THE EUROPEAN SECURITISATION OF MIGRATION ASSEMBLAGE

A Practices of Assemblage Analysis of Joint Operation Poseidon 2018 in Lesvos

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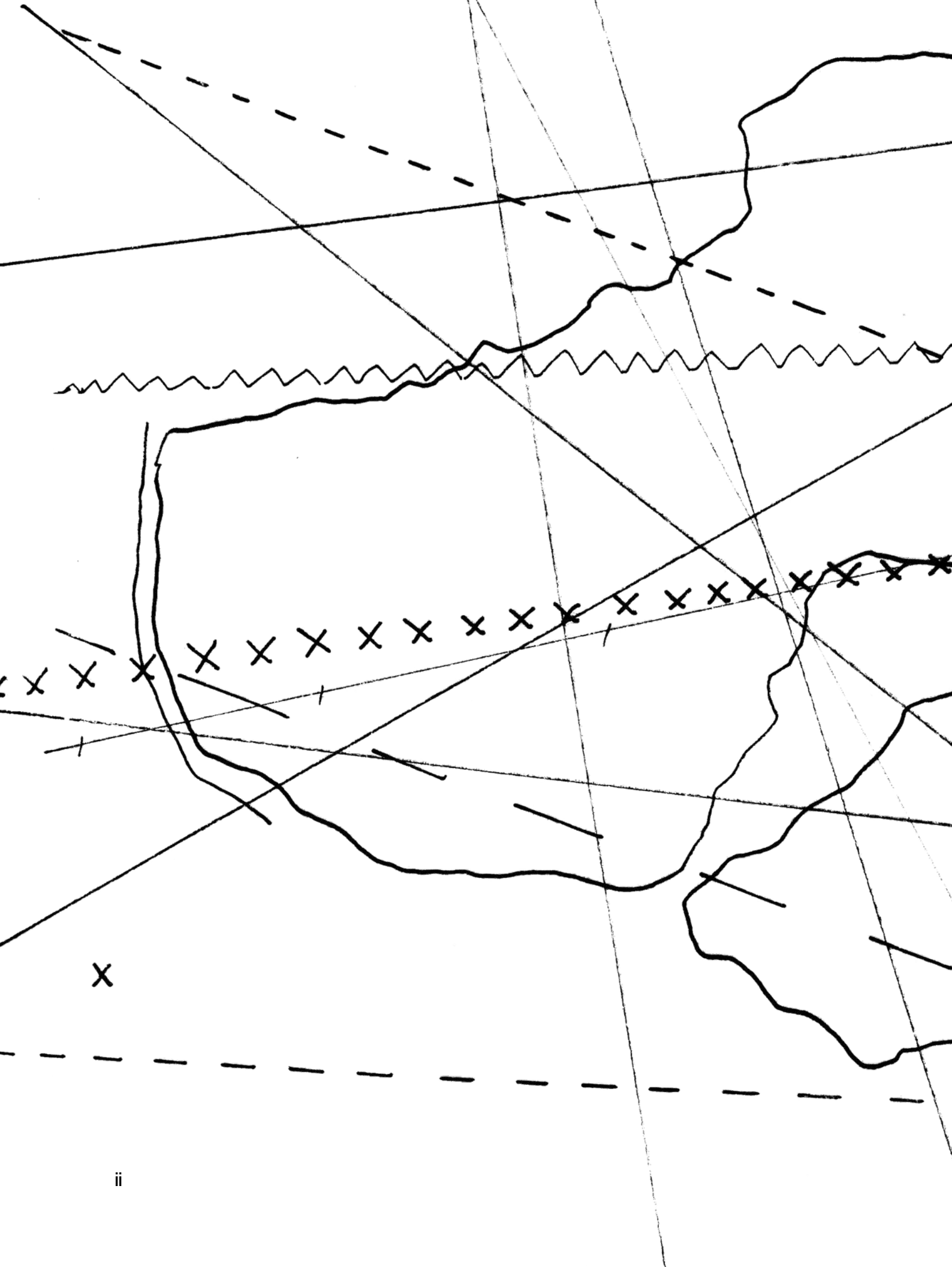
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for Oma

An incredible woman who tended to the wounds of thousands of soldiers and civilians (regardless of their nationality or ethnicity: Jew, German, Dutch or Indonesian) during the war in the Netherlands and after the war ended in Europe, in the (then) Dutch Indies where she worked for the Red Cross side by side with the Dutch Military.

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A critical message to the European Union, once a sworn beacon of human rights (70 years after signing the declaration of Human Rights, 74 years after the Second World War ended and 100 years after the First World War ended), to open its eyes. We said never again. And yet our governments turn a blind eye to the fast return of physical walls and structural violation of human rights in camps on the borders of and inside European territory.

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ABSTRACT

During the summer of 2018, on the Aegean island of Lesvos, an alliance of European actors consisting of over seventy security officers employed under the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex, one or two Europol officers, and hundreds of Greek security officers, collaborated under what is referred to as Joint Operation Poseidon 2018. Informed and framed by European responses to the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016, most notably: The Hotspot system and the EU-Turkey Statement, these actors executed a highly technical and operationalized mission in the midst of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in refugee camp Moria. This research aims to understand how this European security ensemble has emerged in Lesvos and how it is able to operate regardless of human rights violations in Lesvos. In order to capture and analyse the entire heteronormative set of elements that constitute this security ensemble, I draw on an analytic frame called "practices of assemblage" to formulate the following research question: *How has the "European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage" taken shape and how and why is it able to endure, within and regardless of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in Hotspot and refugee camp Moria, on the Greek island of Lesvos, in the summer of 2018?* By applying an assemblage analysis to the securitisation of migration practices and discourse, this thesis aims to make a methodological and academic contribution to the field of securitisation theory. Through careful analysis of primary and secondary sources as well as ethnographic fieldwork during the summer of 2018, this thesis aims to illuminate responsibility and accountability lines surrounding the inhumane situation in Lesvos.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A year after starting this research, this thesis marks the end of an arduous journey and a complicated research during which I had to overcome many personal, physical and emotional hurdles. This is therefore not only a capstone of my uniquely long time as a master student of the MA Conflict Studies and Human Rights and my equally long time as student overall, for me it symbolises the result of physical and mental perseverance and strength and ultimately a story of great personal accomplishment.

It goes without saying that the number of people who have directly and indirectly made this research and thesis possible are too many to mention, however I would like to express my gratitude to the following individuals. First of all, to my supervisor, Dr. Jolle Demmers, who has not only motivated me during the research and writing process, taking the time to discuss "what is this a case of?" and giving me confidence to go into my chosen field, but who has also kept me going throughout the year when things got broken and rough. Jolle, I am truly grateful for the opportunities you have given me. Your unconditional support, lenience within the program to facilitate my delay and never-ending enthusiasm during our many meetings and discussions, are unwavering. My thanks also go to the entire staff of the Centre for Conflict Studies for their insightful classes on Human Rights, Politics and Policy, Theories of Violent Conflict and Qualitative Research. I am also grateful for the help and insights from Dr. Katerina Rozakou and Dr. Pafsanias Karathanasis, from the University of Amsterdam, University of the Aegean, and the Refugee Observatory of Lesvos, respectively. Ευχαριστώ!

I would like to thank the Dutch Ministry of Defence, and the Dutch Ministry of Justice and Security for their cooperation and willingness to provide me with essential insights, access and information, and for their permission to do research with their colleagues in the field. I am equally thankful to officers from the E.B.C.G.A. Frontex for taking the time to answer my questions, giving me the permission to carry out part of my research on JO Poseidon 2018, and personally helping me during my time in Lesvos. I am especially thankful to the group of Dutch officers who were or had been stationed in Lesvos during the time of my research. Moreover, I am equally thankful for the insights of the local and international security, asylum, humanitarian and legal professionals, researchers, volunteers, and activists, and of course the asylum seekers who I spoke to in Lesvos. Thank you for your generous insights and help.

Finally, I would not have been able to finish writing this thesis without my family, friends, class and flat mates here in the Netherlands, in Lesvos, in the UK, in Denmark, and across the Atlantic Ocean. A special thanks to my brothers Thijs and Tonko, my parents, Laurie and the girls (you know who you are), Maj (and Loki), Lisa, Katie, Isabella, Anne, Jiska & Sem, Annemieke, Will, Derek, Emmanuel, Malene, Tanja, Maike and Esmée. I cannot thank you enough for your encouragement, your advice, your insights and love. You are the reason I kept going throughout this difficult year and equally straining thesis writing process. Ευχαριστώ! Mange Tak! Dankjewel! Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFRICOM	Africa Command
BeNeLux	Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg
DV&O	Dienst Vervoer en Ondersteuning (English ST&S)
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EBCGA Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex
EFCA	European Fisheries Control Agency
EMSA	European Maritime Safety Agency
ESMA	European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage
EU	European Union
eu-LISA	European Agency for the Operational Management of Large- scale IT Systems
EURODAC	European Dactyloscopy
EUROJUST	European Union Judicial Cooperation Unit
EUROPOL	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation
FCO	Frontex Coordinating Officer
FOC	Frontex Operational Coordinator
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
FSO	Frontex Support Officer
HR	Human Resources
ICC	International Coordination Centre
Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JO	Joint Operation
KMar	Koninklijke Marrechaussee
LCC	Local Coordination Centre
LO-TE	Liaison Officer-Technical Equipment
MS	Member State
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OP	Operational Plan
RIC	Registration and Identification Centre
RIS	Registration and Identification Service
RMar	Royal Marrechaussee
SAR	Search and Rescue
ST&S	Service Transport and Support
TE	Technical Equipment
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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MORIA NO GOOD

by: Hussam H. Kafi (Alani)

All about the colour / all about the style.

Sticking people in a camp / and the police goes wild.

All about the colour / and all about the bling,

Been fighting over there, so you gotta call me king

Tell me who bombs my country, and who made me a refugee?

Tell me who is in making papers? Cuz I have zero energy.

Every day we have to make demonstrations, about deportations.

Me and my friends, and all the other nations.

Fire took my best friends, don't - you - #see?

Time was a ticking bomb, trust - in - #me.

Silence began a - moments - #ago,

When a voice said, it's time to let - this - #go.

No!...please!...#no!

No!...please!...#no!

No!...please!...#no!

No!...please!...#no!

Tick... Tick... Tock...

I could not stop the .....clock

Flames burnt my Life,

This is what I call by bad luck

I see all the pain, and you say: What's the problem?

What happened to these kids? When was it that we lost 'em?

Lost inside the time, they were victims by design,

and sedated till they demonstrated how you live and how you die.

My poetry's strong enough to stop a bomb..

It's been 2 years now, I miss my mom..

The only things keeping me going is weed and rum.

My dream was to go to Amsterdam.

After I had that burnt child in my arm,

Now I have whispers in my ear's drum,

Telling me I'm the station, and you're the tram

I forgot my name, was it Alani or Hussam?

We came here looking for a place without a harm,

We came here looking for life, love and Salam,

But since we came, we hadn't a single arm..

So, where is humanity? Where is my fam!

We can't stay here, it's a waste of time.

I'm on a new level now, so it doesn't rhyme!

And police be questioning you, where you from?

Are you nuts officer? My president was Saddam

INTRODUCTION

After two years of living on the island of Lesvos, Hussam, a now 20-year-old, young man, who fled his country in 2016, raps about his journey and life as refugee in the song he wrote and recorded in Moria camp and in the streets of Mytilene, the capital of the now infamous Greek island.[1] His, is a story of a gruelling conflict and a hard knock life in one of the most controversial refugee camps in Europe, even named the worst refugee camp in the world by BBC news in September 2018.[2] He raps about the war he fled, his dreams and the harsh everyday reality in the camp he now lives in. How he arrived on the island and was questioned by security officers for registration and identification in the European asylum system. And how he, together with other refugees, asylum seekers and activists, go against the relentless border and asylum system he encountered from day one of arriving on the island: "*Every day we have to make demonstrations, about deportations.*" His rap is as relevant now as it was a year ago. The humanitarian crisis and the asylum crisis in Moria camp are ongoing and unwavering, exemplified by the death of a 24-year old Cameroonian asylum seeker, who lost his life in Moria due to poor living conditions (Boffey and Smith 2019).

Hussam's lyrics depict encounters between him and the ensemble of European and Greek security actors, policies, agreements and laws surrounding asylum seekers, that constitute a rigid European border in Lesvos. I met Hussam in a bar on my final night in Mytilene. He spoke a few words in Dutch to me, which he had learned from one of the hundreds of Dutch NGO volunteers in Lesvos, as his plan had been to seek refuge in the Netherlands. When I told Hussam I had been doing research on the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex and Dutch Frontex officers, he laughed at me, and said: "Ah, so you're with the enemy!", but then quickly added: "you know, they're not so bad, it's the system here that is killing us." He then looked to the starry night sky with a sad smile and started rapping his song for me in the middle of the narrow streets of Mytilene.[3]

During the summer of 2018, on the island of Lesvos and in the Aegean Sea surrounding it, an alliance of European security actors consisting of over seventy officers operating under the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex, one or two Europol officers, and hundreds of Greek security officers (consisting of the local Hellenic Coast Guard and Hellenic Police), collaborated to protect the European border from "unwanted" asylum seekers. Under what is referred to as Joint Operation (JO) Poseidon 2018, these actors executed a highly technical and operationalised mission, which in turn is informed and framed by European policies on migration and European responses to the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016, most notably: the Hotspot system in early 2015, and the EU-Turkey Statement (often referred to as "the EU-Turkey Deal") in early 2016 (Niemann & Zaun 2018). In the midst of a growing humanitarian crisis in Moria, these security actors appear to experience no difficulty reaching the monthly and yearly targets and objectives set out in the Operational Plan (OP) of JO Poseidon 2018, for Lesvos, making European border management appear effective while human suffering continues.

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[1] Please find the music video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmaeO1sQEvM&feature=youtu.be
[2] 'The worst refugee camp on earth' - BBC News: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8v-OHi3iGQI
[3] Author's field notes, 5 august 2018.

It is exactly here that this research takes off. With an underlying motivation to illuminate responsibility and accountability lines surrounding the inhumane situation asylum seekers in Lesvos are faced with, this research aims to understand how this European security ensemble takes shape, endures and has an effect on the island. Specifically, this thesis aims to reveal what elements legitimated and facilitated JO Poseidon 2018, how its actors aligned, how tasks were outlined and most importantly how responsibility and accountability lines were drawn and redrawn. In order to capture an analyse the entire heteronormative set of elements, I draw on an analytic frame called "practices of assemblage", which derives from assemblage theory and was first developed by Tania Murray li (2007).[4] On the island of Lesvos, I analyse a heteronormative mix of laws, agreements, practices, processes, policies, actors, activities, and discourses, that combine to shape and reshape what I have named: the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage.[5] From this empirical complication and analytical frame, the following research question emerges:

How has the "European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage" taken shape and how and why is it able to endure, within and regardless of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in Hotspot and refugee camp Moria, on the Greek island of Lesvos, in the summer of 2018?

Empirical and Academic Significance

Every week, almost on a daily basis, people living in Europe are "confronted" with stories of death and deportation at the borders of "our" continent in the Mediterranean Sea or in the European airports. On our social media feeds, on the television screens we watch every evening, and in our morning newspapers, we hear of, read about, and see asylum seekers drifting in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, dying of starvation unable to enter the European territory, or people freezing to death inside refugee camps such as Moria. We hear strikingly little about the elusive European operations and efforts that coordinate these situations, such as the border security mission: JO Poseidon 2018. Nor, about the executive security actors operating within these missions, such as Frontex, Europol, Border Police from a variety of European Member States such as the Dutch Royal Marechaussee, and Greek security forces, such as the Hellenic Police and Hellenic Coast Guard. While combined, these systems and actors physically entrap people in dire conditions and prevent "unwanted" people from getting into Europe, and even deport "unwanted" lives. By zooming in on the specific situation in Lesvos, where an impressive combination of European actors, laws, procedures, discourses, agreements and activities execute the securitisation of asylum seekers operationalised under JO Poseidon 2018, this research makes an empirical contribution to the transparency of just a fraction of one of the biggest projects in European history: the securitisation of asylum seekers at the European borders (Collier and Betts 2017).

The academic relevance of this research is twofold. Firstly, I aim to make an academic contribution to the body of interpretative research that has emerged in relation to European governance of the "refugee crisis",

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[4] Murray Li's Practices of Assemblage: 1) Forging alignments, 2) Rendering technical, 3) Authorising knowledge, 4) Managing failures and contradictions, 5) Anti-politics, and 6) Reassembling. (Li 2007: 265)
[5] More on the Analytical Framework and the decision to use the particular practices used in this thesis, in chapter one.

specifically in Lesvos. Secondly, I aim to make a methodological contribution to both securitisation and assemblage theory, as I apply a "practices of assemblage" analysis to study the securitisation of migration. Before diving into the academic debates on the European securitisation of migration in Lesvos, I want to comment on the use of the phrase "refugee crisis". I agree with Gilbert in arguing that there is and never has been a "refugee crisis" in Europe (Gilbert 2015). I find the term misleading and further agree with Niemann and Zaun, who state that: "…systemic factors, rather than the increased inflow of asylum-seekers caused a crisis (2017: 3)." In other words, desperate people will make desperate journeys - it is the combination of systemic factors of failing European asylum policies, as well as the quantity of people fleeing war - that cause a state of crisis.

Regardless of which phrase is used to address the phenomenon that took place during 2015/2016, even though it happened only recently, it and its effects on European migration management have been studied extensively in the fields of International Relations, Border Studies, Security Studies, Refugee and Migration Studies, and European Governance (Eleftherakos et al 2018; Garelli & Tazzioli 2018; Guribye & Mydland 2018; Horii 2018; Majcher 2018; Pallister-Wilkins 2018; Tazzioli & Garelli 2018; Tazzioli 2018; Alpes et al 2017; Carrera et al 2017; Collier and Betts 2017; Niemann & Zaun 2017; Kalir & Rozakou 2016; Rozakou 2016). Because this topic is covered by so many academic fields, before delving into the current academic debates, I need to explain the genre of music in which I sing, which family of academics this thesis belongs to, or simply put, define where my epistemological and ontological roots lie. Epistemologically, I align with interpretative research approaches, that is to understand the social world, rather than explain causal relations (explanatory research). Ontologically, I find it intriguing to transcend the traditional divide between individualist and structuralist understandings of the social world. I do not believe either can exist without the other, without structure there is no agency, without agency there is no structure, both shape and reshape one another. By taking a structurationist approach I aspire to analyse all those components: practices, procedures, agreements, laws, and discourses between systems and actors, structure and agency, as well as those actors, and systems themselves (Giddens 1984).

Despite the wealth of material on the securitisation and migration, a structurationist interpretation of the European securitisation of migration that addresses the shaping and reshaping of a heterogeneous set of actors and elements that constitute this securitisation governance (laws, agreements, actors, practices and discourses), specifically for Lesvos, is non-existent, making this thesis academically significant. To prevent reinventing the wheel entirely, a literature review of the individualist (agency-based) and structuralist interpretative academic studies is critical. Firstly, academic studies on the securitisation of migration after the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016 mostly discuss European policy and executive responses. Most significantly, there is a wealth of brilliant critical social scientific (politics, geography, anthropology) and legal research on the European Hotspot approach (Horii 2018; Majcher 2018; Pallister-Wilkins 2018; Tazzioli 2018; De Genova et al 2016), and the EU-Turkey Statement (Eleftherakos et al 2018; Alpes et al 2017; Carrera et al 2017;). Before the events of 2015/2016 critical ethnographic fieldwork had already been done on the European Agency: Frontex (Pallister-Wilkins 2015; Leonard 2010), and academic work (mostly geography, security studies and border studies) on European surveillance technologies (Broeders and Hampshire 2013; Bigo 2011; Dijstelbloem and Meijer 2011; Lyon 2005; Balibar 2002). Furthermore, there is a growing academic gaze on solidarity movements amongst volunteers and Greek locals and humanitarian efforts and volunteering on the island of Lesvos which

mention the securitisation of migration and Frontex (Guribye & Mydland 2018; Serntedakis 2017; Papataxiarchis 2016; Rozakou 2016). However, their focus is largely individualist, or focus on quantitative explanatory accounts of psychological damage after volunteering or after living in the refugee camp Moria as asylum seeker (Sifaki-Pistolla et al 2017) and are therefore too far from our musical genre.

While these academic debates offer important insights and reflections of the European responses (EU-turkey Statement, Hotspot system) its agency (Frontex), and its systems (European surveillance technology), their approaches allow very little room to address and understand the ongoing dialogue, processes, activities, interventions, agreements and laws, that fall in between these actors and elements. By taking a structurationist analytical approach to the combination of elements and actors mentioned above (Hotspot approach, the EU-Turkey Statement the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex and European surveillance technologies), I allow for the careful tracing, pattern finding and combined discourse and practice analysis of this set of heterogeneous elements.

As mentioned before, the academic significance of this thesis, is twofold, next to an academic contribution to structuralist debates on European securitisation of migration, this research makes a methodological contribution to both securitisation and assemblage theory. Methodologically, this thesis answers to the call for a broader range of analytical approaches in securitisation theory, namely the use of ethnographic research in research on security issues (Balzacq et al 2016: 519). Moreover, on a theoretical level this thesis aligns with Lene Hansen in her move away from realist and structuralist theoretical approaches towards a poststructuralist move in security studies (Hansen 2011). An application of the move away from purely structuralist theories is reflected in the analytical framework of this thesis, which derives from assemblage theory. First outlined by Tania Murray Li (2007) to study the heterogeneous elements that constitute community forest management in Indonesia, applied to the European Securitisation of Migration, her 'practices of assemblage', offer an analytical frame that allows me to depart from a purely structuralist and discourse focused (speech act) analysis from within security studies, towards a balanced practice- as well as discourse-oriented analytical framework. While Demmers and Gould (2018) successfully transpose Murray Li's practices of assemblage to the field of conflict studies in their critical assessment of AFRICOM, this thesis implements this analytical tool in a novel theoretical (securitisation theory) and empirical (European securitisation of migration in Lesvos) field.

Methodology

In this paragraph I outline 1) the research strategy and design, 2) the data collection methods and techniques, 3) the ethical considerations, and 4) the challenges and limitations of this research.

Research Strategy and Design

In order to adequately collect data to answer the research question: *How has the "European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage" taken §shape and how and why is it able to endure, within and regardless of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in Hotspot and refugee camp Moria, on the Greek island of Lesvos, in the summer of 2018?,* a clear *research strategy* is required that ties in with the epistemological and ontological musical genre in which I

sing. As this research takes a structurationist, interpretative approach to describe and understand how and why actors and elements of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage act and have an effect in Lesvos, I have chosen to use a *qualitative research strategy*. To formulate the appropriate *research design* the research question has to be unpacked into sub-questions, which allow me to systematically collect empirical evidence on certain manifestations of European securitisation of migration in Lesvos. The research question can be unpacked into five sub-questions by integrating the analytical frame of 'practices of assemblage'. From Murray Li's six practices of assemblage, Demmers and Gould (2018) adapt and define five,[6] which I argue to be most suitable to study the shaping and reshaping of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos[7], and hence form the basis for the five sub-questions of this thesis: 1) *How were different actors aligned behind a common security threat?, 2) In what ways has the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage reassembled elements and actors since the establishment of the common security threat?, 3) How is the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage rendered technical?, 4) How is knowledge authorised and critique contained from executive actors inside the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos?, and 5) How are failures and contradictions of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage managed in Lesvos?*

I expected the five practices of assemblage would manifest themselves: 1) in the discourses and practices of security actors and asylum seekers in Lesvos, 2) in how European border management is framed within European policy texts, and European media, and 3) in how European securitisation of migration is framed in the OPs and mandates of European agencies such as Frontex. These manifestations would form the focus of the empirical data I wanted to collect. In order to systematically collect and analyse empirical evidence to formulate an answer to the five sub-questions, I chose the following *research design*: I used a combination of document analysis with ethnographic fieldwork in the Netherlands and in Lesvos amongst a specific research population of security actors, and divided the research into three consecutive phases of data collection that ran between November 2017 up and until August 2018.

The first phase of data collection took place between November 2017 and April 2018 and consisted of an extensive exploratory literature review on the "refugee crisis", the humanitarian and asylum crises in Lesvos, the EU-Turkey Statement, the Hotspot System, Frontex, and the European Agenda on Migration. Furthermore, I reviewed regulations, legal documents, and policy documents regarding the above. Finally, from the period of November 2017 up and until the summer of 2018, I systematically and continuously followed news articles, videos and social media about the humanitarian crisis in refugee camp Moria, the EU-Turkey Statement and Frontex.

The second phase of this research consisted of ethnographic fieldwork as well as complementary document analysis in the Netherlands between April and June 2018. In line with the qualitative research strategy, three types of *non-probability sampling strategies* were used to sample the research population I would research during this phase. The process of getting access to security actors who played a role in the formation and/or

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[6] (a) forging alignments through a shared threat perception: the work of linking together the objectives of the parties to an assemblage by means of a joint problem definition; (b) rendering technical: the production of technical descriptions of the problem/solution to overcome tensions and make the assemblage appear more coherent than it is; (c) authorising knowledge: specifying and limiting the requisite body of 'expert knowledge'; containing critiques; (d) reassembling: grafting on new elements and reworking old ones; deploying existing discourses, legal instruments, doctrines, to new ends; transposing the meaning of key terms; (e) managing failures and contradictions: presenting failure as the outcome of rectifiable deficiencies; smoothing out contradictions; devising compromises (see Li, 2007). (Demmers and Gould 2018: 5)
[7] More on the Analytical Framework and the decision to use the particular practices used in this thesis, in Chapter One.

execution of securitisation of migration practices in Lesvos, proved to be hugely complex. As luck would have it, one of my classmates had a personal connection with a Dutch Border Police officer who would be stationed in Lesvos during spring 2018. I chose to follow this lead, and from there used *snowball sampling* to get access to other Dutch security actors who had worked or would work in Lesvos. In hindsight, this initial contact can be best described as a type of non-probability sampling, called *convenience sampling*. It should be noted that the term *gatekeeper* is not used here on purpose because as executive security actors, the Dutch Border Police officers were in no position to provide access to security actors from Frontex and Greek security actors in Lesvos. All access to security actors was established through a continuous dance of official authorisation requests between powerful actors (via e-mail contact), executive actors (via phone and in person) and myself. In this environment, initially I focused my research on the group of Border Police officers, this officer belonged to, more specifically: the immigration brigade[8] of the Royal Marechaussee (RMar) at Schiphol airport who work at what they refer to as *G-pier* or gate G.[9] The sampling strategy is only partly *convenience and snowball* sampling because I also targeted specific members of the Royal Marechaussee (two in total) in more powerful positions, who had some type of relation to Frontex completely separate to this first contact. This type of sampling strategy can be best described as *purposeful sampling*.

The third phase consisted of a two-month ethnographic fieldwork period in Lesvos from 7 June until 7 August 2018. The research population of this third phase evolved out of the sampled research population from the Netherlands through *snowball sampling* and consisted of 1) those members of the immigration brigade of the Royal Marechaussee at Schiphol Airport who were stationed in Lesvos during this period, 2) members of the Dutch Service Transport and Support (ST&S) (Dutch Ministry of Justice and Safety)[10] who were active under Frontex as transport team in Lesvos during that period and hung out closely (living in the same hotel, daily leisure activities) with the RMar officers[11], 3) members of the local Hellenic Police and the Hellenic Coast Guard working with Frontex, 4) Frontex permanent staff on Lesvos, and 5) the European Commission representative in Lesvos. Here this authorisation dance continued, now involving official authorisation from Frontex and the Hellenic Ministry of Migration Policy in charge of Moria and the Hellenic Police. Inevitably, I also encountered a myriad of locals, NGO volunteers, researchers and of course asylum seekers, who were much easier to access and were often eager to talk about their situation, work, or research findings, making it easy to incorporate perspectives from the final type of actor within my research population: the asylum seekers and refugees of Lesvos.

Data Collection Methods and Techniques

Within this strategy (qualitative) and design (three phases) the research sub-questions were paired with the appropriate research *methods* and *techniques*. Specifically, during the phase two and three, the following qualitative research *methods* were used: (participant) observation (hanging out), informal conversations (group conversations), and interviews (unstructured and informal), in combination with the following *techniques*: self-

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[8] Vreemdelingenzaken brigade in Dutch
[9] Royal Marechaussee, in Dutch: Koninklijke Marechaussee (KMar).)
[10] Service Transport and Support, in Dutch: Dienst Vervoer en Ondersteuning (DV&O)
[11] This is excluding the many Dutch interpreters also stationed in Lesvos under FRONTEXwho derive from the Immigration and Naturalisation Service INS (In Dutch: Immigratie en Naturalisatie Dienst (IND)), also part of the ministry of Justice and Safety.

reflection, keeping record in a diary, contact list, log book, jot notes, field notes, photo's/video's, mapping and (audio-) recording. In total I conducted twenty-two recorded and non-recorded interviews (formal and informal) and held over twenty conversations (group and individual) with these security actors and asylum seekers and refugees, during phase 2 and 3. In the Netherlands I visited the airports of Eindhoven and Schiphol to observe the work spaces of the Dutch border police officers working for the Royal Marechaussee (RMar) (Dutch Ministry of Defence), and held conversations and interviews with them. This gave me vital information into their frame of reference and actor characteristics as well as initial information about JO Poseidon. Within these interviews I mostly used a topic list as guide but often let the interviewee lead the conversation based around the question: "can you tell me about the mission?" Especially the interviews with powerful Dutch actors were insightful as written text was provided on Join Operation Poseidon and the Dutch contribution to Frontex and other European Securitisation of migration efforts.

In Lesvos I spent most of the time "hanging out" with the Dutch border police officers (RMar and ST&S) during their leisure activities (gym, swimming, drinks, barbeque, basketball, dinners and drinks), mostly to gain their trust and as I was not allowed to join them during their JO Poseidon activities. After a month I was authorised to do interviews with them by the Hellenic and Frontex authorities. With this permission the barrier to speak with other officials within JO Poseidon, became lower and I was able to do interviews and hold conversations with representatives of the Hellenic Police, Hellenic Coast Guard, Frontex permanent staff, and the European Commission. Most interviews were guided by a topic list. Next to interviews, I was able to visit the police station and observe detention areas. Furthermore, after six weeks I was given official permission to visit Moria and specifically the work space of the Dutch border police officers.

In Lesvos, I lived in the capital Mytilene in a type of student house with researchers, NGO volunteers and two asylum seekers. I actively and consciously separated my private living situation from my research population as I feared it may influence their perspective on my objectivity (living with asylum seekers), and thereby their willingness to openly speak with me. Throughout phase three I used mapping to make sense of responsibilities, tasks and activities within securitisation of migration, and those actors, activities and responsibilities of humanitarian aid and asylum systems. To aid in this overview I attended the bi-monthly UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) meetings held in Mytilene, Lesvos which attracted most non-security actors on the island to discuss "the situation". Deductive and inductive reasoning was used to organize and make sense of the qualitative data gathered on securitisation practices and discourse in Lesvos and Europe.

Ethical Considerations and Self Reflection

As Finlay (2002: 531) so aptly states: "As qualitative researchers, we understand that the researcher is a central figure who influences the collection, selection, and interpretation of data." In other words, self-reflexivity is a key method required to make a thesis ethically and scientifically sound. Before reading this thesis, reflections have to be made on 1) personal traits (gender, nationality and physical condition) of the researcher, and 2) restrictions and conditions laid down by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex and the Dutch and Greek

ministries. Being a twenty-seven-year-old Dutch young woman with a broken ankle[12], it is not hard to believe that I received a rather biased treatment from a research population that consisted of European and often specifically Dutch security officials out of which the majority were male between the ages of twenty-five and sixty. This is not to make assumptions about gender or sexuality, but the majority are heterosexual men, fathers, who often take protective attitudes, especially towards female characters in their lives. This hugely influenced my ability to gain their trust and get to a friendly base which was absolutely vital to this research. Moreover, as a Dutch national, the Dutch government officials and officers were more willing to help my research on the Dutch contribution to a European mission and help me get access to the "right" information on JO Poseidon and put me in contact with Frontex officials on the island. In Lesvos, I thus became a tolerated, unauthorised Dutch "Frontex girl", and as friend of the Dutch group I was often tolerated at or invited to Frontex leisure activities. Therefore, my gender, age, physical situation and nationality influenced the access to the research population, which have to be considered in reading this thesis and kept in mind for future research. Finally, besides self-reflection as method to gain access, I want to reflect on how my friendly contact with the Dutch security officers may have influenced my own perception and perspectives on my research and thereby the data I gathered. Given the professional positions of most of my interviewees (asylum seekers excluded) full or partial consent to confiding information or holding interviews was very important. At all times the question of consent was posed. In most interviews with security officials, the officials themselves clarified what information they were allowed to share and what not, and in some interviews, anonymity was requested. I have decided to create pseudonyms for each of the interviewees, anonymising all.

Challenges and Limitations

First of all, this research has a very challenging and limiting context, not just because of the critical research question but also because of the general research fatigue on the island, because Lesvos, Frontex, the EU-Turkey Statement, Hotspots, Moria and its humanitarian crisis are all highly political and are constantly put under a magnifying glass by the media. Therefore, doing a critical research on JO Poseidon and Frontex, which are already put under a lot of media attention is bound to be met with some resistance. As mentioned, there is a huge advantage in the fact that I established and upheld contact with the Dutch border police officers and that formal permission had (eventually) been given to carry out this research by Frontex and the Dutch and Greek governments. Even so, the "authorisation dance" to get formal permission to do this research and write on the Join Operation Poseidon 2018 has proven to be a challenge. It was that much of a challenge that the inaccessibility and difficulty to get authorisation is incorporated as data in my analysis.

Secondly, the research population itself is a difficult group to study as they are comprised of men and women with military backgrounds who have a tendency to repeat the same rehearsed message and follow protocol when it comes to mission specific details. Thought thus has to be given to the willingness and ability of the research population to speak openly about this topic. Moreover, as I had restricted access to the research

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[12] In February 2018 I severely broke my ankle which delayed my research and thesis writing immensely. Initially I was meant to do field research in Lesvos from mid-February until mid-May and write my thesis from mid-May until beginning-August. Throughout the eventual field research in the Netherlands and Lesvos I often walked with crutches and was low on energy.

population during their professional activities (except for two occasions where I was allowed to visit Moria camp), observation during security activities was not possible which makes triangulation of data gathered through interviews largely impossible.

Thirdly, the complexity of this research was also a limitation. As researcher I had to educate myself not only on Frontex, the EU policies and regulations, but also on my research populations. The asylum procedure is extremely complicated and complex and changes almost monthly because of new EU regulations and Greek laws. The process of understanding the asylum procedure that was partly securitised by my research population took up half a year to understand, well until after I came back from Lesvos, which may have influenced and limited my research data. It was extremely important to understand all of this context in order to have good conversations with either asylum seeker or security actor.

Chapter Outline

This introduction presented the empirical and academic relevance of this research, reviewed the literature on European securitisation of migration since the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016, and defined the research gap. Subsequently, the research strategy and design were outlined, briefly mentioning the analytic tool and explaining which methods and techniques were used to answer the sub-questions. Finally, special focus was given to the ethical considerations and the challenges and limitations of this research.

I start this thesis in chapter one with a theoretical discussion and thorough description of the analytical framework that accommodates this research. It outlines which theoretical concepts are used, and discusses the approaches and theories they derive from, namely: bio-politics, governmentality and containment, securitisation theory and assemblage theory. At the same time, it critically examines the analytical frame "practices of assemblage" that I have converted into the sub-questions. This thesis is thereafter divided into five chapters each answering one of the five sub-questions. Chapter two addresses how different actors aligned behind a common threat, namely the influx of asylum seekers coming to Europe in 2015/2016. In chapter three I address how the newly formed assemblage in Lesvos, reassembled the stage, showing which measures were taken to "securitise" the newly perceived threat, highlighting specifically the Hotspot system, the relocation system, the EU-Turkey Statement, and the creation of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex. In chapter four, I discuss JO Poseidon based on the OP for 2018, which I argue renders the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage technical. Specifically, I show which technical descriptions are produced to overcome tensions between actors within the assemblage and make it appear more coherent than it is. In chapter five I show how the assemblage contains critique from its members (executive security actors) by authorising knowledge and specifying accountability and responsibility. In the sixth and final chapter I show how the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage manages critique on the assemblage, by presenting perceived failure as a rectifiable outcome, smoothing out contradictions, and devising compromises. Less explicitly but not remotely unimportantly, this chapter addressed the humanitarian crisis, human rights violations, and failures of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage. Finally, this thesis concludes with a discussion of the preceding chapters which will lead to the answer of the research question.

CHAPTER 1
Theoretical Ideas and the Analytical Framework

❝ Social research, in simplest terms, involves a dialogue between ideas and evidence. Ideas help social researchers make sense of evidence, and researchers use evidence to extend, revise and test ideas. ❞

(Ragin & Amoroso 2011: 57)

This chapter outlines the series of theoretical and analytical *ideas* I draw on to analyse and frame the evidence presented in the succeeding chapters of this thesis. The most important idea presented here in the final paragraph of this chapter, is the analytic tool "practices of assemblage" which functions as a framework enabling the structured dialogue between ideas and evidence presented in this thesis. However, as will become evident, assemblage is an ambiguous and complex analytic tool rather than a theory and therefore borrows from existing theoretical and analytic ideas that each have their own theoretical family. This chapter thus entails a discussion of each of the relevant ideas that co-construct and underlie assemblage thinking and are specifically relevant to the "practices of assemblage".

1.1. Governmentality, Bio-politics, and Bio-power

Bio-politics was first coined as a term by Michel Foucault in *The History of Sexuality Volume 1, The Will to Power* [1976] (1990; 1998) in which he suggests a transformation from politics over geographical territory of the nation-state, to a modern political governance over lives (βιος) of the nation (Vaughan-Williams 2009: 734). The concept of bio-politics is defined by Foucault as "the administration of bodies and the calculated management of life (1998: 140)." With this administration of bodies, he refers to demographic information which was administered through scientific research since the eighteenth century and made it possible for states to govern lives and exercise state power over their populations (the calculated management of life). Bio-politics thus refers to the different ways in which lives are governed and govern themselves, beyond state governance.

Drawing on bio-politics, Foucault defined the *government* as "the conduct of conduct: 'that is to say, a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons' (Gordon 1991: 2)." In *Studies in Governmentality*, Foucault (1991) explores this conduct of conduct, through his study on governmentality as a practice of the power of the government through layers beyond top-down state relations and transcending localities and spaces. Foucault specifically focused on the practices of power at any level and at any location, or in other words "any space where calculation is practiced to manage individuals can be considered a bio-political space (Topak 2014: 818)." Fundamental in performing governmentality and bio-politics is a type of power that Foucault refers to as bio-power: "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques of achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations (1990 [1976]: 140)." The European securitisation of migration in Lesvos can be analysed as forms of governmentality and bio-politics in which this bio-power is

enacted. This display of bio-power by the EU becomes more tangible when seen applied to the asylum seeker and the border.

1.1.1. Containment of Threatening and Unwanted Life

Drawing on Conflict and Development Studies, Mark Duffield (2008) ties in the Foucauldian concept *bio-power* to the European border, by explaining how *bio-power* is contemporarily exercised through *technologies of containment*. He defines *containment* as: "those various interventions and technologies that seek to restrict or manage the circulation of incomplete and hence potentially threatening life or return it from whence it came (Duffield 2008: 146)." While Duffield looks at western policies on development and security in the Global South (e.g. bio-politics from a distance), these technologies of containment can also be seen at the European border (Tazzioli & Garelli 2018; Tazzioli 2018; Duffield and Evans 2011), containing asylum seekers inside European borders, at Schiphol airport, on the Greek islands, or on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea in Turkey or Libya (Vaughan-Williams 2015). Confirming Duffield's distinction between wanted and unwanted lives, is van Houtum (2010) who emphasizes the bio-power of containment technologies as he describes how "invasion maps", and the "global Migrant blacklist" aid in a discourse of othering the asylum seeker, creating a transnational policy of European Apartheid.

1.1.2. The Border

Within border and security studies, scholars such as Étienne Balibar (1998) re-evaluated the function, location and meaning of the border according to the Foucauldian concept of *bio-politics*: "Borders are vacillating [. . .] they are no longer at the border, an institutionalized site that could be materialized on the ground and inscribed on the map, where one sovereignty ends, and another begins (Balibar et al 1998: 217)." Rather, the border should be seen as: "a 'generalised bio-political border' as a re-conceptualisation of the limits of sovereign power: not as fixed territorial borders located at the outer-edge of the territorial state but infused through bodies and diffused across society and everyday life (Vaughan-Williams 2009: 732)."

Like Vaughan-Williams, many scholars adopted Balibar's critique on the border, arguing the border can no longer be understood as a situated frontier in a fixed geographical location but has to be analysed as a fluid boundary which crystallises within and outside geographical borders through lives and boundary making practices (Broeders & Hampsire 2013; Parker & Vaughan-Williams 2012; Bigo 2011; Vaughan-Williams & Peoples 2010; Pickering & Weber 2006). While it appears the practice of the bio-political border which transcends space and locality would be the theoretical *idea* to study, when looking at the securitisation of migration, in practice, some argue, Balibar's argument for a purely bio-political border is not completely correct, and the bio-political border in fact solidifies at the geographical border zones. This is further confirmed by empirical evidence in the form of the construction of walls, fences, security and surveillance systems at US-Mexico and European geographical borders (Topak 2014). In contrast to Foucault, Topak argues, the practice of bio-power (whether in the form of technologies of containment or the administration of bodies) is concentrated primarily at the border zones (Topak 2014: 818). Specifically, based on his ethnographic fieldwork:

Speaking of the Greece–Turkey borderzones, there have been many cases of migrants who managed to reach Greek territory but were nevertheless forcefully pushed back or returned to the Turkish side. Surveillance practices, too, not only calculate Greek territory. Turkish territories are also calculated to ensure preemptive control of migrants before they reach the borderlines. Therefore, rather than fixed territorial lines, borderzones should be understood as extended spaces of biopolitical management that are located at the margins of states.

<div align="right">Topak 2014: 818</div>

Analysing the function and meaning of the border is beyond the scope of this thesis but there is extensive research applying *bio-politics* of Foucault to the border (Topak 2014; Bigo 2014; Van Houtum 2010; Balibar 1998). I thus adopt Topak's definition of the border that is both bio-political (vacillating) as well as geographically concentrated.

1.1.3. Containment at the Border

Topak (2014) and Tazzioli (2018) have used the same approach as Duffield (2008) and have argued that the border can be seen as a site where *technologies of containment* are practiced, referring to the border policy between Europe and Turkey and the asylum policy characterized by the EU-Turkey Statement and Hotspot systems on the border (Topak 2014; Tazzioli 2018). Martina Tazzioli (2018) argued that the Hotspot system can be examined as one of the most prominent containment technologies of our time. By analysing Hotspots as part of 'political technology' for regulating unwanted mobility, it is possible to outline a strategy of what she calls 'containment through mobility'. As she explains:

> By containment through mobility, I refer to the fact that migration movements are obstructed in their autonomy not only by generating immobility and conditions of strandedness, nor through constant surveillance but through administrative, political and legal measures that use (forced) mobility as a technique of government. […] It would be misleading to see the Hotspot System as the actualisation of the Europeanisation of controls; rather, the materiality of the hotspot-infrastructures shows and enforces the role of frontier-line member states – Italy and Greece – as spaces of migration containment…

<div align="right">Tazzioli 2018: 2766</div>

Before the start of the influx of asylum seekers in 2015, Topak (2014) already emphasised the containment structure of the EU-Asia border felt in Lesvos, and especially focused on the impact of these structures on asylum seekers, stating that: "the Greece-Turkey borderzones are bio-political spaces where surveillance intensifies, and migrant lives are held hostage (Topak 2014: 830)." From an understanding of *governmentality*, it thus becomes possible for states to enact *bio-power*, categorizing people into wanted and unwanted lives.

1.2. Securitisation Theory

Securitisation theory is an approach within Security Studies, first established in the late 1980s as result of a collaboration between Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde. In their book: *Security: A New Framework for Analysis (1998)*, Ole Wæver and his colleagues outlined the main argument they had been working on, which in contrast to the neo-utilitarian, realist and neo-realist understandings of the world most commonly used in security studies at that time, instead was based on a social constructivist approach (Balzacq et al 2016: 496). From this perspective, the world is socially constructed and thus by definition "there are no security issues in themselves, but only issues that have been securitised, i.e. constructed as such through securitising *speech acts* (Leonard 2010: 235)." Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde's contribution became known as the Copenhagen School of Securitisation Theory stemming from Ole's home University and broadened the security domain from the traditional "study of threat, use, and control of military force (Walt 1991: 212)."

The *speech act*, originally deriving from language studies, became a famous aspect of the Copenhagen School, it allowed to broaden the scope of the definition of the security threat. In other words, the Copenhagen School activated the Security in Security Studies which solidified in Securitisation Theory. *Securitisation* was centred on discourse and included several *ideas* which aided in the analysis of the securitisation process: 1) *securitising actors*, 2) *referent objects*, 3) *context/conditions*, and 4) *audience*, and was defined as follows: "when a securitising actor uses a rhetoric of existential threat and thereby takes an issue out of what under those conditions is 'normal politics', we have a case of *securitisation* (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 24)". Moreover,

> a discourse that takes the form of presenting something as an existential threat to a referent object does not by itself create securitization—this is a *securitising move,* but the issue is securitized only if and when the audience accepts it as such.
>
> Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 25

The Copenhagen School was initially applauded for the broadening and deepening of security studies, referring to the redefinition of the scope of what can be defined as security threats (broadening). Moreover, rather than focusing the analysis on the security threat, by deepening security studies, the focus of analysis was on who securitised an issue (the securitising actor) and most importantly an analysis of the process of securitisation (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998: 26). Whereas applauded for its proposed Securitisation Theory, the Copenhagen School sparked intense debates and eventually disagreements between security studies scholars (predominantly in Europe). This led to the formation of two more different schools in Security Studies around the turn of the century: 1) the Aberystwyth School, also known as the Critical Security Studies approach which criticized mainly the state-centred analysis of the securitising actor in the Copenhagen School, and 2) the Paris School, led by Didier Bigo who drastically moved away from both schools, and criticised the focus on discourse and thereby the entire underlying assumptions based on social constructivism.

The Paris School – receiving its name from the geographical location of its main scholar – takes up a poststructuralist understanding of the world, and approaches securitisation from a sociological perspective in

which analysis prioritise security practice over discourse. In his study on migration, Bigo (2002) explains how both speech act but also and more importantly practices can be used to analyse the securitisation of immigration:

> The securitization of immigration then emerges from the correlation between some successful *speech acts* of political leaders, the mobilization they create for and against some groups of people, and the specific field of security professionals (which, in the West, and despite many differences, now tend to unite policemen, gendarmes, intelligence services, military people, providers of technology of surveillance and experts on risk assessments). It comes also from a range of *administrative practices* such as population profiling, risk assessment, statistical calculation, category creation, proactive preparation, and what may be termed a specific *habitus* of the "security professional" with its ethos of secrecy and concern for the management of fear or unease.
>
> <div align="right">Bigo 2002: 65-66, emphasis mine</div>

It should be noted that while it may seem easier to understand securitisation studies through these three schools, in reality there is a lot of cross fertilisation between the three. Not surprisingly, scholars also move between these schools and may be influenced by social theories from the one but analytical frames from the other (Balzacq et al 2016; Hansen 2011).

1.2.1. The Securitisation of Migration and Asylum

In the field of securitisation studies, migration has been the issue most prominently discussed, analysed and researched (Balzacq et al 2016: 508). Naturally, there have been intense debates on the securitisation of asylum and migration in Europe, specifically in relation to surveillance technologies (Dijstelbloem &Broeders 2015; Dijstelbloem et al 2011; Broeders 2007; Lyon 2005), the EU agency Frontex (Riekmann 2016; Carrera et al 2015; Leonard 2010; Neal 2009), and of course the EU response to the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016 and collapsing asylum system (Tazzioli 2017; Balzacq et al 2016; Guild et al 2015).

The concept of surveillance is extremely important in the securitisation of migration, specifically the notion of social sorting (Lyon 2003). Leading academic in the field of security and surveillance studies, David Lyon, explains surveillance and security through his concept of social sorting:

> …surveillance today sorts people into categories, assigning worth or risk, in ways that have real effects on their life-chances. Deep discrimination occurs, thus making surveillance not merely a matter of personal privacy but of social justice.
>
> <div align="right">Lyon 2003: 1</div>

This relates closely to Dufffield's bio-political idea of wanted and unwanted live and Van Houtum's discourse of othering the asylum seeker and creating European Apartheid. Securitisation theory goes a step further than specifying this discrimination and highlights what specific technologies and where practices are used to sort wanted from unwanted lives.

The larger contribution of securitisation theory towards a structurationist understanding of European securitisation of migration, is that security systems do not function on their own, Greek and Frontex security authorities are in charge of enforcing, adapting and reinforcing the EU asylum and migration policies by means of surveillance technologies, security agencies, laws and regulations, putting them in a powerful position in the inclusion or exclusion of lives entering the European borders. The development of digital surveillance technologies in the past couple of decades has intensified social sorting at the border-zones of Europe. Through social sorting surveillance technologies - drones, cameras, fingerprinting techniques, and many other large-scale technologies such as fences, Hotspots and the EU-Turkey Statement - the asylum seekers are monitored, categorized, sorted and ultimately included or excluded from Europe. EU's digital borders (Broeders 2007) are connected through "the 'stretched screens' of border officials, police, and visa offices, at the various locations where the border manifests itself (Dijstelbloem and Broeders 2015: 25)." The manifestation of surveillance and securitisation thus happens at all localities and levels of the European border: digital, geographical and bio-political.

1.2.2. Asylum Seekers as Security Threat

From a social-constructivist line of thought, asylum seekers can be seen (through speech act) as a socio-economic threat, but also in the traditional sense as a threat to internal security to European societies (Huysmans 2000). From a poststructuralist perspective, and as mentioned already above, Bigo (2014) analysed securitising practices of the EU, confirming the securitisation of asylum and migration in the EU. In line with the Paris School, in her studies of securitisation practices, Léonard (2010: 246) in an article on the main activities of Frontex, concluded that all main activities of Frontex (anno 2010) could be identified as securitising practices and therefore contributed to the ongoing securitisation of asylum and migration in the EU. Whether studied from a realist, social-constructivist, or post-structuralist perspective, migration and asylum issues in the EU have become important topics of research in security studies (Balzacq et al 2016; Leonard 2010; Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2000). Evidently most scholars agree on the analysis that asylum seekers have been securitised in the EU.

The general academic acceptance that asylum and migration have been securitised in the EU, is important because when the European population (audience) and the EU (securitising actor) accept asylum seekers as security threats, it not only legitimises the use of *whatever* security means deemed necessary (e.g. the use of surveillance technology, population profiling based on race/ethnicity, risk assessments, deployment of securitising actors, refusal of asylum seekers, push-backs and even the use of violence) but also legitimises the prioritisation of securitisation over the respect of human rights and international human rights law in EU border and asylum policies (Little & Vaughan-Williams 2017; Leonard 2010; Neal 2009; Huysmans 2000), which can lead to the direct violation of human rights of asylum seekers and refugees in the EU (Leonard 2010).

1.2.3. 'Analytics of Government' as Analytical Tool?

Having outlined Foucault's governmentality in the previous paragraph and Bigo's work on the sociological approach to securitisation theory in the Paris School above, it is evident that this thesis takes on a poststructuralist understanding of the world, and with that, of asylum seekers and migration. That and how the theory of

governmentality and securitisation theory are cousins in the same family, is explained by Balzacq, Léonard and Ruzicka:

> Securitisation … intersects with speech act theory, Schmitt's political realism, Bourdieu's sociology and Foucault's theory of governmentality. Especially in the last decade, Bourdieu and Foucault have exerted a steady influence on the evolution of securitization theory. Scholars working explicitly with the framework developed by Foucault argue that the literature on governmentality provides securitisation theory with an 'analytics of government' – that is, *'an analysis of the specific conditions under which particular entities emerge, exist and change'* – that enables scholars to uncover how security practices operate.
>
> Balzacq et al 2016: 496

Bazlacq, Leonard and Ruzicka (2016) introduce the 'analytics of government' additional to study securitisation, emphasising the power of processes and practice, rather than only discourse. This is an attempt to overcome either a study of discourse as is the analytical frame for the Aberyswyth and Copenhagen schools, and the practice-oriented analysis as presented in the Paris school. While in the same year, Korosteleva (2016) successfully applies "analytics of government" to border governance of the EU and Russia in the Ukraine, this application of the analytics of government, showed how it is fit for a structuralist assessment of power that incorporates discourse and practice at the state level. However, it does not allow for a structurationist approach to study border governance incorporating ethnographic data from agents in the field, at the executive level.

While Balzacq et al (2016) claim that an 'analytics of government' ensures that securitisation also "considers the conditions under which regimes of practices emerge and are reformed or dismantled (Balzacq et al 2016: 496)", I am thus not convinced they provide a fitting analytic frame to study securitisation in discourse and practice. They confirm this themselves in their conclusion, where three challenges are outlined for the field of securitisation today: theory, method and methodology. With regard to the method of analysis of securitisation theory, they acknowledge that scholars have called for a broader range of approaches including ethnographic research of security governance (Balzacq et al 2016: 519). As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis ethnographic fieldwork on the securitisation of migration at the border is well-represented, however, an analytic frame that allows for the incorporation of both securitisation practices and discourse at the state as well as executive level, still, as Balzacq et al (2016) argue, offers a challenge to securitisation theory. This next paragraph offers an answer to one of the three challenges facing security studies today, namely the issue of *method* or in other words the lack of an analytical tool to study both discourse and practice (Balzacq et al 2016: 517-20).

1.3. An Analytic of Assemblage

European governance on migration has been analysed as securitising practices and discourses and as forms of bio-politics and containment. However, as has become clear from the theoretical debates and *ideas* described above, an analytical tool to study these and overcome the structuralist discourse-practice divide in securitisation theory, has not yet been developed. Assemblage theory can help with that. Specifically, Tania Murray Li's "practices of assemblage", adapted by Jolle Demmers and Lauren Gould (2018) can be used as analytic tool to analyse the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage.

1.3.1. Assemblage Theory

Assemblage theory was first outlined by two French academics: Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guatarri in 1980. In *A Thousand Plateaus: capitalism and schizophrenia*, they present assemblage theory as an ontological framework through which they analyse the complexity of the social world with its myriad of heterogeneous elements (actors, structures, discourses, interventions and laws). More specifically, they provide an understanding of how assemblages are formed through coding, stratification and territorialisation (Deleuze and Guatarri 1980). Assemblage theory was further developed by Manuel DeLanda in his book *A New Philosophy of Society* (2006). DeLanda explains how biological material systems in nature self-organise and how we can research the social world in a similar manner to include the social, linguistic and philosophical in order to create a theory that analyses systems through relations between individuals (DeLanda 2006).

Assemblage theory was built in response to a "dissatisfaction with the dominant ontologies that have characterized social theory (Acuto and Curtis 2014: 6)." In other words, it strongly aligns with the idea of structurationism (Giddens 1986), which holds that actors and structures are in constant dialogue, and together constitute the social world. What makes assemblage analysis even stronger as analytic tool, is that it resolves the biggest critique on structurationism. Namely, it loses focus by aspiring to analyse both structure and agency. Assemblage analysis focuses instead on the activity of assembling and reassembling, the processes, interactions and relations in between.

Given its analytical power, since assemblage was first coined, it has been applied as analytical tool to a variety of complex phenomena, creating a plethora of assemblages: surveillant assemblage (Villegas 2015; Hier 2003), global assemblages (Sassen 2008; Ong and Collier 2006;), community forest management assemblage (Murray Li 2007), security assemblages (Abrahamsen & Williams 2009), mobility assemblages (Salter 2013), liquid warfare assemblage (Demmers and Gould 2018), to name but a few. In a brilliant endeavour to capture this new field (*Reassembling International Theory)*, Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis, conclude that (amongst many other characteristics) assemblage is a method rather than a theory that allows social scientists to disentangle and connect the variety of heterogeneous elements that make up the social world (Acuto and Curtis 2014).

Rather than merely trying to define what we see is a form of securitisation of migration or a bio-political form of containment, assemblage analysis aims to show how and what it is made up of and how it moves and endures, acts and has an effect. This follows the intention of securitisation theory: "Securitisation combines the politics of threat design with that of threat management (Balzacq et al 2016: 495)", in other words, the

combination of defining what it is and how it is managed. Not surprisingly, assemblage thinking is not new to securitisation theory, it is quite literally mentioned in Williams and Balzacq's definition of securitisation:

> [Securitisation is] an articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies, stereotypes, emotions, etc.) are contextually mobilised by a securitising actor, who works to prompt an audience to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations, thoughts, and intuitions) about the critical vulnerability of a referent object, that concurs with the securitising actor's reasons for choices and actions, by investing the referent subject with such an aura of unprecedented threatening complexion that a customised policy must be immediately undertaken to block it.
>
> Williams & Balzacq 2011: 3

Moreover, closely related to the field of Security Studies, assemblage theory has been used and adapted in the field of Conflict Studies to try and grasp the complexity of:

> heterogeneous elements including aid coordinating bodies, think tanks, international and local NGOs, UN and EU agencies, military commands, international financial organizations, community groups, private security cooperations, as well as discourses, laws, norms and doctrines, which in collaboration and competition—seek to provide solutions for urgent needs. What these elements have in common is the will to govern, or more precisely, the will to improve: "the attempt to direct conduct and intervene in social processes to produce desired outcomes and avert undesired ones (Li 2007: 264)."
>
> Demmers 2016: 4

1.3.2. Practices of Assemblage

Close to home, Dutch scholars such as Marieke de Goede and Rivke Jaffe, from the university of Amsterdam have made great effort to apply assemblage theory to violence and security, and analysed a security assemblage looking "at the practices and imaginations of security provision beyond the state and beyond the human (Jaffe 2018: 6)." However, thus far a clear analytic frame on how to study security assemblage through practice has not yet been formulated.

From a desire to operationalise assemblage theory into a more workable analytical frame to apply to the field of Development Studies, Tania Murray Li (2007) outlines six practices of assemblage in her work on Community Forest Management. I draw on the adaptation of her work by academics from my home university Jolle Demmers and Lauren Gould (2018) who mould her "practices of assemblage" to fit security and conflict governance assemblages, specifically they analyse "the hunt for Kony assemblage", in Uganda through five practices of assemblage:

a) ***forging alignments through a shared threat perception:*** *the work of linking together the objectives of the parties to an assemblage by means of a joint problem definition;*

b) ***rendering technical:*** *the production of technical descriptions of the problem/solution to overcome tensions and make the assemblage appear more coherent than it is;*

c) ***authorising knowledge:*** *specifying and limiting the requisite body of 'expert knowledge'; containing critiques;*

d) ***reassembling:*** *grafting on new elements and reworking old ones; deploying existing discourses, legal instruments, doctrines, to new ends; transposing the meaning of key terms;*

e) ***managing failures and contradictions:*** *presenting failure as the outcome of rectifiable deficiencies; smoothing out contradictions; devising compromises (see Li, 2007).*

Demmers and Gould 2018: 5

Combined these practices help to examine what holds the assemblage together and how parties of the assemblage are made to cohere and act. These practices define the boundaries of the assemblage and enable it to govern.

1.3.3. The European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage

Although accurate, I argue that the five practices of assemblage outlined above require some reordering to accommodate the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage I have observed and aspire to analyse and unpack in the coming chapters. Where the first remains: *(a) forging alignments through a shared threat perception*, the second in my opinion should be *d) reassembling*, as I view this practice as a specific set of activities of adapting and reshaping the security field in Europe in response to that same threat perception, which fits well with the first practice in which this threat is formulated. For the proceeding practices, I argue following the same sequence as Demmers and Gould (2018), which makes the order of the practices of assemblage in this thesis as follows:

1. *forging alignments through a shared threat perception*
2. *reassembling*
3. *rendering technical*
4. *authorising knowledge*
5. *managing failures and contradictions*

By applying these five practices of assemblage to the securitisation of migration in Europe, it becomes possible to distinguish a "European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage" and more importantly, to show its power and capacity to function, adapt and endure within and regardless of human suffering and violations of human rights in Lesvos.

1.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has given focus to the theoretical *ideas* and analytical framework that guide this thesis. The first set of those *ideas* - while much less a theoretical family - were the Foucauldian concepts of governmentality, bio-politics, and bio-power. As form of bio-political governance, containment was identified as a critical idea in which separated wanted and unwanted lives. The border has been identified as an important empirical concept to study in relation to securitisation as it, in whichever form: bio-political, geographical or digital is the location where securitisation is practiced.

Secondly, as this thesis aims to understand the European *Securitisation* of Migration Assemblage, securitisation theory has been identified as one such family that cannot be omitted from this chapter. The concepts within securitisation theory that apply to this research, specifically to the securitisation of the asylum seeker were: *the speech act*, *the security threat*, and *administrative practices* accompanied by *surveillance technologies*.

Finally, this chapter concluded with the young family of assemblage theorists on which the analytical framework of this thesis is based. The concept of assemblage in social scientific research has been explained as well as applications thereof by use of the practices of assemblage analytic. In conclusion, as mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, securitisation academics (Balzacq et al 2016) have argued that securitisation theory lacks a coherent holistic research *method*, which I have presented in this chapter with "practices of assemblage" as tool to study securitisation.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide an overview of the reality of life in every single hotspot, border or even a thorough account of every single asylum case, instead focus is given to the island of Lesvos and specifically the securitisation of migration elements and actors thereon. Here lies the heart of the influx of asylum seekers and collapse of the asylum systems in 2015/2016, here the EU-Turkey Statement is implemented and executed by EU agencies E.A.S.O. (European Asylum Service Office) and Frontex and felt by everyone trapped and living on the island, here a humanitarian crisis festers in the EU Hotspot and refugee camp Moria and here the EU agencies, the local authorities, NGOs, activists, researchers, locals, volunteers, and asylum seekers come together forming a micro assemblage at the border of Europe.

Let's dive in.

CHAPTER 2
Aligning Actors Against a Common Threat

> " [06:33] [in] the beginning we didn't have so many arrivals, so we were two people because if you receive a boat with 20 or 30 migrants there is no need for many officers. But step by step, month by month, […] we got the *invasion* in 2015 […], so there was a *need* of more officers, of creating shifts. And I believe we are like a *factory*, like an *industry* now, that is my impression.[13] "

Greek security actors like Antreas, a Hellenic Police officer, Frontex liaison officer, and local in Lesvos, saw how "invasions" of asylum seekers arrived on his beach. However, at the time there was an "invasion" and a "need" in Lesvos (end 2015), border security had not nearly adapted itself to the proportions of asylum seekers arriving in Lesvos. Greek nor European (security) actors could answer to the need for more officers, and clear responsibilities and task divisions for different agents in the field - such as the shifts Antreas mentions - had not yet been laid out. In sum, proportional and significant collaboration with national and European agencies and actors was non-existent at the time that hundreds and thousands of people crossed the Greek-Turkish border into Europe on a daily basis.

In this chapter I answer the first of five sub-questions: 1) *How were different actors aligned behind a common security threat?* Firstly, I describe the influx of asylum seekers arriving in Europe in 2015/2016, specifically related to Lesvos and Greece. Secondly, I argue how the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016 exposed deficiencies in the European and Greek asylum and border security systems and how a bureaucratic chaos unfolded in Lesvos. Thirdly, I show how in response to these deficiencies EU officials changed the discourse towards the asylum seeker from a humanitarian one under "normal" circumstances, to a security discourse in times of "crisis", where the asylum seeker became a "common security threat". Fourthly, I argue how this enabled the EU to call upon powerful and executive actors responsible for *border security*, and show that in response to the "common security threat", alignments were forged amongst those actors who would, under "normal circumstances", have distinctive objectives, but in times of crisis, collaborate voluntarily or coerced, to address a common threat. Finally, I argue this practice of assemblage formed the basis of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos, or what Antreas refers to as the "factory".

2.1. The Influx of Asylum Seekers in 2015/2016

An immense amount of one and a half million people would cross the Mediterranean Sea borders of Europe in just the years of 2015 and 2016 alone, representing the largest flow of asylum seekers since World War II (Niemann & Zaun 2018: 3). Greece received the large majority. To put things into perspective, in 2014 the total number of asylum seekers entering into Greece via sea according to the UNHCR, was 41,038, where in 2015 this

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[13] Interview 20, Antreas, Hellenic Police, 3 August 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

number rose exponentially during the months of April (13,556), May (17,88,9) and June (54,899), up to a total of 856,723 men, women and children in 2015.[14] The total number of sea arrivals into Europe from year to year was: 216,054 (2014), 1,015,078 (2015), 362,753 (2016) and 172,301 (2017), which shows the magnitude of people arriving on the tiny Greek islands in 2015, in comparison to the rest of Europe (856,723/1,015,078 = approximately four out of five, came through Greece).[15]

Located in the Northeast of the Aegean Sea, with 320 kilometres of coastline and an area of 1,633 km2, Lesvos is the largest of the five governing Aegean islands.[16] More importantly, during the influx of asylum seekers, it became the Ellis island of Europe due to its geographical location. From the North, East and Southeast coasts of the island, the Turkish coast is clearly visible, as the island is separated from Turkey only by the narrow strait of Mytilene (named after the island's capital), which, at its narrowest, is only five kilometres wide. Instead of beach holiday photographs, the summer of 2015 in Lesvos was characterised by images of hundreds of people swimming to shore from their sunken dinghies, long lines of women, children, and men walking from shore to the capital Mytilene day in day out, and piles and piles of life vests and small rubber boats left behind in the hills of Lesvos after months of ongoing arrivals.

2.2. Deficiencies in European Border and Asylum Systems

[06:39] They [asylum seekers] would quickly go to the mainland and then they would disappear. Greece saw itself as transit country, not as destination country. They [Greece] saw themselves as victim who would have no benefit from having a good registration and identification procedure, because then all of them [asylum seekers] would be bound to Greece and back then there was no reception facility whatsoever, so the thought for the Greeks was, as long as those people are not adequately conducted to Greece, they will disappear because all of them want to go to Germany anyways.[17]

Prior to my arrival in Lesvos, where I would encounter the security "factory" that had formed there after 2015, and in an attempt to define the "common threat" that may have had justified European presence on the island, I spoke to the member of the management board of Frontex on behalf of the Netherlands and Commander of the Royal Marechaussee (Dutch Ministry of Defence) quoted above. According to him, European and Dutch presence in Lesvos was necessary to contain the flow of asylum seekers, because the Greek authorities were reluctant or unable to respond appropriately. Subsequently, the influx of asylum seekers arriving on the Aegean islands exposed major flaws and defects in the Greek border security systems, but also in the central European asylum and border security systems. In other words, what became known to the world as the "refugee crisis", started

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[14] https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/65373.

[15] https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/65373. It also shows the stark drop of people entering into Europe in 2016, which can be directly linked to the EU-Turkey Statement but more on this in paragraph 3.2.4. and 6.4.

[16] The five governing Aegean islands are Lesvos, Chios, Ikaria, Lemnos and Samos. These islands make up the North Aegean region which governs over all ten inhabited islands in the North Aegean Sea. The capital of Lesvos also functions as the capital of the North Aegean Region.

[17] Interview 4, Commander RMar & Representative of the Netherlands in Management Board of Frontex, recorded, 16 May 2018, Ministry of Defence, the Hague

with a crisis in the existing European and Greek border systems. At the core, its exposure started with a bureaucratic crisis that unfolded on the island of Lesvos in 2015.

2.2.1. Bureaucratic Chaos in Lesvos

As Katerina Rozakou, Greek anthropologist and scholar from the University of Amsterdam, analyses in her comprehensive ethnographic study in Lesvos during the summer of 2015; "thousands of people would gather outside the small Hellenic Coast Guard cubicle in the port area of Mytilene, in order to get registered by a handful of Hellenic Coast guards, every single day (Rozakou 2017: 36/37)." With the ongoing arrival of asylum seekers, came a structural inability to identify and fingerprint every single asylum seeker, resulting in what Rozakou identifies as "irregular bureaucracy" at the borders of Greece. In other words, thousands of asylum seekers were "waved through" as they set out on their 'secondary movements' onwards to Germany (Rozakou 2017). This was especially problematic in combination with the continuous arrival of hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers.[18] It resulted in an extreme overload of the Greek asylum and migration system and its executioners (the Hellenic Coast Guard and the Hellenic Police) on the island.

By the end of 2015, the collapse of the Greek asylum system was a fact. If anything, the influx of asylum seekers coming to Europe in 2015/2016 and collapse of the asylum system exposed major deficiencies in the central European asylum and border security systems. Most notably, the implication for the EU of having the Schengen agreement, which lifted internal border control in order to create a free market economy in Europe, in combination with the Dublin agreement.

2.2.2. The Impossible Combination: Schengen and Dublin

The Schengen agreement, a treaty initiated by the BeNeLux, France and Germany to enable free movement between their five respective countries was signed in Schengen, Luxembourg in 1985 and created the first Schengen Area (Schengen-5). The Schengen area currently consists of twenty-six European Member States that under the agreement (should) have abolished the physical control of their shared borders. The external borders of the Member States on the borders of the Schengen area remain under national authority, regardless of them representing the European Border. Moreover, the internal European market is defined as a common market in which all national markets are open to trade, creating a single market (Menendez 2010). Within this single-market-mindedness the European Asylum policy was born (Menendez 2016: 292). As Menendez further explains the dilemma:

> On the one hand, tearing down borders immediately Europeanised one key lever of asylum (migration) policy: the physical control of internal borders … On the other hand, 'substantive' asylum policy (setting eligibility criteria, deciding individual cases and organising the reception of refugees) remained in national hands.

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[18] Interview 4, Commander RMar & Representative of the Netherlands in Management Board of Frontex, recorded, 16 May 2018, Ministry of Defence, the Hague.

The Dublin convention went into force in 1997 and is built around the principle that the European Member State in which an asylum seeker first arrives, is responsible for documenting fingerprints and details of an asylum-seeker and is then naturally responsible for a person's asylum claim in Europe. In the 1990s the Dublin rules did not need to be applied as often (even when Greece joined in 2001) as the outer North-Eastern borders of the Schengen area were also still the borders of desired destinations such as Germany. However, in the 2000s, and especially in 2008, when EU-15 became EU-27 (and later in 2013, EU-28), large numbers of asylum seekers entered the European Union, but only lodged their asylum claim once they reached their desired country of destination, also known as 'secondary movements' (Menendez 2016: 293). This phenomenon was put under a magnifying glass in 2015. Mid-2015, Frontex did an unannounced Schengen evaluation in Greece.[19] The evaluation outlines security risks that a country (such as Greece) might pose to the Schengen area.

2.2.3. Collapse of the Central European Asylum System

In line with this *threat* perception, as is stated on the website of the European Commission, states that the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016:

> …put a strain not only on many Member States' asylum systems, but also on the Common European Asylum System as whole. The volume […] of arrivals has exposed in particular the weaknesses of the Dublin System, which establishes the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application based primarily on the first point of irregular entry.

European Commission 2018[20]

The Central European Asylum System is guided by the Dublin System[21], implemented at the European (Schengen) borders firstly by national border guards of the "outer" Member States, and supported on request (in 2015) by the Frontex and by EASO (European Asylum Service Office) storing fingerprints in the EURODAC system.[22] When the European Commission is speaking of the weakness of the Dublin system, reference is thus made to the first-entry system which restricts asylum seekers from moving onwards to other member states than those on the edges of the Schengen area. The system is thus weak in actually containing asylum seekers at the border as asylum seekers often undertook secondary movements. Instead of creating clear responsibility lines between member states and asylum seekers making asylum claims, the Dublin system sparked further confusion amongst member

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[19] Interview 4, Chiel Commander RMar & Representative of the Netherlands in Management Board of Frontex, recorded May 2018, Ministry of Defence, the Hague

[20] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en

[21] Here specifically pointing at the Dublin principle for the first-entry rule, defining which member state is responsible for identification and the asylum claim of asylum seekers.

[22] EURODAC stands for European Dactyloscopy (the science of fingerprint technology) and came into action in 2003 with the purpose to aid the Dublin regulation. It is the database in which all fingerprints are taken from asylum seekers and irregular border-crossers who enter the European Union (EURODAC 2000).

states. In sum, in the context of Dublin and the Schengen agreement, Greek border guards were "waving through" asylum seekers, who were in turn able to move freely to all the other Schengen associated countries. What the discourse of the European Commission shows, is the fear of asylum seekers and the threat they are perceived to pose to the European Schengen area.

2.3. "The Common Threat"

As the Greek and European border and asylum security systems collapsed under the pressure of hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers arriving to te Aegean islands in 2015, the continuous streams of "secondary movements" created large migration routes to Germany and other Western European Member States. By the end of 2015, the European and international media coverage of the situation was overwhelming, displaying numerous accounts of human rights violations at the borders and in the heart of Europe in inhumane refugee camps in Greece (Moria), Austria, France (Calais), and Hungary. With Greece collapsing, the question of responsibility hung above the heads of EU leaders.

It is here, at the end of 2015 that crucial framing of the situation takes place. It all revolves around the question: What are asylum seekers to the EU? Are they a life to be saved and helped? Or an unwanted life threatenening our safety and security, from which we should protect ourselves (Duffield 2008)? In the following few examples, the EU and its leaders are analysed, visibly establishing the asylum seeker as *threat* to European freedom, safety and security. Undenyably, this *threat definition* is imperative to the type of response to the situation and the emergence of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos.

2.3.1. European Leaders: Tusk and Juncker

In September 2015 president of the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker gives a critical speech, starting it off with "The first priority today is and must be addressing the refugee crisis." He continues to stress how we, all Europeans were refugees once, and that it is our duty to help. Further personalising the problem as such:

> We can build walls; we can build fences. But imagine for a second it were you, your child in your arms, the world you knew torn apart around you. There is no price you would not pay, there is no wall you would not climb, no sea you would not sail, no border you would not cross if it is war or the barbarism of the so-called Islamic State that you are fleeing. So, it is high time to act to manage the refugee crisis. There is no alternative to this.[23]

In fact, there appeared to be an alternative, the exact opposite happened. As we all know, walls were built, fences were erected and not surprisingly so because this humanitarian framing stands in stark contrast with the security framing Juncker gives in the same speech:

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[23] European Commission 2015 State of the Union 2015: Time for Honesty, Unity and Solidarity Strasbourg (9 September 2015)

> A united refugee and asylum policy also requires stronger joint efforts to secure our external borders. Fortunately, we have given up border controls between the Member States of the Schengen area, to guarantee free movement of people, a unique symbol of European integration. But the other side of the coin to free movement is that we must work together more closely to manage our external borders.[24]

Now it seems manage does not imply showing solidarity to refugees, it implies securing the European borders, the European freedom. Moreover, while Juncker tries to relate to the refugee, European Council President Donald Tusk clearly takes a security approach. In a speech in October 2015 he declares:

> From the very outset of this crisis, I have underlined the importance of protecting our external borders. We do not yet have an agreement on how to do it in operational terms but at least leaders share the view that our priority must be to protect the EU's external borders.[25]

In January 2016 Tusk declares that the EU has no more than two months to save its passport-free Schengen Zone and maybe even the European Union itself (Euronews 2016). Clearly, both EU leaders convey the message that the asylum seeker, while a victim of war, has to be contained and our borders protected from their unwanted lives.

2.4. Aligning Actors in Lesvos

The accumulation of perceived "security risks" to Europe, as defined by EU leaders by the end of 2015, namely, the influx of asylum seekers, the corruption of Hellenic border guards or irregular bureaucracy of Hellenic border guards in the Greek asylum system, and the collapse of the Central European Asylum System, aligned a variety of actors behind a common objective: the securitisation of the asylum seeker at the outer borders of Europe. The heteronormative group of actors consisted of three types: the *powerful*, the *executive* and the *mute.* The *powerful actors* in the assemblage comprised those who have the power to change rules, regulations, write OPs, strike deals and sign agreements: in other words, the EU governing bodies (European Commission, European Parliament, European Council) and the heads of state of European member states. In Lesvos the *executive actors*, contained the European executive agencies such as Frontex and Europol. Although I would argue Frontex is both *powerful* and *executive* and its members can be divided into the management board at its headquarters in Warsaw (as *powerful* actors) and the *executive actors* operating in Lesvos (including permanent staff) to which amongst others, the Dutch RMar and ST&S officers belong. Moreover, *executive actors* of the assemblage in Lesvos consist of Europol agents, the Hellenic Police, and the Hellenic Coast Guard. Finally, the *mute actors* in the assemblage are the asylum seekers and refugees, the assemblage's *raison d'être*.

In sum, around the beginning of 2016 a set of heterogeneous actors pursuing a range of different objectives and with different identities, motives and positions aligned under one common threat. In Lesvos, the

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[24] European Commission 2015 State of the Union 2015: Time for Honesty, Unity and Solidarity Strasbourg (9 September 2015)
[25] European Council 2015 Address by President Donald Tusk to the European Parliament on the latest European Council of 15 October 2015 Press office - General Secretariat of the Council

new-born assemblage enforced a highly efficient border security system, executed by a highly technical agency, that aimed at securitising the European border and the asylum seeker "trying to get in". Within this assemblage, a conglomeration of security actors (Frontex, Europol, the Hellenic Coast Guard and the Hellenic Police) started working towards the securitisation of thousands of asylum seekers coming through the Greek/Turkish-European/Asian border and protect that border from "unwanted lives".

2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I analysed how the first practice of assemblage "*forging alignments through a shared threat perception* (Demmers & Gould 2018: 5)", initiated the formation of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos, or what Antreas calls the factory or industry of security actors. I analysed how Dutch/Frontex agents, Greek anthropologists, Greek police, and European politicians perceived the "common security threat" in 2015. This first practice of assemblage ensured that the wheels of the assemblage started turning, that initial objectives were formulated, and that actors (powerful, mute and executive) became aligned. What these actors would do next would shape the assemblage into what it is today. In conclusion, in this chapter I have shown *"the work of linking together the objectives of the parties to an assemblage by means of a joint problem definition* (Demmers & Gould 2018: 5)*".* In the succeeding chapter a second reaction the influx of asylum seekers is described: *reassembling*. Both the alignment of actors against the common security threat and the practice of reassembling the asylum system and border security elements in Lesvos, Greece and Europe took place simultaneously. The threat identified, and the alignments made, it is now time for action, or as Commander Chiel explained, "It's time to intervene!" In the following chapter I outline what action was undertaken by the aligned actors and how they readjusted their mandates, changed responsibilities and tasks, adapted policies, struck deals and erected walls to tackle their common security threat.

CHAPTER 3
Reassembling Against a Common Threat

> R: It started 18-3-2016, with a smuggler who would send us from Turkey to Chios, […] it was the first time I heard some news about the European […] border going to close. […] If I would have left from Turkey to Chios that time it would have been perfect. But there would be two Turkish armies going to arrest us, so it didn't happen, […] Then, there was some contract between European and Turkish.
>
> I: The EU-Turkey deal?
>
> R: Yes […] It is now 20-3-2016. After 30 minutes we see the Coast Guard, Turkish, all the people tell the driver: "keep going, just keep going!" […] When I jumped inside Greece, I was confused, scared about water. Thank God nothing happened. […] This is eight in the morning, that would be my first time on this f*cking island. The police […] took us from Skala Sykamineas and to Moria. Moria is empty then, 100 people this time. But there are more people coming, more, more, every day. [The] situation gets worse, people fighting everywhere for tents, women get raped. After four months I left Moria and got a job, I am lucky, that is two years ago.[26]

Ali's journey shows a unique experience of the exact moment that the EU implemented one of its most controversial interventions. The EU-Turkey Statement was put into practice on 20 March 2016 and would entrap Ali on the island for two and a half years. As a response to the perceived common threat, the EU and Greek actors aligned and adjusted their objectives and mandates as well as changing and implementing asylum and border policies, technologies, interventions, agreements, and systems. In this chapter I answer the second sub-question of this thesis: *2) In what ways has the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage reassembled elements and actors since the establishment of the common security threat?*

3.1. Different Types of Reassembling

"Reassembling; grafting on new elements and reworking old ones; deploying existing discourses, legal instruments, doctrines, to new ends; transposing the meaning of key terms (Demmers & Gould 2017: 5)." Taken from the definition above, reassembling consists of three components:

- grafting on new elements and reworking old ones
- deploying existing discourses, legal instruments, doctrines, to new ends, and
- transposing the meaning of key terms

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[26] Interview 16, Ali, recorded, 1 August 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

Reassembling occurs by *grafting on new elements*, these elements consist of the failing asylum system (CEAS), and the failing border system (Schengen + Dublin), magnified by the influx of asylum seekers in 2015 (as described in chapter two). According to the EU these new elements made European freedom vulnerable, which resulted in a political crisis in Brussels and throughout Europe.[27] To respond to this "common threat", powerful members of the assemblage (EU) had to rework *old elements* – namely, the asylum systems (Greek and CEAS) and the border system– into a new ensemble of elements, better shaped to respond to the newly perceived common threat. A number of European emergency decisions were made to reassemble the stage operationalised through the following most prominent European border and asylum interventions and technologies[28]: 1) the Hotspot system, 2) the Relocation scheme, 3) Frontex and the RaBITs (Rapid Border Intervention Teams), 4) the EU-Turkey Statement, and 5) the deployment of European agencies, most significantly, Frontex, EASO, Europol and Eurojust.

Secondly, the aligned actors (powerful and executive) *deployed existing discourses, legal instruments, and doctrines to new ends*. To facilitate these interventions and technologies, regulations needed to be rewritten, asylum laws needed to be changed, and agreements needed to be made with new players in the field.[29] While not legally binding, the most prominent document that exemplifies this practice of reassembling is the agreement between the EU and Turkey. Reassembling thus also involved creating a new ally in Turkey and making compromise on the EUs own political agenda (more on the EU-Turkey Statement in the next paragraph). Another important written text that facilitated these interventions was the new mandate of Frontex, mostly giving them more executive power during operations such as JO Poseidon.

Finally, the reassembling happened through changing *the meaning of key terms,* the most prominent being that of the asylum seeker from victim to threat. Other key terms that facilitated reassembling was the use of the word crisis. Once the term "crisis" became normalised in the EU, the aforementioned interventions became legitimised.

3.2. European Responses to Securitise the Common Threat

IN this paragraph I describe European measures taken by the aligned actors of the assemblage chronologically, each reflecting three reassembling components. It should be mentioned here that there were also a range of national responses to the new elements, the famous Angela Merkel: "Wir Schaffen Das"-moment, but on the other extreme also the erection of physical walls and reinforced border patrol at the external and internal borders of European Member States. In October of 2015, several EU Member States took matters into their own hands by intensifying the European internal border patrols (Sweden, Denmark, France, and Austria) and even completely closing off the border through physical border fences on the Hungarian and Greek land borders, blocking the

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[27] Reference here not only to EU policy crises (in European Parliament) but also the rise of the far-right nationalist movements in national politics and general despair amongst leaders of Member States.

[28] "Technologies already in use include thermal cameras, thermo-vision vans, patrol units, helicopters, planes, fences in particular areas, radar surveillance systems, the Surveillance Operational Center, and Geographical Information Systems (GIS); full operationalization of the National Coordination Center, and EUROSUR (European Border Surveillance System) and its satellites and drones (unmanned aerial vehicles) (Topak: 2014: 814)

[29] Many adaptations and proposals were made towards the policies and regulations that underlying these interventions and technologies, Mention should be made of one agenda in particular: In May 2015 the European Commission presented the European Agenda on Migration including: 1. The Evaluation of Dublin III (and proposal of Dublin IV in May 2016). 2. A proposal to the reinforcement of EURODAC system to conform to the Dublin Regulation (Dublin IV) proposal 3. The Schengen Borders Code established by Regulation (EU) 2016/399.

Eastern European "Balkan Route", leaving only the sea routes into Europe (Niemann & Zaun 2018: 4). In extreme cases this even resulted in the collection of personal belongings (including jewellery) of refugees upon arrival in Denmark (Kingsley 2016). Sadly, it does not seem farfetched to draw parallels between these responses and the border and asylum systems during the Cold War[30] and World War II.[31]

3.2.1. The Hotspot System

May 2015

The hotspot system was introduced in May 2015 by the European Commission as part of the European Agenda on Migration.[32] It formed out of a need to assemble asylum and security activities in one central hub and thus facilitates and reinforces the CEAS, supporting those member states who experience most "pressure" from flows of asylum seekers: Italy and Greece. The first hotspot opened in Lampedusa in September 2015 and the others would follow in the months after (Tazzioli 2018). Hotspots are places (most often large existing facilities, such as the military prison camp in Lesvos) throughout Italy (Lampedusa, Pozzalo, Taranto ad Trapani) and Greece (Chios, Kos, Lesvos, Leros and Samos) which function as a hub where first reception and identification of asylum seekers take place and the asylum procedures (claim, interviews, decisions) are executed, by the local authorities, supported by E.A.S.O. (European Asylum Service Office) and Frontex. It could be argued that the Hotspot system Europeanises the asylum procedure (standardising the fingerprinting techniques), going against the initial Dublin principle of nationalising asylum procedures (Tazzioli 2018; Bigo 2014; Huysmans 2000). The Hotspot system clearly *reworked* the old asylum system and played upon the objective to take control of the identification of asylum seekers.

3.2.2. The Relocation Scheme

September 2015

Next to the hotspot system, and in order to counter the obvious conflict between Schengen and Dublin[33], the EU installed a 'temporary emergency relocation scheme', in September 2015[34], to move refugees from (predominantly) Greece and Italy to other Member States to alleviate the pressure these states were experiencing.

> Relocation refers to the transfer of persons in need of international protection from one EU Member State to another. In the scheme, EU Member States committed themselves to the relocation of 160,000 newly arrived refugees from Italy and Greece by September 2017.
>
> Niemann and Zaun 2018: 6

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[30] Referring here to the Berlin Wall.
[31] Referring here to the confiscation of jewellery and belongings of Jewish refugees during World War II.
[32] European Union: European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A European Agenda on Migration, 13 May 2015, COM(2015) 240
[33] See chapter two
[34] As part of the 2015 European Agenda on Migration

The relocation scheme was largely unsuccessful, where a year into the decision only 3,056 persons were transferred (European Commission 2016), to 11,966 by February 2017 (Guild, Costello and Moreno-Lax 2017) and by its deadline in September 2017, to the number of 44,374 persons out of the target of 160,000 were pledged to be relocated (Bejan 2018). In January 2018 the total number of relocated persons was 11,692 persons from Italy and 21,711 persons from Greece (European Council 2018). There has been much critique on the relocation scheme, especially regarding the distribution key that was used to determine who would go where, which was based on thorough research according to the European Commission, of which the outcome however is shielded from the public eye. Moreover, while the relocation process was unsuccessful, the UNHCR urged the EU to extend the arrangement at least until the Dublin Agreement[35] would be reformed, the Commission, however, seemed unwilling to extend the program after its two-year terminal date (Barigazzi 2017 in Bejan 2018: 7).[36] The relocation system is a clear form of reassembling, as it transferred the responsibility of the outer Member States of Europe to respond to the Dublin Agreement - that is to provide basic needs and a fair asylum process to those people who had sought asylum in their country – to the collection of European Member States. Interestingly, the relocation system was a response to an outcry by humanitarian NGOs about the growing humanitarian crises at the border and did not directly respond to the objective of the assemblage: securitisation of asylum seekers. This reflects the "increasing entanglement of securitisation and humanitarianism in the context of transnational border control and migration management (Little & Vaughan-Williams 2017: 533)."

3.2.3. Frontex and the RaBITs

December 2015

Frontex was established in October 2004 under Council Regulation (EC). No. 2007/2004, to promote the operational cooperation at the external borders of the Europe. It became operational and functioned independently from the EC in 2005. The core tasks of the agency were 1) to coordinate the implementation of EU measures by Member States regarding the management of the external borders, 2) to carry out risk analyses, cooperating with Europol and other European and non-European agencies, and 3) the promotion of cooperation amongst and training of border guards. Finally, their operational role was to provide Member States with operational and technical support, sometimes in the form of RaBITs.[37] The initial budget of Frontex was 6.3 million, with a staff of 45 in 2005, which grew by 2014, to a total number of 311 consisting of permanent staff working in the headquarters of FRONTEX, and a total budget of 93,4 million.[38] The management board (MB) was composed of two Commission representatives and one representative per member state, which is still the case now.[39] Importantly, the MB is not elected by EU citizens, however it holds a lot of responsibility. "The MB makes final decisions of agency activities and appoints the Executive Director who is responsible for the agency's activities and is accountable (Horii 2018: 210)." This makes accountability of member states towards Frontex activities very

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[35] Referring here to the proposal for Dublin IV. (European Commission 2018)
[36] For a comprehensive evaluative study of the relocation scheme, I refer to the working paper of Raluca Bejan (2018).
[37] RaBIT: Rapid Border Intervention Teams. Regulation (EC) No 863/2007 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 establishing a mechanism for the creation of Rapid Border Intervention Teams and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2007/2004 as regards that mechanism and regulating the tasks and powers of guest officers.
[38] Frontexyearly report 2014 p.28 and p. 53-55.
[39] (Council Regulation No 2007/ 2004, article 21

difficult. Member states can propose JOs and pilot projects, but it is Frontex's task to evaluate, approve and coordinate such endeavours. Frontex had already been operating in Greece under the name Poseidon since 2007, however on 28 December 2015 following other European responses such as the Hotspot system, Frontex launched Poseidon Rapid Intervention which included the deployment of Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RaBITs), consisting of an exponential deployment (going from no executive forces to 376 executive officers in Greece) of a collection of officers with different qualities such as transporters, interpreters, escorts, and finger printers (Frontex 2015; Carrera & den Hartog 2016: 7/8). When in March 2016, the EU-Turkey Statement became active, large numbers of vessels carrying asylum seekers were stopped by the Turkish Coast Guard and Poseidon Rapid Intervention came to an end (31 May 2016).

3.2.4. The EU-Turkey Statement

March 2016

With continuous flows of asylum seekers and little to no results from the emergency responses set out in the European Agenda on Migration, all eyes turned to Brussels. Largely put forward by Dutch politicians who held EU presidency in the first half of 2016 (Diederik Samson and Mark Rutte), the EU struck one of the most controversial political deals of this century, developed by policy broker Gerald Knaus.[40] Had meetings between Turkish and Dutch ministers not taken place end 2015 and early 2016, had Juncker and Tusk not held their speeches (chapter two) pressing for intensified border security at the outer borders, had Rutte not established the "Ankara-club" (a set of senior officials tasked to come up with a solution for the security problem), had a myriad of other coincidences *not* occurred, there may well have not been an agreement between Turkey and the EU on 18 March 2016 (Peeperkorn 2016).[41] However, the most critiqued and contested response of the European Union thus far, emerged out of this dynamic mix of changing discourses, reassembled elements, and strange bedfellows. After a set of swift negotiations between senior officers of the EU, Rutte, Merkel and Turkish prime minister Davutoglu in Brussels the EU-Turkey Statement (often referred to as "the EU-Turkey Deal") was drawn and signed. The document represented a political, non-legally binding agreement between the European Union and Turkey, which was implemented on the 20th of March and consists of four noteworthy points (European Council 2016):

Returns: everyone who crosses the sea border from Turkey to Greece illegally, will be returned immediately to Turkey, unless they apply for asylum in Greece or are rejected after their asylum case is assessed by the Greek authorities,

One-for-one: for each Syrian asylum seeker returned to Turkey from the Aegean islands, another Syrian asylum seeker residing in Turkey will be relocated to a European Member State (however capped by maximum of 72,000 relocations to Europe) (Niemann and Zaun 2018: 8),

Visa restrictions: in exchange for reinforced border patrol by the Turkish authorities Turkish nationals would have access to the Schengen Area without visa requirements by June 2017 (however this has not

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[40] Gerald Knaus is founding chairman of the European Stability Initiative (ESI).
[41] For a brilliant reconstruction of the series of coincidental events leading up to the deal I refer to an article from the Volkskrant 16 April 2016 (In Dutch).

happened to this day, moreover promised was talk about integrating Turkey into the Eurozone however this has not been the case either up to this day),

<u>Financial aid:</u> Six billion euros have been granted to Turkey by the EU, towards the reception of asylum seekers from Syria in Turkey.

The EU-Turkey Statement played a crucial role in the construction of the assemblage, in particular it aligned actors and assembled elements even more. For example, while previously Frontex and the RaBITs had operated separately to the Turkish Coast Guard, the EU-Turkey Statement assembled EU and Turkish actors and their activities under a common objective: stop "them" from crossing the Aegean Sea. Another important feature is that while "pre-deal" Greece would let asylum seekers pass onwards from the Aegean islands into the rest of Europe (irregular bureaucracy), because of the quantity of arrivals, after the EU-Turkey Statement all asylum seekers were registered, identified and contained by the assemblage of executive actors on the Aegean islands. Overall, the EU-Turkey statement quite literally assembled, powerful, executive and mute actors of the assemblage in one concentrated area. Lesvos became a specific centre from the assemblage as it is the only location from which "returns" would take place. Not surprisingly, the EU-Turkey Statement was initially described as a turning point and success[42], towards reaching the objective of the assemblage: namely the containment of unwanted lives (Duffield 2008). I write, initially, because as I will show in chapter five and six, there were major legal concerns with the EU-Turkey Statement from the beginning and huge critiques concerning the ongoing failures and effects of EU-Turkey Statement (Tunaboylu & Alpes 2017; Alpes et al 2017).

3.2.5. E.B.C.G.A. Frontex

September 2016

During the drafting of the European Agenda on Migration, as response to the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016, the European Commission had already suggested the establishment of a European Border and Coast Guard consisting of Member States and the Agency Frontex. A year later, Frontex was renamed the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (E.B.C.G.A.) Frontex, established under Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of 14 September 2016 on the European Border and Coast Guard [2016] OJ L 251/1. This is commonly referred to as the EBCG regulation and came into force on 6 October 2016. This new mandate required a huge increase in responsibilities and tasks which is reflected in the number of staff and budget in 2017, namely 526 permanent staff by December 2017 and an amount of 280.56 million euros on the yearly budget 2017 (compared to 6.3 million, with a staff of 45 in 2005). In order to support the central European asylum system executed in the Hotspots, and to be able to carry out its obligations under the EU-Turkey Statement, the EU deployed an additional 2,300 European personnel from its agencies: the European Border and Coast Guard Agency E.B.C.G.A. Frontex and the European Asylum Support Office E.A.SO. (Niemann and Zaun 2018; Tunaboylu & Alpes 2017). For Frontex, next to more "feet on the ground", more mandate meant taking a leading role in coordinating the

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[42] Interview 1,4 Ciske ST&S (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 25 July 2018, Elysion Hotel, Lesvos, Interview 3, Leander & Tim RMar (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 11 May 2018, Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, Interview 2, Charles RMar (FRONTEXin Lesvos), Interview 2, recorded, 11 May 2018, Amsterdam Schiphol Airport

cooperation with Member States on the European Border under Operation Poseidon. As Commander of the RMar and representative of the Netherlands in the MB of Frontex, Chiel explains:

> In the old regulation each Member State could do a request to Frontex for a rapid intervention, but it had to come from the Member State. You can understand that by the time a Member State does that, to say, "yes, I'm in over my head, I can't make ends meet anymore", that that didn't happen in reality. In the new regulation, Frontex can impose a rapid intervention when they see there is a need. So, we used to be very reactive, we saw things were going wrong, but we couldn't do anything. So that is the biggest difference with the new regulation.[43]

Under the new regulation, Frontex thus works together with the authorities of the Member State, in this case Greece, however it takes a more proactive and coordinating role while still transposing overall responsibility to the member state: Greece. As European Commission Representative on Lesvos, confirms: "the sovereignty of the Member State stands above everything."[44] These adaptations and changes in responsibility lines reflect the reassembling process and the start of constructing a complex web of responsibility and accountability lines.

3.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed the Hotspot system, the Relocation scheme, Frontex and the RaBITs, the EU-Turkey statement, and the E.B.C.G.A. Frontex as manifestation of the second practice of assemblage: *reassembling*. As with the previous practice, in this practice the asylum seeker took centre stage, as the influx of asylum seekers was the driving force behind changing policies, technologies, interventions, agreements, and systems. The influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016 has been analysed as a common threat to the European asylum system and border security. The asylum seeker coming to Lesvos had previously been perceived as a victim in need of humanitarian aid, while with the new "crisis" and "threat"- discourses, the EU had created a security narrative legitimizing a securitisation approach rather than a humanitarian approach. The EU changed mandates of its agencies (specifically Frontex) and got more involved in the securitisation of migration at the border in Lesvos. By reworking old elements of the securitisation of migration in Lesvos, the newly formed assemblage grafted on this new element. Soon after Poseidon Rapid Intervention came to an end (31 May 2016) and under the new regulation 1624/2016, Frontex, now called E.B.C.G.A. Frontex, started operating under the name JO Poseidon (Frontex 2017: 7). This name reflected the new nature of the operation, a joint effort of European Member States, Frontex and the Host Member State: Greece. From the beginning of 2016, now running to its fourth year in 2019, under this name: JO Poseidon, the local and national Hellenic Police, the local and national Hellenic Coast Guard, Europol, and Frontex have aligned to securitise the asylum seeker, following a highly technical OP. The next chapter describes the OP and analyses how it renders the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage technical.

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[43] Interview 4, Chiel Commander RMar & Representative of the Netherlands in MB of Frontex, recorded May 2018, the Hague
[44] Interview 6, European Commission Representative EU, 9 July 2018, Panaiouda, Lesvos

CHAPTER 4
Rendering Technical: Joint Operation Poseidon 2018

> The operational aim of the JO is to provide increased technical and operational assistance to the host MS by coordinating operational activities at the external sea borders in order to control illegal immigration flows, to tackle cross-border crime and to enhance European cooperation on coast guard functions.[45]

This first sentence of paragraph four of the Operational Plan (OP) of Joint Operation (JO) Poseidon 2018, immediately exhibits the prioritisation of security over asylum of the assemblage: 1) control illegal immigration flows, 2) tackle cross-border crime, and 3) enhance European cooperation on coast guard functions. The technical description in the OP of JO Poseidon 2018 defines and tackles the "problem" in such a way that the small dinghy carrying Ali (introduction previous chapter) is analysed as a dinghy executing potential cross-border crime and carrying illegal immigrants to the EU, rather than desperate people who have taken long routes to flee war and are trapped on a small boat arriving at the shores of Lesvos. The OP of JO Poseidon 2018 describes into detail who, what, where, when and how this aim is operationalised in Greece. By analysing the OP for JO Poseidon 2018, I address the third sub-question of this thesis: *3) How is the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage rendered technical?* I begin this chapter with a brief description of what "rendering technical" implies, especially related to the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage that is slowly starting to take shape throughout the chapters of this thesis. Most importantly, I discuss the OP of JO Poseidon 2018, emphasising its main components, and critically analysing how these overcome tensions and make the assemblage appear coherent. In this analysis I leave out how the OP is executed in Lesvos, as this conveys the frictions within the assemblage and between the assemblage and the reality on the ground, which I reserve for chapters five and six.

4.1. Rendering Technical

"*Rendering technical*: the production of technical descriptions of the problem/solution to overcome tensions and make the assemblage appear more coherent than it is (Demmers and Gould 2018: 5)." Rendering technical is thus the process of generating a technical product, in this case OPs for JO Poseidon, from a specific type of input: e.g. the perceived security threat, and securitisation practices: new alignments between security actors (chapter two), and measures to securitise the threat: EU-Turkey Statement, Hotspot system, amongst others (chapter three). This input is then reconfigured by one powerful actor (in this case the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex), into a clear operational framework: JO Poseidon, which is in turn, rendered technical almost entirely through the OP which describes JO Poseidon per year. The OP of JO Poseidon 2018 can be seen as an accumulated

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[45] Frontex2017 OP JO Poseidon 2017 JO Poseidon 2018 MAIN PART, paragraph 4: Operational Aim, Objectives and Activities. Pp: 9-15.

tangible summary of an ongoing process of rendering technical the problem/solution strategy of the assemblage presented in the operational framework of JO Poseidon.

4.2. Operational Plan JO Poseidon 2018

In 2007, Frontex started operating in Greece under the name Poseidon, in September 2016, after the EU-Turkey Statement and their new mandate came into action, the now called: European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex, started the implementation of JO Poseidon with much more executive power, aligned with new elements, reassembled. Running for more than three consecutive years, JO Poseidon can be analysed as a powerful and constructive mechanism that has allowed the aligned heterogeneous security actors in Lesvos: Frontex, Hellenic Coast Guard, Hellenic Police (including the Hellenic Police Anti-Riot units from the mainland), the Hellenic Ministry of Migration Policy, and Europol, as well as the heterogeneous reassembled elements (EU-Turkey Statement including the readmission structure, the Hotspot system, including the identification and registration structure, the relocation system, and the new mandate), to systematically work towards a common objective: to protect the (European and Greek) borders from the threat of asylum seekers.

In order to render those objectives operational and technical, an OP is formulated for JO Poseidon each year, by the management board of Frontex in Warsaw. The management board consists of two representatives of the European Commission and representatives of each of the member states and meets five to six times a year to discuss the main points of concern such as the OP for JO Poseidon[46]. The OPs for JO Poseidon 2017 and 2018 are drafted during 2016 and 2017 respectively, and signed and finalised by the Executive Director of Frontex, Mr. Fabrice Leggeri, granting Frontex executive board final power over the JO.[47] While claiming to be an executive agency only responding to member state requests, by outlining and coordinating roles, expertise, activities, tasks, and responsibilities for each member state, third parties, Frontex and other European agencies, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex takes a powerful position in the assemblage. In other words, JO Poseidon is in fact a very clever way for Frontex to Europeanise and implicitly monopolise the management of EU borders. By December 2017, Frontex brought forward the OP of JO Poseidon 2018 outlining a highly detailed, technical and operational description of the European Securitisation of Migration strategy for Greece in 2018. It includes the following elements in no particular order:

1) A description and general assessment of the situation (e.g. **problem definition**)
2) the current **legal framework** (based on International and EU law),
3) the operational **aim** and **objectives** for the year 2018,
4) the operational **activities** for the year 2018,
5) the **implementation** of these activities (who (including Greek security actors), where, when),
6) the **cooperation** structure with third countries (Turkey) and European Union agencies (E.A.S.O., Europol, etc.),

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[46] Interview 7, Aart, Press, FrontexHeadquarters, Warsaw, recorded, 9 July 2018, Lesvos via Skype to Warsaw.
[47] Interview 7, Aart, Press, FrontexHeadquarters, Warsaw, recorded, 9 July 2018, Lesvos via Skype to Warsaw.

7) the **coordination** structure (International Coordination Centre (ICC) in Pireaus (Athens), Hotspots and other locations of coordination throughout Greece),

8) the **command and control** structure (including C&C scheme),

9) the internal (regarding operational activities) and external **communication** (press, including researchers like myself),

10) **reporting**,

11) working **conditions and logistics**,

12) **evaluation**.

Each of the elements above resemble specific interpretations through which the assemblage reduces the empirical reality to security and migration issues with clear measurable solutions. I highlight the most telling elements of the descriptions in the OP 2018 and show how they reduce and quantify the reality to clear responsibilities and responsibility lines (legal, cooperative, coordinative), aims, objectives, tasks and targets, and conditions. By simply following the OP (reaching targets, following communication, reporting and evaluation structures, holding to the legal framework), outlined by themselves, the assemblage appears to be more coherent than it actually is.

4.2.1. Description and General Assessment of the Situation: Problem Definition

The first element: the problem definition, is obviously critical for the entire OP and reduces the messy and complex reality to a security problem as highlighted extensively in chapter two and three of this thesis. In the OP this analysis is reflected and confirmed in the third paragraph of the OP: *description and general assessment of the situation*. For example, the EU-Turkey Statement is applauded for its power to decrease the number of "migrants"[48] reaching the islands. Moreover, this component of the OP emphasizes that more solutions are necessary to tackle the problem. This reflects the security gaze of the problem definition.

4.2.2. Legal Framework and the Code of Conduct

The legal framework described in the OP of JO Poseidon 2018 is divided into three parts. Firstly, a description of Frontex responsibilities under the new mandate, almost completely based on the new regulation: Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of 14 September 2016. Secondly, a list of international and EU laws based on the regulation described above, the UN Charter for Fundamental Rights, as well as various UN, EU and International conventions regarding: Law of Sea, Air and Land, Crime, Maritime Search and Rescue, Refugees, Human Rights, Civil and Political rights, Rights of the Child, and against Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. These are then made explicit in the third part of the Legal Framework, which could arguably be defined as the actual legal framework: called: *The Fundamental Rights*. Here a complaints system for executive actors (e.g. the Dutch RMar officers, not

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[48] As opposed to asylum seekers or refugees, people arriving to the border of Europe are consistently referred to either as migrants or illegal migrants throughout the document.

the mute asylum seeker) within the JO, as well as a paragraph called: "*obligations of all persons involved in operational activities coordinated by Frontex*". Misleadingly, not for ALL persons as it excludes the asylum seeker. Most importantly, in these listings of rights and obligations, reference is made, for the first time, to the Code of Conduct.

The code of conduct is outlined in the annex of the OP for JO Poseidon 2018 and distributed in leaflets to all those executive actors (including the Dutch RMar and ST&S officers) participating in the JO Poseidon. It describes precisely how all persons (again executive security officers not asylum seekers) involved in the JO must behave at all times and includes topics such as confidentiality, prohibition of abuse of authority and position, and responsibility. It is also one of the documents I became acquainted with almost immediately before, during and after gaining access to the field as it was widely referenced by all security actors (in the Netherlands and in Lesvos) I spoke to. "As long as this follows the code of conduct!", was often expressed to me at the beginning of interviews.[49] As researcher, I was predominantly regarded as Media and Press by the Frontex permanent staff in Lesvos and therefore under the radar of the Frontex Press Officer (FPO) for Lesvos. Well before coming to the island I already had to indicate my arrival date and purpose to the FPO. One of the first conditions expressed to me by him was that I could do my research as long as all security officers I interviewed or observed (the Dutch officers) followed the code of conduct. A specifically important part of the code of conduct was laid out in article 9, paragraph 2 of the Code of Conduct on confidentiality, where it explicitly states that:

> Professional information in the possession of a participant in current, past or planned **Frontex operational activities must not be publicly disclosed**, including on social media, unless the performance of the duty strictly requires disclosure, or such disclosure has been **appropriately authorised in accordance with the applicable standards**.[50]

Receiving appropriate authorisation first from the Dutch government and Frontex was thus extremely important. In order to conduct interviews and observe the Dutch officers in their capacity as Frontex officers and gain access to their insights and experiences (and critique) as Frontex officers in Lesvos, authorisation was required first in the Netherlands from the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Justice and Security. Only when access was authorised by the Dutch Government, the Frontex Press allowed 'restricted access' to only talk to the Dutch officers. In order to observe their activities in Moria camp and in the port, authorisation was needed from the Hellenic Police and Hellenic Coast Guard who referred to the Hellenic Ministry of Migration Policy representatives in charge of Moria camp, who then in turn referred to the Ministry of Migration Policy Press office in Athens, just to be able to observe the Dutch Frontex officers during a finger print shift (one of their tasks as Frontex officers). As I already stated in the methodology section of this thesis, this continuous dance of official authorisation requests between powerful actors, executive actors and myself, is part of the evidence that co-constructs the assemblage. The complexity to observe or even interview and converse with Frontex officers from

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[49] Interview 13, Astrid, RMar (Frontexin Lesvos), recorded, 25 July 2018, Elysion Hotel, Lesvos. Interview 14 Ciske ST&S (Frontexin Lesvos), recorded, 25 July 2018, Elysion Hotel, Lesvos.
[50] Frontex2017 OP JO Poseidon 2017 JO Poseidon 2018 ANNEX, p. 7.

my own nationality, reveals the "careful authorisation of knowledge, containment of critiques and negotiation of entry rules (Demmers and Gould 2018: 9)". In other words, the code of conduct is a technical representation of the boundary of the assemblage, defining who is allowed disclosure on operational activities, and who is excluded from the assemblage.

4.2.3. Aim, Objectives, and Activities

The overall aim of JO Poseidon, as outlined in the introduction of this chapter, can be reduced to the following, to provide *assistance* by *coordinating* security activities. I argue these two activities are conflicting. The act of coordination implies a certain decision-making power as well as a freedom to shape what, who, when, where and how securitisation of migration takes place in Greece, whereas assistance implies a certain submissiveness to the Greek state who requires assistance to a pre-conceived activity. This makes the aim and thereby the entire JO Poseidon paradoxical. As Hellenic Police officer Antreas and Representative of Frontex Headquarters from Warsaw confirm, the Headquarters of the Hellenic Police sit together with the Frontex Headquarters for Greece in Pireaus (Port in Athens) to go over the OP outlined by Frontex, not draft this together. As Antreas explains:

> In headquarters as far as I know, there is a high-level meeting and they discuss the following OP of Frontex, and what they can and going to offer, and counting on this they calculate, and they arrange also what the Hellenic Police will offer. … They want first of all to have the OP of Frontex in their hands and after they [the Hellenic Police] arrange for themselves what they are going to do.[51]

This quote shows that it is clearly Greece who takes the submissive role and that the JO is coordinated by Frontex, Greece is a far less powerful actor.

The OP outlines eight operational objectives for JO Poseidon that further reflect this supportive and assisting role. These objectives are rendered technical in thirteen activities. In outlining the operational objectives but also in the language used visible below, Frontex thus takes a more active position than is communicated repeatedly throughout the document. The operational objectives:

- **Enhance** border security
- **Enhance** collection and exchange of information, including personal data
- **Enhance** operational cooperation
- **Establish** and exchange best practices
- **Identify** possible risks and threats
- Support MS on carrying out coast guard functions
- Support to migration management
- Technical and operational assistance in SAR[52]

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[51] Interview 10, Antreas, Hellenic Police, recorded, 19 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos
[52] Frontex2017 OP JO Poseidon 2017 JO Poseidon 2018 MAIN PART.

Merely highlighting the type of verbs used, reveals the activating discourse in the objectives, which are in stark contrast with the discourse communicated in the document and in interviews and conversations I held with Frontex Press from Warsaw and Frontex Press Officers on the island, where one message was repeatedly communicated to me: "Frontex is an executive agency, Frontex is here to support and to provide technical assistance to the member state, but Greece is in charge".[53] The following thirteen activities show the priority of securitisation where 10/13 appear to be solely security related activities:

1) Border surveillance at sea and land patrols at the coastal areas.
2) **Supporting SAR operations.**
3) Border checks at border crossing points.
4) Preventing and detecting cross-border crime such as migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings, terrorism and other crime.
5) Supporting screening, fingerprinting, registration and documents checks of migrants.
6) Collection of information through the debriefing activities, including personal data.
7) Supporting the implementation of the Readmission activity.
8) **Supporting the identification of special needs of children, unaccompanied minors, persons with disabilities, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons in need of medical assistance, persons in need of international protection, and other persons in a particularly vulnerable situation.**
9) **Refer and provide initial information to persons who are in need of, or wish to apply for, international protection.**
10) Provide a clear and updated situational picture related to the JO.
11) Carry out daily and ad-hoc exchange of information between Frontex, all operational actors and external stakeholders involved.
12) Share experiences and exchange expertise.
13) Facilitate the cooperation with Union agencies, bodies or international organizations, and Third Countries.[54]

Moreover, what is also quite well-defined is the amount of responsibility Frontex and thereby the EU takes in the JO: numbers 1,3,4,6,10,11,12, and 13 of the activities do not incorporate a level of responsibility (e.g. supporting, coordinating, assisting) but are merely listed as activity. I argue these activities reflect the underlying objective of JO Poseidon: "a European integrated border management"[55], rather than the supporting role they suggest in press communication and in the document throughout. As is seen in the contradiction in discourse and practice I further argue this responsibility claim is used sporadically rather than consistently and reflects what JO participants are instructed to communicate to the outside, following precisely the legal framework and the code

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[53] Conversation #7 Tomas (FPO) (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 26 June 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos, Interview 7, Aart, Press, FrontexHeadquarters, Warsaw, recorded, 9 July 2018, Lesvos via Skype to Warsaw.
[54] Frontex2017 OP JO Poseidon 2017 JO Poseidon 2018 MAIN PART.
[55] Frontex2017 OP JO Poseidon 2017 JO Poseidon 2018 MAIN PART.

of conduct. Here, the power of rendering technical of the assemblage and the individual attempts of those actors within the assemblage to follow self-imposed rules, is visible and makes the assemblage seem more coherent. This is even more apparent the cooperation structure (paragraph 4.2.5).

4.2.4. Implementation

While very straightforward in providing an answer to the "when, where, who, and how" questions, this component: implementation of the OP, is hugely important in rendering the assemblage technical, measurable and executional, and shows the powerful role Frontex has in shaping the operation. First, the implementation period of the JO Poseidon 2018 was between 1 February 2018 and 31 January 2019. By making an explicit timeline, it becomes possible to quantify the objectives into specific measurable targets and link them to specific measurable time units (e.g. weekly, monthly, yearly targets). Second, based on the Geek maritime border zones, two specific operational areas (named J and K) in the Eastern Aegean and Eastern Ionian Sea respectively are identified, and the location of the Hotspots are mentioned: Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Leros. This specifies exactly over which square kilometre of Greek (and European) territory the assemblage is responsible, and where activities will take place, again rendering technical the targets and objectives of the assemblage (and where not). Third, the participating member states are listed, separately identifying Greece as the "host" member state. This indicates the role of Greece as submissive rather than authoritative actor in the assemblage. Greece is *hosting* Frontex and joins the other member states (such as the Netherlands) in a less powerful role as aligned actors of the assemblage, while Frontex takes the commanding role as powerful (EU) actor of the assemblage. Fourth, the implementation component mentions how members of the JO (e.g. security actors) will be informed of their responsibilities in briefings and debriefings. This represents another measurable target that is used as indicator for successful implementation of the mission and safeguards professionality and that all actors are fully aware of their responsibilities, tasks, and the JO details.

4.2.5. Cooperation

In the framework for cooperation with third countries, Frontex reflects the supporting role it takes in the JO. Language used in the OP around cooperation with Turkish authorities is very suggestive rather than binding: "Turkey has been invited", "information can be shared", "the type of information to be shared to Turkish authorities is a subject to agreement with the host MS."[56] This suggests transposing responsibility over the EU-Turkey Statement and other forms of collaboration with Turkey form the EU to Greece. This is in stark contrast with detailed cooperation strategies for Frontex with each of the union and international agencies, outlined in the annex of the OP: EASO, EFCA and EMSA, eu-LISA, Europol, EUROJUST, FRA, Interpol, UNHCR, IOM and NATO.

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[56] Frontex 2017 OP JO Poseidon 2017 JO Poseidon 2018 MAIN PART.

4.2.6. Coordination Structure and Command and Control Scheme

"Frontex is the EU coordinator of the JO initiating, promoting, and facilitating the EU MS synchronised efforts to manage the external border", reads the first sentence of the coordination structure.[57] This sentence clearly shows how Frontex perceives itself, namely as EU coordinator, that is, a powerful actor of the assemblage, employing active words such as *initiating, promoting,* and *facilitating* the *European member states.* No mention is made specifically of Greece, or Greek power in this component of the OP. This scheme (figure 1): the command and control scheme, shows this powerful role Frontex has and clearly depicts the responsibility lines, and coordinating structures at the local and national levels (ICC in Athens, and LCC in Lesvos).[58] As with the code of conduct, the coordinating centres, such as the LCC in Lesvos are technical representations of the boundary of the assemblage. They are tangible places where those actors within the assemblage (e.g. the Frontex permanent staff working on Lesvos) meet in specific meetings only for those members within the assemblage. During the coordination
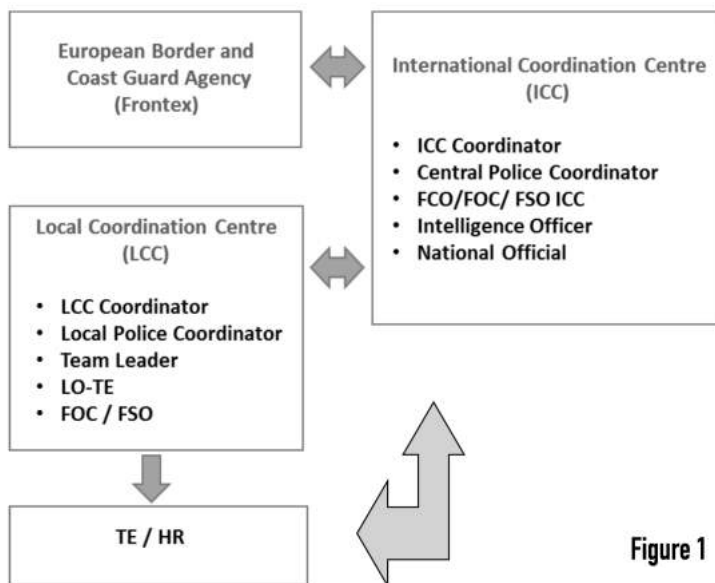

Figure 1

meetings all security actors come together weekly to discuss the progress and any special issues of JO Poseidon in Lesvos. Through the (Local Coordination Centre) LCC meeting and the ICC (International Coordination Centre) meeting, which are held weekly in Frontex offices near the port in Mytilene (LCC) or port in Piraeus (Athene)(ICC), Frontex takes up a powerful role in the coordination of security activities within the assemblage. Not surprisingly, even though JO Poseidon and Frontex claim to be transparent, it is impossible to join these meetings for people outside the assemblage, or for those who attend them to talk about the content of these meetings as it "would jeopardize the mission".[59] While I was given partial authorisation to talk about the mission, I was not allowed access to these meetings. During a field visit with the European Commission representative, I was invited to join the LCC meeting by the EC representative, however once there, the FSO and FOC (Frontex permanent staff) send me away, saying I should know better than that,

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[57] Idem.
[58] Abbreviations:
ICC: International Coordination Centre
FCO: FrontexCoordinating officer
FOC: FrontexOperational Coordinator
FSO: FrontexSupport Officer
LCC: Local Coordination Centre
LO-TE: Liaison Officer-Technical Equipment
TE: Technical Equipment
HR: Human Resources
[59] Interview 7, Aart, Frontex HQ Warsaw, recorded, 9 July 2018, Lesvos via Skype to Warsaw.

because I am not allowed to join those meetings. It is thus another technical tool defining who is allowed disclosure on operational activities, and who is excluded from the assemblage.

4.2.7. Communication and Reporting

Communication is divided into internal (operational) communication and external (Press) communication. Coordination and communication are clearly linked. For internal communication, the JO ensures all information is filtered through the International Coordination Centre, for Lesvos, first through the Local Coordination Centre (LCC). Moreover, the ICC receives and sends out daily and weekly reports from and to participants of the JO (powerful and executive), following exact guidelines stating for example: how many asylum seekers arrived, how many vessels deployed, how many kilometres driven, helicopters flown, to name a few examples. Moreover, similar reports are communicated called 'Frontex reports" from the FCO (Frontex Coordinating officer), FOC (Frontex Operational Coordinator), FSO (Frontex Support Officer), and FSC (Frontex Situational Centre). This ensures 24/7 updates and exchange on the situation and information, and operational monitoring. This is in stark contrast to communication with press. External communication is another intriguing paradox, as it is stated that: "Frontex is strongly committed to the principle of transparency", while confidentiality is one of the primary components of the code of conduct and no information about the mission can be shared with non-participants of the JO (like researchers, NGOs, locals, etc.), nor with participants of the JO outside of formal and approved communication channels.

4.3. Conclusion

In this chapter I argued that the OP for JO Poseidon 2018 represents a conglomeration of "technical descriptions of the problem/solution to overcome tensions and make the assemblage appear more coherent than it is (Demmers and Gould 2018: 5)." Several components of the OP of JO Poseidon 2018 were highlighted, namely 1) the problem definition, 2) Legal Framework and the Code of Conduct, 3) Aim, Objectives, and Activities, 4) Implementation, 5) Cooperation, 6) Coordination Structure and Command and Control Scheme, and 7) Communication and Reporting. Throughout these components I analysed and argued how technical descriptions shape and redefine the boundaries of the assemblage regarding actors and responsibilities. Through the technical description provided in the OP of JO Poseidon 2018, the assemblage and specifically the powerful actor of the assemblage (Frontex HQ) has created the illusion of absolute control and professionalism, setting yearly targets and objectives, while doing away with the tragedy, violence and messiness experienced by mute and executive members of the assemblage. This technical description solidified the alignment of actors, attached targets to the reassembled elements and empowered the assemblage to implement its securitising strategy to tackle the joint problem definition.

The next chapter shows what happens when policy is put into practice. Specifically, it dives into the critiques and experiences of executive actors of the assemblage in Lesvos who perceive the frictions between the assemblage and the messy and complex reality on the ground in Lesvos. Most importantly, I show which tools are used to contain these critiques and allow the assemblage to endure regardless of this messy reality.

CHAPTER 5
Authorising Knowledge: Containing Critiques

> **"** For me personally the training is disposable. From within Frontex they want everyone to be on the same page, I think that in reality it is a waste of time because I haven't learned anything. A training course is good if you have no experience with […] a deportation. Really only very little is said about how to have contact with the migrant. There simply isn't any time. You only have five days in which you have to teach someone who knows nothing how he from beginning to end, in the "right way" or in the way the Greeks want it, how to do a deportation. Like I said, I learned zero. Frontex just wants everyone to get the same course and then we all do everything in the same way.[60] **"**

Astrid's experience of the Frontex training for officers tasked with executing Readmissions[61], offers a rather critical, albeit realistic image. It immediately becomes apparent how she in her role as Dutch Royal Marechaussee Escort Commander experiences and reflects upon the training provided by the powerful actor of the assemblage: Frontex. "It is a waste of time", "I haven't learned anything", "zero". However, she also explains the reason for this: "There isn't any time", "You only have five days to teach someone how to do a deportation." Moreover, it seems the assemblage prioritises creating a group: "Frontex just wants everyone to be on the same page", over establishing qualified officers who can be trusted not to violate human rights of asylum seekers. Throughout the spring and summer of 2018 in the Netherlands and Lesvos respectively, I encountered dozens of examples like these, where executive actors (like Astrid) reflected (critically) on their role in the securitisation of asylum seekers and critiqued the different components that make up the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos. Given these moral and ethical considerations regarding JO Poseidon tasks, it is remarkable none of the executive actors in Lesvos indicated having made use of the "complaints system" (OP) to offer their critique on JO Poseidon. This is of critical importance, because an assemblage that is critiqued because of its failures or contradictions is bound to fall apart (Salter 2013).

In this chapter I analyse which messages and tools are used to contain a myriad of critiques like the one described above. Specifically, I disclose how a fourth practice of assemblage carefully moulds and contains perspectives and discourses of executive actors, by using what I have analysed as informal and formal tools. I further show how in turn, each of these tools carry underlying messages, silencing critiques and equipping the executive actors to internalize knowledge and work under and execute reassembled elements (e.g. EU-Turkey Statement) following a highly technical OP (JO Poseidon 2018) to securitise asylum seekers on the border of

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[60] Interview 13, Astrid, RMar (Frontexin Lesvos), recorded, 25 July 2018, Elysion Hotel, Lesvos.
[61] As mentioned in paragraph 4.2.3. of the previous chapter, one of the JO Poseidon tasks is to support the implementation of Readmissions. Readmission is the operational name for the deportation of asylum seekers under the EU-Turkey Statement. Or as mentioned in paragraph 3.2.4. on the EU-Turkey Statement: the returns.

Europe in Lesvos. In sum, in this chapter I answer the fourth sub-question: *4) How is knowledge authorised and critique contained from executive actors inside the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos?*

5.1. Unpacking "Authorising Knowledge"

"Authorising knowledge: specifying and limiting the requisite body of 'expert knowledge'; containing critiques (Demmers and Gould 2018: 9)." Following Demmers and Gould (2018:5) definition for authorising knowledge, it can be argued that the previously analysed practice (rendering technical) actually already laid out how the limitations were established and showed who is entitled to certain knowledge. The technical descriptions in chapter four gave examples of how the code of conduct and the coordinating centre specified and limited the body of expert knowledge. This does not mean my analysis is faulty. As one of the founding fathers of assemblage thinking stated: "What is an assemblage? It is a multiplicity which is made up of heterogeneous terms … the assemblage's only unity is that of co-functioning: it is a symbiosis, a 'sympathy' (Deleuze 2002: 69). To analyse a sympathy of heterogeneous elements, is undeniably as complex as the unit of study itself. In other words, as the elements that constitute the assemblage move in sympathy, so does my analysis. The components of the OP are part of authorisation of knowledge and require complementary analysis in this chapter. They form the protocols which executive actors fall back on when they are confronted with ambivalent opinions of their security practices.

5.2. Whose Critique?

In chapter two, I defined how three types of members of the assemblage aligned: the powerful, the executive and the mute. The *powerful actors* in the assemblage are those who I have touched upon extensively throughout the previous chapters: Frontex (Management Board, Headquarters), and the EU governing bodies (European Commission, European Council, European Parliament). Representing the designing forces behind the assemblage, JO Poseidon and its OP for 2018, their critiques do not revolve around their experience of executing of JO Poseidon and therefore are not the focus point of this practice of assemblage. The *mute actors* are the complete opposite of the powerful actors in this regard and are most definitely critical of the myriad of failures and contradictions of the assemblage. However, their agency is not recognised within the assemblage and thus their critique is not taken into consideration.

This leaves the *executive actor*'s critique for this chapter, which comprises the experiences and perspectives of 1) the security officers who were deployed under Frontex (permanent and from the participating European member states) to contribute to JO Poseidon 2018 in Lesvos, 2) Europol in Lesvos, and 3) Hellenic police officers and the Hellenic coast guard in Lesvos. As my research was limited by the restrictions of Frontex, the Dutch government, the Hellenic government and the Hellenic police and the Hellenic coast guard as outlined previously, I can only convey the critique of the Dutch executive actors. Specifically, these include the Dutch men and women deployed in Lesvos during summer 2018[62] who derive from the Royal Marechaussee (RMar, Dutch

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[62] This is excluding the Dutch interpreters from the Dutch Immigration Service (IND) also stationed Lesvos under Frontex.

Ministry of Defence)[63] and the Service Transport and Support (ST&S, Dutch Ministry of Justice and Safety).[64] The RMar officers have been deployed in Lesvos in the capacity of escorts[65] and finger printers[66] since January 2017[67] and are all professionally trained and certified to perform a myriad of migration and escort activities and in some cases lead entire deportations (*readmissions* in technical terms) to Turkey. The ST&S officers carry out various highly secured transportation jobs in the Netherlands, amongst others, the transport of international criminals from prison to the International Criminal Court, as well as the transport of "criminal" migrants.[68] In Lesvos they perform all transport tasks for Frontex.

5.3. Critique Within the Assemblage

The main critique conveyed to me by executive actors during spring and summer 2018 revolve around their specific tasks and responsibilities: 1) readmissions, 2) identification and registration (including fingerprinting) and 3) transport. It is important to make clear here that one of the key features of both executive groups, is that they are trained and able to work and think executively and mostly turn off ethical considerations and personal opinions they may have. Like they say: "If you can't turn off your emotions, you shouldn't do this job."[69] Therefore most critique revolves around the execution and efficiency of the different elements, e.g. training and specific tasks, and critique on assemblage elements related to the general situation in Lesvos (regarding the EU-Turkey Statement and the Hotspot camp Moria). I will briefly describe each of these tasks, to contextualise the critique, then outline some of the strongest or most common examples. In paragraph 5.4 I will further unpack the tools and messages the assemblage uses to contain these critiques.

5.3.1. Readmissions

A readmission task starts with a message communicating the amount and names of asylum seekers who have to be deported. On the day of the readmission, the Frontex officers meet in front of the *Yellow Gate*[70], early in the morning.[71] From there Frontex officers go to the police station of Mytilene where they pick up the asylum seekers who are scheduled to be deported. Some of their main critique on readmissions was actually about the readmissions training as I already discussed in the introduction and unpacked in paragraph 5.1. Stan reflects on the quantity of readmission trips and his own role:

> In total we have had only four readmissions during our period (mid-June to beginning August), and we
> were deployed for only two of them, even though it is our expertise, they do not use it and rather use

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[63] In Dutch: Koninklijke Marechaussee (KMar).

[64] In Dutch: Dienst Vervoer en Ondersteuning (DV&O)

[65] Escort is the name of the role for security officers performing the readmission task within JO Poseidon.

[66] Fingerprinter is the name of the role for security officers performing the Registration and Identification tasks in Hotspot Moria, within JO Poseidon. Specifically, there are three tasks performed by security officers working for Frontexin Lesvos: screening, fingerprinting and briefing.

[67] This is referred to within JO Poseidon as "double-profilers". RMar officers had double tasks 1) escort and 2) fingerprinting. The Dutch were initially deployed under a single profile: escorts, this changed to double profile upon request of the Dutch around March 2017.

[68] Interview 14 Ciske ST&S (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 25 July 2018, Elysion Hotel, Lesvos

[69] Interview 12, Jan ST&S TL (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 20 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

[70] The Yellow Gate is literally a yellow gate in front of the port in Mytilene, it is manned by the Hellenic coast guard. See annex XX for photo.

[71] Interview 10, Antreas, Hellenic Police, recorded, 19 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

the single-profilers who are here for that sole purpose, because it is "fairer" on them, even though they may have never done a deportation in their life.[72]

And on the amount of asylum seekers:

> Well just look at the past months, I have done two deportations, one time it was like 6 or 7 Syrians (to Adena), and the other time it was 8 or 9 to Turkey (Dikili), so 15 people or so in total were send back, and if you see how many people arrive per day. Like today we had one boat, 45 people, so that is just you know: every day more people arrive then leave the island, under the EU-Turkey deal.

Astrid pointed out that the execution of deportations was very different from those in the Netherlands:

> The only information they receive about "the foreigner" is their name. You get his name, and then you just have to look and see if you can start a conversation with such a person, using hand signals or any means necessary but you really have zero pre-information about such a person. So, you have no idea what this person may have done in the past.[73]

5.3.2. Identification and Registration in Moria

The Yellow Gate is also the place where all Frontex officers gather in the morning before they leave to go to Moria camp for their activities as either screeners, interpreters or in the case of the RMar: fingerprinters. The Greek registration and identification service (RIS) operate in an enclosed gated area within the refugee camp that is referred to as RIC (Registration and Identification Centre). RIS together with Frontex and Europol, carries out the first registration of the name, age and gender of the person, a data verification of the information, a fingerprint, a medical screening, and an age verification. A RIS representative starts by telling them (in English[74]), where they are, what their rights are, what the next steps are and what they can expect to happen in the next days. The first interview (screening) and the fingerprint task (fingerprinting) are carried out by Frontex under command of the Hellenic police. They identify the asylum seekers firstly through a screening interview in which their basic personal data is written down, after which their fingerprints are taken, and both their details and fingerprints are put into the EURODAC system. Then asylum seekers proceed to the final part of the procedure, which is the medical screening carried out by KEELPNO.

Two Frontex officers simultaneously work with one "new arrival". One of them starts with a photograph, on this photograph hair and ears have to be visible, so all women are asked to remove their headscarf, regardless of their religious conviction. At the same time, fingerprints are taken by another other Frontex officer, who then registers their identity in the EURODAC system on one of the computers in the cubicle they work in. Fingerprints

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[72] Interview 15, Stan RMar (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 31 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos
[73] Interview 13, Astrid, RMar (Frontexin Lesvos), recorded, 25 July 2018, Elysion Hotel, Lesvos.
[74] This is translated into the most spoken languages of the boat, in the case of Africans, this would most often be French.

are only taken from people above the age of fourteen. The Dutch RMar are not as critical of this task, as Stan indicates:

> Here in the camp … everything is organised neatly. Everyone arrives neatly, then they are immediately addressed, they get something drink, they get something to eat, so I think that is all organised in a good way. Yes, and the first shelter really exists, they're being told in the first week they cannot leave the camp because they have to go through all the registration procedures, so yes that is all organised in a good way.[75]

However, when I asked him about the EURODAC system, he mentioned that once he thought he recognised a person as an asylum seeker from the Netherlands, but after checking the EURODAC system with his fingerprints and name, this person seemed not to pop up. He then phoned a colleague of his at the G-Gate checking the Dutch system and this colleague did find the asylum seeker. Regardless, as Stan explained to me, "The Hellenic police is in charge and says this person is not recognised according to the EURODAC system, so he was registered as new asylum case."[76]

5.3.3. Transport

Transportation happens everywhere from the east coast of the island to Moria, between Moria and Mytilene and within Moria camp. In the first instance transporting people referred to as "first arrivals", to either Stage 2 camp (a short stay camp in the north of the island near Skala Sykamineas) or Camp Moria. Transport also happens with asylum seekers within Camp Moria, from the Camp to and from police station, to the hospital, and the court in Mytilene. The Hellenic coast guard is responsible for transport from the north camp to the south camp and did so by touristic touring car up and until June and from July on by the Hellenic coast guard bus[77], this shows how the boundaries of the assemblage can move to include and exclude private contractors (Demmers and Gould 2018).

In general, ST&S members experienced their job as easy, clear and not too controversial, even though some critique was mentioned about the transport of asylum seekers in criminal vans and the way things are done differently in the Netherlands, specifically regarding transporting women and children:

> In the Netherlands there are really clear agreements about how we transport pregnant women and kids. From a certain age we can't transport certain pregnant women in the compartmentalised vehicles. There are also no seatbelts in those, so we can't transport small children either. But here they have different values. [78]

> You'll get to a point here where you can say: "Up to what point is this acceptable or humane? A lot of things go well as long as they go well, but if it goes wrong […] then the whole circus starts. Then you get

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[75] Interview 11, Stan RMar (Frontexin Lesvos), recorded, 31 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos
[76] Interview 11, Stan RMar (Frontexin Lesvos), recorded, 31 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos
[77] See Annex
[78] Conversations, ST&S officers, unrecorded, 28 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

the whole story of responsibility, who has this? Why did you do it this way? Couldn't you have done this differently? Like imagine having an accident with a van, your fault or not, but regardless of this, if there are victims, then you will have a hard time sleeping at night. It is very Dutch to stick to the rules, but it is better not to cross that line you know.[79]

This statement clearly indicates how problematic transport of asylum seekers can be, specifically related to responsibility over "when things go wrong" at the frontline in Lesvos, running all the way up to the Dutch Government. In the end, the ST&S greatest critique is on responsibility and accountability, even if it is clear to them who was responsible for a particular activity (the Dutch Frontex officer) or for the mission overall (Greece is in charge) they are greatly concerned about the moral and ethical issues surrounding these responsibilities. Evidently, there are some concerning critiques regarding readmission, fingerprinting and transport based on the descriptions above by the Dutch Frontex officers. Regardless, Frontex officers and their Greek colleagues remain silent, here's why.

5.4. Formal and Informal Tools with Two Objectives

Further unpacking the fourth practice shows how informal and formal tools (code of conduct or the readmission training), carry underlying messages that aid in reaching either or the both of two objectives: 1) to create expert knowledge, and 2) to motivate executive members to *accept* and *internalize* the specific and limited expert knowledge. The latter is a crucial objective for containing their critiques, as the overall purpose of this practice of assemblage is to contain critique by equalling out opposing opinions and perspectives from its members and thereby manage frictions within the assemblage. For example, the quote in the introduction depicts how through one formal tool: the training course, expert knowledge on the securitisation of migration, in this case: readmissions, is specified and limited. How an underlying message: "We are one/in this together", and "Frontex wants us to be on the same page", is communicated, and how thereby critique is contained: "It is not up to me". One element in this analysis is not convincing enough, or rather, not made explicit by Astrid herself and revolves around the last part: "It is not up to me". It is the complex process leading up to her own acceptance and internalisation of her role, her responsibility, her boundary in the readmission task, that empowers the assemblage to contain her critique on the training. This continuous creation of acceptance and internalisation of expert knowledge is, as I argued above, done through a myriad of informal and formal tools, next to the training (one of the formal tools).

The formal tools I analysed in Lesvos are: briefing and debriefing, training, the OP JO Poseidon 2018, and specifically the code of conduct, reporting, coordination and cooperation meetings, and finances. The informal tools I analysed in Lesvos during the summer of 2018, are the living situation (hotels), basketball tournament, barbecues, birthday parties, and going for beers/clubbing. The scheme below depicts how each of these tools aid to reach one or both of the two objectives.

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[79] Interview 12, Jan ST&S TL (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 20 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

Objectives \ Tools	Formal tools	Informal tools
1: Specify and limit body of expert knowledge	Briefing and Debriefing Training OP JO Poseidon 2018 Code of conduct Reporting Meetings (cooperation and coordination)	Hotel Basketball
2: Create and promote acceptance and internalisation of expert knowledge.	Briefing and Debriefing Training Finances	BBQ Beers/clubbing Hotel Birthday Party Basketball Tournament

To reach the first objective, within each of these tools one or more of the following underlying messages can be distilled that characterise the expert knowledge targeted at executive actors of the assemblage:

"We are one/in this together"   "You are doing a great job"   "Greece is in charge; you are here to support"
"You are just doing your job".   "You are professional"   "You are following the rules"
"You are here to execute orders"

These clear messages specify exactly how executive actors like the RMar and ST&S can respond to their own critique. For example: "Greece is in charge, you are here to support". This message strips the officers of responsibility and hands them a clear answer to the ethical and moral critique they formulate on their tasks:

> It's something that you need to keep in the back of your mind, that you are always here to support. You fall under the jurisdiction of the country where you are, and you just have to accept things and at least don't try to improve things on the ground because it's a Greek thing and Greece has to do the things in the way that Greece likes to do things. I mean that's difficult because I'd love to change things, but I can't, and I don't think they'd appreciate it if I'd show that but I understand the problem here. They're really suffering under the presence of all these refugees, it's unbelievable. [80]

Also confirmed by Astrid with her critique on the readmission training: "That's not up to me". These underlying messages have to be internalised by the executive actors, thereby allowing for the acceptance of the flaws and frictions of the assemblage.

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[80] Interview 15, Stan RMar (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 31 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

5.4.1. Formal Tools

As mentioned earlier, the training, briefing and debriefing of the Frontex officers is extremely important to internalising and accepting this expert knowledge. Having used the example of the readmission training extensively I will use another example. Specifically, Jan's critique on transport procedures. As he says:

> Those are grey areas and at the frontline there is not always enough clarity about these things. *Clarity* also needs to come from the Netherlands too. Like they can say: "ok, this is the line and we won't cross it." That would be desirable, also for my people here because you do speak of this.[81]

In times of deep concern over efficiency and moral and ethical considerations of tasks and components of JO Poseidon, executive actors especially require *clarity*. They want to hold on to the authorised knowledge specified in these underlying messages and technical descriptions of their roles put forward in the OP of JO Poseidon. This is because it ensures accountability and responsibility over "when something goes wrong" is not theirs. During these formal briefing/debriefings/trainings, when the code of conduct is communicated, the main objective is thus to create confidence amongst officers and make sure that they can do their job and that their job makes sense, but most of all these formal tools ensure that actors do not critique and defect.

The command and control scheme and the meetings that are part of it, represent another core formal tool towards the fourth practice of assemblage. Through these meetings which are shielded from the eyes and ears of other main actors in the field such as UNHCR, IOM, MSF, EASO, NGOs, locals, journalists and researchers, in which the number of asylum seekers arriving and leaving and any other security issues are discussed, the actors in it and predominantly Frontex monopolise the knowledge on the securitisation of asylum seekers and limit or even make it impossible to receive critique from the outside actors. This ensures the securitisation of asylum can continue unchallenged and limits humanitarian approaches to the reception of asylum seekers.

5.4.2. Informal Tools

One of the ways to pacify security actors and ensure they maintain their military mindset and accept the failures and contradictions they perceive in each other and their security practices around asylum in Lesvos, is for them to feel like they are part of the same team and feel valued. "We are one/in this together". Because when all actors in the assemblage have a strong sense of comradery, it becomes very difficult to critique one another and the quality of execution of each other's tasks. Moreover, it is important to provide security actors all kinds of perks and create desirable conditions that make it less attractive to complain about the job. A sense of comradery is created through 1) their living situation, and 2) leisure activities, in which these perks and conditions also play a big role. As Jan explains:

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[81] Interview 12, Jan ST&S TL (FRONTEXin Lesvos), recorded, 20 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

> I have to say it all was better than I expected, that is obviously because of all the conditions, like the gorgeous hotel, the beautiful weather, a car's available to you, you have a lot of free time so all in all, it is not bad being here.[82]

For the Dutch Frontex officers, the fact that they lived together in the same luxurious hotel not only made them very satisfied and happy to work on Lesvos, it created this sense of comradery and a sort of living room situation where it was easy to see when colleagues were on and off duty, going and coming back. This is important to create a feeling of comradery because seeing their colleagues working hard, motivates them to work hard too, hearing their colleagues complain, or not complain, facilitates similar behaviour. Next to this, the Dutch Frontex officers spent almost every day together when off duty, going to the gym in Mytilene together, or going to the beach together, going for drinks and holding barbecues together.

All of these activities whether organized by the Dutch themselves or because of the perks Frontex offered (e.g. discounts for membership at the gym, discounts for renting cars), contribute to keeping the officers happy. However futile it may seem, one leisure activity in Lesvos, clearly created a feeling of comradery and feeling part of the same "team" amongst *all* security officers: the basketball tournament. Over the course of two months (June-July), four literal teams played against each other, each representing another security department: the Hellenic fire brigade, the Hellenic coast guard, the Hellenic police, and Frontex officers. The tournament brought together the security actors in an informal but competitive setting, whilst emphasising their similarities (being athletic and strong). I analyse this as a clear display of assembling and explicit unofficial tool to create trust, comradery and a sense of "we are in this together". At the same time, it created a feeling of comradery amongst Frontex officers themselves, which reflects one of the Frontex goals: to create a common European border culture.[83]

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos moulds and contains the critical opinions and experiences of executive actors, through formal and informal tools that together with underlying messages co-construct expert knowledge. Through the authorisation of knowledge, the personal critique of executive actors of the assemblage has become muted and they themselves equipped to communicate to the outside world what was rendered technical in the OP. Namely, the illusion that the EU has everything under control, that activities are legitimate, that targets are being reached, and therefore that the mission is successful. This is problematic because the Dutch officers indicate they see signs of human rights violations in camp Moria, and on the other hand indicate that, "they are just doing their job". Taken at another level, the case of the Dutch officers thus shows how the banality of evil works at the border of Europe, because when human suffering is normalised by those at the frontline, all be it because of the "airtight system" within which these officers work or their "military mentality", humanity is sacrificed under the banner of security.

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[82] Interview 12, Jan ST&S TL (Frontex in Lesvos), recorded, 20 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos
[83] Interview 1, Bastiaan Commander RMar, recorded, 20 April 2018, Eindhoven Airport

EU
WHERE ARE
YOU?!

JESUS IS
COMING!

CHAPTER 6
Managing Failures and Contradictions in Lesvos

" The subject itself is very complicated, there are no easy and unique fixes. You cannot say, "if you do this, then it is over." Nonetheless, you can meet people from one end of the spectrum to the other. Meaning, there are people who want to show solidarity and support everybody no matter who they are, to the other extreme, where people are aggressive and nationalistic. To give an example, in the famous meeting of last Thursday, people started saying whatever, so when I realised that the lady was talking about the Kurds, I thought: "who is this lady and what kind of right does she have to express herself like this against the UNHCR, against Europe, against the Greek authorities, talking about conspiracy?" Unfortunately, it happens, and these people create impressions, and people listen to that, and they are not investigating what is really happening.[84] "

The activist "lady" in the quote above, had confronted powerful and executive members of the assemblage and those on the outside, during the bi-monthly interagency meeting hosted by UNHCR[85], asking why no action had been taken to help the 800 Kurds who had fled as result of fights between Kurds and Arabs in Moria camp three weeks prior. This meeting was during the first weeks of my stay in June. No action would be taken by powerful, executive or non-assemblage actors, throughout the entire duration of my stay.

The diplomatic answer and assessment above is characteristic for one of the many responses from European and national government officials (powerful actors of the assemblage) as to why no action is taken in light of human rights violations in the camp and the results thereof, or as I analyse them: Failures and contradictions of the assemblage, and the first line of the quote above nails the argument of this chapter on the head: "…there are no easy and unique fixes". The core and underlying contradiction of the entire European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage or "factory" in Lesvos, has been, from the start, the illusion that there is one, namely a *security fix*. In outlining a common objective to overcome a perceived security threat, the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage defined their position on the spectrum, that is, to prioritise the securitisation of European borders over the provision of humanitarian aid and efficient asylum systems. Thereby doing away with responsibility over violent outbursts in the refugee camp like the Kurdish case. At the same time, powerful actors communicate that in fact there is no unique fix, and that the EU and its agencies are merely there to support Greece in their efforts to manage the situation. In this chapter I show with three examples, how the assemblage manages failures and contradictions in three different ways, while consistently referring back to the security strategy underlying the assemblage. With this chapter I thus answer the final sub-question of this thesis: *How are failures and contradictions of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage managed in Lesvos?*

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[84] Interview 6, European Commission Representative EU, 9 July 2018, Panaiouda, Lesvos
[85] The now infamous meeting is one of the bi-monthly UNHCR coordinated open-to-all interagency meetings in which all actors on the island concerned with asylum seekers, but especially Moria, discuss the main humanitarian and asylum issues taking place that week. During this meeting representatives of humanitarian aid organizations, asylum services and security actors on Lesvos attend.

6.1. Three Types of Management

Demmers and Gould define the final practice of assemblage as: *"Managing failures and contradictions:* presenting failure as the outcome of rectifiable deficiencies; smoothing out contradictions; devising compromises (2018: 5)"*. Management thus happens in three ways, each of which I describe using three examples. Firstly, it requires presenting failure as the outcome of rectifiable deficiencies. As an example for such practice, I describe the legal case of Moria 35, in which violence was used by Hellenic riot police against peaceful protesters in camp Moria. I will show how this failure is presented as the outcome of a shortcoming of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage. Secondly, management of failures and contradictions is done by smoothing out contradictions. I analyse this practice in the response of powerful actors such as the EU ad Greece to the failures of the EU-Turkey Statement, particularly focusing on how they smooth out legal failures. Thirdly, managing failures and contradictions occurs through compromise. As the third example I show how compromises might be made between executive actors of the assemblage and the mute actors of the assemblage by outlining the unique story of Portia (17 years old), a girl who fled for her life in 2016 and has been stuck in Lesvos for the past two years and created a special bond with the local Hellenic police officers in Lesvos.

6.2. Responsibility and Accountability

Based on the core and underlying security strategy of the assemblage, all management of failures and contradictions – whether through presenting them as outcomes of rectifiable deficiencies, smoothing out contradictions or devising compromise – occurs in some way or the other by declaring that these are not the responsibility of the assemblage, and actors within the assemblage should therefore not be held accountable. Powerful actors of the assemblage have been studied extensively in relation to accountability and responsibility (Horii 2018; Gammeltoft-Hansen 2016; Riekmann 2016). Before going into the three examples, it is thus important to define the terms *responsibility* and *accountability*. Defining these terms, allows for a more precise and complete analysis of the actual accountability, responsibility and obligations of members of the assemblage. In his analysis of European agencies: Frontex, EASO and Europol, and their responsibility and accountability within the Hotspot system, Horii (2018) makes a strong argument on defining accountability:

> …the origin of the concept has partly caused the ambiguity and confusion in the use of the concept among policy-makers, the media and civil society. … the European Commission, for example, tends to use the term "rather loosely". Additionally, there is no universally agreed definition in academic debates. Whereas American academic and political discourse presents the concept broadly and normatively, close to *a willingness to act in a transparent, fair, and equitable way*, European scholars tend to use the term narrowly as *a mechanism shaping an institutional relation or arrangement in which an actor can be held to account by a forum*.
>
> Horii 2018: 210, emphasis mine

I adopt Horii's outlined European use of the term and thus define accountability as; "a mechanism shaping an institutional relation or arrangement in which an actor can be held accountable (Horii 2018:2010)." I further unpack this definition by arguing that the *arrangement* is between the actor and a certain obligation or responsibility to which the actor can be held accountable. In the case of Frontex, it is the obligation or responsibility to protect the European border from the perceived security threat. In other words, the institutional relation between Frontex, the EU and Greece, is specified in the OP of JO Poseidon 2018, where exact obligations/responsibilities for each actor are outlined. The OP is thus the only document that controls the accountability of the EU, Frontex and the Greek authorities towards the humanitarian and asylum crises in Lesvos. On an executive level in Lesvos, this plan is further communicated through the tools described in chapter five, ensuring these responsibilities are internalised and accountability is clarified at all levels of the assemblage.

6.3. Presenting Failure as the Outcome of Rectifiable Deficiencies: The Case of Moria 35

In the morning of Tuesday 18th of July 2017, asylum seekers held a peaceful protest in Moria, demanding the right to freedom of movement for everyone trapped on Lesvos.[86] In an effort to stop the protest, the Hellenic riot police arrived and began using tear gas on the protesting crowd including on women and children (Thomas-Davis 2018). In an interview with *the Intercept*, Noura Koussa, an asylum seeker from Syria described the events as "a repeat of what happened in Aleppo when everyone grabbed their kids and fled to safety (Cassel 2017)." In the late afternoon, more riot police arrived and violently arrested 35 men, 34 of which were black African. One of the arrested was hospitalised due to severe injuries from the arrest with the riot police. Much of the violent behaviour of the riot police was filmed (Cassel 2017), and as response to this event Amnesty International called "on the Greek authorities to urgently investigate allegations that police used excessive force against asylum-seekers in the Moria camp (Amnesty International 2017)." Moreover, on 14 March 2018 five of the Moria 35 men, released a statement:

> *Our humanity has been denied since we stepped foot in Europe, the supposed cradle of democracy and human rights. Since we arrived we have been forced to live in horrible conditions, our asylum cases are not taken seriously, and most Africans are denied residency in Europe and face deportation. We are treated like criminals, simply for crossing a border that Europeans can freely cross.*

> *Now 35 of us have been accused of rioting, destroying property, and violence, however it was actually the police who attacked us in a violent and racist raid on the African section of Moria... It was the police in full riot gear who attacked unarmed migrants with stones, batons and tear gas... It was the police who damaged property by breaking the windows and doors of the containers where we were living. Without concern for people who were inside they threw tear gas into the closed containers. They dragged people by their hair out of the containers. They beat anyone they found with batons, their boots, their fists,*

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[86] http://legalcentrelesvos.org/2018/11/29/the-case-of-the-moria-35-a-15-month-timeline-of-injustice-and-impunity/

including a pregnant woman. It seems we were targeted only because of our skin colour – because we are black."[87]

Up and until 19 April 2018, a month and a half prior to my stay in Lesvos, the 35 arrested men were still imprisoned and awaiting trial. On 20 April 2018 ten months after the arrest, the trial started. It would become one of the most disputed court cases around asylum in Greece, and in the week running up to the trial, NGOs, activists and legal aid groups would hold events, protests, documentary screenings and call for action across Europe using the hashtag #FreetheMoria35. Without going into further detail, throughout my research period, several of the Moria 35 men would be deported, none of the police would be trialed or arrested and the last man of the Moria 35 would finally be released from prison on the 18th of October 2018.

When I asked Antreas, the Hellenic police liaison officer for Frontex in Lesvos about the Moria 35 and the riot police, he responded with their responsibility:

> The anti-riot units are there to arrange if we have special problems, they are not going to work together with Frontex. It's separate and it's over there to arrange everything if there is a need for public order. That is the purpose of their presence.[88]

In other words, Antreas communicated the boundary of the assemblage to me. The riot police are not involved with Frontex, or with the police from Lesvos, and therefore not seen as executive members of the assemblage. In further conversations with Antreas about the topic he explained that the riot police come mostly from Thessaloniki in the north of Greece. Greek locals (my doctor and a friend who is a lawyer) also confirmed that the riot police were "not from the island". This huge violation of human rights, including the unfair trial was thus defined by the local executive actors of the assemblage as an event to which they held no responsibility. No responsibility over Moria 35 also meant no accountability for the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage for this huge failure in the treatment of asylum seekers in Moria.

6.4. Smoothing Out Contradictions: The EU-Turkey Statement

While the EU-Turkey Statement is successful at containing asylum seekers on either side of the strait of Mytilene (see cover), its effects on human lives in Lesvos are obviously devastating (e.g. Hussam and Ali) as well as horrific: Riots, rape, violence and even death in Moria camp (Boffey and Smith 2019; Roberts 2017)). As the EU-Turkey Statement is a clear component of the assemblage, powerful actors hold accountability and have responsibilities over the execution. Notwithstanding, the powerful actors such as the EU and the Greek government are often denying responsibility over these human rights violations caused by the EU-Turkey Statement. This is possible because they change or deny the law, thereby smoothing out these contradictions.

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[87] This is an excerpt, full statement: https://freethemoria35.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/statement35en.pdf
[88] Interview 10, Antreas, Hellenic Police, recorded, 19 July 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

This argument requires a brief side-step into the legality of the EU-Turkey Statement outlined by legal academic Agustín José Menéndez (2016), who argues there are two major legal concerns about this political agreement. Firstly, Greece (failing under the pressure of thousands of applications) has written a law declaring Turkey as a safe third country, thus in a way operationalising a quick denial of asylum to those seeking it and returning asylum seekers to Turkey (Menéndez 2016: 402). However, Turkey is by no means a safe third country under the law, as it does not respect EU law on the responsibility to protect refugees (article 18 of the EU declaration of fundamental rights)[89] and does not respect non-refoulment (there have been many cases of Syrians sent back to Syria, not to mention the conflict going on between Turkey and Syria[90]). Moreover, this Hellenic law goes directly against the notion of a case-by-case assessment to define whether Turkey is safe for each individual being returned, as was stated in the EU-Turkey Statement (Menéndez 2016: 402).

Secondly, Turkey is largely neglecting its end of the bargain, with cases of very poor reception and services to both refugees and asylum seekers, especially after asylum seekers are returned to Turkey (Tunaboylu & Alpes 2017; Alpes et al 2017). In response to criticism from both (legal) academics and human rights activists on this clear contradiction, Europe emphasises the EU-Turkey Statement is non-legally binding and therefore no member state (or Turkey) can be held accountable for any of the results or non-results of the political agreement (Carrera et al 2017). A powerful actor comments it is not a "perfect fix", but at least their mission is successful in keeping the asylum seekers out and there is no clear alternative to their security solution:

> Of course, we are making mistakes. When the deal is being criticised. What I am saying is I agree with you that it is not perfect, the deal. Tell me, what your proposal is and then they say: "ah, I don't know, it's not up to us." And then criticize and criticize… Because the deal for example was made under very pressing circumstances, we had had hundreds of thousands of migrants passing through Lesvos every day, so it was a mess, Europe was a mess. Germany, and so on. So, the message from Brussels, from Berlin, from The Hague, was, find a solution as quick as possible. And the Turks, were, "Ok, we don't mind we have 3,5 million." We are used to that, so I mean that was the real situation. And people coming and saying it's not a good deal and this and that, I am saying. Ok, it's not a good deal. I'm in, what is your proposal? Which paragraph? Which words?[91]

This response shows the clear message of: "we are doing the best we can", there is no better alternative, this is the "lesser evil". Frontex and the other EU agencies follow mandates, plans, that do not actually address the problems Greece and asylum seekers are facing in Lesvos, rather they amplify and worsen the problems. EASO's accurate execution of the EU-Turkey Statement entraps asylum seekers for years, Frontex' continued efficient execution of search and rescue, transport and registration and identification activities entraps asylum seekers like

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[89] Article 18 of the CHARTER OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: the Right to asylum "The right to asylum shall be guaranteed with due respect for the rules of the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol of 31 January 1967 relating to the status of refugees and in accordance with the Treaty establishing the European Community."
 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/pdf/text_en.pdf.
[90] Referring here to Operation Olive Branch of January this year. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/21/turkey-starts-ground-incursion-into-kurdish-controlled-afrin-in-syria
[91] Interview 6, European Commission Representative EU, 9 July 2018, Panaiouda, Lesvos

Hussam, and Ali in the first place. Every single person is now accounted for and entrapped on the tiny island, but Europe does not provide a next step in this process. One of the most common answers to failures and contradictions in the assemblage is that Greece is in charge, meaning the Greek government, not the executive Greek actors (such as Hellenic Police and Hellenic Coast Guard) on the ground, not the EU, not UNHCR, not Frontex, not EASO, not Europol, not NGOs, not and so on and so forth. These types of messages are communicated to smooth out the contradiction of having an assemblage built on a security strategy that causes human rights violations at the border of Europe.

6.5. Devising Compromise: Portia's Prison Home

The final example I want to highlight is that of Portia, which shows a clear case of devising compromises at the very local level in Lesvos.

> R: The rejection came out earlier than I thought, the police came to take me from Kara Tepe[92], you know like they do, trying to hunt for people who have second rejection in the camps, to find people to be deported. And they heard I had second rejection. … At that time, I didn't realise, I thought it would be like three days and then they deport you, but then three days turned into months and two or three months … I came out in October. I still have the paper, the rejection.

> I: but how is your lawyer keeping you out of prison, out of deportation?

> R: Well, the other thing is, I was their best prisoner. I had a good relationship with the policemen. That sometimes they would give me my phone for the whole day until it doesn't have charge, and after, if it didn't have charge, they would charge and give it again. Sometimes they would tell me. "Ok, are you bored?", and they would tell me: "ok, come to watch tv with me." And then I would come to watch tv. From there I got the how you say it, the power? The strength, or how you say, the motivation! To learn more Greek. It was two of them, one S, he is there and the other one K, he was like a father to me. If I need food, sometimes he would bring me food. My aunt was in Lesvos and she never did that for me. I think in September she just came once (Portia was in prison for 3 months July, August, and September). So, at one point I decided, ok the policemen here, they are now my family, the rest I don't even care. At that time, I was calling my mum and I am telling her I am in prison and I don't have money. Nothing. Only these two police officers took care of me in the prison. So, when I came out of prison I still went to the prison because it was like my home, that's where I felt the love, unlike when I was in camp.

> I: And the police guys they know that you are living with the second rejection?

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[92] The separate refugee camp closer to Mytilene, for families and vulnerable women and children.

R: Yeah, you've been to the police station, you've seen O and S, you know the immigration team, even the criminal team. All of them, they know. They say, I should be able to go, that very soon I will be able to leave this place. They say even if we could do something, we would, but we don't have the authority to. [93]

Portia's story shows a unique compromise between the executive actors and mute actors of the assemblage to manage a failure of the assemblage. The failure being the fact that the assemblage had entrapped a 17-year-old girl wrongfully. What had happened is that a minor: Portia, had been tricked by smugglers and had been convinced to tell Frontex that she was in fact an adult, thereby her entire case was dealt with differently and she became separated from her aunt from the beginning. The story she used in her first interview had been a lie, thinking that it would give her a better chance at getting through the system and to her sister who was studying medicine in Poland. This example shows a very local display of how executive actors devise a compromise in reaction to this unfortunate outcome of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage they are member of. It shows a deviation away from the security strategy towards a reaction based on humanity.

6.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed three particular examples of how the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage managed failures and contradictions in Lesvos. In the end, all management of these failures and contradictions builds on the illusion that the asylum seeker is a security threat to European freedom and security. This core contradiction (the illusion of a unique fix, which is in this case a security fix) seeps through the entire assemblage, and its ripple effect is exposed in the management of many local contradictions and failures at the border in Lesvos, like the Kurdish case, Moria 35, the effects of the EU-Turkey Statement on Ali and Hussam, and Portia's imprisonment.

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[93] Interview 22, Portia, recorded, 3 August 2018, Mytilene, Lesvos

CONCLUSION

I started this thesis with Hussam's rap: *Moria no Good*, which kicks off with the lines: *All about the colour / all about the style. Sticking people in a camp / and the police goes wild*. At the end of this thesis it is evident Hussam is referring to the racist and violent behaviour of the riot police during Moria35. Rightly so, he asks: "*Where is humanity?*" Driven by the same question and sheer astonishment regarding clear violations of human rights in European refugee camps, it has been my strong motivation to answer the following research question: *How has the "European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage" taken shape and how and why is it able to endure, within and regardless of an ongoing humanitarian crisis in Hotspot and refugee camp Moria, on the Greek island of Lesvos, in the summer of 2018?* The answer to this research question flows naturally out of the five practices formulated in each of the analytical chapters. In this conclusion I outline the theoretical insights of chapter one and the analytical insights based on chapters two until six, summarized: aligning actors (chapter two), reassembling (chapter three), rendering technical (chapter four), authorising knowledge (chapter five) and managing failures and contradictions (chapter six). Finally, I conclude with a cynical and analytical conclusion to this thesis and provide recommendations for the future of European migration management and future research.

Research Findings

In chapter one I showed that European border management has been studied as a form of bio-political governance and specifically as containment of unwanted lives. Furthermore, I showed how from within the field of Securitisation Theory, asylum seekers have been analysed as security threat to Europe. I then outlined that there exists a methodological gap in Securitisation Theory, and argued how an analytic of assemblage, specifically a "Practices of Assemblage" analysis, can offer a methodological solution to study the securitisation of migration.

In each analytical chapter I emphasised how the "Practices of Assemblage" analysis allows ethnographic as well as document and secondary data research methods to study both securitisation of migration practices and discourse, at the state as well as executive level. Through close reading, tracing, and pattern finding within elements such as European speeches, European agenda's, European documents, agreements, and regulations (chapter two and three), and EU Agency protocols (OP JO Poseidon 2018) (chapter four), combined with interviews and observations of security practices on the ground (chapter five and chapter six), I successfully made a case for the use of a practice of assemblage analytic in securitisation theory.

In chapter two I analysed how the influx of asylum seekers in 2015/2016 was viewed as a security threat to Europe, its border, and Europeans themselves. It was perceived to expose the flaws of the Central European Asylum System in Europe, which was based on the premises of the Schengen Agreement and Dublin convention. The European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage then took shape in response to this one-sided interpretation (largely by European politicians) that depicts asylum seekers as a security threat. This unique understanding of asylum seekers forms the basis for both practices of chapter two and three and the entire

assemblage. In chapter two I further showed how and why powerful and executive actors aligned behind a common objective: to securitise the threat at the external borders of Europe.

In chapter three I focused on the myriad of rearrangements in systems, structures, laws, regulations and agreements that were necessary to enable the assemblage to come to existence, act and have an effect in Lesvos. Not surprisingly, as powerful actor in the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage, the EU took a central role in reassembling European border and asylum systems through the Hotspot system, the Relocation system, Frontex and its RaBITs, the EU-Turkey Statement, and finally renaming Frontex as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex, as well as expanding their mandate.

Where the first two practices answered how the assemblage took shape, the third practice of assemblage described in chapter four, rendered the assemblage technical, partly explaining how and why it was able to endure through a highly technical and institutionalized OP for JO Poseidon 2018. While operating under an elusive state of emergency (always under a "supportive" role towards the Greek state), I argued how as powerful and executive actor, Frontex naturally had a definitive role in rendering technical the assemblage. Careful analysis of framing within the OP for JO Poseidon 2018 in which roles, responsibilities and tasks are clearly outlined for each of the members of the assemblage, showed how the asylum seeker was framed as security threat. In chapter four, I concluded that through the carefully outlined protocols in the code of conduct, the coordination scheme and the yearly targets, the assemblage appeared more coherent than it is.

Zooming in on the myriad of local executive actors at the frontline of the European border in Lesvos, chapter five outlined the complex structure of formal and informal tools, each carrying underlying messages to contain critique from executive members. Specifically, I outlined the critiques of Dutch Frontex officers on their training, (de)briefing and their daily tasks in JO Poseidon in Lesvos during summer 2018. This practice showed how informal tools such as basketball tournaments, and formal tools such as readmission trainings, were used to ensure the internalisation of underlying justifications for their tasks and clarifications of their responsibilities. Combined these tools enabled the executive actors to carry out their tasks within and regardless of the humanitarian crisis around them.

In chapter six I highlighted three outcomes of the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage as examples of clear failures and contradictions and showed how they were managed by powerful and executive actors. I defined responsibility as an obligation and accountability as an *arrangement* between the actors and the obligations, to which the actor can in turn be held accountable. As first example I argued how the case of Moria 35 was a failure of the assemblage that was managed by presenting it as a deficient element that was not the responsibility of the assemblage which in turn explained why the assemblage should not be held accountable. Secondly, I emphasised how legal contradictions of the EU-Turkey Statement were smoothed out by denying legal accountability and emphasising it as a political agreement. Finally, I showed how compromise was used by executive actors of the assemblage to manage asylum system failures, using the very personal story of Portia. I concluded that all management of these failures and contradictions builds on the illusion that the asylum seeker is a security threat to European freedom and security.

The Cynical Answer

In sum, throughout this thesis I zoomed in, closer and closer, on the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage in Lesvos. Through the practices of assemblage analysis described above, I was able to answer how, step by step, an airtight "factory" emerged in Lesvos, and how it was able to endure, regardless of the humanitarian crisis in refugee camp Moria. The cynical answer to the why part of the research question is: Because it works. For Frontex, and other executive members, the JO Poseidon 2018 was successful. As from their perspective, they had followed their mandate, reached their monthly and yearly targets, and used X amount of human resources and technical equipment, as was set out in their OP. The entire assemblage is based on the problem definition that the asylum seeker poses a security threat to Europe, and is successful at its solution: containing and securitising the security threat at the border. In other words, I have shown the power of framing, because as long as flows of refugees and asylums seekers are categorised as security threat and spoken of in security language, "solutions" will be based on security strategies that entrap asylum seekers on the island of Lesvos, and entrap Europe and its members states in the illusion that "we are doing the best we can". This is exactly the reason why there is a complete lack of motivation by powerful actors to change the approach. Because it does what it set out to do. However, this is not the only reason no action is taken to change the "solution".

The Analytic Power

By taking on a security strategy, and defining asylum seekers as security threat, the assemblage argues that it does away with responsibility and accountability over humanitarian and asylum issues at the border. The assemblage is thus able to endure within an ongoing humanitarian crisis because by definition it is a security assemblage and not a humanitarian assemblage. By outlining the how, when, what, and who, in the OP for JO Poseidon 2018 built around this security strategy, and specifying exactly the expert knowledge on the JO Poseidon for executive actors, the assemblage made sure those security responsibility and accountability boundaries were tangible and internalised throughout the actors and elements of the assemblage. The danger here, lies in the fact that, as a result of this smoothly operating factory, the assemblage co-sustains the entrapment of thousands of asylum seekers such as Ali, Hussam, and Portia, in dire conditions on the island of Lesvos. However, because it operates in the form of an assemblage, it is possible for the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage to blur the lines of responsibility and accountability over the effect it has on the ongoing humanitarian crisis in refugee camp Moria. That is the other reason why no action is taken and why it is able to endure regardless of the ongoing crisis, because no one can be held accountable and "there are no better solutions". The analytical power of assemblage analytics that I have shown in this thesis, is that it reveals the responsibilities and accountability lines of each element, and every actor from the inception of the assemblage in Brussels down to the local police officers in Lesvos. I have thus acknowledged the variety of elements that make up the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage, and defined powerful, executive and mute members which makes it possible to begin to pin down legal obligations to specific actors. Which brings me to my recommendations.

Recommendations

Now that the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage is unpacked, and its capacity to create fuzziness around responsibility and accountability over the humanitarian and asylum crises in Lesvos and in Moria is revealed, it is clear that critique on actors and elements of the assemblage dies in the story of technocracy and protocols. Responsibilities of the powerful and executive actors of the assemblage are framed as political, (EU-Turkey, Frontex). In the end, all legal accountability is transferred to the Greek state. Even though, as I have argued in chapter six, it was confirmed by executive actors of the assemblage themselves and by legal NGOs and Amnesty International that the legal tools of the Greek state and the capacity of Greek state itself are highly questionable. While this thesis has unravelled a very specific security assemblage on the Greek island of Lesvos, even on this research fatigued island, more elements can be taken into account in future research. Specific to Lesvos, I recommend incorporating other EU agencies in a future assemblage analysis as the role of EASO, Eurojust and Europol have been largely left out. Moreover, I recommend incorporating researchers from different European nationalities (including Greek) to do research on their respective security officers operating as Hellenic or European agency (Frontex) officers to provide more perspectives and experiences on responsibility and accountability. Finally, my recommendation is to continue to unblur and make tangible accountability and responsibilities of Europe, Frontex, Greece, and executive actors in Lesvos, and initiate open discussions about those questions posed by Hussam. Because when European politicians commit crimes they can be held accountable, when your fellow European citizens break the laws, we have legal systems to hold them in place, but when the European Securitisation of Migration Assemblage commits crimes against humanity, no European government is going to hold the set of heterogeneous elements and actors accountable, as they themselves are part of that very assemblage.

When all are guilty, no one is; confessions of collective guilt are the best possible safeguard against the discovery of culprits, and the very magnitude of the crime the best excuse for doing nothing.

Hannah Arendt

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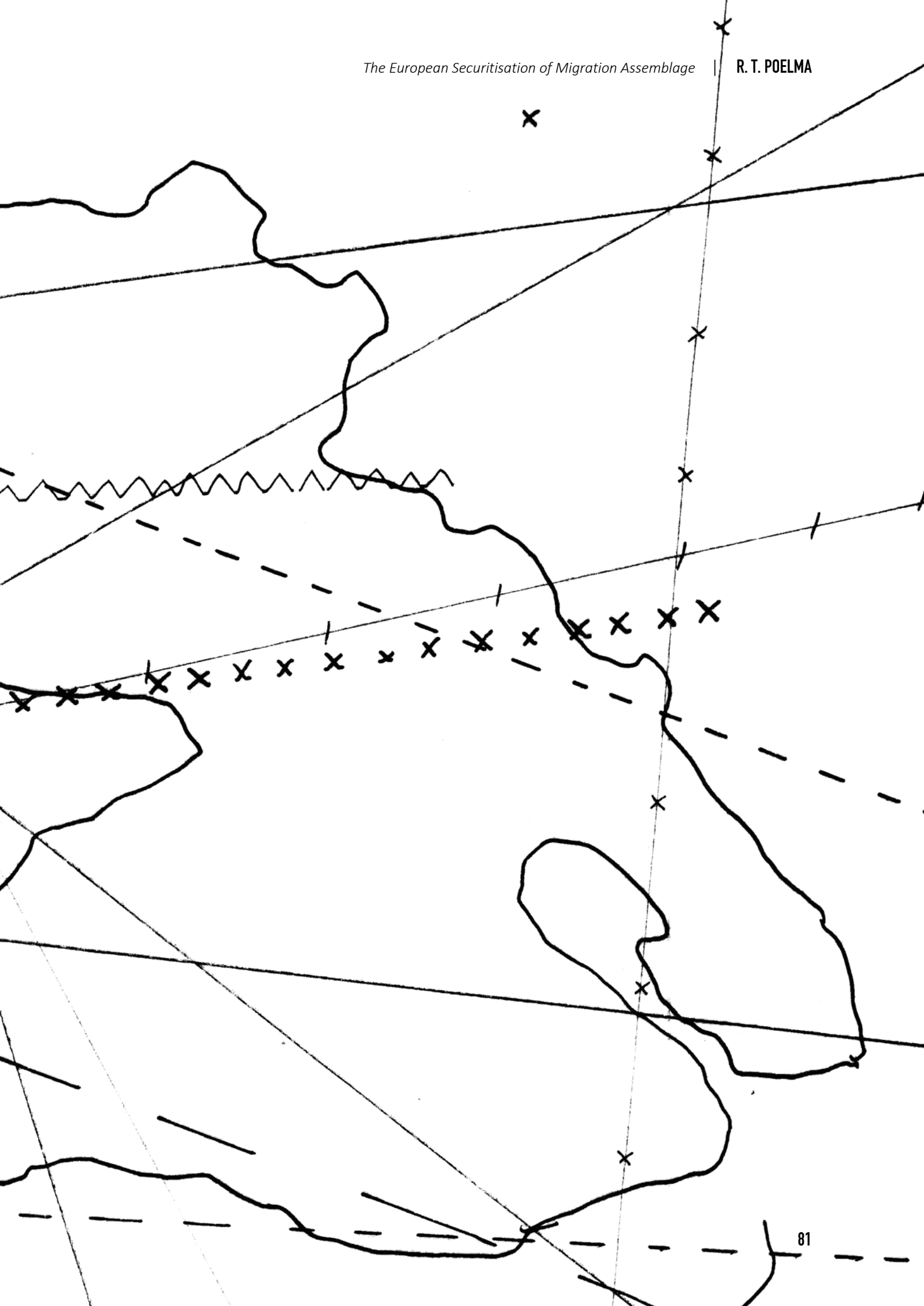
APPENDICES

Photographs

© all photographs in the document are taken by the author on the island of Lesvos, during the summer months.

Each of the photographs throughout this thesis tell a different story that I linked to the chapters that followed it. The first photograph depicts the northern fence of Moria camp, after which I introduce Hussam. The second photograph is taken from the old prison cells of the fortress in Mytilene and shows the world from the frame of the brick walls, symbolic for the analytic framework. The third photograph shows the life vest graveyard, in the North of the island. It shows the magnitude of asylum seekers who arrived on the tiny island three to four years ago. The fourth photograph shows the coast in the North of the island taken from the town of Skala Sykamineas. This is where Ali first arrived. The fifth photograph shows the same photo as the cover page of this thesis. The sixth photograph shows the Dutch Frontex officers holding a barbecue together on the beach. The seventh photograph preceding the sixth chapter of this thesis shows one of the thousands of graffiti messages spread throughout Mytilene. Finally, the photograph preceding the conclusion shows the gate of the harbour behind which the Greek and European flags are visible, it is exactly behind that gate where asylum seekers wish to go to travel with the ferry to Athens.

When all are guilty, no one is; confessions of collective guilt are the best possible safeguard against the discovery of culprits, and the very magnitude of the crime the best excuse for doing nothing.

Hannah Arendt