

THE SPECTACLE OF THE NON-FIXATION POLICY

THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COP-WATCHERS

CALAIS



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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the multifaceted nature and extent of the spectacles related to the non-fixation policy in Calais, focusing on the roles played by politicians, law enforcement, and Human Rights Observers in their orchestration. Employing a constructivist grounded theory approach informed by six months of participant observation, this research captures the real-time dynamics of these spectacles, including their unseen backstage. Through the concept of the spectacle of evictions and a multifaceted comprehension of violence, the researcher approaches the non-fixation policy from a unique conceptual as well as empirical stance.

The study reveals how the non-fixation policy is shaped by socio-political landscapes and border securitization discourses, extending the border beyond physical barriers, discursively and performatively portraying migrants as threats, thus legitimizing stringent border management. Legal complexities and the use of 'flagrance delicto' for evictions highlight ethical and legal dilemmas, perpetuating violence, uncertainty, and exhaustion. Human rights organizations criticize not only the non-fixation policy, but the disorganization of aid pointing to systemic harassment, intimidation, and criminalization of humanitarian and solidary actors. The visual spectacle of policing through large convoys and deployment of the riot-police *Compagnie Républicaine de Sécurité* (CRS) highlights the performative and violent spectacle of evictions and the non-fixation policy. Their body capital subjects observers like people on the move to truncated violence, promising actualization of force in case of resistance. The encounters between HRO and law enforcement are thus characterized by intimidation and violence. It is a dual spectacle, as HRO subjects law enforcement to the humiliation, intimidation, and violence incorporated in counter-surveillance tactics. Hence, this counter-surveillance, intended to ensure accountability and work as a pacifier and defense, often escalates tensions, revealing conflicts over legitimacy and justice. The policy's implementation, the distribution of images, and the spectacles born from it, subject people on the move to a variety of violence, and this violence is politicized as discursive, performative, and visual spectacles by politicians, law enforcement, and HRO.

The research concludes that the spectacles that emerge from the non-fixation policy and encounters between law enforcement and HRO are visual, political, performative, discursive, and violent,

created, reinforced, and contested, a self-reinforcing spectacle driven by exchanges of humiliation, intimidation, and violence. This calls for a critical re-evaluation of border management practices, advocating for humane approaches that prioritize human rights and dignity. By shedding light on the dynamics of border management in Calais, the study offers valuable insights for addressing migration challenges globally, urging a shift from violent spectacles to compassionate solutions.

Keywords: spectacle, violence, evictions, cop-watching, Calais

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ABBREVIATIONS

CRS – Compagnie Républicaine de Sécurité

HRO – Human Rights Observers

UK – United Kingdom

INTRODUCTION

Before my involvement in the border struggle in Calais in 2022, I held trust in authority figures, particularly the police, and disdained sentiments of 'all cops are bastards'. However, my time at the border shattered this trust. As I learned of the evictions and violence taking place in Calais, I had my first fleeting encounter with the convoy of CRS arriving in full riot gear in the middle of our food distribution. The fear I felt as they passed by us, coupled with subsequently learning of the CRS' violent approach to protestors via social media, irreversibly altered my perspective. This shift in perception motivated my decision to return to Calais for my master's thesis, focusing on the interactions between law enforcement and displaced individuals. Aligned with Human Rights Observers, I intended to document and analyze these encounters. Little did I anticipate that my own experiences with the police would become the focal point of my research.

On the 16th of January, amidst my observations of evictions of informal living sites, multiple encounters unfolded with CRS officers that would catalyze my research trajectory. As my colleague and I attempted to document the evictions, we were met with surveillance, humiliation, intimidation, and violence by the CRS. One of the encounters unfolded as follows:

As my colleague and I were escorted out of the living site, we were pushed towards the small stream. The CRS insisted we cross the stream, standing intimidatingly close. I insisted that they give us some space and stop pushing us. A CRS responded to this request by putting his hand on my shoulder and pushing me to the point that I fell next to the stream. I screamed in shock, including something that might have had the potential to lead to a charge of outrage¹. To quickly cover up this mistake, I yelled "you pushed me". To my luck, the CRS did not hear what I screamed but denied pushing me, "I didn't push her, she slipped hard. You see there is a God". Before my colleague and I ran back to our car I sarcastically asked, "Are you coming?". As we drove away,

¹ Outrage can give a fine of up to 20.000 euros and up to 1 year in prison

there was no sight of the van following us for 10 minutes, but suddenly, the CRS van pulled in behind us and stalked us for several minutes before it finally drove off.

These encounters culminated in my colleague and I filing two complaints against three CRS officers for their conduct and catalyzing my research, prompting reflection on the dynamics between law enforcement and cop-watchers. Questions arose regarding our role as observers: were we entirely blameless for the escalation in our encounters? Were we provoking the police with our filming and insistence on our rights? This introspection guided the formulation of my research questions, which seek to unravel the complexities of these spectacles of eviction.

In this thesis, I aim to *explore the multifaceted nature and extent of spectacles related to the non-fixation policy and the roles played by politicians, law enforcement, and Human Rights Observers in their orchestration*. Through empirical data gathered via participant observation and militant research, I endeavor to shed light on the underlying dynamics, purposes, and consequences of these spectacles, and reveal the front- and backstages of these actors. Utilizing a constructivist approach, I conceptualize these encounters as spectacles, offering a novel perspective on the discursive and performative nature of border management and its political implications. Ultimately, this research contributes to a deeper understanding and adds to the political discussion on the lived realities of border enforcement and the ramifications of such spectacles.

CONCEPTUAL RESEARCH DESIGN

Since 2022, I have been engaged in the border struggle in Calais, volunteering with Care4Calais and publishing research on this struggle for Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor. Leveraging this experience, I was welcomed by Human Rights Observers 1st of December 2024 to observe the implementation of the non-fixation policy and the evictions of informal living sites. The first section of this chapter introduces the mandate and operations of HRO, to understand the context of the militant research and participant observation.

When I arrived, I expected to conduct my analysis on the non-fixation policy through the lens of bio- and necro-politics, but on the 16th of January, I experienced the spectacle. From my participant

observation, the concept of spectacle manifested, and I changed my approach to a constructivist grounded theory to conceptualize my participant observations. The second part of the chapter describes the research design and data collection guided by these methods. The third part of the chapter examines some of the ethical dilemmas encountered while conducting this research. As the research question and concept of spectacles emerged from the experience in the field, the chapter ends with exploring relevant literature and concepts to answer the questions that emerged in the field.

HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVERS

HRO defines itself as “an independent watchdog which aims to document and denounce the State violence perpetrated against people on the move at the French-UK border” (Human Rights Observers, 2020, p. 7). The methodology of HRO resembles cop-watching, which “is based on the recognized fundamental right in France to film members of the law enforcement when they exercise their functions” (Human Rights Observers, 2022, p. 3) and is “guided by several principles such as non-violent action, respect for all persons in a professional setting, and the autonomy of displaced people” (Human Rights Observers, 2020, p. 7). This collection of data is used to analyze the non-fixation policy and document police operations during which arbitrary arrests, ID checks, violence, and seizing of personal belongings take place during the actual eviction. Through advocacy and legal efforts, this data is used to denounce and end the policy.

When conducting cop-watching, HRO members must adhere to a set of including, no physical or psychological violence, including non-verbal aggression; avoiding movements that can cause tension; no material destruction; no coverage of one’s face; always having the HRO badge on; and being respectful. The methodology of cop-watching includes not taking videos or photos of minors under any circumstances and avoiding any videos showing the faces of those being evicted, as they have the right to their image. While law enforcement does not have the right to their image during police operations, they should always be filmed in a non-provoking manner, e.g., avoiding close-up videos, except if law enforcement is not wearing a visible RIO, or act intimidatingly or violently (Human Rights Observers, 2023).

My daily work consisted of staking out the commissariat to see if there were any signs of an eviction going to take place, and if so, surveillance law enforcement throughout these evictions using counter-surveillance including taking videos, photos, and notes of what was happening, and engaging in conversations with law enforcement about the operation. Another aspect was engaging with people on the move who were being evicted, giving them information about the procedures and information about humanitarian and legal support in the area. After evictions, I would archive the videos and photos collected, write detailed debriefs, log the information in internal logs, and report to *L'observatoire des expulsions des lieux de vie informels*. When I was not occupied by paperwork or evictions, I would visit the living sites or the day center Secours Catholique to provide information about HRO, including adding people to our distribution list sending warning messages before the evictions, and providing information on the opportunity for HRO to assist with filing complaints against the police in cases of violence or to share their testimonies for advocacy purposes.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

This section examines my methodological approach, balancing active participation and critical observation, to elucidate the complexities and ethical considerations inherent in militant research.

While I had come to Calais to conduct a bio- and necro-political analysis of the non-fixation policy, I put my theoretical presumptions to the side and embraced the inductive constructivist approach, opting to let the data guide the conceptual framework.

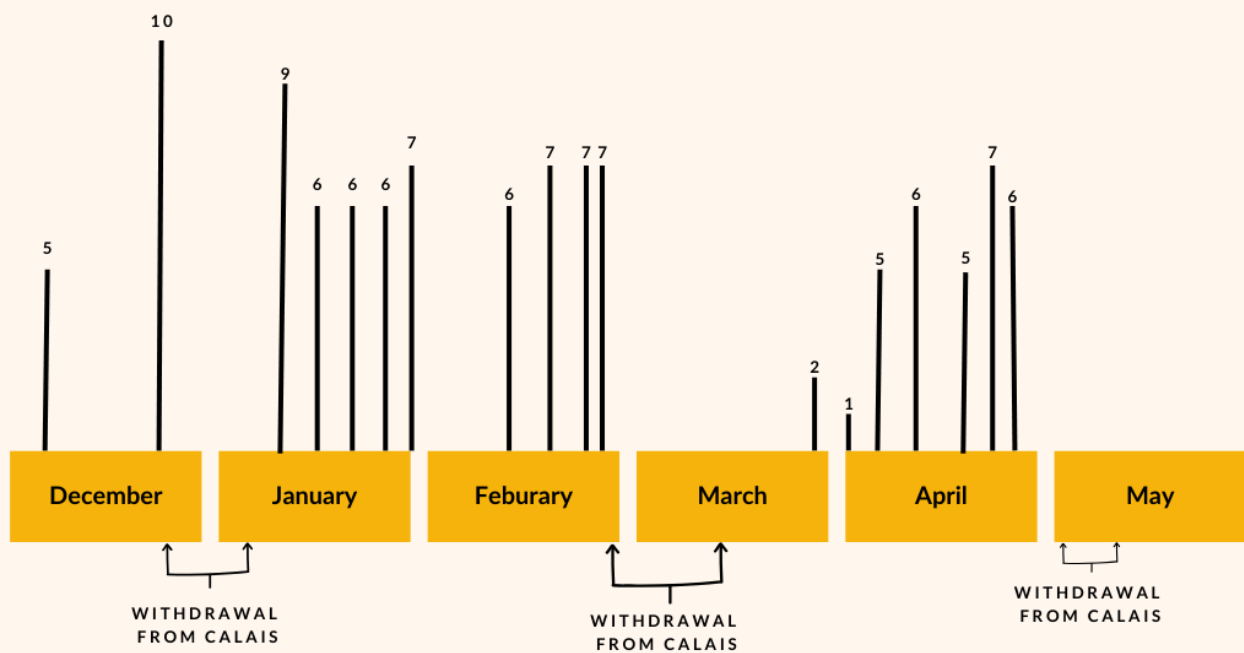
I embraced a constructivist research philosophy, acknowledging that researchers cannot be entirely unbiased, neutral, or objective, and come with theoretical notions and conceptualizations (Charmaz, 2015). With HRO, I engaged in the dual purpose of participant observation - engaging in and observing the activities, people, and physical aspects of evictions (Spradley, 1980). This engagement with HRO can be labeled as militant research, where I, as a researcher, actively participate in knowledge production within the grassroots organization (Gordon, 2014). De Genova (2013b) argues that all research on border struggles is inherently militant, regardless of direct

engagement, as the researcher cannot act neutrally and inevitably becomes entwined in these struggles through knowledge production.

This complete participation in the spectrum of involvement with those being observed and the activities, as Spradley (1980) notes, also obscures part of the spectacles, as the closer the research is to the research, the more difficult it becomes to examine. However, after the 16th of January, I turned a critical gaze towards the role of HRO and cop-watching, exercising explicit awareness to overcome the selective inattention that obscures the participant's observations (Spradley, 1980). I changed my narrow lens, which only focused on law enforcement, to a wider-angle lens, capturing the spoken and unspoken interactions between HRO and law enforcement (Spradley, 1980). As I translated the observations into the conceptualizations of the spectacle, the research output of HRO and the thesis dramatically changed, as I began exposing the backstage I had so kindly been allowed into. To foster this exposure, and introspection of my engagement (Spradley, 1980), I withdrew from the border three times during the research period, as illustrated in graph 1. This withdrawal was recommended by Coleman (2015), allowing me to self-examine my positionality and recognize how my knowledge production is intimately linked with my engagement in the power dynamics and conflicts surrounding evictions. While Spradley (1980) argues the complete participant faces a challenge in observing his engagement, Juris (2007) argues that might be true while collecting data, but when processing data and writing, there are such different academic approaches, that the militant researcher becomes a researcher rather than a militant. This is also visible in the vastly different analyses I have produced for respectively HRO and the thesis, drawing on the same data. The research produced in collaboration with HRO, is however “research about rather than for (the) movement” as Juris (2007, p. 172) puts it. However, the research aims to foster “ongoing (self-)reflection and decision-making” (Juris, 2007, p. 172)

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EVICTIIONS OBSERVED



Graph 1: Overview of participant observations during the research period

While adopting a dual observation stance, for HRO and academic purposes, in the most intense encounters I was a participant, and then an observer as I reviewed video material and the debriefs. I have rigorously scrutinized the knowledge production in light of my militant engagement and participant observation, and my positionality, conducting a “persistent back-and-forth movement between critique and commitment that unsettles the identity of an ‘activist scholar’” (Coleman, 2015, p. 265), hence allowing me to bridge the gap between activism and research (Coleman, 2015; Juris, 2007).

Using the constructivist approach afforded the flexibility of jumping back and forth between gathering and analyzing data, fostering a dynamic interaction between researcher and data – a

primary strength of this method – and enabling data collection over an extended period compared to methods following a structure of data collection and then analysis. As I jumped between observing, coding, and analyzing, I could identify analytical value and gaps in data collection. Over this time, patterns in evictions and encounters emerged. I coded debriefs line-by-line, categorizing encounters into five categories that had emerged after months of observations: perimeter, legal basis, interactions between HRO and law enforcement, filming, and intimidation. I authored most of the debriefs with my partners, supplementing interactions that required a more nuanced understanding of French culture and language. As I reread the debriefs in the coding process, a new category, mockery, emerged, capturing instances of ridicule and sexist remarks. Given the linguistic nuances and underlying meanings in the debriefs, manual coding was preferred over AI tools to ensure accuracy and thoroughness, albeit at the cost of time efficiency. Throughout the analysis, extracts from these debriefs are included, either through direct quotations or references in the text or as entire sections written in *italics*, taking the reader back to the moment of an observation or encounter.

While this method allows for a unique contribution to the research field, it also produces some blindness that I need to be aware of. The long research period enabled substantial data collection, the construction of a new concept, and complete backstage access, which came at the price of being influenced by the subculture of observers (Marquart, 1986), e.g., ‘All Cops Are Bastards’. However, I have exercised caution to avoid this pitfall, and the more radical my colleagues were, the more I found my research into our role in the spectacle relevant. My position with HRO shaped my relationship with law enforcement (Marquart, 1986), which, as the analysis will reveal, often adopted a hostile stance towards cop-watchers. Consequently, formal access to interview French law enforcement was unattainable. While observing independently outside HRO might have provided access to both sides of the spectacle, it would not have conferred backstage access to the organization. Some might argue that there is a blindness to the real implementation of the non-fixation policy, as the presence of HRO, and hence I, affects how law enforcement carries out the non-fixation policy (Marquart, 1986). However, reactivity is the essence of the research topic and has been subjected to rigorous scrutiny. Further, I never revealed myself as a researcher to law

enforcement, hence not affecting their reactivity towards me, but providing an ethical dilemma discussed in the following section.

In conclusion, the constructivist approach to militant research and participant observations acknowledges that the researcher cannot be objective, but rather views the analyses as emergent interpretive constructions of data. By shifting between data collection and analysis, the researcher creates an interaction between the researcher and the data, constructing a new conceptualization of the spectacle of evictions. While this method enabled extensive data collection and in-depth conceptualization, it also introduced potential biases from the subculture of observers. Despite these challenges, the research remains relevant, revealing the complexities of the relationship between law enforcement and cop-watchers. The study's insights highlight the intricate dynamics at play, demonstrating the critical impact of cop-watchers' presence on law enforcement behavior and providing valuable information on the on-ground implementation of the non-fixation policy, that can contribute to political reform.

ETHICS

Conducting participant observations in a conflictual environment involving vulnerable populations presents several ethical dilemmas related to anonymization and consent. These dilemmas necessitate a careful balance between ethical research practices and the imperative to document and analyze the complex dynamics of evictions.

The encounters described in the thesis have been translated from French to English by the author. Further, the encounters have been anonymized, only referring to 'my colleague' and in terms of law enforcement, to 'CRS', 'officer', 'Police Nationale, or 'chief of operations'. As a cop-watcher, it has not been possible to secure the consent of law enforcement to use these encounters for research purposes, but as most of the encounters and photos used in the thesis have already been published by HRO in different formats and under more militant discourses, I have chosen to publish them in the thesis. By anonymizing the officers, the benefit of publishing these encounters, adding to a new political, empirical, and conceptual understanding of evictions and the encounter between

cop and cop-watcher, I believe, outweighs the ethical dilemma of lack of consent. Furthermore, while it might be an ethical dilemma to not reveal my research intentions to law enforcement, as well as recounting encounters and including photos, it is a legal right to observe and film police during police operations.

While the lack of consent from law enforcement and the potential ethical implications of not disclosing research intentions are significant concerns, the steps taken to anonymize participants and the legal right to observe police operations mitigate these issues. The decision to prioritize the benefit of contributing to a broader understanding of evictions and cop-watcher encounters underscores the ethical justification for publishing this research.

Following the publishing guidelines by HRO, people on the move's faces are not published to respect their right to image and to avoid potential criminalization or consequences for asylum claims. Some might critique this and reduce them to research objects; however, I deemed that interviews would risk re-traumatization, and take up valuable time, and while the thesis is very important to me, it is not a policy paper that could make a significant change for people on the move. Further, I follow the terminology of HRO, concerning referring to those being evicted as 'people on the move', actively resisting the term 'migrant' as it is politicized, and being aware that I am part of the society that defines the 'immigrant', and I must hence reexamine my positionality in part of this construction (De Genova, 2013b).

The anonymization of people on the move has been to protect their right to privacy, prevent potential criminalization and negative impact on asylum claims, prioritize their well-being, and avoid re-traumatization. Moreover, adhering to the terminology of 'people on the move' instead of 'migrant' reflects a conscious effort to resist politicized language and reexamine my role in the societal construction of immigration narratives. These considerations underscore a commitment to ethical research practices amidst complex social dynamics.

AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK GUIDED BY CONCEPTUALIZATIONS

Following the method of participant observations that informed the research design and data collection, this framework explores the multifaceted nature of spectacles related to the non-fixation policy and the roles played by politicians, law enforcement, and Human Rights Observers (HROs) in their orchestration. The concept of spectacle emerged intuitively, defined as a show designed for public viewing, often with a theatrical nature (SPECTACLE Definition and Meaning | Collins English Dictionary, 2024). This concept increasingly made sense to describe the encounters between HROs and law enforcement, as well as the non-fixation policy as a whole.

Inspired by scholars such as Andersson (2014), De Genova (2002, 2013a), Franko (2021), and Maggs (2020), the spectacle is constructed as an analytical framework to understand the non-fixation policy. These scholars view bordering practices as performative spectacles that assert state sovereignty and limit the mobility of the unwanted. This performative spectacle, accompanied by a discursive spectacle that characterizes the unwanted as a threat to sovereignty, legitimizes the exclusion and violence against these groups (Andersson, 2014; De Genova, 2002, 2013a; Maggs, 2020).

To further develop the spectacle concept, the works of Owens (2022) and Reyes (2016) are incorporated. They argue that state-performed violence, executed by policing and exercising disproportionate force, creates a spectacle to deter crime and assert sovereignty. This violence must be showcased to an audience to politicize the suffering bodies as a deterrent, either live or through the distribution of images (Owens, 2022; Reyes, 2016). This perspective can be used to analyze the non-fixation policy and its violent enactment during evictions, raising the question of the HROs' role in politicizing the bodies of people on the move by distributing images of the violence committed.

Scholars like Ellison (2019), Andersson (2014), and Franko (2021) provide insights into how these images of violence craft online discourses. They highlight the dual nature of spectacles, where different actors present competing discourses to their audiences, each revealing and concealing

various aspects of the situation. To describe this competition, Andersson (2014) and Franko (2021) conceptualize the double-sided spectacle. Each actor crafts a discourse that seeks to assert their version of reality while attacking the backstage of others (Anderson, 2021; Franko, 2021). This dynamic is evident in how HROs distribute violent images to denounce the spectacle while inadvertently contributing to it. Building on Franko's (2021) work on discursive encounters, this framework extends the concept of spectacles to describe the duality of the performative and discursive nature of face-to-face encounters between law enforcement and cop-watchers. The research reveals a lack of concepts addressing their performative and discursive dimensions, necessitating an extension of the spectacle concept beyond state sovereignty to include these interactions.

In conclusion, this section has delved into the multifaceted nature of spectacles surrounding the non-fixation policy and the roles of politicians, law enforcement, and HRO. The concept of spectacle, defined as a public show with theatrical elements, can be used to describe the performative and discursive phenomenon of the non-fixation policy. It serves as a tool for asserting state sovereignty, legitimizing exclusion, and politicizing the suffering bodies of marginalized groups. Furthermore, the concept of spectacle is extended to encompass online discourses and face-to-face encounters between law enforcement and cop-watchers. This extension enriches our understanding of the complex dynamics at play, shedding light on the performative and discursive dimensions inherent in these interactions. Overall, this framework offers valuable insights into the role of spectacles in asserting power, shaping, and contesting discourses within the context of the non-fixation policy and beyond. It lays the groundwork for further exploration of these dynamics and their implications.

The next section explores the central concept of violence, essential for understanding the multifaceted spectacles related to the non-fixation policy and the roles of politicians, law enforcement, and HRO. While violence might initially appear incidental in the implementation of the non-fixation policy and the encounters between law enforcement and cop-watchers, it is imperative to recognize its broader significance. Violence extends beyond physical acts; it is

ingrained in the spectacles surrounding this policy and its encounters. Without a comprehensive understanding of violence, it is challenging to fully conceptualize these spectacles.

Necro-politics offers a critical lens to comprehend the role of violence in the non-fixation policy and modes of exclusion (Mbembe, 2008). The concept analyzes how state power dictates who lives and dies, fundamentally reconfiguring societal structures and power relations. By exerting sovereignty over mortality, states determine whose lives are expendable, managing these through threats and realities of death (Mbembe, 2008). The population subjected to such conditions exists as living dead in the death world, stripped of basic rights and dignity (Mbembe, 2008). This violent management perpetuates control over excluded populations, legitimized by discourses of securitization and sovereignty (Mbembe, 2008).

Applying these concepts to the non-fixation policy reveals how violence is legitimized as people on the move are excluded from the life world. It underscores that violence encompasses more than direct physical harm; it serves as a structural instrument for controlling populations, legitimized by constructing them as threats.

Moreover, violence exists in various forms and is perpetrated by different actors. Galtung's (1969) framework distinguishes between personal and structural violence. While personal violence refers to direct physical harm inflicted by individuals, structural violence arises from the unequal distribution of resources and power embedded within societal structures. Critics, such as Ellison (2019), argue that structural violence encompasses more than just power distribution; it includes the legitimized force and restrictions imposed by state mechanisms, positioning border violence as necro-political.

The discussion of what constitutes legitimate and cruel violence is pivotal for examining the spectacles arising from encounters between law enforcement and HRO. Balibar's (1998, 2001) ideas of cruelty and 'human garbage' provide further insight into structural violence, which can e.g., also take the form of direct violence by police. Balibar (1998) argues that state power is inherently violent and necessary for its existence. However, violence first becomes cruel when it is disproportionate to the threat, e.g., when intentionally inflicted to manage and control

marginalized populations, such as people on the move. These populations, dehumanized and excluded from society, are thus conceptualized as human garbage—disposable and devoid of value within the socio-economic and political order (Balibar, 1998). Like Ellison (2019), Balibar draws on necro-political aspects of state violence, its legitimacy, and the living dead.

When violence and its legitimacy are defined differently, where one part sees the act of self-defense as disproportionate to the threat, and in turn commits violence in the name of sacrifice or achieving ideality, the violent spiral continues, fostering more violence than neutralizing the threat (Balibar, 1998, 2001). This is relevant for the discussion of what constitutes police coercion and violence, and when it is legitimate. Here we can build on Galtung's framework of violence, distinguishing between biological (reducing somatic capabilities), physical (reducing mobility and freedom), and psychological violence (targeting mental capabilities through threats, lies, and other forms of mental harm). As Klahm et al. (2014) emphasize, there is a need to distinguish between coercion and force in understanding police violence. Coercion involves non-negotiable police behaviors that do not cause biological or physical harm, whereas force entails actions that threaten or inflict this harm, e.g., through psychological harm (Klahm et al., 2014). This distinction is crucial for analyzing encounters between law enforcement, people on the move, and HRO.

Moreover, violence transcends physical reality, manifesting in the digital realm through visual representations. The act of cop-watching, as described by Ellison (2019) and Wilson and Serisier (2010), involves filming police activities to expose and deter violence. However, this practice raises ethical concerns regarding the representation and impact of such imagery, as visual violence can both raise awareness and risk sensationalizing suffering, which Balibar (2001) argues creates a 'new visibility of extreme violence' fostering compassion but also reinforcing divisions between those with protected humanity and those subjected to violence. The ethical implications of documenting and disseminating images of violence, including consent and discourse framing, are critical considerations in navigating this terrain (Ellison, 2019).

In conclusion, the conceptualization of violence within the context of the non-fixation policy, and encounters between law enforcement and cop-watching reveal its profound and multifaceted

nature. Violence, extending beyond physical acts, is deeply ingrained in societal structures and power dynamics, as illuminated by Mbembe's concept of necro-politics. This framework highlights how violence is legitimized to control marginalized populations, perpetuating exclusion and dehumanization. Furthermore, the discussion delves into Galtung's framework, distinguishing between personal and structural violence, and Balibar's insights into legitimate and cruel violence. These perspectives shed light on the nuanced manifestations of violence and can aid in particularly addressing the encounters between law enforcement, observers, and people on the move. Moreover, the chapter underscores the evolving landscape of violence in the digital age, where visual representations play a significant role. Cop-watching practices raise ethical concerns about the representation and impact of violent imagery, emphasizing the importance of thoughtful discourse framing and consent.

THE SPECTACLE OF EVICTIONS

The thesis aims to provide a comprehensive exploration of the spectacles produced during the implementation and contestation of the non-fixation policy in Calais, focusing on the role of politicians, law enforcement, and HRO. The thesis focuses on the socio-political, legal, and practical dimensions of the policy, and how these dimensions are manifested through political, discursive, and performative spectacles. This policy, characterized by its intent to manage and control the visibility of irregular migration, is examined through various lenses to understand its multifaceted impacts and the spectacles it creates, and draws on participant observations and encounters between the researcher and law enforcement.

The first section encompasses three chapters, engaged in the exploration of the political spectacle of the non-fixation policy, and how this spectacle its practical and legal dimensions are contested by human rights organizations and defenders, including HRO. The second section encompasses three chapters, exploring how performative spectacles unfold between law enforcement and HRO, affected by bodily capital, securitization discourses, resistance, and counter-surveillance and surveillance – ultimately creating performative spectacles of violence and exchanges in humiliation, intimidation, and violence. The last chapter explores the role of social media and the

distribution of violent images in the construction of the double-sided spectacle of the border, its practical consequences, and associated ethical dilemmas.

THE SPECTACLE OF THE POLITICS AND THE LEGALITY OF EVICTIONS

Under this headline, four chapters delve into the political spectacles of the near-daily evictions carried out under the non-fixation policy through the legal basis of *flagrante delicto*, and how the policy becomes as spectacle through the discourses of politicians and human rights organizations.

The first chapter explores the socio-political landscape shaping the formulation and implementation of this policy. It delves into the concept of border securitization, which extends beyond physical barriers to permeate discourses and policies into the border zone. Legitimized through media sensationalism and political rhetoric, portraying people on the move as threats to sovereignty and order, the non-fixation policy emerges as a central strategy to manage the visibility of irregular migration in Calais.

The second chapter focuses on the legal framework surrounding evictions, essential for unraveling the complexities behind the near-daily evictions witnessed in Calais. It sheds light on how these evictions intersect with politics, violence, and broader discourses on human rights, providing critical insight into the conceptualization of the spectacles surrounding the policy.

The third chapter scrutinizes the main criticisms against the non-fixation policy in Calais by human rights organizations and defenders. It analyzes the state's responses to humanitarian and solidarity efforts challenging the discourse of securitization and dehumanization. Moreover, it explores the systemic harassment faced by humanitarian and solidarity actors, whose endeavors to provide aid and counteract state policies result in intimidation and criminalization.

Through this exploration, we aim to shed light on the multifaceted nature of the spectacles surrounding the non-fixation policy and the roles played by politicians and human rights

organizations in their orchestration. By examining the complex dynamics at play, we endeavor to provide critical insights into the challenges and complexities of contemporary border management in Calais.

THE SPECTACLE OF BORDER MANAGEMENT

Calais serves as a pivotal junction where the European Union is connected to the United Kingdom and has emerged as a symbol of the challenges and complexities inherent in contemporary border management. This chapter introduces the socio-political landscape that has shaped the development of the non-fixation policy. Central to this exploration is border securitization, which extends beyond physical barriers, permeating discourses and policies within the border zone. Through media sensationalism and political rhetoric, people on the move are portrayed as threats to sovereignty and order, legitimizing stringent border enforcement measures. Against this backdrop, the non-fixation policy emerges as a pivotal strategy to manage the visibility of irregular migration in Calais.

Calais is located on the Schengen border, positioned at the narrowest point of the English Channel. Alongside Dunkirk and Grande-Synthe, it has become a bottleneck for people on the move seeking to enter the UK from the EU (Ellison, 2019). From these cities, extensive infrastructure connects the EU and the UK, encompassing multiple ports, the EuroStar, and the EuroTunnel (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). While this infrastructure facilitates the movement of goods and individuals with documents, it also facilitates the opportunity for those without documents to cross the Channel (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). Many take ‘their chance’ to cross the Channel by sneaking aboard the ferries or EuroTunnel by concealing themselves on/in cars and lorries, or on/in the EuroStar (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). Consequently, the socio-political and border landscapes continually transform to address these irregular border crossings. Since 1991, the British and French governments have entered multiple treaties to fortify and externalize border control. These efforts include the establishment of border checkpoints at ports, the EuroTunnel, and the EuroStar, surveillance systems, and barbed and razor wire along highways and ports (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020).

The securitization of borders within border management within contemporary border management strategies encompasses a complex interplay of spectacles and violence. The physical manifestation of the border, often by barbed and razor wire, embodies what Ibrahim (2020) terms “razor wire humanitarianism” (p. 95) and “aesthetic of violence” (p. 95). Here the infliction of pain serves a dual purpose; as a deterrent while simultaneously politicalizing and dehumanizing those who seek to cross it. These installations constitute acts of structural violence, encompassing both biological and physical violence (Galtung, 1969). By impeding somatic capability by cutting the flesh and mobility restrictions, the boundary between humans and animals becomes blurred as positioned by Ibrahim (2020) and De Genova (2013). This necro-political perspective of the border, akin to Mbembe’s (2008) and Balibar’s (1998) analyses, portrays it as a zone of exception, where those seeking to cross it irregularly are reduced to the living dead or human garbage. Consequently, violence against them is legitimized as they are deemed expendable and pose a threat to sovereignty and order (Balibar, 1998; Mbembe, 2008). This discourse and performative aspect of border enforcement contribute to the ‘border spectacle’, creating a visual discourse of a militarized zone that perpetuates the perception of inherent insecurity, necessitating heightened securitization (De Genova, 2002, 2013).

This spectacle, orchestrated by the UK and France, prompts investments in border security, justified to taxpayers through a securitized discourse. Maggs (2020) illustrates this phenomenon, by analyzing how British media sensationalize Channel crossings, legitimizing border enforcement and portraying migrants as inherently illegal. Such sensationalism serves the dual purpose of deterrence and legitimization of further exclusion.

Moreover, the spectacle extends beyond the physical borders, as argued by De Genova (2023), influencing practices, policies, and perceptions within the border zone itself. In Calais, people on the move live in death worlds, where they are systematically denied basic rights and dignity (Balibar, 1998; Mbembe, 2008). This is exemplified in the policy denying state-provided accommodation to those attempting to cross the border (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020).

However, this policy has led to the creation of informal living sites in the Calais area, ultimately prompting the development of the non-fixation policy. In 2002, the closure of the Sangatte Center, which housed approximately 1500 people on the move, was justified by the then Minister of Interior, Nicolas Sarkozy, as it was perceived to be attracting illegal immigration (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). This sentiment was echoed by the Minister of Immigration Eric Besson in 2009, who argued that state-organized shelters would only incentivize new arrivals, exacerbating humanitarian issues rather than solving them (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). In response to the lack of state-provided accommodation, No Border activists established numerous squats around Calais between 2009 and 2014, while informal living sites consisting of tents continued to emerge (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). Besson responded to these living sites by ordering evictions, justifying his actions by stating “On the territory of this nation, the law of the jungle cannot endure” (BBC News 2009a in Rygiel 2011).

This discourse, akin to the use of barbed and razor wire, dehumanized and uncivilized people on the move, and through this nationalist discourse, Besson sought to reaffirm France’s sovereignty and civilization. It exemplifies explicitly the distinction between the living and the dead, demonstrating the threat and actualization of violence to manage the excluded population. Under the discourse of sovereignty, securitization, and order, Besson legitimizes violence to achieve ideality.

Despite the state’s initial inability to prevent the establishment of informal living sites, evictions became the primary strategy to assert control and power over a situation perceived as uncontrollable. As people on the move were dehumanized in the public discourse, police violence, in the form Klahm et al., (2014) define as force, was a normalized tactic to manage the situation in Calais. In response to these actions Calais Migrant Solidarity, a part of the ‘No Borders’ network, began documenting human rights violations by law enforcement, including documenting evictions and the excessive use of violence, a work continued by HRO from 2017 and onwards (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). Since 2014, human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Refugee Rights Europe, Calais Migrant Solidarity, l’Auberge des Migrants, HRO, Refugee

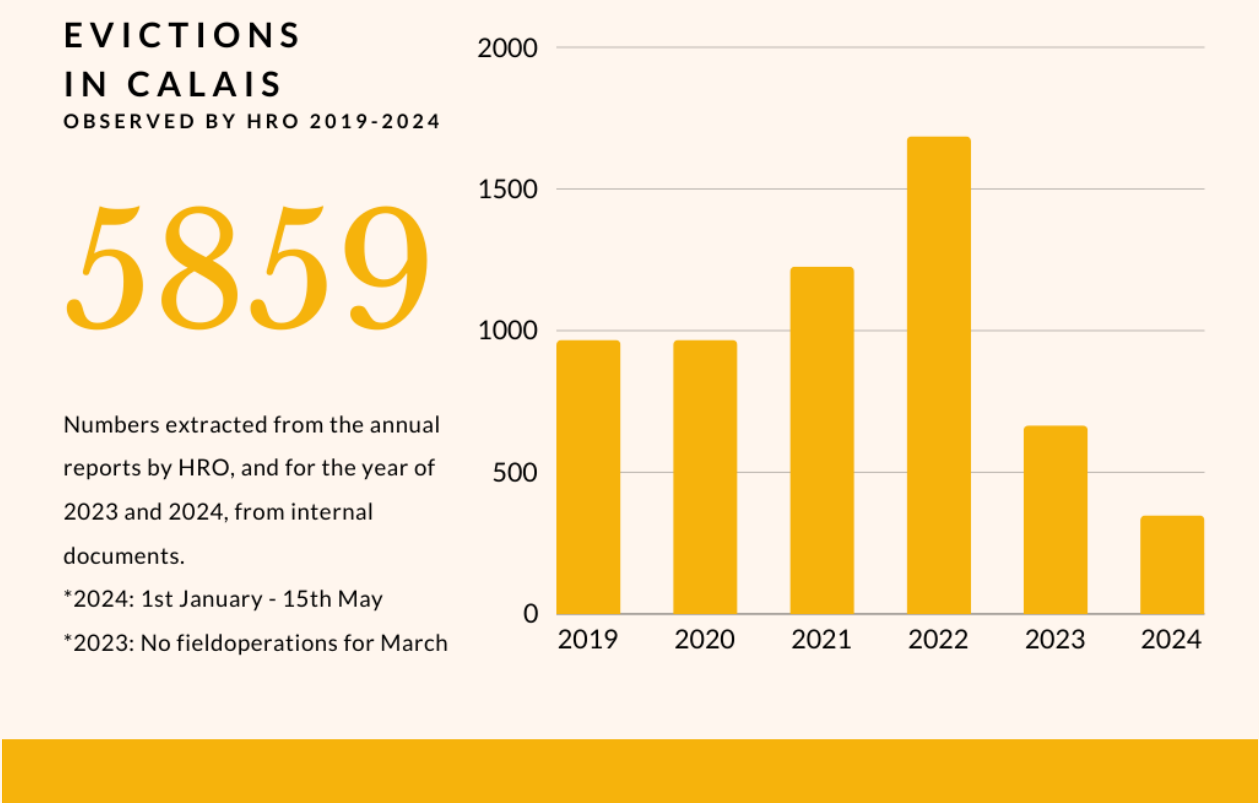
Women's Center, the Refugee Youth Service, and Refugee Info Bus², have consistently highlighted structural and physical violence and harassment by state actors in Calais (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). These violations include discrimination in public spaces, frequent evictions, arbitrary arrests, and police violence, often conducted during evictions, or at night and out of view of cameras, including excessive use of tear and pepper spray (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). In contrast to Besson, these critics state that violence is disproportionate to the threat, hence illegitimate and cruel. This violence intensified after the closure of the Jungle in 2016, which housed approximately 10,000 people on the move (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). Following its closure, many people on the move constructed informal living sites in the city center of Calais (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). French politicians, fearing the emergence of another large-scale encampment, declared 'never again' (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). In 2017, the Minister of Interior, Gérard Collumb, stated, "We're going to make them not want to come to us" (Collumb in Bonnevalle, 2022, p. 219). While the development of 'lutte contre les points de fixation', known as the non-fixation policy, was underway, violence remained the primary strategy to invisibilize the population of people on the move (Bonnevalle, 2022).

When the non-fixation policy was implemented in 2017, it became a means to combat the hyper-visibility of the failed border management that the Jungle and its subsequent closure embodied. Its objective was to invisibilize people on the move and assert the sovereign power of the state through evictions, rather than acknowledge their precarious circumstances. The policy was introduced by French Minister of Interior, Bernard Cazeneuve, drawing inspiration from policies targeting the Roma population in France (Bonnevalle, 2022) The primary justification for a non-fixation policy is often that property owners or neighbors to living sites request evictions, prompting Prefectures to respond accordingly (Bonnevalle, 2022). However, as it becomes apparent in the subsequent chapter the near-daily evictions are not carried out in response to requests from neighbors or property owners but rather stem from a political will to stop fixation points and avoid the hyper-

² Now Channel Info Project

visualization of a failed border management strategy, justifying the evictions from a gray legal area.

The use of evictions as part of the border management strategy is evident in the statistics: 65 % of all evictions in France from 2022-2023 took place in Calais or Dunkirk (L’Observatoire des expulsions, 2023). As illustrated in graph 2, 5859 evictions have been documented in Calais over the past five years by HRO and its partner organizations.



Graph 2: Evictions observed by HRO in Calais

This graph illustrates that evictions have taken place consistently through the past five years, regardless of the global COVID-19 pandemic, where access to shelter and water, sanitation, and hygiene services were more critical than ever. While there was a notable decrease in 2023, there was still an average of 66 evictions pr. month, compared to 32 evictions pr. month in the rest of

France (Observatoire des expulsions, 2023) During the research period, this average was 79, hence 2024 will approximately exceed 2023 with 20 % resembling the numbers of 2019 and 2020.

The current Minister of Interior, Gérald Darmanin, describes, that evictions in Calais are part of

the instructions I have given to avoid reliving what the people of Calais experienced a few years ago, is to be firm. It is the firmness of law enforcement. It is true, this firmness goes hand in hand with a very strong (police) presence and operations every 24 or 48 hours (Darmanin in Bonnevalle, 2022, p. 222).

The argumentation by Darmanin is closely related to Besson, drawing on a securitized discourse, to protect the people of Calais, restore normalcy to the town, and prevent the emergence of a fixation point like the one in 2015-2016, thus legitimizing the structural violence and threat of violence committed against the excluded population. By emphasizing the border crisis and the necessity of firmness, Darmanin indirectly legitimizes violence and confirms the strong political will to conduct near-daily evictions regardless of the circumstances, as illustrated in graph 2. However, Darmanin's strategy appears contradictory, as the evictions aim to render people on the move invisible, yet strong police presence and near-daily evictions create a heightened visibility of the situation. Darmanin attempts to strike a balance signaling control and invisibilizing people on the move to avoid international attention from political critics. This combat against visibility generates a multitude of discursive, performative, and visual spectacles; all of which are examined in the following chapters.

As outlined in this chapter, the utilization of evictions, violence, and the absence of state-provided shelter and fixation points serve the overarching purpose of exclusion and deterrence. In response to this political call, the Mayor of Calais, Natacha Bouchart, implemented a complementary strategy of disrupting and disorganizing humanitarian aid alongside the non-fixation policy, to render life in Calais intolerable (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). The term 'disorganization' in this context refers to a deliberate scattering of living sites and humanitarian aid, deliberately pushed to the outskirts of Calais. This strategy aims to obscure the situation and prevent fixation points from forming. Evidence of this dispersal and disorganization of humanitarian efforts is

exemplified in Bouchart's attempts to ban food distributions in 2017 and 2018, actions later to be found illegal by the court in Lille (Hagan & Bachelet, 2023; Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). Additionally, large rocks were used to disrupt humanitarian organizations from accessing distribution points, and fences were put under the bridges to dissuade fixation points (Hagan & Bachelet, 2023; Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). The combination of the non-fixation policy and lack of political will to assist people on the move results in numerous human rights violations. Vital services such as shelter, food, and water are not provided by the French state and are actively impeded from being provided by solidarity and humanitarian actors due to government actions (Bonnevalle, 2022; Hagan & Bachelet, 2023; Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020).

This disorganization of aid thus further exerts violence against the excluded population, withholding, and intentionally disrupting access to human rights and a life with dignity. This strategy of exhaustion through indirect somatic violence appears to be promoted under the discourse of securitization, and as a necessary strategy to neutralize the threat to sovereignty.

In conclusion, this chapter offers an examination of the socio-political landscape leading to the development of Calais's non-fixation policy. The securitization of borders underscores the intricate interplay between violence and spectacle. This orchestrated spectacle by the UK and France perpetuates narratives of insecurity, justifying heightened investments in border security and enforcement, being legitimized through media sensationalism and political discourse, portraying people on the move as intrinsically illegal. The non-fixation policy represents a strategic response to the challenges of managing people on the move, aiming to obscure them. The near-daily evictions underscore the assertion of sovereign power over the border region through violence. Moreover, disruptions and disorganization of humanitarian aid exacerbate the precarity of the excluded population.

THE SPECTACLE OF (IL)LEGAL EVICTIONS

In the realm of migration management, the legal framework surrounding evictions plays a critical role in shaping the experience of people on the move in Calais. Understanding the legal framework is paramount to unraveling the complexities behind the near-daily evictions witnessed in Calais, and the conceptualization of the spectacle of the policy. This chapter delves into the legal complexities surrounding evictions, shedding light on how they intersect with politics, violence, and the broader discourse on human rights. The legal foundation for conducting evictions, as analyzed by the HRO serves as the cornerstone for understanding the contentious nature of these actions. This chapter not only explains the legal justifications for evictions but also scrutinizes the practical implications of such maneuvers.

Forced evictions as defined by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing is “the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, or access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection” (OHCHR, n.d.). Further, the Commission on Human Rights stated in Resolution 1993/77, that forced evictions “constitute a gross violation of human rights, in particular of the right to adequate housing” (UN Commission on Human Rights, 1993).

Against this backdrop, the near-daily evictions in Calais are often referred to as manifestations of structural violence and a violation of human rights by human rights organizations as mentioned in the previous chapter. The severity of evictions prompts immediate scrutiny of their legal basis by HRO. This is hence the first question posed to law enforcement at each eviction. Given that the living places are scattered across public and private lands in the municipalities of Calais and Marck, one would expect an array of legal justifications, tailored for each living site. HRO's legal analysis, outlined in their yearly reports for 2020 and 2021 sheds light on the framework governing these evictions and highlights this disparity between the alleged legal basis for these evictions and the on-the-ground reality (Human Rights Observers, 2020, 2021). These reveal a troubling trend; while emergency procedures ostensibly provide avenues for swift action, they circumvent due process,

raising questions about fairness and accountability. Moreover, the invocation of 'flagrance delicto' as a pretext for evictions blurs the lines between law enforcement and judicial oversight, inviting skepticism from legal experts and humanitarian advocates alike.

As the HRO reports explain, evictions should be executed through emergency procedures such as an 'order on request' or an 'urgent measure'³ through judicial or administrative channels. These procedures are typically invoked when a living site poses hazards to inhabitants, impedes imminent construction work, or the inhabitants cannot be identified. Notably, these measures bypass the usual rights to fair trial, highlighting the expedited nature of eviction proceedings. In cases where evictions occur on private land, an 'order on request' may be initiated at the owner's behest. During court proceedings, a bailiff, entrusted with enforcing judicial decisions, must substantiate the presence of a settlement and the inhabitants' failure to communicate or evasion upon his arrival. Importantly, this emergency process foregoes the need to notify inhabitants in advance, with only the landowner required to attend court proceedings. Additionally, the eviction notice is often posted in French, disregarding the linguistic needs of inhabitants. Further, the emergency proceeding allows for only one- or two-day notice. For evictions on public land, an 'urgent measure' serves as the legal basis, operating similarly to the aforementioned 'order on request'. However, this procedure involves summoning inhabitants to an administrative court hearing, typically scheduled ten days after the notice. Subsequently, after the eviction, the inhabitants are forced on busses, relocating inhabitants to undisclosed locations.

Historically, these legal mechanisms sufficed for evictions in Calais, Dunkirk, and Grande-Synthe (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). However, the implementation of the non-fixation policy in 2018 challenged the adequacy of these procedures. The demand of near-daily evictions demanded a more expedient legal procedure, leading to the adoption of 'police investigations' under flagrance delict. Hence, the shift towards flagrance delicto reflects the prioritization of expediency over due

³ Known as référé mesures-utiles in French

process in eviction practices. While traditional emergency procedures entail comprehensive legal processes, conducting ‘police investigations’ offers a more efficient means of carrying out *de facto* evictions to meet political demands.

On the 20th of January, the sun is just rising, the sky pink, as the convoy arrives at the first living site. I follow the police while they enter the living site, waking sleeping bodies by hitting the frost-covered tents with batons, and yelling “Wake up”. My colleague and I get intercepted, and as we are escorted out by a Police Nationale officer and the chief of operations, the chief blocks my colleague’s camera obstructing our documentation, and declaring that we don’t have the right to film. Undeterred, my colleague presses the chief for the legal basis of the operation, to which the chief answers “The legal basis is the same as always, it is a question of flagrante delicto”.

These ‘police investigations’, functioning as *de facto* evictions, are referred to as evictions throughout this thesis. They are grounded in Penal Code Article 322-4-1 §1, which stipulates that individuals establishing dwellings on land without the necessary authorization, may face imprisonment or fines (Human Rights Observers, 2020). The premise behind these actions is the notion of ‘flagrante delicto’, wherein law enforcement encounters an apparent criminal act during their routine patrols and subsequently initiates an investigation to gather evidence (Human Rights Observers, 2020). Under this legal framework, police officers are empowered to conduct investigations without prior authorization from a judge. However, the Code of Criminal Procedure §53 imposes limitations, restricting the duration of such investigations to eight days following the initial discovery of the alleged offense. Nevertheless, in Calais, this timeframe has been reduced to 48 hours by judicial decree (Human Rights Observers, 2020). Despite this, during the research period, this time limit was disregarded at least 20 times and evictions proceeded under the legal basis of flagrante delicto.

Despite the purported immediacy of flagrante delicto evictions, most living sites have existed between 2-5 years, yet they face recurrent evictions every 36-48 hours (Human Rights Observers, 2020). Moreover, the French Human Rights Defender has openly contested the use of flagrante delicto as a legal basis for evictions, asserting evictions exceed the jurisdiction of judicial police,

even under the circumstances of apparent criminal activity, including breaching §R434-2 of the Internal Security Code (Défenseur des Droits, 2018). Consequently, while, *flagrance delicto* enables investigations into alleged crimes, its practical use results in evictions being carried out without judicial oversight. This blurring of the lines between investigation and eviction raises significant legal and ethical concerns, particularly regarding protecting the rights of the individual and the proper exercise of law enforcement authority.

Despite criticism, the director of the French Office on Immigration and Integration in 2021, Didier Leschi, justified using *flagrante delicto* for evictions. He argued that after the initial 48 hours, the authorities were required to refer the matter to court for an evacuation order, allowing the camp to reconstitute itself and become a fixation point (Leschi in Panara, 2021). This highlights the political motives behind evictions in Calais: not necessarily preventing crime but to deter the establishment of camps like the Jungle in 2015-2016. This was also evident as I pressed a CRS officer on the 5th of December about what was going on and the legal basis of the operation, he responded ““It's a dismantling of... to prevent them from settling in for too long, quite simply I think you're aware, it's like that all the time ”.

Using *flagrance delicto* as a legal basis for evictions of informal living sites of people on the move, can be viewed as part of the border spectacle, where “migrant practices are produced as flagrant violations of the law” (De Genova, 2013a, p. 1189), and as the living dead or human garbage, not deserving of a proper legal proceeding. This portrayal subjects them to evictions and arrests without judicial oversight, blurring the line between law enforcement and judgment. The investigation becomes the eviction, without proper legal basis, as argued by Cabane Juridique, a former legal organization in Calais, and HRO (Bonnevalle, 2022). This interconnection between politics and policing echoes Reyes' (2016) analysis of Duterte's 'war on drugs', where law enforcement acts as both judge and executioner under the instruction of politicians. While law enforcement in Calais doesn't resort to the same violence as in the Philippines, they subject inhabitants to various forms of police coercion and force during their 'investigation', which will be further elaborated in the following chapters, highlighting the absence of a legal basis for their actions. It hence becomes both a spectacle of politics and violence.

In conclusion, this chapter underscores the intricate interplay between legal mechanisms and political agendas in the context of evictions. Scrutinizing the legal basis and practical implications appears that the near-daily evictions in Calais are not merely logistical operations, but rather strategic maneuvers fraught with ethical and legal dilemmas. As the analysis reveals, the use of 'flagrance delicto' as a legal pretext for evictions undermines fundamental rights and perpetuates a cycle of violence and uncertainty for people on the move. Moreover, the broader critique of border management strategies underscores the systemic challenges inherent in addressing migration flows.

THE CRITIQUE OF BORDER MANAGEMENT

This chapter examines the main criticisms of the non-fixation policy in Calais, as voiced by human rights organizations and -defenders, and analyzes the state's response to humanitarian and solidarity efforts that challenge the discourse of securitization and dehumanization. The chapter outlines how the non-fixation policy has been politically legitimized despite its lack of a legal basis for evictions, subjecting people on the move to various forms of violence to deter new arrivals. It also highlights the systemic harassment faced by humanitarian and solidarity actors, whose efforts to provide aid and counteract state policies are often met with intimidation and criminalization.

Human rights organizations and scholars have raised numerous criticisms of the non-fixation policy, highlighting its political legitimization of violence and the lack of a legitimate legal basis for evictions (Amnesty International, 2019; Bonnevalle, 2022; EuroMed Rights, 2022; Hagan, 2023; Isacker, 2019; Refugee Rights Europe, 2021). According to their discourse, the near-daily evictions are a combination of structural and direct violence, subjecting people on the move to biological, physical, and psychological violence to promote exhaustion and politicize the suffering of the body in the name of deterrence.

UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Leilani Farhah, declared in April 2019 that these evictions constitute systematic harassment, violating various human rights including access to shelter, food, and water, and the right not to be subjected to inhumane or degrading treatment (Refugee Rights Europe et al., 2020). These actions are perceived as an unofficial strategy of the

non-fixation policy to deter new arrivals and promote self-expression. Jacques Toubon, the Human Rights Defender for France from 2014-2020, addressed the structural, biological, physical, and psychological violence inherent in the border environment, describing it as a policy of dissuasion. Toubon argued that the system relies on creating uncomfortable and dangerous conditions to dissuade people on the move from staying, “instilling fear and disorganization as a deterrent” (Toubon in Bonnevalle, 2022, p. 219). Toubon further critiqued the non-fixation policy, suggesting that the goal of the policy was to never “give a break to people living in the street and that these people are always on their way” (Toubon in Bonnevalle, 2022, p. 221). Toubon’s arguments challenge the exclusion of people on the move from society and rights, being under constant threat of eviction, and how their suffering bodies are politicalized in the spectacle of border management, hence echoing the concepts of violence and spectacles notably by Reyes (2016), Mbembe (2008), Balibar (1998), Owens (2022), and Ellison (2019) amongst others. The critique not just being relevant to the non-fixation policy, but also aligns with the critique of Bouchart’s attempts to disrupt and disorganize humanitarian aid as a mode of exhaustion and destabilization.

Border management strategies crafted by French politicians, aim to exhaust people on the move to induce self-expulsion, yet paradoxically hinder self-expulsion through engaging in border externalization treaties with the UK (Bonnevalle, 2022). This traps individuals in Calais, where they live in death worlds, constantly facing eviction and deprivations of human rights, highlighting the unwelcomeness of the French state, thus potentially driving more individuals to attempt crossing the Channel to the UK (Welandar in Maggs, 2020). This creates a vicious cycle of structural and direct violence, incorporating biological, physical, and psychological violence, simultaneously failing both as modes of deterrence and self-expulsion, entrapping people on the move in a spectacle of demonstrating sovereign power through its political and violent spectacle of evictions. As long as there is no safe legal passage to claim asylum in the UK from abroad, it seems unlikely that any spectacle can deter people on the move from passing through Calais. Despite these spectacles and the British spectacle of the Illegal Migration Bill and threats of deportations to Rwanda, there have been an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 people in transit in Calais at any given time during my stays in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. While not covered by this thesis,

despite having observed them, evictions with forced sheltering in other cities in France occur when the population becomes too visible in Calais. Bonneville (2020) suggests that these evictions and forced sheltering operations serve the state's dual purpose: to assert its authority by "dismantling camps in the name of combatting smuggling" (p.214) while also reassuring "the population of its ability to maintain order on a theme that it keeps alive in the media and politically: illegal immigration" (p. 241). This strategy mirrors deportations from the border, which former Director of the General Police at the Paris Prefecture, Yannick Blanc, described as necessary for maintaining the credibility of the border, to deter new arrivals. Again, an argument closely related to creating spectacle politics and violence, rather than sustainable politics addressing the root cause.

This constant population of people on the move has led to frustration among law enforcement. Interviews by Guenenbeaud in 2017, revealed feelings of powerlessness and being overwhelmed, and that the policy was not working (Guenenbeaud, 2017, in Bonneville (2022)). Responding to similar critiques in 2021, Darmanin acknowledged the challenge, "it's true, there's still this impression of trying to empty something that's filling up, even if it's filling up less. But it's the only way to prevent unacceptable things from taking root on Calais territory" (Bonneville, 2022, p. 223), reiterating that the approach is necessary to prevent the recurrence of the situation in 2015-2016. However, the perpetual cycle of evictions and the continuous presence of people on the move can serve as a deliberate strategy of deterrence. The French state doesn't necessarily seek to eliminate the presence of individuals entirely from Calais; rather, it relies on the visibility of border management practices to reinforce its discourse of control and deterrence. The spectacle of non-fixation, evictions, and 'stop the boats' policy form essential elements of this discourse. By maintaining this spectacle, the French government ensures that its border management strategies remain visible, allowing it to reinforce its discourse of deterrence to potential new arrivals and attract new funding for border management from the UK. With additional strategies in place to intercept boats along the coast, individuals in Calais are subjected to prolonged exposure to the structural violence of the state through evictions and the denial of basic human rights as they are entrapped in a liminal zone of exclusion. This ultimately amplifies the spectacle and its impact.

One can wonder how this spectacle has not attracted more attention and come at a political cost to the politicians behind it, but as a member of the Ministry of Interior, Le Courant, acknowledged, that the political cost of disregarding human rights was far lower than respecting them (Le Courant (2018) in Bonnevalle (2020)), hence underscoring how prioritizing deterrence and control of migration flows strengthens the government's discourse of crisis and control. Further, when humanitarians and solidarity actors in Calais attempt to expose this spectacle of violence and exhaustion inflicted on people on the move or to counter the discourse by providing aid, they face harassment, intimidation, and even criminalization (Hagan & Bachelet, 2023). This can be contextualized within the broader political discourse surrounding search and rescue missions in the Mediterranean. Dating back to 2014, politicians like Bernard Caseneuve, Marine Le Pen, and Christophe Castaner have associated rescue efforts with increased migration fixation points in northern France (Bonnevalle, 2022). Caseneuve, directly correlated the rescues with the fixation in Calais, "while the Italian navy's rescue operation has enabled the rescue of many migrants at sea, (it) also had the consequence of creating fixation points for migrants in northern France" (Caseneuve in Bonnevalle, 2022, p. 239), hence suggesting that humanitarian actions inadvertently attract more migrants. This discourse suggests that when humanitarians offer aid, it encourages further migration, challenging the hostile environment fostered by the French government with acts of solidarity. As Franko (2021) observes, when humanitarian organizations step in to fill the gap of the state, they disrupt the political discourse and spectacle constructed by the state. This disruption leads to the criminalizing of humanitarian and solidarity actions. While Franko (2021) focuses on the criminalization of search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, similar dynamics play out in Calais, where humanitarians face harassment and intimidation from law enforcement.

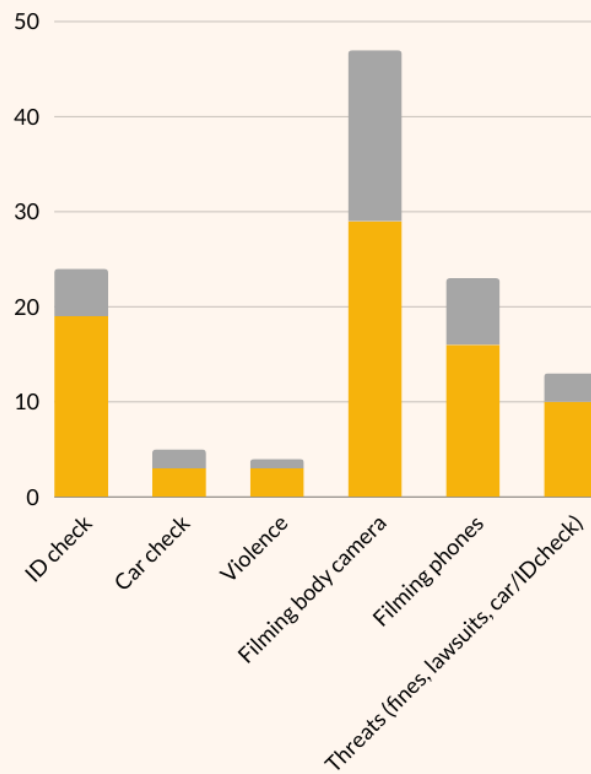
In Calais, the non-fixation policy aims to deter people en route to the UK. When humanitarian organizations and people in solidarity attempt to mitigate the impact of this policy, they are perceived as creating fixation points and consequently targeted by politicians and law enforcement. Hagan and Bachelet (2023) have extensively documented the intimidation and criminalization faced by solidarity actors in Calais, noting the arbitrary use of fines, car checks, and ID checks to

deter their activities, serving to restrict or prevent humanitarian assistance to people on the move. These fines and checks are characterized as manifestations of “‘contraventional power’ an abusive way of enforcing order by penalizing people in the street” (Hagan & Bachelet, 2023, p. 31). For instance, HRO and Utopia56 received a total of 130 fines during the Covid-19 pandemic for allegedly breaching lockdown regulations, despite possessing the necessary documentation legitimizing their activities, law enforcement justified these fines by deeming the observations of ongoing evictions as non-professional activities (Hagan & Bachelet, 2023). The rationale behind fining these organizations was the assertion that their actions endangered public health by leaving their homes, even though the frequency of evictions forcing people on the move out of their camps remained unchanged during the pandemic, as illustrated in graph 2. These fines were brought to the attention of the French Human Rights Defender, who acknowledged the arbitrary nature of the fines, “This behavior demonstrates a desire to dissuade associations from carrying out their humanitarian work with deportees, which undermines the freedom to help others for humanitarian purposes” (Défenseur des Droits, 2023). Further, the Human Rights Defender “recommends that disciplinary proceedings be initiated against them. She also calls for all police stations to be reminded that it is forbidden to hinder the work of humanitarian associations” (Défenseur des Droits, 2023). However, despite the Human Rights Defender calling this to attention, as graph 3 illustrates, car and ID checks, violence, being filmed by law enforcement, and threats, are still much-used tactics to dissuade HRO from observing evictions during the research period.

INTIMIDATION OF HRO BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

OBSERVED BY HRO
DECEMBER 2023 - MAY* 2024

ORANGE: HRO
GREY: RESEARCHER



Numbers extracted from internal documents

*15th May

Graph 3: Overview of intimidation tactics subjected to other HRO members and the researcher

In conclusion, this chapter illuminates the significant criticisms of the non-fixation policy by human rights defenders, focusing on its inherent violence and legal shortcomings. The state's strategy of systematic evictions and harassment of humanitarian actors underscores a broader political discourse aimed at deterring migration through spectacles of politics and violence. Despite ongoing efforts by solidarity actors to mitigate the policy's impact, the practices of intimidation and structural violence persist, reflecting the complex and often conflicting dynamics of border management in Calais.

CONCLUSION OF THE SPECTACLE OF POLITICS AND LEGALITY OF EVICTIONS

This chapter's analysis of the socio-political landscape surrounding Calais's non-fixation policy is crucial for understanding the multifaceted nature of the political and violent spectacles associated with it. By examining the securitization of borders, media sensationalism, and political discourse, we gain insights into how these spectacles are orchestrated and perpetuated by law enforcement, and human rights organizations. The strategic response of the non-fixation policy, characterized by near-daily evictions and harassment of humanitarian actors, underscores the roles played by these actors in shaping and perpetuating the spectacle. Scrutinizing the legal basis and practical implications of these actions helps us unravel the complexities inherent in border management strategies. Ultimately, this chapter's exploration contributes to our broader research question by providing critical insights into the dynamics of discursive and performative spectacles surrounding the non-fixation policy and the roles played by stakeholders in their orchestration.

THE PERFORMATIVE SPECTACLE OF THE ENCOUNTER OF COP-WATCHERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Under this headline, this chapter delves into the spectacles surrounding the non-fixation policy through the performative interactions between law enforcement and HRO during evictions in Calais, and how these encounters become spectacular through the exchanges of humiliation, intimidation, and violence.

The first chapter explores the performative aspects of state power, embodied by the convoy, uniform, and bodily capital of law enforcement, highlighting how the state's discourse of control and crisis management is reinforced through these performative displays, shaping the experiences and responses of people on the move and cop-watchers.

The second chapter delves into the dynamic interplay between HRO and law enforcement, highlighting the spectacle of control, performance, and resistance. By focusing on the establishment

of security perimeters and the ensuing exchanges of intimidation and humiliation, this section sheds light on the broader implications of surveillance, power dynamics, resistance, and the performative aspects of these encounters.

The third chapter investigates the complex dynamics of counter-surveillance and surveillance during evictions. Drawing on the work of Wilson and Serisier (2010), it explores how counter-surveillance by HRO serves as a defense mechanism, an offensive tool, and a pacifier, yet often escalates the very violence it aims to deter. This section examines how the interplay between surveillance and counter-surveillance creates a self-reinforcing cycle, escalating tensions and constructing spectacles of violence.

By addressing the research question, this chapter elucidates the multifaceted nature of the spectacles related to the non-fixation policy. It provides insights into the complex interactions between law enforcement and HRO, emphasizing the need for more humane and effective approaches to managing these contested spaces. Through this exploration, we aim to deepen our understanding of the daily performances of power and resistance in Calais.

THE SPECTACLE OF THE CONVOY AND UNIFORM

The ongoing dynamics of evictions in Calais reveal a complex interplay of power, surveillance, and intimidation between law enforcement and HRO. This chapter explores the performative aspects of state power, as embodied by the convoy, uniform, and bodily capital of law enforcement, and how this affects the encounter with people on the move and HRO. The chapter explores how these elements not only reinforce the state's discourse of control and crisis management but also shape the experiences and responses of people on the move and cop-watchers. Further, the body capital of HRO is analyzed, showcasing the strategic choices of appearance and attitude, and how it affects this encounter. Through this lens, we better understand the spectacle of evictions and encounters and the broader implications for those involved.

36-48 hours after the last eviction in Calais, HRO parks next to the commissariat, surveilling the activities, looking for any sign of an impending eviction. This cop-watching and counter-

surveillance strategy mimics the old-fashioned police strategy: sitting in a car outside the target location and meticulously monitoring movements. The strategy is risky, as law enforcement is well aware of the surveillance car. Although staking out the commissariat is not illegal, the tactic is an act of intimidation. A central part of the analysis is this exchange of intimidation; at this moment, sitting in the car, HRO is the intimidating actor. The encounters between cops and cop-watchers are a constant exchange of humiliation, intimidation, and violence as will be evident throughout these chapters.

Every time I conduct a security check, as HRO calls the stake-out, the car buzzes with excitement and anticipation. However, this is not the only feeling fueling the energy, a sense of power and superiority runs through my veins. Despite not having any control over whether an eviction is taking place, the power is rooted in 'the PIC'⁴ – the message sent out to +500 people on the move warning them that the police is coming.

This ability to control some aspects of the evictions provides a feeling of having the upper hand, which subjects law enforcement to a form of humiliation, even if they are unaware of it. This is linked to the ongoing exchange of intimidation. When HRO stands face-to-face with law enforcement, the upper hand is lost. Despite being able to exchange humiliation and intimidation, HRO becomes subject to a range of violence including physical, biological, and truncated forms, unfolding through police coercion and force.

On the morning of the 27th of February, I park in front of the commissariat and observe the CRS and Police National officers gearing up. They help each other strap on shoulder and shin plates. Some wear bulletproof vests equipped with a small camera resembling Go-Pros, while others carry pepper spray and plastic strips. Tear gas canisters and pistols hang from their hips, and some carry large riot shields or LBD-40s slung over their shoulders. The final touch to their intimidating gear is the white plastic boot covers over their freshly polished leather boots. The convoy consisting of

⁴ PIC is the abbreviation for 'police is coming'

11 CRS vans, 1 Police Nationale car, 1 van of border police, a car with translators, and two closed vans carrying the cleaning team, takes off with flashing blue lights and blaring sirens. I follow, becoming part of the convoy, and try to keep up without breaking traffic laws, fully aware that I am being watched just as intently as I am watching them.



Picture 1: Léonard for Human Rights Observers: The convoy parked at a living site 18.01.2024

The convoy usually consists of 7-12 CRS vans, 1-2 border police vans, and a Police Nationale car, totaling between 80 and 150 police officers, as captured in picture 1. On average this fleet of force evicts 21 people on the move at each living site. While the largest settlement in Calais houses around 300 people on the move during the research period, many are occupied at the time of eviction going to food distributions and other services or are still returning from a failed attempt to cross the Channel. The spectacle of performative and visual power becomes even more evident as only half of the officers exit their vans for the eviction. The large convoy is more of a show - a

spectacle - to demonstrate the state's power and potential for escalation rather than a necessity for carrying out evictions. This display represents truncated violence: a threat of physical violence, and an act of psychological violence that constrains the human action of people being evicted and HRO. The uniform plays an essential role in the performativity of the eviction and the encounter between law enforcement, people on the move, and HRO. The officers march into the living site, forming a fleet of power and intimidation. In picture 2, the fleet of at least 20 CRS officers is on their way to the convoy after evicting 5 people. The picture captures the spectacle nature of the policy, as a person on the move walks past the officers with his tent, ready to reinstall in the living site under the eyes of law enforcement. This policy manifests as structural violence, relying on the truncated and imminent threat of physical violence, to manage the excluded population. The performative and visual spectacle of state power radiated by the convoy, uniform, and sheer number of law enforcement, portrays the population as a threat, legitimizing the violence committed against them. This is contested by HRO, finding this violence cruel, and disproportionate to the threat posed by people on the move, which is portrayed in the way HRO captures videos and photographs. The consequences of portraying visual violence on social media as an advocacy strategy is examined a later chapter.



Picture 2: Léonard for Human Rights Observers: law enforcement leaving the living site and person on the move reinstalling 21.05.2024

The political attempt to disorganize aid and settlements exhausts people on the move to a point where they are too tired to fight for their rights. Coupled with the constant evictions, often leading to self-evictions after HRO sends the PIC, one might argue, that the evictions are not violent at all. I often find myself having normalized the violence of evictions after witnessing 108 evictions over many months as illustrated in graph 1, continually witnessing and being subjected to a range of violence. However, the visual violence and intimidation of the uniform, and its potential to inflict violence, should not be disregarded. During evictions, I have witnessed law enforcement use their batons to hit the tents to wake up people on the 13th and 20th of February, or simply kick the tents, thus law engaging in what Klahm et al. (2014) would define police violence, reducing somatic capabilities. Other times, this intimidation is more subtle, such as laying a hand on their teargas,

pepper spray, or gun, or fully drawing their sprays, ready for action. This kind of violence is characterized differently through the lenses of Klahm et al. (2014) and Galtung (1969). While Klahm et al. (2014) would call it police coercion, Galtung (1969) would characterize it as psychological and truncated violence. Most likely, law enforcement does not recognize these acts as violence but as mere acts of being prepared to defend themselves in cases of aggression from people on the move, and HRO, where in contrast, HRO defines police violence much more broadly, including acts of intimidation like those described. Many of the encounters between law enforcement and HRO hence constitute discussions of disagreements of what violence is, when it is legitimate, and when it is cruel. This is evident throughout the analysis of these encounters.

While there have been few recorded instances of batons or teargas use during evictions in the research period, the mere presence of such serves as a tactic of intimidation, adding to the visual and performativity spectacles for people on the move and HRO. The uniform significantly influences the encounters between law enforcement and HRO. As depicted in pictures 3 and 4, the perimeter becomes a display of dominance and threat of violence, signaling that HRO is not welcome beyond this point. At this particular eviction, the perimeter was a heavy demonstration of masculinized body capital, with the air thick with the promise of violence in response to any sign of aggression by HRO. Accompanying the CRS with a riot shield, was a dozen colleagues, one with an LBD-40 and one with a drawn baton as captured in pictures 3 and 4. The uniform enhances the masculinized bodily capital giving law enforcement authority and power (Diphoorn, 2015). The importance of this masculinized bodily capital is evident as all the female CRS officers I have encountered actively seek to masculinize their bodies further by adding more protection or arms than their male colleagues. The women are also quicker to draw their batons either when conducting the eviction itself or at the perimeter. This could be related to further masculinizing their bodies to claim authority in a heavily male-dominated environment, distancing themselves from the feminine, soft perceptions of women.



Picture 3 and 4: Human Rights Observers: CRS at the left with LBD-40, CRS in the middle with a riot shield, and CRS at the right with a drawn baton at the perimeter 27.01.2024

Uniforms, use of weapons, and policing, are part of the performance of sovereignty, where one person claims authority over another through the possibility of and actual use of violence (Diphoorn, 2015). This sovereign power of the police refers to the “socially constructed source of power, reproduced through daily practices and repetitious public performances” (Diphoorn, 2015, p. 341). In Calais this repetitive performance is the heart of the non-fixation policy, being a constant reminder of the power of the state. The power is produced through the heavy presence of CRS in the city, visually dominating the public space, and exerting their authority through their visual spectacle of violence. Furthermore, the power and authority of the CRS draw on the long history of police violence in its truest form as defined by Klahm et al. (2014), far being defined as legitimate, but an act of cruelty. A ministry-ordered investigation in 2017 denounced the findings of “disproportionate use of tear gas” (p. 50) and “disproportionate, even unjustified, use of force

against migrants and members of humanitarian organizations” (Ministère de l’Intérieur, 2017, p. 29) which still influences the perception of the CRS among people on the move and humanitarian and solidarity actors today (Hagan & Bachelet, 2023). During evictions, the CRS and Police Nationale officers alike claim this authority and remind us of the past by touching their tear gas or even their gun to assert their authority against HRO, despite us as observers not posing a physical threat to the police operation, people on the move, or law enforcement, a tactic also identified by Hagan and Bachelet (2023) as having the purpose to scare off humanitarian and solidarity actors from engaging in the border struggle.

Examining this dynamic, it is only appropriate to turn the lens of bodily analysis to the observers. The team of observers mainly consists of women, whose uniform is their civilian clothing, ranging from flower skirts or jeans and a t-shirt to waterproof clothing. The only distinguishing features of the observer from other civilians are the badge hanging around the neck and the drawn camera phone. HRO abandoned their official uniform - a vest - after their split with l’Auberge des Migrants, an active choice to de-masculinize and civilianize the observers. While the bodily capital of HRO is largely feminized, not providing a visual threat of violence or escalation, it is the camera, attitude, and legal inquiries that pose a threat to law enforcement. While adhering to a code-of-conduct, the personalities of observers affect how they approach law enforcement, with attitudes ranging from playing on the feminized bodily capital, acting naïve when posing questions, to an attitude challenging the eviction and its legal basis, indicating the lack of acknowledgment of its legality and thus the legitimacy and authority of law enforcement. The first group gets the furthest with collecting information that can be used in the legal battle HRO is preparing for against the non-fixation policy, while the latter group gets better video material, as law enforcement often responds more aggressively to challenges of their authority. I am undoubtedly part of the latter group, often being referred to as a ‘bull-dog’, with my French skills put to the ultimate test by presenting legal arguments for the right to be on a private terrain, filming, and calling out breaches of police deontology. This results in being subjected more frequently to acts of intimidation by law enforcement, and as seen in graph 3, I have been targeted substantially by intimidation, compared to my 12 colleagues encompassed in the orange column. My partners in the field are always

reminded about the vitality of bringing their ID, as observing with me, being an insistent foreigner, is more likely to undergo ID checks. Ultimately, this demonstrates that the ‘uniform’ of HRO is more linked to non-visual attributes of attitude, and performativity. The role of the camera itself is analyzed in the two following chapters.

As the body capitals of law enforcement and HRO are vastly different in character – the former being masculinized and intimidating, the latter feminized and vulnerable – HRO balances a fine line when observing and gathering information, always under the threat of violence or arbitrary criminalization. At the same time, law enforcement balances a fine line using its bodily capital and legitimized violence to deal with people on the move and cop-watchers, and adhering to the deontology of the police, knowing their every move is being recorded. There is no doubt who ultimately runs the agenda, as the uniform of law enforcement provides them with authority and legitimized violence, hindering observers from fully insisting on their rights to observe and record police operations, despite cop-watchers not acknowledging this authority. This is further unpacked in the following two chapters, examining how the interface between law enforcement and cop-watchers becomes a spectacle, how surveillance and counter-surveillance affect this encounter, and how the uniform influences this interaction.

In conclusion, the interaction between law enforcement and HROs in Calais is marked by a continuous exchange of intimidation and resistance, and an ongoing struggle for power and authority, each using its unique form of bodily capital and performative strategies. The spectacle of police presence, with its heavily armed officers and large convoy, serves not only as a tool of physical eviction but also as a psychological tactic to instill fear and demonstrate state control. Despite the observers' efforts to document and counteract these displays of power, they often find themselves subject to the same intimidation and violence they seek to expose. This chapter has highlighted how both the visual and performative aspects of policing and observing contribute to this tense dynamic, shaping the experiences of both the people on the move and the observers who support them, and ultimately constructs a spectacle. The following chapters will delve deeper into the implications of these encounters, examining the broader impact on human rights advocacy and the ongoing struggle against structural violence in border regions.

THE SPECTACLE OF THE PERIMETER

The dynamic interplay between HRO and law enforcement reveals a profound spectacle of control, performance, and resistance. This chapter delves into the complicated and often contentious interactions that unfold at the living sites, where the arrival of law enforcement and HRO sets the stage for a struggle over visibility, legality, and human rights. Through observations, this exploration highlights how the establishment of security perimeters by CRS officers becomes a focal point for exchanges of intimidation and humiliation, encapsulating the ongoing tension and violence that permeates these encounters. By documenting these moments, we aim to shed light on the broader implications of surveillance, power dynamics, and the performative aspects of these encounters and how they simultaneously construct and contest the spectacles of evictions.

The true spectacle of surveillance and performance unfolds upon arrival at the living site, where law enforcement and HRO first meet at the perimeter. As captured in picture 5, a physical barrier is established by the CRS, often utilizing vehicles and riot shields to create a human wall. HRO approaches phones at the ready to document the encounter. Questions regarding the legal basis of the operation are met with routine responses from CRS officers, highlighting the repetitive nature of these evictions. Recalling a conversation with a CRS officer on my first eviction on the 5th of December I had first come to fully understand now, “it is an operation like every day madame”, and on the 20th of December, “I’m not going to spend 2 hours arguing with you, you’re used to it, it’s not the first time I imagine”.



Picture 5: Human Rights Observers: CRS forming a perimeter 27.01.2024

The operational pattern remains the same, the only thing that changes is where the security perimeter is set and the intensity of violence, harassment, and intimidation against people on the move and cop watchers. These changes are linked to the constant rotation of companies of CRS, a new unit arriving every three weeks to oversee them before relocating to a new city. While not within the scope of this thesis, HRO members commonly hypothesize that the internal culture of specific CRS companies plays a significant role in these dynamics, with a detailed analysis scheduled for July-August. Additionally, exploring the influence of individual members of HRO and their approaches to the field would have been pertinent to understanding these changes.

If the perimeter is set upon the arrival of HRO, a struggle for territory, rights, and security commences, becoming a spectacle in itself. From HRO's perspective, the perimeter is abusive and arbitrary, existing solely to impede its right to observe the police operation. Despite acknowledging the necessity of following law enforcement's directions, observers adamantly voice their opposition to the perimeter's restrictive nature. HRO perceives law enforcement as leveraging their

bodily capital, thus their authority and uniform, to assert control over the perimeter, citing ‘security’ concerns, despite being aware of HRO’s frequent presence at the living sites. The perimeter is presented as a security measure to protect HRO, yet it frequently changes during evictions, with law enforcement not explaining alterations. Sometimes, the perimeter becomes a stage for performative interactions, akin to a dance between a penalty kicker and a defensive wall in a soccer match. On the 20th of December, every time I would angle my camera or move to one side, the wall of CRS would move to obstruct my view of the goal, the eviction. During this dance, one CRS commented on my struggle to observe and record the eviction, advising me to buy an iPhone 15 as “there is an amazing zoom”. The perimeter could hence be perceived as serving the purpose of impeding the counter-surveillance efforts, concealing the backstage realities of the evictions. Moreover, it serves a dual purpose in the discourse and spectacle created by HRO on social media, as it visually demonstrates intimidation and violence. Unable to directly observe the events inside the perimeter, HRO is left to question what transpires inside, potentially painting a more violent picture of evictions than reality.



Picture 6: Human Rights Observers: Encounter between researcher and CRS at the perimeter
12.01.2024

From the perspective of law enforcement, the perimeter, publicly defended as necessary for security purposes to protect civilians, may serve the dual function of protecting law enforcement colleagues conducting the evictions from HRO's cameras. As previously noted, law enforcement and the Prefecture closely monitor HRO's discourse of these operations on Twitter, hence being aware of how their actions are portrayed. When HRO approaches with their cameras, it poses a threat to both the anonymity of the cop, as their face is being recorded, and being presented within a discourse of violating human rights, and law, and using excessive violence. The officers at the perimeter often cover their faces, further dehumanizing themselves, protecting their identities from the cop-watchers camera. Such an encounter was captured in picture 6, showcasing six CRS officers forming a perimeter, after a colleague had called for backup to manage my colleague and I as we insisted on getting answers to our questions. The picture captures the moment I am approaching the CRS with my camera phone, again demanding the legal basis of the operation, being met with the commander instructing the others not to talk to respond. The perimeter can keep the observer

at bay, shielding those carrying out the eviction from the constant scrutiny, having to constantly be aware of their actions. If HRO becomes too comfortable at the perimeter, it can be expanded to further obstruct their view and to reaffirm law enforcement's claim of authority in a contested situation.

The spectacle laden with truncated, structural violence, the potential of police coercion and violence, enacted as personal, biological, and physical violence, and hence the realization of the bodily capital of law enforcement, unfolds at the moment of the establishment of the security perimeter, particularly in case HRO arrives first, and is escorted out of the living site.

The ultimate challenge to authority happens when HRO arrives at the living site first or manages to sneak inside the perimeter undetected. In such instances, law enforcement escorts HRO out of the living site, often under the threat of criminalization or physical violence, or in rare cases, actual violence as described in the introduction. Being pushed while being escorted out has occurred so frequently that it has become an automatic response to ask officers not to push or touch us, emphasizing our cooperation in walking to the perimeter. Despite this, the threat of violence of the uniform and bodily capital was actualized on the 16th of January, the 13th and 27th of February, and the 26th of April. On these days, the officers' intimidating and hostile demeanors were accompanied by instances of grabbing or pushing me or my colleague as we were escorted to a new observation point a few meters away. On the 26th of April, my colleague and I filmed our escort out, though not succeeding with its pacifying tactic,

On the 26th of April, despite demonstrating compliance with the instructions given by law enforcement to walk in the same direction as the people on the move, I was suddenly instructed to go in the opposite direction to where my colleague was. Confused by this contradictory instruction, I challenged the new instruction, pointing out that I had just been told to follow the people on the move and noting a bit cheekily the presence of a security perimeter ahead, rendering the new direction inaccessible. Before I could react, three CRS officers forcefully grabbed me, asserting, "this is a police operation, ma'am". As I was escorted away by one of the officers, I witnessed my colleague experiencing the same treatment.

As observers, we understand that entering the living site will inevitably result in being escorted out. However, the value of obtaining videos from the inside, exposing the backstage, outweighs the risk of the escort being violent. These videos offer a unique glimpse into the backstage of the eviction, capturing the visual spectacle of intimidation as the army of CRS and Police Nationale enter. Our objective is to stay as long inside the living site as possible before the inevitable escort, delaying this by engaging in arguments about the arbitrary use of security perimeters, and questioning the legal basis. This dynamic becomes another performative spectacle between cop-watchers and law enforcement, each side carefully navigating the delicate balance of pushing boundaries without jeopardizing their discourse, being put at risk of violence or a public display. These forms of encounters are laden with exchanges of humiliation, and intimidation, where the smallest spark can ignite violence. In response to impending violence, the observer can shed her uniform, appealing to the human behind the police uniform, seeking a mutual transcend of their institutional boundaries, and exposing her vulnerability and submission to the authority by appealing to law enforcement as a civilian. In the most fragile encounters, I have stated “I’m just a civilian”. However, often this is too late, as the spiral of violence has commenced.



Picture 7 and 8: Human Rights Observers: Screenshots from videos by the researcher and colleague of the researcher being escorted out of the living site 26.04.2024

In addition to the escort and physical and biological violence, another form of intimidation is the conduction of ID checks. This has occurred on multiple occasions, including on the 27th of January when the officer conducting the ID check took pictures of my passport with his phone as captured in a screenshot from the video in picture 9. This encounter had me lying awake for a few nights, even taking a day off, wondering what the officer intended to do with my passport. A month later, I met the same officer, who asked “you are not French right?”, as I confirmed he stated, “that’s right, because you are Danish”. While some might argue the officer simply recalled we had met before, and identified me based on my accent, as I am one of the few non-French observers, I perceived it as an act of intimidation. The act of stating this information, only available to him on my passport, serves as a stark reminder of being hyper-visualized and targeted by law enforcement, and the subtle threat of ability to exploit sensitive information.



Picture 9: Human Rights Observers: Police National photographing researcher’s passport

27.01.2024

It is not only our IDs that are the target when HRO becomes too comfortable pushing the boundaries during evictions. Our cars have been hyper-visualized and have become active targets, just like the observers, to discourage counter-surveillance. This ranges from routine stops during evictions to simply delaying HRO from observing, as I experienced on the 12th of January, or a car stop as I experienced on the 28th of April;

It was my colleague's last day, and he was looking for a last battle with the police. Throughout the evictions, he argued, and filmed law enforcement provokingly, resorting to law enforcement engaging with us through surveillance, intimidation, and violence; being recorded by Police Nationale with their phones, pushed, and threatened with lawsuits. We overheard the police discuss the possibility of fining our parking multiple times. As the eviction finished, we felt energized, knowing we had captured great videos of police coercion and violence. Soon, we were pulled over by a police van that had been part of the evictions for a 'routine car stop'. The officer was smiling ear to ear as we drove into the trap. My colleague and I started recording. While the officer checked the car's papers and my driver's license, two officers tried to open the trunk without permission, a clear violation of the law. When we complained about the procedure of the car stop, the officer checking the papers started filming without warning and demanded our IDs. Suddenly my license was not enough to prove my identity, only mentioning my lawyer got the officer to move from my ID back to the car. In the search for fining HRO, all lights were checked, and then the officer asked us to present the triangle from the trunk. Presenting the triangle without opening a door as it was in the backseat, the officer was clearly disappointed, as he now lost his legal opportunity to search the interior. Then we were let go.

In the context of exchanges in humiliation, intimidation, and violence, this car stop was a possibility for the Police Nationale, having been subjected to our provoking counter-surveillance and clear lack of acknowledgment of the legality of their operations, to get their revenge, tipping the scale of humiliation and power back in their favor. Under cover of a randomized stop, the threats of administrative detention and fines turned smirks into fear, and law enforcement had gotten the last saying, the upper hand. As Hagan and Bachelet (2023) found, criminalization, including, arbitrary fines, car checks, and ID checks, is a strategy for law enforcement in Calais to intimidate or criminalize solidarity actors and bleed organizations dry from funding.

The relationship between the Police Nationale and HRO differs from HRO's relationship with CRS, as the Police Nationale is not on rotation, unlike CRS. Perhaps due to this permanence, the intimate relationship between cop-watcher and cop is permeated in exchanges of intimidation and humiliation, knowing each other's operational frameworks, and which buttons can be pushed to

provoke certain reactions, such as these encounters have demonstrated. HRO knows which chiefs of operations are likely to engage in a fruitful dialogue regarding questions of legal basis, the Penal Code, and the use of intimidation, and which chiefs will engage with HRO through the exchanges of humiliation, intimidation, and violence. It is difficult to identify the intimate relationship formed, as the relation is inherently violent from both parts, but behind the institutionalized role as an officer in his uniform, the threats of lawsuits, and physical violence, there must be a human wishing to hide or escape from the scrutinizing camera and probing questions.

But what is happening inside the perimeter, that only an iPhone 15 can capture from the perimeter? What is concealed from our view behind a wall of CRS? What is so significant that it warrants violent escorts to the perimeter? In essence, the question arises: what unfolds the backstage of law enforcement's spectacle of evictions? By obscuring the backstage from public scrutiny, law enforcement ensures that they have the potential to use violence or force without risking it being on public display. While law enforcement keeps this backstage hidden, it inadvertently perpetuates HRO's discourse of intimidation and violence, as their concerted efforts to obstruct observation and recordings suggest that they have something to hide. Therefore, from a discursive standpoint, law enforcement's strategy of invisibilization inadvertently reinforces HRO's discourse and its relevance, as argued by Wilson and Serisier (2010). Without photographic or video evidence from HRO, law enforcement can safeguard their image and accuse HRO of defamation if their claims go too far. In turn, politicians may benefit from the deterrence effect generated by the discourse of violence.

In conclusion, this chapter explored the nuanced dynamics of power, control, resistance, and performance inherent in evictions and the interactions between HRO and law enforcement revealing how both parties stage and manipulate these encounters to further their agendas and discourses. Law enforcement and HRO engage in a delicate dance of control, each seeking to shape and narrate the spectacle to their advantage. The security perimeters, confrontations, and behind-the-scenes maneuvers all contribute to the construction of these competing spectacle discourses. While law enforcement seeks to assert authority and conceal the backstage of their operations, HRO uses counter-surveillance to reveal this backstage, exposing it under the discourse of violence

and intimidation. Despite the inherent violence and hostility, these encounters reveal the human dimensions behind the institutional roles, suggesting a nuanced relationship marked by mutual recognition and strategic interactions. Ultimately, the spectacle of these confrontations, with their layers of visibility and invisibility, reflects the broader societal tensions surrounding law enforcement practices and human rights advocacy. Through this lens, we gain a deeper understanding of the stakes involved in these daily performances of power and resistance.

THE SPECTACLE OF SURVEILLANCE AND COUNTER-SURVEILLANCE

This chapter delves into the complex dynamics of counter-surveillance and surveillance during evictions, focusing on how these practices influence and exacerbate violence. Drawing on the work of Wilson and Serisier (2010), it explores the multifaceted purposes of counter-surveillance as employed by HRO: as a defense mechanism to protect against arbitrary arrests or assaults, as an offensive tool to gather evidence and challenge police actions, and as a pacifier to defuse potential violence. Despite its intentions to deter violence, counter-surveillance paradoxically often ends up capturing and, in some cases, escalating the very violence it seeks to prevent. This chapter examines how the interplay between surveillance and counter-surveillance acts as a self-reinforcing cycle, escalating tensions and creating spectacles of violence rather than de-escalating them.

Counter-surveillance is ultimately a provocative tactic, insinuating a lack of recognition for law enforcement respecting their deontology, and the institutional framework ensuring accountability and transparency. The exchanges of humiliation, intimidation, and violence permeate the surveillance- and the counter-surveillance battle between law enforcement and HRO, as law enforcement often at the sight of HRO, begins filming, with or without warning. The use of surveillance by law enforcement might come as a reaction to the use of counter-surveillance by HRO, a tendency also identified by Wilson and Serisier (2010), but the act of humiliation and intimidation by filming is not monopolized by HRO,

On the 13th of February, I approached the perimeter, filming the eviction unfolding, as an officer placed a document in front of the camera lens, obstructing the counter-surveillance. A second officer warned HRO that he was going to film them as the sound 'bipbip' echoed. Then the officer grabbed his pedestrian camera, and approached my colleague and me, shoving the camera into our faces to get a good recording for his books.

This encounter can only be interpreted as using surveillance for intimidation, provocation, and humiliation, knowing that HRO could do nothing about it. However, it may also reflect the feeling of law enforcement when subjected to counter-surveillance by HRO. During surveillance and counter-surveillance, not only are violence and intimidation exchanged, but also humiliation. Both parties experience powerlessness, as neither can stop the other's actions and must endure the humiliation. Law enforcement cannot halt the counter-surveillance without breaching deontology and the law, risking their reputation as cop-watchers film them. Conversely, HRO cannot prevent law enforcement from using surveillance, as its use has been legitimized by the state.

The majority of the time HRO is filmed with pedestrian cameras they are not warned before, hence law enforcement is breaching their obligation under the Direction Générale de la Police Nationale (DGPN) circular nr2008-8433-D, which is scrutinized in a later chapter. When HRO points this out to law enforcement, they often argue the sound, "bipbip", is a warning in itself. Further, it is a common occurrence that once HRO points out officers film them without warning, another officer starts recording either with or without warning, as happened on the 25th of February. I filmed a CRS pushing a person being evicted to make him move back one meter, to which a Police Nationale officer responded by filming me without warning. As I pointed this out, another officer began filming me without warning. It became a spectacle of escalation, as law enforcement potentially interpreted the call for respect for civilian rights as a provocation of telling them how to do their job, a provocation, hence turning on additional cameras to deescalate or record a potential escalation. On the other hand, when a second or third officer begins filming without warning after having pointed out that law enforcement must warn those they film before turning on their camera, it can be experienced as a clear provocation or disregard for the civilian right of the cop-watcher

rather than working as a de-escalation measure, thus a spiral of surveillance and its inherent violence becomes a spectacle in itself.

While harassment and intimidation are often the response from law enforcement in reaction to cop-watchers, the main purpose of cop-watching is to act as a buffer between law enforcement and people on the move, where the use of counter-surveillance can de-escalate this encounter, acting as a pacifier or defense. This was the clear case on the 12th of January at 8:46 am, when a CRS officer was pushing a person being evicted, another CRS noticed our drawn cameras notifying his colleague to stop. In reality, neither my colleague nor I were actively filming, but as Bock (2016) states “in the hands of cop-watchers, therefore, power lies not in the camera but in its possibility: The very fact that citizens can and do record police activity is a check on state authority” (p. 26). In many cases during the winter months, HRO relies on this perception of filming, as rain and minus degrees often shut down our phones or cause failures in saving video evidence. The use of counter-surveillance as a pacifier, was also evident on the 27th of February, where CRS and Police Nationale officers originally shook tents and screamed at them to wake people up, but as soon as one officer noticed our and our camera’s presence, they shifted tactics to saying “bonjour, good morning, please” to wake people up. However, it is not always that the use of counter-surveillance achieves its purpose in acting as a pacifier, however, in these cases, its purpose becomes offense. On the 13th of February, like the 20th of January, law enforcement used their batons to hit the tents while screaming “oh you’re moving, go go go we’re leaving”. On the 18th of February, the police woke up the sleeping camps clapping their hands and screaming “let’s go, get up!” and did the same to pressure those already moving towards the perimeter to move faster. The operations chief shook a tent while screaming to wake up a person inside.

The discourse of law enforcement fails to acknowledge this violence, with some even denying its existence altogether. The level of violence has decreased since the Ministry of Interior denounced it in light of a complaint by Human Rights Watch to the Human Rights Defender in 2017, however, it might also be correlated to the longstanding systematic cop-watching since 2009, acting as a deterrence for violence today. Similar to the cop-watchers followed by Bock (2016), who believed their regular patrolling made the police aware of being watched, being a pacifier and defense, HRO

believes that its constant presence at evictions has a similar effect. Although HRO did not observe many cases of 'classic' physical violence towards those being evicted during the research period, the long history of police violence remains a looming threat, compounded by the visual spectacle of the convoy and uniform.

Encounters between HRO and law enforcement often reflect the inherent difference in their conceptualizations of what constitutes violence. Law enforcement tends to adhere to a more stringent definition of police violence, primarily focused on physical harm by reduction of somatic capacity, as outlined by Klahm et al. (2014). In contrast, HRO holds law enforcement accountable for broader forms of structural violence, related to elements of necro-politics and violence described by Galtung (1969) encompassing truncated, biological, physical, and psychological violence.

An illustrative encounter happened on the 13th of February at 11:04 am, where an officer, speaking with a person who had just been evicted, ironically remarked to my colleague and I, "yes, you can see that we treat them badly, it's true that we have very tense relations with them. In any case you're always there to keep an eye on us, you'd do better to help them", and argued it was HRO's actions that was harassment to law enforcement, exacerbating the situation and prolonging the suffering of the evicted. In some way, this statement acknowledges that violence related to the eviction extends beyond physical violence.

These fundamental disagreements between HRO and law enforcement extend to their perceptions of the 'threat' posed by people on the move, and thereby the threshold for when violence moves from legitimate to cruel (Balibar, 1998, 2001). HRO humanizes and individualizes people on the move, engaging with them on a personal level during maraudes and evictions. Conversely, law enforcement, particularly CRS which circulates in and out of Calais, is influenced by popular media discourse, characterizing people on the move as a security threat, smugglers, traffickers, and even terrorists. Thus, law enforcement reduces people on the move to living dead, or human garbage, seen as threats and as exposable, violence being a necessity for managing them. The violence

subjected to them is hence seen as legitimate, being proportionate to the threat they pose to the citizens in Calais and the state's sovereignty.

Conversely, HRO, not sharing this perception of threat, deems the convoy, arms, and uniforms disproportionate in dealing with a vulnerable population, already exhausted by this policy and disorganization of aid. This fundamental difference in perception shapes their views on the legitimacy of violence, with law enforcement viewing it as necessary for managing a perceived threat to public safety and sovereignty, while HRO sees it as disproportionate and unjustified.

Moreover, the perceived threat posed by HRO to law enforcement lies not in physical confrontation, but in the potential exposure of human rights violations online. Conversely, HRO views its role as that of observers of injustice, willing to put themselves at risk to expose violence and advocate for change. Thus, the encounters between HRO and law enforcement are not just about differing definitions of violence, but also about conflicting perceptions of justice, accountability, and the role of civil society in challenging institutional power.

In conclusion, the encounters between HRO and law enforcement highlight a fundamental divergence in their perceptions of violence and the legitimacy of their respective actions. While law enforcement views its eviction practices as a necessary measure to manage the perceived threat of people on the move to maintain public safety, HRO sees these actions as disproportionate and unjustified responses to a vulnerable population. The practice of counter-surveillance, intended as a tool for accountability and pacification of law enforcement, often results in a cycle of provocation and escalation, underscoring the power dynamics and conflicting discourses at play. Ultimately, these interactions reveal not only differing definitions of violence but also deeper conflicts over justice, accountability, and the role of civil society in challenging institutional power. The chapter thus underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of how surveillance and counter-surveillance can both provoke and prevent violence, and calls for a reassessment of strategies to ensure the protection of human rights in such contested spaces.

CONCLUSION OF THE PERFORMATIVE SPECTACLE OF THE ENCOUNTER OF COP-WATCHERS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

This chapter has explored the multifaceted nature of the spectacles surrounding the implementation of the non-fixation policy, focusing on the roles played by law enforcement and HRO during evictions. The interaction between law enforcement and HRO is marked by a continuous exchange of humiliation, intimidation, violence, and resistance, creating a dynamic spectacle of power and control. Law enforcement employs heavily armed officers and large convoys not only to conduct evictions but also as psychological tactics to instill fear in people on the move and demonstrate state control. Despite their efforts to document and counteract these displays of power, HRO often become targets of the same intimidation and violence they seek to expose and even become co-producers of it. Law enforcement and HRO engage in a dance of control, each manipulating the spectacle to their advantage, contributing to competing narratives. Law enforcement views evictions as necessary for public safety, while HROs see them as disproportionate and unjustified. These encounters highlight fundamental differences in perceptions of violence and legitimacy, reflecting broader societal tensions. The spectacle of these confrontations reveals deeper conflicts over justice, accountability, and the role of civil society in challenging institutional power. This nuanced understanding calls for reassessing strategies to ensure human rights protection in contested spaces, emphasizing more humane and effective approaches.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF REVEALING THE BACKSTAGE ONLINE

This chapter aims to explore the multifaceted nature of the spectacles related to the non-fixation policy that plays out online, and how to which extent it creates spectacle encounters between law enforcement and HRO on-ground. Central to these spectacles, is the difference in legal rights to filming and the right to images, being a root of the tension between HRO and law enforcement. Observations in the field underscore the dual reality faced by HRO: the necessity to document and

disseminate evidence of systemic violence, balanced against the legal and ethical challenges posed by these actions, fraught with complexities.

At the heart of this discussion lies the complex legal landscape governing the right to film and distribute images during police operations. While civilians possess the right to record law enforcement during operations, officers lack image rights, leading to tensions between legal mandates and personal concerns. These rights are enshrined in the Code of Internal Security L241-1 (République Française, 2022) and the DGPN circular nr2008-8433-D, which regulate law enforcement's use of surveillance of civilians as well,

Police officers do not benefit from protection of the right of image (...) Subject to strict rules of professional conduct, a function of the police must comply with them in each of his or her missions, and must not be afraid of the recording of images or sounds" and that "it is therefore excluded to question for this sole reason the person making the recording (...)" . The person making the recording (...), to take his or her equipment or to destroy the recording or its medium: such action would expose its author to disciplinary and legal proceedings (Circulaire N°2008-8433-0, 2008).

These tensions are evident in the observations in the field, where the discussion of these rights leads to nuanced encounters between HRO and law enforcement officers, ranging from fleeting intimate connections transcending their institutional boundaries to confrontations marked by threats and intimidation,

On the 5th of December. I quickly became familiar with the sound “bipbip”, which now instinctively prompts me to say “you have to warn me before filming me”. As my colleague stated this, the CRS officer retorted “And what about me, do you warn me when you’re filming me?” before leaving. Another CRS officer added, “I don’t want to appear on the videos either, that’s my right too. I’ve got a family”. When my colleague reiterated that it is a civilian right to film police during operations, the officer responded, “I’m doing my job. I don’t want to be on the videos for my family, to protect my family, that’s all”.

This encounter is a testimony to when the violent exchanges are put on hold, the cop-watcher and cop transcending their institutional boundaries that otherwise guide their interactions, and an intimate relationship is formed, however fleetingly. These are formed when the officer sheds his uniform and bodily capital, humanizing himself by referring to his life outside of the uniform, employing a pathos argument, creating a more intimate connection between the officers and the cop-watchers, as the officers temporarily shed their institutionalized roles to engage on a personal level, as they ask HRO not to jeopardize their families, and reputation by publishing their work on social media under its discourse of violence and human rights violations.

However, the observer does not seek to reveal this side of law enforcement, not sharing this encounter on social media, as the discourse of the violent, inhuman CRS must be upheld. Rather, HRO sees it as a confession of acknowledgment of their wrongdoing. With this approach, it is not difficult for HRO to maintain a discourse of violent CRS, as such encounters are exceptions rather than the rule. Typically, when faced with cop-watchers' cameras, officers reinforce their institutional roles, using their bodily capital and authority to intimidate and assert dominance over the observers. An encounter like this took place on the 27th of February,

At the perimeter an officer attempted to downplay the eviction by telling the displaced people to wait five minutes and enjoy the sunny weather. As I began filming this absurd interaction, another officer approached me, threatening legal action if his face appeared on social media, stating, "I have a very good lawyer". He repeated this threat even after I asserted my right to film and distribute images of police operations.

This was not an isolated incident; I have faced similar threats of lawsuits on multiple occasions, as evident in graph 3, but we must remember, in this encounter, there is an exchange of threats: one with a lawsuit and the other with a discourse that could damage the officer's reputation through distributing images on social media. The threat of lawsuits is always based on defamation. HRO has the legal right to film and distribute images as long as the discourse does not constitute defamation - the assertion of a fact that is prejudicial to a person's honor or reputation – thus, HRO must be wary of the online discourse to avoid a lawsuit. Defamation cases are significant threats to

HRO and other organizations calling out the state and law enforcement on social media. As Hagan and Bachelet (2023) noted, the Prefecture monitors the Twitter accounts of solidarity actors and organizations, suing them for defamation as a tactic of intimidation and bleeding organizations dry for funding. Despite using general language when referring to the violence of evictions - targeting 'the state' or 'law enforcement' rather than individuals, as a strategy to avoid defamation - the Prefecture has sued HRO for defamation during the research period. Hence, when narrating events inside the security perimeter, HRO must carefully balance recounting facts and questioning what occurs inside. Failing to strike this balance can have severe consequences - the credibility of both law enforcement and HRO is at stake - and unlike law enforcement, HRO does not benefit from the protection of a larger state institution.

Despite the contrasting nature of the two encounters - one focusing on transcending institutionalization and the other on asserting it - both illustrate law enforcement's desire to protect their identities from being portrayed negatively under HRO's discourse. This underscores that cop-watching and counter-surveillance are inherently intimidating tactics. Knowing HRO's discourse, law enforcement does not welcome counter-surveillance despite the prescription of the circular 2008, which states that they should welcome being recorded and observed, and that law enforcement conducting a police operation is not protected under the right of image. In theory, this right to film should ensure that law enforcement operates after the books, but in reality, this right is often obstructed through setting abusive perimeters, blocking our cameras, or physically trying to remove our recording medium, ultimately reinforcing the narrative of law enforcement not being transparent in their operations.

When it comes to social media strategies, I assumed, on the basis of the policy analysis, and symbol of the convoy and uniform, that the state and law enforcement would use the performative act of policing and patrolling the border, posting photos and videos from these operations to strengthen the tactic of a discourse of crisis and control. By making posts like this, it would assure the Calasian population that promises made by Sarkozy, Besson, Cazeneuve, Darmanin, and Bouchart to prevent fixation points in Calais are being upheld. Additionally, the convoy, uniform, and bodily capital would create a discourse of a crisis and portray the border as a militarized zone of violence,

legitimizing violent actions to control the flow of people across and within the border zone and work as a spectacle strategy to deter new arrivals.

However, an analysis of posts by the Twitter accounts of the Prefecture and Police Nationale, to my surprise, only one post of an eviction during the research period posted by Police Nationale 62, the local department in Calais, the tweet highlighting that the eviction of a squat with people on the move was based on a legal proceeding (Police Nationale 62 [@PoliceNat62], 2023). The post included three photos, showing the inhabitants walking away, and two CRS with riot shields standing passively watching their departure. In contrast, these accounts frequently post about the police actions on the beach accompanied by photos of punctured boats. This online strategy reaches a British audience, showcasing the successful intercepting of small boats, reinforcing the crisis and management discourse, and hence attracting more funding for border management from the UK.

The absence of posts of evictions might be because such posts are unnecessary for deterrence. HRO, and other organizations, effectively perform this role, possibly even more effectively. HRO narrates the same spectacle of evictions differently, for a different audience, within a discourse of structural violence, and violations of human rights, to denounce these actions to activists and politicians. HRO systematically posts on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook every time an eviction occurs to highlight the structural violence committed. These posts are often accompanied by a video or photo, not depicting passive police but framing police actions in a way that underscores the intimidation of the uniform and the overwhelming number of law enforcement. Often, images show people on the move who were being woken up by police shaking or hitting their tents, having to gather their belongings under the intimidating eye of the police, or being arbitrarily arrested. HRO's discourse emphasizes how these evictions are carried out as a form of systematic harassment, psychologically truncated violence, and mode of exhaustion committed against the inhabitants of the living sites.

The communication strategies of the state and HRO are a good example of a double-sided spectacle as explored by Franko (2021), both making border management into a spectacle. Without HRO making a spectacle of the evictions and excessive use of police coercion, the spectacle of evictions

would not reach beyond Calais, both serving as deterrence and gaining political power for the right wing. The more the French state insists on evictions, use of power, and displaying a disregard for the law and obligations, the stronger a discourse HRO can present, and the organization can persist.

This produces a series of ethical and political dilemmas related to distributing pictures of violence for advocacy purposes. First and foremost, HRO contributes to a double-sided spectacle, where the strategy of denouncing the border and evictions, ends up reinforcing the violent spectacles of the border and evictions (Anderson, 2021; Ellison, 2019; Franko, 2021), and related to this, evidencing police coercion and violence can firstly provoke more direct violence against those being evicted as well as the cop-watcher (Bock, 2016; Ellison, 2019; Hagan & Bachelet, 2023). Publishing material on the policies one seeks to denounce, contributes to the spectacle, thus reinforcing it.

Secondly, when violence transcends physical reality, manifesting in the digital realm, the consummation of violence might desensitize and normalize violence for the audience or can reduce the structural violence to micro-spectacles (Balibar, 2001; Ellison, 2019; Wilson & Serisier, 2010). The distribution of violent pictures can either spark compassion for those being evicted or create further distancing between the viewer and the evicted ending up promoting their illegalization (Balibar, 2001; Ellison, 2019). Either way, the suffering body of the evicted is politicized, despite the HRO's aim to denounce this politicization. The lack of active content further politicizes people on the move, objectifying them just like law enforcement and politicians. HRO seeks to address this dilemma by blurring the faces of people on the move, and deleting recordings if there has been an explicit request to respect their right to image. Despite HRO visiting the living sites weekly to promote awareness of what HRO does and the purpose of evidencing evictions, and many people on the move encouraging the activities of HRO, cheering them on in front of law enforcement, it can also lead to confrontations between HRO and people on the move when HRO comes running to film the evictions.

Lastly, the ethical dilemma of exposing the backstage of police operations, filming officers on duty, and publishing videos of them online. While the officers do not have the right to their image, the distribution of photos and videos of officers might reveal their identities, potentially putting their

families at risk of harm from the criminal environment or extreme left groups. However, HRO does not aim to film individual officers, unless they commit such violence that these dilemmas can be overridden but focus on the entirety of the institution of law enforcement and the non-fixation policy. However, while capturing this, the exchanges of violence spiral, reinforcing both HRO's incentive to film and law enforcement's incentive to use coercion or force. Thus, the spectacle continues and manifests as a double-sided spectacle.

The strategies employed by both state institutions and HRO in documenting and disseminating these spectacles reveal the contentious and multifaceted nature of border management. The state's reluctance to showcase evictions contrasts with HRO's deliberate focus on these events to highlight systemic violence. This interplay creates a double-sided spectacle where each narrative reinforces the other, influencing public opinion and political outcomes. Furthermore, the ethical dilemmas faced by HRO in distributing images of violence underscore the complexity of their advocacy work.

In conclusion, the performative nature of border control in the digital age highlights the significant role that visual and bodily capital play in shaping public perceptions and political discourses. As this chapter has illustrated, the encounters between HRO and law enforcement are characterized by a constant negotiation of rights, power, and ethics. The right to film police operations, while legally protected, is often contested on the ground, leading to a spectrum of interactions defined by intimidation or humanization, which reveal the personal and institutional stakes involved.

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to explore the multifaceted nature and extent of the spectacles related to the non-fixation policy in Calais and to understand the roles played by politicians, law enforcement, and HRO in their orchestration. This exploration sought to uncover how these spectacles are constructed through policies and encounters, their backstages, and their impact on people on the move, law enforcement, and HRO.

To address this research question, I employed a constructivist grounded theory approach, heavily informed by my participant observation as a volunteer with Human Rights Observers. This militant

research approach allowed me to capture the emergent nature of the spectacles as they unfolded in real-time, including the backstage of what was not captured on videos and publicly displayed. Data collection involved observing and documenting the implementation of the non-fixation policy through evictions of informal living sites, as well as analyzing the legal, and socio-political dimensions underpinning the policy.

Through this research, several key findings emerged, revealing multiple spectacles, extending from the physical world to the digital realm. The socio-political landscape and the concept of border securitization significantly shape the non-fixation policy, which is guided by the spectacle discourse by politicians and media. This policy extends beyond physical barriers, permeating discourses and practices that portray people on the move as threats, thus legitimizing stringent border control measures. Moreover, the legal framework surrounding evictions is fraught with complexities that undermine the rights of people on the move and contribute to the spectacle of state power. The use of 'flagrance delicto' as a legal pretext for evictions reveals ethical and legal dilemmas, perpetuating a cycle of violence, uncertainty, and exhaustion, contested by human rights advocates. These criticisms from human rights organizations highlighted the inherent violence and legal shortcomings of the non-fixation policy, emphasizing the systemic harassment faced by humanitarian and solidarity actors and when aiming to reveal these shortcomings and fill in the gaps left by the state through humanitarian and solidary acts. This harassment forms part of a broader political discourse aimed at deterring migration through spectacles of violence.

This dynamic is mirrored in the interactions between HRO and law enforcement, marked by continuous exchanges of intimidation and resistance. The performative aspects of state power are embodied by law enforcement through convoys, uniforms, and bodily capital, reinforcing the state's discourse of control and crisis management, and working as a psychological tactic to instill fear and demonstrate state control and authority in the meeting with people on the move and HRO. To engage in this meeting, HRO utilizes counter-surveillance as a defense and pacifying tool to ensure accountability but paradoxically often escalates the very violence it seeks to prevent. The implementation of the policy and its related spectacles results in physical, and biological harm, with structural and truncated violence constantly threatening them. The massive presence of law

enforcement, with their bodily capital and capacity to legitimately commit violence against them, exacerbates the constant state of exhaustion and uncertainty, increasing their vulnerability and reinforcing their exclusion from society. Finally, the public dissemination of images and discourses of evictions through social media by HRO further intensifies these spectacles of evictions and violence and politicizes the bodies it was meant to protect, hence coming with a range of ethical and political dilemmas.

The interactions between law enforcement and HRO, reveal deeper conflicts over justice, accountability, and the role of civil society in challenging institutional power, underscoring the critical impact of cop-watchers on law enforcement behavior, and the broader dynamics of power and resistance in contested spaces. The findings also indicate that the practice of counter-surveillance, often exacerbates tensions and construction of spectacles of violence, emphasizing the necessity for a nuanced understanding of how surveillance and counter-surveillance can both provoke and prevent violence, necessitating a reassessment of strategies to safeguard human rights.

In conclusion, the spectacles emerging from the non-fixation policy and encounters between law enforcement and HRO are visual, political, performative, discursive, and violent, created, reinforced, and contested, a self-reinforcing spectacle driven by exchanges of humiliation, intimidation, and violence.

The thesis argues that the non-fixation policy and the spectacles of eviction in Calais serve as performative and discursive assertions of state sovereignty and control. While aimed at deterring migration, these spectacles highlight the inherent violence and ethical dilemmas in current border management strategies. The study calls for a critical re-evaluation of these practices and the development of more humane approaches to migration and border control, urging a shift away from strategies that rely on spectacles and violence. By shedding light on these dynamics, this research underscores the imperative to prioritize human rights and dignity in border management, not only in Calais but also in other border regions facing similar challenges. It is through such a reorientation that genuine solutions to the complexities of migration can be sought, fostering more just and compassionate societies on a global scale.

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