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Emerging geographies of care and control

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Turkey's governance of irregular migration at European Union borders: Emerging geographies of care and control

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Abstract

Combining insights from critical studies on humanitarianism and scholarly work emphasising everyday practices, this study examines Turkish policing of human mobility at European Union borders in two border cities: Edirne and Izmir. Through a focus on the central understandings, justifications and operational responses by Turkish border officials, the article highlights the intertwinement of care and control as inherent to humanitarianism in the daily governance of mobile populations at Turkey's western borders. In so doing, the findings draw attention to discursive articulations and practices, while pointing to their moral, emotional and cultural elements. The article advances the literature by underlining the centrality of geography in impacting on the logics and practices of governing mobility within the territory of the nation state. The findings also underscore variations in border practices and the embodiment of humanitarianism between the two border cities under investigation as well as across the country. In addition, the article adds to debates on the emerging spaces of humanitarianism by bringing into focus the operation of humanitarian border policing in Turkey *before* departure and/or *after* the unsuccessful attempt of border crossing.

Keywords

Turkey, the European Union, irregular migration, humanitarianism, border governance

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Introduction

The 2015 ‘refugee crisis’ has reaffirmed that European Union (EU) borders with Turkey are key crossing points for people escaping war, persecution and poverty. Being on the so-called ‘Eastern Mediterranean Route’, Turkey maintains its importance for migrants to enter the EU through irregular means.¹ Turkey has both sea borders and land borders with the EU. According to the 2016 FRONTEX Annual Risk Analysis report, there were more than 800,000 detections of irregular persons on the Eastern-Mediterranean Route in 2015 (FRONTEX, 2016). Although the so-called Turkey-EU Agreement of 2016 has resulted in a significant decrease of border crossings from Turkey to the EU, the Eastern Mediterranean Route still ranks high in the number of detections at EU external borders (FRONTEX, 2017).

The irregular nature of human mobility through Turkish territories into the EU has the tragic outcome of human suffering, deaths and precariousness as reported by Amnesty International (2016) and academic research (Topak, 2014). The multiplication and diversification of conflicts in the Middle East and elsewhere have exacerbated the inhumane and devastating consequences of irregular journeys in the Eastern Mediterranean. The picture of the three-year-old Syrian boy, Alan Kurdi, who washed ashore on the beach of an Aegean town in Turkey, brought to public attention the everyday realities faced by thousands of people in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. Meanwhile, there is an intensification of a ‘securitisation’ discourse on refugees in Turkey (Toğral Koca, 2016) adding to the ‘precarity’ surrounding the lives of refugees (Şenses, 2016), including questions related to the right to citizenship (Baban et al., 2017).

The violent nature of European borders – and others, such as Australia (Little and Vaughan-Williams, 2017) – has been addressed by a humanitarian discourse (İşleyen, 2016) and related operational exercises to save migrant lives and alleviate suffering on land and at sea (Perkowski, 2016). States tend to re-adjust border policing towards humanitarian concerns so as to accommodate the needs of migrants, while exercising at the same time their sovereign right to control borders (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017b). Drawing on fieldwork in Edirne and İzmir, this article highlights that Turkey’s border policing at its western borders is increasingly shaped by humanitarian logics and operational exercises that display the interplay between ‘care’ and ‘control’ as observed in the European context (Aradau, 2004; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015; Vaughan-Williams, 2015) and in Australia (Little and Vaughan-Williams, 2017).

In this article, I bring an exploration of everyday practices into the discussions on the Turkish border and irregular migration regime. Previous research has examined the Turkish border and migration regime with a focus on its legal framework (Paçacı-Elitok, 2013; Fine, 2017), historical and socio-economic dynamics (İçduygu and Kirişçi, 2009; İçduygu and Yüksekler, 2012) and domestic legislative changes in the context of Turkey’s accession negotiations with the EU (İçduygu, 2011; İçduygu and Üstübcü, 2014; Özçürümez and Şenses, 2011; Muehlenhoff, 2015). Through a conceptual engagement with the centrality of mundane and dispersed practices in the governance of migration (El Qadim, 2014; Mountz, 2004) and borders (Côté-Boucher et al., 2014), the findings presented here highlight how humanitarianism finds its way into the day-to-day work of governing irregular migration in Turkey at EU borders.

In providing new empirics from a neighbouring country of the EU, this study aims to make a conceptual contribution to debates on the emerging spaces of humanitarianism beyond and within state borders (Cuttitta, 2017b; Pallister-Wilkins, 2017a). I have recently argued for the productive effects of particular forms of internal mobility in the emergence of

new border perceptions and techniques in Turkey (İşleyen, 2018), while Pallister-Wilkins (2018) has examined the changing spatiality of ‘humanitarian borderwork’ in response to mobility dynamics in Greece. How does mobility or lack thereof shape the discursive articulations on and practical application of humanitarianism in Turkey and what spaces of care and control do related border practices constitute in the two cities under study? Here, I emphasise the centrality of geography in mundane state practices (Painter, 2006) and study spaces of humanitarianism as geographically varied across the same territorial unit; namely, the Turkish state. In their city-level comparison research, İkizoğlu-Erensü and Kaşlı (2017) argue that Turkish peoples’ differing perceptions of licitness/illicitness about irregular migrants relate to the geographical distance of their respective cities from state borders. With its focus on Edirne and İzmir, the findings here demonstrate that variations in border practices occur even between border cities. In addition, the article draws attention to ‘geographical unevenness’ (Painter, 2006: 755) in the materialisation of humanitarianism across Turkey. Humanitarian border policing at Turkey’s borders with the EU operates *before* departure and/or *after* the unsuccessful attempt of border crossing and away from the formal demarcation lines between the nation states, including in the park and the city centre.

The loss of life and the suffering of mobile populations trying to reach the EU are not exclusive to Turkish borders. The Mediterranean Sea and (North) African countries are places of death, suffering as well as exploitation and serious human rights violations by state and non-state actors in, for instance, Mauritania, Mali and Morocco (Andersson, 2014), Libya, Algeria and Egypt (Cutitta, 2017a). This is in large part a result of an evolving ‘patchwork of connections’ (Andersson, 2014: 9) that individual European state and EU agencies have established with the neighbouring countries and others through readmission agreements, technical and financial assistance and training programmes (Collyer, 2007; El Qadim, 2014; Özçürümez and Şenses, 2011). Yet, far from stopping human mobility, these networks have resulted in more suffering and deaths in the sea (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017a), the criminalisation, economic and physical abuse and racial profiling of particular population groups (Andersson, 2014) and the translation of ‘border-regions into zones of heightened circulation’ (Hess, 2012: 436).

Everyday practices, humanitarianism and the management of space and populations

Within border studies, there is a growing recognition of the centrality of everyday practices in the management of borders and human mobility (Côté-Boucher et al., 2014; El Qadim, 2014; Mountz, 2004). This, at a broader conceptual level, brings with it a rethinking of the state as a set of ‘heterogeneous, constructed, porous, uneven, processual and relational’ practices (Painter, 2006: 754). A concern with daily practices moves our focus beyond the policy level and structure and calls for an exploration of the actions and discourses of state officials who are appointed for border and human mobility management.

A focus on practices invites us to be attentive ‘the operation of power and the discourse (...) in a time and a place’ (Mountz, 2004: 327). Such an undertaking allows for ‘grounded perspectives’ (Côté-Boucher et al., 2014: 197) as to the plurality and diversity of discursive articulations and actions by security actors as well as their power relations, struggles and resistances (El Qadim, 2014, 2017). Situating our observations within daily practices entails a concentrated engagement with the central understandings, logics and justifications underpinning the mundane work of border and migration governance (Côté-Boucher et al., 2014).

It explores how state officials engage in ‘discursive practices of identification, categorization, and nomination’ (Mountz, 2004: 328) as regards to the diverse themes and topics connected with their everyday work, such as borders and border crossing, mobility, smuggling and visas. This encompasses ‘emotional, symbolic and moral elements’ as well as national identity and history that prove to be key reference points in the deployment of claims, strategies and actions (El Qadim, 2017: 7). A focus on the local and the context is central to the examination of how officials understand and attribute meaning to their duties, responsibilities and actions and deploy particular strategies, techniques and technologies for border security (Côté-Boucher et al., 2014).

The increasing attention to everyday border practices is easily discernible in the literature on humanitarianism. This body of works draw insights from Michel Foucault’s *Security, Territory and Population* (2009), which traces the emergence of a new art of governing in the 17th century, which is about the management of the population and the territory. Foucault illustrates how the problematisation of the population gave way to new forms of security practices, whose concern is the effective governance of the people rather than territorial conquest and the rule over conquered lands and subjects. The appearance of a new art of governing the population and the territory has been concomitant with an increasing duty and interest in preserving order, while policing works to regulate ‘circulation’, which refers not simply to the circulation of individuals and goods. But, policing is also concerned with ‘the circulation itself’; that is, how circulation is being managed, allowed, promoted, restricted and spatially governed (Foucault, 2009: 325)

It is this interplay between the governance of the territory and the circulation of the population that has become the research object of an increasing number of studies on humanitarian practices in the area of, for instance, borders and military operations (Aalberts and Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2014; Andersson, 2012), border policing (Aas and Gundhus, 2015; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015), immigration policing (Fassin, 2005; Ticktin, 2005) and human trafficking (Aradau, 2004). The central idea common to this strand of literature is that ‘the humanitarian border’ (Walters, 2011: 138) has been emerging as a new form of bordering. William Walters defines the humanitarian border as ‘a complex assemblage, comprising particular forms of humanitarian reason’ (Walters, 2011: 142) with a view to governing borders and mobile populations and their lives. Didier Fassin introduces the concept of “‘humanitarian government” to designate the deployment of moral sentiments in contemporary politics’ so as to administer the lives of human beings (Fassin, 2012: 1). Humanitarianism, as Fassin further argues, needs to be examined in a broad meaning – one that takes into account both discursive constructions and tangible practices to manage human beings and their lives. The former is about making use of discourses of ‘empathy’ (Aas and Gundhus, 2015), ‘compassion’ (Fassin, 2005, 2012), ‘pity’ (Aradau, 2004) and ‘misery’ (Agier, 2010). The latter encompasses a wide range of practices, such the provision of medical care (Williams, 2015; Pallister-Wilkins, 2018) and basic needs (e.g. food and shelter) (Hoffmann, 2017) along with the increasing number of search and rescue operations framed as humanitarian interventions to save lives (Cuttritta, 2017a; Little and Vaughan-Williams, 2017).

This attests to the intertwining of compassion and control in contemporary humanitarian border policing across a multiplicity of sites and scales. Humanitarianism in border policing performs ‘dual roles of care and control’ (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015: 58). There is nothing ‘paradoxical, incoherent and mutually contradictory’ (Aas and Gundhus, 2015: 1) about caring for the life and safety of individuals on the one hand, and preserving order on the other. Rather, the seemingly inconsistent and opposing logics and practices of providing order and care are ‘happily married’ (Aradau, 2004: 253). EU border practices are

illustrative of how care and control intersect in the area of border policing through the simultaneous labelling of the migrant as both at risk and a risk (Aradau, 2004; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015). Humanitarian governance in the EU's border regime rest on logics and techniques that are shaped by a concern both over the well-being of the individual and over order.

A growing body of research argues that 'care now functions as a technology of border enforcement' (Williams, 2015: 18), whereby humanitarian logics and reasons are utilised to justify practices aiming to control human mobility (Cuttitta, 2017a). This goes hand in hand with the construction of the migrant as being at risk and the concurrent 'introduction of the smuggler as a third party' blamed for migrant suffering and death (Little and Vaughan-Williams, 2017: 3). The rendering of the problem as one of smuggling understood as organised crime calls for interventionist strategies – both inland and offshore – with the goal of saving migrant lives and eliminating human suffering. One example is the proliferation of anti-smuggling operations in the Central Mediterranean framed as humanitarian practices to protect vulnerable migrants and save lives (Cuttitta, 2017a). Thus, protection and care are closely linked with border enforcement, capture and even deportation. In other words, humanitarianism has an 'uneasy relationship' with mobility/immobility (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017b: 20). In caring and protecting, humanitarian action simultaneously intervenes in and stops mobility in rather problematic ways. For instance, at the very moment that migrant boats leaving North African shores are intercepted by reference to humanitarian reasons, care works to capture mobility, and thus, enforces borders (Cuttitta, 2017a).

A further topic of discussion concerns the ways through which practices of care and control relate to space and produce effects for the latter. On the one hand, humanitarianism takes place in specific locations as a result of exclusionary and life-threatening border practices that particular categories of mobile populations are subjected to. The spatially and temporally contingent nature of the humanitarian border also means that this border constantly moves and is relocated in response to the suffering and needs of the mobile populations (Walters, 2011). On the other hand, the shifting nature of the humanitarian border is constitutive of new spaces of care and control. As border crossing becomes violent and life-threatening for particular population groups, humanitarian action takes place away from the official diving lines of nation states. In addition to conventional places of humanitarian action, such as refugee camps (Agier, 2010; Hoffmann, 2017), practices of care dislocate the border by shifting it into the state territory as exemplified by interventions by the United States border enforcement authorities onto migrant bodies at the hospital (Williams, 2015). Humanitarianism moves beyond conventional territorial boundaries also by means of extending spaces of humanitarian practices to the outside, such as international waters (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017a) and neighbouring countries of transit and origin (Cuttitta, 2017a). Here, humanitarianism either materialises following entry, that is, after the border has been crossed, or beyond the territories of nation states so as to prevent or manage entry at sea or on land. The focus on Turkey adds to debates on emergent spaces of humanitarianism by exploring their materialisation prior to border crossing or the failure thereof.

In this article, I explore a further aspect as to the relationship between humanitarianism and space. Painter (2006) suggests that a conventional understanding of state territory that is separated from the outside by physical demarcation lines is insufficient to study the non-uniform, complex, heterogeneous and geographically varied practices and the exercise of power across the state territory. For Painter, there is a spatial complexity and geographical variation in the type, instruments and intensity as to the governance of the

territory and the population. Painter, therefore, calls for an exploration of daily practices to shed light on the uneven and multifaceted operation of power, social relations and (emergent) geographies of these relations. Existing works on humanitarianism have looked at the proliferation of spaces of care by governmental and non-governmental organisation (Cuttitta, 2017b; Little and Vaughan-Williams, 2017). In her recent work, Pallister-Wilkins (2018) argues that it is the specific dynamics of im/mobility of populations that structure the nature of humanitarian care and where this care is provided. The findings on Turkish practices build upon and move beyond that by stressing the spatial complexity and geographical variation in the materialisation of humanitarian border policing within the same territorial state. This is mainly due to varying risk perceptions by Turkish state officials with regard to the inland mobilities of non-citizen population in the country (İşleyen, 2018).

In the context of its membership negotiations with the EU, Turkey has introduced a number of reforms in the area of migration and border control in order to harmonise its laws and administrative exercises in line with the EU's *acquis communautaire*. The EU has demanded Turkey to effectively manage irregular migration through the adoption of new migration and asylum laws and increased technology to control its borders (Paçacı-Elitok, 2013). Similar to EU discourses on border and migration governance (Vaughan-Williams, 2015), humanitarian justifications and a securitising language coexist in the joint statements by Turkey and the EU. This includes, first, the 'Joint Action Plan' adopted in October 2015 (European Commission, 2015) and the highly debated and contested Turkey-EU Agreement, which came into effect in March 2016. (European Council, 2016). The Joint Plan of October 2015 defines that its aim is to address the 'massive influx of persons' through humanitarian assistance, legal, administrative and operational capacity-building along with cooperation in intelligence and information exchange (European Commission, 2015). This study explores the humanitarian dimension of Turkish border policing with its concomitant roles of care and control.

Studying Turkish border practices

Data collection for this study relies primarily on the fieldwork that I carried out at Turkey's borders with the EU from April 2016 to July 2016. The fieldwork took place in two Turkish cities bordering the EU: Edirne (land border with both Greece and Bulgaria) and İzmir (sea border with Greece). Throughout my fieldwork, I conducted 21 interviews.² I selected my interview partners within two central state bodies: the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Customs and Trade. The former is the central institution for Turkey's border governance, under which the Turkish National Police as the law enforcement authority is mandated to control entries and departures of persons at Turkey's border gates. The Ministry of Customs and Trade is authorised to control goods and vehicles entering and leaving the country (Sert, 2013).

The duties of the Turkish National Police in border and migration governance have undergone important changes over the last decade. The EU's Accession Partnership with Turkey in 2001 paved the way for a number of legal and institutional changes in Turkish migration and asylum policies, including the development of a strategy towards the establishment of a civilian border management agency (İçduygu and Üstübcü, 2014). In this respect, the adoption of the Law no. 6435 on Foreigners and International Protection in 2013 (with the entry into force in 2014) is crucial in that it created – under the Ministry of Interior – the Directorate General for Migration Management as the central authority to make and apply policies in migration and asylum matters. The changes brought by the Law

also involve the gradual transfer of national police duties in the processing of migration and asylum procedures to the Directorate (Üstübcü, 2017). However, the responsibilities of the Turkish National Police in irregular migration governance are not limited to border gates as the institution has increasingly extended its operations to new surveillance and control practices across the country (İşleyen, 2018). Therefore, the findings presented here heavily draw upon interviews with police officers at the Police for the Edirne Province and at the Police for the İzmir Province.

There is a growing presence of non-governmental organisations involved in humanitarian practices at the border (Cuttitta, 2017b) and in borderlands (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015, 2017b). These ‘border humanitarians’ (Stierl, 2017) are driven by humanitarian sensibilities and join the humanitarian field to ensure the well-being of mobile individuals. Research shows that non-governmental humanitarian actors sometimes engage in practices with the outcome of reproducing territoriality and sovereignty at the border (Pallister-Wilkins, 2017b). In addition to their reliance on states’ permission to launch and execute their operations under particular conditions (Cuttitta, 2017a), these humanitarian actors have differing forms and levels of cooperation with state actors, which might feed into the logics and practices of bordering (Cuttitta, 2017b). This article looks exclusively at Turkish state officials. The reason is that state officials are the only actors with the official mandate to be present and act upon human mobility at Turkey’s borders.

Data analysis relies on an interpretive approach (Salter and Mutlu, 2013) focussing on how the officials perceive border policing and their roles and justify their actions. The sense of duty and humanitarian concerns came out as two central issues voiced and repeated by most of the interviewees. When asked about their perceptions about the EU and the impact of the EU border and migration polices on their actions, the interviewees explicitly rejected such an impact.

A number of ethical issues arise in academic research on refugees/irregular migrants/displaced people and borders. This is primarily because of the politically and legally vulnerable status of these individuals in the countries of their current stay (Jacobsen and Landau, 2003). While my research is concerned with vulnerable individuals, it is the daily governance of their mobility that I am interested in. Therefore, the research did not involve the collection and use of personal and sensitive data, qualitative or quantitative, on the mobile individuals that might present a risk or vulnerability for them. My interview partners were state officials with tasks explicitly related to border practices. Due to ethical principles of confidentiality, I will keep my interviewees anonymous.

Inviolability of the border, professional duty and humanitarian responsibility.

‘Do you know how a fledgling shivers, with an expression uncomprehending? This is how I feel when I touch the shoulder of a migrant who has just been stopped. I am also a human being. In these moments, I say: “I would let you go, if it were possible.” But I cannot let it happen. I am a professional. I cannot permit departures that do not fulfil the requirements of legality’.
(Interview 13)

This quotation is a good illustration of the simultaneous featuring of sentiments of empathy and the need for order inherent to humanitarianism in the discourse of Turkish border officers. On the one hand, humanitarian elements are articulated by officials in their attempts to frame and make sense of their everyday work. Throughout the interviews, Turkish officials emphasised feelings of empathy with the migrants (Interviews 7, 9, 12, 15 and 19) and pointed out that their job is very difficult as they face, in their daily routines,

situations that are emotionally overwhelming (Interviews 2, 8, 14 and 18). Referring to the hard and desperate conditions faced by the migrants, the interviewees stated that they continuously put themselves into migrants' shoes (Interviews 5, 11 and 16). In fact, feelings of empathy, the sense of identification with the migrants and the drawing of parallelisms with one's own family are recurrent themes that have come out throughout the interviews. Such feelings of empathy and identification find their way in the words of a customs official in Edirne:

'They (Syrians) flee war. Their cities and homes have been bombed. There is a war in their country. There is bombardment, violence and suppression. No water, no electricity, no food. I understand their situation. They have a right to life. They struggle to save themselves, their children, their families. I understand them' (Interview 7).

On the other hand, such discourse of empathy is to be reconciled with and appropriated within the sovereign discourse based on a concern for order, which points to the duty to protect Turkey's borders (Interviews 3, 6, 10 and 16) and to ensure the regularity and legality of border crossings (Interviews 3, 4, 9, 11, 15 and 18). This sovereign concern to police the territory and the population is explained around the sense of duty that surfaces in two ways.

Turkish border officials explain their sense of duty, first and foremost, as the effective protection of national borders, which, in their eyes, is a prerequisite for a strong state. Here, the notion of *namus* (honour) comes out as a recurrent point of reference by Turkish border officials in their explanation of the sense of duty (Interviews 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 16, 17 and 20). As Jenny White observes, *namus* is a term that is extensively used in Turkish nationalist and military discourse on borders. White argues that by attributing *namus* to the border, a linkage is established between the sexual purity (of a female) and national purity. *Namus* in relation to sexual purity means that the latter has to be protected to avert any possible attempt at damaging this purity. Here, *namus* is directly associated with 'masculine pride' with the male (of the family) bearing the ultimate responsibility for defending honour, whereas the female is rendered vulnerable and weak and seen as being in need of a male figure (e.g. father, brother or husband) to protect her boundaries, and thereby, those of the family. Similar to its meaning attributed to sexuality, national purity is to be guarded in order to avoid any 'possibility of illegitimate penetration of essential boundaries'. In this regard, borders, as White further notes, are 'vulnerable' to attempts of violation and infiltration that are to be countered through effective border maintenance. Border practices are meant to ensure that the honour of the nation is preserved in the same way as sexual purity is safeguarded (White, 2014: 151–152).

Namus also finds its way in Turkish border governance in the area of irregular human mobility. 'The border is honour (*sinir namustur*)!' says a border police at the Kapıkule border crossing point (Interview 3). In invoking honour, the officer attaches a culturally specific moral understanding to make sense of and justify his claim to secure Turkey's borders. Border enforcement is linked with a framing of the border as *namus*, whereby the inviolability of Turkey's borders serves as one significant criterion of the state and its honour. 'Turkey is not a third-rate country! On the contrary, it is a strong country that can efficiently protect its borders' (Interview 19). To put it differently, statehood is understood as the capacity to guarantee that borders are free from violation and penetration in the form of unauthorised border crossings, which (would) shatter the state's honour. Turkey is

believed to possess such capacity as put by a police officer, who underlines the sense of duty as being at the core of everyday border enforcement practices:

‘Every nation is obliged to effectively control its borders. This proves the strength of the nation and its prestige. Turkey is a strong state, and like every strong nation, we are obliged to protect our borders. We are obliged to act in line with own national interests. Effective border enforcement proves the dignity and seriousness of Turkey as a state. It shows our determination to prevent any illegal entry and departure’. (Interview 4)

The second aspect of the sense of duty is perceived as one’s commitment to the nation (Interviews 5, 6, 11, 17 and 20) as well as to one’s own occupation (Interviews 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 16 and 18). As illegality stands for unauthorised border crossings, Turkish border officials frame the sense of duty as their obligation to enforce law, which serves as a chief motive in the fight against irregular migration. Throughout my interviews, repeated references were made to ‘professional responsibility’ and ‘duty for the nation’ in the justification of practices of surveillance and interception. For example, referring to the Turkey-EU Agreement of March 2016, a police officer at Aliğa Police said that: ‘Turkey and the EU might negotiate at the international level. They might reach an agreement. What is important for me is my profession - what falls within the area of my professional responsibility -, and this is the fight against illegality’ (Interview 21). Affirming the primacy of the sense of duty in guiding Turkish border practices, such view is widely shared by other Turkish border officials, who expressed that their primary objective is to fulfil the duties of their profession by which they earn their bread (Interview 14). Acting otherwise would mean to betray not only one’s profession, but also the Turkish nation (Interview 6). The notion of betrayal is tied to the inviolability of borders, which is fundamental to the honour of the state. One is believed to betray the nation if they do not fulfil professional responsibilities of preventing potential violations of the border (Interviews 10 and 16).

Turkish practices of governing human mobility indicate the simultaneous operation of care and control in everyday exercises through the rendering of the migrant as a target of both care and control. As the sense of duty underscores the responsibility to effectively control national borders, the migrant appears as one (potential) violator of the national border, while becoming at the same time the subject of protection and compassion. On the one hand, several interviewees stated that they consider the migrants as innocent, harmless and vulnerable (Interviews 1, 2 and 6). Humanitarianism impacts on Turkish daily border practices, whereby care works through what Redfield calls ‘minimalist biopolitics’ (2005: 344). As Redfield argues, different from biopolitics that is about the optimisation of life and the advancement of population welfare, minimalist biopolitics concentrates on the maintenance of human life and the alleviation of human suffering. In Turkish border practices, minimalist biopolitics prevents and cares through the preservation of life and the provision of basic needs. In Edirne, search and rescue operations for migrant boats in distress in the Maritsa River between Greece and Turkey are part of everyday border policing exercises (Interviews 1 and 2). The same holds true for search and rescue operations carried out by Turkish Coast Guards intervening onto migrant boats departing for Greek islands in the Aegean Sea.

Humanitarian border policing is also materialised through internment as a form of care (Williams, 2015; Hoffmann, 2017). Following their interception by Turkish officials on land or at sea, irregular border crossers are brought to the police or the coast guard station, where the connection between security attached to the well-being of the populations and security attached to territorial and mobility control becomes visible. By limiting onward

mobility, internment enforces borders, while it also serves as a space for ‘the temporary administration of survival’; namely, minimalist biopolitics (Redfield, 2005: 433). The temporary governance of migrant lives works through the provision of basic needs for apprehended migrants by the border officials themselves, including temporary shelter (mostly in police and coast guard stations), dry clothes, shoes and blanket, food and drinks as well as basic medical care on site followed by transfer to more advanced medical care if needed (Interviews 6, 8, 15, 19, 20 and 21). A police officer in Çesme said that there are times when apprehended migrants have to stay in the coast guard station or the police station for several days. In such cases, and due to limited institutional resources, the officials buy a warm meal or a hot drink for the migrants out of their own pockets (Interviews 6, 8, 15, 20 and 21). The police officer in Çesme also noted that upon interception, the police station sometimes calls philanthropic groups based in the city and requests basic care products to be delivered. This practice became particularly evident as irregular border crossings from Turkey to the Greek islands reached their peak throughout the late 2015 and the early 2016. Internment turned into a space to capture onward mobility *and* temporarily manage the physical existence of irregular border crossers.

In practice, such instances of minimalist humanitarianism feature alongside operational exercises based on a concern for order and control. Here, migrant mobility poses a risk to the inviolability of Turkey’s national borders. Yet, what is rendered problematic is not the migrant but the action – the act of crossing the border illegally. What turns migrants into a problem and a target of operational action is their attempt of or actual violation of the border through illegal border crossings. As a police officer in İzmir puts it: ‘We do not fight against migrants. Migrants are not criminals. We fight against crime. And that is the irregular and illegal nature of departures from the country’ (Interview 17).

Indeed, Turkish officials explicitly stated throughout the interviews that their activities are meant to prevent illegal border crossings from Turkey. It is the prevention of departure framed as illegal that is at the core of Turkish border practices, and this works through operational action aiming to guarantee compliance with sovereign conceptions of legality as to the state, territory and borders. Illegality is understood as the departure of individuals from the country in the absence of a valid and proper documentation. This is mainly related to that Turkey’s daily border practices rest on varied types of problematisation as to the movement of different population groups within the state territory (İşleyen, 2018). As such, Turkish daily practices at its borders with the EU show similarity with recent findings on the locals of Edirne, who have differing views about intention-versus-attempt when it comes to the mobility of non-citizens towards EU borders. Whereas Edirne locals show sympathy with the mobile individuals’ search for a better life and render their intentions as licit, they oppose the actual attempt of border crossing by labelling it as illegal (İkizoğlu-Erensü and Kaşlı, 2017).

Emerging geographies of care and control. The particular attention to departure illustrates the centrality of geography in the governance of human mobility. The geographical positioning of Edirne and İzmir, particularly vis-à-vis the EU is crucial in structuring daily practices. To start with, risk is primarily understood as irregular border crossings from Turkey into the EU with everyday border practices focussing on the governance of human mobility heading towards Turkish western borders and even towards border cities (İşleyen, 2018). This specific interplay between risk perceptions and practices differs from dynamics pertaining to Turkey’s eastern and southern borders, where the effective control of entry is the primary concern for border officials. Whether it is about economic considerations as observed at the Georgian border (Toktaş and Çelik, 2017), smuggling and irregular migrant

arrivals at the Iranian border (Biner, 2016) or concerns over territorial integrity and armed violence in relation to the Syrian border (Okuy, 2017), it is the management of inward movement (of persons and goods) that takes precedence in Turkey's east and south. Daily practices in Edirne and İzmir are illustrative of geographically specific practices in border governance within the territory of the nation state. The geographical proximity of the two cities to the EU is a significant factor in determining the type of problematisation (departure) and responses within everyday operational exercises.

That said the two border cities differ in particular ways at both the discursive level and the practical level. While border officials in each city express similar moral and emotional sentiments with regard to the migrants and migrant journeys, there are certain variations in their understanding of risk and related daily exercises. First and foremost, Edirne is viewed as a highly risky geography not only because it is the land border with Greece and Bulgaria, but the city has a flat landscape, which is believed to enable an easy border crossing on foot (İşleyen, 2018). While İzmir is also very risky due to its indented coastline for boat departures, the Aegean sea adds a further layer to geography and therefore to mobility to be captured. This throws light on why even the presence of migrants in Edirne are highly problematized in addition to variations in the number of non-citizen populations in the two cities. This became evident during September 2015 events when thousands of people, mainly Syrian displaced people, set off on foot or in buses and taxis to reach Edirne and cross the EU border following Angela Merkel's statement of 'We can do it'. A few days after the arrival of these individuals, the Edirne Governor Dursun Ali Şahin stated that: 'Their (Syrians') stay here is a problem for us. Because they will always aim at border violation and try to cross into Greece. It is best that they go back to their camps'.³

Geography also matters for the specific embodiment of humanitarianism. The forms and spaces of care provided in the two border cities are intrinsic to their geographical position. A look at state exercises in Turkey's south-eastern cities indicates a particular form of care and protection for mobile populations across the same territory. According to the official numbers of Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), there are currently 21 state-run 'Temporary Protection Centres' for displaced people in 10 cities in Turkey's south-eastern region.⁴ These camps were established as a humanitarian response to the Syrian civil war, which has resulted in the displacement of millions of Syrians although the camps currently also host people from other countries of origin, such as Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵ Humanitarianism in Turkey's south-eastern cities conform with the conventional logics and operation of refugee camps as places of care and control (Hoffmann, 2017). Run by AFAD, Turkey's temporary protection centres demonstrate the workings of state-administered, structured and continuous forms of care and control through the provision of protection, shelter, food and services, including health, education and vocational training (Dinçer et al., 2013). Here, care goes hand in hand with reception meaning that humanitarianism is concerned with those individuals who have entered the country in quest for protection. The particular spatiality and type of care provided in these camps are thus related to their geographical closeness of regions affected by wars.

On the other hand, practices of care in Turkey's western border cities work in more ad hoc ways and are spatially dispersed and sporadic in their deployment. Different from the camp setting, humanitarianism manifests itself prior to the attempt of border crossing as exemplified by search and rescue operations in the Maritsa River and the Aegean Sea or the failure thereof as my observations at the Edirne Directorate General for Migration Management showed. Furthermore, everyday practices have productive effects as they are constitutive of new spaces of humanitarianism for mobile populations, while capturing mobility through logics of order and management. For example, when thousands arrived

in Edirne in September 2015 with the intention of crossing the EU border, state practices translated the city into multiple zones of humanitarian border policing. The insistence of, mostly Syrian, people on onward journey resulted in their stay in Edirne for approximately 10 days, during which multiple state actors, including the police and the Directorate General for Migration Management, provided people with basic care, such as food, drinks, blankets and hygiene products. While hundreds stayed in the city centre, such as in parks, others spent the night on the road to the Kapıkule border crossing point and on the highway from Istanbul to Edirne. As a result of exchanges with state officials, many were persuaded to move to Sarayıçi – a historical site in Edirne.

During the September 2015 events, care and control simultaneously operated and fed upon each other. Practices focussing on the preservation of human life materialised before the border crossing happened, which inevitably turned humanitarianism into a form of border control. The presence of people, and thus of care, in particular areas of the city served the capturing of human mobility based on the logic of stopping a particular sort of movement; that is, departure from the country. Meanwhile, border enforcement and the resulting prolongation of stay in the city necessitated solutions to maintain the physical existence of human beings through minimalist biopolitics. This affirms the intertwining of care and control in border policing that impacts on dynamics as regards to space and mobility.

Humanitarianism, smugglers and the smuggling networks. At the juncture where the migrant emerges as a subject of control and care lies the construction of the smuggler and the smuggling activity through a humanitarian language with ethical and moral components. Not only does this relate to the primary goal of the law enforcement activity to fight against criminals (smugglers) and the criminal behaviour (the smuggling activity and its networks). But humanitarian claims are made to justify operational activities in the fight against smugglers, including the utilisation of checkpoints to manage entries into and movement within the border cities. The framing of checkpoints is illustrative of the merging of care and control in the governance of human mobility. Being traditional law enforcement instruments, checkpoints in İzmir are linked with the humanitarian concern of preventing migrants from taking life-threatening sea journeys, while their deployment is a form of border enforcement by capturing mobility before the actual border crossing attempt is realised (Interviews 17 and 19). Here, migrants are seen as being both victims and risky (Aradau, 2004; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015) that is attached to the irregularity of the border crossing activity to be countered by operational activities.

This goes hand in hand with the deployment of 'humanitarian morals' (Fassin, 2012: 8) connected with the victimisation of the migrant. Migrants are represented as victims, who fall into the hands of the smugglers, lose their money, possessions and even lives (Interviews 7 and 13). Through 'a politics of pity' (Aradau, 2004), they are portrayed by Turkish officials as helpless and suffering individuals (Interviews 4, 11 and 16). The vulnerability and suffering of the migrant are believed to be caused by the smuggler and the smuggling networks. The narrative of victimization thus transfers the responsibility of suffering to the smuggler. Humanitarian sentiments are used to give meaning to operational exercises targeting smugglers, who are guilty of putting migrant lives into jeopardy. Smugglers are said to create life-threatening conditions for the migrants and cause human suffering and the loss of life, while making undeserved income on the misery, vulnerability and despair of the migrants (Interviews 2, 7 and 12). This reflects a paternalistic vision of the relationship between the migrant and the smuggler, which disguises the former's agency. It pictures a presumed passivity of the migrant to be exploited, taken advantage of and put into danger

by the smugglers. Such vision deprives migrants of agency to have intentions and strategies for the journey and give consent to the smuggling activity.

These humanitarian claims produce a particular ‘moral economy’ (Fassin, 2012: 7) based on a saviour–victim relationship (Cuttitta, 2017b; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015). They evoke the ‘heroic act’ of the party, who is in a powerful subject position to act on behalf of the victim to save the latter from danger and suffering (Fassin, 2012: 236). Turkish officials affirm this moral economy: ‘We respect the migrants, their lives and those of their families. We see what consequences irregular journeys have. Irregular crossings cost lives - of babies and children. Our operations are driven by the objective of ensuring the regularity of border crossings and protecting lives. Human lives matter the most’ (Interview 1).

The humanitarian language used by Turkish officials establishes a moral order with two additional dimensions. The first underlines a lack of awareness on the side of the migrants regarding the risk that irregular journeys pose (Interviews 15 and 17). Examples include the high flow rate in the Maritsa River during winter as well as the highly risky forestry area in the Turkish-Bulgarian borderlands (Interviews 1 and 4). The second aspect introduces hierarchies of victimisation, where the child represents the most vulnerable (Fassin, 2012) of all border crossers. Whereas all migrants are victims of the smugglers, the children rank the highest in terms of exposure to risky situations during land and sea journeys (Interviews 1 and 5). In describing migrants apprehended after unsuccessful attempts of embarking from the Turkish coast, a police officer in İzmir stated: ‘I see all these (Syrian) men. They put their families on these dinghy boats. I have seen babies of only a few months old. They put these innocent babies on these boats. If the boat sinks, these babies will vanish in the waves in seconds’ (Interview 17). This underscores a patriarchal moral judgement with a cultural trait that places the male as the head of the family with the ultimate paternal responsibility for the safety of the family, especially for children. The mobilisation of victimhood around the ir/responsible male figure reproduces family and gender roles pertaining to a patriarchal vision of the social order in parallel with which mothers or female adults in general, are silenced and denied agency. In the absence of migrant self-awareness and the lack of male responsibility in relation to the dangers of irregular border crossings, the ordinary (mostly) male Turkish official acts on behalf of the victims facing different degrees of vulnerability. As a police officer in İzmir puts it: ‘I make self-sacrifices. I sacrifice my time. And most importantly, I neglect my own family’ (Interview 15).

Conclusion

This article has examined everyday practices of policing human mobility in Turkey at EU borders. It has highlighted the presence of humanitarianism in the understandings, justifications and operational exercises by state officials in the daily management of borders and mobile populations. It has indicated the co-existence of care and control in the logics and operational activities of Turkish border policing, while pointing to their specific character and connections with broader moral and emotional understandings as well as traditional and sovereign conceptions about borders and the state. The findings reaffirm critical scholarship on humanitarianism and goes beyond this literature by adding the sense of duty understood as the effective control of departure being the key motivation driving Turkish officials. Furthermore, the findings underline the centrality of geography in everyday practices of governing im/mobility and stress spatial complexity in the materialisation of humanitarianism and the emergence of spaces of care within the borders of the territorial state.

The findings of this article need to be read by taking into account the (geo-)political aspects of Turkish border practices. Being an EU neighbour *and* a candidate country for EU membership, Turkey has made significant changes in its migration policies (İçduygu and Üstübcü, 2014), which has given rise to the argument that the country acts as 'Europe's gatekeeper' (Soykan, 2016). Everyday practices of border policing are indicative of the (geo-)politics of border control. This is primarily due to limitations on safe and legal journeys to the EU for certain populations that Turkey's western borders have turned into sites of irregular border crossings. The irregular nature and life-threatening consequences of border crossings at Turkish borders with the EU set into motion practices that combine care and control in state interventions addressing human mobility.

The specific operation of humanitarianism in Turkey works to detach the reality of human mobility from its local context. This mainly relates to that the kind of problematisation underpinning Turkish border policing concentrates on border violation facilitated by smugglers, who are said to be criminals putting migrant lives at risk. In the attribution of crime to unauthorised border crossings, the structural causes of risky and dangerous journeys that migrants are forced to take remain invisible. Though Turkish officials realise the hardship of migrants who flee from war, prosecution and poverty in their countries of origin, no salience is given to the conditions in Turkey that drive such border crossings and their facilitation. As for Syrians, feelings of empathy relate to the civil war and its devastating consequences. Yet, the question as to why Syrians, who are under Turkey's temporary protection regime, seek irregular ways to enter Europe is hardly addressed. Furthermore, due to their status under the temporary protection regime, Syrians are set free following their interception. Given the limited socio-economic opportunities and restricted rights to citizenship for Syrians in Turkey (Baban et al., 2017; Şenses, 2016), a significant question remains as to how border policing shapes human mobility dynamics from and through Turkey at large, which future research might explore. This includes an examination of the effects of border practices on the adoption, adjustment and dismissal by migrants of decisions, strategies, instruments, relationships and networks through which human mobility operates at the local level.

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Notes

1. I am aware of the false and problematic dichotomies that are established to define a wide range of individuals ranging from asylum-seekers to the so-called 'economic migrants' and refugees as well as Syrians who are under Turkey's Temporary Protection Regime, which gives Syrians the legal right to stay in Turkey and benefit from basic services. To avoid these dichotomies, yet still acknowledging concomitant limitations, I will use henceforth terms like 'irregular migrants', 'irregular migration', 'mobile individuals' and 'mobile populations' to refer to those individuals who are on the move towards the EU without proper documentation – a visa or a passport – that allows them an authorised departure from Turkey to enter the EU.
2. List of interviews (location, occupation, institution and date) Interview 1: Edirne, police officer, the Police for the Edirne Province, May 2016 Interview 2: Edirne, police officer, the Police for the Edirne Province, May 2016 Interview 3: Edirne, border police, Kapıkule border crossing point (with Bulgaria), May 2016 Interview 4: Edirne, border police, Kapıkule border crossing point (with Bulgaria), May 2016 Interview 5: Edirne, border police, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 6: Edirne, border police, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 7: Edirne, customs officer, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 8: Edirne, customs officer, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 9: Edirne, customs officer, Kapıkule border crossing point (with Bulgaria), May 2016 Interview 10: Edirne, customs officer, Kapıkule border crossing point (with Bulgaria), May 2016 Interview 11: Edirne, customs officer, Kapıkule border crossing point (with Bulgaria), May 2016 Interview 12: Edirne, customs officer, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 13: Edirne, customs officer, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 14: Edirne, customs officer, Pazarkule border crossing point (with Greece), May 2016 Interview 15: İzmir, police officer, the Police for the İzmir Province, June 2016 Interview 16: İzmir, police officer, the Police for the İzmir Province, June 2016 Interview 17: İzmir, police officer, Smuggling and Organised Crime Unit at the Police for the İzmir Province, June 2016 Interview 18: İzmir, police officer, Smuggling and Organised Crime Unit at the Police for the İzmir Province, June 2016 Interview 19: İzmir, police officer, District Police Department in Çesme, July 2016 Interview 20: İzmir, police officer, District Police Department in Dikili, July 2016 Interview 21: İzmir, police officer, District Police Department in Aliağa, July 2016
3. www.diken.com.tr/edirne-valisi-sahin-suriyelilere-uc-gun-sure-verdi-bizim-de-islerimiz-var/ (accessed 4 October 2017).
4. www.afad.gov.tr/upload/Node/2374/files/18_09_2017_Suriye_GBM_Bilgi_Notu2+1.pdf (accessed 5 October 2017).
5. Less than 10% of Syrians in Turkey are residing in the state-run camps, whereas the rest live in different cities of the country facing serious socio-economic problems (Baban et al., 2016).

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