Governing Migrants in the European Union: A Critical Approach to Interrogating Migrants' Journey Narratives

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ABSTRACT

Is it possible to conceive of migrants as active stakeholders of migration and asylum policies rather than passive objects of political and humanitarian intervention? In the public discourse, migrants' voices are largely ignored and their political future in the reception country is often that of ascribed muteness and disenfranchisement. Yet, migrants, in particular those who are categorized in the public discourse and state regulations as "illegal", economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, have a voice, a history, a context, and therefore, aspire to a political existence.

This dissertation explores these voices. First, it is analytically necessary to contribute to the production of immanent knowledge about a complex and pervasive phenomenon that is still largely understood from the subjective perspective of emigrating, immigration or transit countries. Indeed, migration is a subversive political force that transforms and redefines the spaces that it touches by challenging state sovereignty, borders and identities. Migrants' own perspectives can help improve the understanding of human mobility, the migratory journey and the migration management regime. Second, it is equally important to contribute to the normalization of listening to migrants' voices and espousing their subjectivities on the migratory process.

In this dissertation, I propose an empirical study of the migratory journey based on field observations in initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Hamburg and semi-structured interviews with fifteen participants from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan who came to Germany between 2015 and 2016. This work starts with the presentation of the political framework for enabling migrants' voices to access the production of discourse. Then I propose an analytical framework to engage with migrants' narratives of the migratory journey. This is followed by a discussion of the methodology used to generate data for the study. The final section of this dissertation focuses on the spatial setting of migration and, in particular, the case of initial reception centers in Hamburg, which constitute a crucial stage in the migratory journey. This final chapter is an initial attempt at combining discourse analysis and space theory.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Is it possible to conceive of migrants as active stakeholders of migration and asylum policies rather than passive objects of political and humanitarian intervention? In the public discourse on migration, migrants' voices are largely ignored and their political future in the reception country is often that of ascribed muteness and disenfranchisement. Yet, migrants have a voice, a history, a context, and therefore, potential aspirations to a political existence.

In this dissertation, I propose an empirical study of the migratory journeys that occurred during what has been known as "the summer of migration," which described the incoming of migrants *via* the Aegean Sea and through the Western Balkans to Germany and the rest of Northern Europe. Based on field observations in initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Hamburg and semi-structured interviews with fifteen participants from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan who came to Germany between 2015 and 2016, this dissertation proposes an analytical framework that provides a critical approach to the migration management regime and migrants migratory journey narratives. The claim of this dissertation is double. First it argues that it is analytically necessary to systematize the production of immanent knowledge about migrants' journeys through their own subjectivities. Such a perspective enables a deeper understanding of the impact of human mobility on state sovereignty, borderscapes and the workings of the migration management regime. Second, it is equally necessary to politically contribute to the normalization of integrating migrants' voices in the public debate and discourse to address oppressive practices of migration management and control.

Abbreviations

BAMF   Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees)

CEAS   Common European Asylum System

EASY   Erstverteilung der Asylsuchenden (Initial Distribution of Asylum Seekers, a quota system operated by the BAMF determining the share of asylum seekers to be received by each German Federal *Land*)

EU   European Union

CCASG (formerly GCC)   Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (formerly Gulf Cooperation Council)

ICG   International Crisis Group

IFA   Internal flight alternative

EURODAC   European Dactyloscopy

IOM   International Organization for Migration

IRB   Institutional Review Board

NGO   Non-governmental organization

SIM   Subscriber Identity/Identification Mod

UNODC   United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

SIS   Schengen Information System

UAE   United Arab Emirates

UNGA   United Nations General Assembly

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

ZKF   Zentraler Koordinierungsstab Flüchtlinge (Office for central coordination of refugee affairs in Hamburg)

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Note on Arabic transcription

On a few occasions, I provide the transcription in Latin symbols of certain Arabic words and expressions used by the participants to this study. In these instances, the transcription brings a clarification or a nuance that is lost in the process of literal translation. I used the ALA-LC Romanization table for Arabic (American Library Association of the Library of Congress), which is available through the following link:

http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/romanization/arabic.pdf

Chapter I – Developing Initial Questions Regarding a Critical Approach to Migrants' Subjective Outlook on Their Mobility

Background

In October 2014, the EU Commission terminated the Italian-led operation Mare Nostrum in the Central Mediterranean area. Launched a year earlier, this air and naval operation was designed to monitor the Central Mediterranean unauthorized migratory route between Libya and Italy. However, the operation also contained a substantial search and rescue component, which should have enabled rescuing about 150,000 people in a year (UNHCR, 2014; European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2014). Unpopular within the EU because of its cost, allegedly €9 million per month (Amnesty International, 2014c), and inability to stop migrant deaths, the Commission replaced Mare Nostrum with a Frontex joint initiative, Operation Triton, with a much lower budget (€3 million per month) and, subsequently, a minimal search and rescue component. Triton's main focus was the surveillance of unauthorized migrant crossings across the Central Mediterranean region.

In 2015, and in spite of Operation Triton, 1,046,599 migrants[1] were reported to have reached Europe mostly *via* Greece and Italy (UNHCR, 2015b; IOM, Recent Trends, 2016), and 3,771 persons (against 3,279 in 2014) died or went missing during their journey (IOM, 2016). While the number of fatalities was spread throughout the year, April was the deadliest month for migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean (IOM, 2016). Two deadly shipwrecks occurred off the Libyan coast, on April 13th and then a larger one on 18th, in which about 1,200 migrants went missing (Bonomolo & Kirchgaessner, 2015; IOM, 2016). The President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, called a special meeting to discuss measures to end the fatalities, contain the flow of illegal immigrants, combat human traffickers, and foster cooperation among European Union (EU) Member States in dealing with migration. Following a minute of silence, M. Tusk characterized the situation in the Mediterranean as a "tragedy" (European Council, 2015).

Immediately following the April 2015 twin shipwrecks, the EU launched the European Union Naval Force Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR Med), or Operation Sophia, a joint military effort to crack down on smuggling activities. The migrant fatalities being highly unpopular among the European public opinion, the underlying logic of EUNAVFOR Med was that the reduction of migrant crossings would mechanically lead to a lower death rate. In this view, smugglers were the designated culprits who preyed on victimized migrants.

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[1] This number includes asylum seekers.

A month later, the European Commission'[2] reaction to the ceaseless human dramas in the Mediterranean was to propose a "relocation and resettlement" plan (European Commission, 2015c) in order to equitably "distribute" asylum seekers and refugees across EU Member States. In particular, the Commission's plan was to relocate by 2016 40,000 people from Greece and Italy to other Member States, while another 20,000 were to be resettled within the EU from third countries.[3]

In June 2015, amidst an emotionally charged context and heated debate within the EU about the management of what has been labeled a refugee and/or migration "crisis," former French President and then potential candidate to the 2017 presidential elections Nicolas Sarkozy publicly reacted to the European Commission's "burden sharing" (European Commission, 2015c; UNHCR, 2013) plan as follows:

"If you want, it's a bit like a house where you would be living and then a water pipe bursts. [Water] spills in the kitchen. The Repairman comes and tells you: "I've got a solution. We will keep one half in the kitchen (*the audience starts to laugh*), we will put a quarter in the living-room, the other quarter in the parent's bedroom and if it's not enough, we still have the children's room in reserve" (my translation).[4]

At that time, Sarkozy held no office in the government so his declarations and stances do not amount to official statements, but remained authoritative nonetheless. He was still viewed as a leading figure in French politics, as he held the presidency of the country's main conservative party and could represent a very serious contender in the 2017 Presidential elections. [5] Unsurprisingly, Sarkozy's bursting-water-pipes metaphor triggered in France the expected outrage because of its de-humanizing representation of refugees. However, it also found validation among conservative Eurosceptic and nationalist politicians because of the obvious opposition to the European Commission and the bluntness of the rhetoric used to speak of migrants.

In the European Union, immigration and national identities occupy the heart of politics. Most mainstream candidates address migration, and many who identify with the center-right or center-left of the political spectrum often do so through the frame of domestic

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[2] The European Commission is a supranational institution that constitutes the executive arm of the European Union (EU). Among other things, it is responsible for proposing legislation and policies as well as enforcing EU laws in Member States. The European Council is an intergovernmental institution that is often perceived as the main decision-making authority in the EU. It sets on the union's general directions and priorities, although it passes no laws.

[3] The European Commission distinguishes between relocation and resettlement as follows: relocation is "the transfer of persons who are in need of or already benefit from a form of international protection in one EU Member State to another EU Member State where they would be granted similar protection" whereas resettlement is "the transfer of non-EU nationals or stateless persons who have been identified as in need of international protection to an EU state where they are admitted either on humanitarian grounds or with the status of refugee." Resettlement describes the movement of persons from outside of the EU to a EU Member State, while relocation describes intra-EU movements. The latter is a process that relies on the principle of solidarity between EU Member States in order to relieve countries who receive a large population of refugees. European Commission's definition are available on this link: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/relocation_and_resettlement_factsheet_en.pdf

[4] This was an excerpt from Sarkozy's speech before militant members of the re-branded party "Les Républicains." The video of this excerpt is available on the YouTube channel of French television news channel BFM TV under the following link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfXmeYNjmvI (last accessed on 11/28/2015).

[5] He lost his party's 2016 presidential primaries and retired from politics shortly thereafter.

security and, in the case of some center-right parties, the preservation of national identity. Mainstream European parties generally propose measures such as the tightening of controls at the external borders and the multiplication of agreements with non-EU migrant-sending and/or transit countries to reduce the migration inflow. While they typically insist on the respect of the right of asylum, they often adopt a restrictive interpretation by increasing the deportation of asylum seekers who are reluctant to integrate, by attempting to expand the list of safe third countries, suspending, sometimes momentarily, family reunification, and providing alternative forms of protection, such as the subsidiary protection status instead of a refugee status. Many mainstream parties also advocate some level of unification of migration and asylum policies at the EU level. Wrapped in the gentle terminology of human rights and the humanitarian duties to rescue shipwrecked migrants, curb the irksome activities of smugglers, and definitively solve unauthorized migration by providing development aid to emigration countries, mainstream European parties end up carrying out similar policies, namely, the reinforcement of border fencing, surveillance and control, the tightening of migration and asylum policies, and various forms of migrant encampment, usually around the external borders. Finally, pro-migration discourses mobilize utilitarian arguments that praise the economic and demographic benefits of accepting migrants. Welcoming refugees and asylum seekers is thus integrated in the narrative of finding global solutions to local problems rather than a mark of the receiving societies' altruism. According to the utilitarian discourse, migrants that are adequately integrated into the labor market can be an investment that could yield a significant demographic and economic return.

In these public discourses, migrants' voices, their subjective outlook on their own mobility and aspirations to seek a different life elsewhere, are never considered. The very context that gives meaning to their journeys is lost. Migrants are seldom viewed as specific persons with unique circumstances, stories and aspirations embedded in larger historical and political contexts. To understand who and what a migrant is, it is strictly the context of the receiving society in which the conversation on migration is, as is the case of many European countries, filled with anxieties about identity loss. The denial of migrants' agency, autonomy and singularity is correlated with an absence of a dialogic interaction between the context of migrants' journey and that of the receiving society. This study proposes an immanent perspective on migration in which the subjectivity of migrants will be explored. More specifically, I interrogate the migratory journey narratives of asylum seekers and refugees who, in recent years, left Syria, Iraq, or Afghanistan to come to Germany. A recontextualization of the migratory journeys will not shed a more favorable light on migrants, nor will it provide satisfactory explanations about the root causes of their flight. It seeks to offer a contextualized, and so a more pertinent perspective on migration and eventually propose a repoliticization and recontextualization of migrants. More precisely, heeding these personal testimonies will not only enable new insights into the migratory practices that are specific to their itineraries and, thus contribute to a mapping of the various migratory journeys that have taken place across different geographies (the present research is limited to migrations across the Aegean Sea and along the Western Balkans only), but it will also constitute a way for migrants to offer an alternative subjectivity into the public discourse on migration.

Thesis Statement

As the EU concentrated its efforts to curb undesired migration across the Central Mediterranean Sea, a new migratory path started to emerge in Spring 2015. Primarily composed of Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis, this path crossed the Aegean Sea between southwest Turkey and the Greek Islands and then transited through the Western Balkans before reaching Germany and the rest of Northern Europe. This dissertation will address this particular migratory itinerary, which spanned over a period of time going roughly from spring 2015 to the first half of 2016, after the signature in March of the EU-Turkey deal to contain this migration. Between October and November 2015, more than 250,000 migrants arrived in Greece and Italy and the IOM counted about 1,3 millions asylum applications, of which more than 800,000 were made in Germany alone. This dissertation explores this particular migratory path.

Based on the empirical research I conducted in this regard, the thesis of this dissertation is that migration is a complex and diverse phenomenon whose understanding is undermined by blindspots constituted by migrants' own outlook on mobility. I contend that these blindspots contribute to the political marginalization of migrants throughout their migratory journey, including in the reception country. This thesis has a double agenda. First, it is analytically necessary to systematize the production of immanent knowledge about migratory journeys because it helps develop a deeper understanding of the impact of human mobility on state sovereignty, borderscapes and the migration management regime. Second, it is equally necessary to politically contribute to the normalization of the integration of migrants' voices in the public debate and discourse on migration in order to problematize the restrictive and repressive practices of migration management.

The thesis of this dissertation triggered a series of intermediate questions that will be addressed in the following chapters:
- Why do migrants' voices matter?
- How can these voices (or narratives) be integrated into an overarching counter-narrative of migration?
- What is the content of these voices?
- What is the researchers' positioning vis-à-vis these voices?

The Migration Management Regime

Definition

The migration management regime is an entanglement of governmental and non-governmental mechanisms that seek to organize and control the volume, direction and speed of migration. It is an apparatus in the Foucauldian sense, that is, a heterogeneous and non-descript arrangement of various knowledge structures about migrants, migration and human mobility that spawn texts such as laws, policies, and categories, all of which exercise power over migrants as a social body. In its deployment, both multiple and

contradictory, it combines social, technical, political, legal, and institutional realities with systems of representation and narratives to manage the migrant subject (Foucault, 1980b).

The Migration Management Regime at Work

The subject of investigation here are the oppositions between, on the one hand, the entanglement of systems of knowledge about migration and the management/control of human mobility and, on the other, the subjectivities of migrants as they confront the regime. At the center of the power-knowledge binary that constitutes the migration management regime lies the migrant's body. The real concern of power, Foucault argues, is the taming, molding, and marking of body (Foucault, 1995). However, the power of the migration management regime should not be understood as strictly oppressive. The legislators who write the laws and regulations on asylum, border and immigration, the policymakers who design policies, the officers stationed at the border posts, and the broad assortment of personnel that participates in the construction of the regime, ranging from the humanitarian aid organizations to the media writing about migration do not strictly intend to stop cross-border movement altogether but instead operate on a wide range of actions that seek to manage movement, between containment and authorization.

The definition given here implies that the power of the migration management regime is not homogeneous, but consists in a multiplicity of power relationships, as many as there are knowledge structures. For instance, a humanitarian non-governmental organization that provides shelter, food, and medicine to victimized asylum seekers does not involve the same knowledge of migrants as that mobilized by asylum officers who assess the credibility of migrants requesting refuge. Nevertheless, both actors are part of the regime because they act upon migrant subjects based on specific modes or systems of representations of them. It follows that the migration regime is not a 'dispositif' designed strictly to say 'no' to free movement of people, but to administer it, apply conditions, and set preferences. The action of the migration regime is not strictly juridical – to forbid and to allow – but is also, perhaps mostly, counter-tactical and reactive. For instance, migration policies, *via* the introduction of new regulations and amendments to the Schengen Agreement as well as new border technologies, are often reactions to migratory practices that resist and escape crossborder mobility control and surveillance. The migration management regime is perpetually transforming through the introduction of updates to address changing migratory practices and situations. Migration management is a perpetual "home maintenance and improvement."

In this sense, Sarkozy's choice of words captures a certain reality of the EU migration regime, which has been central to the impetus of this research. The mechanisms of exercising power of the EU migration regime are perfectible and adaptable. The EU's migration policies and laws as well as the border technologies deployed can be understood as reactionary measures that seek to address new migratory practices in an *ad hoc* fashion (Kasparek, 2015). For example, the series of shutting down of internal

borders within the Schengen space[6] to contain the passage of asylum seekers reveals the absence of a "Europeanized" regulating authority that could exercise its influence over the whole area. The fencing of borders in the Balkans by Macedonia, Serbia and Hungary with non-Schengen countries as well as the temporary re-introduction of internal border controls within the Schengen area by Austria with Hungary and Germany were carried out because of the 'unexpected migratory flow' and fear of asylum seekers' secondary movements[7] (European Commission, 2015a; 2015d; European Parliament, 2015). In addition, extraterritorial surveillance and tightening of migration control, that is beyond Schengen's external borders, often leads to the emergence of alternative migratory paths (Dijstelbloem, Meijer, & Besters, 2011).

Admittedly, the Schengen Agreement (1985) includes a provision that allows contracting countries to reinstate national border controls on internal borders[8]. The agreement insists on the exceptional and limited nature of such a measure, which must be enforced for a relatively short time and only when public policy or national security requires it. Moreover, any reinstatement of internal border control must be preceded by a consultation with other contracting countries (Article 2 of the Convention implementing the Schengen Agreement of 14 June 1985).[9] According to a 2013 amendment of this regulation, the reintroduction of border controls should not exceed ten days; while those controls can be extended, they must be "monitored at the union level" and cannot exceed a maximum length of two years (Regulation (EU) No 1051/2013 of October 22, 2013, paragraph 2, 3 and 4).[10] The fifth paragraph of this regulation also states:

"Migration and the crossing of external borders by a large number of third-country nationals[11] should not, per se, be considered to be a threat to public policy or internal security."

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[6] This space emerged out of the Schengen Convention, which was signed in 1990 to implement the 1985 Schengen agreement. The agreement had a twin objective: removing internal border controls, that is, enabling free movement of capital, the goods, and people, from the signatory countries, while reinforcing controls of the Schengen Area's external borders, which concretely means harmonization of visa policies and collectivizing the police database Schengen Information System (SIS). This supranational European database allowed exchanging information on migrants. The agreement relies on an important principle; that of shared responsibility to control the European External Border, now a European institution.

[7] The European Commission defines secondary movement as the 'phenomenon of migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, who for different reasons move from the country in which they first arrived to seek protection or permanent resettlement elsewhere' (Glossary of the European Commission). The secondary movement is done without the authorization of national authorities and is assimilated to asylum shopping in the case of asylum seekers, that is a violation of the Dublin Regulation in European law. More broadly, it is a form of irregular migration.

[8] In the Schengen area, internal borders are shared by the member states of the Schengen Agreement; for instance the border between France and Germany is an internal border. Controls at internal border have been abolished by the Schengen Agreement. External borders separate states of the Schengen area and non-Schengen states; for instance the borders between Spain and Morocco along the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla or between Greece and Turkey are external borders. External borders can also be maritime: Italy is a Schengen country with external borders because it is bordered by the Mediterranean Sea.

[9] The text of the agreement is available on the official website of the European Council:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/SCH.ACQUIS-EN.pdf

[10] The regulation is available on the official website of the European Union Law: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:295:0001:0010:EN:PDF

[11] A third-country national refers to countries that are not members of the European Union.

However, the website of the EU's Migration and Home Affairs[12] notes that between November 2015 and March 2016, there have been eight cases of re-introduction of internal border controls from seven countries; all cases but one being related to the current migration issue. The website also states that reinstating internal border controls may be decided unilaterally and is not subject to an external veto. Thus while there are regulations on the pretexts that can be invoked for the re-introduction of internal borders, Member States still employ border controls to contain immigration flows in contradiction with agreed upon legal provisions.

The spectacle given by EU member states of a scramble to produce measures and counter-measures to contain movements of migrants and refugees –the re-emergence of internal border controls, amendments of Schengen regulations and asylum laws[13] and the deployment of navy forces in the Mediterranean against smugglers – exemplify the absence of centrally and collectively administered vision for migration and asylum policies. In his September 2015 State of the Union Address, the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker acknowledged the disintegration of EU's migration and asylum system and called for its 'Europeanization', that is, the delegation of more competences to the Commission for more concerted actions (Juncker, 2015).

The workings of the EU's institutional arrangements to manage migration are but one element of the migration regime that produces a certain type of knowledge and, consequently, a specific knowledge-power-body constellation (Hall, 2001). Besides the EU institutions, the migration management regime encompasses other systems of regulation of migrants' bodies that contribute to the public discourse on migration: nation-states, the media, the private sector, international organizations and non-governmental organizations. Each element entails a particular articulation of power and knowledge and therefore particular rules of conduct for migrants. While the discourses produced by the system may not necessarily converge, the overall purpose of the migration management regime is to create the migrant subject as a domain of intervention. In other words, the migration regime is not limited to the law – what migrants can and cannot do – but, most importantly, to the tactics and strategies of managing the migrant subject as a social body. Accordingly, the migration regime exerts a power that does not exert brute force on migrants by forbidding access as can be suggested by images of 'fortress Europe'. Instead, it reacts to migratory practices by opposing counter-measures. Instead of attempting to stop crossborder movement of unauthorized migrants altogether, the migration management regime targets the flows instead, alternatively diverting them, reducing or increasing their speed, or channeling them towards certain points of border control. The underlying claim of this dissertation is that the logic of the migration management regime, from the discourses and subject positions (or categories) of migrants that it produces to the material practices of border protection and surveillance, is to facilitate the disciplining of movement, the categorization and the sorting out of people.

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[12] See the official website oft he EU's Migration and Home Affairs: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen/reintroduction-border-control/index_en.htm
[13] Such as the German Parliament voted in February 2016 the "Asylpaket II" (asylum law package), which tightened the Germany asylum policy. Among other things, it suspended family reunification for individuals with subsidiary protection status (that is, not refugees) for two years.

The mobility regime

Contrary to the migration management regime, the mobility regime includes no supporting institutional or administrative structure. It shares with the migration management regime a dominant strategic imperative but, in this case, it aims at maintaining and enhancing the ability to maneuver through border surveillance and mobility restricting policies or regulations. Economic migrants, "illegal" migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are part of the mobility regime as they deploy a wide array of tactics to bypass, undermine or comply with mobility management practices. The mobility regime can, therefore, be defined as a variety of migratory practices that correspond to circulating discourses of mobility that promote freedom of movement, choice of a destination country, safety for individuals on the move, hospitality in transit and reception countries, etc. However, the discourses of mobility can also contradict one another. In the fourth chapter for example, I explore instances in which refugees often articulate discourses advocating free movement as well as the hierarchization and categorization among migrants that are more common in the migration management regime.

The mobility regime shares two similarities with the migration management regime. First, it consists of a discursive field that contains various and diverging narratives on migration. In this dissertation, I will specifically explore the migratory journey narratives of asylum seekers and refugees. The narratives do not exist in a discursive vacuum but are co-constructed through dialogical processes. The mobility regime intersects with the migration management regime through the interdiscursive process of borrowing and mixing of discursive elements from the migration management regime. Second, the materiality of the mobility regime consists of an infrastructure, mostly digital, that allows the circulation of discourses, narratives, and migratory practices and tactics. These narratives, as I will later present and discuss more thoroughly, simultaneously precede migrants and are constituted by them. They precede migrants because migratory journeys exist in discursive context, made of laws, regulations, labels and categories but also other stories of previous journeys, past experiences with border crossing, itineraries, smugglers and so on which can be consulted by migrants on the move. However, this discursive context is also constantly updated by new migrants as they partake in the production of discourses through their own lived experiences of mobility and confrontations with the migration management regime. The digital infrastructure, which exists on social media platforms, instant messaging and telecommunications applications such as WhatsApp, Facebook groups and comment sections, Skype or Telegram, is constantly complemented by migrants who may document their journey with anecdotes, advice and directions on the itinerary, maps, what to answer if apprehended, updates on border closures, contact details of smugglers, and so on.

The conceptualization of the mobility regime proposed here frames the migratory practices deployed during the journey as both discursive – contesting certain subject positions imposed by the migration management regime and that are detrimental to mobility – and non-discursive – such as taking a certain path or avoiding biometric identification.

The Migration Management Regime Versus the Mobility Regime

Before undertaking an immanent study of the journey narratives and migratory practices of the mobility regime, it is important to explore the broad representations of migrants within the migration management regime. To this end, I offer a brief analysis of the flow/wave narratives that are usually mobilized to characterize migration in general. An understanding of modes of representations provides insights into the tactics deployed by both regimes and thus the dialectical relationship that binds them.

The Tactic of the Wave

The arrival of thousands of immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East since the beginning of the Arab Spring has been a significant ordeal for the Schengen agreement and the EU's migration management instruments such as the Dublin Regulation.[14] The inability of a group of wealthy nation-states to control population mobility is visible in the usual modes of representations of migrants, especially the flood imagery that routinely characterizes similar important cross-border movements. Sarkozy's comparison of refugees to a domestic water damage is, in this sense, hackneyed; the movement of migrants is almost constantly compared to a flow or stream of water. The systematic and widespread discursive association of 'migration' and 'wave' or 'flow' reveals three important elements about perception of migration: first, it provides insights on certain migratory practices deployed by migrants; second, it emphasizes the tactical mode of operation of the migration regime; third, it unveils the misconception that migrants are individuals devoid of willpower and to whom history happens.

Representations of migration as waves breaking on European countries' borders suggests unpredictability in the movement of migrants and, at the same time, the certainty that it will inevitably hit the shores. Like other forces of globalization, migration erodes borders and contributes to their porosity, justifying in return an increased resort to fencing and walling (Brown, 2010). The wave metaphor captures the idea that the movement of migrants involves re-shaping borderscapes through its unpredictable flows that undermine sovereign control over crossborder movements of people. Borders are more than arbitrary lines defining the limits of nation-state's sovereignty. The EU externalization of border control and migration management, the deployment of increasingly sophisticated border technologies as well as the numerous security tactics that control movements of populations signal the production of the border as a theater of power struggle over mobility.

This struggle can be characterized in terms of opposing tactics. Waves of migrants cancel technologies of individualization and distinguishability deployment by instruments of identification and surveillance along borders (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007). Recurring images and videos of groups of undocumented migrants trying to force their way through

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[14] The Dublin System stems from the Dublin Convention, signed in 1990 and came into effect in 1997. The Dublin Convention guarantees the right of asylum in signatory countries and, at the same time, prevents asylum seekers from lodging requests in multiple signatory countries ("asylum shopping"). The Dublin Convention established the criteria that determine the state that is responsible for processing an asylum request. The Dublin System establishes no quota for the distribution of asylum seekers across signatory states.

the fences along the Spanish African cities of Ceuta and Melilla or the hundreds of refugees and asylum seekers breaking through police lines in the Balkans are the antithesis of the disciplined lines of people waiting to be processed by migration officers. To counter waves of indistinguishable migrants, borders serve as spaces of sorting out and categorization of migrants so as to make their flow more easily manageable. The production of representations of migrants, enabled by the technological machinery of borders, "breaks" the waves of people into recognizable and countable units.

Mirroring the liquid representation of migrants, the EU's self-representation of its migration management (over)uses the image of the "fortress." The expression 'fortress Europe' has been used by open-border activists, international organizations and scholars to criticize the immigration policy of the EU as excessively restrictive and unnecessarily inhuman (Amnesty International, 2014a; Carr, 2012). Yet, while the EU's borders are indeed very restrictive, they are not impenetrable. Thousands of unauthorized migrants have managed to cross the borders. In other words, migrants adopt certain migratory practices that circumvent the EU's border control in spite of the reinforcement, militarization and technological capacity brought to border policing.

Wave Narrative and Agency

The flow/wave representation of migrants can reflect, to a certain extent, certain mobility tactics deployed by migrants against the migration management regime. However, this representation also imposes a conception of migration and its root causes in contradiction to the agency of migrants. In academia as well as in public policy making, migration is often accounted for as the result of linear macro-, micro- and meso-level push-pull forces (globalization and climate change, regional geopolitics, and national economic policies) that leave little space to migrants' agency in the decision-making process surrounding their flight (the timing, the destination, the means of travel, etc.).[15] The point is not to ignore the various levels of understanding a phenomenon as complex as migration. It is impossible to deny the importance of exogenous influences on the decision to migrate. But similarly, it is also crucial to consider the agency of migrants rather than ignore them

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[15] The push-pull movement is a reference frame that is common in many theories of migration that conceptualize the migrant as a passive subjects driven by global determinisms. In the neoclassical theory, there are two levels of analysis that undermine agency. On the macro-level, individual agency is dominated by the spatial distribution of capital in relation to that of labor (the ratio of capital to labor) that determines the direction, duration and volume of migration. Theoretically, labor migrants are pulled into a country where wages are higher (i.e. labor scarcity or a higher capital to labor ratio). On the micro-level, individual agency is an important element in neoclassical theory but it is paradoxically restricted to rational choice, meaning that the decision to migrate is the result of a cost-benefit analysis where possible variance between different individuals is accounted for by discrepancies in the distribution of information rather than different rationalities (everybody is assumed to be an income maximizer or shock to income minimizer). In the post-Marxist segmented labor market theory, international migration is the result of a pull (rather than push) by employers in industrialized (and industrializing) countries who require cheap, flexible and low-skilled labor. The theory was first formulated to account for movement of migrant labors during the Fordist era. But Saskia Sassen updated this theory in *The Global City* (1991) to account for post-industrial growth in the Global North: the need for cheap and low-skilled labor remained strong, but now to fill in jobs in the third sector. In this theory, the migrant's agency is completely deleted. The World System Theory, formulated by tenets of Dependency theory in the late 1970s and a close parent to the segmented labor market theory, views migration as a consequence of the power structure of the nation-states system. Since the cultural and economic globalization is dominated by "core countries," this theory claims that migration flows from peripheral and semi-peripheral countries into the most developed and industrialized parts of the world, pulled by capital and cultural penetration in the home country.

altogether. Typically, push-pull factors accounts for those who have decided to migrate but provide insufficient explanation for the others, usually the majority, who decided to stay regardless of the forces of attraction/repulsion at play. The decision-making process is solely sustained by the assumption of actors' rationality so that the explanation offered to distinguish between those who left and those who stayed becomes tautological: they decided to leave because they were pulled in/pushed out, whereas the others stayed because they were not. Even when considering that the family of the migrant stayed in the home country to receive remittances, the push-pull framework fails to provide satisfactory answers to migrants who have got no recipients in the country of origin or the people who were not driven out of their country. On the contrary, considering the agency of migrants and their active, conscious role in the complex decision-making process grants access to the missing subjective representations of the migratory journey as an alternative outlook on mobility.

In addition, there is another essential level to the journey as experienced by the migrant and which is too often ignored by the usual theoretical framework as well as by policymakers. The journey can bear a significant meaning for the migrant because it has the power to shape and transform his or her identity in unique ways. The person who started the journey is not the person who ended it. Migration is often more than simply crossing borders, especially for asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented migrants. Papadopoulos et al. have described migration as a "transformation of social space" that cannot be appraised by simply considering the change of location, but rather as an appropriation and the re-creation of space itself (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008, p. 211).

Constructing Migrants: Framing the Study

In this study I examine subject positions produced by the migration management regime and the counter-discourses that migrants themselves deploy, either to internalize, negotiate with, or resist the material practices that derive from the discursive categories that are created for them. Discourses emanate from two ensembles: the migration management regime and the mobility regime. The former is the site of production of discourses by policymakers, government agencies and political parties, the media, NGOs and international organizations, whereas in the latter, it is the migrants themselves who enter discourse by giving meaning to their own mobility. In both regimes, discourses are heterogeneous and potentially contradictory in spite of a common umbrella objective in each one: on the one hand managing and disciplining cross-border movement of people, and on the other hand increasing the capacity to negotiate borderscapes and reach a specific destination.

This study explores almost exclusively the oft-ignored discourses of the mobility regime, namely, the migratory journey narratives produced by refugees and asylum seekers. Journey narratives are drawn from in-depth interviews conducted with migrants from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan who came to Germany between 2015 and 2016. In addition, this study also takes into account the international background of these narratives, that is

to say, refugee law, statements by international and non-governmental organizations, the EU's as well as individual states' migration and asylum policies, declarations of European public figures and newspaper articles.

The exploration of the journey narratives and the way they interact with discourses and practices of the migration management regime responds to two main inquiries that are addressed in this dissertation:

1. *The EU's migration regime*: the underlying argument in this dissertation is that the final objective of the migration regime is not strictly to stop, or drastically reduce migration, but to deploy a wide array of tools that can be adjusted to migratory practices, the categories of migrants that the regime produces, and the needs of the immigration countries. Regardless of the various existing settings of the migration management regime, from containment and deterrence to channeling to *laissez-passer*, the overall objective is to manage migrants, that is, maintain control over human mobility and avoid being overwhelmed by the uncontrolled flows of people. Wendy Brown has argued that the border regime is more an attempt to reassert state sovereignty in the face of the driving forces of globalization (not only flows of humans, but also and mostly flows of money, ideas, cultures, insecurities) than an indication that nation-states are in full control of their territory (Brown, 2010). Overall, the migration regime is engaged in a continuous and dialectical process of governing migrants, adapting to the various migratory practices in the mobility regime.

2. *Contesting the migration regime*: the productivity of the migration management regime lies in its capacity to generate subject positions that create and shape different migrant subjects. Migrants can either internalize these categories and reproduce them as they become compliant subjects of the regime or they can negotiate and resist it. Against the discursively produced hierarchized categories of migrants along a spectrum of desirability and deservingness, migrants in return can deconstruct those frames by characterizing their identities in ways that resist and reject those subject positions. Ultimately, the migration management regime is constantly trying to adapt to migratory practices, engaged in a dialectical relationship with migration. One of the pitfalls that I tried to avoid throughout this dissertation is to steer clear of what Foucault called the "repressive hypothesis", which posits that power is a negative force that represses and forbids (Foucault, 1978). Given the definition of the migration management regime proposed here and the importance of understanding its knowledge structures, it would be contradictory to refute the positivity of power, meaning, its capacity to produce migrant subjects as recipients of intervention rather than repression. As previously stated, the migration management regime is not a disenfranchising force that only says 'no' to any desire to move freely; it can channel and direct besides containing and deterring. Similarly, the mobility regime is not necessarily an anti-coercion force. Both regimes encompass a great deal of heterogeneity and divergence. Migrants can choose to comply with imposed and marginalizing subject positions. Chapter IV addresses the instances where complicity between migrants and discourses of categorizations and hierarchization emerged from interviews with refugees and asylum seekers who were attempting to settle in the host country; this in spite of the tactics that they deployed to bypass control and

surveillance while on the move. That being said, it is nevertheless important to note that migrants' acts of resistance against the migration management regime are not inconsequential for them. The extreme hardship of the migratory journey, which can lead to migrant casualties (Spijkerboer, 2007), is one of the prices that unauthorized migrants pay when they attempt to resume the life that they had lost or could no longer lead in the country of origin.

Literature Review: Migrant Categories, Journey Narratives and Inclusive Discourse

Problematizing Categories of Migrants

Because of my interest in the dialectic relationship between the migration management regime and the mobility regime, I approach migration from a politically engaged position. In this regard, it is crucial to blur the normative boundaries between the various categories that are produced by the migration management regime in an effort to differentiate among transborder wayfarers and turn them into subjects of political intervention: guest-workers, economic migrants, irregular migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. As I further delve into migrant narratives in the next chapters, it will appear that empirically, the lines separating these categories are extremely blurry.

Scholarly research often endorses the same categories as those established in international conventions and used by international organizations and government agencies. Adopting such labels undermines efforts to examine discursive practices within the migration management regime critically and fails to highlight narratives produced by migrants themselves. It is not relevant to this study to frame migrants according to legal categories that are similar to the definitions produced by nation-states and international organizations because one cannot adopt the discursive structures of that which one seeks to examine politically. Similarly, it is not relevant either to maintain arbitrary distinctions between migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. These categories are juridico-bureaucratic hierarchies instituting artificial and uncomplicated binaries between supposedly legitimate victims of repression and undeserving individuals who crowd out genuine refugees' access to Western countries' compassion. The UNHCR released a statement in August 2015 to establish, once and for all, the distinction between migrants and refugees. According to the UNHCR, the former choose to migrate and have the possibility to return, while the latter are forced to leave their home with no foreseeable hope of coming back (UNHCR, 2015a). These categorizations elude the difficulty of distinguishing between forced and voluntary decisions to migrate, which are always the result of many factors, some of which are not necessarily related to persecution or conflict zones. The data collected for this study show the fluidity of these categories that stems from the necessarily complex decision-making process of deciding to migrate. One can even wonder if the distinction between migrants and refugees along criteria of forced or voluntary movement still makes sense empirically. As for the political repercussions of this binary, it clearly legitimates a hierarchy of compassion within the receiving countries; economic migrants being generally viewed as less deserving aliens than refugees. But even then, there are sub-categories that nibble at the irreproachability of

refugees as well. Welcoming and generous countries may be fooled by bogus asylum seekers passing as *bona fide* refugees.

James Hathaway considers that being forced out of one's country (of origin or habitual residence) remains a necessary, but insufficient condition, to be legally recognized as a refugee (Hathaway, 2007). The conflation of refugees and migrants into one category, he deplores, could undermine the protection that the former are legally entitled to. For Hathaway, the status of refugee grants a specific legal and ethical entitlement to demand protection from the international community. Hathaway rightly recognizes that migrants and refugees may share similar predicaments, but maintains nonetheless that it is not what entitles a person to international protection. The difference between the two categories, he insists, does not lie in the predicament itself but rather in the recognition of persecution within a framework of international conventions on refugees. In other words, the ethical responsibility for countries to protect refugees does not emerge from individual circumstances, but whether the individual is recognized by the international community as having been persecuted. Hathaway warns that without this legal distinction, the international community would no longer be able to prioritize the assistance to refugees and forced migrants could overwhelm the capacity (and possibly the empathy) of nations. The nation's duty to protect refugees is deemed superior to its desire to enforce migration regulations.

Hathaway's argument is strategically savvy because it provides a normative answer to states' reluctance to provide protection to refugees by discursively constructing them as subjects of international assistance. However, the humanitarian and security predicaments in which refugees and asylum seekers find themselves restrict the critical outlook of Hathaway's position. It first assumes that the situation of emergency concerns refugees above all else on the basis of collectively recognized norms. So the predicament of non-refugee migrants, albeit potentially equally serious, cannot be viewed internationally as equally urgent. Second, Hathaway's legalism occludes criticism of the very norms he wants to uphold. Attempts to question the criteria that serve to discriminate between migrants and refugees are not permitted in crisis situations. The exploration of the journey narratives of refugees and asylum seekers conducted in the following chapters shows that, on the contrary, the norms that are used to define do not correspond to their self-identifications and even create confusions with categories deemed undesirable such as economic and "illegal" migrants. For instance, the need to find safety that is systematically associated with the forced flight of asylum seekers does not always appear in their discourses. In fact, I argue in this study that the incapacity (or refusal) to question, review and complicate these categories eventually hinders the access to protection of refugees and asylum seekers. Narratives produced by candidates to asylum may not correspond to the administrative language of refugee determination status.

In fact, it could even be argued that the condition of migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, is inherently in contradiction with nation-states representations of sovereignty, territoriality and population. The territorial fixing of populations within a circumscribed territory excludes other spatial imaginings that emerge from migrants' outlook on mobility and journey narratives. The bureaucratic perspective on migrants and

the nation-state's conception of space and human mobility systematically transforms them into abstractions that are driven by desires, interests and needs or the bureaucratic conceptions thereof. The projection of the bureaucratic subjectivity onto migrants denotes a blindness to the transformative process of the journey's social setting, or as I will argue in chapter IV, the character development undergone by migrants out of specific circumstances and histories. Migrants are reduced to representations as pure agents of ascribed desires and needs construed through the categories to which they pertain. It follows that categories of voluntary migrants *versus* forced refugees decontextualize the migratory journey and restrict the capacity to provide protection to migrants or enforce their basic human rights. Malkki has provided a valuable critique of these spatial biases, in particular the conception of home as an immutable spatial imagining for which refugees are necessarily longing and to which they strive to return (Malkki L. H., 1995a; 1995b). For Malkki, the 'sedentary analytical bias' is a consequence of the statist approach that over-emphasizes the physicality of the migratory movement and neglects the identity, cultural and cognitive transformations that accompany it. The migrant's home is often framed as an idealized and unproblematic space that is only momentarily forsaken. Malkki adds that this bias can mirror even well-meaning anti-migration narratives that construct the home as the only habitat culturally and sociologically suitable for migrants and asylum seekers. This bias, Malkki fears, can result in undermining the moral foundation of international protection (Malkki L. H., 1995a; 1995b).

Bringing Meaning to Migrant Narratives

It follows that an increasing number of scholars is interested in exploring migrant narratives and in particular the migratory journey as a powerful process of identity transformation (Benezer & Zetter, 2014). Research on migrants' subjectivities considers the experiences of being a refugee through the various expressions of their voices in a non-bureaucratic and non-performative language. However, the general aim of the academic emphasis on refugee experiences and the migratory journey is more analytical than strategic. Even though a great deal of research in critical migration and refugee studies aims to improve the position of migrants, it is still driven essentially by the intellectual aim of furthering knowledge about a complex phenomenon. In this regard, the goal of this dissertation is both analytical and strategic. It seeks to provide an empirical and immanent outlook on migration while adopting a strategy of demarginalization. To this end, taxonomies of migrants are approached critically and narratives are put on the same level of importance as mainstream theoretical frameworks. This work of centering the marginalized words of migrants amidst a public discourse from which they remain largely excluded joins a conversation in migration and refugee studies that is engaged by critical scholars from history, anthropology, and political science such as Liisa Malkki, Dawn Chatty, Gadi Benezer, Roger Zetter, and Wendy Pearlman to name a few. This work furthers the analytical critique of categories and labels employed within the migration management regime by confronting them with the subjectivities of migrants. The contribution of this research is to combine the operationalization of the use of migrant narratives (chapter III and IV) and a clarification of the concept of the migratory journey (chapter IV) in order to embed subjectivities in a social, political and, finally, a

spatial context (chapter VI). The justification of this work is not only analytical – understanding a perspective on migration that still receives little attention – but also political. This research opens with a re-conceptualization of hospitality as a political norm underlying the reception of refugees and asylum seekers and the overall acceptance of migrants into a host society (Chapter II). The aim of this research is, thus, not only to increase knowledge about persisting blindspots of human mobilities, but also to change the grammar of the public migration discourse, which seems stuck between utilitarianism and securitization.

That being said, migrants' subjectivities can be overlooked even by critical migration scholars. For instance Soysal in her book *Limits of Citizenship* argued that supranational forms of citizenship were emerging, particularly in the EU, gradually replacing nationally based and territorially bounded forms of political membership. She explains that "postnational citizenship" is promoted by the increasing pervasiveness of universal human rights regardless of the membership status of the individual (Soysal, 1995). By referencing the same normative principles as Hathaway, one may conclude that human rights and the international conventions designed for the protection of displaced populations are premised on the fact that the processes of refugee status determination rely necessarily on the moral foundation of assistance provision. Unfortunately, this assumption fails to consider that asylum bureaucracies in charge of theses processes have internal political logics and objectives that may owe more to what Christian Matheis has called 'political expediency' (Matheis, 2015) at the expense of the moral foundation of protection. Even in countries that provide an unimpeded access to due process to make asylum claims as well as to appeal decisions, asylum seekers' position remains weaker than that of citizens and legal residents who, besides their entitlement to democratic rights, can also go to the media, vote, and resist collectively (Dijstelbloem, Meijer, & Besters, 2011). In reality, the crystallization of the refugee status in the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol did not prevent countries, as will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters, from updating their migration policies and implementing border policing measures that seriously restrict refugees' mobility and migrants' access to asylum claimant procedures.[16] Soysal somewhat overestimates the capacity of migrants to become members with equal levels of representativeness and rights as native citizens in their adopted countries. In addition, her optimism (very understandable given that she wrote the book about twenty years ago) about the attribution of equal legal privileges to all, even migrants, on the basis of universal human rights overlooks the restrictions that she imposed on the categories of migrants that she considered. Her emphasis on "guest workers" to compare degrees of incorporation in European countries ignores the legal status with which this category is already endowed. On the contrary, undocumented migrants and asylum seekers, virtually stateless, have yet to receive state sanctions on their legal status in the reception country. Alison Mountz, for instance, has provided a compelling analysis on the situation of asylum seekers who, upon arrival from China to Canada's eastern coast in the late 1990s, were stuck in the legal limbo of extraterritorial locations while awaiting processing (Mountz, 2010). These practices of restricting access of asylum claimant process come in a variety of forms. EU countries have, for instance

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[16] Migrants only become asylum seekers when they are recognized as such, that is, once they have officially lodged an asylum request with a country's competent administration.

established and expanded the list of 'safe third countries' to which applicants may be returned. They also create additional categories of protection, such as the 'subsidiary protection' status, which lies outside of the international refugee law.

Even Malkki's widely praised book *Purity and Exile*, an ethnographic study of two groups of Burundian Hutu migrants who settled in Tanzania, one in a refugee camp and the other in a township amidst native residents, imposed subject positions on her study participants (Malkki L. H., 1995b). Her book explored new ways of understanding refugees' processes of self-definition and agency and drew parts of her theoretical framework from Foucault's analysis of the articulation of power and knowledge by the state to control and discipline social bodies. Yet, the persistent imposition of the category of refugee upon the Hutu group that adopted a strategy of blending politically and culturally with the local population and establishing its roots in Tanzania did not record empirically their refusal to carry such an identity. Her Foucauldian commitment to uncovering contingent processes of identity formation in each group was undermined by the use of her power to name, which, in this case, seems to take for granted conceptions of identity, culture and history as decontextualized abstracts circumscribed within a bounded territory. Paradoxically, Malkki's epistemological premise was opposed to Hathaway's deproblematized use of the refugee label as an internationally sanctioned legal status as well as an identity and socio-political category. Understandably, Malkki used the category as a broad descriptor that encompasses historical, socio-economic and even psychological elements. Therefore, it could be said that the label 'refugee' was used analytically rather than to refer to a specific predicament. But the ambiguity of the label persists and one can only deplore the missing reflexivity in her positioning as the assumed expert diagnosing "refugeeness."

The scholarly critique of categorizations by governments and international organizations, which undermines human capacity for agency through creative and pro-active processes of self-definition, must also be accompanied by reflexive awareness of one's own privileged and immanent position. Researchers too occupy a position that enables them to create subject positions and, consequently, can potentially undermine individuals' quest for recognition and agency. Similarly to the state bureaucracies, politicians, international organizations and the media, migration theory makers also enter the public discourse and therefore have a responsibility towards their research subjects. Migration scholarship becomes critical when it acknowledges this responsibility and seeks to enable migrants to produce discourse alongside policymakers and state bureaucracies, political parties, international organizations, charity organizations, and the media.

Entering Discourse

In *The Right of Others,* Seyla Benhabib is particularly aware of her responsibility as a social theorist when she addresses the paradox of membership in Western liberal democracies (Benhabib, 2004). She argues that the articulation of membership norms into a polity always has the potential to affect those who are excluded from communities' deliberations and, as a result, calls into question the legitimacy of such institutional frameworks. She posits that the deliberating members of a community have a moral

obligation towards those who are affected by their decisions but played no part in the decision-making process. In other words, she raises the question of whether and how migrants can enter discourse and affect the collective decisions taken by the members of the host polity. She contends that the community must implement a process of 'democratic iteration', that is, a deliberative process that questions a community's institutional framework, in particular its membership norms, in order to rethink and re-contextualize modes of exclusion (Benhabib, 2004). The aim of this inherently discursive process is to make binary separations between included 'us' and excluded 'them', or citizens and migrants, more fluid. In this sense, Benhabib is more reserved than Soysal about an uncomplicated advent of a post-national citizenship. Besides, although Benhabib acknowledges the expansion of legal benefits to non-nationals, her position remains radical because she envisions opening the access to discourse beyond guest workers who, by definition, already enjoy legal status in the host country.

Yet, Benhabib restricts democratic iteration to certain categories of migrants only, thereby implicitly endorsing the artificial boundaries that separate them. She acknowledges the contradictions between the consolidation of universal human rights as cosmopolitan norms and the increasing restrictions of the "rights of others," specifically refugees and asylum seekers. However, asylum seekers and refugees are governed by an existing international framework. The discussion of whether their rights are actually guaranteed remains indeed an essential question, one cannot reflect on membership/exclusion of migrants by just examining the nation-states' obligations to guest workers, refugees and asylum seekers only. Other categories deemed less deserving of extension of membership norms and, hence, access to deliberations, also deserve to be addressed. Asylum seekers and refugees too can be categorized and treated as unauthorized migrants in the migration management regime because of the arbitrariness of the criteria used to distinguish them.

In her 'Response' to Benhabib's book, Sassen states this shortcoming very clearly: 'While the responsibilities of receiving states have been recognized in the international refugee regime for war-linked refugees, it is much more difficult to establish these responsibilities vis-à-vis economic migrants' (Sassen, 2007). McNevin also makes similar objections against precluding the "harder cases" of inclusive membership (McNevin, 2011). Her emphasis on irregular migrant [17] shows that political marginalization is no less acceptable for economic or irregular migrants than for asylum seekers and refugees.[18]

Second, the capacity of asylum seekers and refugees to participate in deliberations is in reality more limited than it may seem. In Germany, for instance, refugees typically receive a three-year renewable residence permit but must, in the first years of their stay, learn the language before they can enroll in universities, start an apprenticeship or look for employment. In this phase, the process of democratic iteration is irrelevant because of

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[17] She considers the labels 'illegal migrant' to be criminalizing and 'undocumented migrant' to be inaccurate as migrants often carry some sort of documents

[18] Although in fairness to Benhabib's argument, the notion of democratic iteration is proposed as a piecemeal process to review and open membership norms gradually as opposed to sharp propositions of abolishing borders altogether as argued by Bridget Anderson et al. (Anderson, Sharma, & Wright, 2009; 2012).

the linguistic barrier and the fact that their residence status limits them to acquiring the necessary skills to be able to work or receive training. The process of democratic iteration would, thus, be more relevant in a context where migrants' presence in the reception country is longer. Yet, in many cases, the status of refugee or asylum seeker, or even illegal resident becomes a protracted situation. There are other categories besides refugees that are even less likely to be included in the process of democratic iteration: there are asylum seekers who were granted subsidiary protection status (a one-year renewable residence permit that is not a refugee status), or those whose application was denied but can still not be sent back to a third country. Because of the multiplication of precarious statuses, other means of entering public discourse than the institutionalized process of community deliberation must be envisioned.

Nancy Fraser raises the same question as Benhabib: how can democratic societies address the impacts borne by individuals who do not partake in decisions of the community because of certain articulations of membership norms (citizenship, legal residence, etc.) (Fraser, 2007)? She proposes two concepts of the public sphere in democratic theory, normative legitimacy and political efficacy. Normative legitimacy – how inclusive the process of political deliberation is, especially towards those affected by its outcomes – and political efficacy – can the ones affected by decisions of political deliberation mobilize and hold institutional power accountable – are readily transposable to the question of migration and migrant voices.

Finally, other scholars examine technology as a new space for resisting disempowering discursive practices such as refugee victimization and instead enable the assertion of muted subjectivities. This is the case of Witteborn who conducted an ethnographic study on the use by asylum seekers and refugees of smartphones and the social media to maintain and develop an international network. She argues that this technology enables them "to become invisible as deficient categories and assert themselves in the virtual as well as embodied realm" (Witteborn, 2015, p. 352). This act of resistance against norms and processes of excluding their voices from the public realm plays against the narrative of shaming refugees who own a smartphone or are able to use technology. While technologies are not solutions for politically marginalized migrants, Witteborn claims that they are political tools that may create new forms of mobilization that also challenge concepts of border through sharing data and transnational grouping (Witteborn, 2015, p. 364). The use of technology during the migratory journey indeed plays a fundamental and complex role in enabling migrants to escape mobility management while maintaining a digital social network. As I discuss in chapter IV, this technology participates in the construction of journey narratives and so contributes to the emergence of alternative discourses on migration.

This dissertation will address the gaps mentioned in this section by proposing a focus on migrants' journey narratives as an alternative perspective on migration, but also a vehicle to enter public discourse.

Method and Data

This study is aligned with the critical theory approach in two ways. First, it aims at highlighting the hidden coercions within institutionalized structures of power that normalize the dominated position of certain social groups over others. So this study locates and analyzes within the migration management regime mechanisms of discourse hegemony, understood as the reproduction of power relationships that maintain people in dominated positions and act in ways that are not necessarily in their interest (Gramsci, 1971; Howarth, 2000; Strinati, 2004). Second, it proposes a political intervention by exploring possibilities for migrants to resist governing discourses by proposing alternative voices – narratives and discourses. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is the overall approach to public discourse on migration and how it may be contradicted by counter-discourses produced by migrants themselves.

Van Leeuwen wrote that '[c]ritical discourse analysis is, or should be, concerned with both these aspects, with discourse as the instrument of power and control as well as with discourse as the instrument of the social construction of reality' (cited in Wodak & Busch, 2004, p.111). Discursive practices have an essential ideological function because representations of certain social groups may (re)produce inequalities within relationships of power. In this sense, CDA essentially frames discourse as a site for power struggles, between actors competing for filling material objects, phenomena, events, with meaning. It follows that the political commitment of critical discourse analysts is to "unveil" the ideological underpinnings of certain discourses (Fairclough, 1989; van Dijk, 2006). Approaching migration from a CDA perspective enables confronting migrants' journey narratives to various categories of texts – public declarations of politicians, reports by international organizations and non-governmental organizations, media headlines and articles, public policy formulation and legal documents.

To this end, I utilized semi-structured interviews to glimpse into migrants' personal accounts of their journey experiences. Memories of the migratory journey offer non-sanitized accounts that challenge the discourses and practices of migration management. Those personal accounts are extremely important for understanding the way interviewees experience the journey and its hardship and perceive mobility, home and agency. In addition, the interviews mobilized specific languages with their own idioms, resonance, histories and jargon. The thickness of the language, which is fully explored in chapter IV, is fully embedded in the experience and memory of the journey.

Regarding the interviews, fifteen individuals from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, holding administrative statuses of refugee, asylum seeker, subsidiary protection or tolerated stay agreed to share their experiences of the migratory journey with me. The interviews took place in Hamburg between July and October 2016 and cover the interviewees' respective migratory journeys which took place between 2013 and late 2015.

I recruited study participants through a multinodal snowball technique instead of a direct approach. The snowball approach reduced mistrust issues that refugees and asylum seekers may have towards those who try to interview them. My contacts with volunteers in reception centers (nodes) who knew potential interviewees referred me to them. As a result, study participants would contact me with the knowledge of who I was and what

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my intentions were. Before the interviews took place, I supplied study participants with the necessary documents on the interview process and the protection of their data (information sheet and informed consent form).

The advantage of having more than one nodal access point was to increase the diversity of the profiles of the interviewees. In addition, the personal journey experiences were also grounded in secondary data found in reports and maps produced by international organizations such as the UN Agency for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), as well as recent films documenting parts of the migratory journey during the 2015-2016 influx of migrants into Europe (Domokos, 2015; Mustafa Ali & Hammer, 2017).

With Syrian and Iraqi participants, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews in Arabic that I recorded on a digital audio recorder. I translated the interviews from Arabic into English and transcribed them for data processing. I used HyperRESEARCH, a software interface that provides code-mapping capabilities, to transcribe the interviews and code the text data. Interviews lasted, on average, slightly more than an hour, and therefore yielded about two hundred pages of text data after translation and transcription. The coding process started, therefore, with a first reading through the data using highlighters and notes on the margin to manually locate themes that refer to the migratory journey or that were recurrent from one interview to the other. Based on this initial work, I divided the text data into large segments (paragraphs), to which I attributed a category or a code with the help of the software. In this second phase of coding, I used the software to group codes into larger themes. To this end, it was first necessary to remove overlapping and redundant codes. I repeated this operation twice in order to reduce the number of codes (I initially had almost fifty codes). This technique is called "lean coding" and consists of repeating the qualitative analysis of the text data – extractions of codes and grouping codes together – until I had codes that could be grouped under larger themes that meaningfully connected the interviews together. The software helped me create a concept map of the text data based on contextual data interpretation along three main inter-related themes.

Here are the themes and sub-themes extracted during the coding process. I address these in chapter IV:

- The trigger of the journey
  - Decision to leave
  - Choice of destination
  - Preparation
- The obstacles/antagonisms
  - Natural elements
  - The smugglers
  - The migration management regime (encampment, border patrols, regulations)
  - Tactic of imperceptibility and tactic of identity affirmation
- Resolution/Denouement

- The end of the journey
- Narrating home

Study Outline

Focusing on the influx in recent years of Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan refugees and asylum seekers into Germany, this study considers that extremely valuable insights into understanding human mobility can be reached by focusing on migrants' subjectivities. This study is not an exploration of the root causes of migration, although it is possible to gain such insights by considering the voices of migrants as they often reflect personal, regional and global circumstances that led to flight. My research is an attempt at understand human mobility across geographies and social settings through the historically specific case of migrations from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan into Europe between 2015 and 2016. The writing of histories of migration "from below" could then be integrated in a larger mapping of other journeys and effectively update the traditionalist view of migration that still relies on simple binaries such as low/skilled-labor, economic migrant/refugee, legal/illegal migrant, or voluntary/forced migrant. Consequently, the first step is to establish a conceptual framework for approaching migration through the voices of migrants themselves. This is the purpose of the following chapter on hospitality.

Chapter II addresses the question of why migrant narratives matter. Situating the discussion in the politics of protection in Germany since summer 2015, I integrate Derrida's and Hallie's analyses of hospitality to argue that it is a discursive political gesture that enables the voices of migrants to exist in the public space as necessary, albeit overlooked, producers of discourse on migration. This chapter constitutes the intellectual and critical basis for my interest in migrants narratives, which are then analyzed in chapters III and IV. It conceptualizes hospitality as a foundational normative political condition that enables migrants to enter discourse alongside the native members of a receiving polity. As a result, gestures of hospitality seek to articulate a relationship with the foreign other that is characterized by an equal balance of power. The chapter ends with a case study that explores the credibility assessment process and the hearing procedure (the *Anhörung*) for asylum seekers conducted by asylum officers in Germany. Drawing from the legal provisions of the hearing procedure (established by EU law and German Asylum policy) and accounts from interviews with asylum seekers and refugees, I conclude that the credibility assessment process and the hearing are inhospitable practices that depoliticize narratives and further marginalize migrants' voices.

Chapters III and IV explore the journey narratives that I collected during fieldwork. Chapter III continues the argument started in the previous chapter by delving into the architecture underlying the construction of narratives and, thus, clarifies the epistemological stance of this study. Chapter IV then examines the journey narratives that I gleaned from the in-depth interviews conducted with the fifteen refugees and asylum seekers living in Germany. I contend that the focus on the migratory journey is justified by its defining and transformative effects on migrants' processes of self-identification. To integrate the interviews, I design a narrative structure, a storytelling device that enables

me to present all the collected stories into an intelligible journey narrative. The framework of the narrative structure is composed of the themes that emerged from the data coding process. The findings of the chapter are at odds with many discursive elements and 'knowledge' of refugees and asylum seekers of the migration management discourse, including the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. The regime's grammar of victimhood, persecution, and forced flight out of danger are contradicted by the particular violence and hardship of the migratory journey and aspirations of the study participants.

Chapter V focuses on the methodology used to collect data on the migratory journey, namely the semi-structured interviewing method and proposes an exercise of reflexivity regarding these interviews and the data processing phase. In the first part of this chapter, I briefly explain the recruiting technique (multinodal snowball technique) and justify its use. I argue that the use of personal narrative accounts in critical migration studies are not to be held to a standard of objectivity. On the contrary, it is the construction of the interviewees' subjectivity that I was looking for in my inquiry. In this regard, the fact that many of the interviews I conducted were joint interviews (married couples and siblings) also provided interesting insights into the co-production of this subjectivity, sometimes arising from complementary narratives, other times from diverging or even conflicting ones.

The final chapter takes a step aside from discourse and migrants' subjective outlook to examine their spatial backgrounds. It provides an initial outline of a bridge between discourse and space. To this end, I conducted ethnographic observations of three initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Hamburg. Drawing on the geographic philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, I analyze the spatiality and temporality of these particular outlets of the migration management regime. I argue that these reception centers capture asylum seekers' mobility through their re-territorialization, which in turn disables their capacity to occupy and appropriate the space where they reside. The safe, clean and guarded initial reception facilities that I observed also contribute to extinguishing migrants' agency whereas unofficial, hazardous and chaotic makeshift camps such as the "jungle of Calais" enable its residents to engage in the creation of their own spaces. This chapter further explores the underlying argument made throughout the dissertation that agency as well as autonomy and escape from the migration management regime bear a high risk for migrants' bodies.

Chapter II – Between Hospitality and Inhospitality: The Politics of Migrant Protection in Germany[1]

> "Never shall you ask me,
> Nor trouble yourself to know,
> Whence I journeyed,
> What my name is, or what my origin!"
> Wagner, *Lohengrin*, Act I, Sc. III

Introduction

In Europe, the public discourse on migrants is caught in a whirl of contradictory debates that fail to capture the complexity and diversity of migration. Narratives of endangered national identities and waning sovereignties are countered by calls for human solidarity with the migrants. Fears of increased strain on already inefficient domestic labor markets and overburdened welfare states are disputed by utilitarian arguments that migrants can restore fiscal balance and demographic dynamism. This ongoing conversation on migration, taking place without migrants, undermines their agency and ignores their own subjective outlook on mobility. In addition, the considerable migratory influx that Europe has undergone in recent years, and especially since summer 2015, has contributed to the proliferation of the 'crisis' discourse in European Union (EU) politics. The sentiment of urgency pervading the public discourse on migration in the EU combined with the superficial, yet governing, knowledge of the subjectivities of migrants prevent formulating appropriate migration and asylum policies that provide effective protection (Kasparek, 2015).

This chapter argues for re-centering the voices of migrants, particularly of refugees and asylum seekers, as a way to serve a sociological as well as a political agenda. First, collecting the subjectivities of migrants increases the knowledge and awareness of the ways in which they represent and express the 'exilic journey': an event that has transformative effects on their processes of identification (Benezer & Zetter, 2014). Indeed, the journey does not constitute a linear and uncomplicated travel between a starting point and a destination, but encompasses various episodes of movement, stuckness, wandering, and violence as consequences of human encounters and confrontations with border control practices. The knowledge extracted from migrants' journey narratives is, therefore, sociologically important for the sake of increasing our understanding of the contemporary patterns of human mobility within the migratory process.

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[1] Chapter II to V include findings from data collected in Germany in summer and fall 2016 during in-depth interviews with asylum seekers and refugees. This study was conducted according to the research protocol IRB#16-540, which was approved by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB). Refer to appendices H to L.

Second, normalizing the act of listening to these narratives is a political intervention on the discursive terrain of migration because it can challenge the monopoly of narratives produced by agents such as the media and politicians that disenfranchise migrants and ignore the importance of the journey. The common categorization of migrants as either 'real' refugees or 'economic migrants,' supposedly determined by criteria of forced or voluntary flight, is very problematic. Not only does this discourse discount the complexity of the decision to migrate, but it also justifies severe restrictions on migrants' human rights. Indeed, 'economic migrants' are illegalized by the policies that subscribe fully to this categorization, and if they do not behave as passive recipients of humanitarian aid they risk deportation as 'illegal migrants.' Finally, because the process of migration is often a violent and dangerous one, considering the exilic journey can strengthen the justification for providing better and less restricted protection.[2]

However, before delving into migrants' subjectivities on mobility, and thus proposing an alternative narrative of migration that neither marginalizes nor posits them as sources of insecurity for the receiving society, this chapter takes a necessary detour by addressing the following questions: why do migrants' narratives matter? And how can the receiving countries include them in their duty of providing protection? In a context of increasing restrictions to asylum and migration policies in the EU, bolstering the ability of migrants to be heard on their own terms constitutes a political invitation to co-exist in the public sphere with the natives of the host society. Acts of intersubjectivity such as these engage and interact with the (foreign) other on a basis of equality and with a particular consideration to his/her singularity (Fiske, 2016). Inspired by Derrida's essay written with the late Anne Dufourmantelle *On Hospitality*, I argue that establishing an intersubjective relation to migrants is an act of hospitality that grants the foreigner, who is often conveniently depicted as the silent and nameless other, the possibility to access the public space and fill it with a thus far absent, albeit crucial, narrative on the migratory journey. In other words, hospitality becomes a normative political condition that enables migrants to also channel their voices and exit a position of muteness (Rajaram, 2002) that is either imputed by the receiving society or that the migrants themselves strategically adopted in order to avoid a backlash such as deportation.

Starting with an overview of the German political context of the 2015 mass arrival of migrants, which is referred to as the "summer of migration" (Hinger, Schäfer, & Pott, 2016; Buckel, 2016), I draw upon Derrida's analysis of hospitality to demonstrate its fundamental importance for granting protection to refugees and asylum seekers. Finally, I propose a discursive analysis of the credibility assessment procedure in Germany, as a particular area of the refugee status determination in which asylum seekers undergo a 'hearing' to prove the wellfoundedness of their applications. The proposed analysis of the 'hearing' is based on German legislative texts and reports by the German Federal Office

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[2] André Bank et al. make a strong argument for designing humanitarian aid and migration policies that take into account various markers such as gender, age, race, nationality, and so on. The experiences of the migratory journey are significantly determined by these markers and must, therefore, be adequately reflected in policies (André Bank, Christiane Fröhlich, Andrea Schneiker, "The Political Dynamics of Human Mobility: Migration out of, as and into Violence." *Global Policy* (Wiley), December 2016)

for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)[3], the migration authority that is responsible for conducting the hearing with asylum seekers and carrying out decisions regarding their applications. I also use data gathered from interviews that I conducted with refugees and asylum seekers in Germany in summer and fall 2016.

Overview of the Evolution of German Protection Practices During the "Summer of Migration"

At the end of August 2015, Germany decided to open its borders to the thousands of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees blocked in Hungary. The initiative meant that Germany unilaterally suspended an important part of the EU law, namely, the Dublin Regulation, which established the criterion that determined which EU Member State was responsible for processing an asylum request. Typically, the country responsible for processing an asylum request is the Member State through which the asylum seeker entered the EU for the first time. For migrants coming from the southern Mediterranean Basin, EU countries most likely to be responsible for processing asylum requests are Greece, Italy, and Spain. A year later, Germany had received about 890,000 asylum seekers (Federal Ministry of Interior, 2016). In spite of a fierce backlash from her political family and from other EU Member States for her temporary open-border policy, Chancellor Merkel remained firm:

> Also next year, everything will depend particularly on this: our cohesion. It is important that we also always listen to the arguments of other[s], even when [they] assess concerns and opportunities differently as you do. It is important that we do not let ourselves become divided – not into generations, not into social groups, and not into those that are already here and those that are new citizens. It is important not to follow those who, with coldness and even hatred in their hearts, claim the right to be called German for themselves alone and try to exclude others (Merkel, 2016).

In these unifying words, the Chancellor tried during the 2016 New Year's address to gather the people together behind the open-border policy. Her call for solidarity among the Germans in the context of a divided society over the question of migration was at odds with the assertive tone of her August 2015 press conference. Merkel's decision to welcome refugees and asylum seekers received at that time wide support from German society, which rallied behind her famous phrase: 'We have accomplished many things – we will accomplish this!' (Merkel, 2015).

But as Chancellor Merkel later deplored, German society has since become more deeply polarized between pro- and anti-immigration opinions (Spiegel, 2016). Two events exacerbated the division and overturned a part of the public opinion. First, there was the Paris terrorist attack in November 2015, where a Syrian passport presumably used by a refugee was found near a body. Second, the growing concern about the existence of a

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[3] The Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF) is an agency of the Federal Ministry of Interior. One of the BAMF's responsibilities is to carry out the processing of and decisions on asylum applications.

refugee 'problem' (a category conflated with migrants, all of whom were assumed to be Muslims) was further intensified after mass sexual assaults and muggings were reportedly perpetrated by North African migrants during New Year's Eve of 2016 in Cologne and other German cities. Across Europe, terrorist attacks have been systematically exploited by rightwing parties for the purpose of renouncing the right of asylum. In Germany, this hostility, visible both in public discourse and within members of the political class, including Chancellor Merkel's own ranks in the CDU/CSU, led to increasing disavowal of her initial movement of generosity towards migrants.

In its efforts to tighten legislation regarding asylum, the German government and several political parties displayed 'political expediency' at the expense of basic ethical responsibility of granting protection to the displaced (Matheis, 2015). The 2016 proposal of a new asylum legislation made by Merkel's cabinet (Asylpaket II) illustrated well this mindset. The Asylpaket II resulted from a negotiation process involving the ruling coalition party partners: the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Among other restrictions added to the asylum law, the package aimed to suspend the possibility of family reunion for holders of the status of subsidiary protection[4] for two years. However, after having agreed to the asylum reform proposal, the SPD coalition partner picked up on a detail that it claims was not part of the first draft of the negotiated bill. The detail in question extended the suspension of family reunion to unaccompanied minors as proposed by the CDU. CDU members were irritated that their SPD counterparts rejected this specific provision after approval. Eventually, this specific language concerning unaccompanied minors was removed from the family reunion suspension (Deutsche Welle, 2016). However, this episode is indicative of the fragility of the foundational humanitarian justifications for granting asylum. While basic requirements such as the non-refoulement principle are usually respected, the practice of politics often trumps ethical considerations.

More generally, and beyond this unfortunate episode, these political deals reflect the state of mind that prevails in current German and EU context: the preference for frenzied accumulation of new regulations that gradually condition and restrict the duty to provide protection as stated in the international refugee regime. The reform of Germany's asylum policy has had indubitable effects on the country's capacity to provide protection to people seeking refuge. Indeed, examining the currently largest groups of asylum seekers by country of origin, some clear trends in the decision practices by the BAMF concerning asylum applications emerge. According to the European Asylum Support Office (EASO)[5], the refugee recognition rate for asylum applications of Syrians, Iraqis and Eritreans was, throughout 2015, above 80 % (EASO, 2016). However, for Afghan applicants, the rate was around 30 % (BAMF, 2016), a difference that very likely reflects

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[4] The subsidiary protection scheme has been defined in Article 2 (f) of the European Council Directive 2004/83/EC of April 2004 (European Union Law website: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32004L0083). According to the Directive, subsidiary protection is a status that is granted to third country nationals and stateless people that do not qualify to receive refugee status, but who would still face "a real risk of suffering serious harm" if returned to their country of origin. The holder of subsidiary protection is not a refugee.

[5] The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) is a EU agency created in 2011 to enhance cooperation between EU Member States in the field of asylum and assist them in their processing of asylum applications.

the position of the Federal Ministry of Interior that certain parts of Afghanistan were safe enough to send back a number of Afghan applicants (Die Zeit, 2016). In 2016, the situation was significantly different: the number of subsidiary protection statuses was much higher at the expense of the refugee recognition rate (see figures 1.a-d).

In the first month of 2017, this trend in the practice of providing protection to asylum seekers continued irrespective of the insecurity and violence prevailing in the applicants' countries of origin. Although Germany decreased the level of protection of migrants much later than most EU Member States, it has progressively caught on with its neighbors in the past year. Consequently, the asylum application outcomes have become increasingly detached from the situation in the applicant's country of origin. For example, the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs dissuades its citizens from traveling to any Iraqi province, including Baghdad and regions within Kurdistan, because of the risks of terrorist attacks, kidnappings and crossfire (Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2016), and yet, asylum decisions do not reflect this situation since an increasing number of Iraqi applicants are being denied (see figure 1.b). As for Afghanistan, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for the Refugees (UNHCR) published in April 2016 an assessment of Afghan asylum seekers' protection needs. The document argued that Afghan males of fighting age are particularly vulnerable because they risk being forcibly recruited by the Afghan Local Police or anti-government armed groups, some of which could be affiliated with the Islamic State. Overall, the UNHCR adds, the situation deteriorated in Afghanistan in 2015 (UNHCR, 2016a). The trends toward increased restrictions in providing asylum is not likely to reverse itself, especially amidst declining popular support for migrants after the terrorist attacks that occurred in recent months.[6]

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[6] In July 2016, a young Afghan asylum seeker attacked passengers on a train near Würzburg. That same month, a Syrian refugee registered in Bulgaria set off a bomb outside a tavern in Ansbach. A deadlier attack was perpetrated in December 2016 at a Christmas Market in Berlin when a denied asylum seeker from Tunisia drove a truck into the crowd.

Figures 1.a-d: Asylum Application Outcomes in Germany

Figure 1.a: Syrian applicants

Figure 1.b: Iraqi applicants

Legend:
Refugee status
Subsidiary protection
Refusal

Figure 1.c: Eritrean applicants

Figure 1.d: Afghan applicants
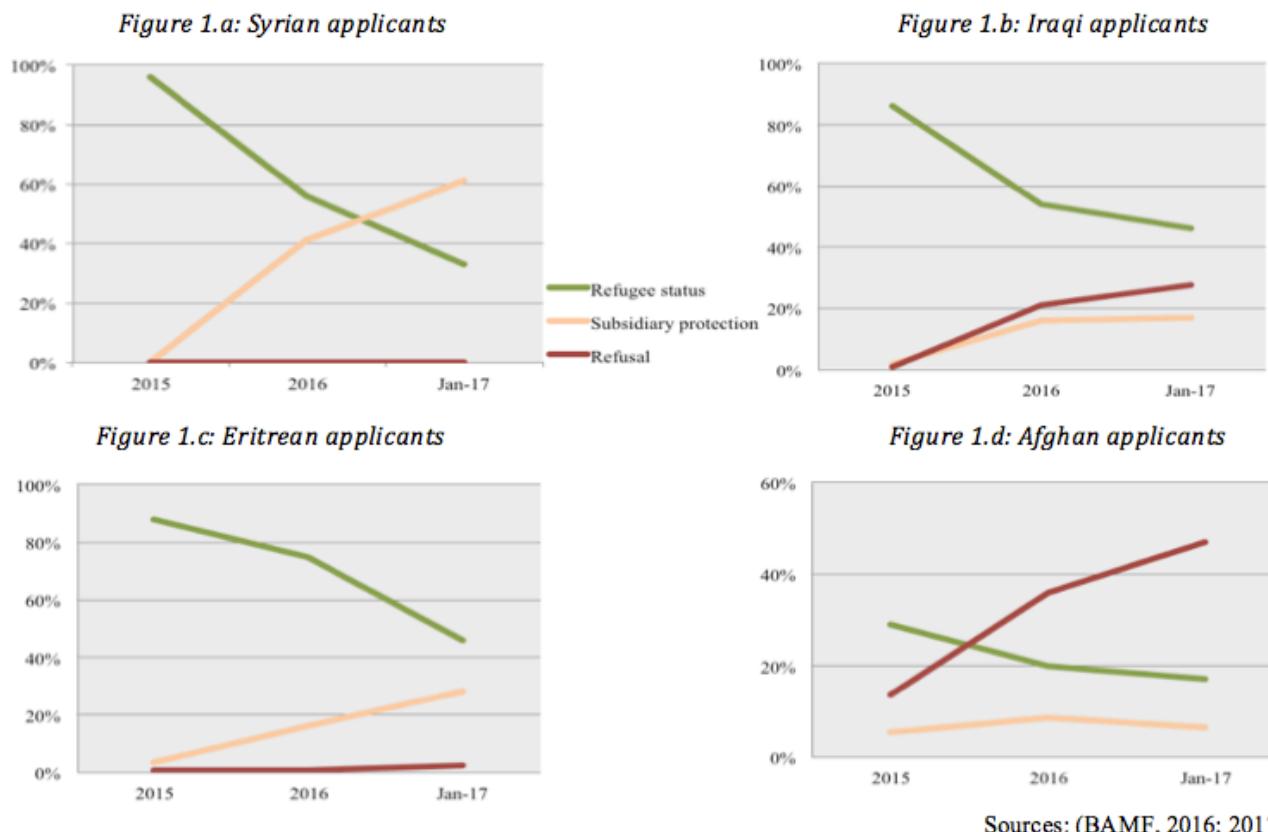
Sources: (BAMF, 2016; 2017)

Increased restrictions on asylum policy constitute expedient anti-immigration practices to contain arrivals of new migrants. The administrative practice of increasing the difficulty for asylum seekers to obtain protection is less a rejection of the Refugee Convention and more a refusal to consider denied applicants as subjects of its provisions. The pattern of asylum denials and the granting of subsidiary protection statuses reviewed earlier suggest a conscious refusal to recognize many applicants as legitimate recipients of protection as stated in the Convention. Instead, they are categorized as cases lying outside of the Convention's framework. In other words, the current trend in processing asylum requests in Germany increasingly disregards applicants' exilic journey as a legitimate claim for protection. As I explore later in this chapter, this highly selective hospitality is sustained by a disregard for applicants' own subjectivity on the journey, which prevents them from providing narratives that could challenge restrictive asylum practices.

Normalizing Exceptions to the Right of Asylum

The proliferation and normalization of the 'crisis' discourse, framed alternatively as a crisis of refugees, of migration, of the EU, or even of humanitarian aid, saturate the public space with rhetoric on the 'unprecedented' flow of migrants (Dumont & Scarpetta, 2015) and the necessity urgently to adopt last resort measures of management and containment (European Commission, 2016). This leaves little space for the media,

politicians, and the bureaucracies in charge of processing asylum requests to acknowledge alternative narratives of migration. On the contrary, exceptional categories emerge from the 'crisis' discourse that justifies categories such as the bogus asylum seeker or the expansion of the list of third safe country (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2017). These reconfigurations of the regulatory framework allow the asylum processing bureaucracies increasingly to situate applicants outside of the norm established by the Refugee Convention.

The right of asylum is a basic human right that is generally accepted as self-evident in the sense that its invocation has no other justification than itself (see the Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). It is all the more fundamental that it is supposed to be upheld by the international community as a protection of last resort. As a result, its universality purports to transcend the *Raison d'État* or any other political imperative, and so expresses an ethical requirement that becomes law whatever the situation may be. This means that all human beings can appeal to the right of asylum as members of the human community. This naturalist conception of the right of asylum is in open confrontation with the positivist perspective that understands it in terms of juridical and constitutional principles.

The incompatibility of these two visions has been compellingly illustrated by Hannah Arendt in her chapter "The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man" (Arendt, 1958). In that essay, she criticized the abstractness of the "Man" to whom the Universal Declaration of Human Rights refers. She argued that this 'man' does not exist, since no human has ever lived outside of some kind of social order. As a witness of the 1930s and 1940s in Europe, she saw that when displaced Jewish populations – the stateless – had been deprived of their citizenship, the 'rights of man' did not substitute for them[7]. Contrary to the promise of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the loss of citizenship and the loss of political status were correlated. When cast outside of a political community, the 'man' is left 'naked'; that is, reduced to the mere biology of being human. The 'abstract nakedness of being human' (Arendt, 1958, p. 297) is covered by no protective rights in spite of the promise of eternal values made by the Declaration.

In *Homo Sacer,* Agamben steers Arendt's discussion of the abstractness of human rights toward the realm of biopolitics, and in so doing, makes explicit the relation between the sovereign power and the rights of man. He develops the concept of 'bare life' to describe what remains of an individual reduced to his or her biological features after having lost

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[7] It could be said that Hannah Arendt adopted a rather narrow historical framework when she argued that the stateless had absolutely no rights because (s)he belonged to no community. When she wrote *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, the 1951 Refugee Convention had admittedly not yet been signed. But in the modern era, and before the Refugee Convention, references to the right of asylum can be found in texts such as Article 120 of the 1793 French Constitution, which proclaimed a constitutional right of asylum: "Il [here the French People] donne l'asile aux étrangers bannis de leur patrie pour la cause de la liberté. Il le refuse aux tyrans"; or later with the creation of the Nansen Passport in 1922 by the League of Nations, which allowed refugees to travel to safety in the aftermath of World War I, when European states had almost normalized controls of population movements across their borders (Sassen, 1999, pp. 77-90). Yet, the point that Arendt made is not limited to the existence or not of a legal apparatus that protects refugees, asylees and the stateless. It is not the rights that she was interested in – abstract in her point of view. She was rather interested in the "right to have rights," which the stateless lose since they cannot take an active part in a political community.

all rights, including that of physiological survival. In the absence of an intermediate protective juridical status (such as the right of asylum), the individual's bare life is irremediably at the mercy of the sovereign power. Following Arendt's thinking, Agamben uses the concept of bare life to suggest that when in 1789 the French Revolutionaries wrote the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen," the addition of the word 'citizen' in the title could be interpreted as a reminder of the 'nakedness' of man when he is no longer a citizen member of a polity (Agamben, 1995; 1998). In other words, human beings are entitled to political rights and state protection so long as they are citizens of the state.

The power of the sovereign, Agamben argues, operates by isolating the bare life within each subject. As the subtitle of the book *Homo Sacer* hints, the relationship between the sovereign power and the bare life is characterized by capture. The mechanism of capture of bare life is carried out through structures of exception. Indeed, in its capacity to establish the juridical order, the sovereign power can also suspend it and thereby create a space of exception. For instance, migrants can be made stateless through geographic manipulation that create extraterritorial spaces where the law can be suspended and the legal status of migrants rendered ambiguous (Mountz, 2010).

However, these spaces of legal ambiguity are not always extraterritorial. It is indeed inaccurate to limit the production of statelessness by 'geographic design' (Mountz, 2010, p. 125) to the creation of Guantanamo-style sites located beyond the physical borders of the sovereign power. Instead of locating the space of exception within or outside the borders of the sovereign power, it can also be represented by the body of the migrant. For instance, during the interviews that I conducted with asylum seekers and refugees in Germany in summer and fall 2016, I came across terrible personal accounts that illustrate the suspension of juridical protection of stateless human beings. Yasin and Zainab, a young married couple that fled Syria, were among the many migrants who journeyed across the Balkans in summer 2015 to reach Germany. As they arrived at a refugee camp in Serbia, Zainab started to feel extremely ill. She and her husband had to enter the camp to obtain a registration document that would allow them to stay in Serbia legally for six months, thereby allowing them to reach the Hungarian border. However, they were asked by the Serbian law enforcement agents stationed there to first queue outside of the camp until the next day because the documents were given on a first-come, first-served basis. Yasin protested that they only asked that a doctor come and see his wife, but to no avail. Zainab and Yasin told me that the doctor in Serbia later informed them that she suffered an internal bleeding but he only examined her the next day, when it was their turn to enter the camp. Their misfortune did not end there, because once they arrived in Hungary, they were arrested and detained by the police. The reason for their detention was that the police found them in an area that was too close to the Romanian border, a very unusual place to be for Syrian asylum seekers who normally try to get to Germany through Austria. Yasin and Zainab could not explain that they were lost. The police released them three days later when they decided to believe them.[8]

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[8] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016.

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On a more general level, however, the protection practices described earlier in this chapter already constitute instances of exceptions. These exceptions are produced each time a decision is taken according to a specific interpretation of the law that privileges certain policy goals without consideration for the law upon which they should be based (Matheis, 2015). In other words, political expediency produces exception. Concretely, the receiving country creates new frameworks and concepts such as 'safe third country,' 'safe country of origin,' 'subsidiary protection,' or 'internal flight alternative,' which are either absent from the Refugee Convention or emerge from an extremely strict interpretation of its articles. These exceptions constitute attempts to curtail the right of asylum and emerge in an *ad hoc* fashion out of state practice of the duty to grant asylum. For instance, German Minister of Interior Thomas de Maizière alluded to the 'internal flight alternative' (IFA) in an August 2016 interview by arguing that there are regions in Afghanistan (usually Kabul) to which Afghan asylum seekers can be safely sent back.[9] The IFA concept is an increasingly used criterion of refugee status determination that helps the asylum officer decide whether the applicant has a relocation alternative in his or her home country (or country of habitual residence) instead of seeking international protection. However, it is a questionable concept because it is mentioned nowhere in the Refugee Convention, but rather stems from a very strict and non-humanitarian interpretation of the Convention's criteria, namely Article 1A(2) that defines a refugee (UNHCR, 2003). In the convention, a refugee is defined as an individual 'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (UNGA, 1951/1967). A strict understanding of this article could be interpreted to suggest that an asylum seeker makes an unfounded claim when his or her country of origin can provide the protection needed, but the applicant still wants to leave the country.[10] The IFA concept can become very problematic when it is used to achieve policy goals such as expediting asylum processing to alleviate the workload of the administration in charge or simply to reduce the number of granted asylum requests.

The problem of exceptions can only be solved by re-thinking the right of asylum. New frameworks for this right should dispose of both the transcendence of a universal ethical necessity (its humanitarian frame) and the judicial positivity (the political expediency) that characterize the practice of granting protection.

In the following sections, I draw upon Derrida to argue that hospitality enables re-imagining the right of asylum. For Derrida, hospitality is defined by two opposing tensions: the duty to offer hospitality unconditionally, and the necessity to protect one's home (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000). I argue that this internal conflict enables pursuing both the universal ethic of providing asylum as well as satisfying the necessity

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[9] See the interview given by Minister of Interior De Maizière to the newspaper *Der Tagesspiegel* (August 14, 2016). A full transcript of the interview can be found here: www.tagesspiegel.de/politik/thomas-de-maiziere-zur-fluechtlingspolitik-niemand-hat-gesagt-wir-schaffen-das-mit-links/14008358.html

[10] In principle, countries cannot use IFA to prevent asylum seekers from lodging an asylum claim. On the contrary, the IFA criterion is part of the refugee determination status, meaning that it can only be used once the claim to asylum has been made.

to translate hospitality into positive state laws.[11] Hospitality not only guarantees the protection of the asylum seekers' bare life, but it also politicizes migrants by allowing them to have agency and, thus, produce their narratives in the public space of the receiving country.

Hospitality: From Transcendence to Immanence

When he wrote *On Cosmopolitanism*, Derrida proposed a new conceptualization of the right of asylum, which he called "the duty to hospitality" (Derrida, 2001, p. 4). However, centuries before the 1951 Convention for Refugees, Immanuel Kant laid the groundwork for the right of asylum and the obligation to provide protection to the displaced as we understand them today.

In his essay *On Perpetual Peace*, Kant conceived of the law of hospitality towards strangers as a legal obligation, rather than a philanthropic duty. More precisely, hospitality defined as the act of greeting the foreign other who does not belong to the same polity, is not, in Kant's view, an act of charity but a legal entitlement and duty that binds the guest and the host. He wrote: "'Hospitality' here indicates the Right of a stranger in consequence of his arrival on the soil of another country, not to be treated by its citizens as an enemy" (Kant, 2010/1795, p. 12). As long as the guest comes with no hostile intentions, he makes a valid legal claim to reside temporarily in the host country. However, Kant supposed that the right of hospitality was to be granted to individuals that were already members of a civil political entity (Benhabib, 2004).[12] It follows that stateless individuals are excluded from this legal scheme because they are outside of Kant's proposed cosmopolitan federation of sovereign states. Or, as Seyla Benhabib puts it: for Kant, the right of hospitality is "the space between human rights and civil rights, between the right of humanity in our person and the rights that accrue to us insofar as we are members of specific republics" (Benhabib, 2004, p. 27). So, for Kant, the protection of human rights relies exclusively on a pre-existing legal status. This view runs counter to Arendt's argument for a universal norm that guarantees to all the right to have rights (Arendt, 1958, p. 296).

Although Kant was not more specific regarding the obligations of the host toward the guest, the current international regime for refugees and asylum seekers echoes his essay centuries later. Most remarkably, Kant added an essential condition to the right of hospitality: the host cannot deny entrance to a foreigner (endowed with legal status of citizenship) if it would lead to the demise of the stranger (Kant 2010/1795, p.23). The principle of non-refoulement of the Geneva Convention is a direct reflection of this condition. Unfortunately, contemporary principles of providing protection and conditions

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[11] Similarly, Thomas Hobbes argued that the law of nature and civil law are related in these terms: "The law of nature and the civil law contain each other and are of equal extent. For the laws of nature, which consist in equity, justice, gratitude, and other moral virtues on these depending, in the condition of mere nature (…), are not properly laws, but qualities that dispose men to peace and to obedience" (Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan (*1651), Part II, Book XXVI, p.164).
[12] Kant's supposition stems directly from his understanding of inter-state relations as a reflection of inter-citizen relations (i.e. from various polities). For instance, international peace is, according to Kant, transitively conditioned by peace between human beings living side by side.

of non-refoulement are often violated or at least mitigated by countries that agreed to the Refugee Convention and have, thus, recognized their obligations toward people seeking refuge. It is therefore important to critically review the shortcomings of Kant's right of hospitality in order to consider a different way of granting it and protecting migrants.

Kant's considerations on hospitality significantly influenced the current regime for refugees, asylum seekers, and the stateless, precisely because his arguments aimed at endowing hospitality with an international juridical status that would have to be respected everywhere. Kantian hospitality was, however, limited to the right of visitation, never the right of residence (Benhabib, 2004). In addition, it excluded private hospitality, which is today governed by the law and potentially results in the emergence of 'the crime of hospitality.' The gesture of hospitality made to irregular migrants may be an offence liable to punishment by law. For instance, instances of criminalization of hospitality took place in France (under the no less problematic label 'crime of solidarity') against two Frenchmen who helped (i.e. without a payment in return) undocumented migrants enter and stay in France illegally (Morenne, 2017).[13]

The subordination by the state of hospitality and, subsequently, the right of asylum, to its laws and principles as in the example mentioned above does not stray too far from Kant's views. Following Kant, hospitality has been subjected to transcendental laws and principles such as a common body of international norms that strive to maintain peace between nations. This framework inspired the 1951 Refugee Convention. However, the principle of state sovereignty also governs hospitality. In fact, as I discussed earlier, the international regime that establishes nation-states' duty to grant protection has been almost totally eclipsed by states' concern about the security risks that foreigners may represent. Hospitality is ultimately a human ethical value and, as such, deserves to be critiqued and constructed from an immanent position. Such immanence is reached by directing our analytical focus on that stranger who comes, not only as a potential threat to the city, but also as a likely member of the host polity. It is eventually the subjectivity of the migrant, that is, the meaning he ascribes to the migratory process, from the causes of mobility to the journey into and the integration within the host society that is the object of the hospitality gesture.

Running counter to Kant, Derrida's interest in hospitality was not motivated by a quest for recovering a lost ethicality, but rather in revealing the limits of the ethic itself.[14] Therefore, his analysis does not lead to the proposition of an alternative set of governing moral norms, but to the disclosure of hospitality's aporia. In this way, Derrida provides the answer to the question: what makes hospitality impossible and necessary? Derrida's analysis does not end with the rejection of hospitality. Instead the very conflict within hospitality keeps it going and justifies the necessity and urgency of its re-instatement in

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[13] Pierre-Alain Mannoni, a French researcher, was arrested in October 2016 because he transported three undocumented Eritreans from Italy. The Nice Criminal Court cleared him on January 2017 because of a 2012 law that grants criminal immunity to citizens who convey undocumented migrants without a payment in exchange. The other case that received widespread media attention was that of Cédric Herrou, who helped about 250 migrants cross the Italian-French border. On February 2017, the court in Nice found him guilty of assisting illegal border crossings and fined him €3,000.

[14] The same can be said about his essay *On Forgiveness* (Derrida 2001).

asylum and migration policies that typically only recognize the severely restrictive framework of the *Raison d'État.*

For Derrida, the aporia of hospitality is located in the contradiction between 'conditional' and 'unconditional' (or absolute) hospitality (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000). Unconditional hospitality is governed by the absolute "Law of hospitality" that not only concerns relations to the guest, but more generally all human relationships. The Law of hospitality is "*abstract, utopian, illusory*" (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 79) because it says that no matter what the circumstances are, the host must greet the guest without asking him questions, not even his name and origin, nor asking him for something in exchange. Hospitality is an unconditional sacred gesture that is too valuable to be hindered in any way:[15] first, it enables a new community to emerge from the encounter with the foreign other[16] and, second, it reminds us of the exilic essence of human beings (today's host may become tomorrow's guest). In addition, unconditional hospitality not only relinquishes the need to know who the stranger is in order to determine whether he or she will be a threat to the host, it also implies that the host will renounce mastery over his of her domain, such that the guest may be able to claim ownership over the host's possessions. Hospitality makes possible a competition between the host and the guest concerning resources owned by the host. This possibility also concerns granting access to public space if we understand it as a social arena in which members compete for political rights and representation.

It is, however, the competitive potential of unconditional hospitality that renders it impossible. According to the Law of hospitality, the host must maintain and protect his home in order to be able to receive guests and make their stay comfortable, both politically and economically. Being hospitable implies possessing power to host and control over the 'house.' Hospitality is, in this sense, a claim of ownership; otherwise, hosting would logically not be feasible. If the host lacks control and ownership over the house, then (s)he cannot offer hospitality. But if unconditional hospitality means that the respective positions of master and guest can also be reversed, that is, the foreigner can claim mastery over the house, then the overthrown host can no longer be hospitable. Derrida concludes from this that being hospitable also requires maintaining guests under control, even by force, so that ownership of the place remains in the hands of the hospitality-giver. The risk embedded in unconditional hospitality justifies building fences and walls, restricting the mobility of migrants, or excluding certain targeted groups from

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[15] The sacredness of hospitality should not necessarily be understood in a religious way, but as a gesture that radically pertains to interactions between humans. Yet, most examples of hospitality are framed within a religious, rather than a secular context.

[16] The emergence of a new community from the encounter of the host and the guest is often cited in religious texts as a result of hospitality. In the Quran for instance, the ninth verse of the 59th chapter titled Al-Hashr (The Exile) relates the warm greetings of the Prophet and his followers by the inhabitants of the city of Yathrib (later re-named al-Madinah) to the point of giving up what they own but in the hope that a new and stronger community would emerge. The verse in question goes as follows: "But those who before them, had homes (in al-Madinah) and had adopted the Faith, show their affection to such as came to them for refuge, and entertain no desire in their hearts for things given to the latter, but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their own lot. And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity." Besides being welcomed as a foreigner-liberator by the inhabitants of al-Madinah, the Prophet, shortly after his arrival, becomes its foreigner-legislator, by drafting the Constitution of al-Madinah, which served as a legal basis for the co-existence of a multi-religious community (specifically Jews, Muslims and Pagans).

crossing borders because they are deemed to be potential enemies that cannot be socialized into guests. Is ingrained within hospitality is a temptation to become inhospitable.

The (im)possibility of the ethic of hospitality does not constitute, for Derrida, a rationale for its rejection. In an interview published in *Paper Machine*, he gave the following answer to a question on ethical aporia and undecidability: "there is no decision or responsibility without the trial of aporia or indecidability" and he later added that "[t]here is no 'politics' of law or ethics without the responsibility of a decision." (Derrida, 2005, p. 128). In order for the decision to be just, it is not enough for it to apply existing norms or rules, but it must take the absolute risk, in each individual situation, of rejustifying itself (Derrida, 2005). Undecidability is not a paralysis, but is instead the political responsibility to decide always outside of an existing normative framework. Risk is nested in hospitality. But trying to exclude risk means rejecting political action and decision. Inhospitable practices, such as the closure of borders and the strengthening of walls are not only attempts to exclude definitively the anguish of risk, but they also constitute an abdication of the responsibility to decide.

Consequently, hospitality does not choose the one who comes according to the level of potential risk to the receiving society that his/her presence may bring. What remains is the relationship that the host and the guest can develop.

Hospitality to Restore Power Balance

Conditional hospitality is governed by the pre-existing laws of the hosting authority and is hospitable in name only. It has no compunction about selecting those who are granted access and sets a tolerance threshold beyond which the foreigner's visit can be denied. Contrary to its unconditional counterpart, conditional hospitality is fundamentally concerned with the potential threat of letting foreigners enter the country. It is precisely the risks of destruction of the host society by a foreign element that Kant wanted to avoid. As mentioned earlier, he restricted the right of hospitality to visiting rather than to residence. Interestingly, Kant used the example of the European colonizers who took over governance of the recipient states to justify his point (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 22). Derrida did acknowledge the risks inherent to unconditional hospitality, but he also expressed skepticism about Kant's solution. Kant argued for establishing conditions for granting hospitality, because a state of non-hospitality would lead to perpetual warfare between people. However, it could also be argued that Kant disposed of hospitality altogether when he limited it to a right of visitation. Kant's concerns have not faded with time, since it is still the case that foreigners often endure constant control of their mobility even for a short trip by means of visa policies, crime control, security checks at airports, and reinforced border surveillance.

Consequently, it is possible to characterize Kant's project of perpetual peace as illusory because it counts on nation-states to be hospitable when they usually do not surrender their mastery over control of their populations and the territories. Conversely, populations can be hospitable. In this regard, Philip Hallie provided perhaps the best example to date

of private hospitality. In his book *Lest the Innocent Blood be Shed,* Hallie provides a poignant account of the singular events that took place in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, a poor mountain village in the French Alps, during the occupation of France in World War II. Under the leadership of the village Pastor, the inhabitants of Le Chambon provided refuge to some 3,500 fleeing Jews (Hallie, 1979; 1981). Underlining the significant risks that the inhabitants of Le Chambon took, Hallie makes the same claim as Derrida regarding the danger of unconditional hospitality for the host. However, in this specific case, the danger does not come from the stranger directly, but is a result of providing them protection when the ruling authority could punish acts of generosity towards a population that was declared enemy or undesirable. Even though the cruelty involved during World War II towards fleeing populations is unmatched by the predicament that asylum seekers and refugees may face as they "trespass" on European countries, the risks of providing sanctuary to Jewish refugees in Le Chambon is nonetheless roughly analogous to the potential prosecution of individuals today who commit the crime of hospitality. In this sense, the act of hospitality becomes an act of resistance against state power. Hallie argued that hospitality, as an act of civil disobedience,[17] is an escape from a cruel relationship, which he characterizes as a power differential that deprives the dominated subject of his dignity.

Hallie's analysis of cruelty is very close to the concept of structural violence developed earlier by Johan Galtung (Galtung, 1969). Structural violence operates through relations of power that circulate through society and are materialized in intertwined social practices (such as sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, etc.) and structures (such as state institutions) that reduce the capacity of individuals to act and safeguard their dignity. Both Galtung and Hallie argued that challenging these relations of power through social and political transformations, notably towards greater emancipation, can alleviate structural violence. For Hallie, such a transformation is achieved through hospitality as an equalizer of pre-existing power imbalances.

However, one can often confuse hospitality with an act of kindness (Hallie, 1981). It is important, thus, to keep in mind that Derrida did not conceive of hospitality as a new ethical norm guided by generosity towards the stranger. Besides, as Hallie argued, kindness does not lead to the liberation from a cruel relationship and could even reinforce it. It does not change the structure of the guest-host relationship and its underlying power imbalance. Hallie wonderfully captured this idea when he wrote: 'The sword does not feel the pain that it inflicts. Do not ask it about suffering' (Hallie, 1981, p. 25).

To understand fully the distinction between kindness and hospitality, one should consider the point of view of the stranger and assess how agency can be restored. For instance, the

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[17] In *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (*Notre-Dame de Paris*) Victor Hugo provides a remarkable example in literature of a similar act of civil disobedience through the provision of refuge that challenges decrees and judgments of the sovereign authority. Esmeralda, a beautiful Roma, is accused of witchcraft and the murder of Phoebus, the Captain of the King's Archers. As a result of torture and thinking that her lover Phoebus is dead, she confesses everything that she is accused of in spite of her innocence. On her way to the gallows, the Bell-ringer of Notre-Dame Cathedral Quasimodo, who is feared by the townspeople because of his congenital deformity, swiftly takes her away to the Cathedral for refuge as the law of sanctuary stated. In the Middle Ages, Hugo explains, every city in France had designated places of asylum. Once inside that space of exception, even criminals were considered sacred and the judgments suspended. But if the asylees set one foot outside of the sanctuary, the law of the sovereign was restored.

political intervention that is hospitality is quite removed from the "acts of kindness" showcased by Frontex's rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea: the act of preventing migrants from drowning is carried out within unbalanced power relationship while hospitality would offer an escape from the migration management regime. Hospitality is, ultimately, an invitation extended to the migrant to enter and integrate with the receiving society's public space on a basis of equality with the host. The opening of the public space to migrants is the political expression of Derrida's Law of hospitality, for it enables the foreigner to exert power within a shared democratic space to promote individual flourishing.

Hospitality provides the foreigner who wishes to stay the ability to speak and act on public space. These abilities are, according to Arendt, fundamental elements of the human condition, as they enable individuals to become members of a political community (Arendt, 1998). It is at this point that Arendt's and Derrida's arguments intersect. The politicization of hospitality, rather than its reduction to acts of kindness that only cater to biological life and survival (bare life), is achieved through the ability to express one's own subjectivity. For Arendt, the expression of this subjectivity is meaningful insofar as it entails recognizing the others' "unique personal identities" (Arendt, 1998, p. 179) in contrast with the homogenizing and essentializing processes of categorizing and sorting migrants. Hospitality is, therefore, a process whereby the migrant gains access to public space through the expression of his/her subjectivity or voice in order to regain agency – the sovereign over the self.

The very expression of this voice, Derrida then adds, is an essential feature of unconditional hospitality because, rather than highlighting the potential enmity and cunning within the foreigner, it is his/her singularity that is at stake, or what Arendt describes as 'single individuals, unique, unexchangeable, and unrepeatable entities' (Arendt, 1998, p. 97). Such singularity does not reside in the name and origin of the stranger, but in his subjectivity. Unconditional hospitality contradicts both the utilitarian pro-migration and the anti-migration securitization discourses. Both discourses categorize and sort migrants along various moral criteria, such as good and bad migrants and those who deserve hospitality/kindness and those who do not. Listening to migrants enables state bureaucracies and institutions to subject them to a power relation where the knowledge accumulated from their narratives constructs them as recipients of policy intervention. Migrants can be categorized as a resource for the receiving country in the form of labor that can be cheap, skilled, expendable, or proper to an inescapable niche. Conversely, they can be categorized as sources of insecurity and then be illegalized or deported. In either case, the relationship to the foreign other is not intersubjective because it is predicted upon (or possibly strengthens) a power relation that undermines agency.

The following section discusses an inhospitable practice through the instrumental use of language. The practice is the 'hearing' stage of the credibility assessment procedure that asylum seekers coming to Germany (and Europe generally) must undergo. As part of refugee status determination, hearings enable asylum officers to listen to the applicants' migratory story in order to determine whether they qualify for asylum. I base my argument on reports and legal texts available, but also on personal accounts that I

collected from refugees and asylum seekers that I interviewed. Although the EU has established a set of good practices for its credibility assessment procedure, I limit my discussion to the 'Anhörung' (the hearing) as conducted by the BAMF between 2015 and 2016.

Before proceeding, I would note that I do not claim to have an exhaustive knowledge and experience of the work of the bureaucracy in question. Critiques of the credibility assessment procedure, including this chapter, would benefit greatly from an ethnographic study of the intimate workings of the administrations and personnel that carry it out.[18] In addition, in my critique of the hearing, I distinguish between the bureaucracy, here represented by the BAMF, and what the asylum and migration law requires. In other words, even though the BAMF and asylum officers have discretion over their decisions on asylum applications, I understand that their tools, that is, the laws, regulations and policies, circumscribe this discretion. Simply put, if the discourse is itself tyrannizing, a bureaucracy would not be immune to it. Therefore, the purpose here is not to essentialize or dehumanize the personnel of the BAMF. Finally, I acknowledge that the BAMF has been dealing with a volume of asylum applications for which it was not adequately prepared. That being said, it remains problematic, as argued throughout this chapter, to exceptionalize flows of migration at a time when it is recognized everywhere as a global phenomenon. I therefore take issue with the cynicism of the credibility assessment procedure that bases itself on extremely stringent interpretations of the Refugee Convention criteria and produces frameworks of exceptionalization.

Practicing Inhospitality: The Case of the 'Hearing'

The hearing at the BAMF is one of the most important steps on asylum seekers' migratory process because it is at this stage that they can defend their claim for obtaining refugee status in Germany. Upon arrival in Germany and after having officially applied for asylum, an asylum seeker receives a letter with an appointment for a hearing. During the hearing, an employee of the BAMF, most likely in the presence of a translator, will interview the applicant to establish whether Germany should grant asylum. Applicants must relate all the events that forced them to leave their country of origin (or of habitual residence) and what they would risk if they return. Generally, the credibility of the asylum claim is established when the BAMF employee is convinced that the applicant had to flee because a war zone or persecution (by state or non-state actors) threatened his/her life directly and personally. The interview is in principle audio-recorded and transcribed.[19] The applicant may add corrections to the transcript before signing it. To this end, the translator usually reads the transcript to the applicant at the end of the interview.

The BAMF encourages applicants to come prepared to the hearing. Other associations of volunteers that asylum seekers come in contact with in reception centers also advise them

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[18] For instance, Alison Mountz (2010) conducted a brilliant ethnography of the Canadian office for immigration.
[19] According to the Asylum Information Database (AIDA), the interview is not transcribed verbatim but rather summarized. AIDA reports that the audio recording is deleted after the applicant signs the transcript.

to prepare their "stories"[20] and make sure that they provide accurate information as well as evidence whenever possible to increase the likelihood of producing a convincing narrative. In an information film about the BAMF hearing supported by a German film funding institution, the voice-over narration suggests that applicants should 'write [their] story down and practice it by telling it to others' (Asyl in Deutschland, 2016). While such advice may be useful, it implies that the language of the hearing is that of objectivity, factual precision, and consistency. This approach fails to acknowledge, however, that the memory of events and the consistency in the narration of stories can be seriously mitigated through the re-telling of the possible traumas suffered during the migratory journey (Puvimanasinghe, Denson, Augoustinos, & Somasundaram, 2014; Barry-Murphy & Stephenson Jr., 2015; Matheis, 2015). The applicant's story must convey the required information and facts with the same accuracy that is usually expected in a trial court.

It is thus hardly surprising that refugees and asylum seekers from Syria and Iraq that I approached during my field studies have never referred to the Hearing by its official name. Even when I proposed the Arabic translation of the word 'hearing' in the interviews,[21] they did not readily associate it with the asylum application process in question. Instead, they consistently refer to the hearing in Arabic as محكمة (*maḥkamah)*, which means 'the court.' In referring to the hearing as a justice court, they emphasize the institutional, legal, and bureaucratic contexts that surround the sharing of their narratives, but which remain subliminal in the name "Anhörung." For applicants, there is little doubt that this stage of the asylum process is akin to a court hearing, where a civil servant of the BAMF formally listens to evidence as well as pleadings in order to decide whether asylum shall be granted. Technically, the BAMF is the German asylum determining authority and the room where the hearing is conducted is not a court of law. The BAMF reports to the Ministry of Interior, not of Justice. But the likening of the BAMF to a court is an indication of how applicants perceive, understand, and experience this process. Applicants behave like defendants in a trial where they need to establish through accurate facts and information the legitimacy of their asylum claim against suspicions of being categorized as bogus asylum seekers. By representing it as a trial, applicants point to the relation of power between the BAMF investigator and the foreign "defendant."[22]

In this specific context, listening to the story of asylum seekers is not an act of intersubjectivity but the instrumental use of personal narratives to assess the alleged deservingness of asylum applicants in accord with the judgments of credibility assessors. Therefore, the hearing is an inhospitable practice of the asylum process that places

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[20] During my field study in Germany, I asked asylum seekers and refugees if they prepared in any way before going to the BAMF hearing. None of the interviewees replied that they rehearsed or prepared their stories in any way.

[21] It can be translated as follows: جلسة الإستماع (*jalsat al-istimā')*

[22] It is nonetheless important to concede that asylum applicants in Germany never have to prove every single element in the case that they make during the hearing. The Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on the standards for processing asylum applications uses the word 'substantiate' such as in Article 4 (a) and Article 5. Yet, although the threshold for substantiating a claim is, by definition, lower than that of proving it, it remains unclear how the BAMF investigator makes the difference between the conditions for refugee status - "a well-founded fear of persecution" – and the subsidiary protection status – "real risk of serious harm" (Articles 2 (f) and 15 of the Directive). This question is essential because the level of protection granted is different for each status; recipients of the subsidiary protection status are not refugees and so are not subject to the Refugee Convention.

migrants in a 'subaltern' position. Their voices are not received on their own terms, but on those of the credibility assessment procedure.

The inhospitality of the hearing is caused by what Derrida described as "the first act of violence," that is, the imposition on the guest of the host's 'language' (Derrida & Dufourmantelle, 2000, p. 15). Of course, the imposed language is not that of a people or a nation in the sense of a linguistic and cultural community. During the hearing, applicants can make their case in their native language and a translator[23] is present to translate the applicant's narrative into German. The imposed language refers instead to a mode of speech that is inevitably jargonic to the uninitiated who has not mastered the legal and bureaucratic language of the credibility assessment procedure. In the in-depth interviews that I conducted with asylum seekers and refugees, respondents often related their journeys in a very different mode of speech than what was expected of them during the hearing. In the interviews I conducted with them, references to the Refugee Convention were extremely rare. Instead, they would often argue that they deserved protection by highlighting their inherent value to society as hard-working and honest future members of the community rather than as victims who fled persecution and/or war. They would dwell on the risks and imminent dangers of their journey as another source of their legitimation rather than stressing living conditions in their home countries. Consequently, preparing for the interview typically required that asylum seekers re-arrange their migration narrative to the particular mode of speech of the hearing.

In this process, the expressive dimension of language, as presented in Benjamin's essay "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man" (Benjamin, 1996), is replaced by a strictly communicative, factual, and instrumental function. The capacity of a language to convey particular meanings such as the significance of the migratory journey gives way to the pragmatic yet inexpressive communication of information. The inhospitality of the process lies in the reduction of the stranger's voice to the administrative classification of persecution. It matters little that the hearing is conducted in the native (or preferred) language of the speaker. The interpreter in the room must in reality translate the applicant's statements twice: first into the national language in which the assessment of the application is conducted, and second into the legal-bureaucratic jargon of the credibility assessment procedure.

It can hence be said that the gesture of hospitality is, in essence, discursive since it implies a certain relationship to language. Such relationship is, in return, inherently political because it is sustained by a specific power imbalance. In other words, the terms of language used, be they cultural or jargonic, are established through a political imposition that maintains or establishes an unbalanced power relation between the one who names, or categorizes, and the one named/categorized. In the case of governing migrants, the power to name grants the ability to tell a good from a bad (finance-interested) migrant, a legitimate asylum seeker from an asylum shopper. The act of hospitality, in contrast, enables the guest to name himself/herself within the host community.

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[23] When necessary, the presence of a translator is mandatory according to section 17 (chapter 4 on Asylum procedures) of the German Asylum Act and the BAMF is, in principle, responsible for recruiting one.

The outcome of the hearing is fundamental because it determines whether the applicant will receive protection and which kind. Yet, the outcome depends on many contingencies that are not necessarily related to the applicant's performance. In fact, random elements such as the mood of the asylum officer, the training that he or she received, the educational background or previous professional experiences, the applicant's city of origin, country of transit, date of entry in the receiving country, and so on, play a part in the decision-making process on asylum applications.[24] As Matheis argues: 'it seems prudent to assume that refuge seekers who gain asylum do so as a result of chance and random accidents largely outside individual and/or institutional control' (Matheis, 2015, p. 27).[25]

The credibility assessment procedure is inherently discursive. Asylum applicants are required to adopt its specific mode of speech. During the hearing, applicants need to convince the application reviewer of their good intentions and the truthfulness of their reasons for flight. To comply, subjects must submit their narratives to the production of a discourse of truth that is not different from Foucault's idea of the confessional (Foucault, 1980b). Through the confessional discourse (Mills, 2004), the operation of power is clear: applicants engage in a self-production of compliant subjects with no other choice than adopting the grammar of the credibility assessment procedure, otherwise they risk being denied. The relation of power established contradicts Hallie's definition of hospitality and Derrida's proposal, in the name of unconditional hospitality, of a restriction of power over the home and thus over the stranger.

Conclusion

In spite of the disenfranchising practices of the provision of protection, it is still possible for migrants to regain agency. In this chapter, I have argued that hospitality as an intersubjective act relating the host and the guest on a basis of equality enables the opening of the public space to migrants who can, thus, emerge from their victimized and silenced categories. By re-claiming their narratives, they can effectively exercise the agency to propose other subject positions than those assigned to them by state bureaucracies, the media, politicians and non-profit organizations. In this sense, the confessional discourse can be made less oppressive when it is practiced outside of the context of establishing one's legitimacy in relation to institutionalized norms and categories of migrants as produced by administrative texts and practices. The

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[24] The Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC), a watchdog organization that monitors the respect of human rights, provides juridical assistance to the victims of human rights abuses by state actors, including asylum seekers and refuges. It published in 2013 a "training manual" on the benchmark standards for the credibility assessment procedure. In the report, they list "circumstantial factors" (any temporary characteristics of the environment of the hearing that could influence the state of the decision-maker such the moods and emotions, whether the interview is conducted before or after a break, etc.) and professional background of the decision maker as elements that can influence the decision-making process and, thus, the outcome of the process (Gyulai et al., 2013).

[25] This is actually another critique that could be addressed to the European Council Directive 2004/83/EC on the provision of protection to refugees and asylum seekers. Although the directive puts a stronger emphasis on substantiation of claims by asylum applicants than on proving them, it still assumes that the success or failure of the application depends solely on the diligence and efforts of the applicant.

confessional discourse can become a tool for politicizing migrants by no longer being something to be subjected to, but a vehicle to express a necessary voice and, thus, exert influence on interpersonal relationships with the host community.

Hospitality, as conceptualized here, operationalizes the political agenda to empower migrants, especially refugees and asylum seekers. This is achieved by overcoming the opposition between unconditional and conditional hospitality, rather than having to maintain one over the other. The Law and the laws of hospitality pull in opposite directions. The former leads to an idealism often conveyed by cosmopolitanism whereas the latter grounds the Law to a more state-centric (some would say realist) form of hospitality. Yet, both sides entail extreme representations of either romanticized or dehumanized migrants that must be kept in check.

But at a more fundamental level, the tension within hospitality materializes in the necessarily conflictual relation between the host and guest. At either extreme of this tension, that is, the domination of either the Law of hospitality or the laws of hospitality, interactions between the host and the guest cease altogether. If hospitality is governed by the sovereign power's *Raison d'État*, there is no guest anymore; conversely, if borders and border control are disposed of altogether, there is no host anymore. In either case, both mirroring figures vanish since they only exist in relation to each other. Consequently, this chapter suggests conceiving hospitality not as an articulation of the relation between the host and the guest, but in terms of the political conflict located in the power relation between a receiving society and the incoming community. The proposed political understanding of hospitality, that is, enabling migrants also to express their voices in the public space, restores its role in articulating power imbalance. Migrants who request protection from the receiving society run the risk of being "kindly" accepted as mute victims expected to play their role of passive recipients of humanitarian aid. In the framework discussed here, this is a "welcoming" act of inhospitality that keeps migrants excluded from the social field in which they can enact their political agency. As an intersubjective act, hospitality is not to be understood as a yardstick to measure how welcoming a society is; being hospitable and unwelcoming can happen simultaneously. It is possible, however, to exercise a hospitality that surpasses the mere relationship between hosts and guests and becomes the political ability of a receiving society to enable re-expressing voices of migrants.

Chapter III – Construction of Narratives: Mobility and Self-identification[1]

> "And He taught Adam all the names"
> Chapter 'The Cow', Verse 31, *The Quran*

> "In the first place, we don't like to be called 'refugees.' We ourselves call each other 'newcomers' or 'immigrants.'
> Hannah Arendt, *We Refugees* (1994, p.110)

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I proposed a conceptualization of hospitality, not merely as the moral foundation for countries to grant protection to asylum seekers and refugees, but fundamentally as a normative political condition that enables migrants to produce discourse alongside the native members of the receiving society. However, the transition from access to discourse as a norm, to the pragmatic production of and contribution to discourse, is not self-evident and needs to be further explored. If hospitality enables overcoming the incapacity to channel one's voice in the public realm of the host society, the subsequent issue is the ability to contest effectively the subject positions that are imposed by the migration management regime[2] and articulate new subjectivities that could demarginalize migrants.

This chapter first explores the process of subjectivation performed by migrant categories as single signifiers. Thereafter, it discusses the possibility of challenging ascribed subject positions through counter-narratives. The aim of these narratives is to enable the transition from migrants as subjects of disenfranchising political categories to narrators of their own migratory journey.

Migration Discourse and Migrant Narrative

From Discourses to Subjects

In social science, discourse analysis studies the relationships among texts, systems of meaning, and a social context characterized by a specific structure of power. The notion of 'text' used here is not limited to a coherent series of written and spoken utterances, but to any (co-)authored arrangement of meaning. This weaving of meaning embedded in any textual object[3] (also including buildings, maps, visual representations, but also values, categories and ideologies) is primarily a 'mode of power relations' (Nickel, 2009, p. 384). For example, airports are filled with textual formations such as the security

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[1] The data discussed in chapter III, IV, and V were generated in a field study conducted according to the research protocol IRB#16-540, approved by the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB).
[2] See introduction.
[3] Roland Barthes has argued that the word 'text' comes etymologically from the Latin word *textus* signifying 'that which is woven' like a tissue or a fabric (Barthes, 1977, p. 159).

discourse that governs the behavior of travelers.[4] Analyzing discourse involves, as Foucault explained, the exploration of various processes that transform individuals into subjects (Foucault, 1982). Subjects do not pre-exist discourse, but are produced by it. In any given discursive field, there is a range of available subject positions that can be filled by individuals throughout their daily social interactions. It is only when an individual starts to identify with the meanings woven together by discourse that (s)he occupies a subject position. For instance, a travel visa is a discursive practice that is granted to subjects who embody the preset characteristics of a *bona fide* traveler. Conversely, those who refuse to, or cannot, showcase the appropriate skills involved in applying for visas are problematized as risky and undesirable travelers. It follows that discourses are not abstract notions but material objects that perform actions. Discourses weave and weld the social world around us (Butler, 1993). Because of their materiality, discourses can also be disputed and individuals have the possibility to choose to refuse subject positions, especially if they are disenfranchising.

The contestability of discourse depends on its 'textuality', meaning, whether there is an acknowledged point of view, or author(s), of the text. A naturalized discursive practice becomes authorless or a-textual when it is established as an objective and factual discourse devoid of any "authorial choices" (Nickel, 2009, p. 397) that structure individuals into desired subject positions. To illustrate how the notion of authorless claims to objectivity become marginalizing, one can look at the neoclassical interpretation of human mobility in which migrants become undifferentiated flows that are either pulled into or pushed out of labor markets. In reducing migrants' decision-making processes to rational choices and their rationality to naturalized binary considerations of income maximization or shocks to income minimization, their agency is degraded to the subject position of an economic adjustment variable oscillating between surplus and deficit.

Nevertheless, the structuring power of discourse does not prevent 'the great refusal' (Marcuse, 1991, p. 63), that is, the autonomy of the subject vis-à-vis the migration management regime and the possibility to be unruly. This chapter assumes that migrants have the ability to refuse subject positions that do not correspond to their processes of self-identification. Without neglecting the Foucauldian relationship between the sovereign power and the social body that describes how individuals internalize subject positions and self-discipline themselves (Foucault, 1995), I explore here avenues for contesting the categories and representations that undermine agency.

Autonomy

The "autonomy of migration" approach has gained traction in critical migration theory in the past decade and has been the object of continuous application (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007; Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008; Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013; Rothe & Salehi, 2016) and theoretical refinements (Scheel, 2013a; 2013b). It was first formulated by French economist Yann Moulier-Boutang in a 1992 interview given to

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[4] For other examples of textual formations in airports, refer to the first chapter of Sarah Sharma's In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics (2014).

the Italian journal *Padova Edizioni* (Moulier-Boutang, 1993; Scheel, 2013a). Moulier-Boutang has hypothesized that migrants exhibit autonomy vis-à-vis policies and regulation of migration control in the sense that migration is a force that transforms borders. Migration and asylum policies designed and implemented by countries can be restrictive and even repressive – the point of this approach is not to negate their existence and effects – but they nonetheless remain inefficient in exerting full control over migratory movements, that is, in generating or deterring them according to set objectives. The idea that these movements retain their independence from state policies means that migration cannot be understood merely as an effect of or a reaction to economic processes or some incentives in receiving and/or sending countries – the usual mechanical system of forces assumed by the push-pull framework. The autonomy of migration approach proposes a perspective on migration that emphasizes the subjective dimensions of migration.

In relation to the inherently collective and transformative nature of the migratory journey as conceptualized in this dissertation, the autonomy of migration approach further emphasizes human movements as a force engaged in a dialectical struggle against the practices of its management. Wrongly misunderstood as a theory of the unmanageability of migrants, the autonomy of migration refers in reality to a heuristic device that enables the exploration of migrants' subjectivities as substitutes for the perspectives of state policies, borders, surveillance technologies and, more generally, the discourse of migration management (Scheel, 2015). In addition, because of the transformative impact of migration on social spaces (country of origins, transit and destination)[5], the autonomy of migration approach construes mobility not as an aggregation of discrete migratory journeys, but a collective movement that actively changes borderscapes and sovereignty (it is not the autonomy of migrants but of migration). As I will discuss in the next chapter, the migratory journey is essentially undertaken as a collective enterprise. Therefore, I will argue that the journey is a collective movement, both in its discourses and practices, which thus constitutes a radical opposition to the individualizing discourses and practices of the migration management regime that operates through sorting and hierarchizing.

Finally, the autonomy of migration approach posits that movement takes precedence over mobility control although it is not independent from it. Rejecting firmly any theoretical framework that views movement as a strictly *a posteriori* decision conditioned by socio-economic or (geo)-political factors, this approach conceptualizes migration as constitutive of sovereign control over borders and human mobility. In turn, the attempts to manage migration lead to ever greater juridical exceptions and restrictive re-interpretation of clauses and principles in international treaties, the deployment of more sophisticated and intrusive technologies of surveillance and detection (Broeders & Dijstelbloem, 2016), the normalization of encampment as an ordinary operation of migration management can be construed as admission of failures against the unrelenting attempts to migrate. In other words, circumventing the autonomy of migration precipitates increasingly repressive and deterring policies (Moulier-Boutang, 2004).

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[5] See Chapter IV and VI.

The autonomy of migration approach is instrumental in re-centering migrants as the subjects and examining the migratory practices and tactics deployed as well as the hardships endured to become less governable subjects of the migration management regime. In this sense, considering migrants' agency does not equate to being oblivious of the impacts of the regime's attempt to control mobility. This approach focuses on migrants' subjective outlook on mobility and seeks to understand how they may extract their bodies from sovereign control and surveillance (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008). These 'strategies of imperceptibility' (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007) correspond to what Deleuze and Guattari have called 'lines of flight' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) that allow individuals to emancipate themselves from the 'rigid lines' of the apparatus of power.

The notion of line of flight echoed throughout the interviews that I conducted with asylum seekers and refugees for this research. Most of the interviewees related how they tried to dodge fingerprinting once they arrived in Greece (and later in Hungary) in order to evade being subjected to the Dublin Regulation, even to the risk of being detained. Some of them decided to throw away their passports so that they could not be identified by European border enforcement agents and consequently become liable to deportation. Lines of flight do no indicate an itinerary, or a ready-made path, but an ability to liberate oneself from the territory, that is, a process of becoming imperceptible and clandestine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). However, sustaining the idea that migrants can escape the governing practices of the migration management regime should not be understood as an attempt to romanticize them. Rather, it is a call for deconstructing the view that migrants can either be a source of labor or victims of unfavorable socio-economic and political factors. Migration is not solely a byproduct of these factors, but it is also a paradigmatic force that generates and transforms the modalities of its own control. In other words, the autonomy of migration ethos is not necessarily motivated by a lingering humanism but it argues that there are varying degrees of relative autonomy, including the ability for migrants also to play a role in their subject positioning.

To this end, Deleuze and Guattari argue that individuals must be able to follow their own lines of flight through becoming clandestine (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). As a matter of fact, all of the interviewees had, at some point of their flight, taken itineraries that enabled them to escape the controlling predictability of the state apparatus. This escape from the migration control apparatus into the unknown was for some interviewees actually quite literal as they related similar episodes of a long and dangerous walk through the Western Balkan woods at night when they could not see anything. During this claustrophobic portion of the journey, many interviewees related how they united their bodies with other migrants, by holding hands and walking in a single file, to become one imperceptible body.

Here is a brief interview excerpt from a narration of the 'forest episode' in Northern Serbia shared by Syrian refugee Amina:

> [Amina]: We went through the woods. Inside, you couldn't see a thing at
> all. How did we walk? Each grabbed the hand of the person next to him. If

you let go, you're lost. I was holding my brother's hand and my brother someone else's behind him.[6]

Syrian refugee Zainab's story was similar to Amina's. To avoid being left alone in the darkness of the forest, each person in her group would regularly ask the individuals beside them for their names to ensure that they remained with the same people.

> [Zainab]:…in the forest, we were about a hundred people, so how could we organize? There could be anyone among us to rob us. So we were walking and grabbing the hand of the person behind us. And you make me hear your voice: 'You, what's your name?' 'My name is this or that.' A hundred people, we don't know each other…we met on the road. 'And you? What's your name?' 'My name is Zainab.' So every now and then, you ask the person next to you. Imagine that my husband was next to me and I couldn't see him.[7]

The "becoming migrant" as a "becoming imperceptible" could not have been better captured by the interviewees' narratives. But it is not enough to claim that migration displays some measure of autonomy from the policies that seek to restrict and manage it. Migrants may have a subjective point of view on their mobility against the structuring discourse of migration management, but it is also important to consider what their subjectivities are made of and, thus, be able to recognize migrants' processes of identification and how they break into different subject positions. The previous chapter explored the condition for resisting certain subject positions imposed by border control apparatuses, the media, politicians, and even international organizations and so proposed hospitality as an intersubjective act that opens the discursive field to newcomers' narratives. However, the link between hospitality and the capacity of migrants to express their own subjectivities requires the conceptual formalization of what is meant by narrative.

From Subjects to Narratives

Before narratives, there are first the events. The story acknowledges these events, which is the first act of interpretation, and then arranges events into a simple, discrete, chronological succession. Then, the plot re-arranges these events so that it creates continuity between them. The plot adds themes, emotions, and necessity to the contingency of the chronological sequence of events. The plot is already an attempt at creating a discourse because it adds meaning to objects that exist independently from the logics that are attached to them, but it is not yet a narrative. Only when the plot is communicated to an audience that it becomes storytelling, or a narrative.

Migrants are *homo narrans* who engage in self-identification by composing storylines concerning different episodes of the migratory process in order to frame them into an intelligible and sequential unfolding of events. The practice of storytelling is not

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[6] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, Hamburg, September 2016.
[7] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016

spontaneous, but inherently social and, thus, collective. Producing narratives is active, because it implies arranging various texts into a systematic storyline. But it is also interactive, because arranged meaning is not a solitary mental activity but emerges from the dialogical process of interacting with others, either through thinking, reading, or narrating (Bakhtin, 1986). Producing narrative is always a social activity that performs a particular story in order to fulfill a specific social purpose.

The production of narratives is, however, not free from discourse structuring. A narrative is always a specific re-arranging of the archive, the historical and cultural *a priori* of a given period (Foucault, 1972). As a result, there is only a finite number of subject positions made available to the narrator by the various circulating discourses. Because narratives are always re-workings and re-arrangings of an archive, the autonomy of narrators is tempered by the possible meanings with which one can identify[8]. For instance, none of the interviewees in this research produced themselves as free-floating world citizens advocating the abolition of all restrictions to mobility. As will be seen in the following chapter, many interviewees even internalized discourses of migration management such as securitization of certain migrant categories. Nevertheless, study participants also never assumed the subject position of the victim-refugee (and never appealed to the Refugee Convention); some of them even explicitly rejected the subject position of refugee. It turned out that through their journey narratives, many interviewees self-identified as skilled and diligent migrant workers, promising students or open-minded Muslims, good fathers and mothers, and so on. Overall, it emerged from the interviews that the overarching positioning that they offered was that of deserving immigrants. It follows that narratives are strategic devices for self-representation. In this respect, the hearing stage of the credibility assessment procedure, which I explored in the previous chapter, should not be understood as a site that enables asylum applicants to produce their own narratives. Indeed, they were already slotted in a specific subject position that considerably limited their capacity to engage in a chosen re-arranging of meaning. As previously established, the hearing is not an intersubjective dialogical act and so does not enable the production of narratives, but rather the internalization of and compliance with a pre-existing discourse.

The following section explores the discursive mechanism whereby hospitality as an intersubjective communication not only enables the inclusion of migrants' narratives within the discursive field, which I discussed in the previous chapter, but most importantly, how it can structure the public discourse on migration by supplying alternative narratives. In this discussion, I describe the epistemological stance that sustains the examination of narratives.

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[8] Anne McNevin makes a similar argument, although she also rightly argues that there is possibility for irregular migrants to break free completely from the proposed subject positions. Basing her work on case studies of acts of contestation carried out by migrants, she identifies three levels of contesting subject positions. The first is merely an 'extension of formal legal status' (McNevin, 2011, p. 127), whereby contesting migrants seek to open the receiving society's membership norms to also include them. In the second level, migrants challenge 'the representational dimension of citizenship' by questioning taken-for-granted meanings of citizenship, often defined along national, racial or gendered norms (p. 99). In the final level of contestation, migrants will try to 'rupture […] the very conceptual vocabulary that limits our understanding of political belonging' (p. 127). The first levels of contestation still negotiate existing subject positions, either through an extension of an existing legal framework or by enriching an unquestioned norm with new modes of inclusion. It is really the last level of contestation that exists outside of the included meanings.

The Epistemology of Hospitality

The understanding of hospitality previously proposed is justified simultaneously from a normative political theory of democracy and a critical discourse analysis perspective. In democratic theory, the public sphere, as a space for the production of public opinions, is considered inclusive and meaningful when it is premised on what Fraser called 'normative legitimacy' and 'political efficacy' (Fraser, 2007). Normative legitimacy refers to the degree of publicness of individuals' political voice. Political efficacy describes the capacity of public opinions to be politically effectual and engage state action. Deficits in normative legitimacy and political efficacy vis-à-vis the public sphere prevent migrants from producing meaningful narratives that can be recognized as such and potentially becoming discourses that also structure their subject positions in the receiving society. As they are deprived of meaningful speech and action, migrants are dehumanized and lose uniqueness (Arendt, 1998). The discourses of flow or wave of migrants discussed in the introduction are partly instances of this dehumanization. Such discourses facilitate policy practices that disregard migrants' basic rights.

Critical discourse analysis adds a crucial focus on the relation between power and language. Conceiving of the public sphere as a competitive space for the production of discourse, migrants' voices are neither recognized by the host society – lack of normative legitimacy – nor channeled – lack of political efficacy. The public sphere is, thus, an order of discourse, or an arena, where discourses circulate to impose temporarily a specific meaning upon a social object. Generally access to this field is not without difficulty since power relations sustain it. For example, in his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France titled "The Order of Discourse," Foucault began by commenting on the context of his own discourse: he was afraid to speak in an institution that is as prestigious, imposing, and steeped in history as the Collège de France (Foucault, 1981). Because every society seeks to control the production of discourse, it is strenuous to enter the discursive arena and fill it with one's own voice. Fairclough adds that the arena is also a site for constructions of meaning that contribute to (re)producing and maintaining relations of domination (Fairclough, 1992). The conceptualization of hospitality as an invitation into the discursive arena to enable migrants to narrate is, from a critical perspective, a political intervention that aims to resist and revise the power imbalance between citizens of the receiving society and non-member residents. Hospitality enables contestability. Contestability is the ability for migrants to become politicized, that is, agents with the ability to contest the texts that lead to their marginalization.

But for hospitality to play its political role as a discursive practice, it must establish an intersubjective rapport with migrants that is characterized by a basis of equality and framed in terms of political efficacy and normative legitimacy. In the previous chapter, I argued that intersubjectivity was rendered impossible through inhospitable practices of processing asylum seekers' application such as the 'hearing' procedure that are designed to assess the credibility of applicants coming to Germany. For instance, the refugee status determination as exercised in the EU transfers a dominant form of subjectivity onto migrants that establishes a hierarchy of subject positions going from legitimized migrants

– the refugee and *bona fide* asylum seeker – to the least desirable candidates – bogus asylum seekers, asylum shoppers, economic migrants and/or illegal migrants. These subject positions are sustained by binary normative labels produced or implied by legal and bureaucratic systems such as forced/voluntary, legal/illegal, moral/immoral that create migrant subject positions that correspond to legal-bureaucratic norms. Not only does the dominant subjectivity of the migration management regime refuse the singularity of migrants and prevent them from bringing along their own migratory context, but it also leads to an ontological fallacy that prevents understanding migration and, thus, causes disenfranchisement of individuals.

In the previous chapter, the question of decontextualized migrants emerged from the impossibility for asylum seekers during the hearing to bring in their own context to their migratory narrative. The imposed context was that of credibility assessment, which adopted a proper juridical-administrative speech genre that established the way asylum applicants would be evaluated. This chapter further explores the process of decontextualization by addressing other elements of the migration management regime, namely the Refugee Convention and the technologies of border monitoring.[9]

In addition, it is also crucial to address the ontological gaps that characterizes the public discourse on migration and imposes categories and labels, namely subject positions, upon migrants that slot them in suspect identities. Labels such as '*bona* fide asylum seeker', 'bogus asylum seeker' (or asylum [s]hopper), and even 'refugee' are governing denominations that silence the point of view of migrants and, thus, their access to (co)-construction and publicization of meaning. The power to name is, in this sense, tantamount to the power to create: the creative mechanism being the enunciation of a signifier that becomes a state of reality to which one must conform.

The power that names takes position vis-à-vis the object, but also puts it in relation to other objects and, as a result, imposes a competition between labeled subjects. For example, legitimate asylum seekers deserve humanitarian assistance, but the asylum shopper is an immoral migrant who takes advantage of others' humanitarianism (Kmak, 2015). These normative labels are enunciated in national discourses, relayed by media and politicians in the public sphere without necessarily having a legal legitimacy[10] or

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[9] Decontextualization of migrants is explored in the final chapter from the point of view of Deleuzian philosophical geography.

[10]Communications by international organizations and human rights advocacy groups argue that labels such as 'bogus asylum seeker' or 'illegal migrant' have no legal basis and are logically fallacious. See for instance this webpage on the website of the UNHCR: http://www.unhcr.org/asylum-in-the-uk.html. There are alternative denominations that equally seek to delegitimize asylum seeking and justify restrictions to the provision of protection as stated in the 1951/1967 Refugee Convention, but that are officially recognized. Labels such as 'asylum shopper' or 'asylum shopping' designate migrants and migratory practices viewed as illegitimate and immoral. These categories are commonly used in the European Commission's official communications, such as this press release: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1246_en.htm. The EU's European Migration Network (EMN), whose goal is to keep EU institutions and Member States informed about the state of migration, publishes an online glossary where it defines asylum shopping as follows: "asylum-shopping has no legal definition, but it is used in an informal sense and also in Commission communications. It is often used with a negative connotation, as it implies an abuse of the asylum procedure through the lodging of more than one application for international protection in different member states" (definition available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary/index_a_en.htm).

matter-of-factness.[11] In spite of the multiplication of migrant categories, the public discourse on migration collapses possible migrants' subject positions into uncomplicated and binary oppositions. For instance, it is very common to associate asylum seekers and refugees with involuntary migration, or irregular migrants and voluntary migration. The refugee journey is also represented almost systematically as a movement away from danger into safety rather than taking into account the inherent violence that often saturates migration (Bank, Fröhlich, & Schneiker, 2017). More generally, the public discourse on migration does not make sense of the 'super-diversity' of migrants and migratory practices (Vertovec, 2007; Debnár, 2016), but imposes what Young called the process of 'thinning' (Young, 1981), that is, the rarefaction of discourse through the process of excluding what is deemed irrelevant to be part of discourse (Foucault, 1981). The process of exclusion implies the power to produce orthodox statements to fill the discursive field[12] with the approved meaning at the expense of less accepted or less disciplined discourse. Such is the case, for instance, for the UN Refugee Agency when it mobilizes the legitimacy of its authorship to assert the difference between refugees and migrants along the binary distinction between voluntary/forced movement (UNHCR, 2016b). The intention of the UN Refugee Agency is certainly not to marginalize migrants and further compromise the possibility for exercise of their agency, but to defend the Refugee Convention against discourse and practices that seek to restrict the protection of asylum seekers and refugees. Yet, in its attempt to clarify a complex situation, the UN Refugee Agency thins out narratives of refugees and asylum seekers. Yet, refugees and asylum seekers too are actors of their flight because, like any migrant, they premeditate and plan their migratory journey. Unfortunately, the dichotomy between migrants and refugees plays a significant part in legitimizing the category of 'illegal asylum seekers/refugees.' This concern will also be explored in this chapter when discussing the narratives collected from the interviews with migrants. For now, it is worth pointing out that all of the subjects that participated in this research came to Europe irregularly as asylum seekers, transited through non-war zones and were, nonetheless, exposed to a great level of violence throughout their migratory journeys.

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[11]Indeed, the proliferation of the trivialized denomination 'legal migrant' is, from a juridical point of view, fallacious, since only acts can be illegal and not people (Pace & Severance, 2016). Similarly, a bogus asylum seeker is a misnomer because a person cannot be 'illegally' seeking refuge. Article 14, §1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights entitles every human being "the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution." If the application for asylum has been rejected, then the individual could be deported. It is only when the individual remains without permission in the country where his/her application has been denied that (s)he ceases to be an asylum seeker and becomes an irregular migrant. One cannot be simultaneously an asylum seeker and an irregular migrant.

[12]The discursive field is not a reference to the notion of 'field of discursivity' developed by Laclau and Mouffe (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). For the two authors, the field of discursivity refers to every possible meaning combination that is excluded from sanctioned discourse. It is in a certain sense similar to Borges' short story *Library of Babel* in which the books encompass every possible permutation of the letters of the alphabet, the comma, the period and the space that can be arranged in 410 pages. The field of discursivity is the library of Babel for excluded discourses. I prefer not to use the concept developed by Laclau and Mouffe because it is unclear whether the field includes every meaning arrangement possible, even if it is meaningless, or if all meanings, even the excluded ones, are also structured by coherent discourse. My interest in intersubjectivity entails that I am interested in examining narratives that can be articulated and recognized in existing terms of discourse. I do not consider excluded discourses to be off-topic. On the contrary, they convey meanings that are at odds or simply different from what is conventionally accepted. Unlike many books in Borges' library, migrant narratives do not run the risk of being unintelligible – such discourse would be inept in effecting political demarginalization. Finally, I prefer to use the expression 'discursive field' or 'discursive terrain' to highlight the competitive nature of the arena where discourses co-exist and compete for fixating meaning.

In this process of discourse rarefaction, migrants' narratives become excluded from the discursive field, as does their capacity to complicate and contest the discourse of the migration management regime. Therefore, to the transcendental and orthodox point of view on migration, intersubjective hospitality opposes an immanent exploration of migration through the examination of the narratives produced by migrants themselves. The immanent point of view of migration is what Mezzadra and Neilson so aptly described as 'seeing like migrants' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 166). In addition, a critique of any hegemonic system of meaning must attempt to be as comprehensive as possible in order to contribute effectively to the multiplication and complexifying of discourse on migration in the social field. Therefore, in order to adopt an immanent perspective on migration and enrich the discursive terrain, I examined migrants' narratives by focusing on their journeys. In other words, the object of this study is to increase the knowability of migrants as they underwent their journeys, viewed as a transformative 'exilic process' that connects and collapses together the places of origin, transit, and settlement (Benezer & Zetter, 2014). The knowability of migrants, and more specifically in this study, of asylum seekers and refugees, involves investigating the becoming rather than taking for granted the matter-of-factness of a being migrant. It means considering that migrants are individuals first, each with their own singularity.

From an epistemological standpoint, however, there are two important caveats that must be kept in mind. First, the conceptualization of hospitality as an intersubjective act and the subsequent collection of migrants' journey narratives in the interviewing process rest on the assumption that migrants' interests, motivations, and processes of identification are not given but are rather constructed through a dialogical process. The knowability of migrants as individuals who negotiate borders to avoid being slotted in marginalizing subject positions, requires recognizing that they are entitled to name who they are and aspire to be. The dialogical process that enables this process of identification should not be understood as a Socratic dialectic whereby an immutable and transcending truth is to be (co)discovered. Because of the discursive framework of this study, the meaning of migrants emerges through dialogue (in the broad sense of the term). In this case, hospitality establishes a basis of equality between speakers-writers and listeners-readers, who actively and interactively co-create meaning. The epistemological stance of this research follows a hermeneutic of dialogue where discourse produces a greater understanding of the narrator. The co-produced narrative helps constitute a counter-discourse that challenges silencing and dehumanizing subject positions. Migrants' narratives can thus constitute examples of resistance to power.

Second, although this chapter argues that resistance to the hegemonic discourse of the migration management regime is carried out through an intersubjective communicational act, it does not follow Habermasian 'discourse ethics' (Habermas, 1990). Habermas can be considered the contemporary thinker who went the farthest to devise a theory of dialogical communication, but the fact that he proposes rational discourse as the only vehicle that grants access of the excluded to the public sphere does not correspond at all to discourse analysis as an epistemology and its critical work against marginalization and power imbalance. This is not to say that Habermas' critique of instrumental rationality has no emancipatory agenda. It is, however, problematic that emancipation, as the

possibility for individuals to become free subjects who also participate in their own positioning through discourse, is located in rationality. It would indeed be difficult to locate resistance to power in rationality while conceiving discourse as a struggle for fixating meaning. Habermas' conception of discourse as the good argument that leads to uncoerced consensus assumes a morality in the rules of engagement, but it fails to neutralize power. On the contrary, the conception of discourse in this dissertation subscribes to the Gramscian notion that hegemony is discursive and that disenfranchising subject positions can be reproduced consensually. Following Foucault's conception of power as a dispersed and normalizing force that produces docile bodies, the emancipatory value of hospitality, as an attempt to restore power balance, does not include, as Habermas does, considerations about the institutional and procedural aspects of communication. Rather, this study is interested in exploring the localized power dynamics that construct subject positions as objects of political intervention and to explore counter-narratives that enable disempowered and depoliticized individuals to resist hegemonic discourse. Emancipation is located in confrontation, rather than in rationality.

The intersubjective essence of hospitality mitigates the process of subjectivation enacted by the migration management regime. Subjectivation results from the articulation of discourse and institutional practices, which encompass the refugee status determination and the credibility assessment procedure. These practices fall themselves within an institutional framework, namely the Refugee Convention, that governs the provision of international protection. As a text, the Convention articulates a certain discourse on mobility that excludes migrants' own subjectivities on their journey.

The following section draws upon Michel Foucault's analysis of the author-function to examine the mechanisms for structuring migrants' narratives and how these, in turn, constitute unorthodox statements as they run against the rarefaction of discourse.

Author-function: Authorship and Text Unity

In an essay titled "What is an author" (Foucault, 1998), Michel Foucault questions the relationship between discourse and authorship. Foucault's goal was not to discern whether the author is the originator of the text, but to examine what happens in the social space, understood as a space of power relations, where the attribution of a text to an author is determined. The sovereignty of the subject over the text is itself determined by rules and systems of discursive productions that govern, authorizing or excluding, the circulation of discourse. Foucault wrote:

'…these aspects of an individual which we designate as making him an author are only a projection, in more or less psychologizing terms, of the operations we force texts to undergo, the conditions we make, the traits we establish as pertinent, the continuities we recognize, or the exclusions we practice' (Foucault, 1998, p. 213-4)

Once uttered and constructed, authors of a narrative have little control over it, because they are necessarily embedded in a discursive field. It is afterwards that the text is

attributed to a constructed author. Again, the individual gains meaning from a pre-existing discourse, becomes a subject-author with a position and a status. In this regard, Foucault uses the term 'author-function' (Foucault, 1998) to designate this very subject position that the text-producing author comes to occupy.

Going back to the analysis of the credibility assessment procedure in the previous chapter, the hearing stage must be understood as a site for dialogical production of a narrative. I established earlier that narratives do not emerge in the minds of the narrator, but are co-produced by assembling and re-arranging multiple texts together. In other words, narratives are the result of intertextuality. Subsequently, the question of the author of the narrative emerges. This is an important interrogation for the purpose of this chapter, because the migrant's journey narrative is produced in a specific articulation of power and juridico-administrative practice that attribute to the narrator the subject position as the responsible author. Such attribution is deeply problematic, because there is indeed, as Foucault suggests, more than one author and, hence, more than one accountability. In the case of asylum seekers in the hearing, the success of the application is not a function of the sole performance of the candidate, but also the reception of the narrative by the asylum officer, which includes, as it has been shown previously, many contingencies.

During the hearing, there are two to three selves, 'I's, that construct the narrative. The first 'I' refers to the candidate who must perform a compelling narrative of persecution to convince the asylum officer of the well -foundedness of his/her application for protection. This 'I' is considered by the receiving country accountable for the outcome of the application. If (s)he produces a coherent narrative that fits the bureaucratic criteria for asylum and that is also substantiated with appropriate documents, then the application will be accepted. The second 'I' is the translator/mediator who makes the narrative intelligible to the asylum officer by translating it into the national language of the processing bureaucracy. He is considered neutral and has no added value to the "original" narrative. The third 'I' is the asylum officer who triggers the narrative of the applicant by asking questions (which are also translated into the applicant's language). The responsibility of the asylum officer is to be fair and unbiased, but also to abide by the regulations imposed on him/her by the bureaucracy that employs him/her. The examiner's impartiality and professionalism is assumed. In this situation, the author-function is assumed by all of these selves because of the juridico-administrative system where the narrative is embedded. In this multiplicity of voices, the sovereignty of the applicant over his/her narrative is diluted and we can wonder to what extent the asylum candidates really author their narratives.

During the personal interviews conducted for this study, the notion of sovereignty over one's own narrative emerged on several occasions, particularly in relation to the hearing. At this stage of the refugee status determination process that the production of narrative bears direct and significant effects on the issue of the migrants' journey. As a result, the struggle for narrative control is particularly salient to applicants. For instance, here is a short excerpt from an exchange concerning the role of the hearing between Madiha, an

Iraqi asylum seeker in her thirties who migrated with her husband and arrived in Germany in 2015, and me:

> Me: Did you prepare the story you were going to tell them at the trial?[13]
> Madiha: No. It was not a story to narrate, it is a story we lived. So what we experienced is what we told.[14]

In her answer, Madiha expresses ownership over her 'story' by emphasizing that she was the one who underwent the journey and its hardships, not the asylum officers. In her mind, it was not necessary to adapt her narrative to the credibility assessment format to make it more compelling. In her sentence, she implicitly rejected the possibility of a co-construction of narrative. For this reason, her claim that she did not prepare for the story should be taken with caution because it is very unlikely that interviewees do not think about their stories, discuss them with others, or hear about other stories that led to a negative or positive outcome. That being said, hearing of Madiha and her husband took place in September 2016, a few days before our interview. The couple was then awaiting the decision on their asylum claim, which came one month later. It was a rejection on the basis that their city of origin, Tikrit, had been reclaimed by the Iraqi government from the Islamic State for more than a year. The asylum processing office decided that they could safely return home.

From a discursive perspective, when an asylum seeker makes the claim of ownership over his or her narrative, it is an attempt to resist orthodox statements that are posited as undeniable truths. Consequently, truth discourses prevent the multiplication of other discourses and other meanings through other subject positions. This entails once again the rarefaction of what can be said of migrants and mobility and, subsequently, the way they ought to be governed.

Conclusion

The consideration of migrants' subjectivities, which is sustained by the epistemology of hospitality and the autonomy of migration approach, has two effects on migration research: first, it constructs the migratory journey as an object of research from the perspective of migrants; second, it equips researchers with epistemological and analytical instruments to criticize the arbitrary classification of migrants and its subsequent justifications for restrictive and repressive interventions on migration. The hierarchy that arranges the various categories of migrants corresponds to the levels of empathy or hostility displayed by the host society in the destination countries toward migrants. Conversely, the prism of the migratory journeys denaturalizes categories of migrants by considering the expressions of their subjectivity and by focusing on the collective dimension of human mobility. It thus becomes possible to understand the process of becoming migrant beyond the usual determinations of processes such as state policies or the economy. Such as research agenda could examine the constitution of migrants as subjects of the migratory journey across various contexts such as their social networks, as

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[13] During the interviews, I used the word 'trial' instead of hearing. See Chapter II.
[14] Interview with Sarhan and Madiha, Hamburg, September 2016

well as the borderscapes and the regulatory frameworks of transit and destination countries.

The following section discusses the contents of the journey narratives that I collected during my interviews with the migrants. As explained in the first chapter, once translated into English and transcribed, I coded the interviews to extract their most salient and significant recurring themes. The necessity to integrate the various interviews into a bigger narrative of the migratory journey entailed that each interview should be framed according to a specific narrative structure. Echoing the previous discussion on the imposition upon asylum seekers and refugees of marginalized and depoliticized subject positions by the public discourse on migration, I will show in the following section that the narrative structure of the migratory journey breaks on many levels with the usual representations of migrants. For this reason, it is important to consider the migratory journey narrative as a possible counter-narrative to the public discourse on migration in Europe.

Chapter IV – 'Your Name is "Refugee"': Migrants' Journey Narratives and the Challenge to the International Refugee Regime[1]

"If this myth is tragic, that is because its hero is conscious. Where would his torture be, indeed, if at every stop the hope of succeeding upheld him?"

Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*

One of the key elements that make cinema a preferred art form of millions can be encapsulated in the difference between story, plot, and narrative. The story is composed of the chronological succession of events, whereas a plot re-arranges these events and creates continuity among them. The plot creates a narrative out of a discrete succession of events. If the story is the unedited footage (or rushes in the cinema jargon), the plot is their organization and assembly into a single structure. However, the plot is not yet a narrative in spite of their similarity. The narrative is the storytelling and refers to the way the plot is communicated to an audience. A narrative implies, as discussed earlier, intertextuality, because it does not strictly represent the individual's personal story, but is always in dialogue with other stories, values, and discourses. In the interviews conducted for this study, there were many recurring discursive elements, one of them being the almost unanimous critique of the German bureaucracy. When asked about their relation to the German bureaucracy, interviewees would often claim that they had a very positive image of its efficiency and pragmatism before being confronted by it. Then, as they underwent asylum request processing, they often deplored the fact that the bureaucracy had 'no system' and that the decisions and length of the process obey no logical and readily recognizable pattern. This narrative is intertextual, partly because participants would often provide examples (besides their own) of people they know with similar circumstances who either had to wait less time than they waited for a decision, or were denied or, more often, had a different outcome.

It follows that narratives are a social practice whereby the narrator selects elements, events, and values from other discourses. The narrative is produced so as to comply with a certain accepted representation or meaning. In the example proposed above, interviewees disagreed with the discourse of German bureaucratic efficiency and fairness and offered opposing narratives of arbitrary and unfair processing of asylum claims. Beyond consideration of whether the discourse or the counter-narrative are true or not, it is the modes of representation that matter and the question of how the narrative is incompatible with a hegemonic migration discourse. This section discusses that concern.

My approach to the integration of the various "stories" collected from the study participants integrated notions of story, plot, and narrative in the sense that I approached the participants' responses as unedited recordings that needed to be re-arranged and re-told with a specific research agenda in mind, that is, to represent the narrative of the migratory journey as an alternative to the public discourse on migration. The attempt here

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[1] Refer to appendices A and B for, respectively, a profile of interviewees and their itineraries.

is to assemble dispersed subjectivities into a representation, in the sense of a proxy,[2] because the migratory journey narrative is not spontaneous. More precisely, each interview could be re-framed as a particular story arc that follows a certain narrative structure. From the perspective of this study, this approach is doubly justified. First, it is coherent with the epistemological stance of my research on migratory journey because, as I posited earlier, narratives are co-produced and co-created. The narrative structure approach to framing the journey emerges from the co-creative involvement of the interviewees and myself, who are directly engaged in arranging events into a plot and a narrative, but also the additional inputs of other discourses influencing their journey.

Second, the journey, as the object of this study, is re-constructed during the interviews as a powerful transformative process that involves several elements of storytelling. In addition, the journey is undertaken by protagonists who act upon certain motivations and psychologies and within larger social contexts. In accordance with the autonomy of migration approach, the participants are not viewed as passive individuals waiting for protection or being led by external processes to migrate. They chose to overcome the fear of the unknown and act upon their drive to leave the place where they lived. In choosing to undertake the journey, refugees and asylum seekers became a collective force of mobility that opted for illegality to reach Europe over the passivity of waiting for relocation and resettlement schemes deployed by the EU[3] or applying for a humanitarian visa.[4] Such solutions are designed to prevent migrants from undertaking a dangerous journey and, in the case of resettlement and humanitarian visas, propose an alternative to unauthorized border crossings. However, these alternatives take a lot of time to be processed and remain very uncertain. Therefore, many individuals prefer relying on their own capacity to reach the countries of their choice than passively awaiting the humanitarian benevolence of EU countries. Yet, the choice of unauthorized migration entails great risks related to the journey, not to mention the costs of hiring smugglers along the way. As protagonists of the journey, participants in this study were driven by goals and choices that put them in conflict with other migrants and individuals and, most importantly, the migration management regime from the country of departure to the country of arrival. The way participants cope with these conflicts, the skills and weaknesses that they exhibited constitute drivers of the plot itself.

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[2] I subscribe to Spivak's distinction between representation as *Vertretung* (substitution) and representation as *Darstellung* (portrait of). The representation as *Vertretung* implies the notion of authority that stems from the act of speaking for a subject (Spivak, 1988).
[3] Relocation is the transfer of asylum seeker and refugees from one EU Member State to another. In 2015, the EU Commission proposed relocating from Greece, Hungary, and Italy 120,000 persons in need of protection. Resettlement is the transfer into EU Member States of asylum seekers and refugees from outside the EU. In 2015 as well, the Commission proposed resettling 20,000 persons.
[4] Asylum seekers can apply for a humanitarian visa in the country of residence or a neighboring non-EU country. The visa procedure is supposed to be expedited and is reviewed at the place of the application, that is, before arriving in the EU. The acceptance of an application for a humanitarian visa is made on humanitarian grounds. Contrary to relocation and resettlement schemes, humanitarian visas are granted at the discretion of the country to which the asylum seeker applies.

Migratory Journey Modelization

In integrating each protagonist's own story arc into a bigger narrative structure, it becomes possible to increase the knowability of the journey experience and propose a counter discourse of the "summer of migration." The model of the migratory journey narrative that I propose here is, therefore, a heuristic device that enables grouping heterogeneous experiences into a communicable meta-narrative. However, in order to construct a model of the migratory journey, it is necessary to first conceptualize it. In this research, the concept of migratory journey is defined as follows: a collective movement that consists in a series of migratory practices across various temporalities and spaces in the attempt to maneuver through regimes of migration management and control. The journey is inherently collective for several reasons, which I will simply state here but explain in further detail in the rest of this chapter.

Based on the empirical research on the "summer of migration" that I conducted for this dissertation, the migratory journey is embedded in a larger context that is social as well as discursive. The migratory journey is done in a group of co-migrants that is formed either since departure or through encounters while on the move. This group is part of migrants' social networks and constitutes a vital source of help and solidarity throughout the journey. In addition, journeys are collective because they are embedded in a larger discourse that is both oral and digital. As soon as an individual decides to leave his or her country of origin (or of habitual residence), itself a decision that can be collective, there is a dialogical process that is engaged between the prospective migrant and the individuals who undertook their journeys before. Future migrants make their decision amidst stories on others' journeys that circulate in their social network, or ask for advice and assistance. Individuals can also benefit from the experience of others by consulting a digital infrastructure (social media, uploaded maps and itineraries, information on smugglers, borders) that is co-constructed by migrants themselves as they archive their journeys. Finally, the journey is a movement, but it is neither linear – from point A to B – nor is it strictly physical. The movement described by the journey also includes the mental projection of prospective migrants into the destination country when the decision to leave has been made. The journey starts before the actual departure as individuals who have decided to leave their country have already started to separate themselves from it. Symmetrically, the journey does not end with the actual arrival in the destination country.

Those elements that constitute the migratory journey must be included in the narrative structure that I propose below:

Figure 2: The Narrative Structure of the Migratory Journey

Climax of conflict /Turning point

Actions (toward the resolution)

Increasing tension

Obstacle/conflict

Decreasing tension

Resolution or denouement

Obstacle/conflict/actions

Obstacle/conflict/actions

Triggering incident or event
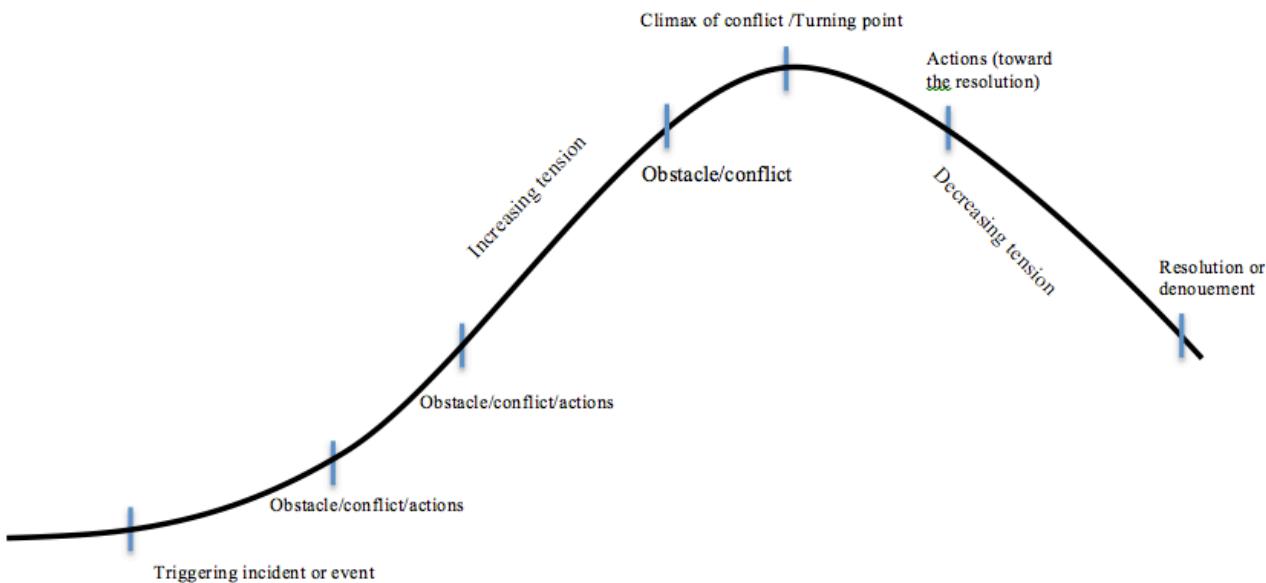
Caveats of this Model of the Journey

This is a heuristic device of the migratory journey narrative and has four biases that must be acknowledged.

i.   *Objectivation*: It is important to keep in mind that the purpose of the narrative structure is not to represent objectively the migratory journeys collected during the interviews. Participants' personal accounts are subjective outlooks on their own migratory experiences. This narrative structure helps represent those personal accounts to convey the meanings expressed by the interviewees beyond chronological sequences of events. What I propose here is one possible processing of the stories *generated* during the interviews that offers a larger narrative on migration and mobility that emanates partly from individuals who undertook the journey.[5] To carry out the processing of interviewees' accounts, I used method of incremental coding that enabled the extraction of themes from text data. I integrated those themes, which represent the findings of the study, to form the various constitutive elements of the journey. Through this process, I was co-constructor of this narrative, which consequently includes my subjectivity as well.

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[5] I insist here on the utilization of the word 'generated' instead of 'collected', which I use uncritically throughout this dissertation, as a reminder that the data used for this research was necessarily co-imagined by both the interviewees and myself. But in defense to my research and as it has been argued by the contributors to the book *"Raw Data" Is an Oxymoron* (Gitelman, 2013), I would contend that imagining data is not a feat of the semi-structured interviewing process alone, but the very nature of knowledge production in general. The norms for the production of data in this present work have been laid out in the third chapter.

ii. *Normative continuity*: This narrative structure may give the idea of journey fluidity. In reality, the interviewees' testimonies provide a picture of fragmented journeys that were characterized by passage through several countries and numerous episodes of stuckness in camps or detention facilities, as well as detours. The itinerary involves spaces of transit into and divergence from the destination. Therefore, the linearity of the journey model is a result of its representation here rather than a theoretical conceptualization. In addition, the climax in this model is evidently not readily identifiable because the various obstacles and struggles faced by the narrator do not necessarily follow a normative pattern of increasing tension before a resolution. A journey can include several climaxing tensions. It is very difficult to compare the tensions created by various obstacles on the participants' paths and place them in a narrative structure. In addition, the journey does not necessarily end with a positive resolution; sometimes there is no resolution at all. During the interviews, I asked the participants whether they thought that their journey had ended after having reached Germany. The answers were often equivocal, because many refugees, that is, those who obtained a residence permit, are still in the process of adapting to a new society, finding a new momentum in life, or simply long for a return to their country of origin. Others are still struggling to obtain a residence permit, or have been denied and are on a deportation list. These participants are still on the increasing tension part of the line in the narrative structure.

iii. *Totalization*: This narrative structure approach does not constitute an ontological proposition of a refugee experience. This would reify interviewees' migratory journeys and turn them into objects of further political intervention. Instead, by exploring the journey narrative and proposing a framework that rejects attempts to romanticize migrants and especially refugees, I would like to contribute to the introduction and anchoring of other political concepts that are better able to mitigate the power exercised on migrants by receiving societies. Indeed, this study is driven by the observation that the migration and asylum policies produced by the EU and by its Member States cannot deviate from current practices of migrant illegalization, criminalization, detention, and border militarization unless they are sustained by different political concepts. In other words, the public discourse on migration is generally restricted to these types of statements and must, therefore, be enriched with new perspectives and approaches. The exploration of the exilic journey directs the focus to a largely overlooked aspect of displacement – the mental and physical movement from an origin to a destination. In addition, the study of refugees' silenced voices re-centers representations often excluded from the discourse on migration. Disenfranchising political categories of integration into a host society, forced flight, and illegal migration, must be replaced by discussions addressing participation, autonomy, and hospitality. It follows that it would be inconsistent with the interventionist agenda of this study to propose an essentializing narrative of the flight experience. The narrative structure approach does seek to provide a general framework to capture each interviewee's refugee experience. Yet, the framing of these personal accounts within a narrative structure is an

organizational device that helps represent complex and diverse stories for the reader. What must be drawn from this study are the numerous misconceptions about the migratory journey, rather than an ideal-type of the flight experience.

Phases of the Journey

My discussion of the participants' narratives here follows the elements that compose the narrative structure mentioned above:

- *The trigger*: this is the tipping element in the narrative that starts the journey. The trigger is the point at which an individual's drive to achieve something is greater than their fears of the risks involved in attaining it. When the participants decide that they will undertake the journey to reach the country of their choice instead of passively waiting for humanitarian intervention, they become protagonists of their own story. In other words, the journey does not start physically with the act of leaving a place, but has already been set in motion when an individual decides to leave. The trigger can be an event (death of a relative, loss of assets, direct threats, etc.) or a feeling (sense of hopelessness, ambition, etc.) that they must extract themselves from stasis. The trigger leads to preparation for the journey, which encompasses the gathering of information to create an itinerary, the choice of a destination, and all the necessary preparation required before any travel. Again, the use of the narrative structure approach fits the framing of migrants as agents with autonomy who prepare, calculate and anticipate. The usual characteristic of forced migrants as pushed out individuals who do not premeditate the journey and do not even decide to undertake it becomes irrelevant.

- *Obstacles*: this category groups together all the struggles that participants faced during the journey, which involve several types of conflicts:
    - Elements: all the obstacles on the path can be related to the terrain (the sea, the forest, mountains), or physiological effects (lack of food and water, fatigue).
    - Conflict with other individuals: smugglers, highwaymen, other migrants, people living in the countries of transit
    - Conflict with the migration management regime: encampment, border patrol, border control, policies (Dublin regulation)

    To address these obstacles, participants had to deploy certain skills, solidarity, caution, etc. These traits refer more generally to the migratory practices and tactics deployed to cope with obstacles.

- *Resolution and denouement*: this part addresses the end of the journey, which meant different things to the interviewees. The end of the journey did not signify that a participant is no longer on the move. Having reached safety does not necessarily mark the end of the journey, for it is the participant himself/herself who decides when it is over.

Combined together in the structure, these recurring elements of the journey as related by interviewees yield a counter narrative to the public discourse on migration.

The trigger

The Decision to Leave[6]

The beginning of the journey precedes physical movement (Benezer & Zetter, 2014) because one must first decide between leaving and staying. Like any decision, it involves anticipation, reckoning, and planning, regardless of the time of reflection left by the urgency of the situation to be fled from. The decision making process can be undertaken slowly or in haste. The preparation for the departure also involves a mental projection into the destination. Before undertaking the journey, many study participants had a destination in mind and so a representation thereof. Before the physical movement, prospective wayfarers have already begun separating themselves from the place of actual residence and begun to get "closer" to their destination; what Benezer and Zetter have called 'reverse socialization' (Benezer & Zetter, 2014).

Here is how Madiha, an Iraqi Sunni asylum seeker from Tikrit, explained their decision to leave:

> [Madiha]: We took the decision quickly, and we couldn't go back on those decisions… undo them. The place where we were living went away. If you stay, militias would come to you. Our situation in Baghdad… it's true we lived in Tikrit, but we went up to Baghdad, and in Baghdad we were in even greater danger than in Tikrit or Kirkuk, and so on. We were forced, I mean…until today, the situation of the Sunnis, it's persecution…especially the Sunni and Tikriti people, I mean it's both![7]

Madiha referred to her home country as a place 'that went away', which suggests that this mental separation that precedes the migratory journey is a painful process. Her country only exists in her memories before she even had left it physically. In this excerpt, she also describes a more threatening situation that is created by armed militias who would target Sunni Muslims like herself. Her mention of Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's birthplace, is not

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[6] In compliance with the IRB research protocol attached to this study, I refrained from asking the participants about the reasons that led them to leave their country or even from tricking them into talking about it. The questions I asked were direct and straightforward. As stated in the research protocol, probing about potentially traumatic events related to their migratory journey raises serious ethical issues. The purpose of my research was to increase the knowability of asylum seekers and refugees by exploring their subjective outlooks on their migratory experience. In this process, I tried to always keep in mind that participants may have to re-live painful memories. Therefore, all participants were free not to answer a question without having to justify themselves to me. Participants were the ones to decide whether they wanted to share memories of traumatic experiences. In such situations, my role was to listen to them without questioning particular events. During the interviews, many participants proactively shared many episodes of violence witnessed or experienced in their country and during the journey. Such accounts would often surface when I asked them how they prepared for the hearing interview, or whether they had a destination in mind before leaving. In these cases and as explained to them on their informed consent form, I was allowed to use their answers as data in compliance with the protocol.
[7] Interview with Madiha and Sarhan, Hamburg, September 2016.

trivial. Later in the interview her husband Sarhan provided some background family history by specifying that his elder brothers had served in Saddam's army.

Compared to Madiha's account of what triggered the decision to undertake the journey, other participants related their decision to leave to a specific event. Such was the case of Rochdi, a young Iraqi doctor and aspiring surgeon who is still waiting for a decision on his asylum request.

> [Rochdi]: My relatives, I mean my grandparents and uncles and aunts came to Baghdad as a result of the war with Daesh.[8] Baghdad is under the control of the government and militias. So they started to threaten…you know arbitrary manner, anybody coming from that region, I mean Al-Anbar or Fallujah. Be it a child, a woman, or a man…everybody was the same. So this was a problem since we were exposed to threats (…). They kidnapped my uncle and until now we don't know where he is (…) and when they kidnapped him, we weren't home (…) I was at the hospital (…). The militias came in the morning and my uncle was alone at home with my grandmother (…), my mother and my aunt… so they came and took my uncle. They asked after us once, twice, three times…but they couldn't find us so my mom told us that we should leave. So I stayed at my aunt's place for 3 days, I gathered the money and left (…). My goal was to leave Iraq as fast as possible. They knew our names. The neighbors would try to help them, spies… the accusation was simply that we were people from Fallujah.[9]

In Rochdi's case, the increasing threats by militias who eventually acted on their threats by abducting his uncle, constituted the tipping point at which the risk in staying in Iraq became too great in comparison with the hardships of the journey. Nevertheless, in spite of the urgency of the situation, he dedicated some time to prepare himself. In fact, he was very well prepared. He took painkillers, antibiotics, bandages and even antispasmodics. However, he made sure not to take his diplomas, which could end up drenched in water, as he explained, expecting to cross the Aegean Sea to reach Europe.

In general, participants did not provide specific triggers or identifiable events, but expressed either a sense of a general threat looming over their heads or a general malaise that prevented them from going about their lives as usual, or even a combination of both. Many young male Syrian participants felt threatened by the possibility of being drafted or being forced to join the militias, which ran against their own plans and aspirations such as finishing their studies. Hussein had to interrupt his curriculum in civil engineering at the university in Syria and leave, fearing that he would be conscripted. In his account, he does not mention persecution, but rather an environment that is increasingly unfavorable to fulfill his ambitions as a young student.

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[8] Daesh is the Arabic acronym of the Islamic State of Iraq and Sham (ISIS).
[9] Interview with Rochdi, Hamburg, October 2016

[Hussein]: (…) the ingredients of life were gone, there were daily dangers and poor living conditions, without naming them, bad conditions for students, economic conditions…[10]

Later in the interview Hussein became more explicit about the reasons that led him to flee his country.

[Me]: Do your relatives also try to join you in Germany?
[Hussein]: No, they don't want to come. But…the reasons of my getting away from Syria, as I told earlier, was danger, the presence of some armed groups, both governmental and non-governmental, terrorist and extremist, religious and moderate…so us young people in Syria are their main targets because of the mandatory military service for the government, because of the terrorists, the army, the religion, the Jihad under the banner sponsored by Islam…and as such, young people were the main targets of these factions, and therefore I left alone…but my dad and mom and siblings, who are younger than me, well, they can stay home and never go out.[11]

Hussein felt threatened by an environment that was about to jeopardize his career decisions and the future life he aspired to achieve. He differentiates himself from his parents, who are invested in raising their children, and his younger siblings, who have not yet reached this pivotal moment in life, where they begin to decide for themselves.

Except for Rochdi, the triggers that led participants to leave their country were rarely a single event. Often, the trigger was the realization at some point that the home country had failed and could no longer offer a habitat suitable for people and families to thrive. For instance, Mohamed who came to Germany with his pregnant wife speaks about a possible return to Syria in the following words:

[Mohamed]: It's a dream but it's not possible to realize it. Maybe we could visit, but even this is difficult. In the light of reality and when we see events in Syria, it gets worse. And [she] (*his daughter*) is growing here…that's it![12]

For many interviewees, the forsaken country has lost its physicality. Germany, as the destination is perceived as their new reality, where raising a child, finding employment or studying are again possible. The country of origin is viewed as a failure that is no longer suitable for life as they aspired to live it. The interviewees left to seek a new home when the former one ceased to be. The conception of the journey, as the quest for a familiar home, runs against the notion that refugees only need temporary arrangements as provided by camps before permanently returning to the natural home. When observing that his daughter is growing in Germany now, Mohamed rejected the fact that his presence is transient, but projected himself and his family in time as becoming local.

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[10] Interview with Hussein, Hamburg, July 2016
[11] Interview with Hussein, Hamburg, July 2016
[12] Interview with Sarah and Ibrahim, Hamburg, October 2016

In this situation, Germany is the familiar country while the previously usual habitat has become 'strange and frightening' (Malkki, 1995, p. 509). Often the asylum country is constructed as the strange country for migrants and the homeland the familiar country. But as Malkki argued, the 'making strange' of the asylum country entails the naturalization of the country of origin as the eternal home to which one will eventually return once it is no longer dangerous. Admittedly, participants did claim that they missed their countries and aspects of their lives there, but they also expressed feeling ill-at-ease in Germany. They nonetheless maintained that the former home country was not recognizable and that they could no longer practice their social habits and culture as they used to do.

This is precisely what Amina replied when I asked her and her husband Abdullah to share their thoughts about the mass sexual harassments that took place in Cologne and other major German cities on New Year's Eve 2015:

> [Amine]: This is of course unacceptable, I mean…in Syria why did we migrate in the first place? Because of the spread of this kind of moral corruption. This thing called Daesh emerged there (…), in our country so lost security. In Syria we were…I mean it's like here (…). When a woman walks alone in the street, nobody would harass us, nobody would disrespect us or do us harm. It used to be very safe. Since the crisis in our country, we aren't safe at all. So we always rely on the presence of someone else, we can't go out at night alone…[13]

Often, there was no objectively identifiable triggering event that led participants to leave their country, but rather a subjective view that their country had become increasingly unfamiliar and, thus, no longer corresponded to their social and cultural habits. Such view of 'home' does not refer strictly to the notion of a physical patch of ground or territory that is part of the nation-state. The trigger of migration as described by interviewees should therefore not be reduced to the physical destruction of that space, be it a home, a farm, a town or a city. Correspondingly, the restoration of that destroyed space to its original state does not necessarily constitute a trigger or reason for return. On the contrary, what interviewees have described is a form of dis-location where one no longer belongs in his/her habitual space. The journey was often driven by the necessity to look for a new location, another home, where one can resume life in safer and more favorable conditions. The journey is, thus, more than simply a physical movement between two places, a re-location. It is the activity of creating a space elsewhere, both physical and social – a new home. The relocation and re-settlement schemed deployed by the EU, besides being extremely lengthy and selective processes, do not correspond to the objective of the exilic journey.

From the perspective of this study's aim to challenge public discourse on migration, the narrative of the unfamiliar home expressed by participants constitutes an important input to Malkki's notion of 'sedentarist bias' (Malkki, 1992; 1995a). Malkki has asserted that

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[13] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, Hamburg, September 2016

social sciences often adopt a sedentarist point of view that naturalizes the connection between people and the place where they live. Cultures and nations are constructed as superimposed elements within a circumscribed territory (Malkki, 1992). Malkki argues that the sedentarist bias entails discourses that pathologize movement and displacement. While it is not accurate that all human mobilities are constructed as amoral denaturalizations (Kmak, 2015), the migration of refugees and asylum seekers is indeed problematized. In its most extreme forms, the sedentarist bias corresponds to incongruous xenophobic demands that refugees should go home. In less extreme discourses and practices of migration management, however, the naturalization of the link between culture and identity, and the country of origin corresponds to policies that seek to minimize the removal of displaced populations from their national communities. The practice of encampment is, in this regard, a response to an aversion to uprootedness. Constructing asylum seekers and refugees as necessarily foreign elements who cannot find a new home for lack of the organic connections to the receiving country is mirrored by strategies of encampment around the places that they fled from and/or far from their destinations. In other words, instead of enabling displaced populations to find a new home, encampment solutions huddle together displaced populations in localities removed from the spaces where they could belong as new political members.

Conceived as a temporary solution, encampment – and for the same reason, subsidiary protection status or the limited duration of refugee status – reflects the ontological construction of a natural home as a physical space in which a culture and an identity are rooted. In this view, migrants cannot have an organic relation with other spaces than that of the original country. The administration of refugees and asylum seekers through the apparatus of encampment, and more generally the temporariness of their status, prevents appropriation of a new space with which communities can weave new and original organic links.[14] Like spaces that are supposed to be occupied temporarily, camps are constructed as ahistorical and apolitical spaces that are designed for what Arendt would call exchangeable human beings, devoid of a context, a history and, consequently, a political future.

Destination

When asked about their destinations, interviewees would not necessarily answer by mentioning a specific country. Some would name a region such as Northern Europe and others would refer to more abstract notions such as quality of life that they would like to achieve through the journey.

Hussein, the Syrian refugee who used to study engineering before coming to Germany, declared that before fleeing his country, he was bound for a specific destination:

> [Hussein]: First, as a choice of the region, there was no country, but the idea is to exit Syria. I mean, the main idea was without a goal, almost. The dangers on our lives, the ingredients of life were gone, there were daily dangers, poor living conditions, without naming, bad conditions for

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[14] Refer to Chapter VI for a discussion on space occupancy and space appropriation.

students, economic conditions, …Generally speaking, the danger was detrimental to life. Afterwards, as I delved more to see what countries were welcoming, that would take better care of refugees and that were possible to reach, so there was Germany.[15]

The siblings Amina and Abdullah from Syria constructed a similar answer:

> [Me]: During your preparation for your journey, did you have a specific destination in mind?
> [Amina]: Yes. It was Germany.
> [Abdullah]: Yes, Germany.[16]

Then when I asked about the reasons for their choice, Amina provided an answer that was quite similar to Hussein's:

> [Amina]: We chose it because it's a country with a strong economy. So in the future, we could find work. My brother can finish his studies. I mean there are opportunities for work…There's more going on here than in Sweden, Finland[17]

The choice of a destination is motivated here by two kinds of criteria: physical safety and socio-economic insertion in the country. Hussein also mentioned certain criteria that are directly related to the journey and his condition as a refugee. However, as young students or professionals (Amina worked for 5 years in Syria for a chemical company) with dreams and career aspirations, they are very mindful of their economic situations in the longer term. This is why, for instance, none of the participants chose Turkey as a possible destination. Turkey may not be a war zone, but they may consider that it would not offer the same education and career prospects as Germany does.

On the contrary, Yasin and Zainab, a Syrian couple in their late twenties were much less certain about the destination of their journey:

> [Yasin]: (…) So first we left without having any goal in mind. The idea was to leave. We arrived in Lebanon and met people who were heading to Europe and we went with them. But there was no specific country in Europe.

He then later adds:

> [Yasin]: My brother was living in Germany. He came here to study. He did a Master's. But then I didn't think of coming to Germany, or any other country. I was only looking for a safe place.[18]

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[15] Interview with Hussein, Hamburg, July 2016
[16] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, September 2016
[17] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, September 2016
[18] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016

When I asked them to be more specific, their answers became more equivocal:

> [Me]: At what point did you decide that you would come to Germany?
> [Zainab]: We didn't decide, but as we were following people on the road, we gave our fingerprints in Hungary. But Germany "broke" these fingerprints [*she means that Germany suspended the Dublin Agreement*].
> [Yasin]: Before the fingerprinting, as we were on the road, we had hoped to come to Germany. We mentioned Germany even when we were in Syria, because Germany is a country that's very powerful in the world, very developed and I knew about it in relation to my studies [*civil engineering*]. I could further develop my skills in Germany.[19]

Zainab and Yasin did not seem to agree on the reason and the timing of their choice of Germany as a destination. Nevertheless, together they provided a range of reasons that, as with other participants, went beyond seeking physical safety alone. Economic considerations were a recurring motive for applying for asylum in Germany. In this regard, Zainab raised a crucial point when she mentioned the fingerprinting in Hungary. The Dublin Regulation applies in Hungary, therefore, the fingerprints that the authorities collected from would be recorded in the European Dactyloscopy (EURODAC), the EU-wide fingerprint database for asylum seekers and unauthorized migrants. This would prevent them from lodging any other asylum application besides the country of first entry in the EU. Since Merkel temporarily and unilaterally suspended the Dublin Regulation, Zainab and Yasin could go to Germany without risking being flagged by the EURODAC when they applied for asylum. In this regard, seeking safety is secondary because they had already left Syria. Yet, Zainab's husband, who contradicts himself, acknowledged economic reasons for their flight.

The other important reason for having chosen to come to Germany was, from their point of view, the capacity to resume life as it was abandoned in the country of departure. Interviewees often projected themselves into the future and contemplated possibilities to get a degree, and engage in potential career orientations. In choosing a destination, participants were also deciding what their next home should be. The journey occurs in space and time, but it is not linear. The choice of a destination is subject to change, even during the journey itself, as illustrated by the discussion between Zainab and Yasin. In fact, hesitations, false starts and reorientations were even more apparent in the accounts given by Ibrahim and Sarah. This Syrian Kurdish refugee couple in their mid-thirties with a small child went first to Turkey. They arrived in Istanbul in 2013 and stayed there for two years. Ibrahim was an engineer who found work as a tailor and his wife, who had to abandon her studies in Syria, could not enroll at a Turkish university.

> [Ibrahim]: First we arrived in Turkey, Europe wasn't in our mind. Turkey is all right, nearly the same people, customs were close enough, the culture, the religion…most of them are Muslim…we didn't feel that we were far. But unfortunately, in Turkey we were shocked by many aspects,

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[19] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016

that is, exploitation, I mean awful exploitation. Anything you'd like to buy has a higher price. And when you work, I mean…you get the lowest salaries. This exploitation made me think about going elsewhere… (*Sarah interrupts*)

[Sarah]: I mean there was a lot of…for example, situations where a Syrian works for like 1 or 2 months, or 3, for a person, and at the end he tells him…at the end he asks for his salary and the guy tells him that there's no salary. And the Syrian can't do anything, because he's got no ID, nothing.

[Ibrahim]: The problem is that all the Syrians in Turkey went there illegally. I mean, you don't get a residence permit or anything like that.

[Me]: So you didn't have a residence permit for the 2 years that you stayed there.

[Ibrahim]: No, we didn't. It was illegal residence. If one day a policeman catches you, no passport, no ID, he could deport you. It's possible.

In this excerpt, Ibrahim and Sarah described the characteristics of life in Turkey that made it a suitable destination of their journey in the first place. Contrary to the other study participants, Ibrahim and Sarah explained their choice of destination by considering what makes it culturally and religiously familiar to the lost homeland. It is the similarity with a homeland that they could no longer recognize that sought: 'nearly same people', same culture, habits and religion. When Ibrahim says 'we didn't feel that we were far', he was referring to the cultural distance between Turkey and Syria, whereas the geographical distance between the two countries seemed secondary. However, they updated their version of the unfamiliar home narrative when they realize that cultural similarities were not enough for them to settle.

Their lack of political status in Istanbul prevented them from contemplating settlement in Turkey in spite of the absence of a war zone and their familiarity with Turkish society. Turkey has signed only the 1951 Refugee Convention, but not the 1967 Protocol, so it does not recognize displaced people from Syria or Iraq as refugees. According to a recent report by the International Crisis Group (ICG), there are 2.75 million Syrian refugees currently living in Turkey under the status of temporary protection. In principle, holders of his status can benefit from free healthcare, the public education system, and sign up for various services such as water, gas, electricity, phone plans, etc. (ICG, 2016). Since August 2016, they can obtain work permits. However, the reality of the refugee situation in Turkey contrasts significantly with arguably generous provisions. The ICG's field research on Turkey in the past year has revealed that Syrian populations still face great challenges in terms of housing, education, and employment. The language barrier, a cumbersome bureaucracy, and increasing divisions within the population concerning President Erdoğan's open-door policy toward Syrians have created many difficulties for incoming refugees to find housing, enroll in public universities, and find decent employment. Many found themselves in precarious situations as they were compelled to work in the informal sector and expose themselves to possible exploitation.[20]

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[20] After a long period of displacement, many Syrians who fled to Turkey have resorted to child labor to cope with an extremely precarious economic situation. For more information on this subject, consult the "Child Labour Report 2016" by non-profit organization Terre des Hommes.

After two years spent in Turkey trying to start a new life, Ibrahim and Sarah's precarious situation and lack of legal status forced them to resume their journey. The second trigger for their journey was their realization that Turkey could not become their homeland.

> [Ibrahim]: My wife was sick but she couldn't receive medical care, except in private hospitals and you had to pay a lot of money. All of this, like they say, in black. Meaning that you got to go to the ten doctors and only one would accept to see you. So with my wife we thought that if she gives birth in Turkey, there would be not birth certificates, no citizenship, no school, I mean the care for the child wasn't possible.
> [Me]: So how did you choose to come to Germany?
> [Ibrahim]: ...Well, I had known for a while that Germany was an industrial country, with good work opportunities. And also, Germany has been for a long time the most welcoming country for refugees and the displaced and migrants. And Germany is big.[21]

Ibrahim makes a clear reference to two elements that he claims he could not find in Turkey: the possibility of obtaining a legal status ('welcoming country') and career opportunities in the field of his education ('Germany was an industrial country'). The claim he makes that Germany is a welcoming country can seem surprising here. President Erdoğan's strong stance against Al-Assad resulted in the open-door policy toward Syrians who came in great numbers to Turkey. President Erdoğan even proposed in July 2016 to start a movement to naturalize Syrians.[22] The proposal was later dismissed because of its unpopularity, especially among nationalists, and in the aftermath of the attempted coup against Erdoğan that same month. That being said, Turkey's welcoming policy did not prevent extreme precariousness and vulnerability. Ibrahim's account of his experience in Turkey and then decision to go to Germany follows on his redefinition of the meaning of home. Instead of emphasizing home as a place of cultural, social, and religious familiarity, Ibrahim and Sarah integrated criteria of work opportunities and political rights. Unsurprisingly, Ibrahim directly linked his new understanding of what home should be to the potential statelessness of his future child if born in Turkey.

It appears from these excerpts that the destination of the journey is not only safe, but it is also the one that can subjectively offer the best conditions for starting life anew. The destination must not necessarily feel culturally or socially like home, but it must provide an environment that is favorable to the interviewees' personal aspirations in life. However, the reduction of refugees' flight to a quest for physical safety emphasizes their biology and mirrors the discourse according to which displaced individuals are only after their own physical survival. In this reductionist understanding of the journey, the protection of refugees and asylum seekers is carried out by providing the items and services necessary to their survival such as food, water, and shelter.

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[21] Interview with Ibrahim and Sarah, Hamburg, October 2016
[22] The President and his party The Justice and Development Party (AKP) quickly afterwards added more nuance to the proposition by limiting it first to 300,000 Syrians with their families based on their skills.

The purpose of problematizing the understanding of refugee migration as a quest for safety is not an attempt to minimize the level of destruction presently occurring in countries such as Syria and Iraq, from which most of the study participants I interviewed come. The interviewees gave many accounts of the dangers they had to escape. For instance, Zainab and Yasin escaped from Madaya, a small mountainous city situated approximately 40 kilometers northwest of Damascus. Madaya is internationally known today for having been one of the theaters of the battle of Zabadani during which several rebellious groups and the Syrian Army and Hezbollah clashed. Between July 2015 and early January 2016, Madaya, controlled by Syrian Islamist rebellious group Ahrar Al-Sham, had been besieged by the Syrian army and Hezbollah. The besieging forced prevented all supply of food into Madaya and also blocked humanitarian aid from entering the city. In late October 2015, the 20,000 trapped residents of Madaya had little access to health services and could not be evacuated either. The last food delivery was authorized on October 18, 2015 before a complete blockade. In this period, more than thirty individuals were reported to have died of starvation with hundreds threatened by malnutrition (Doctors Without Borders, 2016a; 2016b). Zainab and Yasin managed to escape Madaya in June 2015 but were afraid for their relatives who remained there.

> [Zainab]: Some diseases started to appear... you wouldn't even imagine. About 60 people died… 60 people died of starvation. Starvation! The children look like these African children. My brother (*another brother who had stayed in Madaya*) lost 15 kilos and my aunt lost 20 kilos. I mean... (*Yasin interrupts*)
> [Yasin]: There's no other solution for them but to abandon their house. They can give the keys of their house, leave all their possessions to the party, the Hezbollah, not to Assad, not to Assad's army, but to the Hezbollah…and then they can leave the town.
> [Zainab]: My uncle died. He was 35. He died 6 months ago. He was fasting because there was nothing to eat. So he'd rather fast. Hezbollah killed them while they were eating dirt that they had cooked.
> [Yasin]: Thank God we are here. I wish to pursue my studies and education.
> [Zainab]: We came here filled with hope.[23]

The narrative developed by interviewees about escaping danger, but seeking more than just safety does not downplay the threats in their countries of origin. Study participants rarely considered that they had reached the final destination of their journey when they found safety from persecution and or war. Conversely, the choice of a destination and, subsequently, the criteria that mark the end of the migratory journey, included various considerations in addition to physical safety and survival. Interviewees considered safety as a necessary condition that must be fulfilled by the destination of the journey, but this did not simplify the decision to leave. For many interviewees, the fact that their country had become a dangerous place did not entail that leaving was a straightforward conclusion. Before undertaking the journey, interviewees were fully aware of the hardships involved in such an enterprise and the dangers inherent to dealing with

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[23] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016

smugglers, crossing the sea and working their way to their final destination. Therefore, the journey is not the movement out of danger into safety, but was itself viewed as a dangerous enterprise. Indeed, the decision to leave was not taken in a vacuum of texts and narratives. The iconography of the "summer of migration" is saturated with images of sunken dinghies filled with migrants, bodies such as that of little Syrian boy Alan Kurdi washed up dead on beaches, or endless columns of people walking through the Balkans. It was obvious to many that the journey was not simply a movement from danger into safety, but could be a leap into another category of peril. In addition to the images of the journey conveyed by the media, there were also stories of the journey conveyed by family members, friends, acquaintances who had or knew others who had left, crossed the sea and the Balkans to arrive in Western and North European countries. Many times, interviewees would explain how reports of those who went before them informed and influenced their own decisions throughout their journeys.

As a result, the exilic journey, from the preparation phase to the itinerary to arrival, was a de-individualized process constituted by other experiences of transnational mobility. The journey was a network of subjectivities that came together to overcome both nation-state borders and natural geographies.

Preparation

As discussed so far, the journey did not start with the physical movement of leaving the country, but began with its planning and anticipation. Similarly, the personal accounts emphasize the importance of the planning phase prior to leaving the country. These accounts contradict the assumption on which the dichotomy between forced and voluntary migration is based. Escaping a war zone or persecution does not mean that individuals necessarily flee a situation of extreme urgency or imminent danger. Many interviewees described an environment where living conditions were increasingly unfavorable and required adjustments that they could no longer bear. Many young male interviewees were directly threatened by obligatory conscription or demands they join a non-state fighting group. However, it is important for the construction of journey narratives not to fall in the trap of romanticizing their departure as races away from a hot pursuit. More broadly, the Refugee Convention has institutionalized the judgment of asylum seekers along criteria of authenticity. Legally, applicants forf refugee status must produce genuine credentials that satisfy administrative procedures of appraisal such as the credibility assessment (Behrman, 2016). This entails the romantic construction of an ideal-type of refugee whose worthiness is based on the tragedy of the predicament that forced them to leave their homes (Behrman, 2016). This discourse of deservingness is contradicted by the interviewees' personal accounts that reveal the time taken to prepare for and plan their flights to Europe.

In addition, collected accounts of the flight preparations suggest that journeys have a strong incremental learning characteristic to them. The journey has both a spatial and a temporal dimension. The spatial dimension of the journey refers to the mental and physical movements between three kinds of places: the point of departure, the transit, and the arrival. The temporal dimension, however, includes the journeys of others who went

before. It is the temporal dimension of the journey that is incremental, because the wayfarers who had already left leave a trail behind them that informs newcomers about their itineraries and share their own experience and best practices.

Rochdi wittily introduced this idea to me as I asked whether he had downloaded maps before leaving the country and/or while on the move:

> [Rochdi]: Honestly, you don't need them, neither the map nor the GPS. Because, like I told you, in the 10th or 11th month of 2015, people were walking in large groups. So you go where people go. It's like going to Mecca, I mean you go on the footsteps of those before you. That's exactly what it is. You walk and people walk behind you.[24]

The trail can be communicated in the form of digital breadcrumbs that are constantly updated to account for the changes in the itinerary (closed borders, new regulations, new paths, etc.). In the case of Rochdi who preferred not to take a smartphone with him, he relied on other co-migrants to obtain information about the itinerary. He never traveled alone. In other words, a journey is never an individual project, but is embedded in an archive of practices, testimonies, lessons, maps, and networks of people that can be mobilized by each migrant. The preparation for the journey is an ongoing process that involves consulting this archive before, during, and after the journey to benefit from it but also to feed it with new learning. Tsianos and Papadopoulos made a similar observation about migration not being an 'individual strategy,' but rather "characterize[d] [by] continuous shifts and radical re-articulations of individual trajectories" (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007, p. 225).

Before leaving Syria, Hussein set his mind on going to Germany. As he explains, his choice was motivated by this collectively maintained archive of digital information.

> [Hussein]: Through people from the same town who went away, through the Internet and other networks of WhatsApp, Facebook, we would look at some websites that would publish information on people leaving or arriving.[25]

In addition, it is important to be able to access this digital infrastructure while on the move as well. Sarhan and Madiha provide an eloquent example of the adjustments made throughout the journey.

> [Hussein]: We obtained the information we had on the itinerary through Facebook. I know someone in Turkey, a friend who sent me addresses on Facebook… (*his wife Madiha interrupts*)
> [Madiha]: Addresses of Iraqi refugees in Germany.
> [Hussein]: I mean, it was a Facebook group… (*Madiha interrupts*)
> [Madiha]: Yes, a group for refugees… (*Hussein interrupts*)

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[24] Interview with Rochdi, Hamburg, October 2016
[25] Interview with Hussein, Hamburg, July 2016

[Hussein]: So there they publish information.
[Madiha]: They uploaded a whole map…it was very precise. We followed the same path that was indicated on the maps. Almost everyday, they would upload a map.
[Hussein]: Even the smugglers, we found them on Facebook.
[Madiha]: Yes, their addresses were in the comments, so we chose a couple of smugglers and contacted them and came to an agreement with them.
[Hussein]: Yeah, normal thing. They're on Facebook, they describe the path, what will happen, like a boat that will come and take you to Athens, then you get a 'kharti'[26], which is a document that allows you to exit Greece. We went to Athens and from Athens we went to… What is the name? (*He asks Madiha who shook her head to indicate that she did not remember*)…First the capital Athens and then to a hotel at the border region with Macedonia, and indeed everything was correct (*he laughs*), there was no mistake.[27]

Besides consulting information on the itinerary and the destination, preparation for the journey also included the items that migrants took with them. Items included money (for smugglers, food, accommodation and communication) as well as objects that they thought they would need during the itinerary and when they arrived at the destination. Many interviewees reported that they paid smugglers $1,500 to $2,500 per person to cross the Aegean Sea, between Turkey and a Greek island nearby. Many also had to pay smugglers to help them cross the Balkans and take them to Austria or Germany. This time, prices ranged between $700 and $1,500. Besides smugglers, interviewees had to pay for hotel rooms, which were sometimes overpriced, public transportation fares, food, water, and SIM[28] cards for their mobile phones. Finally, many related episodes where they had to bribe police officers along the Balkan road to let them pass or avoid being detained. The bribes demanded per person were not high, but police officers would stop a group of several people who would give about $20 per person. In this respect, it was clear from the data gathered for this study that besides the costs borne by interviewees, the journey generates significant revenue for many businesses across countries of transit and destination. From smugglers and life-vest sellers to hotels, taxis, and phone card sellers, migrants on the move can represent an enormous windfall.

As a result, preparations for the journey required gathering the financial means to travel. For most of the interviewees, the budget for the journey consisted of savings and/or current account deposits, assets sold, and family solidarity. For instance, Ali and Aida, a Syrian asylum seeking couple in their early thirties who came to Germany with their

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[26] 'Kharti' is a Greek word (χαρτί) that literally means 'paper.' At that time, every apprehended unauthorized migrant (including asylum seekers who do not wish to lodge an asylum request in Greece) received from the Greek authorities a 'kharti', which is an expulsion decision. Usually, migrants would have about a month (at one point, Syrians had six months) to exit Greek territory. Unauthorized migrants who held a kharti could legally go anywhere in Greece within the timeframe indicated on the document. This enabled them prepare the next stages of their itinerary such as crossing the border to Macedonia then Serbia where they would also receive expulsion decisions.
[27] Interview with Sarhan and Madiha, Hamburg, September 2016
[28] The subscriber identity module (SIM) card is inserted into a mobile phone and allows access to the service provider's network.

young boy in 2015, mobilized their families to gather money. They sold a small parcel of land and some gold and received loans from family members in the Emirates. Yasin and Zainab sold a new car that they owned and added their savings.

Regarding the objects that they took with them, interviewees usually listed two kinds of items: personal documents for identification once they arrived in the destination country, and objects that they would need while on the move such as clothing, medicine, mobile phones, personal hygiene products. Personal documents are usually carefully packed to protect them from water (especially when the refugees crossed the sea in a dinghy). Usually, interviewees took their diplomas, certificates, a driver's license, and identification documents. These documents are mainly used to help them settle in the country of arrival. Certificates and credentials are included in asylum applications and are, thus, very important. Many interviewees took these documents with them in the hope of obtaining a German equivalence and to use them to apply for jobs, apprenticeships or universities. Interviewees would often report that they kept these documents in sealed waterproof plastic bags to avoid their deterioration during the journey. They often emphasized that all objects they took with them were expendable except their personal documents. Rochdi, the young doctor and would-be surgeon, was so cautious about his medicine certification that he preferred leaving them in Iraq rather than taking them.

> [Rochdi]: I didn't take them [his diplomas and certificates from medical school] with me. I didn't take them because I was scared that the boat would sink and that they would be drenched. Now they're with me. I asked my mom to send them to me by DHL. Since I arrived safe and sound, I asked my mother to send them.[29]

The extreme care that interviewees took with their credentials not only shows the level of anticipation and preparation for the journey, but also the importance for them to settle in a new home where they would not have to start from scratch, but could capitalize on what they had so far achieved. Such aspects further blur the distinctions between forced and voluntary migrants, such that flight cannot be reduced to seeking safety alone, but to transpose a life that was rendered difficult into a country that offered a more favorable environment. For the interviewees, the safety that countries like Turkey or Greece could offer was insufficient because it came with little prospects of resuming the life they had forsaken or pursuing the aspirations, especially on the professional level, that they had conceived. For them, the country of settlement should also offer the guarantee that they could achieve legal status as well as personal aspirations and projects.

This section presented the overall home narrative to account for the various ways in which interviewees progressively lost the ability to live in their home country. Embedded in this narrative are the specific factors that triggered the urge to seek better life conditions elsewhere. The trigger of the exilic journey also marks the phase at which interviewees began to act on their motivations to leave. Although the choice of a destination and preparations for the journey can be ongoing processes that may be carried out even during flight, they represented the active refusal of immobility. It is at this stage

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[29] Interview with Rochdi, Hamburg, October 2016

of the journey that imperceptibility, as the strategy to bypass the migration management regime, is considered as a means to reach the destination where asylum would be requested. In the following section, I explore interviewees' accounts of their itineraries because they provide the necessary subjective outlook on mobility often missing in discourses on migration.

Obstacles

As framed in the journey narrative structure, interviewees encountered several obstacles for which they tried to prepare and that required deploying several migratory tactics to address them. I have divided these obstacles into three categories: those inhering in the itinerary's natural terrain, those created by other individuals, and finally, those arising from the migration management regime.

From the standpoint of the narrative structure approach, when interviewees decided to act upon their motivations and desires, they were no longer passive characters but became conscious agents and autonomous protagonists of their respective journeys. They rejected the subject positions of helpless victims produced by human rights and decided to rescue themselves by engaging the process of becoming irregular. It follows that the obstacles along their unauthorized flight were the consequences of their decision to become pro-actively engaged in improving their life conditions.

As agents who refused to play the politics of victimhood and persecution, study participants made certain choices when confronted with antagonistic elements along their path. Their unauthorized mobility contradicted the EU's preference for passive refugees who stay put in the allegedly safer area around their country of origin until humanitarian assistance arrives. However, the rejection of one subject position put migrants in another process of subjectivation – this time as potential bogus asylum seekers or illegalized 'economic migrants' (Kmak, 2015). Indeed, the implementation of the Dublin Regulation has established a ring of 'safe third countries' around the EU's external borders that constitute the geographical limit to migrants' claims for protection (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013). But at the same time, EU migration management practices, which include asylum and migration policies and bilateral agreements with third party states, have made it very difficult to request asylum in Europe. This entails that different types of migrants, asylum seekers and irregular migrants alike, who seek to reach a specific destination, refuse to stay in the biological safety offered by camps and detention facilities along the EU's external borders. Instead, migrants on the move choose to follow migratory paths that attempt to get around border monitoring and migration management. The attempts made by the EU and Member States to control migrants' mobility produces irregularity, which in turns triggers new policies of migration control and containment.

Natural Obstacles

The terrain of the itinerary described by the interviewees in their personal accounts represented an ambivalent force that both assisted their strategy of imperceptibility vis-à-vis the migration management regime and imposed a formidable obstacle to their safety

while on the move. The specific geography of the Aegean Sea combined with the intensive streams of migrant arrivals, especially in summer and fall 2015, unveiled important difficulties for the monitoring and controlling of the EU's external borders. In February 2016, the EU Council reported that there were in Greece 'serious deficiencies identified during the Schengen evaluation in the field of management of external borders carried out in 2015' (Council of the European Union, 2016). In less formal language, this meant that the panoptical "fortress Europe" was partially subverted by blindspots that were created by the difficulty of managing the multitude of unauthorized movements between Turkey and the Greek Archipelagos. The strengthening of the EU's external borders required exceptional measures that included the 'hotspot approach' or the multiplication of identification and registration centers in the Greek islands that received the greatest number of arrivals (Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kos, Leros), the closure of the Balkan corridor (see Chapter V), and the signing of the EU-Turkey deal in March 2016.

The hotspot approach in particular, with its streamlining of registration and fingerprinting of migrants, was designed to address the strategy of imperceptibility employed by asylum seekers who sought to bypass the Dublin Regulation to reach the destination of their choice.

Conversely, pursuing imperceptibility came at an extremely high price for migrants when it required that they negotiate their passage through dangerous spaces and pathways such as crossing the Aegean Sea in an overcrowded inflatable dinghy at night, or wandering for tens of kilometers through the mountains and lush forests of the Balkan region. The "weapon of imperceptibility" (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007, p. 230) turns against its user and fails when it causes unbearable hardship, serious injury, or death. It is, on the other hand, successful when it enables migrants to reach their chosen destination country after having avoided detection and registration at specific geographic points such as the straits across the Aegean Sea between Turkey and Greece.

The Aegean Sea

The cumulative number of migrants who arrived in Greece during 2015 through the East Mediterranean route reached 853,650 individuals (IOM, 2016). Participants would often mention the sea crossing as one of the scariest stages of their journey. Anxiety was induced by several factors. First, they attempted to reach the closest Greek island at night on an overcrowded inflatable dinghy or a small fishing boat that could easily capsize. Second, all interviewees reported that smugglers would designate someone from the migrants to navigate the boat as they would themselves not be part of the crossing. Finally, they needed to avoid being intercepted by coastguards who would often attempt to turn them about.

In the following testimony, Mohamed, a Syrian Refugee who crossed from Bodrum, related an exchange with a smuggler who chose him to be 'captain[30]' of the dinghy:

> [Mohamed]: They ask: 'Can you drive the boat?' 'Yes.' 30 minutes or 45 minutes later, 'Here is how you do, here is where you go, here is the right, here is the left'. As we were crossing, the smuggler remained in contact with us. He would ask: 'Where are you now? What happened to you? Where did you arrive?' When we arrived at the island of Kos, we let them know that we had made it. At night, the island was visible… You see some light and you follow. That's it. Everybody in the boat was quiet, they entrusted me with their lives.[31]

This testimony was confirmed by other interviewees such as Zainab and her husband Yasin who also recounted how smugglers designated one of the migrants to 'captain' the raft. Zainab also emphasized the irreversibility of the decision to cross the sea.

> [Zainab]: The person who drove the boat was with his wife and 3 children. The smuggler told him that he should drive the boat but he didn't know how. Nobody knew how to drive the boat. But if you don't want to drive, you can't return either.
> [Yasin]: The smuggler put people in the boat and chose one to drive. If you can't drive it, you stay there. And nobody would help you then…
> (*Zainab interrupts*)
> [Zainab]: And even if you decide once you're in the water that you want to return to the shore because you're too scared, they won't let you because they tell you that you could inform the Turkish authorities about the smuggler's identity. So the sea is ahead of you, all you can do at this point is go. No choice once you're in the boat.[32]

Zainab and Yasin arrived on the Island of Kos after about two hours on the boat. However, this was not the case of Ali and Aida who got separated during their first attempt.

> [Aida]: I came in one boat and he (*Ali*) came in another one.
> [Ali]: Yes, we were separated. There were 4 boats. 40 people, including my wife and the baby, got on the first boat, I went in the second one with our other son. The first left before us and at some point we ran out of gas.

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[30] In their book Migrant Smuggling: Irregular Migration from Asia and Africa to Europe, authors Triandafyllidou and Maroukis report that until 2009 smuggling networks operating between Turkey and Greece would often designate a young male migrant under eighteen to drive the boat because if they were caught by the Greek coastguards, they could not prosecute them since they were minors. They would simply be sent back to Turkey. But after June 2009, Greece criminalized the smuggling of migrants and minors could also be prosecuted. As a result, smugglers dropped this strategy (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012). Based on the testimonies collected for this study however, it does not appear that smugglers ended this practice. The interviewee Mohamed is in his mid-twenties but was nonetheless designated as captain. It is possible that smugglers and brokers simply choose not to cross the Sea with the other migrants because it is a risky undertaking and because if they were caught, they would be prosecuted.
[31] Interview with Ibrahim and Sarah, Hamburg, October 2016
[32] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016

The remaining gas was just enough to bring us back. So we were compelled to go back to Izmir. I then tried to leave again 2 or 3 times but I couldn't.

[Aida]: I stayed 6 months alone in Greece.[33]

Ali eventually gathered enough money to attempt the crossing and managed to join his wife who was staying for free at a garage run by a Greek woman in Athens.

When attempting to reach the Greek islands, migrants hoped to avoid the Turkish coast guards who, they feared, would bring them back to the Turkish shore. Interviewees argued that once they reached Greek territorial waters, they no longer feared interception by the Turkish authorities. In other words, they hoped to remain undetected until a certain point, at which they no longer minded encountering Greek border patrols. These views and expectations were informed by the digital archive of previous journeys where one could learn that in summer 2015, arriving migrants only needed to register at a Greek registration center, receive a kharti, and head for Macedonia.[34] However, the same archive also provided advice in the event that Greek patrols decided to return intercepted boats to Turkish waters. In such cases, interviewees recounted that they were ready to take risky measures such as puncturing the inflatable dinghy with a knife or capsizing the boat to transform the interception into a rescue mission.

The dinghy in which Yasin and Zainab were traveling was intercepted by Greek coast guards. The 'captain' of the dinghy tried a risky manoeuver to avoid being returned to Turkey.

[Yasin]: the boat is about 4 meters by 4.5 meters, and they'd put 30-35 people in it.
[Zainab]: (…) First 30 guys got on the boat then 5 more guys. Immediately the boat sank in the water. Those 5 guys couldn't swim so they were the first to be scared. We went for about 100 meters on the water and they were very scared, because at that point, the water started to get in the boat. We were crossing the sea for about 3-4 hours, at night, from 11:30 to about 3:30. We couldn't see the sea, it was black. We were all very nervous and if anybody said anything, someone else would say right away: 'enough!' So you could feel that the people were on the verge of breaking down. It was also very packed. I couldn't move my toes. 3 hours like that, without being able to move your feet. It was a situation…you start remembering the old days. Then you wonder if you're going to make it or not. Then suddenly a boat came near us. They were coastguards. But we didn't know where they were from, if they belonged

[33] Interview with Ali and Aida, Hamburg, September 2016.
[34] Throughout this chapter and for the rest of the dissertation, I use the name 'Macedonia' to refer to what the United Nations still recognizes at 'The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia' (FYROM). My decision, however, constitutes an endorsement of neither the Greek position (see here: http://www.mfa.gr/en/fyrom-name-issue/) nor the Macedonian position (see here: http://arhiva.vlada.mk/?q=node/7134) because the name dispute that divides both countries is beside the point of this study. So I chose to use the name 'Macedonia' as that is the name by which the country is ordinarily referenced for the sake of simplicity.

to Turkey or Greece. If it was Turkish, we'd have to go to Turkish jail. One would say to slit the boat with a knife.

[Me]: Why would you do that?

[Yasin]: There was a period in the migration where Turkey…according to what I understood, because of the pressure on Europe, all this mass of people going to Europe from Turkey. So if Europe catches a boat, they'd return it to Turkish national waters. Even the Greeks, they'd drag the boat to Turkish waters, not to Turkey, but their waters (…). So if you destroy the boat, the coastguards are obliged to save you and will pull you into their territorial waters.

[Me]: Was this just a rumor?

[Zainab]: No, it was not. We were in the boat and some had their knives ready. There were children with us and mothers said that they couldn't swim. There were children, so they thought they'd help us.

(…)

[Yasin]: So the Greek ship intercepted us. Their lights were on so they could see us. Three of us could speak English (…). So they asked us from where we were. Then they asked us to turn off the engines. As soon as we stopped, the ship turned around us and starting dragging us toward the Turkish territorial waters. But the guy who was driving the boat, he was a Syrian refugee too, he turned on the engines and started pulling the other way. So there was an argument between him and the Greek border police because there were children with us (…). So they stopped the ship and said 'Ok.' One by one, we got on the ship and quietly so that we wouldn't capsize their ship.

[Zainab]: Imagine that the coastguards' ship was 4 to 5 times as big as out boat…ours wouldn't be able to carry 30 people, and we still had to get on the boat quietly because theirs was too small for 30 people. It was very dangerous.[35]

Besides being potentially life-threatening to migrants, the maneuver described in the interview excerpt above whereby Greek coast guards attempted to push intercepted boats back to Turkish waters is a direct contradiction of the non-refoulement principle enshrined in the Refugee Convention. This, nonetheless, does not make it an outlying occurrence, as it has been frequently reported to occur in the Aegean Sea (International Federation for Human Rights, 2014; Amnesty International, 2014b; Dijstelbloem, van Reekum, & Schinkel, 2017). With the EU-Turkey deal, these instances of refoulement at sea were further legitimized (Dijstelbloem, van Reekum, & Schinkel, 2017)

Imperceptibility, as a stealth tactic to exploit the specific terrain of the Aegean Sea was not adopted throughout the itinerary, but was strategically deployed depending on the migration control practice along the EU's external borders. The adjustability of imperceptibility emerged from the interviewees' stories on the sea crossing stage of their itinerary. Migrants became imperceptible first by embarking from remote Turkish beaches at night to escape national coastguards then, once in the Greek waters, combined

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[35] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016

this strategy with risky maneuvering tactics to render the maritime border uncontrollable. In addition to stealth facilitated by the geography of Greek islands, migrants could also change the role of coastguards into rescuers (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012).

The Woods of Northern Serbia

As noted in the previous chapter, many interviewees needed to pass through dense forests along the Western Balkan countries. This is a recurring episode in the journey narratives and constituted an extremely tense moment for the interviewees. But before addressing this topic, it is necessary to understand first the necessity to go through forests, often with the help of a smuggler, in order to avoid border police. The tensest forest episodes interviewees reported occurred when they attempted to cross the border between Serbia and Hungary.

The Balkan route is a continuation of the Eastern Mediterranean route (the Aegean Sea) that starts at the Greek northern border with Macedonia and continues through Serbia and Hungary before reaching Austria. The transit through Hungary was very critical because, in contrast to Greece, it is the first Schengen country contiguous to the rest of the EU. In principle, one can without restrictions travel between Hungary and Austria or to other Schengen Member States. This made Hungary the gateway to many migrants' destination countries, as they are mostly uninterested in staying in Greece or the other Balkan states. Asylum seekers usually do not deposit applications in Serbia or Macedonia and try to spend as little time as possible in those countries. As non-members of the Schengen agreement, Macedonia and Serbia signed bilateral re-admission agreements in 2007, respectively Council Decisions 2007/817/EC and 2007/819/EC[36], with the EU whereby they must admit third-country nationals who entered the EU through a partner country without an authorization. By the end of 2015, about 400,000 migrants had entered Serbia from Greece and more than half a million had arrived in Serbia. In September 2015, Hungary closed its Serbian border. This led to the widely covered violent clashes between the Hungarian border police and the migrants amassing along the Serbian border. The increasingly vehement reluctance of Hungary to let migrants transit through its territory culminated in an amendment in July of its Asylum Act, which among other things, introduced a list of "safe third countries." Hungary would no longer accept asylum applications from individuals who entered its national territory from the countries on that list, including Serbia. Given that at that time virtually all migrants entered Hungary through its Serbian border, it was once again necessary to travel undetected in order to reach Austria. Many attempted to avoid the Hungarian border police. Starting from September 2015, interviewees who attempted to enter Hungary also had to pass through a 175-kilometer-long fence along the Serbian border.

The Hungarian border police's reputation of being harsh and brutal with migrants precedes it and many interviewees knew that they needed to avoid being apprehended while attempting to enter the country. Therefore, many crossed the border at night

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[36] Agreements can be accessed online via the following links: for Macedonia, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/BG/TXT/?uri=celex:32007D0817; and for Serbia, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32007D0819.

through the northern Serbian woods. Interviewees who went through this specific passageway often spoke of this episode as an extremely frightening experience. In the previous chapter, I discussed the specific crossing of the Serbian-Hungarian border shared by interviewees who, in the face of great danger, had to combine in order to become an imperceptible unit. Using the woods as a hiding place mirrors the adjustments in border control practices put in place by the Hungarian government. I had mentioned the cases of four Syrian refugees, the siblings Amina and Abdullah and the couple Zainab and Yasin, who crossed the northern Serbian woods to reach Hungary undetected. I explore those episodes again here, but this time to emphasize the tension and anxiety that it generated for the interviewees.

In the following excerpt, Yasin and Zainab describe the crossing between Serbia and Hungary in late June 2015. They were in a group of about a hundred migrants. Before reaching the border, a couple of Serbian police officers had stopped them and demanded a bribe. Then were then allowed to keep going.

> [Zainab]: At that point, it was about 7PM. We started walking through the forest that would take us to Hungary until 9PM. Around 9:30, people started to get tired. There was a river on our right and the forest on our left (…). At 9:30-10 PM, we couldn't see anything anymore.
> [Yasin]: And you couldn't turn on your phone light (*As Zainab would later explain, their cellphone batteries ran out of charge as they had not had an opportunity to charge them in a long time*).

As they were in complete darkness, Zainab described how they all formed a chain of people, holding each others' hands, in order to walk in a file and avoid being stranded alone in the forest between Serbia and Hungary.

> [Yasin]: We were holding each other like this (*he shows how they were holding hands*)
> [Zainab]: A hundred people walking like this. You hold his hand, he holds the next hand behind you.
> (…)
> [Yasin]: We walked to Hungary between 7PM to 10PM…about.
> [Zainab]: I believe at 10:30PM we stopped in the middle of the forest, not knowing where we were. And same thing again. You ask the person next to you 'what is your name.' Every now and then, you would ask that for fear that someone you don't know comes in between.
> [Yasin]: We couldn't see each other.
> [Zainab]: I was that close to Yasin (*she gestures how close she was*) and I couldn't see him. I couldn't know if it was him. So at 11:30-12:00, more or less, we stopped to rest. We were exhausted.
> (…)
> [Zainab]: We tried to sleep in the forest but really we couldn't sleep. We were waiting for daybreak to resume our walking. At about 12 or 1AM, we started hearing steps.

[Yasin]: It sounded like a group was walking around us. They weren't the steps of one person but a group of people (…). We got scared.

[Zainab]: It's a nerve-racking situation to be in the middle of the forest, you see nothing around you and you hear strange sounds. We were really tired. The sound was getting closer, slowly and slowly to the point that they were really close to us. We asked them: 'Who are you?' They said: 'We're a group of Syrians.' And we said: 'So are we. We're a group of Syrians.'

[Yasin]: It was a much bigger group.

[Zainab]: Well… we asked them: 'Why were you tip-toeing?' We told them they could stay with us.

[Me]: So it ended well…

[Zainab]: On the contrary. It was a very scary situation. We asked them: 'Why are you walking in the night? Why aren't you waiting for daylight?' They said: 'We were, but we heard the sound of a woman shouting in the distance. She would scream 'Ibrahim!''

[Me]: Was that your group screaming?

[Zainab]: No, no, that wasn't us. It was a woman.

[Yasin]: So they were hearing this person screaming in the night. The woman was shouting: 'Ya Ibrahim! Where are my children!' So about 4-5 people from the other group had left to find her, following the sounds (…).

[Zainab]: Besides, we had to silence the woman because the police could hear us [it seemed that the woman belonged to neither group, but was likely separated from her own group. Having asked Zainab and Yasin for clarifications, they explained that this episode was confusing because of the darkness and the stress].[37]

Amina and Abdullah also crossed the northern Serbian woods to reach Hungary and they talked about this episode in a strikingly similar fashion.[38] Amina and Abdullah were attempting to enter Hungary in mid-August 2015. Guided by local smugglers, they were walking with a group of other migrants. Amina explained how they entered the woods after sunset and changed their clothes to darker ones. As they walked, each person would hold the hand of the one next to him/her. But at some point, the group stopped walking.

> [Amina]: (…) I couldn't see anything in front of me but the guy whose hand I was holding stopped. I asked him: 'Why did you stop?' He said: 'That hand I was holding is gone. I'm lost. The person removed his hand.' We all stopped. Our mobiles were empty, no charge. No Internet in the forest… We stopped and each person in the forest was asking what was going on. Each person would explain to the person behind that the guy in

[37] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016. The screaming women turned out to be a migrant from yet another group who had become separated from their group. Zainab and Yasin did not know what happened to her after that night.

[38] I thought at some point that it could be possible that Yasin and Zainab, and Amina and Abdullah were part of the same group of migrants. They told me that they had met for the first time in Hamburg only and could not have met on the road. Indeed, Yasin and Zainab arrived in Germany on July 1st, 2015, while Amina and Abdullah left Syria on August 5th, 2015.

the front removed his hand. We stopped and waited (…). We were surrounded with trees and couldn't see in front of us. We could only feel that there were trees around us (…). But suddenly the smuggler came back and said: 'Go, go, go!' So we resumed walking in the same fashion. We didn't walk next to each other but one behind the other. Why? Because the path was so narrow. Only one person could fit. It was a very hard road. So we stopped somewhere, but the smuggler told us to remain silent: 'No voice, no ugh-ugh' (*she makes the noise of someone coughing*). We have become like the trees. Even quieter than the trees. We could hear the police, the sound of dogs… You know the Hungarian police were very tough, very violent.[39]

The creepy atmosphere conveyed by these two accounts emphasizes a kind of danger that is different from what was experienced in the country of origin. One of the characteristics that emerged from the journey narratives is the element of imminent danger, which contrasts with the type of danger that prevailed in their home country and that I discussed earlier in this chapter. When they described the danger that prevailed in their countries, interviewees would point to specific elements such as the obligation to join the army or a militia to fight (particularly in the case of young male respondents), or the risk of being jailed because of past political activism (that was Zainab's situation), or because of their identity (As Sunni Muslims from Tikrit living in Baghdad, Sarhan and Madiha were generally associated with Saddam Hussein's fallen regime).

During the journey, however, interviewees describe the anticipation of danger as more imminent but less distinct. What they report is usually a general state of anticipation of danger, which expressed a creepy tension produced by the feeling of a looming danger without ever knowing what it could be. The forest episodes encapsulate this feeling very well, because they combined a situation where danger was felt but remained ambiguous and the powerlessness of the subjects, who could do nothing besides stay put and remain silent. In such a situation, any noise acquires an eerie character that further accentuates the feeling of an unsettling and unknowable situation. This sense of imminent danger that appeared at many moments of the itinerary and was also triggered by other types of antagonisms, in particular, other individuals encountered while on the move.

Interestingly however, the dread that the interviewees felt and expressed during the exchange was generated more by the darkness and mystery of the forest itself than by the possibility that border police might find them. The opacity of the woods was protective but the absence of recognizable landmarks was frightfully disorienting. Simultaneously locatable and disorienting, the woods where the interviewees hid were disturbing spaces outside the space governed by the migration management regime. The heterotopia of these woods arose from their essential characteristic as counter-spaces to an exacerbated territorialization – the normalization of surveillance, control, and fencing – of the route across the Western Balkans. As reported during the interviews, participants had no access to the digital infrastructure for information while crossing the woods and their language was reduced to simple repetitive utterances that confirmed each other's presence. The

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[39] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, Hamburg, September 2016

confusion and muteness endured in those woods could be translated into the spatial terms of the heterotopia. These woods represent that 'other space', as Foucault defined heterotopia (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986), that is necessarily duplicitous. They negated and neutralized the apparatus of migration management by preventing the detection of the migrants, but their very existence also reinforced the spaces that they contest since their existence constitutes a hideout that sustains the necessity for mobility surveillance, control, and regulation. Some interviewees reported that even as they escaped the authorities and ended up disoriented, they would sometimes wish that the guards would find them, eventually desiring the "normal" spaces of control.

The Smugglers

The third annex (or protocol) to the Palermo Convention[40] defined the smuggling of migrants as 'the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident' (UNODC, 2004, Annex III, Art. 3, §a). One of the key features of this definition is the implicit characterization of migrants as non-victims, which contrast with the Convention's definition of human trafficking in Annex II as the:

> '[R]ecruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation' (UNODC, 2004, Annex II, Art. 3, §a).

The Convention avoids victimizing migrants who were smuggled and criminalizes smugglers only: article 5 of Annex III states that migrants who resorted to smugglers are not 'liable to criminal prosecution.' However, it is worth noting that the Convention addresses only the smuggling of migrants, thereby implicitly excluding refugees and asylum seekers from the possibility of being smuggled. The Convention is admittedly not a treaty on the respect and enforcement of human rights, but rather a tool to tackle, as its title indicates, transnational organized crime. The second and third annexes to the Convention regard the non-refoulement principle, mentioned in both protocols' 'saving clauses' (Annex II, Article 14; Annex III, Article 19), as fundamental in spite of the fight against organized crime groups' human trafficking and smuggling. Nevertheless, the absence of any mention of refugees and asylum seekers in the rest of the Convention, in particular the protocol on smuggling, is not arbitrary. It renders forced flight for safety and smuggling as mutually exclusive. Refugees and asylum seekers do not resort to smuggling. This exclusion of refugees and asylum seekers from the smuggling scheme is an ontology that is strongly anchored in the public discourse on migration. Axiomatically, refugees and asylum seekers never chose to migrate, but were forced out. But from the

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[40] The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, or the Palermo Convention, is a 2000 multilateral treaty that also included three additional protocols: Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children; Protocol against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air; and Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. All EU Member States signed and ratified the treaty.

state's point of view, smuggling is self-selection whereby migrants decide on their own to come. It is by definition unauthorized migration. In this sense, smuggling is tantamount to an undesired and (possibly) uncontrolled outsourcing of a country's migration management. On the contrary, refugees and asylum seekers are put in a passivized subject position where they are not choosers but are forced out against their will. Refugees and asylum seekers cannot be smuggled. Hence, if they do so, they may lose the legitimacy and morality of their flight.

In 2015, I attended a summer school at a university in Scotland in which Professor Jörg Monar, Rector of the College of Europe, presented his analysis of the EU's handling of migration. He argued that the influx of Syrians and Iraqis to the EU were not refugees because most of them were smuggled in from Turkey, a safe haven. He contended that the strong determination that one must have to come to Europe unauthorized and the resort to the services of smugglers, which require heavy payments, are all elements of choice that are characteristic of migrants, not refugees. Said differently, refugees and asylum seekers become financially, legally and morally irresponsible if they resort to the services of smugglers (Kmak, 2015; Watkins, 2017).

The official anti-smuggling discourse of the EU draws the same distinction as it claims that only migrants can be smuggled. *Bona fide* refugees and asylum seekers do not need to hire the criminal services of smuggling networks. However, the EU migration discourse strays from the Palermo Convention as it articulates a humanitarian agenda that seeks to protect migrants' human rights by attempting to thwart the criminal activities of smugglers. Such discourse can be found in many EU communications and directives against human smuggling. For instance, in May 2015, the European Commission addressed an action plan to the Parliament that delineated how the EU should deal with the smuggling of migrants. The introduction, noted: 'The European Agenda on Migration (…) identified the fight against migrant smuggling as a priority, to prevent the exploitation of migrants by criminal networks and reduce incentives to irregular migration' (European Commission, 2015b). While rightly emphasizing the ruthlessness of human smuggling, the discourse conflates the wish to protect migrants with the necessity to the safeguard the EU's external borders. This is possible through the discursive shift towards the victimization of migrants. The sovereign conception of borders from the Palermo Convention is combined with the production in EU texts of subject positions, which in turn entail intervention. Smugglers abuse vulnerable migrants, so the EU must intervene to protect the latter from the former. This humanitarian doctrine, however, thinly veils the sovereign primary imperative to protect the borders from law-breaking smugglers.

Contrary to the anti-smuggling official discourse that victimizes migrants, it emerged from the data that interviewees retained their agency when interacting with smugglers by selecting them and negotiating the transactions, but also by attempting to protect and defend themselves. In addition, the public imagery of migration as an illegal activity carried out by the encounter of unauthorized migrants and criminal smugglers (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008) does not correspond to the multiplicity of

implicated actors and spaces. Finally, the relationship between migrants and smugglers is complex and ambivalent.

Recruitment

Generally, it is the migrants that choose the smugglers and not the other way around. Interviewees would often recount how they resorted to multinodal snowballing recruitment techniques (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012) to hire smugglers. As in many instances of the migratory journey, the decision to hire one smuggler or another was informed by the digital infrastructure. Interviewees would often find potential smugglers' location and phone number on social media. Interviewees' social and family networks also help recommend trustworthy smugglers to the extent that it would reduce uncertainty (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012).

Sarhan and Madiha provide a typical account of the way migrants gather information along the journey, and hire smugglers.

> [Sarhan]: We obtained information we had through Facebook. I know someone in Turkey, a friend, who sent me addresses on Facebook (*Madiha interrupts*)
> [Madiha]: Addresses of Iraqi refugees in Germany.
> [Sarhan]: I mean it was a Facebook group (*Madiha interrupts*)
> [Madiha]: Yes, a group for refugees
> [Sarhan]: So they provide information.
> [Madiha]: They uploaded a whole map. It was very precise. We followed the same path that was indicated on the maps. Almost every day, they would upload a map.
> [Sarhan]: Even the smugglers, we would find them on Facebook.
> [Madiha]: Yes, their addresses were in the comments, so we chose a couple of smugglers and contacted them and came to an agreement with them.
> [Sarhan]: Yeah, normal thing. They're on Facebook, they describe the path, what will happen, like a boat will come and take you to Athens, then you get a 'kharti' (…)[41]

This testimony clearly shows that the transaction between smugglers and migrants involves negotiation. Migrants can also be decision-makers who select smugglers and express expectations. Later in the interview, Sarhan recounted how the group with whom he attempted the first crossing of the Aegean Sea had an argument with the smuggler because he overloaded the inflatable boat with people and it started to sink.

> [Sarhan]: (…) So we climbed on the boat (*Madiha interrupts*)
> [Madiha]: But on the first day we sunk
> [Sarhan]: Yes, we sunk on the first day. I mean the boat (*Madiha speaks at the same time*)

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[41] Interview with Madiha and Sarhan, Hamburg, September 2016

[Madiha]: It couldn't carry everybody

[Sarhan]: …Couldn't carry everybody…74 people for one boat.

[Madiha]: Children and young guys, women (*Sarhan interrupts*)

[Sarhan]: But we were still close to the beach. About 150 meters. So the women remained on the boat and us young guys or those who could swim got in the water and dragged the boat back. We arrived and found the smuggler. We hit him and threatened him with the phone, that we'd inform the [Turkish] police about him.

[Madiha]: Yes, but the main smuggler didn't come. It's people, Turks, who came and a young guy who would translate for us. A guy who lived in Turkey for 2-3 years and could speak Turkish.

[Sarhan]: So that guy helped us speak with the smuggler [the main one]. So we spoke with the smuggler and we said that he'd take 40 on the boat because with women and children, the trip isn't easy.[42]

In other cases, a fellow migrant would recommend a smuggler to interviewees. Some interviewees also chose to recruit smugglers directly. This was the case for Amina and Abdullah who knew that smugglers would conspicuously gather in the bustling Basmane Square in Izmir. The following excerpt shows the facility with which migrants could find smugglers in Turkey.

[Amina]: (…) We stayed in Izmir about 5 days until we managed to find a smuggler. And the smuggler told us when we could leave.

[Me]: How did you find the smuggler?

[Amina]: I met people who told me about smugglers. There's a neighborhood in Izmir called Basmane and there you'll find many Syrian smugglers. There's even a neighborhood there called "Syrian street." So you'll find smugglers in the street asking you if you'd like to go. So there we met our smuggler. I mean, we waited about 5 days until the circumstances were good and found one.[43]

As Amina hints, with the increase of the population movement through Izmir, Basmane turned into an urban space that integrated the migration economy and became a hub for migrants transiting through Turkey. The streets around Basmane Square enabled businesses to flourish such as restaurants, merchants, hotels, taxis, and even foreign currency dealers. In other words, the smuggling business and the local community become entangled in a symbiotic relationship. Yet, the straightforwardness of the recruitment processes should not conceal the complexity of migrants' relationships with smugglers.

Dependency, Fear, and Trust

As Madiha briefly mentioned in the previous excerpt, interviewees did not necessarily interact with smugglers. Sometimes, they only dealt with brokers. In reality, the figure of

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[42] Interview with Madiha and Sarhan, Hamburg, September 2016
[43] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, September 2016

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the smuggler that emerged from the interviewee's personal accounts is that of an antagonistic and threatening yet indispensable actor in their migratory journeys. The relations with the smugglers were almost systematically problematized by interviewees as they were often characterized by financial exploitation, inhuman treatment, physical threat, and deception. The ambiguity of the smuggler also reinforced the impression of imminent danger pervading the migratory journey. The journey was a collective endeavor embedded in a discourse containing stories, testimonies, rumors, advice, and information that was shared by migrants digitally and orally and that informed their suspicion of smugglers. In other words, this discourse also determined migrants' interpersonal relationships with smugglers. Sarhan and Hiba reported the story of their brother-in-law who crossed the Aegean Sea from Bodrum a couple of days before they did. The following exchange shows how the mistrust toward smugglers is partly based on stories reported and circulated by their social and kin networks.

> [Me]: What would you have done differently to make your journey safer?
> (…)
> [Sarhan]: If [the EU] refuses to help the refugees, to help you come to Germany, you're obliged to take this path… no big ship and no plane.
> [Madiha]: You'd never get a visa for the plane.
> [Sarhan]: No it's impossible. There was no other way than this one. It there were another way, it's a lie. I mean, like a big boat, it would take us more money. I mean you pay more than $1,300 per person. In fact it's a big lie. Some tell you that they've got a bigger boat so you pay more, it's all lies. He charges you something like $2,500. I mean one smuggler charged [Madiha's] brother $2,500 because he'd smuggle him in a big boat (*as opposed to an inflatable boat or dinghy*). (…) They arrived, they got off the car and it was a dinghy…like ours. They asked: 'What's this?' They paid for a bigger boat but there was none. Her brother was in a group of young guys so they threatened him, but the other smugglers, they were Turk, they had knives on them. They took them out and told them: 'You climb aboard or we kill you.'[44]

Other interviewees such as Zainab also based their representations of smugglers on reported stories. When I asked Zainab why it took her and her husband several days to find a smuggler who would help them reach Macedonia, she provided an answer that encapsulated the fear of smugglers.

> [Zainab]: Many smugglers were themselves thugs who would send you somewhere to be robbed. My uncle's wife went with a smuggler and experienced just that. She paid the smuggler, and the smuggler sent her to thieves on the road.
> (…)
> So we thought, we go with people, in groups (…). Ours had about one hundred people and about all of them were Syrians. It's much better than

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[44] Interview with Sarhan and Madiha, September 2016

to go with a smuggler. We were among ourselves and we'd defend each other.[45]

In this excerpt, Zainab did not seem to distinguish between smugglers in Turkey and smugglers along the Balkan route. Instead, she opposes the Syrian identity to the smugglers, as if they were mutually exclusive. In this identification process, she drew a line between trustworthy Syrians as insiders and suspicious smugglers as outsiders. Her othering of smugglers reflects their ambivalence as both a resource and a danger. Her perception of smugglers is also retrospectively constructed by the extremely frightening experience that she and her husband went through with smugglers in Hungary. In her testimony, however, she dismissed the fact that in Turkey, smugglers and brokers could be Syrians as well, as was reported by other interviewees.

Reports of smugglers' mode of operation in Turkey also played a role in accentuating their ambiguous representation. Some interviewees declared that they actually never knew the identities of the smugglers, nor did they ever meet them in person. Instead, they described how they only interacted with 'brokers' or 'middlemen' who mediated between them and the 'real' smuggler. In the following excerpt, I asked Ibrahim and Sarah about the way they recruited a smuggler to help them cross the Sea between Bodrum and Kos. They explained that they did not recruit a smuggler but a broker, whose involvement in the transaction added a layer of mistrust.

> [Me]: So you just said that just to speak with a smuggler, you need to pay?
> [Sarah and Ibrahim] (*at the same time*): Yes!
> [Sarah]: I mean even before you leave, you need to pay.
> [Ibrahim]: And after you pay, you wait. And he could be a crook. Many people I know were fooled by crooks. And it's possible the guy is not a crook. Of course you've got the brokers, the networks.
> [Sarah]: There is a broker for each smuggler. Many are Syrians who work for him. They bring him clients, or they bring him the victims (*she laughs*)
> [Ibrahim]: Let's say you're a big smuggler. My job would be to bring you a guy who wants to leave. I'd receive 100€ from him, or $100. Then 2, 3, 10 people, and so on. All of them do that. It's a widespread practice.[46]

Yasin and Zainab explained in similar words the same type of organization as they were looking for smugglers in Izmir. In the following exchange, Yasin and Zainab explained how the money flowed between the broker and the smuggler.

> [Yasin]: In reality, there are no smugglers in Turkey or Izmir. Instead it's all about the middlemen. The main guy, no one knows who he is. The guy who smuggles people and organizes the whole operation isn't visible to the ordinary people. So there were middlemen (…). For each person he brings, he'd earn $50 to $100. In reality you don't see the smuggler.
> [Zainab]: Even those who work with him don't know who he is.

[45] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016
[46] Interview with Ibrahim and Sarah, Hamburg, October 2016

[Yasin]: And the middleman doesn't go with you on the boat (…). I saw people from my region, the region where I used to live in Syria, working in this business. In Syria, they weren't in this business. You can live in Turkey like this. Turkey is a country that if you must live in it, there's plenty of work to do. But for us with diplomas, like engineering, we're educated so we come to Europe.[47]

The two previous testimonies point to the opacity and unaccountability of smuggling networks in Turkey in spite of the facility with which they could hire their services. However, I would refrain from comparing or assimilating smuggling networks to criminal organizations, let alone mafia-type groups. The data used for this study indicates the existence of networks especially in Western Turkey, but I have not gathered enough data to establish the organized nature of smugglers, such as structure and hierarchy, relationships with local authorities, membership rules and so on (Finckenauer, 2005).

The descriptions provided above rarely applied to smugglers operating in the Western Balkans. Testimonies of itineraries across the Balkan route often pointed to occasional smugglers who took advantage of the stream of migrants to earn money. But in this part of the journey, it is the lack of a semblance of organization that made many encounters with smugglers extremely uncertain and in some cases dangerous. Once in the Balkans, many interviewees hired smugglers directly without referrals or any prior knowledge about their reputation. As a result, interviewees would often compensate for this lack of information about smugglers by recruiting them as a group so that they could defend themselves if the situation demanded it.

For instance, after Ibrahim and his wife Sarah crossed the barbed wire fence along the Hungarian-Serbian border (probably in late August 2015), they were considered illegal migrants in Hungary. This situation put both of them in a very vulnerable position vis-à-vis smugglers.

[Ibrahim]: We stopped at a village. In that village, we found a taxi that took people north. We knew that going with this car would cost us 100€ to 150€ each. They were smugglers. But then we asked the driver, he asked for 400€ per person! But he said: 'You decide now. If you don't get in the car, I'll bring you the police. You choose.' We were compelled to get in the car. Luckily, the smuggler (or the driver) was not a bastard.[48] Meaning he didn't screw us. Some of them made you pay half and an hour later they drop you at the police. This often happened. I heard a lot of cases like this. Or you get in, he drives you for an hour and a half and then he tells you: 'Here is the border.' But you realize you only arrived in Budapest.[49]

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[47] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016
[48] Ibrahim used the Arabic expression ابن الحرام (ibn al- ḥarām), which literally means ' illegitimate child' (born out of wedlock). This expression usually refers to a person who is dishonest or contemptible.
[49] Interview with Ibrahim and Sarah, October 2016

Ibrahim's narration of his encounter with the smuggler in Hungary mirrors the ambivalent and fluctuating attitude migrants usually have toward them. On the one hand, the smuggler clearly threatened that he would report them to the police if they did not hire him. But on the other hand, Ibrahim was thankful that he eventually kept his word. The mistrust of smugglers was often justified. Interviewees would often relate unsettling stories about their encounters with smugglers, especially in the Balkans. Such accounts expressed great tension as the situations described were characterized by uncanny events that contributed to the feeling of imminent danger at many points of the journey.

For example, Zainab and Yasin had just entered the Hungarian woods and escaped a dispatched border police unit when a young man 'with marks of old wounds all over his body'[50] and who was selling bottled water proposed to drive them to Budapest. Zainab and Yasin did not trust the man but the rest of their group took him up on the offer. Information about the brutality of the local police left them with no choice. Not keen on crossing Hungary alone, Zainab and Yasin eventually decided to go with the rest of the group thinking that, after all, the smuggler was alone and they were thirteen. He took them to his small van but instead of going toward Budapest, he dropped them at an abandoned dilapidated house in the countryside. There, three more people were waiting for them. The smuggler asked that each person give him 500€. At first, the group refused, preferring to give him half of the money once they start driving toward Budapest and the rest when they get there. This would have been their only security in such transactions. However, the smuggler burst out in anger and the migrants became scared. They realized that he was no longer alone. They gave him the money and he started driving the van; his other three partners following them in another car. They drove for hours until the van ran out of gas, again in the middle of the countryside. The smuggler asks everybody to get out of the van. He took the car paper, locked the van, and left with his partners in the other car, leaving the whole group behind. He said he would come back with gas as well as some food and water.

> [Zainab]: We had no idea where we were. It was midnight, in darkness, no food, nothing, of course no water. The previous night, it was the same but in the forest. That was the third day like this, with no water, no food…our energy at zero, and you there, not knowing where. Darkness around us, we had no idea where we were. At some point, we thought maybe he had left to bring people with him who could harm us, maybe he could bring people who could kill us. We started to hear like murmurs inside our heads.
> [Yasin]: 13 people, by a car. There was nowhere to lie down and sleep.
> [Me]: So you waited until sunrise?
> [Zainab]: Until the morning came. We tried to walk a bit but it was too dark. At sunset, we realized we were surrounded with cornfields.
> [Yasin]: I would have never thought we were there. Had we known, we could have eaten the corn!
> [Zainab]: We took the corn and started eating it. The boy with us had diabetes (…). He saw the corn, it was as if he had found a treasure (…).[51]

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[50] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2015
[51] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016

They could see a small village in the distance. It must have been a few kilometers away. They walked to the village and when they arrived, they realized that the smugglers had left them near the border with Romania, very far from Budapest. As they were so far away from the usual Balkan route that migrants would take, the villagers would not believe that they were lost Syrian asylum seekers and decided to call the police.

Amina and Abdullah also had a sinister experience with smugglers as they arrived at the border between Macedonia and Serbia. They tried to avoid the Serbian authorities who had then closed the border. They found a local smuggler who approached them and offered to help them cross the border through a mountain road. The smuggler was about 18 to 20 years old and asked each person of the group to give him 20€, a small sum in comparison to what migrants are usually charged.

> [Amina]: We climbed the mountain but it was extremely steep. Climbing it was very hard. There were no trees, just rocks.
> [Abdullah]: And there were clothes lying all over the ground. The more we walked, the more clothes we saw. So at some point, I was scared that the guy was a thief or a thug. I mean why would there be clothes all over the mountain?
> [Amina]: As we approached the top of the mountain, we went to the next mountain, which was filled with trees. Very dense. There were clothes everywhere. Personal belongings, torn clothes… that young guy was constantly on the phone. I asked him: 'Who are you talking to?' He said: 'Just some guy.' We started to get very scared.
> (…)
> So I called Abdullah. I told him I had a pair of scissors with me. I told him to put it in his pocket. And I had a knife that I put in my pocket. But the guy saw us and he got scared. So he started walking very fast (…). He started to run and disappeared in the forest. As he disappeared, we stayed still.
> [Abdullah]: (…) So I told one of two guys who was ahead of me: 'If you see any suspicious movement, whistle so we can make the women flee.' We arrived at the top of the hill and there was a guy on a nearby hill that was higher than ours.
> [Amina]: We noticed he wasn't alone. There were thugs with him. They came back toward us but saw that we had knives and each one carried a stick, so at least we could defend ourselves. He felt that we were suspicious and disappeared. As he disappeared, we kept walking, but then one of the guys showed up again and started yelling: 'Come in! Come in!' (*in English*). It was a trap.
> [Abdullah]: At this point, we had to escape (…). We decided to climb down. We saw on the phone that there was a road down there. A small road. So we decided to go in that direction.[52]

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[52] Interview with Abdullah and Amina, Hamburg, September 2016

The data provided no accounts of physical abuse and violence such as torture or rape inflicted by smugglers upon migrants as is regularly reported by the media, international organizations and NGOs.[53] However, the stories of the encounters with the smugglers, both in Turkey and across the Balkans, provided a worrying illustration of the imminent danger that pervaded the journey. The tension that surrounded the interviewees' interactions with smugglers were frequently extremely unsettling insofar as the danger that they could represent for them was anticipated, but not always clearly identifiable. Doubts about the identity and intentions of smugglers preceded all interactions with them as stories concerning them were often shared along by migrants' social networks. From the point of view of the interviewees, the dubiousness of smugglers emanated from the necessary opacity of their illegal activities as well as from the subordinate dependency position they occupied vis-à-vis those individuals. Their lack of information on and control of smugglers creates an environment that seemed unstable and uncertain, which, in turns, created a sense of heightened tension.

Migrating Beyond Smuggling

The Palermo Convention's state-centric definition of smuggling individualizes border crossing because it considers unauthorized migration assisted by smuggling as the encounter of a migrant and a smuggler. Such an understanding of smuggling, and migration in general, is also reflected in the EU's anti-smuggling discourse, which also views migrants as individuals who plan, assess and decide to leave on their own. Smugglers would, thus, intervene, during the late phase of implementing a decision to migrate that was taken individually. The fragmented nature of migration in a large number of individual initiatives is undermined by the conceptualization of the journey and the empirical findings proposed by this study. As has been argued in the previous chapters, the migratory journey, and migration in general, involves a collection of actors, networks, and spaces. While migrants need the assistance of smugglers, in spite of their untrustworthiness, there are other individuals who intervene in the smuggling activity and outside of it, across various spatial settings.

One of the main elements that rendered the journey collective was the existence and use of a digital infrastructure that informed, guided, advised and buttressed migrants before they left their home nations and while on the move. The interactions with smugglers cannot be considered outside of this infrastructure, but the contrary is possible. The digital assistance that migrants received went well beyond smugglers and, as a non-physical infrastructure, existed beyond the usual triad formed by the countries of origin,

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[53] The absence of such accounts from interviewees' answers provides no indication as to whether they experienced or witnessed them (refer to footnote 5 of chapter IV). A few interviewees shared traumatic experiences with me but preferred that I not include them in my research. All study participants were free to decide to keep certain parts of their journeys silent. It is also possible that some may simply have experienced no such physical abuses in relation to smugglers. Be that as it may, trauma is not necessarily an individual and intimate experience (such as rape, torture, or enslavement) but can also derive from collective suffering. More importantly, this dissertation is not interested in cataloguing the experiences of trauma during the migratory journey, nor does it encourage the validation of migrants' voices through their status as victims of trauma. See *The Empire of Trauma* (Fassin & Rechtman, 2009) for a compelling study of trauma that critically addresses the issue that trauma bas become a necessary framework for legitimizing ordeals. The goal of this research was to address the absence of migrant voices from public discourses concerning migration.

transit, and destination. The following testimony displays great ingenuity in circumventing mobility controls imposed in transit countries by means of exploiting ordinary e-commerce and instant messaging platforms.

While crossing Europe, many interviewees were compelled to sleep in the street as they were unable to find a hotel room for a night. This was especially the case in Balkan countries where hotels would state they were fully booked or simply refuse to serve migrants without proper registration at the reception centers. In Hungary, for instance, many avoided registration for fear of being subjected to the Dublin regulation. Throughout the itinerary, Amina and Abdullah remained in touch with their brother in the Emirates who would book nearby hotels according to the GSP coordinates that they were able to send him through WhatsApp. Users of this platform can share their location with their contacts in two steps only.

> [Amina]: (…) I have a brother in the Gulf[54], so I was in contact with him to inform him where we were. So each time we arrived somewhere, we'd buy a [SIM] card for the Internet so we could communicate with him and, from where he is, he could book a hotel for us. This helped us so much, so much. It prevented us from sleeping in the street. So we immediately sent him a message to tell him where we were. He replied that he reserved a room at this hotel and showed us where it was so we could go there. We arrived at a hotel so and so… of course if hotels see that you're Syrian, they'd refuse to give you a room. But if they see that you booked a room through Internet, they were then shocked: "How did you book a room via Internet?" (*both Amina and Abdullah laugh*). So they had to give us a room.
> (…)
> We arrived in Belgrade at night. Same thing, I contacted my brother to tell him that we arrived in Belgrade and here is where we were. He sent us hotel reservations immediately. As we entered the hotel, they were surprised. They told us: 'There is no room available.' We said: 'We have a reservation.' They were again even more surprised: 'How did you find this place?' We stayed there for 3 days until we could find a smuggler who could take us from Belgrade to Germany.[55]

In this cheeky testimony, the interviewee related how she and her brother were in touch with another family member in a third country which, in spite of their appearance as unauthorized migrants, granted them bona fide frequent traveler status enjoyed by global citizens (Calhoun, 2002; Aas, 2011). The mobilization of this network enables bypassing mobility management at precise points without the assistance of smugglers. Migrants count on a network of social and family ties that pre-exist the journey, but that is also broadened on the road. For instance, such was the case of Rochdi, the doctor and aspiring

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[54] I asked Amina why she and her brother did not seek refuge in the UAE where her other brother lived. She answered that the she was convinced she would never receive a visa. There were indeed allegations that the UAE blocked visas for Syrians (Amnesty International, 2014d). To date, the CCASG countries have signed neither the 1951 Refugee Convention nor the 1967 Protocol.
[55] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, Hamburg, September 2016.

surgeon from Iraq, who only reported working with a smuggler while crossing the Aegean Sea. As a young man traveling without dependents, he managed to cross Europe, from Greece to Germany without hiring smugglers. Rochdi did not travel alone, however, but assisted and was assisted by other migrants he met on the move.

Upon entering Macedonia by foot around mid-August 2015, he shared how he proceeded from then on.

> [Rochdi]: We didn't stay too long in Macedonia. One night. I didn't stay too long but most people would stay because they had families [with them], they were tired. We were young guy. I mean, I met guys on the road since Turkey. So there were young guys, we'd just run. Some people I had met in Turkey already, in Izmir. That guy was Syrian, may God keep reward him well, was named M.
> [Me]: Are you still in touch with M?
> [Rochdi]: Yes, of course! He's my buddy. We're excellent friends until today (…). We were together in dire situations. Thank God.[56]

Later, Rochdi related how he helped others crossing the border between Macedonia and Serbia:

> [Rochdi]: Um…afterwards in Serbia, we had a very tough night there. In Serbia [at the border with Macedonia], it was tough, tough, tough. I mean the road was all muddy and the problem wasn't with us. We didn't have a problem with this. But there were people behind, with children, old people. We decided to take the bags and luggage across the border and then come back to bring the children and the rest. We had to! Otherwise it's a sin! It was cold, really cold. So we took the children across the border. People would walk by groups, one after the other. Every hour a group would arrive. At some point, you sort of remember the families even though you don't know them personally. So you help them.[57]

Rochdi argued that he helped others because he was young and traveling without dependents. He also emphasized that solidarity among fellow travelers during the journey is necessary. This testimony evoked the space of the journey across borders and rugged terrain. The spaces of the journey were in fact much more diverse. The journey was collective precisely because it connects many spaces that were not necessarily contiguous. This meant that the journey connected spaces beyond countries of origin, transit, and destination, independently from smuggling activities. Such was the case of Basmane Square, which has emerged as a hub for crossing migrants and related smuggling activities. On the same note, other types of spaces have emerged as significant crossroads where movements of people and local economic activities have become intertwined. Such hubs can take the form of reception centers such as the Aegean Greek islands (most notably Lesbos), urban public facilities such as the Keleti main station in

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[56] Interview with Rochdi, Hamburg, October 2016
[57] Interview with Rochdi, Hamburg, October 2016

Budapest, or ramshackle settlements, as in the 'Jungle' of Calais. In these emerging transnational geographies of migration, smugglers were active and interviewees often associated these spaces with such activities. These spaces constitute the physical market for smuggler. However, smuggling activities are but one aspect of those hubs. More precisely, migrants generate new economic dynamics across those spaces, including smuggling networks. The autonomy of migration is, once again, relevant in accounting for the geographies of migration.

The realities of unauthorized migration do not accord with the imposed framework of an encounter between a migrant and a smuggler. As a dangerous and arduous enterprise, interviewees undertook their journeys collectively rather than individually and mobilized a wide array of instruments to arrive safely at their destination. First, the category of unauthorized migrants is greater than the categories of the anti-smuggling discourse insofar as refugees and asylum seekers too often find themselves in a situation where they must consider all means to reach the chosen country of destination, usually irrespective of the safety in the country from which they departed or through which they transited. Second, smuggling concerned certain aspects of the journey, but certainly not all of it. Migrants deployed several tools, such as the digital infrastructure or social networks, that assisted them throughout their journeys. Finally, the journeys connected various spaces, beyond the origin-transit-destination triad while also creating new ones.

The Migration Management Regime

The migration management regime is a significant obstacle to migrants' journeys but is not unsurmountable. The purpose of this section was not to point to the cracks in 'fortress' Europe; migration is more significant than the simple exploitation of weaknesses in the articulation of migration law, policy and technologies of border surveillance and control. Rather, I would like to explore the ways interviewees coped with the obstacles posed directly by the migration management regime. As I will show, these obstacles were not only physical, but also constituted violent imposition of subject positions that could deprive them of their identity. Resistance to the migration management regime was consequently versatile: it was not restricted to tactics of escape and imperceptibility, but at times also included the desire to preserve one's identity and otherness against imposed subjectivities. Often, these acts of resistance were embedded in the spatiality of the journey and, therefore, created spaces in which interviewees could deviate from the normative subject position of the undesired migrant.

The Spatiality of the Migration Management Regime

On the itinerary of the journey, the migration management regime materialized as concrete procedures of controlling the bodies of migrants such as encampment, detainment, and forced registration and fingerprinting. The productive power of the migratory journey refers to its capacity to re-write geographies. By attempting to circumvent mobility surveillance and control, migrants challenge state sovereignty over geographical territories and, therefore, create blindspots across borderscapes, that is,

borders and the array of regulations, practices and discourses that compose the apparatus of mobility control and selection. Going around borderscapes, migrants reshape the forces of sovereign control that seek to manage their mobility (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008). Migration reshapes geographies and, consequently, changes the very practices of its own control. The series of border closing and fencing along the Western Balkan route between 2015 and 2016 when study participants were on the move display the deep imprints that migration has brought about for the sovereign dynamics of its own control. Such changes have deeply affected the European Schengen space.

Borrowing geographic concepts developed by Deleuze and Guattari, the construction of the Schengen area can be understood, on the one hand, as the establishment of a smooth space devoid of borders and obstacles to human circulation counterbalanced, on the other hand, by the striation of strengthened control and monitoring along its external borders (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). This spatial re-organization of the EU territory has instituted a political space where European citizens and legal residents can freely circulate inside the Schengen zone whereas inward movements were greatly monitored and regulated. Like any writing of space, Schengen entailed specific power structures embedded in its geography. It re-coded asylum seekers and refugees as unauthorized migrants until they can show that they too deserve being granted access to the EU's internal space. In other words, the political organization of the EU space imposed a subjectivity on migrants that corresponds to an imagined refugee or asylum seeker. Refugees and asylum seekers are defined as forced migrants in search of safety, preferably in the area surrounding their country of origin. Their involuntary flight is deemed moral because it is supposedly conceived without material objectives besides survival and, thus, cannot seek the intermediation of smugglers or violate migration laws and regulations.

One of the main reasons the interviewees' migratory journeys were difficult and hazardous were the attempts of the migration management regime to regulate the speed, volume, and direction of the streams of travelers. Frequently, efforts to manage migration lead to the 'squeezed-balloon syndrome' (Dijstelbloem, Meijer, & Besters, 2011) that describes the emergence of alternative migration routes that were less controlled. These alternative routes often contained specific geographic challenges that rendered their surveillance difficult. In return, such routes pose greater risks for migrants' safety precisely because they enabled movement that was less perceptible. That being said, the presence of technologies of mobility control along the itinerary did not necessarily aim to divert migration. The purpose of the migration management regime, as the name indicates, was to manage mobility, rather than simply divert or contain it. In many cases, managing mobility meant channeling migration through specific registration points as well as adjusting its speed to facilitate the sorting out of migrants. It follows that the Greek islands in the Aegean Sea that saw the greatest numbers of migrant arrivals (Lesbos, Samos, Chios, Leros, Kos) were also designated by the EU as hotspots. These locations became special registration centers that sought to sort asylum seekers from economic migrants. In May 2015, the European Commission released the European

Agenda on Migration that outlined the role and the hotspot approach as a sorting center for migrants:[58]

> 'The European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Frontex and Europol will work on the ground with the frontline Member States to swiftly identify, register and fingerprint incoming migrants. The work of the agencies will be complementary to one another. Those claiming asylum will be immediately channelled into an asylum procedure where EASO support teams will help to process asylum cases as quickly as possible. For those not in need of protection, Frontex will help Member States by coordinating the return of irregular migrants. Europol and Eurojust will assist the host Member State with investigators to dismantle the smuggling and trafficking networks' (European Commission, 2015d).

The hotspots integrated various European agencies that coordinated their efforts to monitor borders, gather and share information on migrants, and carry out initial processing of those who were categorized as asylum seekers. On the ground, the function of the hotspots was to prevent dispersion of arriving migrants and channel them through these designated places of registration and categorization. In addition to controlling the direction of the flow, they also served as speed regulators of the movement of migrants. Interviewees referred to these hotspot centers as camps and would often describe long queuing lines regulated by a drop-by-drop passage of migrants through the processing offices. The hotspot centers are infrastructures that represent a particular form of 'fluid governmentality' in which the objective is to reduce the speed of mobility to a convenient pace rather than facilitate it (Luke, 1998). Only then is it possible to carry out the slotting of the transiting migrants along legal categories: asylum seekers who are allowed to continue their migration and economic migrants who will be refouled. Contrary to heterotopias of escape constituted by spaces such as the woods used as hideouts or the dinghies across the Aegean Sea, hotspot centers are 'heterotopia of sovereignty' (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008). They are spaces of exception that reflect the discourse of migration crisis and, therefore, lie outside of the ordinary practice of national sovereignty. In addition, they produce subjectivities through processes of migrant sorting.

The following section discussed the participants' descriptions of the registration centers – in Greece and the Balkans – through which they transited. In most of the cases, these camps, as the interviewees persistently referred to them, were places where they would often spend more than one night waiting for registration, fingerprinting and receipt of the expulsion decision (or 'kharti').[59]

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[58] The Agenda was published less than a month after a boat headed for Italy capsized leading to the death of about 800 migrants.

[59] It is logical that all interviewees received the 'kharti' because they came mostly from Syria or Iraq, and their asylum request was processed in Germany; none of them were refouled.

Descriptions of the Registration Camps[60]

When Yasin and Zainab arrived in Lesbos, they were taken by the Greek coastguards to a camp in Mytilene, Lesbos, for registration. The following dialogue narrates their experience as they arrived late at night, at a time at which they could not be processed.

> [Zainab]: We arrived in Greece at 2:30 AM. They took us to a camp…Mytilene Island, on top of a mountain. It was very cold. There was nowhere to sleep, no tent, nothing. So we slept next to each other on the ground.
> [Yasin]: The day was very hot and the night very cold. And there was no food, no water either, there were no bathrooms (…). We bought tents, very small ones, only women would sleep in them and us guys on the ground. So my tent was next to the tent of another Syrian guy.[61]

Amina and Abdullah arrived at the same camp as Zainab and Yasin, but about a month later. It seems there were some upgrades made to the camp in Mytilene such as tents and containers to accommodate migrants. However, from the testimonies of Amina and Abdullah, the center's reception conditions were still extremely inadequate.

> [Amina]: (…) They took us to another camp, they said with containers, something cleaner (*she laughs*). We arrived at the camp, there were only tents. The ground wasn't soil or sand, but rocks. They said: 'Syrians stay here.' We were angry. We were shouting: 'How can we sleep here?' (*Amina had previously said that she and her brother arrived at the camp around midnight*) 'We won't sleep here!' We were tired and needed to sleep a little, wash ourselves. He said: 'The bathroom is there.' There was only one bathroom. It was so dirty, to the point that I didn't want to go there. I'd rather stay in my own dirt than get that filth on me. You'd just be adding filth on top of yours. Then at the time of sleep, there weren't enough tents. Imagine this! There was a big tent, but it was full. There was no space for us. It was completely full. So we went to buy a tent at a gas station. It cost…um…15€. It was good for 4 people. We slept in it. Of course we put cardboard under us so we could sleep. We were 3 women and with us was a 7 year-old boy, another one was 16, plus my brother, another Syrian guy and me. Us women slept in the tent…you know we wear the headscarf and needed to rest from it a bit. So we removed the headscarves and so on. The guys slept outside.
> [Abdullah]: We put cardboard on the ground and slept on them by the entrance of the tent. Of course in the morning, our backs were broken because of that that ground…because of the stones, felt like knives.

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[60] Not all registration centers were actual camps. According to the collected accounts, they could also be near train stations. In fact, camps were situated in places through which migrants would transit in great numbers. On the occasions where interviewees were apprehended by the local authorities without having been registered at the camp, they would be taken to a police precinct nearby for fingerprinting and then sent to a registration center.
[61] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016

[Amina]: Yes, and they didn't give us blankets. They didn't give us pillows and at night it was so cold. Cold, cold, cold! (…) In the second night, we slept very close to each other so we could stay a bit warm. In the morning, of course, they didn't distribute breakfast, they didn't distribute dinner. Nothing! There was a car that brought lunch but we couldn't get closer because there was such a crowd around the car that we preferred to stay back. At the market, we bought bread and mortadella and cheese. That's what we bought for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Around 6:30 PM, it was summer so the sun would set late. They came and told us that they would distribute the "khartiate" (*Arabized plural of 'khartia'*) and we could leave. We gathered together, with the other Iraqis and Syrians and they started calling names. Anybody who had the khartia could leave, I mean I was allowed to leave the camp and easily cross Greece.[62]

The collected stories about camps along the Western Balkan route reported even more terrible reception conditions. In the following interview fragment, Amina described a camp in Serbia along the border with Macedonia. They had arrived around 3 to 4 AM and the camp was closed already so they had to sleep outside until they were allowed in to line up for registration.

[Amina]: We arrived there at the camp. I mean, it was like a zoo. They told us: 'You'll sleep here.' Impossible! There was nothing at all. No restroom, no tent. We even came to miss the camp in Greece (*Amina and Abdullah laugh*). At least we had tents there and the ground was dry. Here the ground was muddy, there was water everywhere. People were sleeping. It was like those pictures you see of Africa.[63] There were Syrians, Afghans…we built a tent. The guys slept outside and the women inside. We woke up in the morning at about 7.We decided to go to the next camp. Fortunately, we slept inside the camp. Those who slept outside couldn't get in because they closed the door. The Serbian police prevented them from entering the camp. They would not be allowed in until everybody inside left and reached the second camp. Then only could they enter the camp. There was an ocean of people, outside and inside. Of course, there was a line for families and a line for the others. The line for families was faster. So we entered the second camp. Same thing. It was really tough. We had to wait many hours until they allowed us in. Inside, there was the Red Cross. We walked a lot and had thorns in our feet. They healed us.

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[62] Interview with Amina and Abdullah, Hamburg, September 2016
[63] The evocation of Africa by Amina was very surprising. While the conception of population displacement is imbued with images of people living in squalid eternal camps in "Africa", one would expect that Syrians' representations of refugeeness would be also shaped by permanent settlements such as Zaatari or Azraq in Jordan, or the numerous Palestinian camps throughout the Levant. It is possible that the use of the "African" imagery serves to demarcate oneself from this condition and render one's own predicament exceptional as opposed to the normalized condition of the "African" refugees. Such attempt at excluding the self from an othered category mirrors claims of greater deservingness to be granted international protection. Similarly, some interviewees differentiated themselves from Afghan asylum seekers.

The accounts provided by Zainab and Yasin about their transit through a camp in southern Serbia were even more terrible. They described, as the previous participants did, the antagonisms opposed to their mobility in the form of deployed technologies of the body: regulation of the speed and direction of migrants' movements and processes of subjectification through sorting and categorization. In their case, however, the competition between the logics of mobility control and the provision of basic human care prevented Zainab from receiving urgent medical assistance in a timely manner.

> [Yasin]: When we arrived in front of the camp, the situation was very tough. We were in front of the camp, the people massed in front of it. I mean, it's impossible to describe to it you. People on top of each other, and the camp was kind of…what? Tents. It was in a forest, they put the camp there. The tents were…They were used for horses. It was dirty. By then, my wife was already very ill. Greatly. When we were in the mountain, she fell…it looked like internal bleeding. So I pushed my way all the way to the place where they frisk you [upon entering the camp]. They, they inspect you, take your picture and fingerprints. My wife stayed outside. The officer frisked me and I told him I had my family with me. He asked where. I told him outside (…). Outside the sun was hitting hard (…). She has a migraine and shouldn't stay under the sun. He said: 'Don't go. You sleep here and your wife sleeps outside.' I said it was nonsense. I got angry. He brought a guy (…) [who] could speak Arabic. I explained the situation to him. He said: 'You must sleep here and your wife must sleep outside.' I said: 'How? We're Arabs. How can I let my wife sleep outside while I stay here for the night?' He said: 'Then you can sleep outside too.' So after having waited a whole day, I left the camp. I saw a doctor and told him about my wife, that she may have a hemorrhage. He first said that I was lying. But then he said: 'All right. Go out and wait for me there.'[64]

The refugees and asylum seekers transiting through the heterotopia of registration camps are constructed by the sovereign dynamics of border control as individuals in "biological crisis" (Foucault, 1966). The biological crisis that characterizes unauthorized migrants in general, especially refugees and asylum seekers, is not limited to the camp. The migratory journey includes other heterotopias such as the dinghy on which they cross the sea and the routes they take. But in contrast to these spaces of escape, camps are spaces of mobility capture. The camps regulate the speed of migrants' mobility while paying lip service to their physical safety. As discussed in the first chapter, the biological crisis stems from the deterritorialization of migrants – the journey – into the naked life outside of the state's protective sheath. Migrants' political nakedness is mirrored by the subjectivization of refugees and asylum seekers as displaced bodies strictly in search of survival and physical safety. Consequently, the public discourse on migration, including the UN Refugee Agency, often locates the destination of the journey within the safety of the camp, removed from conflict zones and persecution and equipped with the necessities that preserve life (shelter, food, water, medical assistance). In this view, migrants' agency over their mobility and choice of settlement does not count as a vector of their survival.

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[64] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016

Many interviewees provided accounts of their attempts to escape mobility control and regulation. Throughout their journey, they deployed resistance tactics when they resorted to smugglers, took less monitored and/or more hazardous paths, or exploited their digital and social networks. In certain parts of their itinerary, unauthorized migrants tried to remain unnoticed while traveling. The images of endless columns of migrants walking across the Balkan countries that filled the iconography of the 2015-2016 migration do not contradict the stealth migratory practices discussed in this chapter. Indeed, like any tactic, migratory practices change and adapt to the conditions prevailing in a given environment. There is no need to escape border control when the passage through safer terrain is tolerated as was the case of the 'Balkan corridor', which was tolerated by transit countries in spite of Schengen and Dublin regulations between autumn 2015 and March 2016 (Kingsley, 2016; Moving Europe, 2016b).[65]

Imperceptibility tactics to escape control were not, however, the only acts of resistance against the migration management regime. Interviewees often related episodes of micro-resistance by affirming one's identity, culture or lifestyle amidst the instability of the journey. In her account of the camp in Mytilene, reported a few pages earlier, Amina related that she could finally 'rest' from the headscarf when she and her brother, Abdullah, bought a small tent from a local merchant. The function of the tent was not to provide the comfort and sense of security of a shelter, but was aimed to reverse the openness and commonality of the camp. The large open space of the camp, filled with people, and where amenities, if any, were collective, left no room for privacy. In such a shared crowded space, the tent becomes a device that could temporarily restore a semblance of privacy in which covered women could have some intimacy and remove their headscarves.

Camps (and other spaces of transit such as airports) are spaces at the margin of societies where new identities emerge through bureaucratic performances. In the case of registration camps through which interviewees transited, they were sorted between those who deserved lodging an asylum request and those who did not. Yet, although they were separated from the outside world, transiting migrants attempted to maintain normality. When Yasin unsuccessfully tried to find medical assistance for his sick wife at the entrance of the Serbian registration camp, he refused to stay inside the camp and leave Zainab sleep alone outside. In spite of the circumstances of the journey, he invoked his 'Arab' identity, instead of security considerations, to return to his wife queuing at the entrance of the camp so as not to let her spend the night alone.

The affirmation of identity usually occurs in contradistinction to the categories, or subject positions, imposed by the migration management regime. However, the reaffirmed identity does not always refer to a cultural specificity but can also appeal to one's humanity, beyond the restrictive bureaucratic categories of asylum seeker or unauthorized migrant imposed by the migration management regime. Asserting one's

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[65] See chapter V.

identity as a human being often appears in interviewee narratives when they are confronted by the technologies of border control and monitoring. The resistance to imposed subject positions stretches beyond the camp: the spatiality of the migration management regime is not limited to the physicality of the camps situated along the itineraries crossed by migrants. Indeed, borders are also constituted by digital entities located within interconnected databases such as the SIS and the EURODAC that archive various biometric information on migrants. The archive is supplied by an extensive technological apparatus that "datafies" the mobility of migrants (Broeders & Dijstelbloem, 2016). Biometric systems such as iris scans and facial recognition, and more usually fingerprinting, serve as identifiers for registered migrants. The identity of migrants, and subsequently the establishment of their bureaucratic categories, is constructed based on details extracted from their bodies, which become a source of readable information for migration technology (Dijstelbloem, Meijer, & Besters, 2011). The reconstruction of migrants from details of their bodies constitutes a negation of their context, history and memory, that is, what makes them unique human beings. The resistance to the construction of migrants' identities from detailed information from their bodies is subtly captured by the testimony of Yasin and Zainab about their apprehension by Hungarian border police.

Failing to escape the Hungarian authorities, Yasin and Zainab knew that giving their fingerprints when in Hungary could very likely trigger the Dublin requirement of EU country of first entry and prevent them from requesting asylum in Germany. The Hungarian border police caught them soon after they entered the country and had to take their fingerprints. However, this did not prevent Yasin from micro-resisting the procedure as he asked to take the fingerprints of his wife himself.

> [Yasin]: He [the officer] came to fingerprint my wife. I told him: 'Wait a minute, if you please.' He was holding her hand and for us, you don't do that. I told him I take her hand and make her give the fingerprints.[66]

This brief and apparently inconsequential episode reveals, nevertheless, the desire for the interviewees to remind the officers that they are more than bodies carrying information, but are individuals with a specific history and memory that also informs who and what they are. The legal and bureaucratic necessity for the border police officer to take Zainab's fingerprints does not constitute, in the eyes of her husband, an exception to patriarchic cultural elements whereby someone's wife should not be deliberately touched by a strange man. Whether Yasin really retains patriarchic cultural traits is not the question. He did invoke such cultural practices, but what matters here is that he seized the opportunity to have a say in his subject positioning by asserting his identity or the fact that fingerprints did not exhaust who and what he and Zainab are.

The various obstacles along interviewees' itineraries reviewed in this section did not constitute deterrents to the decision to migrate. As framed in the narrative structure, the desire to leave and settle elsewhere was, for the interviewees, stronger than the fear of the anticipated dangers that characterized their migratory journeys. Therefore, these obstacles

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[66] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016

should be taken as antagonistic devices that enable migrants to become protagonists of their journeys by developing and displaying character traits such as skills and attitudes that enable them to pursue their goal. In other words, the brute force of the migration control deployed along their itinerary and the hazards of the journey neither blocked migrants nor deterred them from attempting to cross the border to reach Europe. Once migrants were settled on leaving their countries, the migratory journey became a story of how they maneuvered and negotiated the obstacles that they encountered. In essence, the migratory journeys of those interviewed illustrated migrants' autonomy and agency.

The following section addresses the final phase of the journey, namely its resolution.

Resolution?

In the narrative structure, the end of the journey corresponds to its resolution or denouement, which could be broadly defined as the return to a (new) normal after all the antagonisms have been overcome. The restoration of a normal situation in the destination or settlement country mirrors the unfamiliar home narrative discussed earlier. The establishment in a new home, legally, economically, socially and culturally, rather than simply reaching physical safety, constitutes the end of the migratory journey. Just as the journey does not begin when migrants physically leave their country of origin, it does not end with arrival in the chosen destination. The journey can possibly become a protracted situation of irresolution as was the case for several interviewees still facing obstacles of legal recognition that prevented them from settling in their destination country. Some had obtained subsidiary protection, others had had their asylum application denied but could appeal the decision, and others have been placed on a deportation list.

Ultimately, it is the interviewees themselves who assess and decide whether their journey has ended. The conclusion of the journey depends on migrants' subjective criteria that indicate whether a situation of normalcy, as they would characterize it, has been resumed in their new country of residence. Accessing this subjectivity implies inquiring about their senses of self and of belonging in the receiving society. I follow in the footsteps of scholars such as Soysal (1995), Benhabib (2004), Bosniak (2010; 2011) and more recently Bhimji (2016) to discuss interviewees' claims of personhood in relation to their legal and personal situations in Germany.

I use the notion of personhood here to avoid the epistemological trap of terms such as integration or assimilation. First, the notion of integration implies a timeframe that extends well beyond the one-to-two year period of residence in Germany that none of the study participants had accumulated at the time of the interviews. Second, and most importantly, the notion of integration does not fit the epistemological stance of this research. Although integration is an essential question that is inseparable from notions of citizenship, membership and identity, it is often presented politically, socially and culturally as an inward-looking concept that only proposes the perspective of the receiving society and state without considering migrants' subjective sense of belonging. As an unavoidable discursive element of migration policy formulation, the notion of integration encompasses several indicators such as citizenship, education, employment,

place of residence, homeownership and so forth, that determine the extent to which immigrant communities can be differentiated from native members of the receiving society and, potentially, design corrective policies to reduce gaps. In other words, there are discourses of integration articulated in the host society that designate rules of belonging for their guests. Their claims of personhood become thus challenged by processes of subjectivation.

Discourses of integration are, in part, the focus of the ethnographic and discursive research conducted by Patricia Ehrkamp on the deindustrialized German Ruhr conglomeration of Duisburg-Marxloh (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003; Ehrkamp, 2006). As the local steel and coal industries started to shrink significantly in the 1990s, the share of the resettled Turkish population in the area rose to about a quarter of the total residents. In her work on the integration discourses articulated in the German society, she identified processes of othering and "Orientalizing" of the Turkish immigrants that rendered their assimilation very difficult, if not impossible (Ehrkamp, 2006). She located within these discourses a power imbalance with the host that put Turkish immigrants (across generations) in the dominated subject position of permanent guest workers for whom Germanness was constructed as an unreachable identity (Ehrkamp, 2006). Therefore, she framed the imposition of the rules of assimilation addressing the Turkish immigrant guests as an absence of hospitality in the Derridian sense. Similarly, chapter II of this dissertation framed hospitality as an invitation to migrants by the receiving society to enter discourse on migration with their own voices on a basis of equality with the host. By granting access to the public discourse, hospitality enables migrants to proclaim and assert their personhood. It follows that the construction of migratory journey narratives cannot refer to the notion of integration, which imposes a subject position that negates the condition of intersubjectivity in hospitality.

The Notion of Personhood

Because this section deals with the phase in which interviewees have reached the final destination of their migratory journeys, I examine the ways they articulate and negotiate their personhood as newly arrived migrants in relation to their specific circumstances in Germany, their personal aspirations, and proclaimed social status (Bhimji, 2016). This discussion must of course take into particular consideration the various legal statuses that differentiate the interviewees. Some of the interviewees were granted asylum (a three-year long residence status), others received only subsidiary protection (one-year residence permit rather than refugee status), and several others were either denied as refugees or were still awaiting a final decision by the BAMF. However, I do not ascribe personhood to the legal rights and entitlements that migrants may have in the receiving country. For instance, Soysal argued that national citizenship is evolving towards 'postnational citizenship' where personhood will be defined by international laws and conventions (Soysal, 1995). Attaching rights to universal principles that apply equally to migrants and citizens is indeed a vector of demarginalization and inclusion, which eventually enables striving for legal personhood. Yet as Bosniak has argued, obstacles to personhood are not strictly legal, but are also moral (Bosniak, 2011). Benhabib too addresses 'moral personhood' as the social and political involvement of migrants in the

deliberations of the community in which they reside (Benhabib, 2004). Nevertheless, both Bosniak and Benhabib still locate the achievement of personhood within the frame of norms, rights and laws, whether at the national or supranational levels.

Even though I fully subscribe to the argument that 'with assignment to personhood, the bearer is treated as a subject entitled to rights and recognition' (Bosniak, 2010, p. 13), I explore a more emotional dimension to personhood as it has been shaped by the process of the migratory journey as well as early socialization in the receiving society. Access to rights and the extension of membership norms are indeed important factors that enable migrants, including undocumented ones, to adopt and negotiate personhoods. But the narrative approach of this paper emphasizes exploring migrants' personhood, their daily struggles to normalize their lives in Germany, beyond the usual framework of citizenship. The right to personhood is not strictly legal, nor is it solely attached to citizenship and membership norms. This right also mobilizes the capacity to define, contextualize and historicize oneself in the face of restrictive asylum laws as well as essentializing subject positions conveyed by discourses on migration. Claims of personhood are in this sense empowering, because they contest the power to name, categorize and sort wielded by border technologies, migration policies and regulations.

It follows that personhood refers to a process of identification whereby migrants deploy tactics of asserting their value and agency against subject positions that they believe misrepresent them. This approach fits the journey narrative structure since interviewees often needed to negotiate antagonistic subject positions that impeded the affirmation of their personhoods by hindering their dignity and agency.

This section examines the interviewees' discourses of subject position contestation and rejection that they deployed as new and/or aspiring residents in Germany. I show that the interviewees who claimed that their migratory journey had reached its resolution are those who expressed a sense of belonging that enabled them to move on to resuming the life that they had forsaken in the country of origin. Conversely, the interviewees who do not consider that their migratory journey has ended (the majority) were still struggling to settle in Germany. Paradoxically, however, it also emerged from the interviews that the legal status of the study participants did not correlate with resolution of their journeys. Indeed, several interviewees who were granted asylum were still experiencing a subject position that eroded their personhood. The impediment to interviewees' personhood is, therefore, not strictly attached to entitlements and rights but reflects the subject positions that are conveyed by their legal statuses as refugees, asylum seekers, holders of subsidiary protection or individuals awaiting deportation. This entails that claims of personhood expressed by interviewees do not necessarily refer to the laws and regulations in Germany. Interviewees did not even appeal to the Refugee Convention, which they all ignored when they justified the legitimacy of their stay in Germany. On the contrary, their affirmation of personhood was often conducted by advancing their individual self-worth.

Contesting Subject Positions and Claiming Personhoods

Interviewees whose asylum request was denied or who were still waiting for a decision by the BAMF responded that their journey had not ended. Rochdi, the aspiring surgeon, and the young Iraqi couple, Sarhan and Madiha[67], were still waiting for a decision on their application when I interviewed them. These participants emphasized the uncertain nature of their stay in Germany, which prevented them from resuming whatever professional and personal aspirations they had conceived in their respective countries.

To the question of whether they thought that their journey had ended, Sarhan and Madiha replied as follows:

> [Sarhan]: No, it's not over.
> [Madiha]: It still goes on.
> [Sarhan]: This is just the beginning of the journey. Up to now was just the transit, to come here. But we have everything left to realize. Up to now, we haven't started working on our future. We have yet to realize our future. The first step is the language. We're in B1 now.[68]

When I then asked when they think a decision will be taken, Sarhan replied that he did not know and started to express how he felt about the decision-making process.

> [Sarhan]: I mean, what we thought about Germany, it's a matter of luck. I met Syrians, Iraqis, Afghans, and so on, and the responses changed a lot. Luck! I mean they've got no system. We used to think there will be a German system. But it's not a system. Some would spend 30 minutes in the second trial, they obtained residence for 3 years. Others would spend 3 hours, or 4 hours with official original documents, and they only received one year (…). I mean there are so many stories, real ones that I've seen. So I discovered, I mean I'm certain now 100% that there's no system. There's no system nor is there a law to be followed. Those who decide… who decide on refugees, base their decisions on their convictions. This guy gets a year, that other one 3 years (…). The law, we read the law when we came here, when we arrived in Germany. They gave us a booklet on asylum law…

As for Rochdi, he provided a rather similar answer:

> [Rochdi]: For me, there are journeys. Journeys! I don't think that the migratory journey has ended. Until I receive the residence permit. Until then, I'm not settled. Do I go back after a year or so spent in Germany? Do I stay? All this exhaustion and these dangers… (*silence*). Do they have any value or importance to the German government, or…(*silence*).

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[67] A couple of months after I had met with them, Sarhan and Madiha called me to inform me that their application had been rejected. They appealed the decision but as of summer 2017, I did not know what the outcome was.
[68] Interview with Sarhan and Madiha, Hamburg, September 2016.

Honestly, there's one thing that I don't understand. Sometimes I feel like Germany… (*silence*) I mean a whole group gets the residence permit and another one just one year protection, and then another group, denial. They deport them. Of course they must have specific reasons to deport you. They don't just deport you because God only knows why. For sure, they must have specific grounds. But some people…(*silence*). I told you about my friend who's been deported to Hungary. But there are some people who did give their fingerprints in Hungary, they were Syrians, not Iraqis, Syrians! (…)

[Me]: What would you do if your application was denied?

[Rochdi]: Let me tell you. That's impossible. It's either the residence permit or the residence permit (*he laughs)*. Choose what you'd prefer (*he continues to laugh*).[69]

The irresolution of the journey expressed in both answers corresponds to the precariousness that often accompanies the status of asylum seeker. Mirroring the unfamiliar-home narrative discussed in the trigger phase of the journey, these interviewees have not yet been able to resume the activities and lives that they abandoned in their country of origin. They expressed a desire to achieve the aspirations and ambitions that they had brought with them to Germany upon which they cannot yet act. The frustration of not settling yet and ending the migratory journey was expressed through their questioning of the German administrative process of reviewing asylum applicants. The impediment to the participants' personhood – the ability to claim respectability for the self – is not contested by appealing to the right to claim asylum, or the persecution and violence in their country of origin, but is communicated through the incomprehension at what they believe to be questionable and unfair administrative processing of asylum requests. It was neither the law nor the regulations that challenged their personhood, but the interviewees' perception that their application was neither systematic nor impartial.

Other interviewees formulated the same complaint, particularly when their application was rejected. Such was the case of Ali and Aida, a Syrian Kurdish couple with three children (the last one was born in Germany). They reached Germany in April 2015 and underwent the hearing with an asylum officer. Their application was deemed "inadmissible" the following October on the basis that they had been fingerprinted in Greece, which is, under the Dublin regulation, the country of first entry. In addition, they failed to appeal the BAMF decision on time because they were transferred to another reception facility and the BAMF decision letter was sent to their previous address.[70] Since Germany has halted deportations of Syrian asylum seekers to Greece, Ali and Aida are still in Germany, under the '*Duldung*' status ("tolerated stay" i.e. deportation has been

[69] Interview with Rochdi, Hamburg, October 2016

[70] The asylum application lodged by Ali and Aida was considered "inadmissible" (*"unzulässig"*) because the BAMF found that Germany was not responsible for providing them one of the types of protection available (refugee, subsidiary protection, or ban on deportation) (Asylum Act, Article 29). In their case, another EU country – Greece – was the EU state of first entry and consequently the state responsible for processing their asylum request. In the case of inadmissibility, the applicants have exactly one week after reception of the notification letter to appeal (Asylum Act, Article 29 (1) and (3)).

temporarily suspended). Their stay in Germany is temporary and they are on the deportation list to Greece.

> [Ali]: Well in life, no journey ever ends. I mean you're always looking for security, stability. So maybe if you reach these points, you finished your journey. But we haven't finished our journey. Like I explained to you a bit earlier, we're here in Germany but we fear that at any moment the police will come and tell us: 'Come, Griechenland' (*Griechenland is the German name of Greece*). We're always scared of this so we don't live in stability.[71]

Later, Ali and Aida would share their views on the asylum process and especially the hearing with a BAMF examiner.

> [Aida]: There was a decision to stop deporting Syrians (*Ali interrupts*)
> [Ali]: And Germany suspended Dublin for Syrians. Meaning that Dublin no longer applied to Syrians. In spite of this, we're subjected to Dublin.
> [Aida]: Maybe the translator made a mistake
> [Ali]: He may have hurt us more than he helped us… No he didn't help us at all.
> [Aida]: I am certain that if they give us a chance to sit with the investigator a second time, that he listens to our story, he'd give us the residence (*meaning the three-year residence permit granted with refugee status*) and we'd obtain the rights to be refugees.
> [Ali]: Now the problem is that the first trial (*or the first hearing session*)[72] decides your fate. The trial we had was just that. It was in writing, tsk, tsk, one sheet after the other, and you're done. But I need to understand first what's a trial in writing and what's an oral court? Tell me! I'm not from here! I have no clue what the difference is! For example, one trial is for those with specific circumstances or who have a special story so they ask for an oral trial. But unfortunately, after this, tsk tsk, you're denied.[73] I'm… In Syria, the day my home was destroyed, my [identification card] was at home. So it was gone![74]

In the previous interview excerpts, participants had not yet been able to end their journey by settling in Germany. Regardless of their specific legal circumstances, they voiced mistrust of the bureaucratic processing of their asylum application by pointing to a perceived lack of consistency in procedure. Often, the migrants contested the lack of a systematic and predictable asylum review procedure with the claim that they were within

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[71] Interview with Ali and Aida, Hamburg, September 2016
[72] Interviewees would typically call the hearing a trial. I addressed this question in Chapter II.
[73] Ali and Aida only had one meeting with the BAMF asylum officer. It was not the hearing per se, but a preliminary meeting where applicants would share basic information (name, country of origin, age, date of entry) and briefly explain the circumstances of their flight. The second meeting is ordinarily the formal hearing. In the case of Ali and Aida, once the BAMF realized that they were subject to the Dublin regulation, no hearing took place since the country of first entry is in charge of processing their asylum application. Ali and Aida mistakenly thought that they had a hearing, but in fact they never did.
[74] Interview with Ali and Aida, Hamburg, September 2016

their rights and that their presence in Germany was legitimate. However, while this legitimacy is substantiated by the dangers they escaped from in their countries of origin, most of the participants justified their claim with arguments that are not expected from asylum seekers. Ali and Aida believe that they never had a chance to explain the circumstances of their flight to the asylum officer and argued that it would rightly enable them to become, without mentioning it clearly, subjects of the Refugee Convention.

Claim for Value as a Worker

Employment for asylum seekers and refugees in Germany is a complex matter because it is subject to many requirements and conditions.

Asylum seekers whose application has not yet been decided by the BAMF only hold a permission to reside ("*Aufenthaltsgestattung*"), which does not allow to be employed in Germany. If the asylum application was rejected, but deportation of the applicant has been temporarily suspended (i.e. "*Duldung*"), then the Office of Foreign Affairs may provide an employment permit ("*Beschäftigungserlaubnis*") under three conditions:

i.   The Duldung status is not accompanied with a work prohibition

ii. The applicant has resided for at least three months in Germany

iii. The application for the employment permit is accompanied by a concrete job offer.

Since summer 2016, asylum seekers in almost all German states can obtain a work permit regardless of whether their employment may disadvantage permanent residents and citizens on the job market. However, asylum seekers who still live in an accommodation facility (reception centers, shelters, and so forth) cannot seek employment. However, after fifteen months of residence in Germany, asylum seekers must be provided with housing accommodation.

Refugees and holders of a subsidiary protection status are granted a residence permit ("Aufenthaltstitel") for one year or three years renewable. Upon completion of integration courses, they have the right to work and be self-employed without restrictions. However, they often face several obstacles on the job market such as insufficient skills in the German language, difficulty in establishing the recognition of their education degrees, certificates and skills acquired before coming to Germany, inadequate qualifications or absence of a formal diploma, or the unwillingness of employers to hire refugees.

These elements, both legal and social, simultaneously specific to German law and brought to Germany *via* the migratory journey, constitute impediments to migrants' ability to claim their worth as workers rather than recipients of state handouts. Many study participants such as Ali and Aida legitimized their presence in Germany by proclaiming their worth as workers, thereby rejecting their potential positioning as burdens on the receiving society.

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[Aida]: So we arrived here mainly to work. So they give us a chance, just a year. We'd accept a residence permit for only a year. At least we could sign work contracts. We want to be legal, but we're not allowed.

And later in the interview, she added:

[Aida]: We came to work, to live, to regain what we lost. When we came and they denied us they didn't give us the opportunity (…).[75]

By attempting to reclaim her personhood as a worker and contributor to society, Aida implicitly challenged the subject position of inactive costly migrants and refugees that she argues was imposed on her. She combines the contestation of what she believes to be improper implementation of the procedures for assessing asylum application and the restrictions of asylum law on her capacity to be a contributing member of society.

Interestingly, interviewees strove for personhoods that are mirror images to subject positions from which they wished to free themselves. Several participants assumed that the rest of the society perceives them as lazy people who live off the state welfare (Skeggs, 2011). In return, these contested subject positions reveal the participants' modes of identifications, that is, their attempts to construct their personhood. Identification plays a significant role in enabling participants to end their journey. Interviewees claimed personhood by insisting that they were hard-working people who could positively contribute to society. That stance mirrored the subject position of a parasitic presence.

Hussein was a student in engineering in Syria when he left. He came to Germany around January 2016 and obtained refugee status. He considered that his journey had ended.

[Hussein]: The essential stage is over. The main goal has been achieved and that is having reached safety. And now starts the aspects of life. Now starts the outlook from the perspective of daily life and from my own personal perspective. We have reached safety, now for me not to become a parasite to the German society, I must become a productive person.[76]

Contrary to what has been argued here, Hussein situated the end of his migratory journey in reaching the safety of the destination country. However, he also mentioned resuming studies and starting a family as the next steps in his journey. While he clearly stated that his journey had ended, underlining his answer is a subtle apprehension that his presence in Germany may become 'parasitic' if he does not, at some point, contribute to the society that gave him refuge. The safety narrative is here somewhat undermined when Hussein expresses the necessity to maintain the legitimacy of his status in a society where he does not take his presence for granted. The fear of being viewed as a parasitic entity to the host was also expressed by other interviewees such as Yasin who, like most of those with whom I spoke, did not consider that his journey had ended in the reception country in spite of having received refugee status.

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[75] Interview with Ali and Aida, Hamburg, September 2016
[76] Interview with Hussein, Hamburg, July 2016

Yasin and Zainab, who at the time of the interview had been living in Hamburg for about sixteen months, were both granted refugee status. Before leaving Syria, Zainab had only one year left at the university where she was studying philosophy and Yasin had just obtained his degree in Engineering. As foreign legal residents, they need first to complete German language requirements before being able to enroll at the university or obtain a work permit. Elements that could be viewed as ingredients of a normal life – a renewable and stable legal status, a home, a monthly income – did not suffice to unequivocally mark the end of the journey.

> [Me]: Do you consider that your journey has ended?
> [Yasin]: Because we came here and obtained protection for 3 years, or a residence permit for 3 years only. But in Europe, every day there's a new law against the refugee. So we can't forget that where you're living isn't your country.
> [Zainab]: You're not settled.
> [Yasin]: At any moment, you might have to leave. How long will we remain in this house where we are now?
> [Me]: But earlier you [Yasin] were very enthusiastic when you told me about learning German… (*Zainab interrupts*)
> [Zainab]: Yes, because we want to acquire the relevant skills to live here.
> [Yasin]: Honestly, I am learning German to… Look, I'm telling you all this in Arabic. I can defend myself in Arabic. But if someone comes and speaks German to me, I can't defend myself. I'll make so many mistakes. I must convey the idea that first we're not backward people. We're a people that's educated, we're a people that's conscious, we're a people that's cultivated. There's a very large share of educated people from Syria who arrived in Europe. We never rely on others. You should see where the Syrian people work. It's a very industrious people.
> [Zainab]: We're here to learn the language, to study, to acquire experience. We'd like to work, finish our studies. It's nice when someone does that, build a future, of course here in Germany if we're allowed to remain.[77]

In his answers, Yasin expressed particular concern about the political developments in Germany and Europe that may lead to greater hostility and restrictive measures against refugees' presence and their eventual access to political membership. His fear is stirred by a sense of vulnerability in his most mundane interactions with the native population because of his insufficient knowledge of the language. His symbolic muteness prevents him from verbally correcting what he believes to be the unfair representation of Syrians as an unworthy and parasitic addition to an otherwise "industrious" German society.

Later in the interview, Yasin and Zainab mentioned their desire to contribute to German society as a way to resume an 'orderly life.'

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[77] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016

[Yasin]: I know that a share of the taxes that you guys pay go to us. We take a share of your taxes.

[Zainab]: Meaning that we take from the state's reserves. But in return, we can work and give the money back or contribute also. It's like a credit. You take a credit and at some point you reimburse. We would like to work and return the money and help. We didn't come here to become a charge.[78]

In expressing their indebtedness to German society, Zainab and Yasin also hope to dismiss possible misunderstandings that they may be misrecognized as a burden. In these interview excerpts, they expressed their inherent value as skilled, educated, and honest potential members of the host society yearning for an opportunity to pay their dues and contribute to the collective welfare – many interviewees also expressed refusal to be objects of charitable assistance. The fear of becoming perceived as a parasitic or burdening presence is actually linked to the notion of hospitality in the sense that it establishes a distinction between legitimate and clandestine guests. By definition, the parasite is an entity that lives at the cost of its host, only benefitting itself. The interviewees argued that if they, as guests, are not able to fit in the host society, learn the local ways, become productive and, eventually satisfy their own representations of what Germany's social expectations of them may be, they could risk being misrecognized and consequently expelled. The economic and social inclusion would, from the perspective of many interviewees, put an end to their journey by normalizing their lives and guarantee the legitimacy of their presence in the longer term. In other words, Interviewees do not consider that their membership is only a factor of their legal status as refugees. It is also determined by their capacity to contribute to society through work and tax payments. From the outlook of most interviewees, making home combines a legal status that is protected against contingent political developments and popular mood swings towards migrants, as well as the cultural and economic inclusion that renders their presence justly recognized as necessary. Admittedly, the right to work is conditioned by their legal status: subjects of Dublin regulation, or refugees who have not fulfilled certain requirements (such as German language requirements, length of stay in Germany, permission to work) are not yet allowed to study[79], work or start an apprenticeship. It emerges that personhood surpasses the citizenship framework or the necessity to access certain rights and entitlements. It is related to personal identities that are constructed as moral oppositions to immoral subject positions that could make them objects of deportation. The status of refugee or asylum seeker can be experienced as an embarrassment that hinders migrants' respectability but also the autonomy to work, provide for oneself, and eventually "re-pay" the favor made by the host society. This suggests that many interviewees do not necessarily disagree with the opinion that a typical refugee is a burden to the host society who needs education and housing but provides nothing in exchange. The stereotypical conception of the refuge is indeed saturated with images of displaced populations living in squalid camps. Such vision of

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[78] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2016

[79] Refugees have the right to study in Germany but generally they must first have reached a proficient level in the German language (C1-level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).
Requirements that individuals must meet to start studying vary depending on the specific German state and the degree being sought.

refugeeness could mirror the living conditions of camps such as the Zaatari refugee camp for Syrians and which is today a *de facto* permanent settlement. In this regard, many interviewees struggle to insist that they are different from these "typical" refugees. Eventually, the assertion of personhood is a means to end the migratory journey by guaranteeing one's permanent settlement in the reception country against the temporariness and instability of the refugee status.

Claim for Value as a Historicized Person

Interviewees' reactions to the gaze that slots them in problematic and devalued subject positions extends to other realms of identity than simply the capacity to be productive. The misrecognition, as an obstacle to ending the journey and making home in the reception country, is also contested by asserting one's personal historicity. Participants would indeed also often insist on their past life not only as victims of persecution and war-zone escapees, but also as individuals who used to have a different existence before being triggered into undertaking the migratory journey. Keeping the memory of that lost normalcy, even if imagined, is a defense against the decontextualizing subject positions as refugees or migrants produced by the governmentality of the migration management regime. Many participants negotiate personhood by emphasizing and reminding themselves that their position as refugee and/or asylum seeker does not constitute a single signifier of their existence and who they may be, but must be put in a larger context that is not to be reduced to persecution and war, but which includes culture, identities and social status. Migrants have a cultural, political and social background that predates the migratory journey and which re-contextualizes them in a social and political space that negates expressions of their subjectivity.

For instance, Zainab and Yasin, who were granted refugee status and receive a stipend that helps them with the rent, often expressed during the interview how much they miss the life that they used to have in Syria and which they still cannot re-create in Germany. The reason for this is often related to the concern of being misrecognized by society as individuals whose past was erased by the war and migration.

> [Zainab]: We lived a prosperous life. The region that we come from was touristic. So the very very very very poor guy in our region, he'd be rich here.
> [Yasin]: As a young guy in my country, I worked 3 months during summer in my region, I made about 1 million Syrian Lira. Back then in 2010, 1 dollar was then 50 lira.[80]
> [Zainab]: Now they treat us on the basis that… I mean look at the questions [Germans] ask me. Germans asked me if I knew what a dishwasher was or if I knew what a microwave was. The other day at school (*the language school where she attended the mandatory integration courses*), they asked us if we knew what a promenade was. Do you go for

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[80] According to XE.com, an online currency converter tool, in October 2010, one dollar was worth around 46 Syrian lira. This means that Yasin claims to have earned more than $21,000 within three months of work. Today, one dollar is worth around 515 lira.

a walk in Syria? When I hear this, God almighty, they think that we come from the countryside.

[Yasin]: Like I told you, I want to learn the language so I can tell others about Syria.

Afterwards, Zainab described her interaction with the house tenants as he showed them around the house where they currently reside.

[Zainab]: (…) The landlord here, we rent this place from him, imagine that he taught us how to turn the lights on and off! By God almighty, he taught me this! He even taught Yasin: 'That's how you turn on the light.' I mean, a lot of simple things. They make you feel as if you were a human living like a bug, that you were living like a bug and here you discovered the life. On the contrary, our life is hard here. The life that we used to live there...We were very very prosperous.[81]

The 'idealization of the homeland' by the interviewees mirrors the difficulties in finding one's place in the country of settlement (Hughes, 2016, p. 32-33). The memory of Syria expressed in this excerpt illustrates the ambivalent relationship toward an imagined – or utopian – home and the possibility of constructing a new one. The unfamiliar-home narrative re-emerges here not as a trigger to migrate as it has been discussed before, but rather stems from a realization of the near impossibility of return. After having reminisced about the comfort of her life in Syria, Zainab then acknowledges with clarity that she can only dream of coming back.

[Zainab]: (...) I said that I wanted to return to Syria. But that's just a hope. I know that I may never go back. I just hope. It's a dream. The best years of my life are here.

[Yasin]: Like the Palestinians who wished to return to their country. They were born in Syria and lived in Syria. Even the Palestinians who were in Syria, they'd become Syrians, but they'll never be Syrians. Since 1948...(*silence*). We've become the second Palestine.[82]

This oscillation between romanticization of home and the realization that it is no longer, which was noticeable in other interviews too, exposed an inherent difficulty when conducting semi-structured interviews as well as it provided valuable insights into the attempts by migrants to strive for personhood within a new but already inhabited space. On the one hand, those interviews explored memory, which is as Marfleet argued, a fluid identity that continuously adjusts to narrators' individual circumstances and needs (Marfleet, 2016).[83] The exploration of acts of memory gives access to migrants' struggles to become, as Georg Simmel phrased it, organically linked to this new space that they come to occupy (Simmel, 1964). Eventually, it is also through their voices that the interviewees strive to occupy a space. So in addition to proclaiming the qualities that they

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[81] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016.
[82] Interview with Yasin and Zainab, Hamburg, October 2016.
[83] Including the researcher's own circumstances and needs, as discussed in the next chapter.

may bring as active contributors to the economic welfare of the receiving society, they also import their history and identity to the new space. Nevertheless, the obstacles to personhood arise from construction of this space as a natural juxtaposition of the native culture and geographic boundaries.

In addition, it is important to note that interviewees did not necessarily claim the specificity of their history and identity. Instead, they emphasized the similarity between their past lives and the everyday living conditions in the receiving society. For instance, Aida tried to show how much her life in Syria was normal, just like the Germans.'

> [Aida]: You know our situation in Syria before the events was pretty stable. We had a home, we had a car, jobs, toys for kids, we were living well.

The mundane life that Aida describes here is a yearning for the recognition of their normality and similarity with the German society in spite of the cultural foreignness that separates them. Yet, as her claim of personhood demands solidarity in the name of a similar lifestyle, she also establishes cultural boundaries vis-à-vis other migrants who, from her perspective, compete for the same space in Germany. Indeed, she right away added:

> [Aida]: The Syrian population wasn't poor, like for instance Afghans, or like… I mean they come here in search for money. We didn't come for this. We came here to work, to live, to regain what we lost.[84]

Aida claimed for herself an organic link to the new space of settlement because of qualities and a history that rendered her similar to her representation of German society. This claim to personhood is carried out on a moral basis because she and her family were denied asylum. The allegation of being within the values rather than the laws of the receiving country leads to the othering of some migrants who are perceived as taking advantage of the law, but who are foreign to the values.

Most of the Arabic-speaking study participants, regardless of their legal status in Germany, also gave in to the similar processes of Afghan migrants along the criteria of legitimacy and deservingness. The interviewees who obtained a refugee status feared of course that they could be bundled with other migrants and impede their own claim to respectability. In several instances, interviewees internalized the practices of categorization and sorting of migrants practiced of the migration management regime to highlight their identity as insiders, irrespective of the decision on their asylum application, and that of others as incompatible outsiders who compete for the same status.

For instance, Sarhan, who at the time of the interview was still awaiting a decision from the BAMF, combined in the following excerpt the oft formulated complaint about the inconsistencies of the asylum application review process with the overwhelming number

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[84] Interview with Ali and Aida, Hamburg, September 2016

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of demands that the administration needs to treat and which, fatally, could lead to oversight failures.

> [Sarhan]: [Germany] is the country that hosted most refugees. So they weren't prepared for that. In a sense, Merkel's decision was wrong. I mean they'd give residence to people who are already in their fifties or more. Sure! But how would this guy benefit the country? A man and a woman I met could barely walk. They were 60 years old. I asked them: 'Why did you leave?' He replied: 'I escaped the bombings.' I then say: 'A guy your age is afraid of death?' So many people entered the country, they can't even write, don't have a diploma.
> [Madiha]: Many people who came in were felons in their countries, thieves, delinquents. Because of them, refugees have a bad name.
> [Sarhan]: And many who came were extremists. I mean, they belonged to terrorist organizations. There's no control, the borders are open and you just come in.
> [Madiha]: With this law [German Asylum law], everybody's equal, the one with diploma and the one without. Everybody's equal![85]

Some interviewees specifically distinguished themselves from Afghan migrants in quite racist terms by denouncing their poor hygiene when they resided in the same asylum reception facility, their criminal behaviors while on the move across Europe, or the poverty and backwardness of Afghanistan. Generally, interviewees formulated these statements in order to assert their moral deservingness and utilitarian value to Germany in order to establish themselves as migrants worthy of protection. Contextually, however, the claims of personal worth presented in this section were in general made defensively, that is, in reaction to the misrecognition and lumping together of all migrants in negatively perceived categories within a specific political environment (Skeggs, 2011). The interviews took place a few months after several incidents across the European continent (terrorist attacks, sexual harassment in public spaces) that incriminated migrants as carriers of disorder and insecurity. These events further justified rampant identitarian movements and contributed to the gradual generalization of hostility towards migrants.

Conclusion

The narrative structure of the migratory journey, while still a model of an inherently life-changing event (Benezer & Zetter, 2014), highlights several fundamental contradictions to the construction of refugees and asylum seekers as involuntary migrants. From the decision-making process prior to flight to the collective nature of the migratory journey and the tactics deployed to circumvent migration management, from the aspirations to normalize one's life beyond the simplistic quest for safety to the struggles met in the destination country by asserting personhood, what emerged from the integration of the testimonies collected here is the empirical blurring of the lines among various migrant categories. The ontologies of the migration management regime as devices of migrant

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[85] Interview with Sarhan and Madiha, Hamburg, September 2016.

subjectivation and, thus, political intervention, need to be radically revised. The whole grammar of the migration management regime must be changed in order to improve the provision of protection and to base migration and asylum policies on the politics of hospitality. Based on discourse structuring opposition binaries – voluntary or forced migration, refugees or economic migrants, safety or persecution – the public discourse on migration fails to take into account two important constitutive elements of migrants. First, it deletes any previous signifiers that gave pre-migration individuals their identity, context and historicity. Because of the interviewees' decision-making processes and migratory practices, categories of migrants are inherently equivocal and unstable. The category of migrants is as undecidable as the end of the migratory journey may be. It follows that the identity of migrants is continuously changing. The migration management regime does not look past the assigned categories and thus ignores the various identity transformations such as the becoming migrant. Many interviewees temporarily embraced various identities depending on the particular circumstances of the migratory journey. They embraced the category of unauthorized migrant when they chose to become imperceptible, then they produced themselves as asylum seekers when they submitted to the refugee determination process, and finally, they made certain claims to personhood to achieve settlement in the destination country, which could lead to the rejection of previous signifiers.

The stance of this research was to understand migratory practices through those who produce them. The consideration of migrants' subjectivity was operationalized by the migratory journey narrative structure. Yet, the analytical frame presented here should not be viewed as a dogmatic understanding of migration. It is one interpretation among others with its proper epistemology, political ethos and the researcher's subjectivity. This interpretation distinguishes itself by its commitment to explore subjectivities and explain how they can contest and resist against processes of depoliticization, essentialization and decontextualization deployed by the migration management regime's mechanisms of subjectivation.

In addition, the narrative structure presented here is a heuristic tool that does not bear generalizations because the migratory practices discussed here are unique to the specific timeframe geographies of the interviewees' flight. The migrations between 2013 and 2016 through the Aegean Sea and across the Western Balkans generate journey narratives that are different from those transiting by Libya and the Central Mediterranean Sea, or the crossings of the Strait of Gibraltar. Each one of these paths generates its proper migratory practices and even its specific jargon.[86] The purpose of the migratory journey narrative structure is to examine empirically the agency of migrants at work, especially how it challenges the common assumptions of the causes of their flight, human mobility, and modes of identification. In reality, this research also shows that subjectivities exist on both sides of the border. Migration and asylum policies, the borders and the apparatus of

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[86] See Annex I.

surveillance,[87] the management of human movement are also the result of a subjective outlook on mobility.

Although this study does not suggest recommendations for migration and asylum policy, it aims nonetheless to contribute to updating it. The value of the findings presented here must be accepted on their own terms without subjecting them to a policy-centric perspective. This does not elude, however, a clear positioning vis-à-vis public policy making in the field of migration and asylum in the EU. Before any policy formulation, the language of migration, including the rhetoric used in the Refugee Convention and by international organizations, must absolutely be enriched by migrants' subjectivities as presented in this research. In this regard, the concept of hospitality discussed in chapter II could be viewed as a proposal of a political concept that could change the perspective on migration away from dehumanizing categories and toward effectively decriminalizing crossborder human movement and demilitarizing borderscapes.

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[87] This subjectivity can be experienced at the individual level of the agents in charge of border surveillance. For instance, Alexandra Hall's article "The Pleasures of Security? Visual Practices and Immigration Detention" in which she explains how security agents in detention centers for immigrants draw pleasure from their gaze upon detainees (Hall A., 2016). She drew her findings from a year of ethnographic fieldwork at an immigration removal center in England. In a conference paper "Decisions at the Data Border: Discretion, Discernment and Security" (presented at the 11th Pan-European Conference on International Relations in Barcelona), Hall researched screening agents at ports of entry (such as border security in airports) and explored the fascination drawn from checking passengers' belongings and the intimate pleasures drawn when encountering a suspicious item.

Chapter V: From "Raw Material" to "Data": Lessons from Conducting In-depth Interviews

Introduction

How do we research migrants, and especially, refugees and asylum seekers? How can we reconcile a critical agenda that seeks to advance migrants' agency, the imperative of increasing the knowability of refugees and asylum seekers, and the appropriate research ethics when considering particularly vulnerable human subjects? The study of migration through the lens of migrants themselves raises political, epistemological and ethical questions that I have wrestled with throughout the research process for this dissertation. Beyond the theoretical and methodological rigor necessary for any academic research, this chapter reflects on the inclusion of human subjects in the present study and on the crucial issues of fieldwork, data generation and analysis.

The empirical source for this study consists of field observations of initial reception centers and in-depth interview of fifteen refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg, Germany. While this dissertation mostly deals with migrants' subjectivities and discourses of migration as objects of analysis, it does not subscribe to an ontological distinction between discursive and non-discursive elements. Such a dichotomy would not only analytically undermine the role of discourse as a representation of social practices, namely, the migratory journey and the migration management regime, but it would also weaken the political positioning of this study by ignoring power relations conveyed in the spaces in which the journeys took place. The next chapter on the spatiality of initial reception centers for asylum seekers and refugees is a first attempt at bridging discourse and space as objects of analysis in critical migration studies that better understand mechanisms of disenfranchisement and marginalization.

The present chapter focuses on the interviews as a method of academic inquiry and offers reflections on conducting research on vulnerable subjects. Starting with a discussion of the recruitment process, I then address the political, epistemological and ethical difficulties of generating data and analyzing it to provide an alternative subjective perspective on migration that contradicts the assumptions and practices of the migration management regime.

Lessons from the Recruitment Process

After initial failed attempts to recruit study participants by simply going to reception centers to talk to asylum seekers and refugees, I amended the recruitment strategy in my research protocol by resorting to third parties who knew potential interviewees and could refer me to them. At the start, I had indeed underestimated the mistrust that migrants would have toward strangers who wanted to question them. In addition, suspicion towards me was exacerbated when I showed potential subjects the documents that the Virginia Tech IRB required me to produce at each recruitment, namely, the information

sheet and the informed consent form.[1] Although they were in Arabic, these multiple-page documents often exuded an off-putting bureaucratic appearance. Such outcome came to me as a surprise. I was convinced that a full disclosure of every aspect of my research and the interview, from the protection of their anonymity to the potential risks associated with the participation in the research, the absence of compensation, and the names and contact details of the Primary Investigator and the IRB Chair would provide sufficient guarantees for the academic seriousness of my project. Unfortunately, these documents started to look and sound like the state, which was not particularly appealing to migrants who by definition needed to establish the legitimacy of their presence in Germany. In the particular instance of my research, trust was not established by these documents, but by seeking the assistance of "gatekeepers" in my network who volunteered with refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg and could, therefore, refer me to potential subjects. This recruitment strategy helped me present my research to study participants after I had been referred to them by third parties. This recruitment strategy, known as multinodal snowballing, was complemented by another node as I found a few participants by joining a refugee sports team in Hamburg.

In other words, the snowballing recruitment technique served less to grant access to potential interviewees, which was never a difficulty in Hamburg given the number of reception centers in 2016, and more to reduce suspicion against me. The referrals proved immensely useful in recruiting participants who were still living in reception centers as well as those who resided in an apartment in Hamburg. The latter bore tremendous importance for my research on two levels: they opened a small discursive space to interviewees not as guests, but as hosts, albeit in the private sphere only, and it enabled female participants to enter this space in the context of joint interviews.

The Ethic of Care and the Reversal of Hospitality

Some interviews took place in public spaces such as coffee shops or at a public library, while others took place at the interviewees' homes, which could be either a converted container or an apartment. In those instances, the person who referred me to the interviewee would accompany me to his/her place of residence where I would be introduced. We would exchange small talk for a while and then the person would leave so that we could conduct the interview. However, in all of those cases, interviewees greeted us as guests and served us food and drinks, often reminding us that it is part of their Syrian or Iraqi customs to extend hospitality to visitors when we would object that they did not have to trouble themselves for us.

These moments were particularly interesting because interviewees could embody the role of hosts and emancipate themselves, even momentarily, from the ascribed position of temporary guests and burden to the receiving society. Through the preparation of beverages and food, they could enact rituals of hospitality from the side of the one who welcomes the other. In addition to signaling that migrants can regain normalcy through the social construction of a home that is adequate enough to entertain guests, the interview also helped the study participants produce themselves as familiar subjects, that

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[1] See Annex II where these documents are available in English.

is, beyond the strangeness attached to the status of refugee or asylum seeker. These interviews constituted an example of the concretization, if not at the political level at least in the field of academic research, of the principle of reciprocity underlying hospitality. The guest of today is the host of tomorrow to adapt Georg Simmel's characterization of the sociological category of the stranger.

From the perspective of academic scholarship, hospitality as a normative political basis for the provision of protection should be related to the ethical framework of care as the moral principle guiding research on human subjects in migration studies. Wiles has defined the ethics of care as an ethical framework in which care for study participants informs the ways in which the researcher ought to approach ethical dilemmas (Wiles, 2013). The ethics of care is situational and does not depend on universal ethical norms. Contrary to the principalism of ethical frameworks such as the beneficence of 'do good' or the non-maleficence' of 'do no harm' approaches, the ethics of care emphasizes the subjectivity of research participants (and by extension all parties affected by the research) in relation to possible ethical dilemmas (Wiles, 2013). This framework also contrasts with consequentialism, which posits as morally right whatever the researcher may deem good for society. The 'end justifying the means' principle as the essence of consequentialism can lead to morally suspicious behaviors, such as violating the promise of confidentiality, if they are viewed as beneficial to the collectivity.

The objectivism of principalist and consequentialist ethical frameworks contradicts the norm of hospitality established in this research. Hospitality is in essence an ethic of care toward study participants whose subjectivity still remains excluded. Actually, Wiles' definition of ethics of care fails to mention its political foundation, which also characterizes hospitality. Contrasting with perspectiveless ethical frameworks, the ethics of care embraces the political stance of the research whereby solutions to study participants are sought based on their subjective point of views. As Robinson has explained, such an ethical framework is governed by a set of practices and responsibilities that care for individuals who are in undervalued social position (Robinson, 2015). In this research, the ethic of care is thus politically motivated by the pursuit of emancipation of research subjects from disenfranchising categories that limit them to positions as refugees or asylum seekers and only admit their transient presence, or worse, their implicit parasitism of the reception society through policy measures such as 'burden sharing' (European Commission, 2017).

Conducting interviews at the study participants' places of residence and being offered drinks and food should not be understood strictly as a cost for interviewees. Although I had stated in my research protocol that I would compensate study participants for any costs that they would incur in relation to the interview (transportation cost to and from the interview location, on-site food and drinks, etc.), my decision to accept their invitation to meeting them at their residence conformed with the ethic of care, because it provided them with the opportunity to reverse hospitality and to enter discourse from a host position.

Joint Interviews

The reversal of hospitality enabled by interviewing some research subjects at their place of residence also helped solve another ethical difficulty, namely, the inclusion of female refugees and asylum seekers in the list of participants.

When designing the research process, I thought that it would prove difficult to interview female subjects alone. I stated in the research protocol that it may be culturally insensitive to interview Syrian, Iraqi or Afghan women alone. This could possibly put them at risk of being scolded by their relatives or social network. Fortunately, all interviews that took place in the private sphere of the research participants also involved female interviewees. I conducted five joint interviews of siblings or married couples who undertook the journey together.

Although joint interviews have so far received little attention in literature on qualitative research, it is generally considered a source of rich data (Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012; Wilson, Onwuegbuzie, & Manning, 2016). An increasing share of this literature exists mostly in health research (Sakellariou, Boniface, & Brown, 2013; Polak & Green, 2016). It is therefore time to increase the focus on conducting joint interviews in social science given their analytical value. Indeed, as could be seen in several interview excerpts used in the previous chapter, there were numerous instances where partners could correct, complement, complicate or even contradict the answers provided by one of the interviewees. For instance, instead of receiving a single answer on what would put an end to the migratory journey, joint interviews produced very nuanced answers. Consider the following excerpt from the interview with Yasin and Zainab who were asked whether their journey had ended now that they had reached Germany, had been granted a refugee status, and had moved in an apartment in Hamburg. While they gave ambivalent answers regarding the end of the journey, the discussion between them turned to their difficulties of belonging in Germany and the possibility of eventually returning to Syria.

> [Zainab]: I would return. I would return even if my house got destroyed, my parents died and other things… (*silence*) but I'll return.
> [Yasin]: I honestly…(*Zainab interrupts him*)
> [Zainab]: My husband doesn't want to return. He wants to continue his studies here.
> [Yasin]: I love this country because it's very developed.
> [Zainab]: Yes and in this country, there are a lot of people who are nice (…). Yes, that's true but I love my country a lot.
> [Yasin]: Yes, but if you learn the language, you'd like this country more.
> [Zainab]: Yes, but even if you learn the language. I mean (…) Hanna and Nadine who are one of the most adorable persons I know here, they helped us find this apartment. They came here one day and I was down because this place is very small in comparison to our place in Syria. It's 45 m^2. For us, that's just the living room. She asked me: 'Why are you angry?' I said: 'I'm angry because we had 7 apartments and 2 houses and 10 cars. So when I think about all this, I'm now in a small house like this (…)'

[Yasin]: In reality, no, no, no. They've got a civilization. We can't deny that. They've got a civilization, they're developed. They're very powerful (*Zainab interrupts him*)

[Zainab]: The difference between the Arab countries and the European countries is the regime, that's it. We've got planes and we've got… um… development. The difference is that the regime in the Arab countries is backward. Here their bus is orderly, their metro is orderly. The difference between the two countries is the regime only. I said I wanted to return to Syria. But that's just a hope. I know I may never go back. I just hope. It's a dream. The best years of my life are here.[2]

This excerpt indicates that the discussion of a return to Syria has already taken place between the couple by the fact that Zainab explains her husband's position on that matter on his behalf. In this case, the joint interview allowed me to witness directly the ongoing debate between them. From the interview excerpt above, it is possible to see how the end of the journey is debated even among interviewees who migrated and now live together. Zainab seems more conflicted than her husband about projecting herself in the long term in Germany. Yet, even amidst their contradiction, there are also intersections of opinion between the couple such as their affection for the country that granted them refugee status. So in this short excerpt, we can see elements of divergence as well as a "we-talk" that enriches the data generated during this types of interview (Torgé, 2015).

It is important to note that in this research I was mostly interested in the generation of data through the co-construction of acts of memories about the migratory journey as prompted by semi-structured interviews. Conversely, I did not focus on the relationship dynamic between the interview partners unless it helped me analyze the data generated. In other words, the relationship dynamic between participants who were interviewed at the same time did not constitute the data *per se*. Yet, the dynamic between interviewees could potentially be a source of ethical dilemmas. Joint interviews could be imbalanced and the voice of one of the partners, expectedly the woman, could be suppressed.[3] There were indeed joint interviews where one of the partners was rather more reserved, but this was not necessarily the case for female interviewees. For instance, Amina, a refugee from Syria spoke more than her brother Ibrahim, who was also ten years younger. In the two interviews where such imbalance happened, I would argue that they did not constitute cases of voice suppression, but rather unveiled a relationship dynamic in which one of the partners was more assertive than the other without necessarily preventing divergence of opinions. In addition, there were also circumstances that prevented both interviewees to be constantly available to me. This was the case of Ibrahim and Sarah who needed to

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[2] Interview with Zainab and Yasin, Hamburg, October 2017.

[3] This was actually the case in a single interview that I conducted with a middle-aged Iraqi female asylum seeker. It took place in the reception center where she then resided, on a bench right outside her container. We sat on the bench and soon after I started asking her questions, her son, who seemed to be in his thirties, emerged from the container and stood in front of me, readily adopting an intimidating posture. The encounter only resembled a joint interview because he would automatically respond on behalf of his mother even as I addressed my questions to her directly and that she started to answer. His answers were curt and he quickly grew impatient with my questions. Neither he nor the initial interviewee objected that I record the interview or use the data in my work. In spite of this, I decided not to include the interview in the dataset because the initial interviewee was silenced and I could not use the snippy answers that her son gave me in any case.

divide their time between my inquiries and a toddler seeking attention. At times, Sarah would play with their child while Ibrahim would continue the interview. However, she was assertive and often provided long answers whenever she had the opportunity to do so. Overall, the manifest suppression of one of the interview partners' voice and especially the possibility of harm inflicted by the other partner because of certain revelations would have prompted the option of ending the encounter and/or retracting their answers altogether so as to avoid aggravating the situation.

That being said, the joint interviews conducted for this study were characterized by a "common reflective space" (Bjørnholt & Farstad, 2012, p. 7) in which partners would often help each other answering the questions, complementing or correcting each other, and even raising new topics. Joint interviews were, in this regard, ideal settings for dialogical construction of narratives by eliciting shared memories of the migratory journey.

In reviewing the particular aspects related to recruiting study participants and the particular aspects of reversed hospitality and joint interviews, I focused on data generation. The following section addresses the data analysis phase of the research process, namely, the integration of the interviews into an overarching migratory journey narrative and the epistemological and political lessons to be drawn from that effort.

The Methodology of Narrative Integration

The Parallel with Cinema Editing

In cinema, editing is the process of coherently arranging a collection of various movements captured on film – of the story, the emotions, the images and sounds – into a fluid narrative. This suggests that editing does not generate these movements but instead shapes them through cuts, juxtapositions, shot selections, or choices of sounds in order to merge the form and the content of the film. It is often considered that good film editing is invisible and there are film critics who relish in meticulously detecting all the editing mistakes such as jump cuts, appearance of camera crew and filming equipment on screen, or any other continuity errors. If in one sequential shot an actor holds a glass in the left hand but then, in a subsequent shot taken from a different camera angle, the glass migrated to that actor's right hand, then it is an inaccuracy that could eclipse the film's overall narrative quality. At a time when viewers can effortlessly replay and pause movie scenes at will, it has become easy to engage in uncovering editing flaws, but also in so doing, losing sight of the meaning and emotions conveyed by the film while obsessing over accuracy and consistency. On the contrary, film editing is not invisible, but leaves a strong imprint on the final work. From the perspective of editors, enhancing an actor's performance, for instance, would systematically be preferred over avoiding a match cut. The inadvertent position of a glass across sequential shots matters little when the delivery of the actor demands it. Editing mistakes are not considered as such because the work of editors is to put together film shots so as to generate an idea that is much greater and more powerful than their individual meanings. The narrative – the story being told – requires appropriate editing, that is, the narration – the way the story is told.

On many levels, the integration of in-depth interviews conducted for this research and their presentation *via* an overarching narrative structure follows a methodological process that is comparable to film editing. In the previous chapter, such structure served as the narration of the personal accounts collected from interviewees. It enabled the assembly of the generated audio "footage" from the interviews into a journey narrative that could be presented to readers. Of course, the present study is governed by academic discursive norms that have little in common with producing cultural artifacts like films. Although the present work embraces a political stance that is "radical, democratic, and interventionist" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 11), it remains a scholarly work. This dissertation makes claims by mobilizing a number of essential concepts that have been defined and which help make sense of data that have been generated through specific modes of scientific inquiry in order to produce significant findings. It follows that the migratory journey narrative presented here is not just a collection of anecdotes that may or may not reflect a certain reality of migration, but is anchored in several sources such as academic articles, legal texts, or reports by international organizations and NGOs. The previous reference to film editing is not a suggestion to tolerate inconsistencies and inaccuracies in interpretative qualitative research, particularly when it resorts to semi-structured interviews. The comparison to film editing shows instead the process of narrative construction with no other intention that to convey a certain meaning, in this case, a thick description of the migratory journey. Therefore, the underlying argument of this dissertation is that an immanent perspective of migration is necessary to introduce new political concepts that break with the illegalization, securitization and/or utilitarian narratives that saturate the public discourse on migration. The integration of migrants' subjectivities into this public discourse should enable social change in the direction of empowering the most disenfranchised migrants.

A technical process akin to film editing was carried out to integrate the interviews that were conducted for this study. The incremental coding process of the text data, whereby transcribed interviews are fragmented into smaller segments in which important themes appear, was accompanied by a process of integrating all the themes into an overarching narrative. The textual analysis through coding implied making the necessary "cuts" and "juxtapositions" that I discussed in the previous chapters to allow moving from single story arcs to an encompassing narrative that offered a glimpse into the migratory journey as it was experienced by the interviewees themselves. Multiple readings of the text data were necessary for coding and integration to take place simultaneously. In addition and as stated throughout this study, I was less interested in investigating cold information and data related to migration than in communicating subjectivities. Through the methodological approach of this research, which combined critical discourse analysis and semi-structured interviews, the purpose here was to enter and influence the discourse on migration and update its marginalizing grammar.

The parallel with film editing should not, however, lead one to think that I collected raw audio recordings like an editor would work with raw footage. The interviews are not raw material to be collected and then processed into workable data. In fact, the very notion of raw data is problematic, for it would contradict the co-construction of narratives that was

carried out during the interviews, involving study participants in both single and joint interviews as well as myself. Assuming the naturalness of the data would have epistemological implications that assume a mode of cognition that only recognizes fixities but not becomings. On the contrary, there was knowledge created through social interactions as well as self-reflection. The data on the migratory journey was prompted and generated by the interviews that I conducted and the discourses, understood as exchanges running to and fro, that they triggered.

In addition, sentencing the acts of memories of interviewees as raw material would necessarily undermine the self-reflexivity that any research on human subjects must undertake. As an aspiring social scientist, I must constantly train myself to objectify my positioning vis-à-vis the object of study, which is characterized by a personal and a political dimension. On a personal level, my relationship to the study participants was both that of an insider and an outsider. My Arab and Muslim identity, my native knowledge of Arabic, and my status in Germany as a migrant from Morocco were factors that helped me organically connect with interviewees. After they accepted to participate in my research, there was a relationship of familiarity that clearly facilitated our conversations. Yet, interviewees did not readily trusted, since I needed a referral to recruit them for this study. In reality, I was also an outsider because I was not an Arab like they were. Morocco is geographically and, by certain aspects of its culture, quite remote from the Levant. The Moroccan Arabic and accent can sound very foreign to a Levantine ear. In addition, I was not a migrant like they were. As a spouse of a German citizen, I was privileged enough to have been granted permanent residence status and a work permit.

On the political level, the ethos of my position as well as its ethical framework condition my gaze on the study participants and, as such, must also be reflected upon. This is especially important when working on the subjective modes of representation and identification of migrants. This aspect of qualitative research was particularly important in this study when I was confronted with opinions that directly contradicted my own political views. This point will be discussed later in this chapter, but it suffices to conclude at this point that the immanent position from which I tried to approach the migratory journey required an approach to data that was not only generated, but that was also co-authored.

The Issue of Accuracy

The work on subjective personal accounts does not aim to produce flawless and accurate narratives. In this context, the notion of accuracy can be problematic if it refers to the descriptive quality of an observation in relation to a tangible external object, which can be approached objectively through tools that quantify and measure. One can wonder how such accuracy is to be achieved when, on the one hand, the object of study is comprised of migrants' acts of memory on their migratory journeys, and on the second hand, these subjective accounts are by nature intertextual.

The Truthfulness of Interviewees' Personal Accounts

It seems that the necessity of objective accuracy dictated the choice of method and therefore eliminates qualitative inquiries on human subjectivity from the array of worthy scientific approaches. While accuracy is necessary in the sense that the responses given by study participants should not be misrepresented and must be anchored in secondary sources, the interview data itself is extremely tractable: interpreting hours of compiled text data bears the risk of eventually projecting one's own political convictions onto study participants' subjectivities. As a matter of fact, my epistemological stance in this research, which is inherently partisan as is the case of all epistemologies (van Dijk, 1993), has been challenged on several occasions by the very opinions of those who are presented in this research as being oppressed by discursive categories of migrants and practices of migration management. I have discussed in the last section of chapter IV the reproduction by some interviewees of the marginalizing grammar of the migration management regime.

In the following interview excerpt, Ali and Aida, a couple from Iraq whose asylum application was rejected,[4] respond to a question about their opinion on the sexual assaults that took place in Cologne during street celebrations of the 2015 New Year's Eve and for which many migrants, mostly from North Africa and some from the Middle East were incriminated. Their answers illustrate the political distance that can exist between study subjects and me as a researcher.

> [Aida]: Well, like I told you before, there were good and bad people who left. Those who did these things were themselves delinquents and thieves, gropers, even in Iraq.
> [Ali]: Many who came from Iraq, how to say… (*silence*) are savages. These see a girl wearing a skirt, they'll try to molest her (…). You know back when we were on buses [he means the bus fleets that were sent to Hungary and Austria to bring asylum seekers to Germany (Graham-Harrison, Kingsley, Rawlinson, & Murray, 2015)], I told my wife about this open border policy: 'That's a mistake. It's a mistake.'
> [Hamza]: But you took advantage of that "mistake."
> [Ali]: Yes, but as we were crossing the border, I said to my wife: 'Yes, we made it safe and sound but we suffer from it as well.'
> [Aida]: At the station itself [Keleti station in Budapest], you could see all kinds of people. The station brought together the person with no diploma and not even ethics, and we stayed at the same place!
> [Ali]: Well about Germany, we say in Iraq "تغربل" ['tgherbel' or to put something through a sieve]. You know what a "غربال" is ['gherbāl' or sieve]?
> [Hamza]: Yes. We have the same word in Morocco.
> [Ali]: So you need to use a sieve for the refugees. You give one a chance to build a future, so you need to give those who deserve. On TV, the

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[4] Ali communicated this information to me after the interview. When we first met, he and his wife were still awaiting an answer.

German Foreign Minister said that we will not deport Syrians and Iraqis. I consider this to be a mistake. Thousands of Syrians and Iraqis came in, many of them don't deserve to be here, they didn't deserve to live in their country to start with.

[Aida]: Look at Belgium. They filtered people, Finland, same thing.[5]

In this excerpt, the interviewees endorsed a discourse of hierarchization of deservingness that fatally reduces the capacity of nation-states to provide protection to displaced populations. Through the image of the sieve, interviewees advocated the separation of worthy refugees from the worthless ones, thereby summoning a utilitarian narrative that is at odds with the critical reflection that this dissertation stands for. Nevertheless, one may hastily conclude that such internalization by migrants of discursive practices deployed within the migration management regime must be excused as an illusion that keeps them unaware of their oppressed condition. For that matter, the asylum application of Ali and Aida was rejected and in late 2017, they were still awaiting a decision regarding their appeal.[6]

Such a conclusion could naturally locate the researcher as an individual speaking from a position of truth. In this transcendental role, the researcher can uncover the false consciousness of study subjects who have acquiesced to the hierarchization of merit, even when the momentary suspension of migrant filtering has served them (the buses that indiscriminately brought asylum seekers into Germany) and that later, in the name of the very categories that they want enforced, were denied asylum. Such positionality implies a positivist stance that supposes a truth to be discovered out there, independently from any discursive practice. Indeed, supposing a false consciousness means that there is a true consciousness, which should incidentally align with the researcher's own political views.

On the contrary, I focus on discourse as site and object of struggle and resistance. In *The Order of Discourse*, Foucault declares: 'as history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized' (Foucault, 1981, p. 52-53). It follows that my ethical and political positions cannot rely on the simplistic notion of false consciousness where individuals are manipulated into deceive themselves (van Dijk, 1998). This would imply that I impose meaning to texts and, therefore, the undermining of the agency of research participants in rejecting or accepting certain subject positions as well as the failure to acknowledge my position and subjective input. The investigation and analytical instruments that I mobilize in this research, namely critical discourse analysis and semi-structured interviewing process, help examine and explain the struggle between institutional and personal subjectivities.

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[5] Interview with Ali and Aida, September 2016, Hamburg.

[6] While opinions such as those expressed by Aida and Ali are objectionable from the vantage point of my political stance, I tried to refrain from displaying my disapproval of them in the interviews. During the fieldwork stage of my research, I encountered such views in numerous interactions with migrants. Usually, I reacted the same way as I did in the interview excerpt above. I expressed a moderate objection ('But you took advantage of that "mistake"') so as to show that I did not share such opinions, while avoiding covering their voice with my own arguments and possibly leading them to alter their words. That being said, I am aware that my reaction, be it silence – which would likely be interpreted as approval – or expressing reservations in a restrained fashion or engaging in contradictory debate, necessarily carried political weight and, therefore, participated in the shaping of their narrative and self-presentation.

Indeed, although many interviewees endorsed discourses that seemed against their interests as migrants, they do not include themselves in the categories of migrants that they reject. They resort to the othering of other migrants and retain the agency to assert their personhood.

Such ambivalence in interviewees' narratives illustrates well what Flyvbjerg argues, namely, that discourses should not be approached as either unambiguously oppressive or liberating, but as instruments to be wielded tactically within a power relation (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Instead of projecting my own political preferences, exercising self-reflexivity led me to interrogate the tactical use of hegemonic discourse by migrants in terms of asserting certain identities that could help them cope with the final phase of the migratory journey. Assertions made by interviewees against other migrants that display racist views or that advocated the illegalization of migrants were not simply fringe opinions that undermine the truth of their narratives. On the contrary, they must be situated within the overall journey narrative, for they provided essential elements on the circumstances of settlement, claims of personhood and the possibility of resuming a normal life.

Conclusion

My epistemological stance was sustained by the ethical framework of care. It follows that my position vis-à-vis the object of study implied a certain intellectual discipline in the framing of the analysis that prevented certain equivocations and misnomers such as data collection and generation, the deceptive manipulation of ideology or false consciousness, the notions of accuracy and truth. The critique of positivist and transcendental approaches to migration expressed here should not signify, however, an opposition between truth and relativism. The exercise of reflexivity discussed in this chapter aims to show that ultimately truth is both strategic and ethical. Truth can be defined according to the epistemological and ethical position of the researcher, that is to say, whatever spurs social change in the direction of emancipation from hegemonic discourses must be true.

Chapter VI – Manufacturing Striated Space for Migrants: An Ethnography of Initial Reception Centers for Asylum Seekers in Germany.[1]

Introduction

The mention of refugee camps in the media and reports by non-governmental organizations is often accompanied by images of squalor. The standardization of encampment as a technology of power to manage the displaced (Malkki L. H., 1995a) has also given rise to repressive practices that often involve extraterritorialization of camps (the offshore admission and screening of migrants, which can lead to illegal detention and deportation) and results in the violation of the basic human rights of their residents (Mountz, 2010). The conceptual ambiguity between detention centers and reception centers is more common than one may think as evidenced by reports of illegal detention of asylum seekers within the "hotspot approach" to managing migration into the European Union (Amnesty International, 2015; Fleming, 2016; European Parliament, 2016).

Yet, through my field observations in four initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Germany between May and October 2016, I did not recognize the materialization of the Agambean state of exception in inhuman detention facilities. As a matter of fact, these reception facilities were not hotspot centers, which are usually situated at the fringe of the Schengen space. They were not extra-judicial spaces either, but were located within the city-state of Hamburg. Yet, the vision of asylum seekers being chummy with private security staff contracted by the municipality was quite unexpected. Some of the security guards even spoke Arabic or Kurmanji. Many of them had indeed a migration background and a few had come to Germany only recently as asylum seekers themselves so that they decided, after obtaining refugee status, to work for a security company that was contracted by such facilities. Of course, asylum seekers were not always at ease with the security staff and the Johanniter, the charity organization that was contracted to run the facilities that I visited. I witnessed an incident in which a disgruntled asylum seeker who left his identification card in his dwelling unit expressed his frustration to the security and Johanniter personnel as he would no longer endure the practice of having to swipe his card to get a meal. He claimed that after almost ten months of living in the center the staff should be able to recognize his face by then.

In the initial reception centers that I observed, asylum seekers were provided food, clothing, sanitary products and a monthly financial allowance[2]. In addition, they were entitled to legal representation as well as full access to Germany's refugee claimant

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[1] This chapter is the result of field observations conducted between May 2016 and July 2016 in three initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Hamburg, Germany. The study was conducted according to the research protocol IRB#16-478, which was approved by the Virginia Tech IRB. Refer to appendices D to G.

2 As of October 2015, a single adult person staying in an accommodation center receives €143 per month. As for families, rates vary according to the number of adult partners and the age of the members of the household. These allowances are low because the Asylum Seekers' Benefic Act states that those living in reception centers are provided with food, shelter, clothing, and sanitary products. For more on this issue, please consult the November 2015 report by AIDA (Asylum Information Database), *Country Report: Germany.*

procedure. However, in spite of staying in the accommodation center for several months to over a year, they could enjoy neither the right to participation in nor appropriation of the space they came to occupy. In the observed initial reception centers, asylum seekers did not contribute to the production of these urban spaces, which were produced before their arrival and derived from previous spaces that fulfilled other functions. The ability to (re)produce space so that it would meet the needs of its residents is rendered impossible as the initial reception centers pre-exist the asylum seekers that inhabit them and offer no possibility for creative alteration. In these centers, asylum seekers did not need to rely on their intelligence in order to settle, for many accommodation centers were made available as an emergency measure to serve as a temporary arrangement only. However, the duration of the stay of asylum seekers in such centers and the significance of this specific period in their journey should not prevent overlooking the relationship between asylum seekers and their spatial environment.

In the ongoing debates on migration, the subjectivities of migrants are often relegated to the background. However, critical research in refugee studies and forced migration puts a great emphasis on the unheard voices of migrants. I also devoted most of my research to exploring and uncovering the narratives produced by migrants (including refugees, asylum seekers and illegal migrants), especially their journey experiences. In so doing, I sought to contribute to the academically and politically invaluable research that engages in processes of identification with migrants. In this chapter, however, I will momentarily break from focusing on the story of the "heroes" of these migratory journeys to interrogate the background of these voices, that is, the space that surrounds their subjectivities. This chapter is, thus, a contribution to understanding the spatiality and temporality of initial reception centers in Germany.[3]

This chapter draws on Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of striated and smooth space as laid out in *A Thousand Plateaus* to examine the politics and tactics of space and time in the initial reception centers. These two concepts represent Deleuze's attempt to establish a concrete geography of his philosophy of space. While Deleuze's spatial concepts are not geographies *per se*, they raise a problem that can hardly be ignored by geographers: the organization and production of space as experienced by its inhabitants and as constitutive of meaning.

Striated space is a complex entanglement of lines and patterns that governs itineraries between a starting and an end point. Factories, schools, airports, or hospitals are examples of striated spaces because they are the products of geographic triangulations; a mapping process that produces the space by laying out projections on the concrete ground, borders and clear demarcations between various territories (Anderson, 2006). Typically, striated spaces have an evacuation plan. Conversely, a smooth space is an amorphous surface only bounded by the horizon line. Like the sea, the steppes or the desert, smooth spaces neither oppose movement nor do they impose an itinerary. As such, they do not capture humans within bounded territories.

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[3] There is a rich literature on the politics of space, culture and time that stretches beyond the scope of this chapter, but on which I am currently working. This literature includes "speed theorists" such as Paul Virilio, Zygmunt Bauman, Ben Agger, as well as David Harvey's earlier work on postmodern space and the ontology of space.

I will start with a brief explanation of Germany's initial reception centers[4]. Then I will discuss how these spaces are striated by referring to the specific initial reception facilities where I was temporarily allowed in and could conduct in each one of them a weeklong field observation at various times of the day. I will examine the spatial temporality of these centers and what role they play in the management of migration in Europe. Finally, these spaces will be compared to another type of space that is neither striated nor smooth, but "holey" as conceptualized by Deleuze and Guattari in Plateau 12, *Treaties on Nomadology: the War Machine* (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980).

Reception in Germany

Since 2008, the number of demands for asylum lodged in Germany has been constantly on the rise (BAMF, 2016). It peaked in 2015 when the total count of asylum applications that the country received reached 476,649 (BAMF, 2016), slightly more than its last historical record in 1992 during the massive displacements of the Yugoslav Wars.[5] In October 2015, only a few weeks after Berlin suspended the Dublin system for Syrian asylum seekers,[6] the welcoming euphoria towards refugees that swept across Germany abated and the country's capacities to process asylum applications started to overheat (Martin, 2015). The Federal States could hardly keep up with the high influx of asylum seekers, especially since accommodation capacities had been significantly reduced between 1993 and 2007, as arrivals of asylum seekers and refugees had drastically decreased (BAMF, 2016; Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration, 2015). Therefore, since summer 2015, several municipalities have scrambled to open additional accommodation facilities in addition to those that were already operational. Warehouses, indoor sports facilities, converted shipping containers or simply tents were hastily re-arranged to increase reception capacity. In April 2016, German Minister of Interior Thomas de Maizière reported a marked drop in the daily arrivals of asylum seekers (Turner, 2016), thus arguably alleviating the pressure on Federal States' reception

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[4] The expression 'initial reception centers' is a translation from the German legal term *Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung*. It is important to note that this is a bureaucratic category only that does not correspond to what the residents themselves call them. For instance, Syrian refugees and asylum seekers seldom refer to the initial reception center where they reside as such, but rather call it 'Al-camp', an Arabized version of the word 'camp.' While calling these facilities can be justified, I chose here to use the bureaucratic category nonetheless, because I would like to bracket temporarily the examination of migrants' narratives and voices in this paper.

[5] The number of lodged applications includes first and follow-up applications, which indicates the total number of cases handled by German asylum officers. The BAMF, which is an agency within the Ministry of Interior, is the only entity in Germany that can register asylum applications.

[6] The Dublin System stems from the Dublin Convention, which was signed in 1990 and came into effect in 1997. It is one of the main legal instruments of the CEAS. The Dublin Convention established the criteria that determine the European state that is responsible for processing an asylum request. It also guarantees the right of asylum in signatory countries as it aims to prevent a phenomenon called "refugees in orbit," where a person seeking protection cannot find a state that accepts to process her asylum request. However, the Dublin system is mostly known as the legal device designed to prevent asylum seekers from abusing the European asylum process, notably the practice of lodging simultaneously or consecutively an asylum request in more than one signatory country (a practice known as "asylum shopping"). Because of the Dublin system, it is the country of first entry of an asylum seeker that is responsible for procession his/her asylum claim and providing accommodation during the application review process.

capacities[7] and improving the living conditions in these accommodation facilities.[8] Indeed, there were situations of overcrowding, especially in initial reception facilities where reports pointed to particularly low ratios of showers and toilets to people (Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration, 2015). It is, however, hard to determine the quality of the reception conditions in Germany and, more generally, in the European Union. Although the European Commission established for all Member States common standards of living conditions in accommodation facilities for asylum seekers and refugees, facilities vary a great deal across states and even within countries.[9] In Germany too initial reception centers significantly vary in size and type of accommodation.

In May and July 2016, I had the opportunity to visit two different initial reception facilities – *Erstaufnahmeeinrichtung* – in Hamburg. The primary purpose of these centers was to provide accommodation for asylum seekers during their initial reception period, that is, after they had registered their asylum application at a branch of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees or BAMF. The allocation of each asylum seeker to a specific reception facility occurred through the EASY distribution system, an IT application that dispatches applicants quantitatively across the territory. The system uses the "Königstein key" – *Königsteiner Schlüssel* – a formula that combines the tax revenue and population of every Federal State to issue an annual quota of asylum seekers to be received by each state. In 2016, the city-state of Hamburg was given a quota of about 2.56% of asylum seekers (Bundesanzeiger - Federal Gazette, 2016).

As of August 2016, there were approximately 38 to 40 initial reception centers in Hamburg (the number fluctuated) (Hamburg.de, 2016). The type of accommodation ranged from tents, converted shipping containers, gyms or retail stores to permanent buildings in some cases. At the initial reception facility, asylum seekers wait for their application to be processed by the BAMF. Within a couple of weeks to several months after their arrival to the facility, asylum seekers receive a yellow envelope from the BAMF with an appointment date and time for their hearing with an asylum officer. In this stage of the asylum seeker's journey, the hearing (*Anhörung*) is the most crucial event, because this is when the applicant can tell his/her story to a BAMF employee, that is, what happened in the country of departure and the reason why staying there became impossible. Upon examination of the file, which includes checking the facts, coherence

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[7] The fact that accommodation facilities in Germany are less overcrowded does not say much about the arrivals of migrants by the Mediterranean Sea. According to the IOM, the total number of Mediterranean Sea arrivals between January and August 2016 reached 263,636, compared to 354,628 the previous year. However, arrivals through the Central Mediterranean route (Italy) have increased in comparison to the previous year, according to the last report by the UNHCR. The number of person found dead or missing while attempting to cross the sea has markedly increased: 3,176 in 2016 compared to 2,754 in 2015. For more details, please refer to the following links: for IOM, https://missingmigrants.iom.int/migrant-arrivals-mediterranean-reach-263636-deaths-sea-3176; for UNCHR: http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/regional.php

[8] In this regard, the European Commission and several non-governmental organizations warned about the appalling receptions conditions in refugee camps and even gestating humanitarian crises, mainly in Greece and Western Balkans.

[9] The Reception Conditions Directive, which is part of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), is quite problematic. While the Directive refers to minimum standards of reception to be made available to asylum seekers, Member States can implement them in very different ways. Besides, there is a conceptual ambiguity between the notions of reception and detention. For instance, the hotspot approach adopted by Greece and Italy to cope with the high number of daily arrivals has deprived many asylum seekers of their capacity to enter and exit centers freely. For more on this subject, read the March 2016 report by the European Council on refugees and Exile (ECRE), *Wrong Counts and Closing Doors: The Reception of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Europe.*

and documents provided during the hearing, the BAMF employee decides whether the applicant can be recognized as a refugee. The story of the applicant must establish that flight was justified as it was triggered by war and/or persecution[10], and that a return is not an option since the conditions that led to the escape are still present.

In Hamburg, initial reception centers fall under the authority of the Central Coordination Staff for Refugees or ZKF.[11] The ZKF is responsible for the procurement of accommodations as well as the coordination of the tasks of agencies, private and non-state actors that work in the facilities. In the initial reception centers that I visited, the Germany charity organization, Die Johanniter (Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe e.V. or the Saint John Accident Assistance) had been contracted to run the facilities, while a private security company was also hired to control the access to a facility and patrol its premises.

The Process of Re-Territorialization into Striated Space: Capturing the Subjectivity of Asylum Seekers

Many initial reception facilities were converted spaces that originally fulfilled a different function. This process of re-producing built space leads to what Deleuze and Guattari would call a re-coding of space (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The functionality of a space has been de-coded by decontextualizing it and then immediately replaced (re-coded) within a new territory in order to serve a different function (recontextualization). The very signification of these spaces has migrated so as to construct a new relation between the signifier – the new spatial arrangement of pre-existing space - and the signified – a structure that receives asylum seekers and refugees. For instance, the first initial reception center that I observed used to be an outlet store for a major German consumer electronics retailer, while the second facility had formerly been an indoor multipurpose sports hall. The other two facilities were composed of converted shipping containers. In all cases, the initial space had been decontextualized (a site for commerce or a site for sporting events) and re-created into a new territory, that of a camp for non-members of Germany. The new function ascribed to these spaces is that of re-territorialization of individuals. As such, the initial reception center was a striated space that aimed to bring migrants back into the registering and controlling domain of the state. Indeed, the re-arrangement of these spaces enabled the re-territorialization of asylum seekers, who became ordered as they "queued" for their hearing.

Interestingly, many elements of each facility's previous function remained visible. In the first center, brands of consumer electronics were still indicated on walls, but served absolutely no purpose. The general architecture of the premises was still that of the "big

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[10] Persecution must be understood in accordance with the definition of a refugee as stated in the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and then generalized in the 1967 Protocol. According to international refugee law, a refugee is a person who has a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (1951 Convention, Article 1-A, §2).
[11] The ZKF is an interagency newly created (October 2015) and falls under the authority of Hamburg's Department for Labor, Social and Family Affairs and Integration as well as the Department for Internal Affairs and Sports.

box store": a one-story large rectangular structure with a high ceiling, no windows but wide doors, and parking outside. Similarly, the former sports hall reception facility retained the usual scoreboard, but it did not perform its initial function of displaying the score and the remaining time during a sporting event. However, if the device became useless in the initial reception center through the de-coding and re-coding of space, it accidentally became the bearer of the irony that often accompany processes of de-contextualization. The usual inscriptions "*Heim*" (home[12]) and "*Gast*" (guest, visitor) visible on every scoreboard took on a different meaning in this specific re-contextualization. In German, asylum seekers may refer to a reception facilities as a "*Heim*" which could be understood as either home or asylum to describe the physical dwelling place. Yet. Asylum seekers are considered as "*Gäste*" (guests) who experienced Germany's *Willkommenskultur*. The semantic game created by the new context of this facility gave the scoreboard an ambiguous meaning that could be exploited by a pun. Often, the comedy of a situation stems from an incongruity, a misplacement, or an inconsistency between the inherent reality of an object and its current context. The incongruous object is a deterritorialized object. Besides being a-topical, the presence of the scoreboard was also anachronistic. Such was also the case of the ubiquitous utilization of repurposed shipping containers to accommodate migrants who often journeyed a long way through land and sea. Migrants are not merchandise, but they do occupy at different times the same space as traded goods, which creates irony.

Deterritorialization cannot be considered without reterritorialization; otherwise the very notion of territory becomes irrelevant. Deleuze's concept of smooth space is precisely that of the absence of a territory since there are no demarcations, borders, itineraries that govern movement. The reterritorialization of these spaces and objects implies their re-contextualization in a new functionality. The new space, such as the converted container, the former gym or retail outlet may resemble its respective original arrangement since it still contains signifiers of the previous function. But it is not an iteration of the former space, but rather an original (re)formation under new modalities. In this process of re-arrangement, some clues and traces of the old signifiers can still be present, like the scoreboard, but would thus also be out of context or literally atopical. Therefore, as produced spaces with a new modality, and thus a new signification, it is crucial to examine the new power relations that underlie these spaces closely. In this respect, the stakes of investigating the meaning of the initial reception centers is very high: it is precisely during their residence in these spaces that asylum seekers must convince officers of the BAMF of the validity of their journey narrative by substantiating it with documents and evidence of their fear of persecution in their former home. This is the hearing phase of the refugee status determination.

There are particular utterances that only belong to the initial reception center, namely, the language of refugee status determination. The refugee status determination is the social "code" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of initial reception centers; in return, the strategic role

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[12] This is not a perfect English equivalent of the word '*Heim*', which rather describes a relationship to the home or the homeland. Of course, this is further complicated by the variations in the utilization of the word '*heim*' across German regions. In the South of Germany, one would often hear "*ich gehe heim*" for "I am going home", whereas in the North, one would rather hear "*ich gehe nach Hause.*"

of these centers is to make its residents wait and prepare for the hearing. It is through this specific code that asylum seekers are reterritorialized. This means that asylum seekers must adopt a particular "speech genre," that of the BAMF, in order to satisfy the practice of credibility assessment. These speech genres are a repertoire of utterances that fit a specific context where the speaker must take on the appropriate subject positioning, or "good behavior" (Althusser, 1971) that would enable applicants to produce during the hearing a bureaucratically receivable journey narrative. By internalizing the "foreign" language of the credibility assessment procedure, applicants bacame themselves agents of the very rules that alienate their subjective outlook on the migratory journey. As subjects of the bureaucratic realm of the refugee claimant procedure, asylum seekers must reproduce and reframe their journey experience so that it conforms to an ideal-type established by legal definitions of what it is to be a refugee (Behrman, 2016). This is a form of subalternity where the asylum seeker is not taken on his or her own terms, but through the lens of the assessor's knowledge system that is constituted by the bureaucratic language of vetting, which ignores the voice of the speaker (Spivak, 1988). Once again, we are confronted with the process of deterritorialization, but this time, it concerns the asylum seeker's own mode of representation of his or her journey narrative. Subsequently, the asylum seeker's subjectivity must go through the process of reterritorialization to fulfill its new function within the legal and administrative context of the credibility assessment procedure. Considering that the subjective narrative produced about one's journey experience serves as a vector of identity (trans)formation (Benezer & Zetter, 2014; Malkki L. H., 1995a), especially by allowing the reconstruction of one's identity after having undergone a traumatic experience (Puvimanasinghe, Denson, Augoustinos, & Somasundaram, 2014), the narration of the migratory journey fulfills a different function when it enters the territory of bureaucratic scrutiny. Factual elements of the journey narrative remain recognizable, but they must be re-arranged, i.e. re-contextualized, in order to satisfy a series of established legal and bureaucratic criteria if the applicant wishes to obtain a refugee status. As stated in chapter III, narratives are by definition embedded in a discursive structure, which in this case, is provided by the credibility assessment procedure and therefore reflects the function of distinguishing applicants who deserve to have their asylum request granted and those who do not. In this context, narratives are inevitably reduced to a very few possible re-arrangings of events related to migration that are likely to be positively received by an asylum officer. During the hearing before a BAMF employee, two reasons for granting asylum are retained out of the multitude of reasons that may lead to migration, but which are not included in the definition of the refugee in international law: war and fear of persecution.

Through the performance of asylum seekers at the hearing, the initial reception center ceases to be this abstract and empty *space* designed to receive migrants and becomes a *place* charged with meanings for its inhabitants. It is what Henri Lefebvre called "spaces of representation" (Lefebvre, 1991; Samers, 2010, pp. 37-38) to designate the ideational space produced and endured by its dwellers. The hearing becomes this essential bond between asylum seekers and the reception facility, because it is in this space that they must rehearse their stories and wait until it is their turn to relate it to the BAMF employee. For this reason, the initial reception center is much more than an immobile space of circulation for asylum seekers. Spaces like these reception facilities are less

fixies that enable people to move through them than an important piece of the machinery that produces a performance (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

The Spatial Background of Asylum Seekers' Journey Narratives

Academic Research in forced migration and refugee studies is often concerned with journey narratives and calls for the need to hear them. Listening to migrants' narratives not only holds the key to a deeper understanding of the experiences of flight, but it is also a politically motivated endeavor that seeks to disenfranchise those whose subjectivity is seldom considered.

In her introduction to the 2016 issue of the journal *Refuge*, Dawn Chatty urged the reader to hear the genuine voices of forced migrants and refugees, though certainly not with the purpose of "[reinforcing] their passivity, vulnerability, and "neediness" as humanitarian aid recipients in an undefined space between nation-states" (Chatty, 2016, p. 3). In the same issue, Philip Marfleet proposed a historical exploration of the exclusion of refugees' voices from mainstream history, an absence that he called "collective amnesia" (Marfleet, 2016). Marfleet argued that in the instances where the voice of the displaced was heard, it was only to integrate them into dominant narratives. This was the case of the 1950s integration of refugees' narratives into the Western rhetoric of anti-communism. Similarly, Simon Behrman explored the evolution of the representation of the refugee in contemporary history by analyzing romanticized figures of literary exile. He contended that even positive portrayals of refugees failed to acknowledge their subjectivity as they were instrumentalized to serve grand political and religious narratives (Behrman, 2016). Paradoxically, the advent of the refugee as an internationally recognized legal status with rights and entitlements did not help promote refugees' voices, but restricted them in an international bureaucratic order where they are performed in the asylum claimant procedure (Easton-Calabria, 2015; Behrman, 2016).

Taking into account migrants' subjectivity requires listening to their journey narratives. This endeavor constitutes a break from classical theories of migration such as the push-pull framework for understanding migration and which often undermine migrants' agency in the process of flight. Many scholars in refugee studies deplore the fact that the journey often suffers from a lack of conceptual complexity and is presented as a unidirectional phenomenon with clear intentionality and purposefulness. Admitting that there is a substantial literature in migration studies dedicated to other forms of journeys such as pilgrimage, nomadic communities and undocumented migration, Benezer and Zetter still argue that refugee journeys are still under-researched albeit being "powerful life-changing events" that deserve much greater attention by scholars (Benezer & Zetter, 2014, p. 297).

While acknowledging the importance of exploring migrants' narratives about their journeys, this final chapter momentarily deviates from this epistemological imperative in order to focus on the spatiality and temporality of a specific segment of the journey: the stay at reception facilities. In the particular case of undocumented migrants, refugees and

asylum seekers, the migratory process is more than simply crossing borders. Papadopoulos et al. described migration as a "transformation of social space" (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008, p. 211), that is, an act of appropriation and re-creation of space. For this reason, it is as important to consider migrants' journey narratives as to situate them in a spatial setting. In the case of this chapter, the setting is that of the initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Hamburg where I conducted field observations.

The Capture of Asylum Seekers' Journey Narratives

The initial reception centers for asylum seekers where the field observations took place were not detention centers. While the deployment of such facilities in Germany, especially in the context of massive influx of migrants since summer 2015, partly served to avert a humanitarian crisis in Europe, the rights enjoyed by asylum seekers were not reduced to humanitarian assistance, as opposed to the political entitlements granted to citizens. The state's imperative to avoid a humanitarian crisis suggests that these reception centers were designed to cater to asylum seekers as strictly biological bodies stripped of their political nature, what Agamben calls "bare life" (Agamben, 1998). The charity organization, the Johanniter, whose motto "*For the Love of Life*" ("*Aus Liebe zum Leben*") invokes Agamben's argument that humanitarian assistance can neither defend nor demand political rights, may thus be the humanitarian façade of the state's biopolitical strategy whereby the political right to mobility as well as fundamental human rights are denied to asylum seekers and refuges alike (Agamben, 1995).

This is not an complete rejection of Agamben's thesis, itself an extension of Arendt's analysis of the *de facto* statelessness of refugees (Arendt, 1996; 1958), according to which the status of the refugee stems from a juridical void where human existence is reduced to "bare life" (Agamben, 1995; 1998). There are indeed countless cases of extra-territorial and extra-juridical camps where migrants are detained, or where the only assistance provided is of a humanitarian nature when it becomes impossible to defend fundamental human rights. It is also important to acknowledge the increasing restrictions on asylum adopted by nation-states, including Germany and the rest of the European Union. However, the grid of analysis provided by Agamben to understand reception of asylum seekers at initial receptions centers is inadequate in accounting for disenfranchisement and diminishment of the exercise of agency. The initial reception facilities that I visited seemed to have little in common with the Agambean camp as the repressive space where a state of exception materializes. While many of these facilities were deployed as a measure of emergency and asylum seekers often remained in them for a protracted period, usually with little knowledge of the length of the waiting time, these sites were not extra-juridical and extra-territorial spaces. Cases of reception centers as bureaucratic limbos where all laws except those of the state of emergency are suspended (Frichot, 2007; Mountz, 2010) cannot be generalized to the situation of asylum seekers in these facilities in Hamburg. In spite of numerous efforts to tighten legislation regarding asylum policy, those seeking asylum in Germany still retain the rights that were granted by the UNHCR. Therefore, contrary to Agamben's framing of the refugee camp as a concretization of a particular juridical structure, the problematization of these initial

reception facilities does not require a critique of their legal basis. A generalization of the focus on the juridical-political structure of all refugee camps, including initial reception centers, to contend that they all are systematic devices to abolish asylum, marginalize asylum and put an end to freedom of movement would give credit to what Michel Foucault criticized as the "repressive hypothesis" (Foucault, 1978).

The repressive hypothesis is a paradigmatic conception of power regarded as a negative force that simply infringes upon someone's freedom to carry out certain actions or fulfill certain wishes (Howarth, 2000; Mills, 2004). For instance, the oft-used term "fortress Europe" by open-border and/or pro-migration activists to criticize the European Union's border control and restrictive migration laws is a concession to the repressive hypothesis. It implies, indeed, that the political aim of the European Union's migration policies is to establish an insurmountable barrier to the migrants whose presence is not desired. The notion of "Fortress Europe" frames migratory practices and asylum seeking along moral principles that need to be safeguarded against non-ethical practices of migration management (Kasparek, 2015) that merely say 'no' to freedom of movement. This, in turn, not only overstates the efficiency of militarization of border control and the introduction of increasingly sophisticated surveillance technologies in deterring undesired migration, but it also neglects the strategies and tactics deployed by migrants to bypass migration management.

Similarly, these initial reception centers are not spaces where the rights of migrants to apply for asylum are denied. There is, in these centers, no suspension of refugee law in order to establish a state of exception. The tool to analyze the ability of asylum seekers to express their agency is, in the context of these facilities, not legal, that is, referring to the workings of sovereign power in drawing demarcation lines between the included and the excluded; between the citizens and those reduced to bare life. On the contrary, it is the reception space of the asylum seekers that matters, but not in terms of the living conditions but as a disciplinary space. Deleuze and Guattari talk about "apparatus of capture" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to designate the exercise of power in a striated space, which consists in re-coding and re-territorializing humans through the layout of the space (buildings, architecture, rules). The capture of the asylum seekers' narratives through space is more relevant to understanding power relations in such reception facilities.

Striated Space and Holey Space: Apparatus of Capture and Mobility Tactics

The striation of the initial reception centers is produced by the reterritorialization of asylum seekers through the accommodations, the rules of the premises and the labor produced within them.

The initial receptions centers that I observed were roughly divided into two spaces. The first consists of a field of dwelling units situated inside the premises. Families live in units that are adjacent to each other while single migrants must share units with others. Inside the units, there are bunk beds, tables and chairs (according to the size of the

family) and a cabinet to store valuables. Units have no ceiling and the walls are made of a web of bedclothes and similar fabrics. Privacy is absent from these units. The second space is the outdoor courtyard where people can hang out. In the former indoor sports hall, the eating location was situated in a converted shipping container in the courtyard, while in the other facility, there was a large covered area inside where people could eat as well as spend time with others.

In none of the centers are the residents allowed to cook, since meals are prepared for them. There are three meals served per day at fixed hours. Generally, residents were more frustrated with the fixed and in cases inconvenient meal times than the overall quality of the food, which left much to be desired. Meal times last typically one hour and a half but many would rather eat at later times. Meals are served by the Johanniter staff that orders them from a private caterer. At each meal, the residents need to swipe their card in front of a security staff member before being served food.

These accommodation facilities are spaces of "enmeshed temporalities" (Sharma, 2014) where the experience of time for residents who wait several months to more than a year (no more than fifteen months in total as the German Asylum welfare bill states) for their asylum application to be processed is very different from that of the Johanniter who do not spend the night in the facility, but leave in the evening and come back the next day early in the morning. In addition, although the presence of the security company in the facility is constant, there are three shifts rotating throughout the day. In this sense, the initial reception center is very similar to an airport; both are spaces of transition and flow that deploy systems of immobility. Airports' security checks, passport controls, and baggage checking impose "queuing tapes" on travelers that organize the space and regulate their movement (Sharr, 2014). The "fields of queuing tape" may not be physically present at initial reception centers, but these spaces are nonetheless waiting rooms that regulate the movement of passive asylum seekers in the country. The queues imposed externally by the BAMF move asylum seekers by allocating schedules for the hearing. However, in the case of initial reception facilities, the "queue management system" (Sharr, 2014) does not follow a predictable pattern: there is no order that is visible to asylum seekers, nor is there a possibility that applicants can actively seek to "cut the line."[13] Waiting in this space is not necessarily dead time since adult asylum seekers are particularly encouraged to prepare for the hearing with the BAMF by rehearsing their journey narrative and collecting as many documents to substantiate their stories, especially proof of persecution or lack of safety in the country of origin, as possible. However, I did not witness applicants rehearsing or preparing for the hearing. Still, the performance of the asylum seeker is spatially and temporally optimized through the apparatus of capture of narrative in the initial reception center.

Yet, if the enmeshed temporalities in airports are organized around ensuring time-convenience for the "liquid" business traveler, the temporality of asylum seekers is more

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[13] I witnessed, however, many asylum seekers in these facilities claim that Syrian and Afghan asylum seekers are usually processed faster than Iraqis. Besides, applicants from the Balkans have become administratively prioritized since the end of summer 2015 after their countries of origin were added to the list of "safe country of origin." This measure led to the implementation of administrative and legislative measures to accelerate the review of asylum applications.

viscous. Initial reception centers are part of the migration management and control regime just as borders and surveillance technologies are. Therefore, they also serve to control migrants' mobility. Again, the earlier critique of the repressive hypothesis, whereby the role of migration management is not to stop movement but to control it, is useful in understanding objective of spatial-temporal power of initial reception centers. Migrants seek what Deleuze calls "lines of flight" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), that is, vectors of deterritorialization in order to move around and through striated spaces along their journey to their final destination. A striated space seeks to re-territorialize through apparatuses of capture, therefore, migrants multiply movements in order to escape striation. This is a mobility strategy deployed by many migrants as can be seen through migratory practices of dodging border controls. For instance, many migrants heading for Europe attempt to circumvent several border surveillance technologies such as fingerprinting or iris scans by taking alternative routes. In some extreme cases, migrants have resorted to burning their fingertips (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007) or using smart phone technology to seek alternative routes or get information from other migrants about other paths. In other words, a way of escaping striation is to remain in motion in order to stay imperceptible to mobility control. Movement can, thus, be used as camouflage. Consequently, the counter-strategy of migration management is to reduce movement, that is, mobility control. Initial reception centers operate as decelerators of migrant mobility. These facilities are spaces that achieve striation by slowing down circulation rather than attempting to stop it altogether (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, & Tsianos, 2008).

Interestingly, deterritorialization does not systematically mean that migrants seek smooth space to circulate freely and without an imposed itinerary. Many archetypal smooth spaces like the sea are increasingly captured by nation-states' migration management apparatuses. Frontex, the European Union agency through which Member States coordinate their efforts to control the external borders of the Schengen space, conducts many sea operations in the Mediterranean, especially around the Greek Aegean archipelagos, to intercept migrants on boats. This shows precisely the complex and frictional relationship between striation and smoothness: the two spaces are in certain points mixed so that there is no pure striation of space contrary to the repressive hypothesis. "Fortress Europe" is ridden with holes, gaps, and cracks.

These specific points of friction constitute "holey spaces" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). They link smooth and striated space (Frichot, 2007). This figuratively means that corridors of escape are tunneled through the striated spaces of migration control. However, the famous "Balkan Corridor",[14] which enabled temporary and free passage of migrants across the Balkans between October 2015 and March 2016 when governments

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[14] The Balkan corridor requires in fact a deeper analysis than what is provided here, because its existence is the result of the tacit resignation of Balkan countries of transit to containing migrants. Even though it is a state infrastructure, the corridor remains a holey space, for it is a crack in the striation of state borders, and thus is also an integral part of migration management. However, in the case of the Balkan corridor, it is precisely acceleration that is sought rather than deceleration. Hungary, Macedonia and Serbia have understood that migrants have no intention of staying there, but aim for northern countries such as Austria, Germany, Scandinavia and the United Kingdom. So hastening the movement of migrants out of the Balkans and towards the North, while restoring state monitoring of their movements was the strategy deployed in the temporary opening of the Balkan corridor.

of countries along its route decided to close it (Moving Europe, 2016; Müller-Uri, 2016; Kingsley, 2016) was a holey space dug into heavy police and state control.

While the initial reception center offers no respite from striation, there are holey spaces where migrants can escape, temporarily. The "Jungle of Calais," from where reportedly more than 9,000 migrants (Help Refugees, 2016) attempted to reach the United Kingdom, is the mirror image of initial reception centers, precisely because it is a holey space bounded by the striated space of Schengen's external border in Northern France and the smooth space of the English Channel. It was an informal camp for migrants where the living conditions were much less salubrious than in the initial facilities that I observed (Spindler, 2016). Yet, the remarkable difference between the two spaces was the capacity that migrants enjoyed in Calais to avoid capture by the state, that is, to occupy and re-produce space themselves. In the camp at Calais, living conditions may have been hard and harbored many dangers such as fire hazards, toxic chemicals, and disease, it nevertheless enabled its dwellers to appropriate space and re-invent it. While waiting for the best opportunity to reach England, which implies a temporality of the opportunist on the look-out, life in Calais required inventiveness and ingenuity in recycling trash and abandoned objects. In Deleuzian words, those who remained in Calais were awaiting deterritorialization. Reports on the "jungle of Calais" often describe the various shops, restaurants, barbers, places of prayer and even a library, that were opened by migrants stuck there (Gentleman, 2015; Wainwright, 2016). Migrants there are engaged in derelict city-making by tunneling places of escape from the controlling and disciplining striations created by migration management apparatuses. Holey spaces like Calais are, nevertheless, not idyllic, because the agency embedded in this particular political geography comes at a price. The cunning of migrants, that is, the attempts at avoiding striated spaces for the sake of free movement, yielded its share of suffering: hunger, sickness, squalor and sometimes death when trying alternative paths to escape state surveillance and control.

Conclusion

While the focus here was essentially on the initial reception centers as spaces, this should not be understood strictly as a spatial analysis of these facilities. Instead, this final chapter was an attempt to complement migrants' narratives with a reflection on the space into which asylum seekers and refugees may be reterritorialized. There are, in this sense, linkages between examining discourse and space. Similarly to the rest of this research, the political stance in this chapter is the critique of ontologies, which are here related to space fixity as well as the strict separation between individuals in motion and immobile spaces. By examining politics of space and temporality, it is still mobility that is being investigated. However, mobility is not simply the act of leaving a space previously occupied to then occupy another one. Against this "sedentarist bias" (Malkki L. H., 1995a) that limits the migration of asylum seekers to reaching sanctuary, it is imperative to update this thinking. Asylum seekers do not desire sanctuary for its own sake. Safety in and of itself is not an object of desire and, as such, the motivation to resort to migration. In extreme cases, such a view fails to problematize detention of asylum seekers and refugees in extra-juridical yet war- free spaces. What is avidly sought is

safety to achieve something; it is for migrants a performative notion that may enable studying, building a family, working, or engaging in any activity where the subject's agency can be freely expressed. Migration is, in this sense, a vector of space occupation and appropriation. In the initial reception centers, one often hears asylum seekers express frustration with the time it takes to process their application, or be thankful for the recipient country's hospitality. They may also express longing for their families and friends, or the odors, colors, and sounds of their previous home. But in all of these utterances, they seem to essentially express the same disappointment: "we are safe indeed, but…this is not why we came here." The desire for safety comes with imagined arrangements of space they will occupy, that is, an active participation in their own re-territorialization. Therefore, the initial reception facilities are spaces that oppose this desiring power.

General Conclusion

Migration renders the ambivalent position of European receiving countries increasingly untenable as they are torn between re-asserting state sovereignty and complying with human rights principles. Currently, the public discourse of migration and the practices of migration management clearly suggest a stronger emphasis on the principle of sovereignty. The "crisis discourse" that is often mobilized to characterize migratory movements, as was the case during the "summer of migration," reflects the numerous derogations and re-interpretations of international regimes, in particular the Refugee Convention, in the direction of greater restriction of countries' duties and migrants' rights. Certain migratory movements, such as the arrivals of asylum seekers from war-torn countries, or from Sub-Saharan and North Africa are still understood as exceptional occurrences that require equally exceptional measures, without regard for the ways in which the targeted migrants would be affected.

Far from wishing to contribute to the trite conversation of a supposedly imminent collapse of state sovereignty, the main claim of this study is rather to consider that migrants must be enabled to participate in the production of discourse on migration. Migrants' voices must be integrated to the public discourse in order to update, inform and enrich policymaking in terms of protection provision and reception. The current grammar of migration, which is trapped between utilitarianism and securitization, must be revised in order to include missing political and ethical foundational concepts as well as empirical elements of the migratory process. The present study is organized around such objectives.

Chapter I introduced the context of this study, namely, the arrivals of migrants into Europe in 2015 and 2016. It then established the study's epistemological approach, which was derived from the use of critical discourse analysis and semi-structured interviews to provide an immanent outlook on the migratory journey. The object of this research is the subjectivity of migrants and their narratives of the migratory journey that brought them to Europe and Germany in particular.

Chapter II presented a political justification for exploring migrants' subjectivities and attempting to normalize their participation in public discourse. In this section, I drew from Jacques Derrida and Philip Hallie to provide a conceptualization of hospitality as a discursive political gesture that integrates the voices of migrants into the public space. This chapter presented Hospitality as a normative political requirement for restoring migrants' status as "stakeholders" of migration and asylum policies along the residents of the host country. In the last part of this chapter, I discussed the refugee status determination process and, in particular, the hearing stage as it is conducted in Germany and during which applicants for asylum must explain their request before an asylum officer of the BAMF. I argued that the reception of asylum seekers and the refugee status determination process contradict the hospitality norm because they alienate migrants' voices and deny them access to the production of discourse.

Chapter III and IV constituted the main empirical part of the study, which consisted of in-depth interviews with migrants from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan recently settled in Germany. Building upon the conceptualization of hospitality and the epistemological stance of this research, Chapter III described the passage from the capacity for migrants to enter discourse and the effective production of narratives of their migratory journey. The following chapter presented and discussed these narratives. To this end, a narrative structure – a storytelling device – was constructed in order to integrate the various migratory journeys into an overarching counter-narrative. This structure was composed of the themes that were drawn from the data coding process of the study participants' personal testimonies. This chapter explored each phase of the journey and discussed the migratory practices deployed by interviewees as well as the hardships endured during this particular period. This analysis suggested that the collective journey narrative is at odds with the public discourse on migration and migration management policies and practices. This chapter illustrates the necessity of updating the language of migration in order to account for the realities of the migratory process.

Chapter V addressed the methodology used to generate the data on the migratory journey, that is, semi-structured interviewing process and critical discourse analysis, and carried out a necessary exercise of reflexivity regarding the processing of the interviews. The main concern of this section was to determine whether my treatment of the data conformed to my epistemological stance and then to locate the instances where my own voice "covered" that of the interviewees. This chapter argues for a combination of hospitality as a normative political basis to engage with study participants and the utilization of the ethics of care framework to address ethical dilemmas when researching human subjects.

Finally, Chapter VI attempted to connect discourse analysis with space as a vector of power relations. Based on field observations inside initial reception centers for asylum seekers in Hamburg, the chapter used Deleuze's and Guattari's geographic concepts to analyze the power dynamics in these particular spaces. These reception centers are apparatuses of capturing migrants' mobility through their re-territorialization. As with the migration management regime, the agency of migrants is also hindered by such spaces. This chapter eventually illustrates the notion that discourse is material, since space is also a discursive practice.

Overall, this research explored the migratory journey not as a quest or an adventure undertaken by heroes, but as an endeavor replete with violence and hardship whose protagonists are migrants. It cannot be an adventure and its protagonists cannot be heroes when the study participants view their migratory projects as a way to resume life in its utter banality. My research is not an apology for the journey – or of nomadism – but simply seeks to present collected testimonies on suffering in an attempt to regain normalcy. Consequently, I strove through this work to break with the persisting exceptionalization of migrants, either as romanticized contemporary heroes, exotic strangers, or the disrupters of the internal order of countries.

In this regard, it is the utmost importance to remind the reader of the constraints inherent to the sample used for this study. It is a limited sample because of the usual length of in-depth interviews, which consequently necessitate a lot of time to processs, and thus reduce the capacity of a single researcher to conduct a great number of interviews. The sample is also limited by the fact that it does not capture those who could not make it to Germany, those who remained imperceptible, or who were stuck in the Balkans, Greece or Turkey, or simply the countless individuals who either decided to stay in their countries of origin or could not rescue themselves.

The sample used in this study represents no one besides the interviewees themselves and within the specific context of co-production of narratives. I do not offer a survey of migrants' opinions on their journey because the epistemology of my research is critical and interpretative. Consequently, the views and attitudes expressed by study participants, especially anti-migration rhetoric and sometimes glaring xenophobic judgments, should not be viewed as an openhanded promotion of repressive migration policies or an endorsement of racist opinions against migrants. On the contrary, interview excerpts from my sample establish the complexity of migrants' identities and self-representations, thus restoring their unquestionable humanity in opposition to processes of essentialization and othering. A crucial feature of my ethos as a critical scholar in migration studies is not to cover migrants' voices with my own but to honor their claims by listening to them as humans worthy of hospitality. Of course, hospitality here is not meant as the mere gesture of physically inviting a stranger inside one's home, which is a mere private act. It is the political act of inviting the foreign other inside the public field in order to fill it with his and her own meaning about the migration process. The discussion on migration in reception societies, and especially in the EU, must continue along these very terms. If there is a crisis, it is not a migration or a refugee crisis, but that of the production of new meanings about migration and migrants.

Appendices

Appendix A – Information on interviewees

	Relationship	Age at the time of the interview	Occupation(s) in the country of origin	Country of origin	When interviewee(s) left home country	Legal status at the time of the interview
Hussein	Not applicable	24	Engineering student	Syria	October 2015	Asylum seeker awaiting BAMF decision on asylum application
Sarhan and Madiha	Married	36 (Madiha did not communicate her age)	Teacher; Housewife	Iraq	July 2015	Asylum application rejected. Appealed the decision.
Ibrahim and Sarah	Married	33; 22	Tailor; Housewife	Iraq	June 2013 (lived a couple of years in Turkey before leaving in summer 2015)	Refugee status
Taha	Not applicable	24	Engineering student	Syria	May 2015.	Refugee status
Ali and Aida	Married	29; 27	Civil servant; Nurse	Syria	December 2013 (lived in Turkey almost a year before leaving in early 2015)	Duldung status (on deportation list)
Amina and Abdullah	Siblings	31; 20	Chemist; engineering student	Syria	August 2015	Refugee status
Rochdi	Not applicable	25	Surgical med student	Iraq	April 2015	Asylum seeker awaiting BAMF decision on asylum application
Yasin and Zainab	Married	28; 26	Engineering student; Student in social sciences	Syria	June 2015	Refugee status
Yusuf	Not applicable	45	Translator	Afghanistan	August 2015	Refugee status
Rabia	Not applicable	67	Retired high school teacher	Iraq	September 2016	Asylum seeker awaiting an appointment with the BAMF for the hearing

Appendix B – Interviewees' itineraries

Across the Aegean Sea:
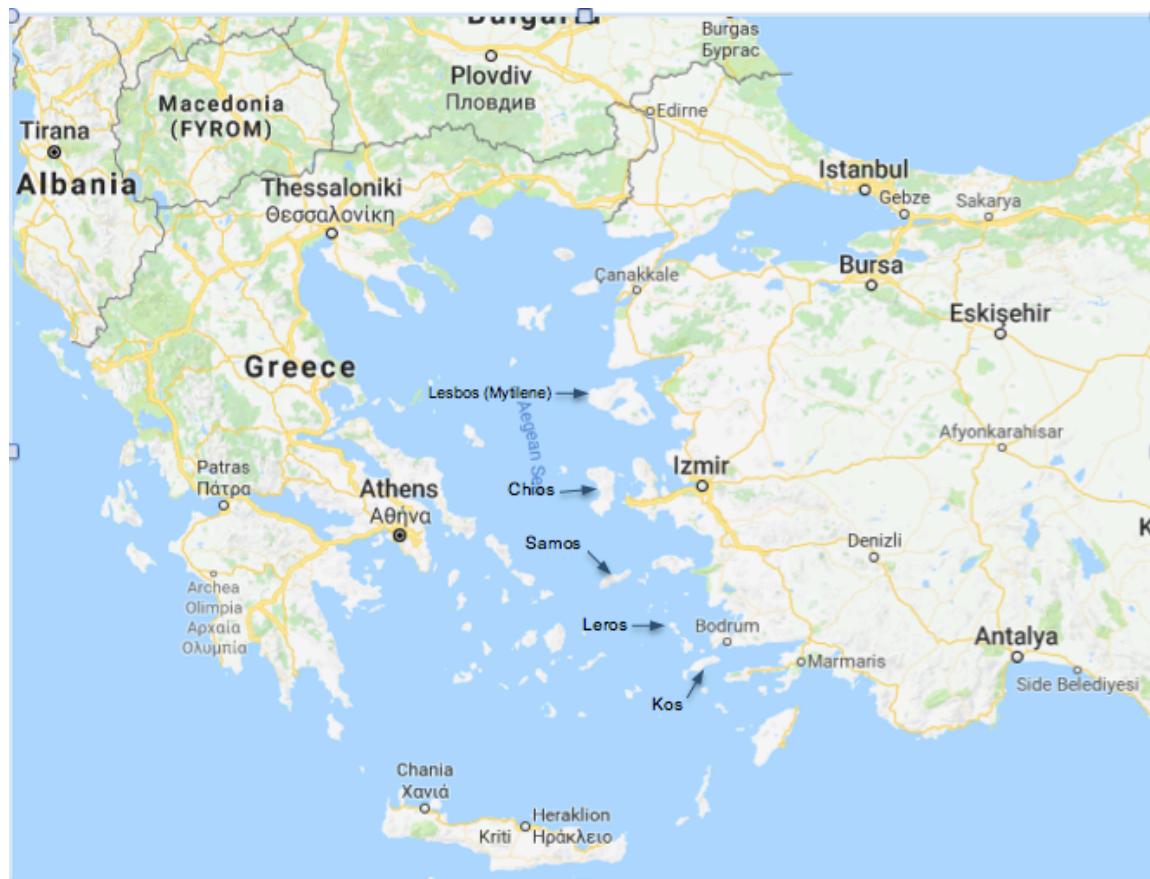
In the migratory journeys related in this chapter, interviewees left Turkey mostly from beaches around Izmir, Bodrum or Marmaris or from the bay in the region of Balıkesir. From these points, they would arrive at one of the five closest Greek Islands, Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros, and Kos, which also constitute the hotspots for registering arrivals.

Across the Aegean Sea:
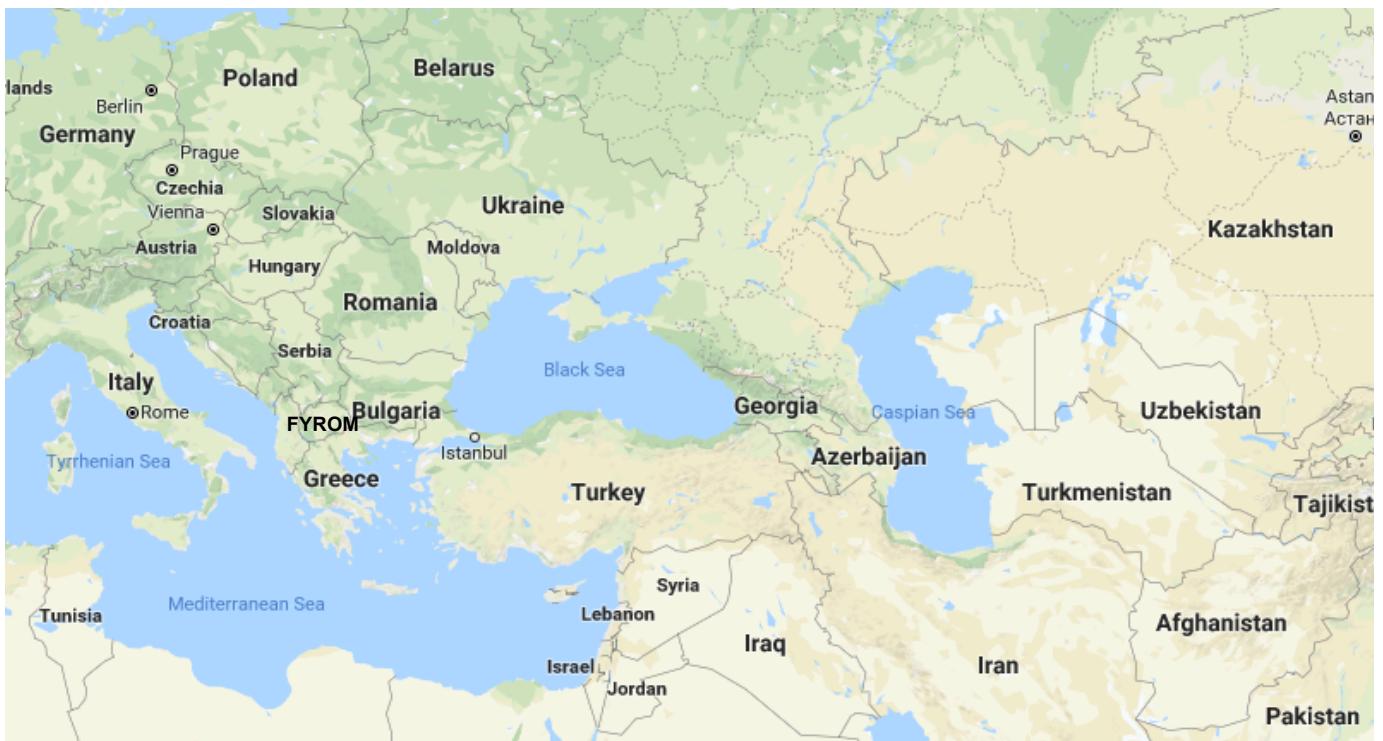
After having crossed the Aegean Sea and upon registering at one of the five hotspot Greek islands, interviewees would generally go to Athens by boat and then to Thessaloniki. They would then head North to cross Macedonia, Serbia and Hungary. Many were stuck in Budapest main station Keleti before reaching Austria and then Bavaria in Germany. Once they entered Germany, interviewees were reported to the authorities by claiming that they were asylum seekers before they are dispatched to one of the initial reception centers across the country.

Appendix C – Misunderstandings

Out of the hours of grave and at times heartbreaking stories narrated by the interviewees emerged a few moments of comical misunderstandings and lighter discussions on the peculiar variants between our respective local Arabic. Many of them stemmed from my initial unfamiliarity with the colloquialisms of Levantine and Mesopotamian Arabic.

The interview with Rochdi was probably one of the most difficult to follow because of his Baghdadi accent (as he named it). A unique but oft-repeated characteristic of his accent was particularly hard for me to get used to. He would typically affricate most of the 'k' sound (corresponding to the Arabic consonant ك or ک). This means that he would pronounce the 'k' sound as 'dsh' as in 'John' in English (phonetically 'dʒ'). For my untrained ears, it could quickly become difficult to recognize certain words. Arabic sentences with several 'k' consonants in them could become quite unintelligible. Consider the following sentence in colloquial Baghdadi Arabic ('k' consonants in Arabic are underlined):

"كِل الدِكاكِين مسكِرة"

(all the shops are currently closed, 'kul al-dakākīn msakra')

If Rochdi had said this sentence to me, he would probably have pronounced it as follows ('k' consonants sounding as 'dsh' are underlined): "d<u>sh</u>ul al-da<u>dshādsh</u>īn msa<u>dsh</u>rah"

Other occurrences of communication breakdown emerged from the specificities of the colloquial Arabic in the Middle East. For instance, many Syrian interviewees would use the words 'msheleḥ' (مُشلِح) or the plural 'mshellḥīn' (مشلحين). For instance: 'As we were walking across the mountain, we saw 'mshelḥīn' in the distance.' The word means 'thug', brigand or highwayman. This is not a word used in Moroccan Arabic or standard Arabic. However, I can recognize the root of the word, which is the verb 'shallaḥa' (شلّح), meaning 'to undress' to 'to strip.' My confusion with the word 'mshellḥīn' comes from its grammatical construction: the word 'mshellḥīn' could mean 'those who have been undressed' or maybe 'the naked ones,' which is how I first understood the word. Unfortunately, it is the opposite meaning that the word refers to: those who strip you of your possessions (or literally, of your clothes). Perhaps the word still means 'those who have nothing on', or figuratively, 'the destitute', which then explains the perceived necessity for them to rob others.

Another word that was used by each interviewee was 'balam' or بلم . Once again, this is a word that is used neither in Moroccan Arabic nor in standard Arabic. Nevertheless, the context in which it was used made it quite easy to guess. Interviewees would, for example, say: 'we crossed the sea on a balam.' The word 'Balam' was used by interviewees to designate both a small boat made of wood and an inflatable dinghy. In Morocco, the dinghies that are used to clandestinely cross the Gibraltar strait in order to reach Europe are usually called by their Spanish name 'pateras'. After some research, I found that 'balam' designates a small boat made of planks and that has the appearance of

a simple rectangular wooden box that seem to be fit for calm waters only. It is easy to construct and can be mostly found in Kuwait where it is used for small fishery and pearl hunting. In all likelihood, the word migrated to the Levant because it captures quite accurately the size and instability of the dinghies that are provided by smugglers to cross the Aegean Sea.

Sometimes miscomprehension came from the creativity of migrants who produced a jargon that corresponds to their common experience with the German bureaucracy. The most striking occurrence of this linguistic creativity that I encountered was the word 'maldanah' or ملدنة . This is not an Arabic word even though it sounds so but a German one. Interviewees would sometimes say: 'tmaldent' or تملدنت. I had to ask the first interviewee who used it in front of me what it meant. It comes from the German word 'Anmeldung', which means registration. Once in Germany, asylum seekers must register in various bureaucracies such as the social security office or the job center of the administrative district on which they depend. The 'maldanah' is simply the arabization of the 'Anmeldung' procedure. Those who completed registration could then happily say: 'tmaldent' (I have registered).

It is worth noting that this migratory jargon is quite specific to the journeys of Syrians and Iraqis who journeyed to Europe and settled in Germany via the Aegean Sea and the Western Balkans. Sub-Saharan and North African migrants who attempt to cross the Strait of Gibraltar would not understand 'balam' since for them these dinghies are 'pateras.' Only the experience of having registered at the German local administration combined with the knowledge of Arabic can bring about words such as 'maldanah.' Various itineraries develop their own languages to describe specific experiences. There is no single journey experience. In this regard, how fascinating it would be to explore the various jargons of the journey and maybe see if certain words migrate back to the countries of origin. Do the relatives of Syrian migrants who stayed home understand words such as 'maldanah' and 'suzial'? Could these words integrate local dialects? An interesting avenue for research could thus be the linguistic mapping of the migratory journey.

Appendix D – IRB#16-478: Approval Letter

VirginiaTech

MEMORANDUM

DATE:	January 23, 2017
TO:	Max O Stephenson Jr, Hamza Safouane
FROM:	Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)
PROTOCOL TITLE:	Observation of the general setting of two facilities for initial reception for refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg and the interaction of the latter with the site's managing authorities and administrators, civil servants and on-site NGOs.
IRB NUMBER:	16-478

Effective January 23, 2017, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the Amendment request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As:	**Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 2**
Protocol Approval Date:	**May 5, 2016**
Protocol Expiration Date:	**N/A**
Continuing Review Due Date*:	**N/A**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Appendix E – IRB#16-478: In-person Verbal Consent Form for Participants – Information Sheet

Title of Project: Observation of the general setting of two facilities for initial reception for refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg and the interaction of the latter with the site's managing authorities and administrators, civil servants and on-site NGOs.

Investigator(s):
- **Name:** Hamza Safouane
- **Email / Phone Number:** hsafouan@vt.edu / +49 (0) 172 577 9873

I.   Purpose of this research project:

The purpose of this research project is to gain a first understanding of this particular stage of refugees' journey into the European Union and more particularly in Germany. I would like to understand what an adult refugee's daily life may be in a facility for initial reception and the overall configuration of the facility (type of facility, size, material, general layout). Observing this location will greatly help me piece together the characteristics of the various stages of the journey and, in particular, what refugees undergo upon arrival in the European Union.

The field notes will help me to further my research and I would also like to use them for an academic publication between now and the end of 2017.

II.   Procedures:

I will observe the facility without asking you questions about your identity or line of work nor requesting from you or any other participant to do anything particular during observation. I will take notes of what I would observe on a notepad. The notes will consist in a description of the facility and the general interactions of refugees with each other and with non-refugee individuals in the facility. I will not follow you or anyone else in this facility nor eavesdrop on conversations, but will strictly observe from a distance. No identifying information will be collected, such as names, age, gender, address, country of origin, or physical descriptions.

I will also be observing the interviews you may give as a staff member of Plan International with the refugees in the facility. I will not take notes of anything that would have been said during the interview. I will focus on the interaction between the interview participant and the NGO staff; knowing the questionnaire, I do not expect that the answers sought by Plan International to be pertinent to my research. You may allow me to attend the interview by giving me your verbal consent.

III.   Risks:

I will collect no information that could be used to identify and harm the participants, such as the name, physical descriptions, country of origin, etc.

I understand that the access to this facility is restricted and that the privacy of refugees must be safeguarded. Therefore, I will not even disclose in my publication and dissertation the address of the facility, but only name it as one of the facilities of initial reception in Germany.

However, should you feel uncomfortable with my presence, either during the interview or generally in the facility, please let me know about it and I will leave immediately. Such request would be not result in any action that could be detrimental to you or anyone else in the facility, nor will it trigger any anger or resentment on my part.

IV.   Benefits:

No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate. Although I am happy to volunteer my services as a translator to your organization, my continued services are not dependent upon you agreeing to participate in this study.

V.   Extent of anonymity and confidentiality:

The field notes will be collected anonymously with no reference to any identifying information since they are not necessary to the data.

Besides, the data will be stored in an empty password-protected USB stick only and that I will use strictly on my personal computer. I plan to delete all this data altogether (i.e. formatting said USB stick) once I have finished writing my dissertation, most likely by the end of 2017.

Finally, the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view the study's data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

VI.   Compensation:

No compensation is to be earned in the participation of this research.

VII.   Freedom to withdraw:

You are free to refuse being included in this study at any time, without penalty.

VIII.   Questions or concerns:

Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact me through the email or phone number mentioned in the beginning of this document.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact Virginia Tech's IRB chair, Dr. David Moore at moored@vt.edu or +1 (0) 540 231 4991

Appendix F – IRB#16-478: In-person Verbal Consent Script

Title of Project: Observation of the general setting of two facilities for initial reception for refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg and the interaction of the latter with the site's managing authorities and administrators, civil servants and on-site NGOs.

Investigator(s):
- **Name:** Hamza Safouane
- **Email / Phone Number:** hsafouan@vt.edu / +49 (0) 172 577 9873

Script:

Hello, my name is Hamza Safouane. I am one of the volunteers of Plan International-Deutschland and will conduct some of the interviews. I am also a Ph.D. student and my research is on migrants coming to Europe. I would like to understand the journey process undertaken to come here and the experiences of the migrants as they come to an initial reception center like this one.

I will ask no questions but will observe this facility and the interactions of the refugees with each other as well as with non-refugee persons present in the facility (managing staff, civil servant, NGOs). I will not listen to your conversations nor will I follow you or anybody else. I will observe from a distance and take notes of my general impressions of the facility and the social interactions that take place. No name, address, age, gender, country of origin or spoken language will be collected. All my observations will remain completely anonymous, including the name and address of this facility.

I will use my observations for my dissertation and a possible academic publication in the months to come. The data will be saved in a blank password-protected USB stick, which I will use on my personal laptop only. All the field notes gathered at this facility will be completely erased by the end of 2017.

I am available if you want to ask me any question regarding my research and my presence here. You can also contact me on my phone number and/or email.

You can simply say so if you agree that I remain here and observe. Should you feel uncomfortable with my presence and study, please let me know and I will stop immediately. I will harbor no bad feelings against you if you decide that I should not be doing this and you will bear no consequences.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix G – IRB#16-478: Amendment to Access to Other Reception Centers
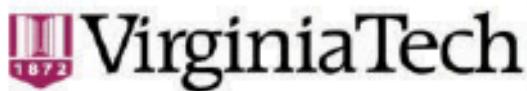
WirginiaTech

Office of Reseach Compliance
Institutional Review Board
540/231-4606 Fax: 540/231-0959
Email: irb@vt.edu (http://www.irb.vt.edu)

Amendment Application

1
Requesting Amendment To:

▸ *Research Protocol Document* — Section 2.1: in paragraph 3, changed "access to one of these facilities" to "access to some of these facilities"; in paragraph 4, changed "living conditions in that particular facility" to "living conditions in initial reception facilities for refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg"; in paragraph 5, changed "temporary access to this site" to "temporary access to these sites"; in paragraph 6, changed "the general configuration of this facility" to "the general configuration of such facilities" Section 3.3: in paragraph 2, changed "on the living conditions in the facility" to "on the living conditions in initial reception centers"; in paragraph 3, changed "involve the general observation of the facility" to "involve the general observation of each initial reception center I go to ... I will focus on the spatial features of each facility..." Section 3.4: in paragraph 1, changed "Plan chose the facility where it would like..." to "Plan chooses the initial reception centers for refugees and asylum seekers where it would like..."; in paragraph 1, changed "my temporary access to this facility" to "my temporary access to some of this facilities...and compare them with one another...I did not intend to observe any particular facility" Section 4.1: changed "when observing large groups of refugees in the center" to "when observing large groups of refugees and asylum seekers in the centers." Section 4.2: in paragraph 3, changed "for the general observation of the whole site" to "for the general observation of each site...all refugees present in every facility I gain access to through Plan International...These are generally big facilities, each hosting more than a hundred individuals..." Section 4.4: added the address of the second initial reception center that I will visit. Section 5.1: changed sentence in numbered point 4. : "I will have access to each facility..."

▸ *Consent Form(s)* — Section "Title of the project": changed "Observation of the general setting of one of Germany's facilities for initial reception" to "Observation of the general setting of two facilities for initial reception for refugees and asylum seekers in Hamburg..." Section "Script", paragraph 1: changed "migrants as they come to a facility like this" to "migrants as they come to an initial reception center like this one";

2
Have these requested changes been initiated?

Answer: No

3
How will the proposed amendment affect study participants?

In the first study, I thought that I would only have access to one initial reception center. But Plan International-Deutschland was recently granted access to another center to carry on its study of the refugees' and asylum seekers' living conditions in such facilities. Interestingly, although all initial reception

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centers in Germany serve the same purpose (providing temporary residence to refugees and asylum seekers while they wait for their residence permits or asylum application to be processed before being dispatched to a shelter elsewhere or sent back to the country of origin or a third country), they can vary a lot with one another in terms of dimensions, location, type of accommodation, origin of migrants, the security company, the NGO in charge of running the facility. Therefore, having access to another facility to gather field observations will help me make comparisons between the one I go to. While I will not be able to draw generalizable observations (external validity is not applicable in this study), I will be able to have a glimpse at the variety of experiences during this crucial stage in refugees' and asylum seekers' journey.

Appendix H – IRB#16-540: Approval Letter

VirginiaTech

Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech
300 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4606 Fax 540/231-0959
email irb@vt.edu
website http://www.irb.vt.edu

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 19, 2017

TO: Max O Stephenson Jr, Hamza Safouane

FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)

PROTOCOL TITLE: Governing migrants in the European Union: discourses, practices, and membership

IRB NUMBER: 16-540

Effective June 15, 2017, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the Continuing Review request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As: **Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 6,7**
Protocol Approval Date: **June 30, 2017**
Protocol Expiration Date: **June 29, 2018**
Continuing Review Due Date*: **June 15, 2018**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Invent the Future

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Appendix I – IRB#16-540: Recruitment Sheet

My name is Hamza Safouane. I am originally from Morocco and am currently pursuing my Ph.D. in Planning, Governance and Globalization at Virginia Tech. My dissertation concerns migration to the European Union.

I am here today to ask you to participate in my research on refugees in Germany by answering some questions. The purpose of my study is to examine refugees' journey through their experiences. I would like to learn about certain aspects of your migratory journey because I consider it to be extremely important and likely to have a significant impact on your life.

In this spirit, I will ask you some questions about your travel to Europe and Germany, as well as your encounters here with government agencies and civil servants, non-governmental organization staff and representatives, and your everyday encounters with the average citizen. The interview should last no more than one hour, but it can take longer if you like. Your responses will be confidential and I will not share your name or residence with anyone.

Before we schedule and undertake an interview, my university requires that you have ample opportunity to review my study aims and to consider your participation in this way. If you are interested in participating in an interview for my inquiry, I can provide you with necessary information regarding the interview, including what I will do with your responses, and how I will maintain the confidentiality of your comments and observations. You may take as long as you wish to consider the research information and consent form I will share and then contact me via phone or e-mail if you agree to participate, so that we can schedule a meeting for your interview.

It is perfectly acceptable if you do not wish to undertake this interview and, in such a case, you will not have to explain your decision. However, I would appreciate it very much if you inform me about your decision not to participate, so I will know to contact another individual.

If you decide to participate in my study, I would like to conduct the interview in a nearby coffee shop or restaurant or in an establishment of your choice so that we can speak in a relaxed environment.

Do you have any questions for me now?

Would you like to receive the information sheet outlining my study and the informed consent form?

Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix J – IRB#16-540: Information Sheet

Title of the project

Governing migrants in the European Union: discourses, practices, and membership

Investigator(s)

- **Primary investigator:** Dr. Max Stephenson Jr.
- **Email / Phone number:** mstephen@vt.edu/ +1 (0) 540-231-6775

- **Co-investigator**: Hamza Safouane
- **Email / Phone number**: hsafouan@vt.edu / +49 (0) 172 577 9873

I. Purpose of this research project

The purpose of this research is to examine refugees' journeys as told through their own stories and voices. I would like to listen to refugees describe the journeys that took them to their present location and status in Germany. I consider that constellation of experiences to be extremely important and have a significant impact upon those who undertake it, irrespective of their starting and end points. I am not interested in developing exhaustive accounts of each interviewee's journey. I am instead interested in refugees' representations of their journey-related experiences.

For this purpose, I would like to ask you some questions concerning your arrival to Europe and Germany, as well as your interactions while here with civil servants, non-governmental organization staff members and representatives, and your everyday encounters with the average citizen. The interview should last about one hour and I would like to interview about 10 to 12 adult refugees (above 18 years old).

As a part of our conversation I will ask you to provide certain identifying information such as your name, age, family situation, country of origin, and date of arrival. I will ask for this because it will help me grasp how your experience, as you report it to me, is similar to and differs from the accounts provide by other individuals I interview with different individual and social characteristics. I will make sure that this information and all of your responses to my interview questions remain protected, that is, I will never release or publish any information that could identify you with your responses to my queries.

I will transcribe the interviews I conduct and analyze them for my dissertation and later potential academic publications. I will make every effort to protect your identity by only referring to you by pseudonym or in generic terms.

II. Procedures

As a participant in this study, I would like to ask you several questions for which there are no right or wrong answers, nor is there a preferred length for your responses.

Consent:

Before agreeing to participate in this study, I ask that you review this document thoroughly. If you elect to participate, you will need to sign the consent form in my presence. In addition, the consent form must be signed at the location of the interview and before it begins. You can take as long as you wish to think about it, but please do inform me of your decision if possible. If you refuse, you do not have to explain your decision. This interview is completely voluntary and there is no penalty for not participating.

Location:

I would like to conduct the interview in a nearby coffee house or restaurant so that we can talk in a relaxed environment. I will cover any charges you may incur for transportation (bus or metro) to the location that we jointly select and for your coffee or tea.

During the interview:

With your permission, I would like to audio-record our interview. If you do not wish for the interview to be audio-recorded, I would like instead to take notes. If this is not acceptable to you either, please know that this choice is also perfectly acceptable. I will respect whatever decision you make concerning this question.

If you feel uncomfortable during the interview at any time, please let me know and we can discuss how best to proceed. You can also decide not to answer a particular question and you may end the interview at any time, as you might decide.

After the interview:

After the interview, I would like to keep in touch with you so that I could send you a transcript of the interview and a copy of my final dissertation if you would like to have these materials. You may also elect not to receive a copy of either one. I would also like to make sure that you have the opportunity to renew or reconsider your consent to participate in my research. You can at any time decide to withdraw your consent. If this is the case, I will not use your interview in my dissertation and publications. You may withdraw your consent by sending an e-mail to the primary investigator (Dr. Stephenson) and myself.

III.   Risks

Certain questions may trigger discomfort or evoke unpleasant memories. If this is the case for you, you may choose not to answer that question. In addition, you can choose to discontinue participation or not answer any question for any reason. You are welcome to share any issue linked to your refugee journey experience with me, but only as you elect, for I will never ask you to do so.

As I note above, your responses to my questions will remain protected. I will not release to anyone any identifying information that you may share with me (such as your name, age, country of origin, etc.). It will not be possible for anyone to link your interview responses to you.

Any expenses accrued for seeking or receiving medical or mental health treatment will be the responsibility of the subject and not that of the research project, research team, or Virginia Tech.

IV.   Benefits

I cannot promise you any benefits should you elect to participate. I can say, however, that I will be personally grateful for your participation and that your responses will help others reflect more deeply on their refugee journeys. This research may benefit society more generally by building greater understanding, even though I cannot promise that it will benefit you individually.

V.   Extent of anonymity and confidentiality

I will make every effort to keep all of your interview responses and personal characteristics protected from theft and/or misuse. None of this information or any other identifiable results of the study will ever be released to a third party in a way that might result in their ability to identify you individually as a study participant. To ensure this result, I will use study codes for all the identifying information so that no one except my mentoring professor and Primary Investigator, Dr. Stephenson, and myself will know who you are and what your specific responses to queries were.

The Virginia Tech (VT) Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view the study's data for auditing purposes, but not with the purpose of identifying you individually. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

VI.   Compensation

I will pay for beverages and/or meals that you may order at the place where we conduct the interview as appropriate and necessary, as well as possible transportation costs (metro and bus tickets) between your place of residence and our jointly selected interview venue.

VII.   Freedom to withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time and without penalty. You are free to not answer any questions on whatever basis you may determine. You do not have to justify your decisions to withdraw and/or not to respond.

Should you withdraw or otherwise discontinue participation, I will nevertheless compensate you for any transportation costs you may have incurred to reach and depart from our interview site to reach your residence.

VIII.   Questions or concerns

Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact the Primary Investigator, Dr. Stephenson, or myself at the email addresses and/or phone numbers indicated above.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant, or need to report a research-related event, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at moored@vt.edu or +1 (0) 540-231-4991.

Appendix K – IRB#16-540: Informed consent form

Title of the project

Governing migrants in the European Union: discourses, practices, and membership

Investigator(s)

- **Primary investigator:** Dr. Max Stephenson Jr.
- **Email / Phone number:** mstephen@vt.edu / +1 (0) 540-231-6775

- **Co-investigator:** Hamza Safouane
- **Email / Phone number:** hsafouan@vt.edu / +49 (0) 172 577 9873

- I have read and understood the project and research stated in the information sheet that was given to me by the Co-Investigator (Hamza Safouane)

- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project. I also understand that I may ask further questions about this research at any time.

- I agree to take part in the project. Taking part in the project will include being interviewed and audio-recorded. If I change my mind about being audio-recorded, I can ask the Co-Investigator to not record or stop recording at any time. I will have to give the Co-Investigator my consent to take notes during the interview.

- I understand that taking part in this research is voluntary; I can withdraw from participating at any time and will not be asked questions about why I no longer want to take part. In case I decide to withdraw, I will have to notify the Co-Investigator if I still want him to use the interview as data for his research. If I decide that the Co-Investigator cannot use this data, I will not have to explain why.

- I hereby assign the copyright of my contribution to the Co-Investigator and the study's Primary Investigator (Dr. Stephenson) and Co-Investigator, so that my words may be quoted in publications, dissertations, and other research outputs.

- I understand that my words may be quoted in the Co-Investigator's publications and dissertation but my name and any other information that could identify me or link my answers to my identity will not be used.

- I would / would not (delete as appropriate) like to be notified of any publications which are produced by the Co-Investigator from this study. I would like to be notified of this by e-mail/text message/phone call (delete as appropriate) and have provided the relevant contact information to the Co-Investigator.

- I understand that my personal details such as phone, e-mail, and address will not be revealed to anyone except to the Co-Investigator. I also understand that he will make sure that no one else, besides the Co-Investigator has access to this information.

- I confirm that I have freely agreed to participate in this research project conducted by Dr. Max Stephenson and Hamza Safouane. I have been briefed on what this involves (as stated in the information sheet that was provided to me) and I agree to the use of the findings as described above and in the information sheet. I understand that this material is protected by a code of professional ethics.

I have read the informed consent form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent to participate in this study as outlined above:

_____ Date_____
Subject signature

_____
Subject printed name
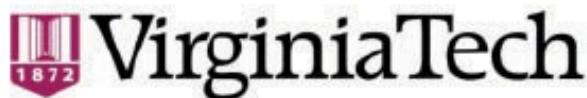
Appendix L – IRB#16-540: Amendment Application to Recruitment Strategy

VirginiaTech

Office of Reseach Compliance
Institutional Review Board
540/231-4606 Fax: 540/231-0959
Email: irb@vt.edu (http://www.irb.vt.edu)

Amendment Application

1

Requesting Amendment To:

▸ *Research Protocol Document* — Section 3.3: the first 3 paragraphs Section 4.2: the first paragraph Section 4.6: the first paragraph Section 5.1: the whole answer

2

Have these requested changes been initiated?

Answer: No

3

How will the proposed amendment affect study participants?

I have tried recruiting subjects through direct approach but was not very successful. I encountered a great deal of distrust as I approach them as a total stranger and ask from them to give me an hour or their time to ask them personal questions about their journey experiences. I would therefore like to add parallel recruitment chains besides direct approach. The first additional recruitment strategy is recruitment at places where refugees and asylum seekers may go to seek advice and assistance from volunteers such as the Café Exile, which is a coffee shop in Hamburg ran by volunteers, or other charities and support groups. The second additional recruitment approach is to seek referrals from my network of volunteers in the field of asylum. I hope that I could overcome the mistrust by building a longer relationship with potential subjects or by being referred to them by someone whom they would trust more.

Appendix M – IRB#16-540: Interview Guideline

The following questions will serve as a guideline to help me explore themes related to refugees' personal ways of framing their journey experiences. I may reword these questions during the interview in order to help interviewees to understand what I am asking. The questions will be asked in the interviewees' native language.

1) Did you have a destination in mind as you prepared to depart? If yes, how did you come to choose Germany? What did you hope or imagine it would offer?

2) As you have reflected on your experience, what would mark or has marked the end of your migratory journey?

   a. Follow-up question: What is your hope for the future?

3) Could you describe your itinerary?

4) What did you take with you for your journey?

5) What would you have done differently to make your journey easier, less risky, less adventurous?

6) How does your actual experience of safety compare with what you had believed would occur before coming here?

7) Could you describe your interactions with the government authorities, non-governmental organizations/humanitarian agencies in Europe? In Germany?

8) Could you describe your experiences with the ordinary people whom you have encountered in Europe? In Germany? In Hamburg?

9) How did you prepare for the refugee determination process? How did it go?

10) Could you describe what you did yesterday?

   a. Follow up question: Was this a typical day for you since you arrived here?

11) Do you see ways that you could get ahead economically now that you are here?

12) Do you see other things about being here that could improve your quality of life?

13) Did you hear about the Cologne incidents? Many migrants were incriminated. What's your opinion/take on this?

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