



# **‘Borderizing’ the Island Setting and Narratives of the Lampedusa ‘Border Play’**

**Paolo Cuttitta<sup>1</sup>**

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam  
Email: p.cuttitta@vu.nl

---

## **Abstract**

The island of Lampedusa is known as an EU border hotspot. Its high degree of ‘borderness’, though, is less the result of its geographical location than the product of a ‘borderization’ process carried out through specific policies, practices and discourses. The introduction explains what Lampedusa’s ‘borderness’ consists in: irregular landings and the changed anthropic and human landscape have turned the island into an ideal observatory for all major issues of the current debate on migration-related border controls. The first section analyses the main factors of the ‘borderization’ process. Specific political choices (establishing a detention centre, concentrating migrants, dispatching border guards, employing patrol boats, involving humanitarian workers etc.) suggest that borders are the result of the placing and interaction of ‘spatial bodies’, as well as of legislative measures and international relations. The paper also regards Italian immigration control policies as a ‘political spectacle’, and Lampedusa as the theatre of the ‘border play’. The second section therefore analyses the two narratives (the securitarian one of the ‘tough’ and the humanitarian one of the ‘humane’ border) prevailing in five



different acts of the play, and shows that both are strictly connected and serve the same purpose of governing and managing human mobility.

### **Introduction (Lampedusa's 'borderness')**

Not only most Italians but also many other EU citizens immediately link Lampedusa with keywords like 'irregular migration' and 'migrant boats'. Similarly, on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean, many migrants and would-be migrants associate the name of the Italian island with the idea of a gateway to Italy and Europe. If Lampedusa has almost become a synonym for the border, it is due to the fact that its recent history is indissolubly linked with that of sea border controls aimed at curbing unwanted migration. Indeed, writing Lampedusa's history of the last two decades would confront us with all the major issues of the current political and academic debate on migration-related border controls.

First of all, Lampedusa could be analysed with regard to the number of migrants landing there: over 150,000 from 1999 to 2011 (see table in next section). In the same period, and in the whole of Europe, comparable (and yet lower) figures can only be found on Greek and Spanish islands, the other outposts of the EU sea border.<sup>2</sup>

Secondly, border controls have been criticized for their lethal impact on human lives (Albahari 2006; Spijkerboer 2007; Kiza 2008; van Houtum and Boedeltje 2009). Indeed, Lampedusa is the place where hundreds of migrants have touched Italian soil only as dead bodies (while thousands went missing during the sea crossing), and some of the tragedies occurred in its waters also testify to the growing indifference towards the obligation to rescue people in distress at sea (Klepp 2011).

The high death toll at the external EU borders can also be explained by the fact that migrants are continuously forced to change their routes in order to escape controls. Indeed, the shifting routes of irregular migration represent another major research issue, particularly for think tanks cooperating with state authorities in designing the policies of migration management (ICMPD 2007). Also in this regard, Lampedusa proves a privileged observatory: for example, Bangladeshi and Pakistani migrants had to move to the Libya-Lampedusa route after joint Italian-Egyptian controls closed the Suez route to Southern Italy in 2004, while Italian-Libyan push-back operations forced refugees from the Horn of Africa towards the Sinai route to Israel in 2009.

---

<sup>2</sup> The total number of boat migrants arriving to the Canary Islands was 95,907 in the same period. Yearly figures drastically decreased after reaching a record 31,678 in 2006. On Greek islands, yearly arrivals totalled more than 10,000 only in the period between 2006 and the record year 2009 (30,544), while figures were significantly lower in the following years.

Along with migrant routes, control policies and practices have changed too. As a result, territorial borders have undergone profound transformations regarding their shape, their operational modalities and the places where they manifest themselves (Anderson 2000; Walters 2002; Cuttitta 2007; Shachar 2007). In and around Lampedusa, the flexible, mobile and multiform borders of Italy and the EU, as well as of countries of origin and transit, emerge not only in detention centres on the island, or in vessels and aircrafts patrolling neighbouring waters, but also in the physical presence of North African consular officers identifying migrants and smugglers upon their landing. Popescu (2012, 77-78) has recently argued that "there are three main spatial directions along which bordering takes place within the emerging global border regimes – borderlands, networked borders, and border lines. These spatial contexts for bordering are not mutually exclusive and should be understood in conjunction, as they can occur simultaneously in the same geographical setting", and I think there can hardly be a better example for the co-presence of these "three main types of border spaces" (Popescu 2012, 153) than that provided by Lampedusa.

Besides their grave consequences that can result in death, border controls have been put into question also with regard to their compliance with human rights obligations. In this respect too, conditions at Lampedusa raise several critical questions for research: unlawful detention, forced returns from the island and push-back operations from neighbouring waters (Vassallo Paleologo 2012) have been the object not only of reports from humanitarian organizations but also of court decisions at both national and international level, especially concerning the right of asylum.<sup>3</sup> With regard to the latter, practices of 'preventive refoulement' (Marchetti 2010) or 'neo-refoulement' (Hyndman, Mountz 2008) could also be analysed in the light of the concept of externalization of asylum (Rodier 2006).

As the site of a detention centre, Lampedusa could also tell us a lot about the nature of such 'total institutions' (Goffman 1961), which have been seen, on the one hand, as places where the state of exception takes place and migrants are reduced to bare life (Agamben 1995; Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2004), but have also been considered, on the other hand, for their role of slowing down migration (Panagiotidis and Tsianos 2007) within the process of selective and differential inclusion of migrants (Mezzadra and Neilson 2012; with specific regard to Lampedusa: Andrijasevic 2006).

Lampedusa could also be an observatory for the globalized governance of migration (Düvell 2002; Betts 2011). On the Sicilian island state and non state actors, international and supranational bodies, global and local NGOs of different

---

<sup>3</sup> In 2012 the European Court of Human Rights, in a case regarding 24 Eritrean and Somali migrants who had been pushed back to Libya in 2009, held that Italy had violated article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment), article 4 of protocol 4 (prohibition of collective expulsion) and article 13 (right to effective remedy) of the Council of Europe's Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

kinds are involved in a wide range of activities related to the management of borders and migration: sea and air patrolling, rescue at sea, first aid, legal assistance, detention, identification, transfers and returns, with each actor having different levels of involvement and autonomy in the process of decision-making and in the implementation of decisions, and with non-state actors in particular also raising the question of the depoliticization of migration management (Geiger and Pécoud 2010) insofar as they reformulate the border “in terms of technical norms, standards, and regulations” (Andrijasevic and Walters 2010, 995).

Finally, the agency and the subjectivity of migrants (Mezzadra 2001; Transit Migration 2007) could also be examined from the Lampedusa ‘observatory’, far beyond the obvious consideration that each sea crossing testifies the motivation and strength of migrants trying to realize their migratory projects. Lampedusa has also been a place of riots, of self induced injuries, of protests and escapes, during which migrants also happened to join the local population in rallies against the Italian government, as well as to clash with groups of local inhabitants.

In other words, on Lampedusa we can see all the functions of the Italian and EU border concentrated in one place. Also the side effects of borderwork (from migrant casualties to the changes in the composition of the population and in the anthropic landscape resulting from the presence of migrants and border workers on the island) are particularly acute and evident here.

If this is what makes Lampedusa more ‘border’ than other places, where do the origins of this ‘borderness’ lie? The degree of ‘borderness’ of a certain place in a given historical context is, at least to some extent, always a consequence of its geographical location: more or less far from the core of the relevant state territory, more or less close to ‘other’, ‘foreign’ territories. From this point of view, no wonder Lampedusa is more ‘border’ than other border spots that – although being formally no less Italian borders (or ‘external borders of the EU’) than Lampedusa – are located far away from any current migration route and, more generally, from third-country territories. And yet, the geographical context alone would not suffice to explain why Lampedusa is more ‘border’ not only than other sea border spots in Calabria or Sicily, but also more than Pantelleria, another Italian island just off the coast of Sicily, which is even closer to North Africa.

Indeed, Lampedusa’s high degree of ‘borderness’ also depends on political choices: on policies, practices and discourses that have been developed in and around the island, ‘borderizing’<sup>4</sup> Lampedusa and transforming it into the quintessential embodiment of the Euro-African migration and border regime.

---

<sup>4</sup> The verb ‘to borderize’ (admittedly a neologism) has the advantage of univocally indicating the fact that something (an island, in this case) is turned into a border. It is therefore more suitable than the verb ‘to border’ (Van Houtum and Van Naerssen 2002), which has a broader spectrum of meanings, for the purposes of this paper.

Over a century ago, Simmel (1908, 467) pointed out that the border “is not a spatial fact with sociological effects, but a sociological fact that takes a spatial form”. Now the idea that “the making of borders is the product of our own social practices and habitus” (Van Houtum 2005, 674), “that all political borders are human-made products” (Ivi, 675) has become almost a truism. Though, the literature lacks case studies of border making in the field of migration controls, analysing the processes that turn specific places into borders, or dramatically increase their degree of ‘borderness’. This is the gap this paper aims at partially filling, by addressing the Lampedusa case.<sup>5</sup>

A further, more particular objective of this work is to analyse the narratives supporting the ‘borderization’ process. Securitization studies (Wæver, Buzan, Kelstrup and Lemaitre 1993; Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2006) have showed how migration can be turned into a security issue. However, it has been stressed that the humanitarian rhetoric is also an essential element of governmentality, and this is particularly true with regard to the government of human mobility (Bigo 2002; Agier 2008). Indeed, humanitarian concerns are used to support restrictive policies, which are often presented as necessary to guarantee adherence to humanitarian obligations according to international refugee law (Bigo 2002), protect the migrants’ human rights from abuses committed by smugglers and traffickers (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı 2007) or prevent border casualties (Carling and Hernández-Carretero 2011). Neilson (2010) points out that both ‘toughness’ and ‘humaneness’ play a role in the governmentality of migration at Australian borders. This article confirms the close link between securitization and humanitarianism, by showing that both narratives – the securitarian and the humanitarian, the ‘tough’ and the ‘humane’ – are crucial in the ‘borderization’ process of Lampedusa.

Starting from the assumption that “politics is a spectacle” (Edelman 1985, 195), that the securitization of migration is part of the political spectacle (Huysmans 2000), and that Italian migration policies represent no exception in this regard (Ritaine 2012), this paper applies the same metaphor to the particular context of migration controls at a selected spot of the EU-Africa border. Indeed, if migration policies always tend to be theatrical, the border provides “the exemplary theater for staging the spectacle of ‘the illegal alien’” (De Genova 2002, 436), and, more generally, of migration controls. While De Genova refers to the US-Mexican border, some authors have already suggested that Lampedusa may be regarded as one of the “ad hoc constructed borders” that politics spectacularize (Sossi 2006a, 60), as a privileged stage for the securitarian and humanitarian ‘border spectacle’ (Sciurba 2009, 145-169; Gatta 2011; Campesi 2011). In this sense, this article tries to develop these suggestions by considering Lampedusa’s ‘borderization’ process

---

<sup>5</sup> Of course, one could similarly – and comparatively – study the ‘borderness’ and the ‘borderization’ processes of other EU and Schengen border hotspots (e.g. Ceuta and Melilla, the Canary Islands, the Evros river and Calais).

as a theatre performance, and the Sicilian island as a theatre for the ‘border play’ represented by Italian migration control policies.

Two sections follow this introduction. The first examines the measures and practices that most contributed to the ‘borderization’ of Lampedusa. The second examines five acts of the ‘border play’, and the narratives prevailing in each of them, oscillating between the securitarian one of the ‘tough’ border and the humanitarian one of the ‘humane’ border.

### **Borderizing Lampedusa (Manufacturing the border)**

#### ***At the roots of Lampedusa’s ‘borderness’***

First, it may be worth remembering that the roots of Lampedusa’s current ‘borderness’ originally lie in the birth of Schengenland and in the adoption of more and more restrictive immigration regulations at national and EU levels, beginning with the two most ‘classical’ instruments of migration control: the imposition of the visa obligation on citizens of most non-EU countries, and of sanctions on carriers transporting undocumented migrants across state borders. Without these measures, undocumented boat migration would not exist, for migrants would possibly take an aeroplane to Rome or London, or a ferry to Palermo or Marseille, but surely not a dinghy to Lampedusa.

Besides this, the following factors contributed to Lampedusa’s ‘borderization’ process.

#### ***Concentrating migrants***

If we compare yearly figures regarding landings of irregular migrants at Lampedusa with the total number of irregular migrants apprehended at Sicilian borders, the year 2002 marked a ‘great leap forward’. From that year on, Lampedusa alone accounted for the majority of apprehensions in the whole Sicilian territory, while it totalled less than 17% in the previous two years. In three of the following nine years (until 2011) the percentage even exceeded 80%, and only specific practices (preventive push-back operations as well as the practice of diverting migrant boats to other Sicilian ports), aimed at performing the ‘zero immigration show’, made the Lampedusa share sink far below previous trends in 2009 and 2010 (such practices will be analysed in the next section).

In the same year of 2002, also absolute figures rose sharply (from 5,504 to 18,225 in the whole of Sicily).<sup>6</sup> But why did the majority of migrants land at Lampedusa rather than elsewhere?

---

<sup>6</sup> These developments began simultaneously with the drastic decrease of arrivals from Albania across the Adriatic Sea, which was, of course, a further element that contributed to concentrating the spotlight on the southern borders of Italy from 2002 onwards.

To some extent, one of the reasons was the choice of the Italian government to initiate a dialogue with the Libyan regime, also envisaging cooperation against irregular migration, in 1998. At that time Tunisia was by far the most important country of departure of migrant boats. The first Italian-Libyan agreement on police cooperation was signed in December 2000. Gadhafi soon realized that he could capitalize on Italian requests (Cuttitta 2008; Paoletti 2010). In order to raise the stakes for cooperation, the Libyan leader decided to put pressure on the former colonial power by easing controls on transit migration to Italy in specific periods throughout the Zeros. And Lampedusa is definitely the closest Italian destination for boats setting off from the Libyan coast.

**Table 1: Irregular migrants apprehended at Italian sea borders**

Year	Lampedusa	Total Sicily	% Lampedusa on Total Sicily	Total Italy	% Lampedusa on Total Italy
1999	356	1,973	18.04%	49,999	0.71%
2000	447	2,782	16.07%	26,817	1.67%
2001	923	5,504	16.77%	20,143	4.58%
2002	9,669	18,225	53.05%	23,719	40.76%
2003	8,819	14,017	62.92%	14,331	61.54%
2004	10,497	13,594	77.22%	13,635	76.99%
2005	14,855	22,824	65.08%	22,939	64.76%
2006	18,096	21,400	84.56%	22,016	82.19%
2007	11,749	16,875	69.62%	20,455	57.44%
2008	30,657	34,541	88.76%	36,952	82.96%
2009	2,947	8,282	35.58%	9,573	30.78%
2010	459	1,264	36.31%	4,406	10.42%
2011	51,753	57,181	90.51%	62,692	82.55%

**Source:** table created by the author based on data from the Italian Ministry of Interior.

This may well explain – at least partly – the general increase of arrivals at Lampedusa during the decade, but not the sudden increase of 2002, which was caused by other factors. One was the evolution of reception and detention conditions on the island. In the early Nineties no institutionalized assistance was provided: migrants were offered food, shelter and clothes only on a voluntary basis, if at all. In all cases, they left the island with the first available ferry to Sicily: neither they nor anybody else had an interest in a longer stay. In 1996 the first centre for assistance was established. Until 2002, even after law 40 of 1998 introduced detention centres for undocumented migrants, it maintained its status as a reception centre: it was run by Red Cross volunteers, and, with only a few exceptions, migrants were immediately transferred to other facilities in Sicily or

mainland Italy. Then, in July 2002, the brotherhood Misericordia replaced the Red Cross, and contract terms were changed. The workers were no longer volunteers but employees, and the volume of funds paid by the Ministry of Interior was made dependent on both the number of detainees and the number of days spent by each of them in the centre. Since then, transfers would no longer be carried out as soon as possible, and migrants would remain for longer periods on the island. Thus, the Lampedusa centre turned in fact into the only detention centre on an Italian minor island.

At the same time, and significantly, the Italian authorities increased sea patrolling activities: from that year on, they would carry to Lampedusa all the migrants intercepted in the southern Strait of Sicily (while some of them would have otherwise reached other destinations if not intercepted, and others would have been transferred elsewhere if intercepted).

These circumstances explain the increase of Lampedusa's share on the total number of landings in Sicily. Though, they also contributed to increasing Lampedusa's 'borderness' in other ways: the management of the detention centre and, more generally, of higher numbers of arrivals required the work of the army and police force as well as civilians (e.g. employees of humanitarian organizations), whose massive presence – together with the more occasional, but often large presence of representatives of media and international bodies – dramatically transformed the composition of the population and the very landscape of the island.<sup>7</sup>

The 'borderization' of Lampedusa through specific moves (establishing a detention centre, concentrating migrants, dispatching border guards, employing patrol boats, involving humanitarian workers etc.) shows that also borders are the result of a "relational disposition of social goods and humans (living beings) in places" (Löw 2001, 224), of the placing and interaction of 'spatial bodies' (Lefebvre 1974).

### ***The Tunisian turn***

Until 2003 Tunisia was the ideal springboard to Italy and Europe, not only for Tunisians and Algerians, but also for sub-Saharan migrants. Lampedusa was not the only destination of migrant boats setting off from the Tunisian coast: many

---

<sup>7</sup> The different bodies acting on Lampedusa include the EU (with its Frontex missions), Italian authorities (state and municipal police forces, Coast Guard and Port Authority, military bodies like *Carabinieri* and *Guardia di Finanza*), authorities of countries of transit and origin of migrants (e.g. Libyan, Egyptian and Tunisian consular officers identifying migrants to be returned as well as smugglers to be prosecuted), UN agencies like the UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), international organizations like the IOM (International Organization for Migration), NGOs like the brotherhood Misericordia, hybrid subjects of international law like the Order of Malta, humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross, Save the Children and Médecins sans Frontières, and others.



landed in Pantelleria or Western Sicily (also including the Aegadian islands), others headed for the South-East of Sicily.

Between December 2003 and March 2004 Tunisia adopted a series of restrictive legislative measures aimed at curbing irregular migration, and the authorities strengthened the surveillance of the Tunisian coast (Boubakri 2004, 106). As a result, Libya replaced Tunisia as the main country of departure for migrant boats, as migrants (including Tunisians) now preferred to travel to Tripolitania in order to attempt the sea crossing from there.

From the coasts of Tripolitania, Lampedusa is by far the closest Sicilian destination. The alternative routes from Tunisia to other Sicilian destinations were thus abandoned, and Lampedusa saw its position as the main landing point strengthened.

It must be stressed that the political turn of the Tunisian regime was a direct consequence of Italian pressure (Cuttitta 2008). Also its side-effects should be therefore considered as an (indirect) result of the behaviour of Italian authorities.

### ***Performing crises***

To say it with Edelman (1977, 47), “any regime that prides itself on its capacity to manage crises will find crises to manage”. In the same vein, and with specific regard to migration controls, Mountz (2010, xvi-xvii) argues that states generally “develop narratives to explain and perform their day-to-day work”, and that they “excel in particular at performing crises”. Furthermore, “crises often transpire along the geographical margins of sovereign territory: on islands, in airports, at sea, and in offshore detention centres where authorities and migrants encounter each other”.

Lampedusa was the theatre of two exceptional crises in 2009 and 2011. While further details of the crises will be given in the next section, here I only summarize how the emergency was artificially created. On both occasions, the migrants that had been disembarked at Lampedusa were not timely transferred to the Sicilian or Italian mainland but were kept on the island for weeks and even months.

In early 2009 the decision not to transfer migrants from Lampedusa until their repatriation caused the overcrowding of the centre, resulting in protests by the island's inhabitants and in riots in the detention centre. In 2011, on the contrary, the centre had long been closed when the first Tunisian migrants arrived in the wake of the Jasmine Revolution, and it was not reopened in spite of the dramatic increase of landings. Thus, failing to transfer migrants immediately turned the whole island into an open-air camp, causing strong repercussions on the everyday life of the population.

Reportedly, 450 Italian policemen, *carabinieri* and *guardie di finanza* were stationed at Lampedusa to face the crisis, in a ratio of one to thirteen to the inhabitants, at the end of January 2009. Both in 2009 and 2011, the (artificially created) emergencies ended up increasing significantly the part of the population which is neither indigenous nor migrant, but rather consists of people whose presence on the island is related to Lampedusa's border functions, also including Frontex officers, UNHCR representatives, deputies from the Italian and the European Parliaments, activists, researchers and journalists from all over the world, thus causing dramatic transformations in the human landscape of the island as well as in the everyday life of the inhabitants. More generally, the spotlight of political and media actors was concentrated on Lampedusa for weeks and months, which further raised the island's degree of 'borderness'.

### ***Extending the border***

Besides detention centres, law 40 of 1998 also introduced a new measure, the so-called *respingimento differito* ('deferred refusal of entry'), transforming the border from a line into a zone.<sup>8</sup> According to Italian law, undocumented foreigners trying to enter the national territory can be refused entry *at the border* (the relevant measure being called *respingimento alla frontiera*). Undocumented migrants who are apprehended *within the territory* receive an expulsion order, instead. While the expulsion order entails rights including the judicial review with suspensive effect of the expulsion (which means that the migrant has the right to remain in the territory until the court rules whether the expulsion is lawful or not), the right of appeal granted (on paper) to persons refused entry at the border has no suspensive effect. By extending the applicability of the refusal of entry also to those who are apprehended immediately after irregular border crossing (whereby the Italian word for 'immediately' – *subito* – has no precise meaning and can therefore be interpreted flexibly by authorities with regard to the distance in space and time from the place and moment of actual border crossing), this provision created an undefined border zone inside the official demarcation line of the territorial border. Since its adoption, this regulation was most applied to Lampedusa and the territorial waters around it (Vassallo Paleologo 2009). Significantly, after the European Directive 2008/115 on returns became automatically applicable in Italy (in the absence of Italian legislation implementing it), the then vice-minister of Interior, Alfredo Mantovano, while complaining that this would make returns 'more complicated', pointed out that procedures taking place on Lampedusa are not affected by the directive, since Lampedusa is 'a border zone' («Il Sole 24 Ore» 2011), and migrants arriving there are not returned, but rather refused entry.

---

<sup>8</sup> Article 8, paragraph 2, of law 40 of 6 March 1998, now article 10, paragraph 2, of the *Testo Unico sull'immigrazione* (legislative decree 286 of 25 July 1998 and its following amendments).

### **Lampedusa on stage (Performing the border play)**

To start this section, I will refer back to the number of people arriving at Lampedusa (see table in the previous section). Migrants entering Italy irregularly by sea make up only a small percentage of those residing irregularly in Italy (Ministero dell'Interno 2007, 336) and Europe, the largest part of undocumented residents consisting either of persons who have crossed the land (and not the sea) borders irregularly or (to a much greater extent) of persons who have entered EU territory legally with a valid visa, and then overstayed its expiry date.

Indeed, the number of undocumented migrants entering or trying to enter Europe by sea is much smaller than is generally perceived as a consequence of the widespread rhetoric of 'invasion' (De Haas 2007), and it appears even smaller if compared with the demand for foreign workforce (every year millions of migrants legally enter Europe through national recruitment schemes, or receive legal status through legalization programmes) and with a EU population of half a billion inhabitants.

However, migrants arriving by sea (including casualties) have a much stronger impact on public opinion than overstayers and immigrants entering the country illegally by land have. Therefore, if the border, generally speaking, is a suitable theatre for the 'political spectacle', the sea border is the ideal stage for political actors to perform the 'border play'. In Italy, it is a matter of fact that the increase of boat migrants from North African coasts occurred at the same time as the decline of migration from Albania, which caused the shift of the spotlight from the East to the Southern Italian sea borders. Possibly, the spotlight was not only shifted but also strengthened: especially after September 11, attempts made by both mid-right and mid-left Italian governments to link the fight against illegal immigration with the fight against Islamic terrorism<sup>9</sup> increased prejudice towards black, non-European and non-Christian immigrants,<sup>10</sup> and therefore fuelled fear against arrivals from North Africa.

If we assume that the attention of political actors on boat migration is driven by the intention to gain electoral benefits easily (rather than by the real need to contrast actual threats resulting from the phenomenon itself), Italian voters are

---

<sup>9</sup> According to the Italian minister of Defence under the second Berlusconi government, Antonio Martino, "illegal immigration is infiltrated by Al Qaeda", and it is often managed "by terrorists in order to bring persons, weapons and drugs to Italy and Europe" (Martino 2004, my translation). Also the vice-minister of Interior under the second Prodi government, Marcella Lucidi, stressed that the link connecting illegal immigration "with international terrorism requires a particular surveillance of clandestine immigrants from the Horn of Africa as well as from the sub-Saharan region, where Islamic fundamentalism is spreading rapidly" (Camera dei Deputati 2006, my translation).

<sup>10</sup> The vice-minister of Economic Development under the fourth Berlusconi government, Adolfo Urso, suggested to "foster immigration flows from the Eastern Mediterranean, even if of Muslim religion, since they originate from a more European context than [that of] immigration flows from the Southern Mediterranean, that are less inclined to integrate" («Il Messaggero» 2008, my translation).

obviously to be seen as the spectators of the ‘border play’. Though, they are not the only ones. Other spectators are the governments of countries of origin and transit, who should be convinced to participate in the management of undocumented migration, in their citizens’ interests and their own interests, and thus turn to co-actors of the play, as well as potential migrants, who should be informed about what may happen to them.

In this context, Lampedusa was turned into the main – if not the only – site of the performance. While multiple and dispersed stages may confuse the audience, concentrating the show on a single stage makes it easier not only for the actors to play but also for the spectators to follow the performance. This is the more evident, the more a performance is articulated in different acts and different narratives. In the following paragraphs I present five acts of the ‘border play’ and analyse the role played by the securitarian and humanitarian narratives in each of them.

### ***First act (Toughness)***

The first is the series of deportations carried out between October 2004 and March 2006, when around 2,200 migrants were returned from Lampedusa to Libya.<sup>11</sup> This was meant to be a sober show: what counted was the message to be sent to the audience, which sounded more or less like ‘we are defending our borders, we are pushing them back’. No particular scenic design was needed for this, because the simple fact of reporting the bare daily pieces of news on the number of people returned to Libya was more than enough. Instead, since the government was aware that it was acting in breach – or at least at the edge – of law, it tried to prevent any detail of deportation procedures from being made public. As Sossi (2006b) points out, the institutional media only showed ‘neutral’ pictures of the port, of the coastline, and sometimes of migrants upon their arrival.

In the first period, the government firmly defended its policy, playing down protests from international organizations as well as from the European Parliament (and even a ruling of the European Court of Human Rights that stopped the deportation of eleven migrants). Later, in order to prevent further criticism, deportations were not even made public, and return flights to Libya were continued without media and/or Lampedusa’s inhabitants taking notice.

### ***Second act (Humaneness)***

The narrative of the ‘humane border’ prevails over the narrative of the ‘tough border’ only after the electoral victory of the mid-left coalition in April 2006. Though, there was a transition period before the elections. After the Italian government had been criticized and put under international pressure for returning

---

<sup>11</sup> Others were first transferred to Sicily or mainland Italy before being returned. A total of over 3,000 persons were deported from Italy to Libya in that period, also including hundreds who had landed on places other than Lampedusa.

migrants to Libya, it decided to reduce and then stop deportations to Libya, probably fearing that negative repercussions in the forthcoming elections could exceed the positive effects, if deportations should be continued. Furthermore, in February 2006 the legal status of the centre for migrants was turned from that of a detention centre to that of a reception facility, where migrants would be held only for a limited time and then transferred to the mainland, after a screening to be carried out jointly by the Italian government, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Italian Red Cross (CRI) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

During the 2006-2008 period, the cooperation with the mentioned organizations within the 'Praesidium' project<sup>12</sup> – as well as with Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), which was entrusted to provide an initial medical screening upon arrival of the boats at the port, and with the Order of Malta – ensured that the system would be both 'efficient' and 'humane' at the same time. Furthermore, since it had to be made clear that there was nothing to hide, the detention centre was open for visits not only from members of the Italian Parliament, but also from journalists and researchers. After a few months, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, declared that 'a lot of progress has been made' and 'the situation is improving' (Ansa 2006, my translation). In January 2008, the chief of the Italian IOM office, Peter Schatzer, declared that the detention centre at Lampedusa 'can now represent a model for other countries' (Ansa 2008, my translation). After visiting Lampedusa in September 2007, the Council of Europe issued a report in which, although expressing 'concern about the legal status of the reception centre', since 'there is no legal basis for detaining persons' there, it 'congratulates the Italian authorities for the improvements they have made and for the integrated approach they have adopted for running the centre' (Council of Europe 2008, 17). And yet, it is in this very humanitarian frame that the toughness of Italian policies was reaffirmed. While the Prodi government increased cooperation with the Gadhafi regime, in order to prevent migrants (also including refugees) to embark from the Libyan coast (which resulted in migrants being held in detention centres in infamous conditions, subjected to abuses from the Libyan police), and while at the same time it signed an agreement with Libya upon whose basis push-back operations from the high seas would be started by the following Berlusconi government in May 2009, the domestic *côté* of the Italian sea border regime – that is the Lampedusa stage – was maintained immaculate by stopping deportations to Libya and by enforcing migrants' human rights on the island.

### ***Third act (Emergency I)***

A new act of the 'border play' was started at the end of 2008 and lasted until March 2009. The narrative of the 'tough border' re-conquered the Lampedusa

---

<sup>12</sup> In 2008 also Save the Children joined the project.

stage, as the new government slowed down transfer procedures while arrivals increased. As a result, the centre soon became overcrowded. While its maximum capacity was 804, it hosted 1560 migrants on 11 November, 1572 on 28 December and 1840 on 23 January. Most of them were Tunisians, some were Egyptians, others came from sub-Saharan countries. On 30 December the government announced that all migrants would from now on be indefinitely detained on the island until their repatriation. It also declared that even asylum applications would be processed there, and ruled therefore that an asylum commission be transferred from Trapani to Lampedusa. Between November 2008 and March 2009, hundreds of migrants were detained for periods longer than allowed for by law, even if the Lampedusa centre was no longer a detention centre, but rather a reception centre. Discontent grew not only among the migrants themselves, but also in the population of Lampedusa, that initiated protest actions against the government. As a reply, hundreds of policemen, *carabinieri* and *guardie di finanza* were sent to maintain order on the island. On 17 February migrants started a hunger strike, and on the following day they set the detention centre on fire. The building was partially destroyed, which resulted in hundreds of migrants being eventually transferred to mainland Italy. On the other hand, the fire contributed to strengthening the perception of a state of emergency as well as to the further criminalization of migrants. It was in this climate, two days after the fire at Lampedusa, that the government issued a decree extending the maximum duration of detention for the purpose of expulsion from 60 days to six months.

In fact, some of the declarations made by the government in this act of the ‘border play’ were disregarded. Except for a handful of asylum seekers, whose applications were processed on Lampedusa immediately after and according to the government’s announcement, all others were transferred to the mainland. In addition, hundreds of so-called ‘economic’ migrants were transferred from Lampedusa to the mainland before being repatriated – or before being released, in the end, either because all Italian detention centres were full or because the maximum duration of detention had been reached. Though, what counted was the toughness of both the government’s stance and the situation at Lampedusa. Indeed, the exceptional conditions created on the island not only represented a means to put pressure on the Tunisian authorities (which had always been reluctant to readmit their nationals before, in spite of a readmission agreement signed with Italy as early as 1998), but they also provided the dramatic scenery of invasion and emergency that would justify, in the eyes of public opinion, the adoption of restrictive and repressive measures: after extending the maximum duration of detention for undocumented migrants, it was also decided to start push-back operations to Libya. The third act of the ‘border play’ ended, indeed, on 18 March 2009, when the government announced not only that over 3000 Tunisians had been successfully repatriated so far, and arrivals had already been already drastically reduced, but

also that unauthorized landings would be further reduced from May on, when joint patrols with Libyan authorities would start.

#### ***Fourth act (Zero immigration)***

The fourth act takes place over one year after the new wave of deportations – the push-back operations from the high seas – had started in May 2009. This improvement in Italian-Libyan cooperation, also including a strengthened surveillance of Libyan national waters, resulted in an unprecedented reduction of migrant boats. In August 2010 the minister of the Interior Maroni proudly announced that the number of irregular migrants arriving at Lampedusa showed a 98 per cent decrease, comparing the period from August 2009 to July 2010 with the previous twelve-month period. Lampedusa thus became the stage for the 'zero immigration' show – a brand new variety within the narrative of the 'tough border'. Since the detention centre was closed, the few migrants who managed to penetrate the network of border controls and were intercepted only after entering Italian territorial waters were carried to other Sicilian ports, in order not to disturb the play: even the few that for technical reasons were first escorted to Lampedusa were kept waiting on the dock – and out of view of the public – until they were transferred elsewhere.

#### ***Fifth act (Emergency II)***

Also the last act of the 'border play' is permeated by the narrative of the 'tough border'. In this case, though, this narrative was explicitly mixed with that of the 'humanitarian crisis'. In early 2011, in the wake of the 'Jasmine Revolution', thousands of Tunisians took the chance of the power vacuum in their country (resulting in decreased border controls) and set off towards the Sicilian coast. Many landed at Lampedusa, and yet the centre was kept closed: rather than spoiling the set of the 'zero immigration' show, the authorities decided to host the first groups of migrants in tourist resorts. After the fall of the Ben Ali regime in mid-January 2011, the number of Tunisian migrants crossing the Strait of Sicily skyrocketed, and it became clear that the 'zero immigration show' could no longer last. Though, the centre still remained closed (even after Italian authorities resumed the old policy of diverting intercepted migrants to Lampedusa), and no transfers were carried out to the mainland. On 12 February there were 4000 migrants sleeping on the streets. 1500 were eventually 'hosted' in the local football ground. The day after, the Italian government declared a state of humanitarian emergency on the entire national territory. Only then was the Lampedusa centre re-opened, and still there were thousands of migrants who did not find accommodation there, its capacity being of only 804 persons.

Before being *declared*, the humanitarian emergency had been *created* by the government, as it had been done two years before, by refusing to transfer migrants to the mainland. Unlike in 2009, though, migrants were 'accommodated' in the centre only after the whole island (whose surface totals only 20 square kilometres)

had been transformed into an open-air camp – which it still remained for long: at the end of March the number of migrants (6200) exceeded that of the local population (5800). While even basic food supply became problematic, transfers to the mainland – also starting as late as mid-February – were carried out only in small numbers, as the capacity of Italian detention centres was limited, and the government did not want to simply release migrants on Italian territory with an expulsion order.

Again, migrants were being detained in an undefined legal status, for periods longer than allowed for by law, in a context that was even more chaotic than that of 2009, the *de facto* detention in the ‘open air camp’ represented by the whole of Lampedusa being an unprecedented event. By declaring the state of humanitarian emergency, the government introduced in its narrative – besides the securitarian element – also the humanitarian one. This was aimed at obtaining the adoption of temporary protection measures from the EU, according to the relevant directive,<sup>13</sup> which would have obliged all member states to share the burden that was currently being borne by Italy alone. In other words, the Italian government would have got rid of most migrants, if these had been recognized as temporary refugees by the EU. As it became clear that this would not be the case, the government decided to act unilaterally. On 5 April, after signing a new police cooperation agreement with the Tunisian transitional government, the Italian Prime Minister Berlusconi issued a new decree granting the status of humanitarian protection to all ‘nationals from North African countries’ who had arrived between 1 January and 5 April. All migrants arriving after 5 April would be returned, regardless of their origin. The first return flights to Tunisia were carried out immediately afterwards, and arrivals from Tunisia were greatly reduced in the following months, while those who had been granted protection – even if only by Italy and not by the EU – could now be released and were thus free to cross Schengen borders to neighbouring countries (in spite of France partially resuming border controls), which was the aim of most of them. Thus, also the aim of the government was fulfilled: Tunisian migrants were kept away as long as possible from mainland Italy (and particularly from the North of the country, where the populist and xenophobic ‘Lega Nord’ – then an important coalition partner – is based), and then put in the best possible condition for leaving the country.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Council Directive 2001/55/EC of 20 July 2001.

<sup>14</sup> The 2011 emergency did not end in April. Since the Libya war began in March, thousands of refugees arrived from Libyan coasts, and arrivals from Tunisia resumed in the Summer. Again, migrants were held at Lampedusa, transfers were rare and delayed, and the situation exploded in the overcrowded detention centre, that was destroyed by a fire set by migrants. There was also a clash between a group of inhabitants and a group of migrants fearing repatriation. The Lampedusa emergency ended only after the centre was closed, thousands of migrants were transferred with ferries to Sicily and mainland Italy, and the island was declared ‘unsafe haven’ (Castronovo 2011). The Monti government reopened the centre in the Summer of 2012.



In this period, the Sicilian island was so much under the spotlight that not only Italian political leaders like premier Silvio Berlusconi and the European Parliament member Mario Borghezio, but also foreign ones, including the French right-wing party leader Marine Le Pen, all travelled to Lampedusa and held speeches there in order to take advantage of the visibility.

## Conclusions

Much of the current scholarly research on borders (and migration controls) focuses on the scattered and dispersed (and though networked) character of borders. Indeed, borders have become ever more independent from their spatio-temporal coordinates of fixity in space and continuity in time, and they have also become much more immaterial, and much less visible. As a result, they are now potentially ubiquitous and increasingly elusive.

However, in this very context, some borders stand out from the others both for their visibility and for their fixity in space and continuity in time, both for their materiality and for the fact that a large number of border functions are concentrated and take place there rather than elsewhere. Such borders are definitely more 'border' than others, and the functions they fulfil are always to a great extent symbolical. Among them there are not only monumental borders like walls and fences, which are often, as says Brown (2010, 91), "nothing more than spectacularly expensive political gestures" (in the field of migration controls, this is the case of the US and Greek fences at the Mexican and Turkish borders respectively, or the Spanish ones around Ceuta and Melilla): among them are also unwallled ones, specific places where border functions are concentrated and made visible, and where the border is enacted like a play on the stage of a theatre. Lampedusa is exemplary of this.

Lampedusa is more 'border' than other Italian and European border places not just for the larger number of migrants landing there, but also because the concentration of border functions on the Sicilian island has transformed its anthropic landscape and the very composition of the population. Last but not least, Lampedusa is more 'border' than other border places simply because it is *indicated* by the authorities as 'the' border. In the decade 2002-2012, in Italy, in most of the cases in which irregular migration has been spectacularly presented either as an emergency or as a solved problem, this has been done by referring to the situation on Lampedusa.

Furthermore, Lampedusa reminds us that border lines are still en vogue. Although migration controls have been spatially flexibilized (with specific regard to the Italian-North African border see Cuttitta 2008; Bialasiewicz 2012), both internally (in the territory of destination countries) and externally (to the territories of countries of origin and transit), the border line still remains crucially important for the (self-)representation of territorial power (be it the power of nation states like Italy or the power of supranational political entities like the EU). Even if other,

delocalized borders (like visa offices at consulates in the countries of origin and transit, and detention centres in both destination and transit countries) may even be more important for the practical functions that they fulfil in managing migration, the most theatrical borders of migration controls are in fact located along the official demarcation line of EU borders.

After introducing Lampedusa's 'borderness', this paper has analysed the relevant 'borderization' process (which can well be seen as a constitutive part of the more complex process of EU border production including the dimensions of 'bordering, ordering and othering', see Van Houtum 2010). It was political choices – from that of diverting boat migrants to Lampedusa to the involvement of Tunisia and Libya in migration controls, from the artificial crises to the legal expedient of considering Lampedusa a 'border zone' – that concentrated the Italian sea border on the Sicilian island, thus increasing its degree of 'borderness' to the maximum extent possible. As a result, Lampedusa was transformed into the quintessential embodiment of the EU border, and also into a stage for a political spectacle (here called 'the border play').

Analytically, it is possible to distinguish between a 'borderization' process (transforming Lampedusa into the border par excellence) and a 'spectacularization' process (transforming Lampedusa into a theatre). And yet, the two processes are closely linked, as the 'emergencies' of 2009 and 2011 exemplarily show: the same choices that led to extremely critical (and therefore 'spectacular') situations in the detention centre and on the whole island also resulted in a dramatic increase in Lampedusa's 'borderness'.

Similarly, the different narratives – the securitarian and the humanitarian – emerging all along the 'borderization' process are analytically distinguishable but strongly tied with one another. While the narrative of the 'humane border' finds its utmost expression in the period 2006-2008, under the second Prodi government, most powerful manifestations of the narrative of the 'tough border' can be found in several acts of the 'border play' that were performed under different Berlusconi governments. Despite all appearances to the contrary, though, both narratives are strictly connected, and both serve the same purpose of governing and managing human mobility.

Arguably, there are differences between the ways of operating of the Italian or Frontex patrols and that of humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross or Médecins Sans Frontières. Similarly, there are differences in the practices – not only in the narratives – of border controls between different periods under different governments. And though, differences are less marked than they appear. The production of a 'humanitarian' crisis (in the fifth act) seems to be aimed at strengthening the 'tough' character of the Italian and EU sea border, while the second act exemplary shows that the humanitarization of controls aims at legitimizing 'tough' policies and at hiding their most unpleasant consequences

(also including human rights violations) from the public view. According to Bigo (2002, 79), the humanitarian discourse “is itself a by-product of the securitization process”, and the former therefore ends up strengthening the latter. Indeed, if the dominant discourse were the humanitarian rather than the securitarian, migrants would not need to embark on risky sea crossings to reach their destination countries, as they would be ‘humanely’ allowed to travel freely from one country to another, and Lampedusa would be just one of the many minor Italian islands living on fishery and tourism.

While the functional nexus between human rights and migration management, and the role of the human rights regime in the governmentality of borders, undoubtedly deserve to be further investigated, as pointed out by Neilson (2012), humanitarian discourses contributing to ‘borderization’ processes within the securitarian, ‘tough’ frame can go beyond human rights by addressing the more general senses of hospitality, charity and understanding towards boat migrants. This is particularly evident if we analyse two further elements of the ‘borderization’ process, which have not been mentioned so far.

As early as 2004, Lampedusa was awarded the gold medal of civil merit of the Italian Republic, in recognition of the hospitality of the island’s inhabitants and institutions, which went far beyond basic legal obligations. Four years later, a monument five meters high in the form of a gate was installed near the port of Lampedusa: *Porta d’Europa* (“Europe’s Gate”). This artwork by Italian artist Mimmo Paladino was meant to commemorate the thousands of migrants who died during the sea crossings. A doorless and colourful gate suggests openness towards migrants, and it may sound ironic to install such a monument in the very same place where hundreds of them only arrived as corpses, as a consequence of restrictive entry policies, and thousands of others were subjected to illegal detention and inhumane treatments, or illegally forced to embark on deportation flights. Indeed, the *Porta d’Europa* is not meant to be a monument to human rights, to humaneness according to law, but rather a monument to humaneness per se, to humaneness even beyond the law.

Humaneness according to law lends itself to the purpose of justifying stricter controls insofar as they respect human rights – and insofar as they contribute to the enforcement of human rights: in the name of the need to protect migrants from human rights violations committed by smugglers, or, as argued by Bigo (2002, 79), to differentiate between refugees and illegal migrants. The all-encompassing, reassuring, self-absolving humaneness *beyond* the law, instead, lends itself to the purpose of justifying the very existence of stricter, ‘tougher’ controls, regardless of their complying to any condition.

## Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Nathalie Bernardie-Tahir and the Miriade network for inspiring this paper, as well as to Tim Raeymaekers and two anonymous reviewers who commented on previous versions.

## References

- Agamben, Giorgio. 1995. *Homo Sacer. Il potere sovrano e la nuda vita*. Turin: Einaudi.
- Agier, Michel. 2008. *Gérer les indésirables. Des camps des réfugiés au gouvernement humanitaire*. Paris: Flammarion.
- Albahari, Maurizio. 2006. *Death and the Moral State: Making Borders and Sovereignty at the Southern Edges of Europe*, CCIS Working Paper 136, <http://ccis.ucsd.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/CCIS-Albahari-death-and-the-moral-state-june-15-2006.pdf> (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Anderson, Malcolm. 2000. *The Transformation of Border Controls: A European Precedent?* In P. Andreas e T. Snyder (a cura di), *The Wall around the West: State Borders and Immigration Controls in North America and Europe*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 15-29.
- Andrijasevic, Rutvica. 2006. *How to Balance Rights and Responsibilities on Asylum at the EU's Southern Border of Italy and Libya*. University of Oxford COMPAS Working Paper 27, <http://oro.open.ac.uk/12652/1/COMPASWP.pdf> (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Andrijasevic, Rutvica and William Walters. 2010. *The International Organization for Migration and the international government of borders*. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28(6), 977-999.
- Ansa. 2008. *Immigrazione: Esperto OIM, centro Lampedusa modello da seguire*. 18 January.
- Ansa. 2006. *Immigrazione: Lampedusa; Unhcr, vita in Cpt è migliorata. Alto Commissario Guterres valuta condizioni*. 16 November.
- Betts, Alexander (ed.). 2011. *Global Migration Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bialasiewicz, Luiza. 2012. *Off-shoring and Out-sourcing the Borders of Europe: Libya and EU Border Work in the Mediterranean*. *Geopolitics* 17(4), 843-866.
- Bigo, Didier. 2002. *Security and Immigration: Toward a Critique of the Governmentality of Unease*. *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 27(1), 63-93.
- Bojadžijev, Manuela and Serhat Karakayalı. 2007. *Autonomie der Migration. 10 Thesen zu einer Methode*. In, *Transit Migration Forschungsgruppe (ed.), Turbulente Ränder. Neue Perspektiven auf Migration an den Rändern Europas*. Bielefeld: Transcript, pp. 203-9.

- Boubakri, Hassen. 2004. New Migratory patterns at the Tunisia-Libya frontiers. Case of the Sahara desert area. In, Council of Europe (ed.), Proceedings of the Regional Conference on 'Migrants in transit countries: sharing responsibility for management and protection'. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, pp. 89-109.
- Brown, Wendy. 2010. *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books.
- Camera dei Deputati. 2006. Resoconto stenografico dell'Assemblea. Seduta n. 37 del 19/9/2006. Rome: Camera dei Deputati, [http://www.camera.it/\\_dati/leg15/lavori/stenografici/sed037/s090.htm](http://www.camera.it/_dati/leg15/lavori/stenografici/sed037/s090.htm) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Campesi, Giuseppe. 2011. The Arab Spring and the Crisis of the European Border Regime. Manufacturing Emergency in the Lampedusa crisis. EUI Working Paper RSCAS 59, [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/19375/RSCAS\\_2011\\_59.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/19375/RSCAS_2011_59.pdf?sequence=1) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Carling, Jørg and María Hernández-Carretero. 2011. Protecting Europe and Protecting Migrants? Strategies for Managing Unauthorised Migration from Africa. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 13(1), 42-58.
- Castronovo, Antonella Elisa. 2011. Dalla 'Guerra dei disperati' alle navi galera. In, Michele Mannoia (ed.), *Il silenzio degli altri. Discriminati, esclusi, invisibili*. Rome: XL edizioni.
- Council of Europe. 2008. Europe's 'boat people': mixed migration flows by sea into southern Europe. Parliamentary Assembly Doc. 11688. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc08/EDOC11688.pdf> (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Cuttitta, Paolo. 2008. The Case of the Italian Southern Sea Borders: Cooperation across the Mediterranean? In, Gemma Pinyol (ed.) *Immigration flows and the management of the EU's southern maritime borders*. Barcelona: Cidob, pp. 45-62, [http://www.cidob.org/es/content/download/8449/86208/file/doc\\_migraciones\\_17.pdf](http://www.cidob.org/es/content/download/8449/86208/file/doc_migraciones_17.pdf) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Cuttitta, Paolo. 2007. *Segnali di confine. Il controllo dell'immigrazione nel mondo-frontiera*. Milan: Mimesis.
- De Genova, Nicholas. 2002. Migrant 'Illegality' and Deportability in Everyday Life. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 31, 419-447.
- De Haas, Hein. 2007. *The myth of invasion. Irregular migration from West Africa to the Maghreb and the European Union*. Oxford: International Migration Institute, Oxford University, <http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/pdfs/Irregular%20migration%20from%20West%20Africa%20-%20Hein%20de%20Haas.pdf> (retrieved 28 September 2012).

- Düvell, Franck. 2002. Die Globalisierung des Migrationsregimes. Zur neuen Einwanderungspolitik in Europa. Berlin: Assoziation A.
- Edelman, Murray. 1985. *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Edelman, Murray. 1977. *Political Language: Words That Succeed and Policies That Fail*. San Diego: Academic Press
- Gatta, Gianluca. 2011. Le violenze dei salvatori e dei salvati. Scenari lampedusani. Trickster 10, [http://trickster.lettere.unipd.it/doku.php?id=violenza\\_straniero:gatta\\_lampedusa](http://trickster.lettere.unipd.it/doku.php?id=violenza_straniero:gatta_lampedusa) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Geiger, Martin and Antoine Pécoud. 2010. The Politics of International Migration Management. In, Idd. (eds.), *The Politics of International Migration Management*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-20.
- Goffman, Erving. 1961. *Asylums. Essays on the social situation of mental patients and other inmates*. New York: Anchor.
- Huysmans, Jeff. 2006. *The Politics of Insecurity. Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU*. London-New York: Routledge.
- Huysmans, Jeff. 2000. The European Union and the Securitization of Migration. *Journal of Common Market Studies* 38(5), 751-777.
- Hyndman, Jennifer and Alison Mountz. 2008. Another Brick in the Wall? Neo-Refolement and the Externalization of Asylum by Australia and Europe. *Government and Opposition* 43(2), 249-269.
- ICMPD. 2007. *The East Africa Migration Routes Report*. Vienna: International Centre for Migration Policy Development.
- «Il Messaggero». 2008. Immigrazione, Urso: “Favorire i flussi dai Balcani: il Mediterraneo del Sud più difficile da integrare”. 13 October, [http://www.ilmessaggero.it/articolo.php?id=32740&sez=HOME\\_INITALIA](http://www.ilmessaggero.it/articolo.php?id=32740&sez=HOME_INITALIA) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Kiza, Ernesto. 2008. *Tödliche Grenzen. Die Fatale Auswirkungen europäischer Zuwanderungspolitik. Eine theoretisch-empirische Untersuchung von Todesfällen illegalisierter Migranten im Kontext neuer Migrationsdynamiken und restriktiver Migrationspolitiken*. Vienna-Zurich-Berlin: Lit.
- Klepp, Silja. 2011. A Double Bind. Malta and the Rescue of Unwanted Migrants at Sea, a Legal Anthropological Perspective on the Humanitarian Law of the Sea. *International Journal of Refugee Law* 23(3), 538-557.
- Lefebvre, Henri. 1974. *La production de l'espace*. Paris: Anthropos.
- Löw, Martina. 2001. *Raumsoziologie*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.
- «Il Sole 24 Ore». 2011. Mantovano: ma l'impianto non è saltato. 29 April, [http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2011-04-29/mantovano-impianto-saltato-063804\\_PRN.shtml](http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2011-04-29/mantovano-impianto-saltato-063804_PRN.shtml) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Marchetti, Chiara. 2010. Expanded Borders. Policies and Practices of Preventive Refoulement in Italy. In, Martin Geiger and Antoine Pécoud (eds.), *The*

- Politics of International Migration Management. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 160-183.
- Martino, Antonio. 2004. Discorso del Ministro della Difesa. Rome: Ministero della Difesa, [http://www.difesa.it/Pubblicistica/info-difesa/Infodifesa140/Documents/Intervento\\_del\\_Ministro\\_della\\_Difesa.pdf](http://www.difesa.it/Pubblicistica/info-difesa/Infodifesa140/Documents/Intervento_del_Ministro_della_Difesa.pdf) (retrieved 28 September 2012)
- Mezzadra, Sandro. 2001. Diritto di fuga. Migrazioni, cittadinanza, globalizzazione. Verona: Ombre corte.
- Mezzadra, Sandro and Brett Neilson. 2012. Between Inclusion and Exclusion: On the Topology of Global Space and Borders. *Theory, Culture & Society* 29(4-5), 58-75.
- Ministero dell'Interno. 2007. Rapporto sulla Criminalità in Italia. Analisi, prevenzione, contrasto. Roma: Ministero dell'Interno, [http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/assets/files/14/0900\\_rapporto\\_criminalita.pdf](http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/it/assets/files/14/0900_rapporto_criminalita.pdf) (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Mountz, Alison. 2010. Seeking Asylum. Human Smuggling and Bureaucracy at the Border. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Neilson, Brett. 2010. Between governance and sovereignty: remaking the borderscape to Australia's north. *Local-Global journal* 8, 124-140.
- Panagiotidis, Efthimia and Vassilis Tsianos. 2007. Denaturalizing camps. Überwachen und Entschleunigen in der Schengener Ägäis-Zone. In, Transit Migration Forschungsgruppe (ed.), *Turbulente Ränder. Neue Perspektiven auf Migration an den Rändern Europas*. Bielefeld: Transcript, pp. 57-85.
- Paoletti, Emanuela. 2010. Relations among unequals? Readmission between Italy and Libya. In, Jean-Pierre Cassarino (ed.), *Unbalanced Reciprocities: Cooperation on Readmission in the Euro-Mediterranean Area*. Washington: Middle East Institute, pp. 54-76. <http://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/publications/ReadmissionWeb.pdf> (retrieved 28 September 2012).
- Popescu, Gabriel. 2012. Bordering and Ordering the Twenty-first Century. *Understanding Borders*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Rajaram, Prem Kumar and Carl Grundy-Warr. 2004. The Irregular Migrant as Homo Sacer: Migration and Detention in Australia, Malaysia, and Thailand. *International Migration* 42(1), 33-64.
- Ritaine, Evelyne. 2010. Dramaturgie de l'intrusion migratoire: Teatro all'italiana. In, Denis-Constant Martin (ed.), *L'identité en jeux. Pouvoirs, identifications, mobilisations*. Paris: Karthala, pp. 201-221.
- Rodier, Claire. 2006. Analysis of the external dimension of the EU's asylum and immigration policies – Summary and recommendations for the European Parliament. Brussels: European Parliament.
- Scieurba, Alessandra. 2009. Campi di forza. Percorsi confinati di migranti in Europa. Verona: Ombre Corte.

- Shachar, Ayelet. 2007. The Shifting Border of Immigration Regulation. *Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties* 3(2), 165-193.
- Simmel, Georg. 1908. *Soziologie. Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.
- Sossi, Federica. 2006a. *Migrare. Spazi di confinamento e strategie di esistenza*. Milan: Il Saggiatore.
- Sossi, Federica. 2006b. Lampedusa, l'isola che non c'è. In, Paolo Cuttitta and Fulvio Vassallo Paleologo (eds.), *Migrazioni, frontiere, diritti*. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, pp. 251-60.
- Spijkerboer, Thomas. 2007. The Human Costs of Border Control. *European Journal of Migration and Law* 9(1), 127-139.
- Transit Migration Forschungsgruppe (ed.). 2007. *Turbulente Ränder. Neue Perspektiven auf Migration an den Grenzen Europas*. Bielefeld: Transcript.
- Van Houtum, Henk. 2010. Human blacklisting: the global apartheid of the EU's external border regime. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28(6), 957-976.
- Van Houtum, Henk. 2005. The Geopolitics of Borders and Boundaries. *Geopolitics* 10, 672-679.
- Van Houtum, Henk and Freerk Boedeltje. 2009. Europe's Shame: Death at the Borders of the EU. *Antipode* 41(2), 226-230.
- Van Houtum, Henk and Ton Van Naerssen. 2002. Bordering, Ordering and Othering. *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 93(2), 125-136.
- Vassallo Paleologo, Fulvio. 2012. *Diritti sotto sequestro*. Rome: Aracne.
- Vassallo Paleologo, Fulvio. 2009. Il respingimento differito disposto dal questore e le garanzie costituzionali. *Diritto, Immigrazione e Cittadinanza* 11(2), 15-30.
- Wæver, Ole, Barry Buzan, Morten Kelstrup and Pierre Lemaitre. 1993. *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*. London: Pinter.
- Walters, William. 2002. Mapping Schengenland: Denaturalizing the Border. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 20(5), 561-558.