

A photograph of a garden with several large, vibrant pink roses in full bloom. The roses are set against a background of green foliage and dark tree branches. The image is split horizontally by a white, torn-edge paper effect.

HERBALISM & BORDER VIOLENCE



**SOLIDARITY
APOTHECARY**



OVERVIEW



OVERVIEW

- Welcome/Practicalities/Content Warning
- About Nicole/the Solidarity Apothecary
- The Border Regime
- The Mobile Herbal Clinic Calais
- Herbal medicines used in the clinic
- Ukraine Herbal Solidarity
- Border abolition
- Resources



WELCOME

- Hugely grateful for your presence, time & energy
- Apologies about not doing this live!
- Questions & Answers – info@solidarityapothecary.org
- Content warning



CARE

- Totally normal to dissociate when hearing distressing things
- Find an anchor to support you through the material <3
- Organise with a friend/comrade to debrief if possible
- Journal
- Move



DISCLAIMERS

- Absolutely massive topic in a small amount of time!
- One 'lens' of state violence e.g. there are countless other forms of state violence
- The distribution of this violence and oppression is not even
- This talk focuses on so-called British-French Border
- The British state mastered the art of state craft through colonialism
- Abolitionist movements led by Black feminists & radicals



ABOUT ME

- Nicole Rose (she/her)
- My lineages are English, Welsh and Irish
- DIY herbalist for over a decade, completed formal clinical training with the Plant Medicine School in Ireland
- Runs the Solidarity Apothecary supporting people experiencing state violence with herbal medicines
- Navigated traumatic stress & PTSD since childhood, prison & repression etc.



ABOUT THE SOLIDARITY APOTHECARY

- The mission of the Solidarity Apothecary is to materially support revolutionary struggles and communities with plant medicines to strengthen collective autonomy, self-defence and resilience to climate change, capitalism and state violence.
- www.solidarityapothecary.org



ABOUT THE SOLIDARITY APOTHECARY

- Supporting people harmed by State violence with herbal medicines e.g. care packages, one-to-one support
- Distributing the Prisoner's Herbal Book to people in prison worldwide
- Organise with the Mobile Clinic supporting Refugees in Northern France
- Ukraine Herbal Solidarity
- Supporting frontline organisers
- Frontline Herbalism Podcast
- Main political organising is prisoner support & abolitionist struggles



HONOURING THOSE KILLED BY BORDERS





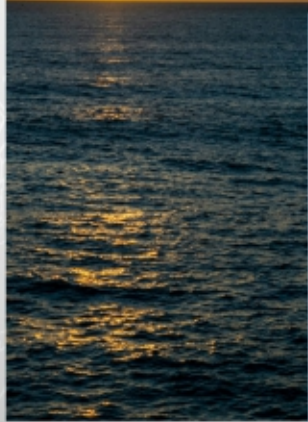
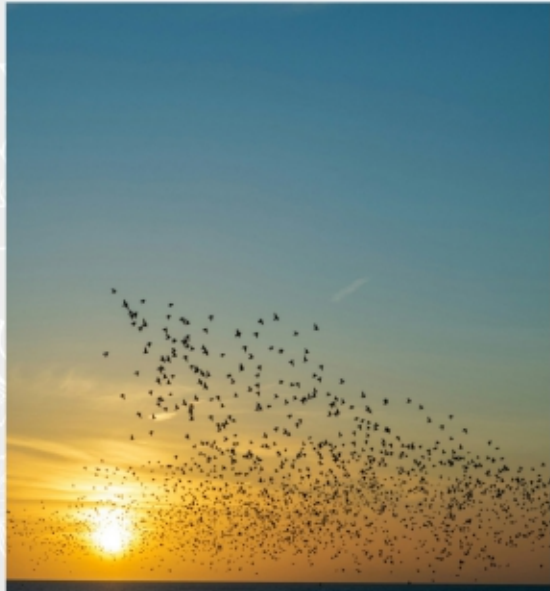
ABOUT THE BORDER REGIME



WHAT ARE BORDERS?



BORDERS ARE MADE UP!



WHAT ARE BORDERS?

“Borders are not natural divisions between people or benign lines on a map. They are mechanisms for some groups of people to claim land, resources, and people, while fundamentally excluding other people from access to those places. They create and exacerbate inequalities and they protect the economic, political, and cultural privileges that have accrued over the past few hundred years through the spoils of colonialism, capitalism, and most recently economic globalization. Drawing a border is an inherently violent act that relies on the threat of force to support a territorial claim”.

- Reece Jones, *Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move*



BORDERS ARE NOT ALWAYS CLOSED

- They are always open for capital e.g. movement of goods and services
- Labour exploitation
- Golden visas and access for the rich



A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

- Refugee
- Asylum seeker
- Migrant
- People on the move
- See Migrant Rights Network Words Matters Campaign - <https://migrantsrights.org.uk/projects/wordsmatter/>



MIGRANT

Any individual who has crossed borders between two different countries for the purpose of temporary residence: for example to study or to work.

- Migrant Rights Network



MIGRANT

- Bradley and de Noronha in *Against Borders* write how “the violent exclusion of people defined as migrants, which then makes it possible to illegalise, detain and deport them, should be of concern wherever it emerges”
- NB - People have multiple identities beyond the statist characterisation of why they have crossed a border.



REFUGEE/ASYLUM SEEKER

“an individual who has been forcibly displaced from their home country, because of war or conflict, settler-colonialism, or because they have been harmed or threatened with harm due to their ethnicity, religious or political beliefs, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation. An asylum seeker often has very limited rights in the country they have arrived in. Asylum seekers may seek formal, official protection from the country they have arrived in. Otherwise, they may live outside the remit of the law, fearing apprehension by the Home Office, and forced removal.”

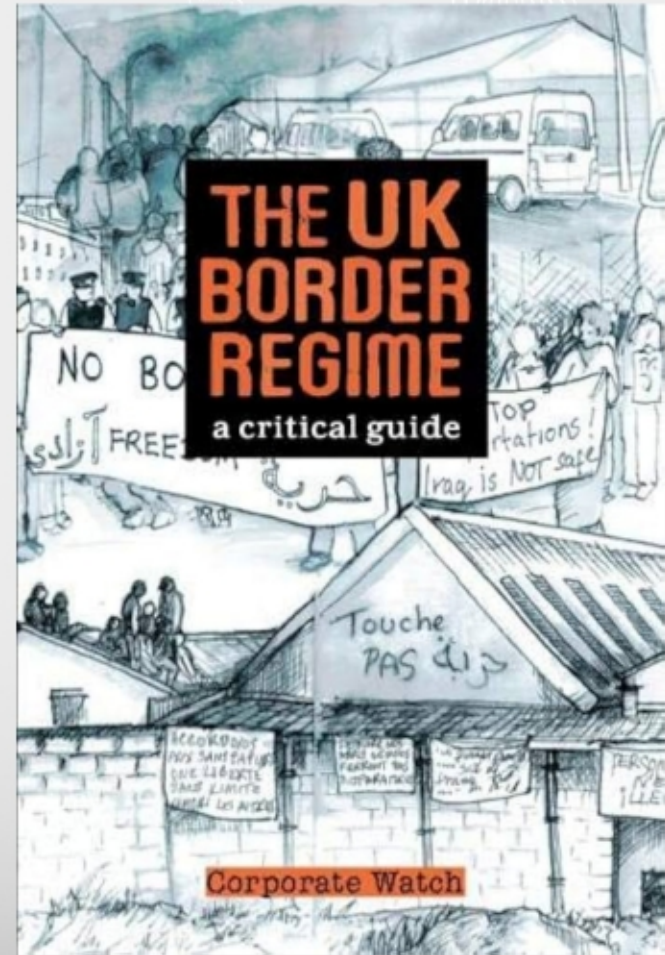


- Migrant Rights Network

WHAT IS THE BORDER REGIME?

Shorthand for all of the many different institutions, people, systems and processes involved in trying to control migrants

- Corporate Watch



BORDERS ARE EVERYWHERE

“...Borders do not materialise only at the edges of national territory, in airports, or at border walls. In fact, borders are everyday and everywhere, determining how people relate to partners, employers and the police where they live and work, and their access to healthcare and welfare support.”

- Gracie Mae Bradley and Luke de Noronha,
Against Borders



BORDER REGIME SYSTEMS

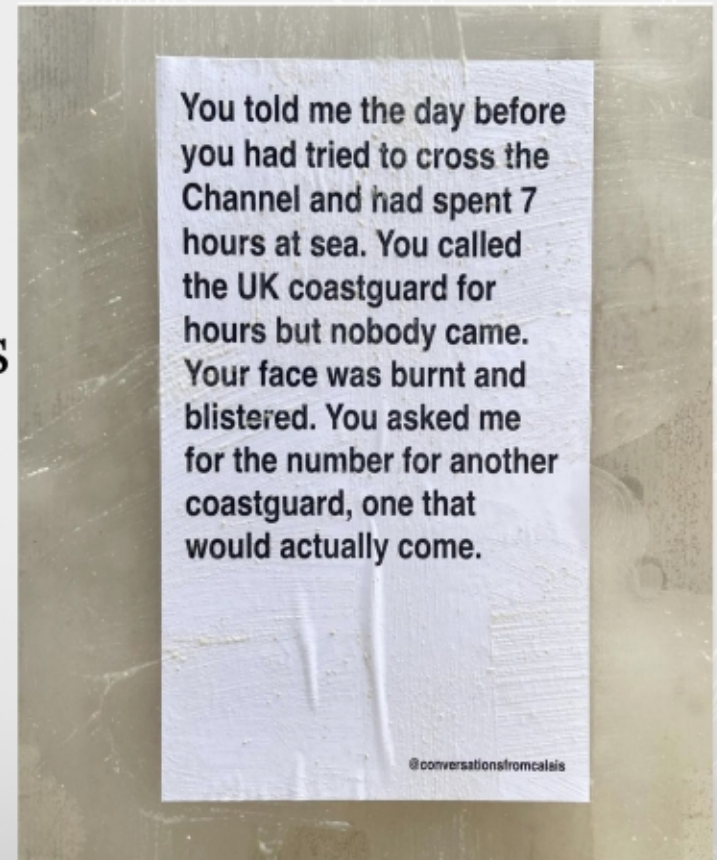
Systems may include, but are not limited to:

- The reporting systems
- The dispersal systems
- The systems of raids and the work of the Immigration Enforcement raid squads
- The immigration detention system
- Deportations: the 'removal' system



BORDER REGIME SYSTEMS

- Investment in Calais, the port town in France where many people try to cross. The British state invest millions in fencing, policing and other systems to make it as hostile as possible
- The Hostile Environment: the many anti-migrant measures
- Hostile data: systems the Home Office uses to track people with its current databases



BORDER REGIME ACTORS

- The Home Office: the main government department responsible for immigration control
- The Border Force: responsible for control at the 'frontiers'
- Airlines, ferry companies, coach and train companies, Eurotunnel, port authorities, lorry companies, travel agents, who all work closely with the Border Force in different ways
- Security companies who run outsourced border searches, detention centres, or deportation 'escorting'
- IT geeks developing new Big Data software, engineers inventing new surveillance systems and weapons



BORDER REGIME ACTORS

- Big business organisations lobbying to keep down labour costs
- Bosses who call Immigration Enforcement raids on workers demanding higher wages
- Media moguls spreading anti-migrant propaganda to sell papers
- Ambitious politicians posturing as tough guys
- Far-right agitators trying to 'push the window' of acceptable hate
- Council and homelessness charity workers going out on joint patrols with Immigration Enforcement to find foreign workers or rough-sleeper



BORDER VIOLENCE & THE EUROPEAN UNION

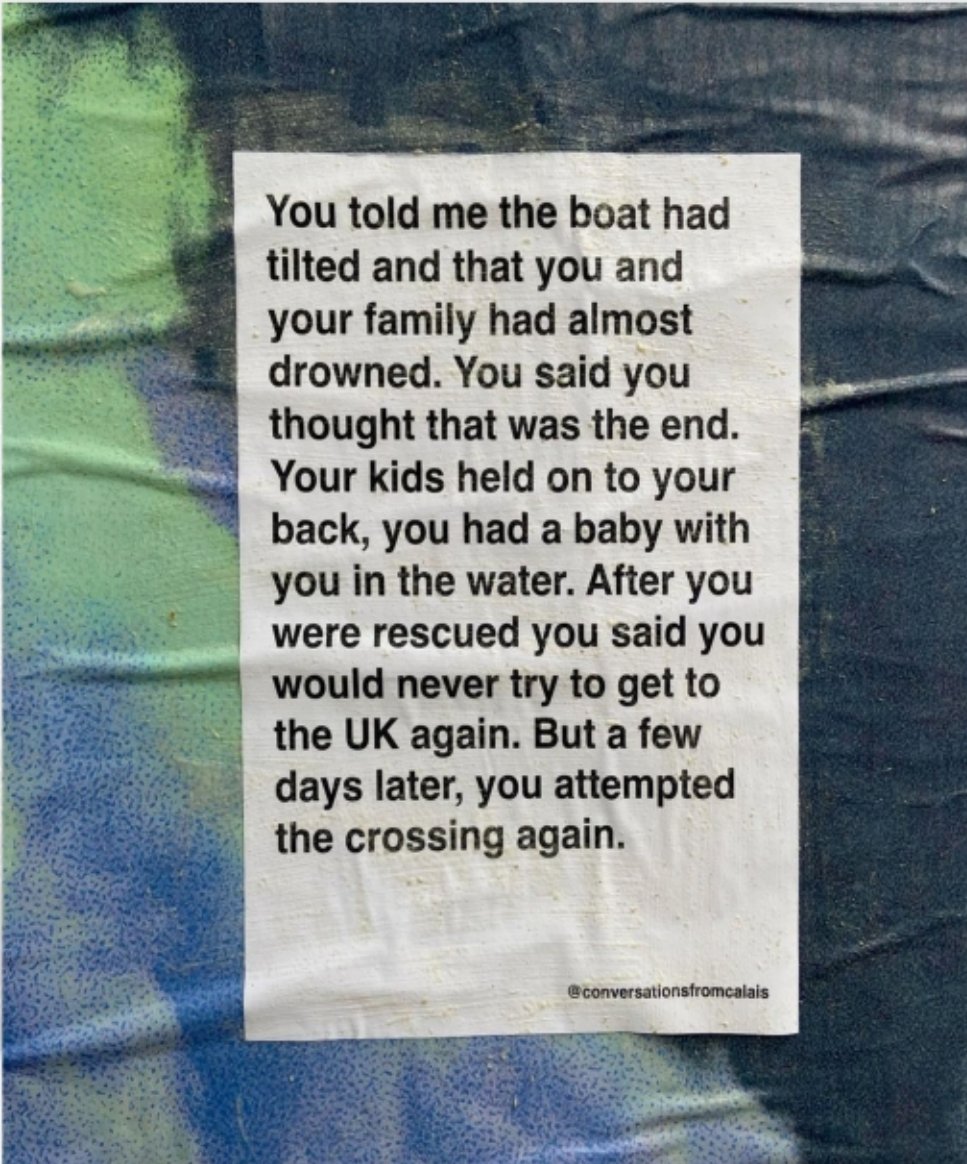
MAJOR MIGRATION ROUTES TO EUROPE



THE BRITISH - FRENCH BORDER

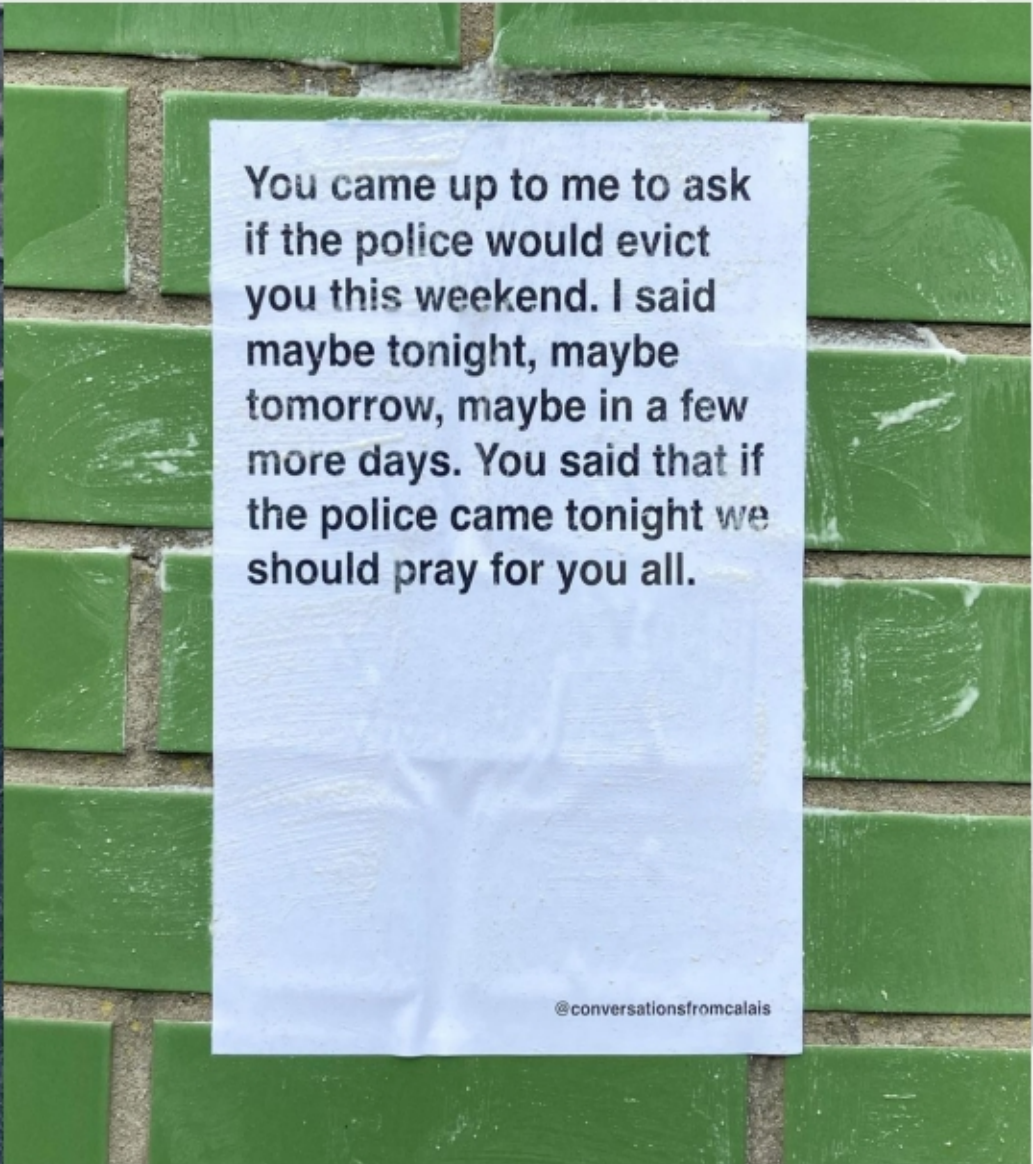


THE BRITISH - FRENCH BORDER



You told me the boat had tilted and that you and your family had almost drowned. You said you thought that was the end. Your kids held on to your back, you had a baby with you in the water. After you were rescued you said you would never try to get to the UK again. But a few days later, you attempted the crossing again.

@conversationsfromcalais



You came up to me to ask if the police would evict you this weekend. I said maybe tonight, maybe tomorrow, maybe in a few more days. You said that if the police came tonight we should pray for you all.

@conversationsfromcalais



ABOUT THE MOBILE HERBAL CLINIC CALAIS



THE MOBILE HERBAL CLINIC CALAIS

- The Mobile Herbal Clinic Calais is a dedicated mobile clinic that takes place in Calais and Dunkirk in Northern France every month. Since October 2019, we have supported more than 10,000 refugees living in the region.

MOBILE HERBAL CLINIC



العيادة المتنقلة للتداوي بالأعشاب
CALAIS & DUNKERQUE

WWW.MOBILEHERBALCLINIC.ORG



THE MOBILE HERBAL CLINIC CALAIS



THE MOBILE HERBAL CLINIC CALAIS

In Northern France our objective is to deliver:

- First aid and acute medicines
- Self-care support and preventative medicines
- Skilled and appropriate triage, referral, and hospital advocacy
- Herbal medicine support for volunteers from other agencies



THE MOBILE HERBAL CLINIC CALAIS

- Team of four: clinical supervisor, field coordinator, herbal first aiders, communications assistant
- We focus on acute care, self-care, prevention, health autonomy e.g. cloves, mouthwash, wound care kits for people to take away
- We work as part of an ecology of local health care e.g. Red Cross, MDM, FAST, No Borders Medics



HOW WE ORGANISE THE CLINIC

Roles in the Field

Clinical Supervisor

*Medical Training
Minimum 5+ years clinical experience
Mentors first aiders*

Field Coordinator

*Trip planning & logistics
Inventory management
Timekeeping
May also be a herbal first aider*

Herbal First Aider(s)

*Working on internal medicine
or external medicine stations
Defers to clinical supervisor
Practical wound care and dressings*

Communication & Support

*Translation support
Informing refugees of services available
Assisting other team members with
practical tasks e.g. cleaning, stock taking*



HEALTH NEEDS & PRESENTING CONDITIONS

- People are living outside in challenging conditions e.g. the cold, wind, time in the sea, walking many kilometres a day, chronic stress
- Upper respiratory conditions our 'bread and butter' e.g. coughs, cold, flu - our goal is to help prevent these from getting worse, offer relief, identify more serious infections and refer
- Wounds
- MSK injuries especially from police
- Skin issues
- Foot complaints, blisters, fungal infections etc
- Digestive issues



HERBAL MEDICINES USED IN THE CLINIC

- Cough syrup
- Chest Rub
- Immune Tonic
- Antimicrobial Vinegar
- Mouthwash and Gargle
- Bruise ointments
- Wound sprays
- Anti itch sprays



HERBAL MEDICINES USED IN THE CLINIC

- Indigestion lozenges
- Creams: calendula, anti-itch, antifungal, chamomile
- Extra strong cough mix
- Allergy blend
- Aloe Vera gel
- Burn gel
- Other herbal powders: Baikal skullcap, Myrrh, Marshmallow powder



MEDICINE MAKING LOGISTICS



OTHER EXAMPLES OF HERBAL SOLIDARITY

- CROP, concerned residents of Penally
- Paris encampments
- Direct Provision in Ireland
- Care packages to folks in hotels
- Bristol Herbalists without Borders
- Remedios sin Fronteras, Dana Woodruff





UKRAINE HERBAL SOLIDARITY



UKRAINE HERBAL SOLIDARITY

- Did a recce/spoke with Ukrainian and Polish comrades about needs
- Global call for support and fundraising
- Found a site at a service station in Poland greeting refugees
- People in acute shock and distress, major emotional trauma (bombings, sexual violence, displacement etc)



MEDICINES DISTRIBUTED

- 3,500 medicines distributed in first six days. 17,000 over six months
- Tinctures: Valerian, Skullcap, Hawthorn, Rose
- Nervous system support blend of glycerites: Chamomile, lemon balm, hawthorn, rose
- Nervous system tea blend: linden flower, chamomile, lemon balm



MEDICINES DISTRIBUTED

- Nutritive tea blend: nettle, dandelion leaf, oat straw, raspberry leaf
- Lavender oil
- Muscle rub
- Cough syrup
- Immune tonic: ginger, turmeric, thyme glycerites, elderberry, echinacea tinctures



RECENT DISTRIBUTION

- This October, Solidarity Apothecary supported Elliott and a few volunteers from Kalyna Collective in preparing and transporting 3,000 bottles of tinctures and teas for nervous system support to Kyiv, Ukraine.
- From there, Insight humanitarian hub has been distributing them to queer defenders and disabled elders living and working in frontlines areas such as Donetsk, Zaporyzhzhia, and Kharkiv.
- We are trying to raise \$1500 to cover various expenses from this endeavour, related to transportation and supplies, which volunteers fronted and need reimbursement for.
- Donations welcome: <https://paylinkz.app/astickandastone>
- <https://solidarityapothecary.org/campaigns/support/>
- More info: @astickandastone @kalyna.collective



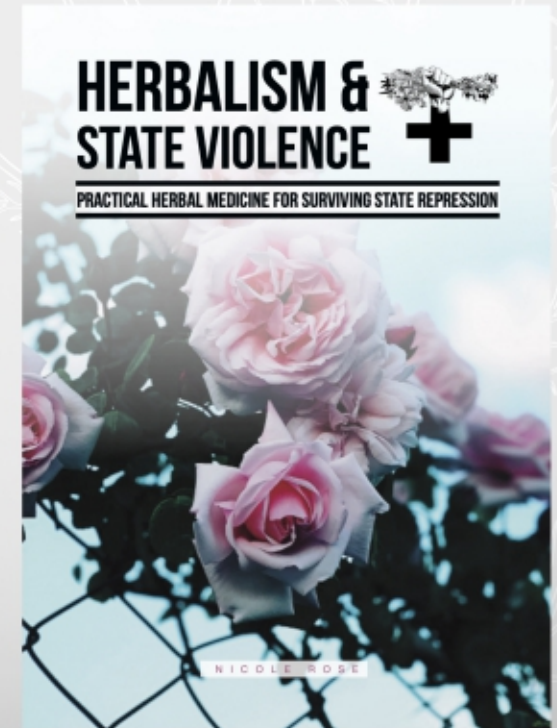
THINKING OF DOING SOMETHING SIMILAR?

- Short term response Vs long term infrastructure
- Medical responsibility not always easiest in grassroots projects
- Needs structure, care, intention and commitment



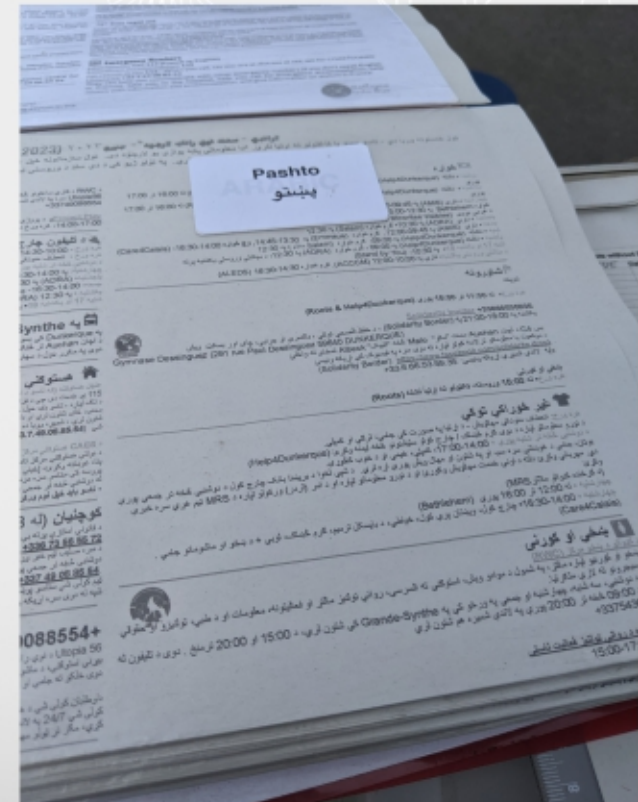
THINKING OF DOING SOMETHING SIMILAR?

- See top tips article in Herbalism and State Violence Book
- Surveying needs incl. health needs/medical infrastructure
- Relationship ecology - importance of building relationships with folks on the ground
- Anti-racism
- Cultural learning
- Knowing your limits and scope of practice
- Learning and skill sharing
- Starting small and growing sustainably



THINKING OF DOING SOMETHING SIMILAR?

- Funding and legal structures
- Division of labour
- Medicine making logistics
- Vicarious trauma
- Translation infrastructure
- Social media
- Exploring your motivations and white saviorism
- Risks





BORDER ABOLITION



BORDER ABOLITION

“Abolition is concerned with presence (the presence of life-sustaining goods, services and practices of care) as well as absence (of violent state practices like detention and deportation). Accordingly, border abolition seeks to dismantle violent borders, but also to cultivate new ways of caring for one another, nurturing forms of collectivity more conducive to human flourishing than the nation-states we currently inhabit. Border abolition is a revolutionary politics situated within wider struggles for economic justice, racial equality and sustainable ecologies, based on the conviction that there will be no liveable futures in which borders between political communities are violently guarded.”

- Gracie Mae Bradley and Luke de Noronha, *Against Borders*



STRUGGLES AGAINST THE BORDER REGIME

“Struggles against the border regime include resistance and fights against new developments, such as the British state wanting to deport people to Rwanda. It also includes mutual aid and survival based solidarity such as distributing food and things people need, operating search and rescue missions on dangerous seas, organising health care and many other examples. It also means organising as a collective struggle - working with and being led by people on the move who resist repression, organise demonstrations and fight back. We can keep taking action to resist dehumanisation and advocate for free movement of people.”



RESOURCES

- Mobile Herbal Clinic Calais website - <https://mobileherbalclinic.org/>
- Herbalism and State Violence Book - <https://solidarityapothecary.org/herbalism-and-state-violence-book/>
- Herbalism and State Violence Resources - <https://solidarityapothecary.org/herbalism-and-state-violence-resources/>



RESOURCES - PODCASTS

- Mobile Herbal Clinic Calais Interview on the Frontline Herbalism Podcast – <https://solidarityapothecary.org/the-frontline-herbalism-podcast/40-msdn-10-mobile-herbal-clinic-for-refugees-in-calais-and-dunkirk/>
- Calais Border Broadcast - <https://calaisborderbroadcast.wordpress.com/>
- Still We Rise Podcast - Coventry Asylum and Refugee Action Group describe themselves as a migrant led grassroots community organisation based in Coventry. Their podcast 'Still We Rise' has hours of excellent material exploring the lived experience of people who are in the UK negotiating the UK asylum system - <https://www.carag.co.uk/podcast>
- Final Straw Radio - various interviews on struggles and solidarity on US-Mexico Border - <https://thefinalstrawradio.noblogs.org/>



RESOURCES - BOOKS

- The UK Border Regime: a critical guide by Corporate Watch
- Violent borders: refugees and the right to move by Reece Jones
- Abolishing State Violence by Ray Acheson
- Against Borders: towards a politics of border abolition by Gracie Mae Bradley and Luke de Noronha
- Inflamed by Rupa Marya and Raj Patel
- Undoing Border Imperialism by Harsha Walia



GROUPS WORKING IN CALAIS AND DUNKIRK

- Calais Migrant Solidarity – <https://calaismigrantsolidarity.wordpress.com/>
- Mobile Refugee Support - <https://www.mobilerefugeesupport.org/>
- First Aid Support Team, Calais – <https://www.f-a-s-t.eu/>
- No Borders Medics – <https://nobordermedics.org/en/start-english/>
- Refugee Community Kitchen – <https://refugeecommunitykitchen.org/>
- Calais Food Collective – <https://calaisfood.wixsite.com/home>
- Utopia 56 - <http://www.utopia56.com/en/>



OTHER CAMPAIGNS & SOLIDARITY PROJECTS

- No Borders Team Poland – <https://nobordersteam.noblogs.org/>
- Migrants Rights Network – <https://migrantsrights.org.uk/>
- Patients Not Passports –
<https://www.patientsnotpassports.co.uk/>
- Bristol Herbalists Without Borders – <https://bristolhwb.org/>
- Conversations from Calais –
<https://www.conversationsfromcalais.com/>

