenship/humanity and the possibility of return to that privileged status' (2004, p. 862). Here, she argues that Agamben's conceptualisation takes all as potentially equal in their reduction, ignoring the discriminatory patterns that exist in Western social constructions that mean some groups may be excluded from access to rights and full citizenship due to their gender, ethnicity, or religion. The bio-political regime of modern liberal states is not simply an abstract entity that functions according to the notions of sovereignty, but historically rooted hierarchy that practices specific discriminatory patterns. The zone of indistinction is not one-dimensional; its geography is multi-dimensional, where some groups find themselves in deeper pockets of discrimination and insecurity than others. These critiques should also be raised when considering Archer's (1995) analytic dualism in regards to analysing grassroots agency in resisting sovereign exceptionalism. The examples above of people restructuring identity as acts of inclusion to the refugee crisis are all in a privileged position both in regards to the spheres of *bios* and *zoe*, but also within neoliberal society itself, in both race and class. That privilege, deeply ingrained in the historical contingencies of Western neoliberal societies, permits a voice and agency to challenge authority. Refugees themselves do not have the opportunity to reconstruct their own identity to permit their inclusion, but must wait to be invited in, the same way Sarah is allowed to invite Yasser and lend him a voice through her own piece in the

Guardian. The *bios* is a structured entity, and those outside of it must still depend on certain gatekeepers to imbue them with meaningful inclusion. Equally, Agamben's work with the Camp should speak to the constraints of geospatial divisions; the refugee crisis has precisely inspired these small acts of inclusion because it folds up the space occupied by both the citizen and the *homo sacer* and forces in each a recognition of the Other.⁵ It remains that the most intrinsic issue in the restructuring security through the framework of identity construction is that the acts of inclusion is still a one-sided endeavour. To be effective acts of resistance, this must be conducted not only by those most protected by the structures of a biopolitical neoliberal regime, but those who have not been given stock or voice in this society.

Conclusion

Bare life is a critical approach to orthodox narratives of states of exception in securitisations. By creating distinctions between valued life and bare life, the sovereign ban invokes a system of exclusion, a narrative of Self and Other imbedded in the biopolitical whole that requires, as Campbell (1998) argues, these oppositions in order to exist. Therefore, security can be better understood as a matter of identity construction that both predicates and is predicated by acts of inclusion or exclusion. Agamben's theories of the sovereign ban help situate this security dilemma in the context of the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe, considering how biopolitical state interventions (militarizing borders, Frontex and professional managers of unease, camps as zones of indistinction, and imposing visible markers of the Other) create a state of exception that either permits or refuses a person's legitimacy and right to life.

However, his theories of the sovereign ban fall prey to the problem of central conflation that grants agency to a structure agency and removes agency from individuals. Therefore, Archer's (1995) analytic dualism allows another view of the refugee crisis that pulls forward the actions and narratives of individuals in attempting to resituate the refugee Other back into the *bios* (the realm of legitimacy). These actions are understood not instead of the structural implications of state inclusion and exclusion, but alongside and in relation to this power. As Squire (2009, p. 155) argues, acts of solidarity, such as public pressure against the refugee

⁵ In considering the implications of security and identity construction on the global scale, it is useful to look at Duffield's (2007) work on the global uninsured, or Bankoff (2001) on the reduction of the non-Western world to exotic and therefore dangerous spaces.

wristbands, HONY, or Sarah and Yasser's story, can disrupt the exclusionary logic of the sovereign by reconstituting citizenship as an identity that is simply Edkins and Pin-Fat's (2005) life as such.

Finally, this paper considered the weakness in these arguments, in both Foucault and Agamben's approach, and in Archer and Squire's, who suggests that there is a need to integrate a notion of history alongside structures of power and individual agency in considering how inclusion continues to be framed through invitation by a (legitimate) individual, rather than by the Other's own assertion of Self. Instead, I believe it is essential that acts of inclusion, either in the physical space of one's lives or by reconstituting the relational identity as understanding not Self and Other but 'like me', is an action that should be considered meaningful, even if not broadly influential. The refugee crisis is still ongoing and to ignore the power of the sovereign to ban, or of individuals to include, is to risk an incomplete analysis of how security tensions may escalate or diminish moving forward. While we need to recognise how the actions and labels of states render refugees vulnerable, we as individuals are not without power or influence. Our own actions, at the local or community level, can resist lazy and damaging dichotomies of Self and Other and offer spaces of inclusion for those seeking refuge.

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