

# NO BORDERS

INTERCONNECTEDNESS IS A MEMETIC VIRUS THAT LIBERATES US FROM OUR FAULTY WIRING, AND EVERY STEP THAT RATCHETS THAT FREEDOM CLOSER IS AN EXPONENTIAL EXPRESSION OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE HUMAN RACE AND ITS PLACE IN THE ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE OF THE UNIVERSE.

OPEN BORDERS ARE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SOCIOPATHIC PRISONER'S DILEMMA STUCK IN RECURSIVE LOOPS FOR THE REST OF OURS SPECIES' MISERABLE HELL OF AN EXISTENCE AND A DIMENSION OF WONDERS BEYOND WHAT WE'RE CAPABLE OF EVEN CONSIDERING.

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IS OUR ONLY HOPE  
EMMI BEVENSEE



## **In-group Preference and National Borders**

Fundamental to the danger of nation-states and borders are the paradigms of nationalism and in-group preference that exploit human quirks to justify violence. In-group preference is best understood in terms of the creation of teams through the dehumanization of an 'other.' In-group preference is mentally categorizing someone who is somehow different (however shallow that difference may be) and turning their value into less than that of your team or "community."

It is necessary to resist the dishonest mental aggression of in-group preference even as it is critical to recognize degrees of scale, spectra, and the intensities of harms that accompany in-group preference depending on from whom it comes. After all, to other up ("Fuck you pig!" from a poor PoC) is awesome and is a fundamentally different act than to other down ("The poor are stupid." from a rich white lady). Further, the ideology of whiteness, as utilized by exploitative empires, is one of the most deeply othering paradigms to curse this planet.

In-group preference is often synonymous with nationalism, but in-group preference is more fluid. It doesn't depend on just the nation-state. In-group preference swims equally well among neighborhood nationalism, racial othering, etc. Our human tendency to have affinity with people is not in and of itself the problem. The problem is what we do with it. The behavior of having tribes is largely distinct from 'tribalism.' A tribe or imagined community that seeks cooperative game theoretic strategies across lines of difference and doesn't resort to dehumanization to maintain violent supremacy is not being "tribalistic" as imperialists donned it; they are practicing voluntary free association. For instance, just because I like someone and value myself doesn't mean that I should hate everyone who isn't that person or me and doesn't share the traits that we connect over.

But even if it was 'natural' or inherent to prefer in-group preference then I would resist my nature and try to change it. My goal is to eliminate the faulty wiring that suggests that somehow because I am me and not you that I am somehow worth exponentially more than you. In a trolley problem between myself and two people of equal value and goodness (whatever that means) I should never ever ever hesitate to save them by sacrificing my own life just because I feel so urgently connected to my own being. This logic of self-absorption stretches across time as well. Indigenous spiritualities are often careful to think 500 years forward and backwards from a given generation and to recognize the interconnectedness of individuals across this scale. It is important, as well, that neither the collective nor the individual rule over one another. Western failures to incorporate a similar paradigm of interdependence are coordination problems that arise because 'I do not see others' liberation as being as important as my own,' even if that 'liberation' is just food or health care. Whatever it is in my head that says "I'm worth more," only because I'm me, is wrong. It's a tick. If that's what being natural means, then fuck being natural.

Nationalism is one of the grosser forms of in-group preference though racism is quite similar in form. Ideological and cultural disparity are disguised as justice and then built into intricate systems of domination. I should never think of someone across a border as being worth less than me because they were born where they were and I, here. I should know that billions of lives deserve basic freedom even though I'll never know a damn thing about them.

Nationalism, being one of the most violent modern battlegrounds of in-group preference, is defined by its endemic othering. Borders are a place of resistance, the hybrid space between imagined communities and inflated sites of value. Borderlands infect dehumanization with empathy to the extent that movement and sharing across difference is possible. This

pinged off of the lived experience and observations of other human beings with access to other forms of knowledge. In this way open borders help to solve the knowledge problem of markets and the knowledge problem of privilege and ideas in a way that atomized siloing completely throttles.

### **Not Being A Dick**

Aside from this heady discussion of economics and ideas, it is almost more important to focus on the underpinning of open borders ideologies: not being a dick. Anyone could find themselves in a situation where they are desiring of migration. That desire should be able to be filled along voluntary lines in a larger process of cooperative solutions to coordination problems. Most people don't have the pleasure of knowing a lot of migrants, refugees, and undocumented people. I know more than I could count and the experience changes me at deep levels all the time. Empathy and liberty are twin principles, which in conjunction, form many trails and pathways needed in order for humans to survive, much less thrive, through the thicket of obstacles we collectively face. So, in lieu of big fancy stuff, babysit and make a casserole for your migrant neighbors and community. Learn a language and build deep bonds. Be trustworthy and you'll experience a chosen family unparalleled. The non-zero sum game of open borders is a rare dynamic where efficiency and ethics mingle to create a network of people and practices that deeply embody the spirit of benevolent mutual-aid. So put out your hand, and walk beside everyone instead of with no one. Be a friend *and* an accomplice. Protect migrants and undocumented people from the U.S. gestapo of Border Patrol and ICE. When you run across those who wear rifles to enforce borders, treat them as terrorists and, if we have a future, it will look kindly on you.

thriving, and human dignity— because they are.

### **Intellectual and Cultural development**

The borderlands are often places of great fun, amazing food, flourishing markets, music, and intricate hybridity. The mixing of cultures often leads to literal parties when the effects of state and non-state militarization and monopoly can be sufficiently shaken off. Borderlands with freer movement allow for exchange that can promote peace-building across difference. Additionally, and this cannot be understated, open borders allow for increased movement of ideas, and ,where the movement of ideas are restrained, development is poisoned. Whereas, where ideas are free, the world benefits in dramatic fashion.

Ideas are obstructed in two key ways through closed borders: (1) inability of persons to physically move and build connections to share their ideas, and (2) inability for people to be immersed in different cultures and languages so as to learn how to effectively introduce their ideas. Vulgar nationalism and isolationism makes for stale nazism and vastly restricts growth in science, technological development, politics, and other cultural fields such as literature and the arts.

The internet has bested some of the problems of restrictive borders, but it is no substitute for the ability of people to make meaningful connections in real life, especially in contexts such as China or Turkey where the internet is massively censored and controlled despite the wide availability of things like proxies, VPNs, and Tor browser. Even up against many restrictions, though, the internet serves as a landscape visualizing the potential for increased memetic complexity through cultural interchange. When you can go on a forum and test your pet political or economic theory against the lived experience and research of people from across the world, your sample size grows and your data models can become exponentially more reliable. The same goes with immersion. An individual's ideas and stereotypes can be

vulnerability to power and mythos is precisely why nationalists seek to violently repress connectedness across borders. Interconnectedness is a memetic virus that liberates us from our faulty wiring, and every step that ratchets that freedom closer is an exponential expression of hope for the future of the human race and its place in the ecological landscape of the universe. Open borders are the difference between a sociopathic prisoner's dilemma stuck in recursive loops for the rest of ours species' miserable hell of an existence and a dimension of wonders beyond what we're capable of even considering.

### **Borders**

Borders, in the modern sense of physical and/or ideological constructs separating conjoined nation-states, are not the norm they are generally assumed to be. National borders are the (often literal) walls demarcating sites of authoritarianism and coercion at odds with the liberty and development so crucial to the human species. Many believe that the modern nation-state was born through the Treaty of Westphalia in response to European religious wars in 1648. Time went on and the ideas and practices of statism were reified through Hobbesian justifications of the need for the state as a means of coordination and collective action around public goods problems, namely *domestic* peace and security. The passport was originally just meant to be a temporary war-time precaution, and most countries advocated total abolition of the passport system. The U.S. border with Mexico was largely porous and allowed for free movement before the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Clinton's National Strategic Plan in 1994. These changes were made as ways of curbing the inevitable flows of migration that they expected as a result of the free-trade agreement. The border is now being even more heavily militarized and politicized amidst calls from Donald Trump and his zealots for an impossible wall, despite the fact that net migration into the U.S. from the southern border has been beneath zero, that

immigrants commit less crimes, don't increase unemployment, and also use fewer public resources. The US effectively makes immigration illegal by ensuring that it's nearly impossible for average people to migrate legally. Lately the Trump regime continues to make legal immigration even more difficult than it already was. Even now, experiments such as the Schengen zone and the European Union are proving, despite the complexity of Brexit and the unceasing bureaucracy of the EU, that fluid boundaries between a great number of countries is not only possible, it is exceptionally profitable, ethical, and enjoyable. Further, most U.S. Americans believe that immigration is a good thing even if they disagree with the level at which it is occurring or that they think it's occurring.

As incompetent, inefficient, and rigidly inflexible as national states are, the primary anarchist argument against them is their illegitimacy as defined by their monopoly on violence and coercive methods of domination. With the exception of the Nazi offshoot of national-"anarchism," sincere anarchists across the spectrum, from anarcho-capitalists to anarcho-communists, are broadly against nationalism and the state. Borders and the state are seen as central impediments to empathy, evolution, and coordination and, instead, stand as critical pillars of in-group preference and stagnation.

If people are migrating, something in public goods allocation is (likely structurally) unequal. If it was just as good to stay or go, mostly people would stay. Open borders are an equalizer and an outlet for productivity. Freedom of movement is essential to any liberty-focused ethos and system of rights. If not for freedom of movement, most other systems of ethics and rights crumble. For example, if people do not have the right to change their location and who they are around, what good is freedom of association or voluntary exchange? Or if people cannot migrate and interact with different audiences, what good is freedom of speech?

Any libertarian in favor of militarized national borders is more

allowed to be documented and work legally, they would leave the agorist black-market economy and enter into the taxable economy (although I'm an anti-statist and anti-tax, etc.). This would enable the U.S. to collect taxes on their labor and monitor migrant flows as they futilely desire to waste resources doing (such as with the now cut-off DACA recipients). This would also reduce the relatively minuscule benefits expenditures that conservatives obsess over as these persons would be able to pursue work at market value, rather than grossly unfair and precarious under the table employment schemes. In fact even the paranoia of migrant flow increasing the size and failure of the welfare state is unfounded or at least dramatically exaggerated as this multi-EU nation study finds. Even many conservative libertarians are skeptical of whether the economic arguments are real, much less whether they overcome the obvious moral obligation.

Migrants should be given the same to chance to compete freely on a leveled global market as any other firm or individual. One extensive study found that the politically motivated efforts to create a perception of negative competition among migrants, rather than striving to create collaboration and coordination, actually ends up dramatically increasing the costs and losses associated with demographic shifts as a result of migration. This diverse entry into the marketplace would rush in a network of complexity capable of maximizing development, lowering prices, and raising wages. All of these artificial subsidies on protecting the imagined community of the United States is as ineffective and wasteful as it is unbearably cruel. The U.S. depends on the subjugation of Mexico and Mexicans (in addition to south of Mexico). Allowing those south of the U.S. border equal opportunities raises the boat for everyone except for those whose inordinate wealth depends on the violence of exploitation and fictitious nationalism. So much more could be said about the economics of these issues, but, more than almost anything, it is essential to treat immigration policies as if immigrants are actual people— real live, human beings, striving for and deserving of life,

Economists have argued that we could double the world's GDP through open borders. This could not only eliminate global poverty, it could usher in an age of unprecedented prosperity that could enable us to solve some of the most pressing issues of health and environmental destruction facing, not only our species, but earth as a whole. There are a host of benefits that a receiving country has as part of accepting migrants including labor, entrepreneurship, and social capital, and these benefits can also extend even to "under-developed" countries receiving migrants. In the U.S., for example, many migrants are only entering for seasonal work after which they will return home. Migrants are often willing to do work that U.S. citizens are not which drives down prices and increases wages overall even if it is as a result of initial inequality that this phenomena even exists. The U.S. agricultural industry, for example, would likely collapse without its huge supply of undocumented labor and the same goes for many international economic goals such as the United Kingdom's budget surplus. Migration restrictions (and the coming economic suicide of tariffs) to folks south of the U.S. border are also obstacles to many U.S. entrepreneurs seeking to do business in Mexico but deterred by long lines on the land crossings and extensive harassment, especially for non-white U.S. citizens upon return. Also, though, to assume that entrepreneurial innovation and intellectual development is a one-way street flowing south from the U.S. into Mexico is a racist and ludicrous assumption. We need not forget that brown folks created much of what modern society depends upon from food to math and physics. The reality however is that greater exchange between Mexican intellectuals, innovators, and entrepreneurs would inevitably increase the dynamics of competition that keep labor wages high and prices low in addition to fueling development of practices and products in the market.

The grossly exaggerated \$113 billion figure initially thrown out by Trump and his media cronies as being the cost of undocumented persons on U.S. taxpayers is misleading in that if migrants were

than likely a crypto- or open fascist of the ilk of Augustus Invictus, et. al. There can be no liberty without the abolition of nation states and their borders. Libertarian ethicist Michael Huemer states of borders:

*"These restrictions are imposed by coercion: guards are hired to patrol the borders, physically barring unauthorized entry, and armed officers of the state forcibly detain and expel immigrants who are found residing in the country illegally... many suffer from oppression or poverty that could and would be remedied, if only they were able to enter the country of their choice."*

But this is only the beginning of the suffering as many are fleeing warfare, or worse, only to face the brutality of detention centers. Additionally, though, even persons who are not refugees and simply have a preference deserve to move freely as long as they are not infringing directly on the rights of another. Migration, like markets, when not disrupted by monopolies of power and violence, has inherent characteristics that lend towards a rapidly adaptive and yet dynamic homeostasis.

Borders are essential in creating the non-state "other." Those from outside the drawn lines of the borders are often a racialized and heavily policed fiction of the paranoid colonial mind. It is no coincidence that xenophobia and the desire for borders and a clear citizen subject has so often been historically linked with genocide in the colonial pursuit. In modern statist capitalism the "other" from across the border serves the purpose of a "justifiably" exploitable labor and resource pool in a different way but also reminiscent to the slaves in the early colonial Americas.

National borders, however, should not be confused with personal boundaries or privately held property. That which an individual or collective has legitimate and ethical claims to ownership over should not be impinged upon by outside actors. This can be seen

in the methods of Indigenous resistance to infringements of treaty-based land-claims such as the “No-DAPL” movement at Standing Rock supported by any anarchist or libertarian with a backbone and conscience. The fact that they refused violence as a means of protest is a testament to either their strength of conviction or the danger of the situation they face. These Indigenous property movements, although containing aspects of national liberation, reflect more of what an actual attempt at collective private property could be and, if nothing else, why nationalism will seek to destroy competing nationalism or property norms no matter how legitimate they are. Decolonization and Indigenous nationalism can be seen in this way as more of an attempt at navigating monopoly and statist violence in their desire for basic access to the resources they rightly own.

### **Economics**

There is a reasonable hesitancy to discuss the economics of migration because immigrants are often reduced to inhuman caricatures of their commodified value. This is an absolute cruelty that misses the ethical imperatives surrounding migration. However, to dismiss the economics of the issue entirely serves to render invisible other layers of the catastrophic ramifications of closed borders. No matter how devastatingly corrupted our current system is, even if the bosses and monopolists benefit the most from migrant labor and resources, the economics of closed borders are still devastating to those most vulnerable, from colonized nations to the undocumented labor force in the host country. So, however treacherous, an understanding of the economics of migration that recognizes the central humanity of migrants is necessary to gathering a complete picture of the crisis.

Imperialist national borders are designed to protect concentrations of wealth and maintain access to exploitable labor and resources. Most oppressed nationalism is itself a response or method of resistance against this impossible playing field even if it

is fettered by the same problematics of nationalism. However, with things like the internet and higher levels of exchange happening between global citizens every day, the ability to effectively maintain national borders and identities is in many ways dwindling. Nations come replete with numerous high-overhead subsidies. The unsustainability of this, coupled with the ever increasing ease of use for things like cryptocurrencies and homebrew industrial manufacturing, trends in many ways towards a general market decentralization through agorist and counter-economic practices. These practices can then be coupled with parallel institutions which, following market logic, lend themselves to significantly flatter firms and the gradual destruction of many vast concentrations of wealth.

To make this idea of subsidized sites of power and resource concentration tangible, the U.S. spends billions of dollars a year on the “Prevention Through Deterrence” infrastructure that channels migrants through the most dangerous parts of the desert. Furthermore, as spending on border enforcement infrastructure and agents continues to explode, apprehensions continue to decline. This is in conjunction with the fact that the U.S. spends more on Immigration Control and Enforcement than all other federal law enforcement agencies combined. These subsidies help to create and maintain monopoly through cronyism and carte-blanche contracts with private companies who supply every piece of the seemingly infinite web of needs for “protecting the border.” The prevention through deterrence strategy and Border Patrol (BP) boots on the ground mean that the Mexican drug cartels (narcos) can control certain key crossing areas rather than having to patrol the entire border. Through brutality and corruption, BP and the narcos are able to own the lives of those crossing, often forcing them into ever more dangerous situations as the desperation for safe crossing grows. Similar phenomena haunt the EU, as countries close borders, disrupting Schengen efficiency across the increasingly nationalist and xenophobic continental Europe.