

# Irregular migration, borders, and the moral geographies of migration management

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## Abstract

Migration management expresses the idealizations of policymakers: how they view the world's ideal biopolitical and geopolitical organization. This article presents an analysis of an anti-irregular migration campaign funded by Australia and administered by the International Organization for Migration to deter “potential people smugglers” in Indonesia. The article demonstrates that the campaign attempted to normalize the idea that transporting irregular migrants was immoral and a sin. The Indonesia–Australia border and the Westphalian nation-state system were structured as moral geographies. The campaign framed immigration law as the ultimate determinant of moral and immoral migration, proclaiming a righteousness in immobilizing irregular migrants, regardless of circumstance. Per the campaign, moral migration is to be managed, and borders to be guarded, by unaccountable consultants for hire like the International Organization for Migration—states’ deputized migration managers. The article analyzes how irregular migration was structured as subverting and exploiting territorialized nations, how the campaign associated emplacement and boundedness with safety and irregular migration with a threatening, foreign, immorality. Finally, the article investigates how everyday spaces were infiltrated by bordering practices designed to normalize the campaign’s purported “truths” about morality and migration, showing the varying temporalities and scales of border-making and migration management.

## Keywords

Migration management, moral geography, irregular migration, borders, asylum seeking

## Introduction

Moral ideas about space and place create expectations concerning correct and incorrect uses of geographies. This foundational truth is captured by the “moral geography” concept

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(Beckingham, 2013; Cresswell, 2005; Erol, 2018; Gökariksel and Secor, 2017; Landén et al., 2017; McAuliffe, 2012; Matless, 1994; Mills, 2016; Proctor, 1998; Rogaly and Qureshi, 2017; Smith, 1997). The moral geography concept stresses that there are socially produced and performatively territorialized norms, termed “moral geographies,” for how people should think about and behave in different places. This performative territorialization of moral arguments happens across scales. Moral geographies inform our behavior in hallways and football stadiums, and help to shape our views on topics as diverse as immigration to which military actions are just. Even the world’s elemental geopolitical order, the nation-state system, is continuously structured as “natural,” “moral,” and “ideal” through statecraft reproducing it as a moral geography best able to organize humanity. Migration management, the topic of this article, is part of this reproduction. Discourses and programs of migration management normalize distinctions between regular (right, moral, and fair) and irregular (wrong, immoral, and unfair) migration. Migration management discourse presents the regulation of migration as an apolitical, techno-rational, endeavor (Andrijasevic and Walters, 2010; Geiger and Pécout, 2010; Heller and Pécout, 2020; Pécout, 2015; Scheel and Ustek-Spilda, 2019). Yet justifications for immigration, asylum, and border security policies are inherently moral arguments (Carens, 2014; Gibney, 2004; Parekh, 2016; Walzer, 1983).

Given the relationship between moral judgements and the regulation of migration, this article demonstrates that the moral geographies concept is a useful analytic for examining what migration management *says* about how the world supposedly should be organized. More specifically, what migration management policies are *saying* about the morality of irregular migration and how such policies attempt to subjugate people into internalizing and performing these moral geographies. To do so, this article presents an analysis of an anti-irregular migration campaign funded by Australia and administered by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to deter “potential people smugglers” in Indonesia. This research is part of a broader project using critical discourse analysis (Phillips and Hardy, 2002), close readings, and historical narrative to analyze Australia’s anti-irregular migration public information campaigns through a data set of over 200 primary source documents detailing campaigns’ design, messaging, and administration. Asylum-seekers have used Indonesia as a transit point en route to Australia, and the Australian Government has targeted Indonesia as a key site for border externalizations to immobilize asylum-seekers there (Coddington, 2019; Dickson, 2015; Hirsch and Doig, 2018; Missbach, 2014; Watkins, 2017b) (Figure 1). The campaign used advertising, like traditional information campaigns,



**Figure 1.** Representation of irregular migration to Australia. Source: IPSOS Indonesia (2012).

yet rather uniquely combined ads with community engagement and collaborations with religious institutions to spread arguments about irregular migration's immorality.

Officially entitled the *Public Information Campaign to Curb Irregular Migration and People Smuggling in Indonesia*, this campaign was designed to convince potential people smugglers that transporting irregular migrants to Australia was immoral and a sin, structuring the Indonesia–Australia border as a moral geography. Analysis of campaign documents reveals that the campaign framed immigration law as the ultimate determinant of moral and immoral migration, proclaiming a righteousness in immobilizing irregular migrants, regardless of circumstance. To spread this idea, the campaign used advertising and media, community events, and the enlistment of religious figures to encourage Indonesian fisher-folk to view migration through the campaign's purported "truth" that irregular migration is immoral. The campaign constructed not only the Indonesia–Australia border, but the idealized Westphalian system as a moral geography, framing undocumented migration and the transport of irregular migrants as an affront to the natural, or national, order of things. An order to be maintained not only by sovereign states, but their "deputized" contractors for hire—unaccountable intergovernmental bodies and private firms competing for migration management contracts.

The article proceeds by first contextualizing anti-irregular migration campaigns within the migration management literature. Next, I outline the moral geographies concept: a concept with an extensive literature yet, surprisingly, one which has not been utilized to examine migration management. This section is followed by analysis of the campaign, specifically the ideas about morality and migration: the moral geography it sought to normalize. Lastly, the "Discussion" section expands on this analysis, exploring how the campaign structured the nation-state system as a moral geography. This section details how the campaign posited immigration law as the definitive source of migration's morality, laws righteously protecting territorialized nations. The section also examines migration management via unaccountable contractors like the IOM, who not only act as border externalizers but as state, nation, and citizen-builders. The way this campaign framed irregular migrants as exploiting righteously rooted nations and how the home was used as a unique space of moral reflection and supposed safety in its boundedness are also analyzed.

## Migration management

Migration management refers to efforts by states and intergovernmental organizations like the IOM to control documented, undocumented, and forced migration through immigration and border control policies (Ashutosh and Mountz, 2011; Barber and Bryan, 2018; Brachet, 2016; Geiger and Pécoud, 2010, 2014; Georgi, 2010; Loyd and Mountz, 2014). There is a large literature documenting and analyzing the migration geographies produced by immigration and border control architectures driven by migration management logics. This literature details efforts to deter undesired migrants through walls (Soto, 2018), the militarization of borders (Jones and Johnson, 2016), maritime interception (Garelli and Tazzioli, 2017), humanitarian bordering (Cuttitta, 2018; Pallister-Wilkins, 2018), development initiatives (Crane, 2020), detention (Mountz et al., 2013), deportation (Collyer, 2012), and extra-territorial enforcement practices broadly termed "border externalizations" (Bialasiewicz, 2012; Casas-Cortes et al., 2010, 2016; Watkins, 2017b). How states police migrants and asylum-seekers already on their territory is also a focus (Coddington, 2019; Coleman and Stuesse, 2014; Franck, 2018; Pinelli, 2018). As Franck (2018) explains, domestic operations create "a distinct type of enforcement geography where policing the border takes place throughout the everyday spaces that migrants inhabit" (251–252). Domestic

enforcement targets immigrants' places of belonging, producing insecurity and precarity (Coleman and Stuesse, 2014). Taken as a whole, domestic and international migration management tactics create transnational governances bordering both migrants' mobilities and places of belonging.

States and intergovernmental bodies also seek to govern how people think about migration through information campaigns (Brachet, 2016; Fleay et al., 2016; Heller, 2014; McNevin et al., 2016; Musarò, 2019; Nieuwenhuys and Pécoud, 2007; Oeppen, 2016; Pécoud, 2010; Schloenhardt and Philipson, 2013; Watkins, 2017a; Williams, 2019). Such campaigns date to at least the 1980s when the UNHCR used them in Cambodia and Vietnam (United Nations, 1992: 715). Campaigns target the actors comprising irregular migration infrastructures, particularly potential migrants, using forms of media to circulate deterrence messaging. Watkins (2017a), for example, shows how Australia's campaigns target potential migrants' spatial imaginaries of irregular migration, circulating narratives of the supposed physical and financial dangers of crossing borders. Watkins (2017a) demonstrates how campaigns directed toward asylum-seekers depict people smugglers as cartoonishly evil, a tactic quite at odds with the campaign detailed below. In another example, Williams (2019) examines campaigns used by the United States, emphasizing their use of gendered discourses of guilt and responsibility. Researchers have also compared campaigns' overt scare tactics to states and intergovernmental bodies' migration management discourse, demonstrating the disparities between the two (McNevin et al., 2016; Schloenhardt and Philipson, 2013). For example, using the same campaign examined in this article as a case, McNevin et al. (2016) assess the supposed rationalities of migration management, concluding them to be fraught with politics which belie the technocratic model pushed by its advocates.

Within the migration management literature, people smugglers are not a major focus. Rather, how people smugglers are governed is generally subsumed within broader discussions of strategies and territorialities engendered to contain migrants. There are, however, notable works documenting people smugglers' role in irregular migration (Sanchez, 2016; Spener, 2004, 2009; Vogt, 2016). These works trace the embeddedness of people smugglers in localized migrant networks, challenging representations of people smugglers as ruthless criminals. Yet studies have tended to examine irregular migrants as the target of migration management, states' vilification of smugglers often presented as political rhetoric. This generally may be the case. However, as the sections below will demonstrate, states and international organizations have also sought to discipline people smugglers not only through borderings, but through information campaigns designed to reshape their ideas about irregular migration. Through information campaigns, states and international organizations seek to normalize moral arguments about mobility, boundedness, and thus the world's ideal biopolitical and geopolitical order—in other words, a moral geography. As the migration management literature has not incorporated the moral geography concept, the section below will further detail what is meant by the term and how it has been used. After this I will show how the IOM sought to normalize the Westphalian nation-state system as a moral geography through trying to convince Indonesian fisher-folk that transporting irregular migrants was immoral.

## **Moral geographies**

The way boundaries are ascribed with socially constructed meaning shapes how and where we travel. Our movements are regulated performances structured by moral ideas about spaces and places, our moral geographies. Cresswell (2005: 128–130) defines moral

geographies as social codes that regulate which people, things, and practices belong in which spaces, places, and landscapes, positing that the examination of moral geographies sheds light upon the often taken-for-granted relationships between geographical orderings and ideas about what is just and ideal. Legg and Brown (2013) make a similar point, stressing that work investigating moral geographies demonstrates “the regulation of human behavior through spatial relations” (135). Thus, moral geographies are socio-culturally produced and policed ideas about places and spaces, ostensibly (re)produced to ensure “maintenance of the common good” (McAuliffe, 2012: 191). The moral geographies literature has provided thick descriptions of the relativistic moral features of places (Matless, 1994; Proctor, 1998), explored the taken-for-granted moral codes shaping our geographies, as Cresswell (2005) emphasizes, and investigated widely known and consciously subverted socio-spatial moralizations (McAuliffe, 2012).

For a researcher to argue a moral geography exists is not to claim the spatial discourse defining that moral geography is ethically virtuous. Rather, it is to argue certain social actors have attempted to normalize this claim. As scholars, we can agree or disagree with the ethics of the moral geographies we research. The moral geographies literature has traditionally focused more on empirical documentation of moral geographies than normative argumentation (Proctor, 1998; Smith, 1997), yet there are recent works integrating normative and descriptive approaches (Olson, 2018: 938–940). Moral geographies do not produce a false consciousness and we are all able to discern, disagree with, and subvert the moral geographies we encounter. Subjects are overdetermined (Rodriguez and Schwenken, 2013), and like all socio-spatial subjugation the behavioral norms moral geographies (re)produce are contingent and resisted (Cresswell, 2005; Gökariksel and Secor, 2018). As socio-culturally policed space, moral geographies subjugate us within regimes of behavioral regulation, the norms and expectations moral geographies reflect, transmit, and reproduce becoming embodied and performed (Gökariksel and Secor, 2018). Yet people’s transgressions against the norms of a moral geography can be what most starkly brings those norms to light (McAuliffe, 2012: 191).

Given the connection between moral geographies, boundary maintenance, and performances through space, it is surprising there has not been consideration for how projects of migration management articulate, or seek to reinforce, moral geographies reifying borders and the Westphalian system as ideal. The sections below do just that. Specifically, I detail how the IOM, under the supervision of the Australian and Indonesian governments, sought to “re-educate” potential people smugglers in Indonesia through an information campaign articulating a moral geography valorizing the bordered nation-state system as righteous and demonizing irregular migration and transporting irregular migrants as sinful. This campaign shows how the performative violation of moral geographies can generate responses from the actors whose interests and ideas are being contested: responses seeking to re-educate transgressors. The sections below detail the campaign’s use of messaging, religious figures, and religious instruction to discipline potential people smugglers into performing the Westphalian moral geography.

## **A campaign constructing potential people smugglers**

The Australian Government has responded to asylum seeking irregular migration’s subversion of moral geographies of boundedness through an array of border externalizations in Indonesia. One such externalization is anti-irregular migration information campaigns (Watkins, 2017a). Like many of Australia’s information campaigns, the IOM was contracted to design and administer the *Public Information Campaign to Curb Irregular*

*Migration and People Smuggling in Indonesia.* Per the IOM (2010a), this was the first information campaign in the world to target potential people smugglers (ACBPS, 2011: 6). The campaign ran from 2009 to 2014, with varying levels of operational intensity, alongside an extensive portfolio of IOM projects in Indonesia. In 2009, the IOM had 24 field offices across Indonesia which, according to the IOM, were “strategically located alongside the smuggling routes” (IOM, 2010a: i). In 2010, the campaign’s first year being fully operational, the IOM (2011b: 56–59) had 276 personnel in Indonesia, the third most of any country. That same year, the IOM’s (2011a: 47) expenditure in Indonesia was \$26,634,503 USD, their 10th largest portfolio. By end of 2013, the IOM’s (2014: 57) annual expenditure in Indonesia had risen to over \$40 million USD, their sixth largest portfolio and has remained at similar levels.

Officials within the Indonesian Directorate General of Immigration, as well as IOM staff, identified 14 coastal communities across Kualuh Leidong, Sukabumi, Manggarai Barat, and Kupang as sites for the campaign (IOM, 2010a: iv–vii). In 2009, the combined population of the 14 coastal communities was over 100,000 (IOM, 2010a: iv–vii). The campaign used three approaches to “educate” potential people smugglers about the immorality of transporting irregular migrants. First, the campaign used advertisements. Ads ranged from radio spots, billboards, banners, posters, and fliers, to clothes and merchandize branded with campaign slogans. The second approach was mobilizing community, industry, and religious leaders to spread the campaign’s messages and discourage people smuggling. Religious leaders were encouraged to support the campaign through the dissemination of anti-irregular migration religious instruction, particularly sermons drafted by IOM subcontractors. Finally, the IOM organized community events to reinforce campaign messaging. Events included family photo days, outdoor movie nights, and “proud fisherman days,” among others.

The IOM (2010c: 13) identified developing an awareness of the personal motivations driving people smuggling as a “critical building block” toward achieving the campaign’s objectives. To do this, the IOM (2010d: 13) surveyed 247 people about their attitudes toward, and motivations for, people smuggling. Surveys were complemented by focus group, interview, and observational research (IOM, 2010d: 14). The IOM found that religion was the “ultimate motivation” for people smuggling (Figure 2). Additional Australian funded research across Indonesia in 2012 reinforced this finding, identifying religion and morals as key motivations for transporting irregular migrants (IPSOS Indonesia, 2012). Thus, the IOM (2010a: 10, 2010b: 8) adopted a “values-based approach” and moral messaging for the campaign. The following sections will demonstrate how the campaign sought to guide its audience toward thinking about the morality of migration in certain ways, seeking to normalize differences between purportedly moral and immoral mobility acts and geographies of mobility.

## **The sermons**

The IOM sought to normalize the idea that transporting irregular migrants was immoral most directly through mobilizing religious institutions to disseminate anti-irregular migration and people smuggling sermons. These sermons articulated a moral geography of righteously emplaced nations, virtuously protected by borders and restrictive immigration law, under threat from foreigners on the move: foreigners threatening due to their cross-border mobilities. The IOM (2010a: 19–22) worked with at least 136 Muslim and Christian religious leaders to incorporate the message that irregular migration and people smuggling was sinful into their sermons. The IOM (2010a: 10–11) provided the religious leaders with “draft” sermons examined below. Using these sermons, and others subsequently prepared, the IOM

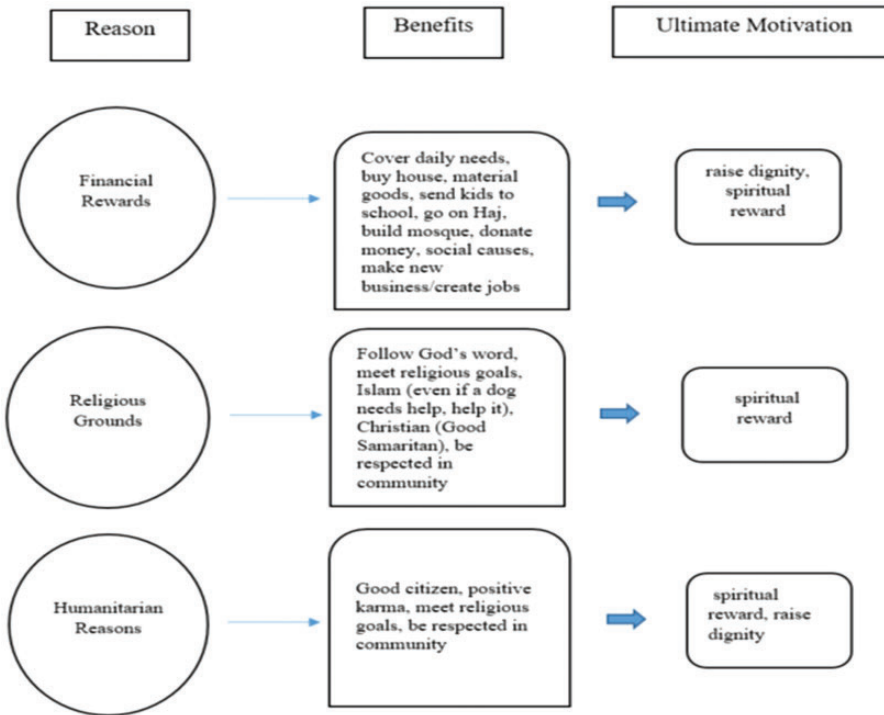


Figure 2. IOM's people smuggling motivation flow chart. Source: Adapted from IOM (2010d: 22).

created prayer booklets. By the end of 2010, three thousand copies of the prayer booklets were distributed across the 14 communities (IOM, 2010a: 66), while IOM (2010a: 23–24) staff determined 7160 people heard anti-people smuggling themed sermons from 6 May 2010 through 15 June 2010 alone.

The Islamic sermon produced by the IOM is provided in Figure 3. The sermon is framed in language about helping others, yet the sermon qualifies this in the following way, “the critical point that we need to remember, however, is that our open willingness to help others is an act based on wisdom and faith, not based on crime and sin . . .”

This aspect of the sermon seems directed toward the sentiment that transporting irregular migrants aids people in distress and thus is moral. The sermon counters this belief by pointing out that people smuggling is a crime and thus a sin, therefore transporting irregular migrants across borders does not help irregular migrants or yourself. The sermon frames irregular migrants as people without “the right motives,” rather than people seeking refuge. The sermon cautions that irregular migrants are trying to reach “Australia through our borders,” using “our boats, our people, our knowledge.” In this sense, the sermon valorizes borders and nationalism, “othering” the foreigners who entered “our territory” through crossing “our borders” to draw from “our resources.”

The sermon also connects borders supposedly inherent protection of the nation to the law, “they ask for help . . . but this is not the help talked about in the Al Qur’an. Bringing irregular migrants to Australia is illegal. And it is a sin.” The sermon’s only direct argument for why transporting irregular migrants is immoral is that it is illegal. Religious morality is defined purely in relation to domestic law. The sermon’s message is that regardless of circumstance, by committing the sin of crossing borders without a visa, irregular migrants are

## FRIDAY SERMON - BASIC THINKING

Greeting then read quote from Al Qur'an.

In the verse I just read, Allah says that as social creatures, people have to respect one another, and not be prejudiced with skin color, race, rank, or economic background.

People of Allah, as humans on this earth, we are to help each other. And yet I think you will agree that before we are willing to help someone we will look at what they are wearing, what they look like, where they are from, and a list of many other things. Allah says this is not right, and we must help one another regardless. In Islam, helping each other without restrictions is a part of a philosophy called *habluminannas*. This comes from the fact that a healthy self is a self that can live symbiotically with themselves, with others, with their environment, and with Allah.

The Al Qur'an specifically states that one who engages in *habluminannas* is a person who can live symbiotically with others and follows many relevant verses including:

- being an individual that is willing to do good (An-Nisa: 124, Al-Ashr: 1-3, At-Tin:5-6).

- Also in the *Ta'awun* form (helping each other), explained by Al Qurthubi in his translation. He said as an example, some *ta'awun* forms are based on verses which describe that we must all do what we can such as: a good person helping others with his knowledge, a rich person help others with his wealth, a brave person help others in his fight for Allah SWT. Everyone should help each other using their talents and abilities.

There is also the act of *ta'assun* which means we are always giving and receiving or helping each ((An-Nisa: 86).

The critical point that we need to remember, however, is that our open willingness to help others is an act based on wisdom and faith, not based on crime and sin. Yes, we must help each other. But it is not considered helping if a crime or a sin is involved. This is specifically referred to in Al-Ma'idah:2. READ VERSE Al-Ma'idah:2

From the verse I have just read, it is clear that we must help each other in the spirit of goodness, and not help each other to do wrong things. The words of Allah SWT are very interesting and if we listen to them carefully, let me read it "To be Helpful with each other in goodness and faith"...

Words of these nature occur only once in Al Qur'an, which requires us to understand this verse in general context. General in terms of the objective and specific goodness it demands.

Let me read another verse where it states that we are not to help each other in crime, as God's wrath will surely be felt.

Do not take the *hadiths* lightly for they are full of clarity. There is a *hadith* that states that everyone must be helped, the oppressed and the oppressor. Rasulullah SAW states "Help your friends, the oppressed and the oppressor, as well." To which the Friends of Rasulullah replied, "Of course, we will help the oppressed. But does it make sense that we also help the oppressor?"

To which Rasulullah SAW responds, "By stopping them from making mistakes or committing sins you are helping them." (Bukhari and Ahmad)

The blessed people of Allah, many among you are fishermen and others who work in the coastal industry. There has been news circulating recently of many irregular migrants trying to reach Australia through our borders, through this area. The way they can reach Australia is by using our boats, our people, our knowledge. They ask for help but blessed people of Allah, I tell you that this is not the help that is talked about in the Al Qur'an.

Bringing irregular migrants to Australia is illegal. And it is a sin. If you agree to help house irregular migrants before they leave for Australia, if you have anything to do with smuggling these irregular migrants to Australia, it is a sin. You are not helping them, you are doing something wrong in the eyes of Allah SWT.

Some of you may ask me, if someone wants to live in another country to try and improve their lives, is it not allowed? And I will answer you that of course it is allowed but you must follow the process within the law.

By evading the right processes that have been established you are committing a crime, and that is wrong. The key to helping others is that we must think first before helping others. Make sure you help the right person with the right motives in the right way.

As for the irregular migrant smuggling, you can help them, you must help them, by not allowing them to break the law. Report them to the local authorities and you are doing right, then you are helping them correctly in the eyes of Allah SWT.

Remember, all of us humans at the end will go back to our creator, God. And we must account for all of the things we have done while living on this earth.

Wassalamualaikum warah matullahi wabarrakaatuh

**Figure 3.** Islamic sermon produced and distributed by the IOM. Source: IOM (2010c: 47).

not helping themselves but endangering their own salvation. Therefore, per the sermon, transporting irregular migrants aids them commit sin and threatens their eternal soul. Human temporality is presented as secondary to a spiritual eternity, as neither irregular migrants' or your own mortal circumstances are of primary concern, as "all of us humans at the end will go back to our creator, God. And we must account for all of the things we have done while living on this earth." Through self-reflection, per the sermon, it will become clear that irregular migrants can best be aided through being reported. By reporting them, the potential people smuggler is "doing right" and "helping them correctly." Thus, the potential people smuggler may still become irregular migrants' savior by preventing them from committing the sin of crossing borders without permission.

The IOM's Christian sermon was only released in part (Figure 4). Regardless, the sermon's message is clear. The Christian sermon focuses on establishing irregular migrants as economic migrants. For example, the sermon cautions, "we must be careful, however, because the words 'those in need' can be interpreted in many different ways." The sermon dismisses the notion that irregular migrants "need" to cross borders. Irregular migrants are presented as merely wanting to improve their economic position, and that a righteous sense of need is not a material one. It furthers that helping people improve their economic standing is not the kind of help implied in the Christian story of the Good Samaritan. The sermon's final paragraph questions whether foreign irregular



"Dear brothers and sisters, I would like to re-visit the story of the Good Samaritan. Yes, I know most of you have heard the story, and you probably remember it well.... In fact I can personally remember hearing the story when I was very young. It is interesting that many many people love that story. And do you know why?

The message of the story is internationally appealing. The message of the Good Samaritan tells us that we have to be kind and helpful to everyone, without looking at the color of their skin, their economic status, their language or dialect, or even their gender. The message of the Good Samaritan is that we must do what we can for those in dire need.

I bring up the story of the Good Samaritan because I feel that this great story, this story of human kindness and love, is also a story that can be used to mislead us. Now please, let me explain what I mean by saying "mislead us".

The simple message of the Good Samaritan is that we must help those who are in need. "Help Those in Need". We must be careful, however, because the words 'those in need' can be interpreted in many different ways. As you know, people have many different needs. For example, I need a new motorbike, maybe someone needs a new TV... maybe someone else needs a new bed.

Do you think the morale of the Good Samaritan story had those types of needs in mind? (Wait for response from congregation). Do you think that if I told someone that I really needed a new motorbike, that it would be that person's responsibility, in accordance with the Good Samaritan story, to help me get that motorcycle? (Wait for response from congregation). What happens if I told someone that I really needed a motorcycle and that I needed them to help me steal it. Should that person help me steal it? (Wait for yes/no response from congregation).

No, nobody should help me steal the motorbike because that would be wrong. That is a sin. So what is my point? Where am I going with this? Let me explain.

A few weeks ago, a team of researchers came to this area to discuss with residents here the issue of smuggling irregular migrants from Indonesia to Australia. They wanted to know if it ever happens here, who gets involved, and why people would support the practice. Well a few weeks ago the researchers came back to this area to share the results of their research. One of the interesting findings of the research was that many people surveyed said they would support smuggling irregular migrants because it was the humanitarian thing to do. And this made me think about the Good Samaritan.

Overall, the issue of irregular migrants is a difficult one because there are many reasons that people want to flee their country, their homes, and their families to seek life in another country. Most of the irregular migrants we see in Indonesia are from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and from the middle east. These people are here not because they want to stay in Indonesia, but because they want to settle somewhere else, namely Australia. They come to Indonesia with the intention of finding a way to go to Australia. These people, if you ask them, will tell you they "need to go to Australia."

**Figure 4.** Christian sermon produced and distributed by the IOM. Source: IOM (2010c: 48).

migrants *need* to go to Australia, insinuating that they are merely attempting to "steal" a better quality of life by crossing borders irregularly.

### The campaign's advertising slogan

The campaign also sought to reassert the virtues of the Westphalian nation-state system as a moral geography through conventional advertising. The campaign's messaging generally avoided directly forbidding smuggling, instead encouraging people to think and behave in ways which indirectly discouraged it, making it a matter of conscience. After consulting and securing support from religious institutions, the IOM finalized the ad campaign's primary theme as "Rejecting Offers from People Smugglers is the Right Thing to Do," the main slogan being, "I Know Smuggling Irregular Migrants is Wrong." Note that the theme is an affirmative one, making a moral claim. This is a pedagogical approach, teaching subjects to think about people smuggling in moral terms and assess its morality in a certain way.

The slogan, “I Know Smuggling Irregular Migrants is Wrong” has similar characteristics yet individualizes the moral message. In some combination, the theme and “I Know” slogan were included in all campaign materials (IOM, 2010a: 3) (Figure 5).

The four posters in Figure 5 illustrate the campaign’s mix of suggestion and personalization. The two posters on the top of Figure 5 offer direct but suggestive statements, “Smuggling Irregular Migrants is a Sin” and “Proud Fishermen are Observant of Religion and the Law.” These messages provide religious instruction and a self-help message. Of note is the connection between religion and obeying the law (top right poster in Figure 5), indicating their interdependence in maintaining self-dignity and salvation (top and bottom right posters in Figure 5). The two posters on the bottom of Figure 5 individualize the message, emphasizing “I”; the poster on the bottom right of Figure 5 suggesting that your family’s dignity, not just your own, is at stake. The campaign’s messaging focused on the self-worth, moral, and religious implications of transporting irregular migrants across borders, directing people’s

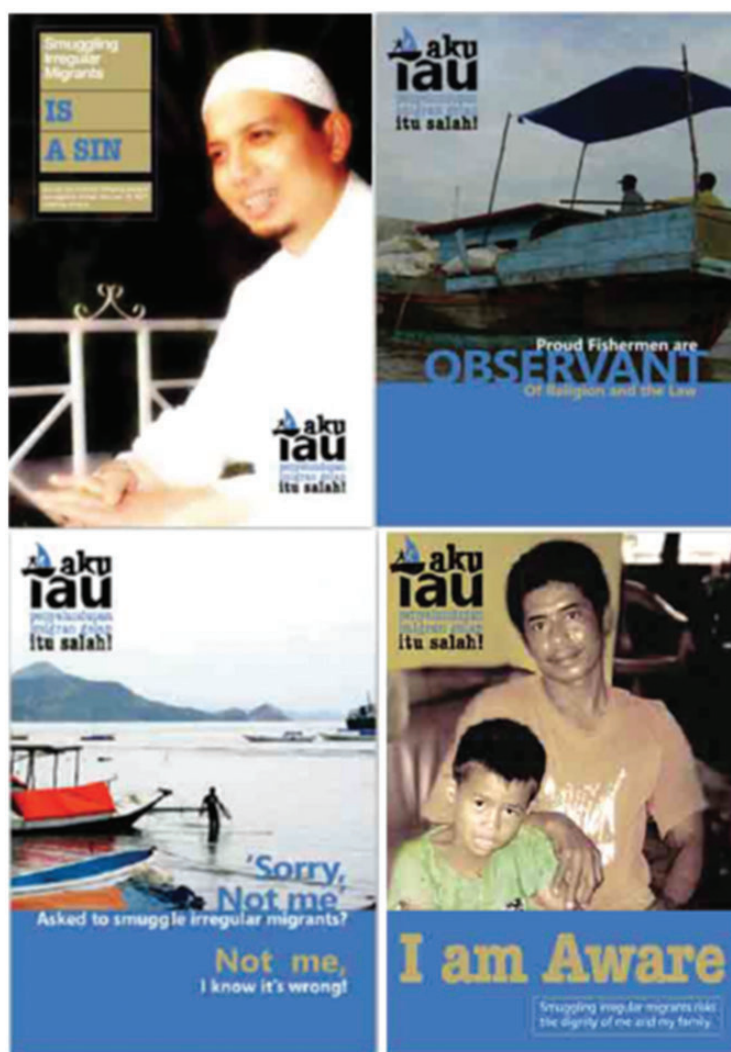


Figure 5. Example campaign posters. Source: IOM (2010c: 64).

conscience through the spread of “truths” about the morality of regular migration and immorality of irregular migration. In doing so, the ethics of the nation-state system is affirmed, a moral geography supposedly beyond reproach.

### **Bordering the everyday**

The campaign sought to integrate this moral geography into people’s everyday lives through disseminating branded “collaterals” designed to “keep the issue at top of mind” (IOM, 2010c: 40). Items were selected that the IOM (2010c: 40) thought people generally could not financially afford to discard. The objective was to get collaterals into people’s homes, for as long as possible, to encourage them to think about the campaign’s arguments daily. This shows the varying scales and temporalities of bordering pedagogy, and how actors, in this case statist agents, attempt to make us (re)learn and perform moral geographies across our lifeworld. For example, the use of a 21-month “I Know” calendar was justified in the following way, “a calendar keeps people smuggling front [and] center because it will be placed prominently [in potential people smugglers’ homes] and consulted often . . . in addition, making this calendar 21 months-long extends the shelf life of the product” (IOM, 2010c: 39). The use of family portraits is perhaps the best example of the IOM’s attempt to integrate bordering pedagogy into people’s everyday lives. The IOM’s (2010c: 44) research found that most households desired family portraits, yet many could not afford one. The IOM (2010c) saw family portraits branded with campaign slogans as an opportunity to get moral messaging into homes, displayed in a “prominent area in their household or [hung] by the front door for everyone to see once they walk in” (44). By the end of 2010 alone, 2618 family portraits were taken of an estimated 9163 people (IOM, 2010a: x). The branded family portraits use as bordering pedagogy qua moral pedagogy is glaring. The potential people smuggler is provided with an object which, presumably, they will look at daily. In looking at the portrait they see themselves, spouse, and children, while being reminded that they “know” people smuggling is a sin. The portraits encourage viewers to consider their conscience as they leave their home where they will be susceptible to the temptation of people smuggling. Further, the potential people smuggler can view the portrait upon returning home and reflect on the morality of their day in relation to the moral geography the campaign promoted.

Radio advertisements were also used to achieve this goal. Radio spots broadcasted “scenarios” demonstrating why people smuggling was immoral (IOM, 2010c: 31). Figure 6 provides an example. Notice how in the ad the husband character quickly corrects the wife character’s assertion that transporting irregular migrants provides religious rewards. The husband draws from the campaign’s “I Know” slogan in stating, “I know that is not the way to earn extra money. I know that is wrong. . . .” The ad argues transporting irregular migrants actually does not help them, yet avoids justifying this position. The husband merely states, “I don’t know the details . . . it is not right.” This quick dismissal avoids addressing irregular migration’s connection to asylum seeking, the bordered nation-state system’s production of refugees, the failings of the international refugee regime, or the precarity of displacement. Any of these realities challenge the ethics of the Westphalian moral geography being promoted. Instead, the ad leverages religion to focus on people smuggling’s purported immorality, concluding that, “earning money that is not halal will mean we are living a life of sin.” Within the radio ad in Figure 7, the message that people smuggling is sinful is further legitimized. Note how the imam character frames people smuggling as a battle of conscience between sin and salvation. The imam character bluntly claims that any moral dilemma about transporting irregular migrants is a self-serving

Religious Theme: Husband and wife face tough future	
Synopsis: Facing financial pressure, a husband recalls a religious sermon explaining why IM [irregular migrant] people smuggling is wrong	
Wife	So, do you think you can get the money?
Husband	Did you cook rice? I am hungry (trying to change subject).
Wife	You ask for rice but did you buy rice? I told you this morning to bring rice home. I am too embarrassed to go buy rice after they told us they won't give us anymore goods until we pay off our debt
Husband	I don't understand why they are so hard to us. They know us fisherman, the catches have been tough. They know the weather hasn't been good.
Wife	Well she told me too many fisherman are asking for credit. She is bearing a lot of burden. According to her, you should do the same as Pak Bambang.
Husband	What do you mean Pak Bambang?
Wife	Well, he is making extra money using his skills not for fishing but for helping others.
Husband	What do you mean?
Wife	He is making extra money working with some people from Jakarta.
Husband	What do you mean?
Wife	What do you mean, what do you mean, what do you mean (being cynical)... Pak Bambang is making extra money helping foreigners reach other countries He just helps drop them off and makes good money.
Husband	Oh honey, I know that is not the way to earn extra money, I know that is wrong. That was even the prayer topic last week and the imam said it was wrong.
Wife	But we are just helping them.
Husband	No, we are not helping them. I don't know the details but there is a process for them, agents use us little people to break that process. It is not right.
Wife	But we need money.
Husband	Yes, we need money but it is like the imam said, God will provide a way.
Wife	You are right, earning money that is not halal will mean we are living a life of sin and I do not want that.
Husband	I love you. I love our children, I will find a way for us to live halal.

**Figure 6.** Radio ad emphasizing religious implications of people smuggling. Source: Adapted from IOM (2010c: 32).

fabrication, “you are a smart man and you are probably capable of convincing yourself that any sin is justifiable, but the simple truth is that people smuggling irregular migrants is wrong. . . .” The imam character dismisses any moral, ethical, or intellectual dilemma concerning transporting irregular migrants as, “how the devil works.” Thus, potential people smugglers are being told people smuggling is a matter of conscience yet one with no room for debate. One side is righteous, the other evil. The potential people smuggler is not merely being taught about righteousness and sin but being coercively directed to disregard their own ideas as “the devil’s work.” In other words, people are being encouraged to accept the moral geography being articulated at face value rather than critically evaluating its purported ethics for themselves.

## Discussion

Migration management expresses the idealizations of policymakers: how they view the world’s ideal biopolitical and geopolitical organization. Investigating programs of migration

Religious Theme: Fisherman Seeks Religious Advice	
Synopsis: A religious leader explains to the fisherman why IM [irregular migrant] people smuggling is wrong.	
Fisherman	Imam, I am so sorry to bother you, do you have a few minutes?
Imam	Cecep, it is so good to see you. You must be very busy lately, I miss you at prayers.
Fisherman	Yes, please forgive me Imam, I have not been going to prayer.
Imam	Remember Cecep we praise Got not only in good times but also in bad times.
Fisherman	Yes Imam, I understand.
Imam	Come here, sit, tell me how I can help you.
Fisherman	Imam, I come here because I need your advice.
Imam	Well, I will do my best to help you.
Fisherman	A week ago I have been given a chance to earn some extra money. Of course I can really use the money but I am not sure how halal the money is. I would like to ask for your help.
Imam	To be honest, if you are already in doubt, then God is already giving you signs that you have to be careful, what is the source of this extra money?
Fisherman	I have been introduced to a man from Jakarta, he wants me to be part of a team that will help his friends out of Indonesia by boat to Australia. He is paying a lot of money to the crew.
Imam	Well you are right, already it sounds suspicious.
Fisherman	Yes, and there is more. We will not meet the guests until we are ready to leave. The information about the guests is limited. I need your advice.
Imam	This sounds like it is about irregular migrants. I know people smuggling irregular migrants is wrong, and I am sure you know that it is wrong too.
Fisherman	Yes, I know it is wrong, but irregular migrants is not our issue, we are just helping them, and we can use the extra money.
Imam	Cecep, you are a smart man and you are probably capable of convincing yourself that any sin is justifiable, but the simple truth is that people smuggling irregular migrants is wrong, no matter how you look at it.
Fisherman	You are right. I know people smuggling is wrong and I will not do it. I am trying to convince myself it is justified just so that I can find a reason to do it.
Imam	Well that is how the devil works. He tempts us, he goads us, and he uses our own minds to go against what is right. I am glad that we have had this talk and I am sure you will never forget that people smuggling is wrong.

**Figure 7.** Radio ad depicting conversation between imam and potential people smuggler. Source: Adapted from IOM (2010c: 33).

management has shown how border enforcement architectures are shifting. Analyzing how border enforcement architectures articulate moral geographies provides insight into what type of world migration management programs are attempting to construct. This, in turn, provides insight into how states may respond to future displacement and irregular migration geographies. It is unclear whether officials within the Australian and Indonesian governments, or the IOM, actually believe asylum seeking irregular migration or people smuggling is immoral and a sin. Regardless, it is instructive that states and the IOM use such argumentation. As mentioned above, Australia's campaigns have depicted both irregular migrants and people smugglers as threatening and villainous, as well as both as moral subjects trying to do the right thing. This contradiction tells us the lengths to which migration managers are willing to go to legitimize the virtues of borders and the nation-state system and reduce irregular migration: they will say anything.

Border control has become more extreme as growing numbers of irregular migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees have seemingly disrupted idealized imaginaries of what

Malkki (1995) famously called “the national order of things”: the notion that the world is naturally divided among nation-states territorializing polities of citizens best served through geographic rootedness and boundedness. This Westphalia moral geography circulates a powerful normative expectation that once territorially established, nations should forge borders that admit relatively few outsiders, becoming safe and self-replicating through emplacement and boundedness. Border enforcement tactics are efforts to police irregular migrants’ perceived transgressions against border’s seemingly natural, moral, righteousness in regulating movements across emplaced nations. The findings of this study indicate that even with record numbers of displaced peoples, states and the IOM probably will continue deploying aggressive forms of migration management to immobilize asylum-seekers, efforts to prevent the displaced from using irregular migration to “self-select” where they become reterritorialized.

The case described in this article is unusually explicit in its adoption of a morality-based campaign but is nonetheless instructive in the moral geography it articulates. First, the campaign sought to normalize immigration law as the definitive moral regulator of migration. Campaign posters, radio spots, and sermons emphasized obeying the law when evaluating the morality of migration. The Indonesia–Australia border was constructed as a natural boundary (re)produced through either moral or immoral migration mediated by the law: moral mobilities those being legally sanctioned by sovereign nation-states, immoral mobilities as all others regardless of circumstance. The laws of nation-states were given centrality in this narrative over international norms and obligations granting asylum-seekers the right to cross borders. As the Islamic sermon (Figure 3) and radio ads (Figures 6 and 7) state, international migration is “allowed” but only in accordance with national laws and the “right processes.” The notion that existing, “established,” migration and asylum law is adequate in regulating migration and serving refugees is furthered, even as the rates and realities of displacement and undocumented migration show this to be inaccurate. Concerningly, the right to seek asylum was absent from the campaign’s structuring of moral mobilities, as was Australia’s legal responsibility to adhere to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. The campaign even furthered the idea that there was a righteousness in reporting asylum-seekers to the authorities. That reporting asylum-seekers benefits not only yourself but, ultimately, asylum-seekers, as you are preventing them from crossing borders without a state’s permission—an immoral act.

Second, the campaign reproduces a world where it is supposedly right and righteous for borders to be guarded by highly mobile consultants for hire. Today, migration is managed not only by states but their deputized contractors: unaccountable and shadowy private firms and intergovernmental bodies hired to facilitate border control all over the world. The IOM is the face of migration management qua extra-territorial border security for hire. The IOM’s role in administering transnational border control under the guise of its purported apolitical expertise in managing migration has enabled its now near ubiquitous global presence. In 2018, the IOM (2019a, 2019b) had 12,673 staff facilitating 2584 active projects in over 150 countries. In 1998, by comparison, the IOM (2019b) had 67 member states, 1100 staff, and 119 field offices. Furthermore, in 2018, the IOM (2019a: 6–7) had a total project expenditure of over \$1.8 billion USD, whereas in 1999 the IOM’s (2001: 2) total project expenditure was just \$294.3 million USD. Through their financial contributions, states hire the IOM to facilitate bordering operations in migrant source and transit countries, extending states’ bordering power beyond their territory. The main constraint on states transnational bordering capability being cash: the money required to pay the IOM to administer projects. In fulfilling this service, the IOM acts to pre-emptively stymie asylum-seekers’ efforts to lodge asylum claims (Ashutosh and Mountz, 2011). Under the

guise of humanitarianism and “maintaining order,” the IOM leverages conflict and supposed crises into immobilizing asylum-seekers often when it is most vital for them to cross borders (Brachet, 2016). The IOM’s supposedly righteous transnational agency, ironically, rests on a mission of enforcing the righteousness of national rootedness and immobility. As Dini (2018) has shown, the IOM perpetuates a narrative of sedentarism as natural and immobility as proof of national allegiance, migration management governing not only non-citizens but serving as domestic state-building, nation-building, and citizenship-building projects.

The results of this study further this important point: the IOM not only implements border externalizations for destination states, but also furthers source and transit countries’ control over their own citizens. The Australian Government indeed paid the IOM to go to Indonesia to work toward reducing asylum-seekers’ ability to lodge asylum claims in Australia. Yet the Indonesian Government approved this campaign and its targeting of Indonesian citizens for “re-education.” In doing so, the Indonesian Government used the IOM as a subsidized extension of the Indonesian state, reproducing the Indonesian nation through a program of nation and citizenship-building. This subcontracted statecraft sought to subjugate Indonesians into particular migration mentalities, embodied through acts of citizenship and nationalism that reproduced moral mobilities and rejected immoral ones. A campaign designed to reproduce the Indonesian nation in a certain way while subordinating other ways of thinking and being. The campaign’s messaging was an effort to normalize the ideal Indonesian citizen: a citizen who embodies borders and immigration law as moral regulators of movement. As such, migration management governs not only the mobility of non-citizens but the rootedness of citizens.

Third, and relatedly, unsanctioned cross-border mobilities were associated with a foreign threat, crime and self-gain, malintent and theft. A familiar trope in political rhetoric, irregular migrants were structured as devious economic migrants, jumping the imaginary queue, moving ahead of legal, regular, immigrants. The radio spots (Figures 6 and 7) and sermons (Figures 3 and 4), the Christian sermon in particular (Figure 4), structured irregular migrants not as stateless asylum-seekers in search of permanent refuge but as selfish economic migrants. The desire to leave a polity and self-select another being treated with suspicion, something to be interrogated, discouraged, and deterred: a want requiring a purity test. Both the Islamic and Christian sermons (Figures 3 and 4) even add hints of nationalism and xenophobia to this narrative, describing foreign irregular migrants as using “our territory,” “our borders,” “our people,” “our resources”: irregular migrants wanting to selfishly take advantage of Indonesia and Indonesians. While not discussed above, during the campaign, the IOM produced and circulated a newsletter about irregular migration to Indonesian officials and the public. The newsletter was entitled “Sovereign Nation” (IOM, 2010c: 57). Taken as a whole, the campaign sought to normalize the world as simplistically divided between nations and nation-states: “us” and “them”; “our” chunk of earth and “theirs”; the crossing of “our” borders needing “the right motives” and sanction to ensure that a crime does not occur and that “we” are protected from some type of violation. Any mobility act outside the sanction of the “established processes” of asylum and immigration law, regardless of their shortcomings, was structured as subversive, immoral, a money grab. Nations and nation-states being reified as essentialized entities, borders territorializing and protecting unique populations from nefarious outsiders after “our” national resources.

Finally, the home was presented as a unique site of moral reflection; a space for daily evaluation of the morality of your behavior, whether your actions comport with the established codes of conduct, laws and regulations, of the nation-state system. The campaign used the home as a site to reinforce campaign directives, to remind potential people smugglers of

the centrality of the law in determining moral mobilities and the implications should one violate the codes of this moral geography. The IOM saw, and sought to use, the home as a pedagogical architecture capable of transmitting, normalizing, and reproducing moral regulation. Within the home, subjects were encouraged to think about the morality of transporting irregular migrants before they left each day and to reflect upon it when returning. The home being a space where moral norms are known, reflected on, and reinforced, outside the home a space of temptation and resistance, a space where foreigners and criminals seek to trick you into violating moralities you otherwise know are right. Again, boundedness is idealized as safety, the “outside” a foreign space of threat and temptation, something needing protection from. Thus, even the home becomes a site for subjugating people within geopolitical ideals regarding morality, movement, and borders: a site for bordering practices reinforcing the nation-state system as the determinate of how to think, behave, and move in the world.

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