Space and the migrant camps of Calais:

Space Making at the Margins

Anita Howarth, Brunel University

Yasmin Ibrahim, Queen Mary, University of London

Abstract

This chapter analyses how the online versions of Britain's two mid-market newspapers framed the migrant camps or 'jungles' on the French sea border as marginalised spaces. The French town of Calais has been the focal point of debates about illegal entry to the United Kingdom and in tandem cross-border tensions. The jungle as a physical entity is drawn into space-making in a multitude of ways which are complex and entwined. We examine discursive and material space constructions in framing human migration and how borders as interstitial spaces become continually redefined and reconstructed through the interactions of the corporeal body with the physical environment, policy enactments and cross border patrols. Spaces at the margin functioning beyond metaphors become heuristic entities where their material and intangible construction and destruction have consequences for shaping human empathy and engagement as well as distance and detachment with the migrant as a human and with immigration debates.

Introduction

In 2007, British online national newspapers began to report on a handful of makeshift tents on scrubland near the French port of Calais occupied by migrants hoping to cross into the UK border. By early 2009 this makeshift space, labelled 'the jungle' by migrants and the newspapers, had more than 800 occupants (Rawstorne 2009). In September 2009 the French riot police demolished the camp and dispersed its occupants (Garnham 2009) to deter new migrants from heading to Calais. In spite of this militant action by the French authorities, mini-camps sprung up all along the French coastline. Newspapers were concerned that these makeshift shelters could grow into mini-jungles (Allen 2009c) and within a year a 'new jungle' had emerged in a small village near Dunkirk only to be similarly demolished by the authorities (Finan and Allen 2010).

This chapter examines how the online versions of Britain's two mid-market newspapers[1] framed the migrant camps or 'jungle' in the French town of Calais as interstitial spaces. The notion of marginality occupies a central premise in the discourse of the jungle; the migrants who congregate in these camps (while waiting to cross to Britain) are illegal bodies and hence marginal entities, the spaces they occupy are marginal lands within the town and Calais' itself is in a marginal zone on the edge of the Schengen area of free movement and on the sea border between continental Europe and Britain. It is also a major transport hub *en route* to Britain and so the focal point of continuing media debates and cross-border tensions about illegal entry into the United Kingdom, all of which combine to shape the politics of the margins; a politics of contestation over territory as well as meaning (Howarth, and Ibrahim 2012; Ibrahim 2011).

We argue that the jungle as a physical entity is drawn into material and immaterial or discursive space construction in a multitude of ways which are complex and intertwined. The phenomenon of human migration highlights how border spaces become continually contested, redefined and reconstructed through the interaction of the corporeal body with the physical environment, policy discourses and cross border patrols and their attendant surveillance and combative practices. The jungle as a spatial metaphor has multiple readings including the degradation of white civility through the migrant occupation. Equally the material and immaterial (i.e. discursive) construction and destruction has consequences for shaping human empathy hence the politics of attachment in immigration debates.

Making Space, Social Imaginary and the Media

The sociological imagination of space and the politics of space construction through a multitude of practices have implications for our sense of belonging, security and identity. Space is continually created in a multitude of activities connected with refugees, human resettlement and immigration. Space making through discursive paradigms, media frames, movement of corporeal bodies, policy discourses or the assertion of borders inscribe space as an intimate element of human psyche in gaining both intimacy and distance to sensitive issues such as immigration. The complex ways in which spaces are created, destroyed, denied or deemed marginal reveal the enmeshing of power relations and vulnerability of the human condition. Spaces can be socially, materially and discursively constructed (Harvey 1973; Massey 1991; May 1996; Shields 1999). Shields conceptualizes the notion of spatialization as a 'social imaginary' where spatial divisions and distinctions provide the means to ground hegemonic ideologies and social practices (1999). In these 'social imaginaries' issues of belonging, boundaries, marginality and 'othering' can reflect discursive and material practices of 'us' and 'them', inclusion and exclusion, as well as proximity and distance. `

More recently, studies have developed the notion of social imaginary further, highlighting how landscapes and dominant features within them ‘become spatially bounded scenes that visually communicate what belongs and what does not’ (Trudeau 2006, p. 421). Space and our social imagination of it become critical to the construction of a ‘territorialized politics of belonging’ in which the discourses and practices that maintain boundaries ‘correspond to the imagined geographies of a polity and to the spaces that normatively embody the polity’ (Trudeau 2006, p. 421). A central theme in this Western imaginary is marginality where being on the margins has ‘implied exclusion’ (Shields 2013, p. 216) in the sense of the geographically isolated, the site of ‘illicit or socially disdained activities’ and/or the ‘other’ in relation to the cultural centre (Shields 2013, p. 13). Margins, ‘while a position of exclusion’, can also facilitate critique because they ‘expose the relativity of the entrenched, universalizing values of the centre and expose the relativism of the cultural identities which imply their shadow figures of every characteristic they have denied, rendered “anomalous” or excluded’ (Shields 2013, p. 217).

Benedict Anderson’s (1991) concept of a nation as an imagined community enables people to imagine the boundaries of a nation or cultural centre even when these boundaries may not physically exist (1991, p. 6). He argues that one of the significant historical developments that facilitated the evolution of a national consciousness or imagination was the emergence of a profitable, mass circulation press as it enabled national conversations about or with the unknown other. Such conversations allow people to be aware of each other’s existence, experience and belonging to a community. Thus, media play a role in creating a national consciousness and a bond between individuals. Tangentially, space construction and media are intrinsically entwined.

Newspapers are inextricably implicated in space construction through their discursive and visual practices. They construct space through a multitude of techniques including the use of images, imagery, narratives, metaphors, distance framing and robust agenda setting where notions of belonging to a defined discursive space can elicit both cerebral and visceral responses. As Durkheim observes (1915) time and space as social constructs are often subjected to ideological struggles over meaning. David Harvey’s (1990) materialist construction of space as a product of social relations and ideological struggles imbues a Marxist perspective to space production equally implicating media as a capitalist and ideological enterprise within this frame. Hence, media’s production of space in sustaining the social imaginary of the nation-state is not divorced from the political context, power or ideological struggles. As David Harvey (1990, p. 419) observes ‘the very act of naming geographical entities implies a power over them, most particularly the way in which places, inhabitants and social functions are represented’.

The framing of space in the media while renewing the social imaginary of an imagined community is political. It is within this premise we analyse media and space construction where the concept of spatialization as a social imaginary (Shields 1999) emerges through the politics of territoriality centred on discursive and material practices of media in relating to border issues, immigration policy and the construction of the British Identity through the 'other'. It is also necessary to contextualise the jungle in Calais through the regional entity of the European Union (EU). The EU, and in particular France, is perceived as a space where large numbers of illegal migrants congregate at or near the French ports and where the French government adopted a de facto policy of closing, banning or demolishing migrant shelters between 2002 and 2011. The media hence employ distinct spatialization techniques to construct the violation of a bounded space in the discourses of the jungle. David Sibley (1995, p. 5) similarly asserts that the emergence of boundaries and stereotypical representations of others can reflect social practices of exclusion and inclusion. Theorists from different ontological perspectives including post-structuralists and postcolonialists have mapped the connections between identity and space construction (see Bhaba 1990; Shields 1991) where distinctions such as centre and periphery can reinforce dominant ideologies and practices whilst polarizing and dichotomizing different spaces. In tandem social identities emerge through the imagination and creation of space both through material practices and discursive ones.

The jungle as a case study provides a context to understand the complexity of space making in a refugee settlement or the border as both a marginalized space and one of tension and conflict due to its porous and juridical nature. The discursive and physical spatial constructions work to create both distance and proximity. The proximity-distance framing provides a duality of subduing the suffering of the 'Other' whilst heightening the fear about the dissipation of order by casting the threat of physical violation as imminent in your backyard.

The Context of the Jungle

We locate media constructions of the migrant spaces of Calais, in particular the 'jungle' camps, within the wider context of 'unregulated, unaccounted population shifts' across Europe resulting from the breakup of states, wars and revolutions (Geddes 2003). EU states have struggled to deal with these shifts, a task further complicated by the infiltration of population movements by global networks of terrorists and people traffickers (Bosworth 2012). The EU has responded by reconstructing migration as a security threat to their spaces so warranting the construction of 'Fortress Europe' (Millner 2011), a 'security-judicial apparatus' with increasingly militarized external borders intended to keep out unwanted migrants and tougher laws criminalizing those who do enter (Aas 2011). However, militarization has failed to deter new migrants entering the EU or the re-entry of those deported. Instead, it has pushed illegal migrants onto marginal spaces in and around the French border ports such as Calais. (Thomas 2013).

The French sea border is a marginal migration zone of transit and congregation of migrants looking for opportunities to cross the English Channel (henceforth the Channel). Britain is the preferred destination for many of them because of language, family, historic ties and the perception that the country has (relatively) well-organized systems for processing asylum applications (Millner 2011). However, the Channel represents a major physical and security obstacle. Not only do migrants have to cross a sea barrier they also have to bypass border controls to reach their preferred destination. In 1995, France opted into and Britain opted out of the Schengen Agreement on the undocumented movement of people between signatory states. The result was the alignment of a Schengen border (emerging from the Agreement) with the French sea border, which meant the retention of border controls at the ports (Thomas 2013), rendering the coastline as a marginal migration zone shaped by the politics of moving bodies and marking these spaces as transient.

The politics of the margin focuses on towns such as Calais where the French authorities struggle to manage congregating illegal migrants whose movement is obstructed by passport checks and further compounded by the social, environmental and humanitarian challenges posed by overcrowding of the marginal spaces they occupy (Rigby & Schlembach 2013). On the other hand, immigration has moved up the political and policy agenda in Britain. Immigration and cross-border patrol have invariably become election issues with successive governments tightening immigration policies and illegal migration across the Channel. Within the UK, immigration has become a politically sensitised issue (Boswell 2012) and externally the politics has given rise to a mix of cross border collaboration and conflict. French-British collaboration while seeking to tighten border security has nevertheless descended to a sustained blame game with either party holding each other responsible for the perceived policy failure and actions in arresting the number of immigrants who congregate at the borders. British politicians criticize their French counterparts for inadequate controls, labelling the border a ‘sieve’ that allows migrants to cross the Channel illegally (Millner 2012). Conversely, the French point the finger at the British counterparts for their benefit system, which is deemed as attracting migrants. The UK has also been condemned for refusing to allow entry to former colonial subjects and opting out of the Schengen Agreement creating a bottleneck of moving illegal bodies that France has to deal with (Thomas 2013).

Britain’s national newspapers have played a critical role in shaping the public debate and consciousness about the politics of the margins played out in Calais. The challenge for media is that illegal migration is often invisible and hence difficult to cover. However, the earlier furore over Sangatte Red Cross shelter near Calais and its closure in 2002 highlighted how migrant shelters can provide visible and material manifestations of migration with the congregation of corporeal bodies in makeshift shelters and of the Channel as a major conduit for the movement of illegal migrants into Britain (Boswell 2012).

Approach to Media Framing

This chapter examines how the online versions of two British mid-market newspapers, The *Mail Online* and *Express*[2], framed these migrant camps between 2007 and 2012. The mid-market newspapers are politically significant in that they have shaped the political agenda and public debate on a number of issues including immigration (see Davies 2009, p.32; Boswell 2012; Migration Observatory 2013; see Park et al. 2014). Coverage is driven not only by competition between the two newspapers (Greenslade 2004, p.629) but also by their ideological opposition to immigration. NGOs have repeatedly criticized newspaper coverage of immigration as routinely 'discriminatory, sensational and unbalanced' reporting (Commission for Racial Equality 2007, p.98).

However, the editors of both titles (i.e. the *Mail Online* and *Express*) contend that Britain is facing the biggest demographic change since the Norman invasion in 1066 (Esser 2007). This means large numbers of illegal bodies are moving unchecked into the country and reconfiguring the spaces of Britain. What they cover and how they frame illegal migration is therefore, in the view of the editors, not only in the 'public interest' but also of major concern to the public (Esser 2007). Illegal migration, however, is notoriously difficult for journalists to cover as much of it is furtive and largely invisible. The furore in 2002 over the Sangatte Red Cross centre gave the newspapers some entry into the clandestine world of migration. It drew newspaper attention to the Channel as a major conduit for cross border migration and the migrant camps in Calais as spatially visible manifestations of an otherwise invisible problem (Boswell 2012). After the closure of Sangatte, the French authorities banned shelters so migrants had to construct their own on unused, marginal spaces they could find in and around Calais. The jungle(s) of Calais and Dunkirk were the most high profile examples of these camps between 2007 and 2012 and have been the focus of attention in both these titles.

For the purpose of the analysis in this article, we did a key term search on the *Mail Online* and the *Express* online between 2007 and 2012 using 'Calais + immigration' and 'Calais + migrant camp' and 'Calais + jungle', which elicited 121 articles. We deduced from a close reading of the texts three dominant themes in these articles on the construction of marginal spaces: through the movement of the corporeal body and its interaction with environment; policy discourses and practices; and cross border tensions enacted through physical or material practices as well as through articulations. We then analysed these recurring frames in our analyses. Framing refers to more than what is on the news agenda; it includes how media think about issues and shape public discussions or conversations. The power of frames lie in the ways in which these serve to make sense of events in the news; set the parameters of the debate; persist in the selection, emphasis and inclusion or exclusion of certain discourses (Gitlin 1980 cited in Semetko and Valkenburg 2000, p.94).

What emerged from our analyses of themes were a broad consensus and little divergence between the two online newspapers about the significant frames. Both the media converged on presenting the Calais migrant as overcrowding the border town and denigrating the environment. The policies adopted to deal with this threat of the migrant were framed as failed initiatives and hence providing the resounding justification for the destruction of these illegal spaces. The failure resulted in a blame game, which saw manifest cross border tensions and contestation with the French authorities around the problem of migration. The discourses used by the *Mail Online* and the *Express* in constructing these strands of narratives often unleashed a fear over imminence and magnitude of the problem and equally the insurmountable social and physical costs to the British taxpayer. Within these discourses, these two media distanced the migrant in the reader's social imaginary and sought to depersonalise and delegitimise the migrant through her occupation of the borderland. This then upheld the violent obliteration of the spaces and the combatant stance of the authorities.

The Corporeal Body, the Physical Environment and (the Absence) of Empathy

The dominant discourse in both newspapers was of the constant, relentless movement of illegal corporeal bodies into border spaces near the ports. This was evident in descriptions such as 'flood' of migrants (see Brown 2011; Reporter 2010; Allen & Dawar 2012; Sparks 2010b). Such narrations beyond marginalizing and depersonalizing the migrant equally subsumed her in an amorphous mass of moving bodies (Reid 2007). The tightening of border controls however constrained the onward movement of migrants. Too dangerous to go back to their home countries and blocked from moving on, the migrants found themselves occupying a liminal space on marginal sites and in a state of limbo. The camps along the French coastline were reconstituted as 'waiting room[s]' (Fagge 2009) for migrants 'waiting for a chance' to climb onto a vehicle headed for Britain (Reid 2007) or playing a 'waiting game' that goes on for months marking the capricious and futile predicament of the migrants (Sparks 2012). Discourses also sought to criminalise the jungle as 'launch pads' for illegal bids to reach Britain (Peter Allen 2008). Descriptions of the migrant's movements shifted from the benign 'leap' to the furtive 'sneak' and the criminalized 'smuggle' onto vehicles headed across the Channel to Britain (Reid 2007; Sparks 2009c; Reynolds 2009). Narratives of the migrant movement also drew attention to the immense personal risks and their marginal existence between life and death. The act of leaping onto or hiding in vehicles portrayed the migrants as reckless and endangering their own lives. The newspapers carried reports of migrants falling between the wheels of fast moving traffic, suffocating in airtight compartments (Reid 2009) or being poisoned from toxic chemicals in the cargo of trucks (Reynolds 2009; Peter Allen 2011). They were framed as perilous not just to the environment but to themselves. In the process of depicting the migrants as casualties or fatalities, the media thwarted emotional engagement and proximity to the migrant.

In line with this, newspapers presented the willingness of migrants to risk their lives as foolhardy by reducing their aspirations for survival or a new life to visions of an ‘El Dorado’ (Reid 2007; Bracchi 2009; Allen & Murray 2009; Fernandes 2009); a fantasy of illusory wealth and the pursuit of which could lead to the squandering of life. The newspapers constructed the migrant as ruthless and irresponsible in perpetuating her own unstable existence in the periphery, thus distancing their struggles to reach Britain. This frame of migrants’ search for wealth provided newspapers a useful tool to alienate the migrant as an opportunist and an illegal corporeal body not worthy of a better life, Instead the migrants needed to be dealt with either through violence or juridical enactments in the form of detention and deportation from the EU. With reports of growing numbers of migrants, the newspapers conjoined discourses of their illegal movement with criminalization, degradation and threat. This was evident in association of the jungle with lawlessness and peril;, characterised by gang wars over territory and a ‘hiding place’ where violent criminals could evade the police (Allen 2008b; Reynolds 2009). This danger was seen as contaminating law and order spilling out from the periphery onto the streets of the town itself or into nearby villages (Allen 2009c). As a result local residents felt threatened and businesses were disrupted (Rawstorne 2009). Barbarism in the form of the ‘law of the jungle reigned’ (Bracchi 2009) as the police failed to check the violence of the migrants and the jungle into ‘inhumane squalor’ (Allen 2009d) over which the putrefied ‘stench’ of rotting waste hung (Bracchi 2009). The visualisation of the camp through sensory allusions and narratives of squalor again sought to distance the migrant from their audiences.

Thus, newspapers constructed the movement of corporeal bodies simultaneously as transient and illegitimate leading to a disruption and denigration of the physical environment through its decomposition and degradation. Migration was constructed as a problem ‘out of control’ (see Rawstorne 2009) that warranted the destruction of the jungle as a humane and rational response to the squalor, inhabitable conditions and the threat posed to its immediate environment and White civility.

Newspapers forestalled any empathy for the jungle inhabitants facing the destruction of their dwellings by de-humanizing them. Not only did the newspapers, as already discussed, demean migrants’ aspirations for a new life, they also displaced their suffering to the distant locale of their ‘war-torn’ or ‘war-ravaged’ countries of origin where threats to their lives and those of their families had forced them to flee their homes (Allen 2008; Allen 2009a). Any empathy towards the migrants was negated by constructing them as not only reckless and responsible for their precarious existence but by also associating them with the people traffickers who moved them across Europe (Fernandes 2009), hid in their camps, contributed to the squalor and were often behind the violence that frequently broke out (Bracchi 2009). The jungle inhabitants were not presented as subjects of trauma or suffering and hence not deserving of human empathy. Both newspapers supported the French ban on any semi-permanent shelters, opposed any attempts by charities to erect new ones (see Fagge 2009) and supported moves to demolish the jungle unequivocally. The destruction of the camp pushed the migrants into covert shelters described by the newspapers as ‘hideaways’, ‘hideouts’ and ‘hidden culverts’ to avoid detection by the police (Giannangeli 2009). Newspapers framed the destruction of the jungle as a rational response to all the social ills that had presented to fortress Europe and particularly the UK.

Policy Discourses and Practices

Arguably, the most de-humanizing element of the coverage was the subsuming of the predicament of the migrant and their experiences of trauma within an overarching discourse of policy failure. The newspapers presented the growing number of migrants and the squalor presented by these camps as evidence of ineffectual policies that had failed to address a problem that had ‘plagued’ the coastline for a decade (Slack & Allen 2009). The visibility of the jungle and its association with organised criminal activities became material manifestations of the inadequacies of French governance of the borders (Garnham 2009). Due to failed policies, the papers claimed that an estimated 200 migrants a week were crossing the Channel although no one knew the ‘true’ numbers (Fagge 2007). The illusiveness of figures in representing the scale of the problem meant that the imminent threat of jungle could be heightened by underscoring the ineffectual policy initiatives.

As the scale of the problems associated with the camp escalated, the newspapers resorted to a blame game. The British government was seen as culpable for allowing a ‘black’ economy to develop in which illegal migrants could find work (Reid 2007), offering ‘generous’ benefits, housing and medical care (Young 2009), and providing legal aid to fund asylum applications (Allen 2009). Conversely, the French were initially accused of ‘ignoring’ the problems of the jungle (Allen 2007) but after a series of raids on the camp the newspapers claimed that ‘at long last’ the French were getting ‘tough’ on the criminals sheltering in it (*Daily Mail* 2009b; Slack and Allen 2009). However, within days those arrested had been freed, shelters rebuilt and the ‘problem’ of illegal migration still unaddressed (see Bracchi 2009). The newspapers viewed this as evidence of a lack of political will to address the criminal encroachment and occupation of Calais. A new ‘tough talking’ immigration minister, Eric Besson, set out to demonstrate state ‘determination’ to stop the ‘rule’ of people traffickers in Calais (Slack & Allen 2009). He announced that the camp would be demolished, the ‘law of the jungle’ would be stamped, order restored (Bracchi 2009) and the border made ‘watertight’ against people smugglers and migrants (Slack & Allen 2009, Fagge 2009). His British counterpart added that such decisive action would remove a ‘magnet’ for migrants and deter new ones coming to Calais (Allen, 2009).

These ongoing newspaper discourses legitimized the violent action. In a dawn raid in September 2009, French riot police bulldozed the shelters, chain-sawed any remaining vegetation and obliterated any reminders that the physical space had once housed hundreds of migrants (Allen 2009c). Police arrested or detained many of those occupants of the camp who had not already fled. The act of physical destruction symbolised the reclaiming space from the illegal corporeal bodies and reasserting law and order.

However, within hours of the police action new camps had ‘popped up’ (Allen 2009d) and over the next few weeks derelict properties including Hovercraft buildings and wartime blockhouses had been turned into ‘secret homes’ for migrants (Fagge 2009d; Allen 2009e; Reynolds 2009). The demolition of the jungle did not persuade existing migrants to return to their country of origin or to stem the ‘flood’ of new ones into the town. Local charities dismissed the destructive act as a ‘publicity stunt’ intended to appease the British public (Sparks 2010b). Newspapers once again lapsed into the discourse that the governments had failed to ‘seal off’ the area to migrants and instead the annihilation of the jungle had merely displaced the problem to ports all along the coastline (Giannangeli 2009). Within a year, a ‘new jungle’ had grown up in a village near Dunkirk, which too had been ‘over-run’ and ‘invaded’ by migrants and people traffickers (Finan & Allen 2010). The parallels drawn with the earlier Calais jungle served to legitimise and rationalise the same action (i.e. the demolition of shelters and the obliteration of any reminders that this had once been a migrant shelter). However, this pattern of the construction, destruction and re-emergence reflected the making, unmaking and reconfiguring of space conveying the struggle between illegal bodies and authorities of governance to reclaim space from the hands of those they deemed as illegal and unwanted civilized Europe.

Cross Border Conflict and Co-operation

Cross-border interactions also shape the territorial politics of space and accounts of the failure of immigration policy threw into sharp relief areas of co-operation and conflict between the two governments. Not only did they concur on the need to demolish the jungle they also collaborated on the militarization and tightening of border controls intended to keep the unwanted other out of the nation state. Measures included the investment of millions of pounds in surveillance technology that included night vision, x-ray and heat-detection machines as well as devices able to pick up heart-beats and carbon dioxide emissions in vehicles (Reid 2009; Fernandes 2009). The increased use of powerfully invasive technologies deployed and the newspapers’ uncritical coverage highlight the relative powerlessness of the migrants particularly when juxtaposed against the hyperbolic discourse of ministers. The investment was hailed as part of the ‘biggest shake up’ of immigration systems and security ‘for a generation’ intended to create ‘one of the toughest border crossings’ in the world at Calais and the epitome of Anglo-French collaboration (Allen & Slack 2008). However it failed to ‘seal’ the borders and policies of detention and deportation became areas of conflict between the two states.

Newspapers presented detection, detention and deportation in cases of failed asylum applications as a linear and, ideally, an inexorable process but undermined by French inefficiency and ineffectualness. After the demolition of the jungle, the authorities had moved migrants arrested after the to detention centres across France but some escaped and 'were believed to be heading back to Calais' and the remainder were released after a court found 'procedural irregularities' in their detention (Fagge 2009). The judge ruled that the 'collective arrests' that followed the destruction of the jungle infringed the 'fundamental freedom' and individual right of migrants to claim asylum where they chose (Fagge 2009c). A furious *Mail Online* claimed the court action would leave migrants 'free to flood' Britain and exposed the French government's promise to tighten up immigration control and security 'as a farce' (Mail Foreign Service 2009).

At the same time, French private security firms and airline pilots refused to be participate in forced deportations because such actions were seen as contrary to the humanitarianism at the root of what it meant to be French so Britain had to provide the flights and guards, and the British taxpayer 'had to pick up the bill' (Allen & Slack 2008). While ministers continued to claim that the two governments were 'joining forces to deliver joint returns' critics labelled it 'ridiculous' that Britain was having to solve its immigration problems and those of France (Allen & Slack 2008). The newspapers were further incensed when, in 2009, joint French–British plans to repatriate migrants to their countries of origin faltered after a legal challenge in the French courts on humanitarian grounds (Reid 2009).

Thus, key elements of the security apparatus put in place to expel those who had eluded the border patrols were challenged by judicial safeguards on the rights of those within its borders irrespective of their nationality. The British newspapers though viewed the humanitarian inclination of the courts as undermining the ability of the nation state to police its borders. In France, as opposition against detention and deportations grew, politicians increasingly presented illegal migration as 'fundamentally a British problem' as most of the migrants had come from former colonies, shared a common history, spoke English, had family in Britain and were heading there (Allen 2009). That is by implication they belonged elsewhere and therefore sought to devolve responsibility for deportations to their British counterparts. The Franco-British tensions over how to deal with migrants that had evaded border patrols exposed the primacy of the boundaries of the nation-state and the fragility of co-operation over common borders.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore how the online versions of Britain's mid-market newspapers constructed a social imaginary around illegal migration in the marginal spaces of migrant camps on the French sea border dubbed the jungle. In the process, it demonstrated how spaces are socially imagined and constructed in the cultural and material artefact of the media. Our examination of media's ability to present margins and borders as liminal spaces where norms can be suspended provides a lens to interrogate how space construction in media can mediate both the social imaginary of national borders and our conceptions of the 'other' particularly in immigration policy and cross-border security discourses. It is in this context of the politics of territoriality and marginalization that the jungle metaphor came to ascribe a broader process of space construction beyond the functional reference to migrant shelters, to embody complex interweaving of discourses, which not only constructed the camps as symbolic spaces of degradation and barbarism but as juridical sites where annihilation can be rationalised. The jungle also reveals media's power to both build and diminish our sense of place and belonging.

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[1] Our focus here is the online coverage by the two mid-market newspapers, *Daily Mail* and the *Express,* of the migrant camps known as the ‘jungle’ and the term ‘newspapers’ used here refers to these versions. We do not to infer coverage in the online and print versions is the same but this chapter is not concerned to compare the two.

[2] Although the newspaper is commonly known as the *Daily Express*, it changed its name to the *Express* a number of years ago, this is the name that appears on the website and so it is the one used in this chapter.