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GIORGIO AGAMBEN AND THE SPATIALITIES OF THE CAMP: AN INTRODUCTION

by
Richard Ek

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ABSTRACT. The Italian political philosopher Giorgio Agamben's conclusion that the camp has replaced the city as the biopolitical paradigm of the West is as difficult to digest as it is easy to see how it responds to contemporary political tendencies in the world today. In this introduction to this theme issue on Giorgio Agamben and the spatialities of the camp, a detailed exposition, emulating the structure of Agamben's seminal book *Homo Sacer*, is conducted, tracing the genealogies of Agamben's ideas and commenting on his swiftly enhanced importance in the social sciences and humanities. The introduction concludes by outlining some possible research fields in human geogrphy where much insight could be gained if Agamben's work is given more detailed consideration.

Key words: Giorgio Agamben, camp, homo sacer, power, bio-politics, bare life, naked life

Introduction

The seemingly radical notion that it is the camp rather than the city that has become the biopolitical paradigm of the West, as the state of exception tends to become the rule, is difficult to digest. Nevertheless, a plethora of contemporary societal tendencies resonates ominously well with the alarming conclusions that may be drawn from Giorgio Agamben's work on *homo sacer*, the displacement and desubjectification of more and more human beings in the world today.

On a world political scale, the State of Emergency declared by the post-11 September political leadership of the Bush/Cheney and Blair administrations (Armitage, 2002; Norris, 2005) has initiated inter/national measures that have begun to unravel repellent geopolitical consequences such as the global war prison implemented to fight the 'war on terror' (Gregory, 2006). The territorial states of the 'West', generally regarded in political theory as havens of human rights and enlightened democracy (Slater, 2004), have increasingly implemented harsher immigration and asylum policies (Papastergiadis, 2006). An innocent human is shot dead in the head by the police in the London Underground with the comment 'we are sorry, it was a mistake, but we are prepared to do it again' (Minca, 2006a).

The creation of *homo sacer* and the state of exception are not twenty-first-Century phenomena (Landzelius, 2006), even though the Guantánamo Bay camp is a painfully singular example. Nevertheless, as a result of the second military campaign against Iraq (and Afghanistan before that) by the George Bush Junior administration, world political development has been such that there has been a flurry of interest in Agamben's writings within the social sciences and humanities.[1] Claudio Minca argues that 'Guantánamo is the archetype of the spaces of exception produced by contemporary geopolitics', thus indicating the return of the camp (Minca, 2005, p. 406). When the atrocities in former Yugoslavia could be discursively constructed as 'taking place' due to 'ancient ethnic hatreds' in the geopolitical scripts of the West (ÓTuathail, 1996a), the return of the camp 'has been simply metabolized by a significant part of the electorate in the world's most important democracy' (Minca, 2005, p. 405).

When Gilles Deleuze was asked what kind of knowledge could be conveyed out of *Mille Plateaux* (when it was originally published in 1980) he defiantly answered that 'it's philosophy, nothing else but philosophy' (Wallenstein, 1998, pp. 179–180). Agamben, on the other hand, searches for the contours of another Europe beyond the present orders' degeneration (Fiskesjö, 2004) and explicitly relates to contemporary incidents, such as when the Italian police in 1991 herded Albanian immigrants into the stadium in Bari before sending them to Albania (Agamben, 1998). But Agamben's writing is very complex, and one way of trying to do justice to his work is to triangulate renderings and interpretations of his main conclusions made by other scholars.[2]

Even if Agamben's work on *homo sacer* is metaphysical and usually regarded as philosophical, it also constitutes a distinct spatial theory of power (Minca, 2006a) that calls for an examination and rereading of the political and the spatial, and the spatial logic of the camp (Diken and Laustsen, 2006a). Agamben's spatial theory of power, sovereignty and displacement also invokes a scrutinization of traditional political geographical theories about inclusion and exclusion, belonging and insularity, as well as established imaginations about thematically specific political places such as humanitarian camps (Elden, 2006).

The section that follows includes a brief introduction to Giorgio Agamben's biography and work on language and aesthetics, followed by a more detailed exposition of his work on sovereignty, *homo sacer* and the camp. Emulating the structure of *Homo Sacer* (Agamben, 1998), this section is divided in three subsections, namely: abandonment as the original political relation; the production of naked life as the fundamental activity of sovereign power; and the camp as contemporary biopolitical paradigm. In the fourth section of this introduction, Agamben's increased importance in the social sciences and humanities is commented on, together with a presentation of some of the critique that has been directed towards Agamben's work. In the fifth section, I hint at how Agamben's work on *homo sacer* and the state of exception could enrich human geography, focusing on the research fields of critical geopolitics, mobility, actor network theory and recent work on relational space. Finally, the papers in this theme issue are presented.

Giorgio Agamben's work on language and aesthetics

The philosophy of Agamben is unsystematic or unclassifiable in the sense that it does not reside in a specific system of thought or philosophical school, which means that simply regarding his work as an *oeuvre* or project does not really make much sense (Iversen *et al.,* 2003; Bolt and Pedersen, 2005). Giorgio Agamben was born in Rome in 1942. In 1965, he wrote a doctoral thesis in law and philosophy on the political thought of the French philosopher and Marxist activist Simone Weil. On completion of his law studies, however, Agamben changed direction after having met some writers, and instead became a 'free writer' (Bolt, 2003). He participated in Martin Heidegger's seminars on Heraclitus and Hegel in 1966 and 1968 (Mills, 2006), and became influenced by the German philosopher.

As a philosopher and philologist, Agamben has been on the scene since the late 1970s, although the majority of his work has only been available in English since the early 1990s (Bos, 2005). In his earlier work he focused on aesthetics and literature (Mesnard, 2004) and language and metaphysics (Mills, 2006). In *The Idea of Prose* (Agamben, 1995), for instance, he discusses the relationship between poetry and philosophy, likewise in *Language and Death* (Agamben, 1991), where he also presents a fundamental objection to Derrida's thesis on deconstruction (Thurschwell, 2005). In his first major contribution to the philosophy of aesthetics, *Stanzas* (Agamben, 1993a), which he dedicated to Heidegger, he deals with questions of language and phantasm, and the self and language (Bartoloni, 2004). The experience of language is also elaborated upon in *Infancy and History* (Agamben, 1993b). Questions regarding language and literature (Agamben, 1999a, 1999b) and aesthetic theory (Agamben, 1999c) have also been tackled in later works.

Living in Paris, Agamben was part of the philosophical intelligentsia circle of friends and acquaintances that consisted of Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy, Félix Guattari, Gilles Deleuze, and perhaps especially Guy Debord. He was, however, also a member of the diaspora community of Italian political philosophers that included Toni Negri and Paolo Virno. Like the rest of his generation of Italian philosophers, his work (and life) became both characterized and influenced by a societal reality filled with deep and violent antagonism (Bolt, 2003), and, from the beginning of the 1990s, a turn in Agamben's authorship may be observed in which political theory becomes pivotal (Franchi, 2004; Wallenstein, 2005). In a sense his first 'political' book, *The Coming Community* (Agamben, 1993c), symbolizes a transitory stage between his literary, philosophical books and the political nature of his work, as the book gives philosophical and literary examples of communities based on nothing else but openness (Bolt, 2003; Bolt and Pedersen, 2005).

There is however no break with his earlier productions. For instance, *Infancy and History* (Agamben, 1993b) contains seminal concerns about the capture of life and preoccupations that eventually evolve in generalized figures such as *The muselmann* (Damai, 2005), whereas *Language and Death* (Agamben, 1991) investigates the metaphysical connection between human mortality and a capacity for language (Norris, 2005). From the middle of the 1990s and onwards, Agamben's contribution to political theory should rather be considered as an enquiry into aesthetics, history and language, since his political philosophy fits seamlessly with his other philosophy (Thurschwell, 2005).

Giorgio Agamben's work on sovereignty, *Homo Sacer* and the camp

Agamben's texts are usually complex, dense, multi-layered and written in a continental philosophical, post-foundational tradition.[3] One can read and interpret Agamben in different ways, so it is to be expected that an interpretive dialogue will take place within the social sciences and human geography during the coming years. In this sense, Agamben's work is becoming a significant source in a multitude of contexts (e.g. readers, introductory texts, key thinker compilations, essential works, critical appraisals) in much the same way as other central thinkers in philosophy and the social sciences such as Michel Foucault, Henri Lefebvre and Manuel Castells.

A linear reading of Agamben is only the first step in an interpretation of his work, however. For instance, *Homo Sacer* (Agamben, 1998) is written in an episodic mode, where the relationships between the different sections are not always evident (Fitzpatrick, 2005). According to Thomas Wall, each section of Agamben's texts should be read as being superimposed one upon the other, as if they simultaneously occupied the same space (Wall, 1999, p. 121).[4] Agamben's political philosophy is eclectic (Sinnerbrink, 2005; Vogt, 2005), in the word's most positive sense. He picks the most useful interpretations and conclusions from other philosophical and social works and assembles them into a meaningful whole (on eclecticism, see Kelley, 2001; Tellings, 2001).

So far Agamben's *Homo Sacer* project includes three books: Part I being *Homo Sacer* (Agamben, 1998), Part II: I *State of Exception* (Agamben, 2005a), and Part III *Remnants of Auschwitz* (Agamben, 2002a). Part II: II has not yet been published.[5] In addition, in *Means Without End* (Agamben, 2000), several of the articles are outlines of the central parts of *Homo Sacer* and *Remnants of Auschwitz*. For instance, in the first part of *Means Without End,* the (re)appearance of the camp is dealt with in a somewhat more rudimentary and accessible way than in *Homo Sacer*. In this exposition I focus on the first volume and follow the book's structure: *The Logic of Sovereignty*, *Homo Sacer* and *The Camp as Biopolitical Paradigm of the Modern*. Earlier surveys have proved very helpful, especially those of Nasser Hussain and Melissa Ptacek (2000), and Jenny Edkins (2000).

The original political relation

In *Homo Sacer* (1998), Agamben tells a story of the indifferentiability of relationships: between law and life (Kieslow, 2005) and between 'humans' and 'politics' (Spinks, 2001). His ambition is to reveal the true and original nature of the political realm through a three-faceted account of the politics of sovereignty in the West (Edkins, 2000; Hussain and Ptacek, 2000;): literary-historical (Part 1), mythical (Part 2) and 'one as brutal as possible' (Part 3) (Kieslow, 2005).

The literary-historical facet departs from Carl Schmitt's theory on sovereignty and the exception. For the conservative philosopher Schmitt, the basic principle of politics was the distinction between 'us' and 'them' (Gregory, 2004a) and the '*nomos* of the earth' was a spatial ordering, conceptualized on the basis of an 'us inside – them outside' divide (Diken and Laustsen, 2005a). In Schmitt's definition of political sovereignty in *Political Theology* (Schmitt, 1985), the sovereign is whoever can decide on the state of exception. Although standing outside the normal juridical order, the sovereign nevertheless belongs to it because he is responsible for deciding whether the normal order should be suspended *in toto* (Agamben, 2005a). According to Schmitt, the sovereign guarantees the validity of the law by being outside it. In other words, by being the constituting power, the sovereign is outside the constituted power (Wallenstein, 2005). For Agamben, the paradox of sovereignty is the fact that the sovereign is simultaneously outside and inside the juridical order. This implies that the power of sovereign rulers is not primarily defined by their capability to create, but rather to suspend law and order (Agamben, 1998; Hozic, 2002).

Schmitt's understanding of the exception is related to a state of emergency in society that endangers the state and requires the suspension of the normal order to resolve. However, in Agamben's exegesis, the notion of the exception moves away to a more original function (Hussain and Ptacek, 2000) in which the exception reveals itself as a kind of exclusion. What is excluded is not absolutely excluded in relation to the sovereign, but is maintained in relation to the rule of the sovereign in the form of the sovereign's suspension (Agamben, 1998); that the exception is an inclusive exclusion.

Inclusive exclusion is the 'key' to understanding modern political power (Bartonek, 2004), as it describes the ontological foundations of politics and the deepest expression of Western metaphysics (Bernstein, 2004; Mills, 2004).

As a consequence, the original political relation, or the relation of exception, is the relation of the ban – of a*ban*donment – rather than application[6] (Agamben, 1998, p. 29; Dean, 2004; Wall, 2005), a category of relation (Düttman, 2001) with a more complex topology than the inclusion–exclusion division (Pratt, 2005). Here, Agamben refers to the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy's (1993) musings on the experience of law, and its ontological structure as that of abandonment (Agamben, 1998, pp. 58–59). 'He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather *abandoned* by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable' (Agamben, 1998, p. 28; emphasis in original). The relation of the ban is constituted by thresholds, or zones of indifference, opened up by sovereign violence[7] (Agamben, 1998) where concepts of inside and outside become blurred rather than exclude each other (Agamben, 2005a).

Here, Agamben directs himself towards Walter Benjamin's essay *Critique of Violence* (Benjamin, 1978). Benjamin has exerted an enormous influence on Agamben (Borislavov, 2005),[8] who argues that 'In laying bare the irreducible link uniting violence and law, Benjamin's 'Critique of Violence' proves the necessary and, even today, indispensable premise of every inquiry into sovereignty' (Agamben, 1998, p. 63). The work of Benjamin is used as a bridge between parts 1 and 2 of *Homo Sacer*, in the *Threshold* section (pp. 63–67). In Benjamin's analysis, the link between law and violence is an oscillation between the violence that posits the law and preserves it. The violence exercised in the state of exception, however, conserves law in suspension (acts and manifests rather than rules and executes), and the distinction and dialectic between violence that posits and preserves the law is broken. At this stage, Benjamin zeroes in on the bearer of the link between violence and the law, on a figure he calls 'bare life', and brings into being a link between juridical violence and bare life (Agamben, 1998, 2005a). Agamben makes the same intellectual move and asks himself 'what is excepted and captured in sovereignty, and who is the bearer of the sovereign ban? Both Benjamin and Schmitt, if differently, point to life...as the element that, in the exception, finds itself in the most intimate relation with sovereignty. It is this relation that we must now clarify' (Agamben, 1998, p. 67).

The fundamental activity of sovereign power

The mythical facet departs from what Agamben regards as the primary example of inclusive exclusion in classical Western politics, namely the separation of the biological and political aspects of life. *Zoē*, the biological fact of living common to all living beings (Agamben, 2000), was included through exclusion from the *polis* and confined to the domestic sphere, *oikos* (Edkins, 2000) at the same time as *bio*, 'the form or way of living proper to an individual or a group' (Agamben, 1998, p. 1) became the politically qualified life part of the *polis*. Western politics is constituted by this originary fissure between *zoē* and *bios* (Wall, 2005) and has not succeeded in constructing a link between the two (Agamben, 1998). As a consequence, while parts of 'society' have been excluded from politics they have at the same time been included, i.e. affected by the more or less violent consequences of politics. When *zoē* (i.e. biological or natural life) is included through an exclusion from *polis*, i.e. abandoned (the original act of sovereignty), naked life is produced (Hussain and Ptacek, 2000). There are four categories of 'life' in *Homo Sacer:*, *zoē, bio,* naked life and 'form-of-life' (Mills, 2005).[9] In other words, 'naked life' is a distinct modality of existence in which *zoē* is politicized (through abandonment and/or exposure to sovereign violence, on/in the threshold/zone of indistinction) (*ibid.*), and a limit concept between *polis* and the *oikos* (Mills, 2004). The fundamental activity of sovereign power is (through an act of abandoning subjects) the production of naked life (Agamben, 1998; Diken, 2005).

Agamben here takes one step further in his investigation of the bearer of the sovereign ban by going back to the Roman grammarian Pompeius Festus' notion of a figure of archaic Roman law, *homo sacer*. For the first time, sacredness is tied to human life as such (Agamben, 1998), and his overall effort is to split the concept of the sacred from notions of sacrifice, holiness and religious experience, and to reveal the concept as a primordial political exercise, a setting apart (Hussain and Ptacek, 2000), and at the same time to 'uncover an originary *political* structure that is located in a zone prior to the distinction between sacred and profane, religious and juridical' (Agamben, 1998, p. 74; emphasis in original). If life is made sacred by the act of setting apart, such an activity is thus connected to the idea of the sovereign exception ('exception' comes from *ex-capere*, or taken outside) (Hussain and Ptacek, 2000). *Homo sacer* is a figure defined by a double exclusion (from human jurisdiction and divine law) that it is possible to kill without punishment (the act of killing in this circumstance does not count as homicide) but is forbidden (due to the figure's sacral unworthiness being outside the religious order) to sacrifice:

> Just as the law, in the sovereign exception, applies to the exceptional case in no longer applying and in withdrawing from it, so *homo sacer* belongs to God[10] in the form of unsacrificeability and is included in the community in the form of being able to be killed. *Life that cannot be sacrificed and yet may be killed is sacred life.*
>
> (Agamben, 1998, p. 82, emphasis in original)

That sacred life and naked life can be killed but not murdered or sacrificed becomes a principle that is inherent in the formulation of sacred life as well as in the structure of sovereign power; that is, Agamben draws a historical line where *homo sacer* and naked life becomes synonymous (Bartonek, 2004):

> In the figure of this 'sacred life', something like a bare life makes its appearance in the Western world. What is decisive, however, is that from the beginning this sacred life has an eminently political character and exhibits an essential link with the terrain on which sovereign power is founded.
>
> (Agamben, 1998, p. 100)

This conclusion points to the assertion that 'Western politics is a biopolitics from the very beginning, and that every attempt to found political liberties in the rights of the citizen is, therefore, in vain' (Agamben, 1998, p. 181). This, in turn, suggests two central inferences: first, that the 'birth' of biopolitics needs to be re-evaluated, and second, that all human beings are potentially *homines sacri*.

To begin with, Agamben argues that since the 'production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power' (Agamben, 1998, p. 6), Michel Foucault's claim that politics became biopolitics at the beginning of the modern era (when natural life was included in the calculations and mechanisms of state power) has to be corrected (Edkins, 2000; Norris, 2005). In pointing out that 'biopolitics is not a distinctively *modern* modality of power' (Gregory, 2004b, p. 804; emphasis added) Agamben is here referring to Foucault's discussion in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* on how, in the modern era, 'Western man was gradually learning what it meant to be a living species in a living world' and how:

> For the first time in history, no doubt, biological existence was reflected in political existence.... For millennia, man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with an additional capacity for a political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence as a living being in question.
>
> (Foucault, 1990, pp. 142–143)

Agamben is nevertheless very sympathetic towards Foucault's work, and has subsequently placed his own work within the intellectual genealogy of biopolitical theoreticians like Foucault and Hannah Arendt (Grosse, 2006). 'Completing Foucault' (Fitzpatrick, 2005) is therefore perhaps a better expression than 'correcting Foucault', as Agamben's *Homo Sacer* project primarily radicalizes Foucault's theses on biopolitics (Gregory, 2004b).[11] Following Foucault, Agamben claims that the modern state is not primarily based on citizens as free and conscious subjects, but on citizens as naked life. Their birth becomes the sovereign powers' stake and fundament (Bartonek, 2004). Only naked life is authentically political (Agamben, 1998), and the nation's citizens are subordinated to the biopolitically organized legal system's possioility to at any time decide the extent of each individual's rights. Each citizen is never once and for all either 'in' or 'out', but is rather on the threshold (Rosén, 2004). As partly argued in footnote 6, 'This disturbing feature of the exercise of modern sovereign power makes redundant all political theories grounded in human rights or principles of justice, since these remain blind to the essentially *biopolitical* foundation of modern political nationality' (Sinnerbrink, 2005, p. 252) and perhaps makes the abandonment of the traditional identification of the subject (as citizen, the nation as a sovereign people,[12] the worker) (Vighi, 2003) necessary. It may be that contemporary political philosophy needs to be rebuilt, but on the refugee as an analytical figure (Agamben, 2000; see also next section).

This first conclusion leads directly to the second.

As biopolitical subjects, every human being is a potential *homines sacri* as they (or rather, we) are, at the most elemental level, excluded in the sense that our most elemental 'zero position' is the biopolitical object, and that eventual political and civil rights are only given to us according to biopolitical strategic deliberations (Žižek, 2004). As a biological minimum, naked life is a condition to which all human beings can be reducible through a suspension of their ontological status as subjects (Butler, 2004). For Agamben, *homo sacer* is not only a figure in the legal philosophy of ancient Rome, but is also subject to recurrent materializations in history (Dean, 2004), since (and here Benjamin's influence on Agamben is again apparent) the history and tradition of the oppressed informs us that the state of exception is now the rule (Benjamin, 1969; see also Buchanan, 2002), In turn, in the *Threshold* section between parts 2 and 3 in *Homo Sacer* (1998, pp. 112–115), Agamben suggests that life today is exposed to (sovereign) violence without precedent 'in the most profane and banal ways' (p. 114), and:

> If it is true that the figure proposed by our age is that of an unsacrificeable life that has nevertheless become capable of being killed to an unprecedented degree, then the bare life of *homo sacer* concerns us in a special way. Sacredness is a line of flight still present in contemporary politics,[13] a line that is as such *moving into zones increasingly vast and dark*, to the point of ultimately coinciding with the biological life itself of citizens. If today, there is no longer any clear figure of the sacred man, it is perhaps because we are all virtually *homines sacri*.
>
> (Agamben, 1998, pp. 114–115; emphasis added)

The contemporary biopolitical paradigm

The third – and the most brutal – facet departs from the argument that the politicization of life has reached such an extent that the state of exception comes more and more to the foreground as the fundamental political structure. Here, Agamben turns to Hannah Arendt, to find that she did not incorporate any biopolitical perspective into her writings on totalitarianism and the concentration camp (Arendt, 1951). His entrance into the analysis of the contemporary biopolitical paradigm is therefore a combination and radicalization of Arendt and Foucault (who did not explicitly discuss the concentration camp). Arendt has a clear influence on Agamben's ideas (Kalyvas, 2005), especially when he argues that there is a point of contact between mass democracies and totalitarian states, in the sense that they both build their sovereign power on naked life (Agamben, 1998).[14] As a consequence, when democratic states (through the act of sovereign a*ban*donment) put the state of exception in the foreground, democracy and totalitarianism converge (Ball, 2005), or perhaps more accurately, democracy closes itself upon totalitarianism.[15]

Another point of contact between mass democracies and totalitarian states (as both are based on sovereign power) is the common question concerning which form of organization is the most appropriate when it comes to the task of assuring the care, control and use of naked life (Agamben, 1998). Johan van der Walt interprets sovereignty as the power to determine, or simply *manage*, which technically means managing the ultimately disinterested non-decision to either continue or discontinue an instance of naked life. 'Sovereignty would be the trampling of the spider without the need or the wish to scare, the wiping of a shoe without shuddering' (van der Walt, 2005, p. 278). The desire of sovereignty is so completely self-identical and absolutely self-related that its engagement with others is best reduced to a silent managerial processing (*ibid*., p. 279). Organization is here not a citadel of order, but a threshold where people routinely pass from order to disorder and from disorder to order. From this view there is only a difference of degree (although quite a large difference) between 'sacking a person on the one hand and in holding him or her in a camp on the other' (Bos, 2005, pp. 18–19).

Agamben puts the notion of the camp in focus here, as for him it is the camp that reveals itself as the form of organization of naked life that the sovereign chooses; a pure and absolute biopolitical space and the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity. As far as I understand Agamben, while biopolitics and the production of naked life are not specific to modernity, the camp is. After having discussed examples of naked life in history, such as *Versuchspersonen* or human guinea-pigs in concentration camps and the comatose girl Karen Quinlan (Agamben, 1998),[16] in the final chapter of *Homo Sacer* Agamben turns to the camp as the '*nomos*' of the modern. He starts by emphasizing that the camp has a colonial origin (created by the Spanish in Cuba and the English in South Africa at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century respectively; see also

Campbell, 2002), and stresses that colonial war extended the State of Emergency to an entire civil population. The camp was born out of a state of exception and martial law, rather than ordinary law.

A crucial notion in the understanding of the camp is uncovered here: the connection between racism, colonialism, biopolitics and the camp. Modernity is a colonial modernity, and its histories and geographies have been made in the shadow of colonialism (Gregory, 2004a).[17] To Achille Mbembe (2003), race has been an ever-present shadow in Western political practice and thought when it comes to ruling over foreign people:

> In sum, colonies are zones in which war and disorder, internal and external figures of the political, stand side by side or alternate with each other. As such, the colonies are the location par excellence where the controls and guarantees of judicial order can be suspended – the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of 'civilization'.
>
> (Mbembe, 2003, p. 24)

Through colonial management, Western sovereign states become involved in the differentiation and categorization of people, 'a way of separating out the groups that exist within a population' that Foucault (2003a, pp. 254–255) defines as racism. When such a separation is inscribed in the mechanisms of state power, racism goes biopolitical (Diken and Laustsen, 2005a). One form of life (separated out in an act of racism and imagined as responsible for biological threats) is perceived as a threat to another form of life (imagined as a 'society'), which means that society must be defended. The killing of the other contributes to life; the life of society (Foucault, 2003a). Soon afterwards the sovereign power starts looking inward for enemies from whom society has to be defended. The separation of life thus continues within, from an 'ethnic racism' to an 'internal racism' 'whose function is not so much the prejudice or defence of one group against another as the detection of all those within a group who may be the carriers of a danger to it' (Foucault, 2003b, p. 317).[18] Colonial models were brought back to the West with something resembling colonization as a result: an internal colonialism (Foucault, 2003a) or an endo-colonization (Virilio, 1991a).

Accordingly, the camp is a management technology best suited to the production of naked life on the threshold, whether that naked life is territorially situated in the 'West' or not. The sovereign keeps on abandoning its subjects, creating naked life in order to defend 'society', and the state starts treating its own citizens as potential enemies and outsiders (Diken and Laustsen, 2005a). As the logic of the camp becomes more generalized in society, the production of naked life is thus extended beyond the concentration camp's walls. The camp replaces *polis* as the contemporary biopolitical paradigm.[19] The camps not only become camps for the disadvantaged, but also for the advantaged as gated communities and other solipsistic enclaves for the wealthy in the city of splintered urbanism and other places (Graham and Marvin, 2001; Diken, 2004). The project that started with Aristotle, namely the distinction between *polis* and naked life, has collapsed (Norris, 2005).

We are therefore forced to admit that we repeatedly find ourselves in the presence of a camp, whether or not different kinds of degradation are committed there. This is not only because the logic of the camp stretches itself outside the concentration camp but also because the camp is materialized (and in its spatial and material form finds its most potent expression) (Agamben, 2005; Minca, 2005). In its political form as a territoriality of power, this materialization turns the capacity of exemption into an awesome weapon of the sovereign authority. The camps' materiality transforms the law of sovereign power into a cage (Bauman, 2003). Here, Agamben relates the political situation to the crisis of the nation state:

> It [the birth of the camp] is produced at the point at which the political system of the modern nation-state, which was founded on the functional nexus between a determinate localization (land) and a determinate order (the State) and mediated by automatic rules for the inscription of life (birth or the nation), enters into a lasting crisis, and the State decides to assume directly the care of the nation's biological life as one of its proper tasks…the camp is the new, hidden regulator of the inscription of life in the order…[and] is the fourth, inseparable element that has now added itself – and so broken – the old trinity composed of the state, the nation (birth), and land.
>
> (Agamben, 1998, pp. 175–176)

So, even if the nation state is in crisis in today's global world, Agamben reminds us of its lingering presence and the fact that we continue to live under the auspices of a classic state similar to that of early modern Europe (Heins, 2005; Kalyvas, 2005).[20] He concludes that the third thesis (that the camp is the biopolitical camp of the West):

> throws a sinister light on the models by which social science, sociology, urban studies, and architecture today are trying to conceive and organize the public space of the world's cities without any clear awareness that at their very center lies the same bare life (even if it has been transformed and rendered apparently more human) that defined the biopolitics of the great totalitarian states of the twentieth century.
>
> (Agamben, 1998, pp. 181–182)

The question is whether that is about to change.[21]

Giorgio Agamben and the social sciences and humanities

As a 'genealogist of security' (Marchart, 2003), Giorgio Agamben is perhaps the one who today asks the most disturbing questions regarding constituting and constituted power (Borislavov, 2005), links between sovereignty and security and the 'war on terror' (Norris, 2005). *Homo Sacer* is little by little gaining the status of a 'post-modern political classic' (Ojakangas, 2005).

The increased interest in Agamben reflects increased engagement in biopolitics and biopower in general; concepts that have become increasingly prominent in contemporary political thought (Sinnerbrink, 2005). Agamben's actuality is therefore in tandem with the marked resurgence of interest in Foucault's work, not only due to the recent transcriptions and translations of Foucault's lectures (Foucault, 2003a, 2003b, 2006) but also the confluence of recent political events (war on terror, increased Islamophobia, vilification of asylum-seekers) to which a Foucaultian analysis is particularly germane (Golder, 2005). At the same time, the renewed interest in Schmitt in political theory (Kalyvas, 2000; Rasch, 2000, 2003; Koskenniemi, 2004; Stirk, 2004; Ojakangas, 2005) should be seen as an aftermath of the influential publications of not only Agamben, but also Derrida (primarily *Politics of Friendship* (Derrida, 1997, but also I would argue 2000, 2001 and 2005) (Prozorov, 2005). New and old texts by Foucault, Agamben, Schmitt, Hardt and Negri (2000, 2004) and others mutually reinforce each other's importance in the social sciences and the humanities, as together they offer a deeper understanding of the present bio- and geopolitical condition.

Agamben's work has been used to illuminate a plethora of aspects, tendencies and phenomena that have been discussed and analysed within academia. Two areas of research are especially salient, namely the situation of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants, and the new security situation.

For Agamben, the refugee is perhaps the only thinkable figure for the people of our time, the only category and the central figure of our political history (Agamben, 2000). Faced with increased migratory pressures after the Second World War, territorial states in Europe have created an increasingly complex system of civic stratifications and migration management systems (Kofman, 2005) that is dependent on the figure of the asylum-seeker as a threat (Tyler, 2006). The results are millions of stateless people inside the territorial states (Bauman, 2002, 2003), inhumane changes in citizenship and migration policies (Walters, 2002; Evans, 2003; Harrington, 2005) and even more inhumane detention centres and other migration and refugee camps throughout the world (Perera, 2002; Rajaram and Grundy-Warr, 2004; Diken and Laustsen, 2005a).

Furthermore, the terror threat has been taken as a pretext to dismantle civic rights that, following the breakdown of the Soviet Union, were argued would become universal (Fiskesjö, 2004), so that 'Today we are facing extreme and most dangerous developments of this paradigm of security. In the course of a gradual neutralization of politics and the progressive surrender of traditional tasks of the state, security imposes itself as the basic principle of state activity' (Agamben, 2002b, p. 1). The politics of security may be seen increasingly as a fundamentalist belief; as a kind of new church of faith (Diken and Laustsen, 2006b), involving increased domestic hegemony of militarism in the USA (Cunningham, 2004), the rearticulation of the relationship between sovereignty and citizenship legitimized by the 'new normalcy' as a central metaphor (Bhandar, 2004), the justification of 'just wars' (Palladino, 2005) and the branding of the Guantánamo Bay camp as though it were the public face of exceptionalism (see further Johns, 2005; Minca, 2005; Neal, 2006).

Agamben points towards the production of naked life in other kinds of camps as well, although he admits that his choices of examples may seem extreme and even arbitrary. 'Yet the list could well have continued with cases no less extreme and still more familiar: the Bosnian women at Omarska' (Agamben, 1998, pp. 186–187) and camps based on military interventions and/or humanitarian grounds (*ibid*., p. 187). Even so, the separation between humanitarianism and politics today and the sell-out of independent humanitarianism have been identified as the extreme phase of the separation of the rights of the citizen and the rights of man (Agamben, 1998, see also Heins, 2005):

> The rise of human-rights discourse and democracy paralleled the rise of the modern sovereign state, and the trope of humanitarianism itself has been emblematic of international orders from colonial empires through the international society of sovereign states to the so-called new humanitarianism of the late twentieth century. The only new thing about this later humanitarianism is the new sovereign order of violence that it institutes. The relation between humanitarianism and either violent militarism or politics is not an oxymoron. Humanitarianism is essential to both: it is deeply implicated in the production of a sovereign political power that claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence.
>
> (Edkins, 2000, p. 13)

Other kinds of camp worth mentioning here are the rape camps of the former Yugoslavia, hedonistic sunbathing resorts such as Ibiza and more low-profile arrangements of disciplinary confinement – voluntary camps such as theme parks (Diken and Laustsen, 2004, 2005a, 2005c).[22] How Israeli governments have gradually folded the sacralization of the Land of Israel into the reduction of the Palestinian people to *homines sacri* has also been analysed and commented upon from an Agamben point of view (Gregory, 2003, 2004a, 2004c; Enns, 2004). In addition, Agamben's work has finally been a creative injection in research areas such as legal studies (Schûtz, 2000; Newman, 2004; Rosén, 2005) and social and cultural studies of science and medicine (Palladino, 2003; Cohn, 2004; Cresswell, 2005; Moreira and Palladino, 2005; Russ *et al.,* 2005).

The large volume of literature on Agamben includes of course valuable critique, with various degrees of sympathy. One of the most critical points levelled against him is that he is not sensitive to the dimension of gender. This is quite surprising, since his analysis of the production of naked life starts with the public and the private, *zoē* and *bios* (Pratt, 2005). According to Andrew Asibong (2003, p. 171), 'the question of sex and its interaction with systems of power should be considered as a crucial point of entry into the very concept of bare life and, even more importantly, emerges as a key to the issue of its survival and revolutionary manipulation by the sacred, or potentially sacred, subject'. It is not only that many of those who are ontologically devaluated to the status of naked life are women but 'both admission to citizenship and [the] rendering [of] individuals as bare life are accomplished through – and often in the name of – gendered and heterosexual norms' (Pratt, 2005, pp. 1056–1057). Lisa Sanchez even argues that the figure of *homo sacer* is gendered as masculine, not only etymologically but also in the sense that Agamben himself displaces and excludes women by overlooking the gendered quality of sovereignty, legality and the inclusion – exclusion dichotomy. Hence:

> His outlaw [Agamben's *homo sacer*] is not complete, but emblematic of a kind of privileged and partial exclusion, a displacement that is temporary and conditional and that depends upon a figure whose exclusion is more complete...the prostitute is the excluded exclusion that makes *homo sacer's* displacement and return to the social possible. Agamben's abrupt dismissal of the women in the text as not a part of 'what is important' is symptomatic of precisely the kind of erasure we see repeated in the myths and legends of our history.
>
> (Sanchez, 2004, p. 868)

Agamben has also been criticized for being dualistic in his approach, particularly as he reads Foucault structurally rather than genealogically (Neal, 2006). You are either *homo sacer* or potentially *homo sacer*; there is no in-between. Instead, *homo sacer* and the sovereign should be regarded as being far less solid and stable than Agamben suggests (Long, 2006). Another point of critique is that Agamben romanticizes the refugee as the figure of naked life *par excellence*. To Agamben, the refugee becomes a sentimental trope or key to the very codes of political power:

> For him, the radical political potential of the refugee resides in the fact that when they appear, 'our' collective belief in democracy might fail as power is forced to reveal itself in

> its 'true' and pure form (biopolitics). This Wizard of Oz scenario, in which the curtain of illusion falls back to reveal the operations of power, is incredibly simplistic despite Agamben's theoretical complexity.
>
> (Tyler, 2006, p. 197)

Moreover, to Andreas Kalyvas (2005) *Homo Sacer* lacks an account of the forces, interests, struggles, strategies, actors and so on that were and still are involved in the production of bio-sovereign power:

> By assimilating political relations to a single master concept, that of sovereignty, Agamben can no longer localize the contingency of political and social struggles. His approach...assumes an almost totalistic, agentless history, and though it is concerned with politics and its eclipse, it is itself quite unpolitical...Agamben gives no explanation for the sovereign's repeated victories and unstoppable march toward the camp, leaving the impression that the disastrous triumph of sovereign power might have been guided by the iron hand of historical necessity all the way to the camps....He does not differentiate among various forms and modalities of political power and overlooks instances of mediation. By disregarding the distinct aspects of political power, politics is relegated to a single, pejorative version of sovereign power and state authority.
>
> (Kalyvas, 2005, p. 115)

As a consequence, Agamben evinces a tension between the ontological aspects of biopower as the fundament of politics and the physical and factual existence of specific biopolitical regimes, with the result that despite a 'breathtaking historical sweep, the biopolitical paradigm displays a marked loss of specificity in its analyses of contemporary biopolitical phenomena' (Sinnerbrink, 2005, p. 258). Yet another point of critique regards the question of the relationship between the nomothetic and the idiographic, as the broader social preconditions and the mechanisms of the Nazi regime are in turn treated as indices of 'modernity' or an inevitable outgrowth of the logic of capitalism (Turner, 2005); a critique that has also been directed towards Zygmunt Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989).

Agamben's controversial work has been defended as well. His fundamental research design – that through an investigation of the extreme it is possible to say something about the regular or general – is not an unusual or uncommon research methodology, Paul Virilio works in a similar way. However, Agamben's methodological use of the paradigm needs to be clarified. In an interview, Agamben argues that:

> I work with paradigms. A paradigm is something like an example, an exemplar, an historically singular phenomenon. As it was with the panopticon for Foucault, so is the *Homo Sacer* or the Muselmann or the state of exception for me. And then I use this paradigm to construct a large group of phenomena and in order to understand an historical structure, again analogous with Foucault, who developed his 'panopticism' from the panopticon.[23] But this kind of analysis should not be confused with a sociological investigation.
>
> (Raulff, 2004, p. 610)

The meaning of paradigm relates to Thomas Kuhn's second, less well-known meaning of the word (Kuhn, 1962). In an attempt at clarification, Agamben claims that 'in my books they [*homo sacer*, *muselmann*] were treated as paradigms whose function was to establish and make intelligible a wider set of problems. This brought about some misunderstanding, especially amongst those persons who in good or in bad faith seemed to think that I was illegitimately acting as an historian, using facts as metaphors and vice versa' (Agamben, 2002c, p. 1). Kuhn used the term 'paradigm' in two different ways: to designate what the members of a specific scientific community had in common, and, as a single element of a whole, acting as a common example or model. In this second sense, the paradigm is a single phenomenon, 'a singularity, which can be repeated and thus acquires the capability of tacitly modeling the behaviour and the practice of scientists' (*ibid*., p. 2). After this clarification, Agamben turns to Aristotle's definition of the paradigm in order to describe its logic and at the same time argue that his use of figures such as *homo sacer* and the *muselmann* should not be methodologically read in an inductive (or deductive for that matter) way (here quoted at length):

> Aristotle says that the paradigm, the example, does not concern a part with respect to the whole, nor the whole with respect to the part, it concerns a part with respect to the part. This is a very interesting definition. This means

> that the paradigm does not move from the particular to the universal, nor the universal to the particular, but from the particular to the particular. In other words, we first have deduction which goes from the universal to the particular, we have induction which goes from the particular to the universal and then the third we have the paradigm and the analogy which go from the particular to the particular....To understand how a paradigm works, we first have to neutralize traditional philosophical oppositions such as universal and particular, general and individual, and even also, form and content. The paradigm analogy is depolar and dichotomic, it is tensional and not oppositional. It produces a field of polar tensions which tend to form a zone of undecidability which neutralizes every rigid opposition. We don't have here a dichotomy, meaning two zones or elements clearly separated and distinguished by a caesura, we have a field where two opposite tensions run. The paradigm is neither universal nor particular, neither general nor individual, it is a singularity which, showing itself as such, produces a new ontological context. This is the etymological meaning of the word paradigme in Greek, paradigme is literally 'what shows itself beside'. Something is shown beside, 'para'.
>
> (Agamben, 2002c, p. 3)

René ten Bos (2005) regards the accusations that Agamben's work is unrealistic missing the point, and that 'Here is a philosopher at work' (but a philosopher that relates his thinking to contemporary events). 'It is true, Agamben's own sense of urgency has seduced him to write in perhaps overly dramatic and alarmist tones about camps as paradigms for political organization' (*ibid.*, p. 18). He is obviously motivated by an ethical drive to lay bare the juridico-political mechanisms of power that make it possible to commit violence which do not count as crime (van Muster, 2004) and the prophetic tone in his texts seemingly comes from 'someone who accuses his/her contemporaries of being unable to put an end to this [sovereign violence] and also of being unable to look beyond that end' (Bos, 2005, p. 21).

Giorgio Agamben and human geography

How then can Agamben's work on *homo sacer* and the state of exception enrich human geography? In the following this question will be approached by first suggesting how Agamben's conclusions may be incorporated into critical geopolitics, and then going on to discuss Agamben in relation to the claimed mobility turn in human geography (and other disciplines) as well as into relation to ANT-influenced texts. Finally, the idea that Agamben's thoughts may be of use in the discussion on relational space will be raised.

Agamben and critical geopolitics

Critical geopolitics started in the mid-1980s as a reaction to mainstream political geography's concentration on the territorial state in international politics. It called for a discursive approach that did not normalize the state system (ÓTuathail, 1987). Political geography had to break away from what John Agnew later labelled the 'territorial trap' in the social sciences (Agnew, 1994). In their seminal article, ÓTuathail and Agnew (1992) reformulated geopolitics as a discursive approach. Geopolitics should 'be critically re-conceptualized as a discursive practice by which intellectuals of statecraft "spatialize" international politics in such a way as to represent it as a "world" characterized by particular types of places, peoples and dramas. In our understanding, the study of geopolitics is the study of the spatialization of international politics by core powers and hegemonic states' (ÓTuathail and Agnew, 1992, p. 192). As a consequence, critical geopolitics is 'an engagement with the more philosophical discussions of our time which call into question the construction of the political of the political order of (late? or post) modernity and its political articulation in terms of sovereignty and the patriarchal authority of territorial modes of rule' (Dalby, 1994, p. 607).

This is not the place for a total recollection of the history of critical geopolitics. Suffice it to say that, during the 1990s, the subfield was a creative and thriving engagement with the historical and contemporary politics of writing global space (ÓTuathail, 1996b).[24] Successively, critical geopolitics was institutionalized during the late 1990s and is now an established part of political geography. In my opinion, however, the work of Agamben has much of value to bring to this discursive approach to geopolitics. This is hardly a controversial argument, as both critical geopolitics and Agamben's texts are, to a significant degree, based on Foucault's work on discourse and power. Benedikt Korf (2006) has analysed ethnic antagonism in Sri

Lanka by combining Agamben and critical geopolitics. It could be fruitful here to go back to ÓTuathail and Agnew's concept of 'intellectuals of statecraft' (1992) and reconsider how the agency of statecraft (i.e. the community of state bureaucrats, foreign policy experts and advisers and political leaders), actively produces naked life and states of exceptions. For even if, following Agamben, the production of naked life on the threshold is inherent to the existence of a sovereign power, the discursive writing of global political space, the production of geopolitical imaginations, the interpretation of geopolitical events and the implemented geopolitics based on these writings/imaginations/interpretations (such as, at the time of writing at the beginning of August 2006, the Israeli military aggression in Southern Lebanon) are finally conducted and initiated by political agents, as 'practical statecraft'.

However, the work of Agamben is not only valuable to a further investigation of the postmodern geopolitical condition of the twenty-first century (ÓTuathail, 2000) and a complement to his more schematic, agentless account of the state of exception in contemporary affairs. The literature on world politics after 9/11, where the politics of security and terror mirror each other in a smooth space of indistinction (Diken and Laustsen, 2002; Diken, 2004), could in turn, benefit from insights into the spatialities of power and warfare, as do Stephen Graham's work on urban geopolitics and vertical warfare (2002, 2004a, 2005a, 2005b and 2006; see also the contributions in 2004b) and Derek Gregory's work (2004a) on the colonial past and present. Claudo Minca's recent contributions (2006a, 2006b) also show how a close reading of classical geopolitics makes it possible to outline the spatial architecture of Agamben's theory and comment upon the contemporary dance macabre of the biopolitical machine as well.

Agamben and the mobility turn

Although mobility is not a recent phenomenon, but rather something inherent in human civilization, technological development has resulted in rounds of time–space compression which have made it necessary to totally reconsider human geographies in the contemporary world. There is no need here to give a general description of mobility as a phenomenon and, in a sense, ontology (see the editorial in the new journal *Mobilities* by Hannam *et al.*, 2006),[25] but I would like to re-emphasize the important conclusion reached by among others Phil Hubbard and Keith Lilley (2004) that, first and foremost, mobility is always stratified and speed exists only in relation to slowness in both absolute and relative terms, and second, that mobility is always produced in tandem with the production of immobility. These facts are central to any discussion about how the work of Agamben can enrich studies in the spatialities of mobilities, since the production of mobility and immobility overlaps the production of naked life.

One very obvious example of this is sovereign power's obsession with security in space of flows, with secured and sorted mobilities as a consequence (Adey, 2004a). Increased security and surveillance apparatus at airports is a particularly pedagogical example (Lyon, 2003; Adey, 2004b; Aaltola, 2005; see also Amoore, 2006), and perhaps constitute a paradigm in Agamben's use of the word. The airport has also been described as something similar to a camp: 'Both airport and camp constitute zones of exception, each are framed by a rhetoric of emergency, each are limit concepts of the other. One facilitates movement and the other denies it, yet both are zones of perpetual transit and futuristic promises' (Fuller, 2004, p. 6; see also Fuller and Harley, 2004). At a time of security frenzy, airports increasingly resemble detention camps. At Roissy-Charles-de-Gaulle Airport, for instance, a hotel has been converted for the detention of asylum-seekers, and is defined by the French authorities as being outside the territory of France (Walters, 2002).

In addition to the camp tending to be generalized throughout society as a whole, this tendency reveals a more encompassing logic. The camp is a space of control organized according to the science and management of flows (Diken and Laustsen, 2002). When, following Deleuze (1996), power goes nomadic (in the societies of control), control as a mobile form of discipline manages itself quite well without walls (Diken and Laustsen, 2002). In airports with increasingly mobilized surveillance and security apparatus, the visitor is devalued to 'word without body' (represented as a sign, passport number and so on) and a 'body without word' (as the visitor's body, and only the physical body, is scanned and represented by biometric technologies) (Diken and Laustsen, 2005a, p. 65). For this very reason Agamben refused to travel to the USA in March 2004, and later made a philosophical comparison between the tattooing of inmates in Auschwitz and the biopolitical tattoo imposed upon travellers going to the USA today (Agamben, 2004b).

In a combination of macro-scale neoliberal governance and micro-scale neoliberal governmentality (Sparke, 2006), mobility, most notably transnational mobility, becomes a right for some (sometimes via luxurious lounges at airports, which may be seen as 'camps' that are very difficult to enter for the less wealthy) and an exclusion for others. Mobility – or the production of mobility and immobility, fastness and slowness – becomes a deciding factor for socio-spatial change and stratification, as the logic of the camp keeps society together, constitutes the social contract (Diken, 2004) and makes it possible for power to escape the agora in the way that Bauman has discussed (Bauman, 1998 and 2000).

Another creative intellectual endeavour, namely that of Paul Virilio's work, has not had such an impact in human geography as might have been expected (for an overview of Virilio's work by geographers, see Luke and ÓTuathail, 2000; Bartram, 2004). Virilio's work on how the infrastructure and vectors of speed result in social transformation (Virilio, 1994), on the militarization of the city and national territories into vast camps (Virilio, 1986[26]), on the spreading of 'airport architecture' (Virilio, 1990), on 'metabolic vehicles' (Virilio, 1991b), on the city whose centre is nowhere and circumference everywhere (Virilio, 1997) and on how '*globalisation provides the 'state of emergency'*, that foreclosure which transforms, or soon will transform, every state into a *police state*, every army into *a police force* and every community into a *ghetto*' (Virilio, 2003, p. 133, emphasis in original) is largely congruent with Agamben's work. This is something that Michael Degener, the translator of Virilio's *Negative Horizon* (2005), has already argued (see 'Translator's Introduction: Seven minutes' in Virilio, 2005, pp. 14–25). The potential of a careful combination of Agamben's and Virilio's texts calls for further examination.[27]

Agamben and 'ANT geography'

As an alternative ontological and methodological approach, actor-network theory (ANT) has attracted considerable attention.[28] Fiercely rejecting technological determinism and the naturalization of technological and social solidity, ANT encourages researchers to rethink relationships of power (Hinchliffe, 1996). Several geographers have done so, investing much effort in integrating ANT approaches with human geography.[29] ANT has been criticized for providing a descriptive language without explanatory power, and that 'It is not very good at explaining why some actors are excluded from networks, and studies so far have been weak on factors such as class, race, gender, etc.' (Basset, 1999, p. 42).

Agamben's work on sovereign power could, I think, both politicize and radicalize ANT in a fruitful way. It should work the other way around as well, and Agamben's focus on the category of relation could be widened to include non-humans and other actors. After all, Agamben tries to disturb our ease with the 'human' as a fixed category and posthuman in a wider sense (Braun, 2004). I can only agree with Bruce Braun and James McCarthy in their editorial on Hurricane Katrina when they argue that:

> The abandonment of citizens in New Orleans was consistent with Agamben…entire populations were taken outside the political order, effectively stripped of political status.…This does not mean that they were placed entirely *outside* the law…they were simultaneously left bereft *of* the law…and turned over *to* the law.…Neither Agamben nor those who draw upon him, for instance, seem to conceive of the relations between sovereigns and citizens, or between citizenship and bare life, as situated and occurring in a more-than-human world in any way that matters…[therefore] we argue that citizenship, and political life more broadly, must be understood as not simply constituted in language or law, or conceived as a property that belongs inherently to the subject, but as composed in and through complex assemblages that include myriad nonhuman actors and entities.
>
> (Braun and McCarthy, 2005; pp. 803–804, see also Shapiro, 2005)

Power emerges from the material and immaterial assemblages and connections that allow bodies to persist and enable people to act as political subjects and societal citizens (Braun and McCarthy, 2005). However, as Nigel Thrift notes, 'what is happening now is that bare life is increasingly mediated by things which slip in between its interstices, boosting it here, conditioning it there' (Thrift, 2005, p. 72). The 'automatic production of space' (Thrift and French, 2002) and the soft- and hardware-produced 'sorted geographies' (Graham, 2005c) become the code/space (Dodge and Kitchin, 2004; see also 2005a, 2005b) where naked life is produced (which brings us back to the information, surveillance and security complex discussed above). This also reconfirms that the act of *abandonment*, even if it reaches its maximum force in the materialization and territorialization of the camp, is primarily a topological and relational relation.

Agamben and relational space

Relational notions of space and place are a paradigmatic departure from intellectual involvement in notions of space as absolute and relative, since it dissolves the boundaries and borders between objects and space (on space as a keyword, see Harvey, 2006, pp. 119–148). Objects are space and space is objects, rather than space existing as an entity over and above objects and their relations and extensions (Jones, 2005). Natural and social processes, objects and events, take an ontological precedence over space. Space *is* the product of processes and events rather than processes and events taking place *in* space (N. Smith, 2003).[30] Following a Heraclitean ontology space is always in a process of becoming (Massey, 1999) a verb rather than a noun and the articulation of relational performances (Rose, 1999).[31]

The relational production of topological spatiality is no foreign thought to Agamben. For him, the state of nature (together with the state of exception) is:

> a single topological process in which what was presupposed as external now reappears, as in a Möbius strip or a Leyden jar, in the inside, and the sovereign power is this very impossibility of distinguishing between outside and inside, nature and exception, *physis* and *nomos*. The state of exception is thus not so much a spatiotemporal suspension as a complex topological figure in which not only the exception and the rule but also the state of nature and law, outside and inside, pass through one another.
>
> (Agamben, 1998, p. 37; emphasis in original)[32]

The abandonment of political subjects is therefore no simple geography of exclusion; the zone of indistinction lies beyond the margin and involves the production of a space of the exception whose performance traces a moving line (Gregory, 2004b). 'Performance' again becomes an important concept. The act of suspending the law is a performative act:

> which brings a contemporary configuration of sovereignty into being or, more precisely, reanimates a spectral sovereignty within the field of governmentality. The state *produces*, through the act of withdrawal, a law that is no law, a court that is no court, a process that is no process. The state of emergency returns the operation of power from a set of laws (juridical) to a set of rules (governmental), and the rules reinstate sovereign power: rules that are not binding by virtue of established law or modes of legitimation, but fully discretionary, even arbitrary, wielded by officials who interpret them unilaterally and decide the condition and form of their invocation.
>
> (Butler, 2004, pp. 61–62; emphasis in original)

As a consequence, the difference between abandonment and exclusion is that abandonment is an active, relational process (Pratt, 2005). The performance of abandonment is simultaneously the production of relational space and the production of space. I can only agree with Pratt when she argues that:

> geographies do more than contain or localize bare life. Geographies are part of the process by which certain individuals and groups are reduced to bare life. They are therefore integral to the process that Agamben describes.
>
> (Pratt, 2005, p. 1055)

The abandonment and desubjectification of humans are not only political but spatial performances as well. Sovereign power and *homo sacer* produce a relational space constituted by a non-symmetrical power topology which sometimes coincides with a geographically materialized power topography and sometimes does not. Following this, one potential project is the investigation of how geographic knowledge has specifically been an active part of the production of naked life. In a sense, much has already been done in this field of enquiry (Livingstone, 1992), although not explicitly from the point of departure of Agamben's radicalized version of biopower and biopolitics (but see Minca, 2006b). However, it would seem that Neil Smith's remark remains relevant today:

> The development of sophisticated computerized cartographic technology has, in the last

> year, definitively altered the way in which modern warfare is fought and staged.…A considerable percentage of students who learn GIS in USA classrooms graduate to military and related jobs; the Defense Mapping Agency with 9000 employees is the single largest employer of USA geography graduates…there is a curious lack of reflection on this military-geographic connection.
>
> (Smith, 1992, p. 257)

There is still much for human geographers to do here. One task is to continue to theoretically and empirically enrich Agamben's inherently spatial concepts, figures and reasoning through a continued and nuanced investigation into the relational space of abandonment and the dialectics between the topographical and the topological in the production of spatialities of sovereign power.

The articles in this theme issue

The articles in this theme issue are written by scholars deeply engaged in the writings of Giorgio Agamben. Claudio Minca reflects on the spatial architecture that underpins Agamben's theory of sovereign power and draws attention to the need to see Agamben's theoretical edifice as a grand spatial theory. The dissolution of the geographical *nomos* pivoting around the nation or territorial state that dominated up until the First World War, the *ius publicum Europaeum*, has not been replaced by an alternative geographical *nomos* but by a biopolitical *nomos* whose geographies of exception challenge geographers' engagement.

Derek Gregory analyses Guantánamo Bay as an iconic example of Agamben's state of exception, and traces the convolutions of 'inside' and 'outside' through the instruments of law and violence. The common understanding of Guantánamo as a wild zone beyond the reach of international and US law is questioned. By embedding the case in his framework of the 'colonial present', Gregory argues that law is not something 'outside' sovereign violence but that law and force are complicit. The law is the site of struggle not only in its suspension, but also in its formulation, interpretation and application. This implies that the space of exception is a potential space of political modernity rather than paradigmatic, and that resistance, even biopolitical modes of resistance, is possible.

In his article, Nikos Papastergiadis uses psychoanalytic theory and Agamben's analysis of the displacement or abandonment of the Other in the biopolitics of modern sovereignty to illustrate the contradictory formation of identity in contemporary times of acceleration and intensification of global flows. In his model, or framework, the 'invasion complex', historical fear and spatial anxieties are intermixed and crystallized into defiant and hostile stances against the refugee, the stranger and the asylum-seeker in political discourse. Papastergiadis also delivers a discussion of the shortcomings of Agamben's analysis in that the camp can never completely confine the Other. Like Gregory, Papastergiadis also highlights the possibility of engaging the state of exception: the camp inspires resistance and resistance is possible.

Bulent Diken and Carsten Bagge Laustsen examine the political and spatial logic of the camp through the story of Remus and Romulus, our civilization's best-known 'city myth'. They highlight three aspects of the myth, namely the walls as symbol of the rule, the transgression of the city's limits/walls in the shape of the exception, and the biopolitical zone of indistinction between culture and nature, humans and wolves. Diken and Laustsen then add a fourth aspect or possibility not included in the myth: the city where the exception is the rule and the camp is the organizing principle – a society of exception.

Michael Landzelius shows in his article about the dehumanizing discourse on 'Communists' during the 1930s and 1940s in Sweden that the rhetoric in the 'War on Terror' is not new. The time covered in the article has yet today in Sweden a nostalgic shimmer, since it represents the beginning of the Social Democratic welfare state project *Folkhemmet* (the Peoples' Home). Landzelius, however, reveals how the later on internationally famous example (or paradigm in the way Agamben defines it) of the Northern European welfare state model was built on biopolitical measures in a state of exception, and that not everyone was welcomed into the 'Peoples' Home.

Finally, in his review of Hikaru Yamashita's *Humanitarian Space and International Politics* (2004), Stuart Elden emphasizes Agamben's insight that, like famine camps, humanitarian camps are also metaphysically situated within the logic of the camp, as they are spatial creations based on sovereign acts. As a result, humanitarian areas are seen as being much less of a challenge to the principle of sovereign space than is usually claimed, as they challenge only the individual state's territorial control rather than the logic itself.

Conclusion

In some sense, Agamben's work is pessimistic and dystopic. In an interview, Agamben admitted that 'I've often been reproached for...this pessimism that I am perhaps unaware of. But I don't see it like that. There is a phrase from Marx, cited by Debord as well, that I like a lot: 'the desperate situation of society in which I live fills me with hope.' I share this vision, hope is given to the hopeless' (Vacarme, 2004, p. 123). The cruel machinations of and in camps have, however, to be actively challenged.[33] But before that can be done, they have to be recognized and understood. The camp, as the more or less visible paradigm of the political space of modernity, constantly metamorphoses and disguises itself, sometimes in erratic ways. All that is necessary is that we learn to recognize its shape and content (Agamben, 1998).

Here, and five years after the publication of John Urry's call for a 'sociology beyond societies' (2000), Diken and Laustsen's call for a sociology after the camp (2005a) provides a constructive starting point. To Diken and Laustsen (2005a, p. 156), 'the existing sociological category of "relation" is not sufficient to an understanding of the camp. The camp as a sociological object necessitates a new, paradoxical conception of relationality. For lack of a better concept we call this paradoxical relationality "nonrelation"'.[34] Does human geography need a 'non-relational turn'? The history of geography is filled with announcements of new lines of enquiry and philosophical approaches – few of which are entirely new (Braun, 2004). While a 'non-relational turn' in human geography would not be completely new, it could nevertheless inject urgency into the new geopolitical situation. I can therefore only agree with Claudio Minca (2005, p. 405) when he says: 'Calling attention to and exploring the workings of the spatialization of the politics of exception is, I believe, perhaps one of the most urgent tasks for academic geography today.' It is necessary to outline and deconstruct the geographies of politics of exception/non-relation, and the time for this appears to be ripe.

Perhaps 'splinter' should be the leitmotiv that runs through any discussion of an eventual 'non-relational turn' in human geography; a noun and verb that conveys the violent shattering of space. Here I am not only referring to Palestinian space, even if that is an especially acute case or bordering, (Gregory, 2005)[35] but, also to a metaphysical point of view of space *in toto*. The discussion that ensues will certainly be an urgent one.

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Notes

1. As the first military campaign of the George Bush senior administration actuated a larger interest in Paul Virilio's work on speed, warfare and technology. See e.g. Der Derian, 1992; Wark, 1994.
2. Some of Agamben's crucial Italian concepts, such as *potenza* and *nuda vita,* have been translated in different ways and include: 'potentiality' or 'possibility' (see Minca, 2005); 'bare life' (in Agamben, 1998); or 'naked life' (in Agamben, 2000); see Agamben, 2000, p. 142, translators' note 1).
3. Matthew Sparke (2005) argues that theories dealing with de- and reterritorialization in some sense (stressing instability, openness, antiessentialism), should often be bracketed as post-foundational rather than, as is usually the case, poststructuralist or postmodernist.
4. Edward Soja (1996) recommends a similar approach towards Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1991), which he argues could be read as a polyphonic fugue, as a multiplicity of voices and instruments simultaneously expressing a specific theme.
5. Perhaps his quite recent book, *The Time That Remains* (Agamben, 2005b), gives a hint of what the as yet unpublished part of the *Homo Sacer* project will contain. Here Agamben analyses how Paul, as a Jewish Messianic, discussed the juridical and the political (see also Agamben, 2004a).
6. Since abandonment, rather than inclusion or/and exclusion, is the original political relation, it is, for Agamben, necessary to rethink political theory completely, as well as 'every attempt to ground communities in something like a 'belonging', whether it be found in popular, national, religious, or any other identity' (Agamben, 1998, p. 181). One such theory that comes immediately to mind is Benedict Anderson's (1991) on imagined communities.
7. According to Edkins and Pin-Fat (2005), sovereign power is not a proper political power relation in Foucauldian terms, since to Foucault power relations and freedom occupy the same moment of possibility and imply that resistance is always inevitable. Relationships of violence, on the other hand, lack this, and the authors argue that 'although sovereign power remains globally predominant, it is best considered not as a form of power relation but as a relation of power' (Edkins and Pin-Fat, 2005, p. 1). The sovereign act or performance of inclusive exclusion could here perhaps be regarded as an act of violence rather than an act of power.
8. Agamben's style of writing is sometimes very similar to Benjamin's, an aphoristic prose (for instance, in *Stanzas* and *Idea About Prose* (Agamben, 1993a and 1995) (Bolt and Pedersen, 2005). Agamben is also the Italian editor of Benjamin's complete works (Bernstein, 1999) and in 1981 he unearthed previously lost manuscript pages from the Arcades project on a book on Baudelaire. Agamben's recon-

struction of the lost manuscript is still unpublished, however, mainly due to disagreements between Agamben and the publisher (Bolt, 2003; Rapaport, 2005).

9. 'Form-of-life' is a messianic figure that Agamben posits in order to overcome the production of naked life, a counter-paradigm towards naked life (Agamben, 2000). The 'form-of-life' or 'happy life' renders the division between *zoē* and *bio* impossible by finding its unity in pure immanence (see further in Mills, 2004).
10. There is a clear parallel between the sovereign power and the idea of God, at least if we look in the Book of Job, where God proclaims that he or it 'owes its worshippers nothing – certainly not the account of His actions. God's omnipotence includes the power of caprice and whim, power to make miracles, and to ignore the logic of necessity the lesser beings have no choice but to obey. God may strike at will, and if He refrains from striking it is only because this is His (good, benign, benevolent, loving) will' (Bauman, 2004).
11. There is a thriving production of texts regarding the similarities and differences between Foucault's and Agamben's perspectives on biopower and biopolitics that I do not have the space to go into here; see further Ojakangas, 2005; Sinnerbrink, 2005; Sirnes, 2005; Genel, 2006.
12. *'The concept of people always contains within itself the fundamental biopolitical fracture. It is what cannot be included in the whole of which it is a part as well as what cannot belong to the whole in which it is always already included'* (Agamben, 2000, p. 32; emphasis in original).
13. The original political element is sacred life, but in modernity the principle of the sacredness of life is totally emancipated from sacrificial ideology. In contemporary culture the meaning of 'sacred' continues the semantic history of *homo sacer* (Agamben, 1998) and sacred life is now virtually co-extensive with the political as a whole (Wall, 2005).
14. It is customary to describe both Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy as dictatorships, but technically neither Hitler nor Mussolini was a dictator. What characterized the Nazi and fascist regimes is that they allowed the existing constitutions to subsist and create a second structure alongside the state of exception. The opposition between dictatorship and democracy is also misleading for the same reason (Agamben, 2005a).
15. This claim also perhaps echoes Theodor Adorno's warning 'I consider the survival of National Socialism *within* democracy to be potentially more menacing than the survival of fascistic tendencies *against* democracy' (Adorno, 1998, p. 90, in Vogt, 2005, p. 80; emphasis in original). The claim also perhaps echoes Heidegger's notorious remark (deleted from the published 1955 version of *The Question Concerning Technology*) that modern industrialized agriculture is 'in essence the same as the manufacturing of corpses in gas chambers and extermination camps, the same as the starving of nations, the same as the manufacture of hydrogen bombs' (Sinnerbrink, 2005, p. 254).
16. Agamben has been criticized for his eclectic collection of empirical evidence and rendering of these examples as 'indistinguishable'. However, what unites the examples he selects is the thesis on the generalization of the exception and the correlative indistinctiveness of fact and norm in Western politics and philosophy (Mills, 2004).
17. 'To be sure, they [the histories and geographies of colonial modernity] have been made in the shadow of other formations too, and it is extremely important to avoid explanations that reduce everything to the marionette movements of a monolithic colonialism' (Gregory, 2004a, p. 7).
18. Just as, for instance, the 'War on Terror' in the West is more and more directed towards 'potential terrorists', i.e. practically every human being in the different Western democracies (see further Žižek, 2002).
19. Of course, this does not mean that we are all living in concentration camps, but that the concentration camp is an extreme form that reveals a logic of more common character: the biopolitical production of naked life emptied of content and intrinsic value (Laustsen, 2004).
20. Compare Paul Gilroy's (2000) discussion about 'camp thinking' in *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line* and Lefebvre's (1984) concept of a 'terrorist society' in *Everyday Life in the Modern World*.
21. *Homo Sacer* does not stop here. A third threshold (pp. 181–188) introduces the *muselmann*, in Agamben's line of thought the most extreme figure of the camp inhabitant and the exemplary case of naked life. Primo Levi (1959) had described this figure that in camp jargon was called 'The Muslim' (*der Muselmann*), a being from whom horror, fear and humiliation had taken away all consciousness and personality so that only apathy remained. In a sense, this threshold section is also a threshold section to Part III of the *Homo Sacer* project, *Remnants of Auschwitz* (Agamben, 2002a), were the *muselmann* is described as the final biopolitical substance to be isolated in the biological continuum and the moving threshold between man and non-man, an indefinite being in whom humanity and non-humanity, physiology and ethics, medicine and politics and life and death continuously pass through each other. A product of absolute power, the *muselmann* was not even allowed to die as an individual but as parts of an industrial production of corpses, and the *muselmann* could not even kill itself, because the *muselmann* did not have a self to kill (Agamben, 2002a). *Remnants of Auschwitz* has been widely discussed, since it is a controversial investigation into a very sensitive issue; see further Fraser, 1999; Faye, 2003; Bernstein, 2004; Davis, 2004; LaCapra, 2004; Diken and Laustsen, 2005b; Mills, 2005; Moore, 2005; Turner, 2005).
22. In preparation for this article, I reread *Homo Sacer* (Agamben, 1998) during a family vacation visiting family-oriented, heavily populated sun resorts and theme parks such as *Lådbilslandet* ('byggy land' or 'trolley land'). While my children Amanda and Alexander, happily unaware that they are also potential *homines sacri*, drove electrified trolleys for hours, my reading of Agamben became more intense and more clarifying. I always read Paul Virilio when travelling by air for the same reasons.
23. 'So, the panopticon is a concrete, singular, historical phenomenon, but for Foucault at the same time the panopticon is, as he writes, 'panoptism'. This is to say, a model of functioning which can be generalized, which allows the definition and establishment of new sets in the relationship between power and the everyday life of man....This means that the panopticon functions as a paradigm, as an example which defines the intelligibility of the set to which it belongs and at the same time which it constitutes. Foucault always works in this way. There is always a concrete phenomenon – the confession, the juridical inquiry, etc, which functions as a paradigm, because it will decide a whole problematic context which it both constitutes and makes intelligible' (Agamben, 2002c, p. 3).
24. Works by 'classical geopoliticians' such as Halford Mackinder, Rudolf Kjellén and Friedrich Ratzel (among others) were deconstructed, analysed and commented upon (ÓTuathail, 1992, 1994a; Taylor, 1993). The social construction of the Soviet Union during the 'Cold War' was carefully in-

vestigated, often with an explicit use of Foucault's writings (Dalby, 1990; ÓTuathail, 1994b). The new critical geopolitics of the spaces of flow and cyberspaces were given attention (Luke, 1991, 1993; Wark, 1994), as the sudden and sometimes unexpected processes of political de- and reterritorialization (ÓTuathail and Luke, 1994; Agnew and Corbridge, 1995) and the eagerness to declare a 'New World Order' (ÓTuathail, 1993). Finally, the critical geopolitics of environmental problems was thoroughly investigated by Simon Dalby (1992, 1996), 'culminating' in the book *Environmental Security* (Dalby, 2002) while Gearoid ÓTuathail (Gerard Toal) has focused on the US engagement in the former Yugoslavia (ÓTuathail, 1999, 2002; ÓTuathail and Dahlman, 2005) and more recently in Iraq (ÓTuathail, 2003, 2005).

25. See also the general introductions by Tim Cresswell (2001, 2006), and on tourism and mobility (Hall, 2005), on planning and mobility (Jensen and Richardson, 2004), on sociology and mobility (Urry, 2000; Kaufmann, 2002), on media and mobility (Morley, 2000), and urbanity and mobility (Graham and Marvin, 2001; Kaika, 2005).
26. Part IV of *Speed and Politics* (Virilio, 1986) is actually labelled '*The State of Emergency*'.
27. Virilio is well aware of Agamben's work: 'I must say I have a boundless admiration for Agamben...Homo Sacer...is a remarkable book, and one with which I could not agree more' (Virilio, in discussion with John Armitage, in Armitage, 2000, p. 52).
28. Actor networks mobilize, and are constituted by a multiplicity of actors (human and non-human, technological and organic). They keep each other in position more or less durably in time and over space (Whatmore, 1999). The actors only emerge within the relationships established in the network, and their forms, shapes and capabilities are determined by their interaction with each other (Callon, 1986). Because the intricate complexity of the relations that constitute the network has become more and more unrestrained and resistant to modernist processes of purification (the separation between 'nature' and 'culture', 'human' and 'non-human', 'object' and 'subject') due to the development in techno-scientific practices, we now live in a non-modern society (and have done so all the time, according to Latour, 1993).
29. See Murdoch and Marsden, 1995; Bingham, 1996; Demeritt, 1996; Hinchliffe, 1996; Thrift, 1996, 2005; Murdoch, 1997a, 1997b, 1998; Whatmore, 1997, 2002; Castree, 2002; Latham, 2003; R.G. Smith, 2003.
30. This relational thinking about space and time originated with Leibniz's work in non-Euclidean geometry. To Leibniz, space, as time and matter, was dividable into atomic structures in which monads are the only existing entities in the universe that are not dependent on human consciousness. All other physical objects exist only if they are acknowledged by the senses as phenomena. The objects are only phenomenological manifestations of the metaphysical substance, the monads (Tonboe, 1993). Leibniz argued that spatial aspects such as position, distance and motion are nothing other than a system of relations among things, a system without any metaphysical or ontological existence per se (Harvey, 1969; Werlen, 1993).
31. Space is no longer reduced to particularity, passivity and contingency (Doel and Clarke, 1998), and 'space' and 'time' are less important than the always unique acts of 'timing' and 'spacing' (Bingham and Thrift, 2000). In his call for post-structuralist geographies, Marcus Doel argues that 'place is an event...neither situated nor contained within a particular location, but is instead splayed out and unfolded across a myriad of vectors...vectors of disjointure and dislocation [that] may conjugate and reverberate, but there is no necessity for them to converge on a particular experiential or physical location' (Doel, 1999, p. 7). In short, there is no space, only spacing; that is, 'the differential element within everything that happens; the repetitious relay or protracted stringiness by which the fold of actuality opens in and of itself onto the unfold of virtuality. Space is what reopens and dissimilates the givens' (Doel, 2000, p. 125). As in origami, 'the world can be (un)folded in countless ways, with innumerable folds over folds, and folds within folds' (Doel, 1999, p. 18). Folds are everywhere (Deleuze, 1996). The folding and unfolding of space becomes an event, an actualization of the virtual (Gren and Tesfahuney, 2004). The focus on becoming, (un)folding and events in relational thinking connects to the works of Michel Serres. In his attempt to construct a 'philosophical geography', topology, as a 'science of proximities and ongoing or interrupted transformations', is highlighted (Serres with Latour, 1995, p. 105). Topology is not concerned with the distance variable per se, but with the properties of spaces that are independent of metric measures, and how relations are folded and unfolded (stretched, compressed, stratified) while maintaining certain properties (Dainton, 2001; Latham, 2003). 'Topology, in short, extends the possibilities of mathematics far beyond its original *Euclidean* restrictions by articulating other spaces' (Mol and Law, 1994, p. 643, emphasis in original). Following Serres' topological thinking, a number of human geographers have begun to see space, place and time as co-constituted, folded together, situated, mobile and multiple (Amin, 2004; Massey, 2004; Thrift, 2004).
32. Analogically, Europe could be seen as an a-territorial or extra-territorial space in which *all* residents would be in a position of refuge. In a possible coming community, European space would mark an irreducible difference between nation and birth (Agamben, 2000). 'Only in a world in which the spaces of states have been thus perforated and topologically deformed and in which the citizen has been able to recognize the refugee that he or she is – only in such a world is the political survival of humankind today thinkable' (Agamben, 2000, p. 26). In a much less messianic tone, or no messianic tone at all, it could be argued that this recognition of the citizen's potential refugee status is one of the political challenges of relational space (compare Massey, 2004).
33. Either actively challenged in a very direct way, as Foucault did (Eribon, 1991; Macey, 1993) or in a more tranquil way.
34. To Diken and Laustsen (2005a), sociology has always been aware of paradoxes of inclusion and exclusion (i.e. it is not possible to include without at the same time excluding) and that the difference between inclusion and exclusion can never be decided once and for all. The same is true for human geography, but here, Agamben has introduced – or at least developed – the notion of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion (in the same system); that is, the constitutive relation between relation and non-relation. The experience of the camp is this oscillation between relation and non-relation. 'The task of sociology, one could say, is to give word, to "politicize" this oscillation between life as spectacle and naked life' (Diken and Laustsen, 2005a, pp. 161–162).
35. 'Bordering describes a vast array of affective and transformative material processes in which social and spatial orders and disorders are constantly reworked' (Woodward and Jones, 2005, p. 239).

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