RESCALING REFUGEE AND MIGRANT BODIES ON THE ISLAND OF LESVOS

By

Adrija Maitra

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Supervisor: Dr. Nadia Jones-Gailani

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ABSTRACT

The year 2015 is regarded as the peak year in which thousands of refugees and migrants from Turkey, crossing the Aegean Sea, arrived on the shores of Lesvos. The EU-Turkey deal, signed the following year, provided the framework to contain illegal entry into the EU and closed all (land and sea) routes of entry into the EU from Turkey. The research for this study was conducted from April-June in the year 2018. The narrow stretch of the Aegean Sea lying in between Izmir (Turkey) and the north shore of Lesvos still remained active during the time-span of this study. Routinely patrolled by the Hellenic Coast Guard, Frontex vessels, and sometimes by NATO warships, created a border security regime which produced migrant illegality. Once on the shore, they were transported to the refugee camp of Moria within a few hours. Moria, colloquially referred to as 'hell on earth', served as another site of body-politics, reducing their bodies to bareness. Through NGO spaces in Mytilene, these refugees and migrants were able to access a platform to create and recreate their temporal realities. This thesis traces the migration trajectory of the refugees and migrants through the border security regime, production of bare lives within the refugee camp, and the negotiation and navigation of temporal experiences. Through the lens of scaling, it illustrates the ways in which borders are being re-mapped, asymmetrical relations among bare lives produced, and the relationships between multiple temporal realities embodied. The material collected from the field was through the method of participation observation, in the capacity of a trainee at an NGO called Lighthouse Relief, and by conducting many semi-structured interviews of full-time NGO workers and trainees. This thesis has attempted to circumvent the pitfalls of a nation-centric approach by studying the multiple scales which impact the bodies of refugees and migrants along their trajectory of migration. Migration is viewed from the point of a journey.

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Lastly, to my family in India, for always being there. Ma, you are my strength. If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have reached this far. You always come first.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of original research; it contains no materials accepted for any other degree in any other institution and no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgments is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

I further declare that the following word count for this thesis are accurate:

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Signed: ADRIJA MAITRA

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List of Abbreviations

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

LHR – Lighthouse Relief

ERO – Emergency Response Operations (official name of the team at Lighthouse Relief, Skala Sikamineas, Lesvos)

RR – Refugee Rescue

HCG – Hellenic Coast Guard

TCG – Turkish Coast Guard

FRONTEX – European Border and Coast Guard Agency (French: Frontières extérieures for "external border")

EU – European Union

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

OHF – One Happy Family

MMS – Moria Medical Support

SGBV – Sexual and Gender-based Violence

Introduction

In the year 2015, the global community witnessed a massive influx of refugees and migrants on the shores of the Greek island of Lesvos. Arriving on rubber dinghies across the Aegean Sea, they were caught in between the Turkish landmass and the northern shores of Lesvos. According to a UNHCR factsheet published in November 2015, over forty-five percent of the total 770,838 refugees and migrants entering Europe that year arrived in Lesvos from Turkey via the ten-kilometer stretch of the Aegean Sea.[1] The same report mentions that approximately 379,000 people arrived on dinghies, and the daily average arrival rate was around 3,300 persons.[2] It also speaks about a refugee "hotspot" named Moria, which accommodated around 2,500 to 3,000 refugees and migrants. Moria and another site called Kara Tepe, which hosted around another 2,500 persons, are referred to as the "two reception/registration sites" of the island. The "assembly points" of Molyvos/Oxy and Skala Sikamineas provided space for another 1,000 of them.[3]

The report goes on to stress the urgent need for humanitarian aid and action in this scenario, especially emphasizing the onset of winter. Some of the most pressing challenges faced during that time were "…a severe lack of adequate reception in relation to shelter, sanitation, and site management exposing refugees and migrants to serve risks."[4] These gaps have led to tensions between various refugee groups, as well as between the refugees and the police. Efforts were being made to address these gaps and enhance the response-reception capacity by working in close collaboration with the authorities and other humanitarian

[1] UNHCR, "Lesvos Island – Greece: Factsheet", 2015
https://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/5645ddbc6/greece-factsheet-lesvos-island.html
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

actors.[5] One such actor in this scene is an NGO called Lighthouse Relief.[6] It was founded in the peak year of 2015, against this backdrop of the enormous number of arrivals. Its headquarters is located in one of the two assembly points mentioned above, the small fishing village of Skala Sikamineas

This thesis centers around the range of politics that refugee and migrant bodies, crossing this stretch of the Aegean Sea, are subjected to on Lesvos. It argues that this body-politics takes place via the production of illegal and bare bodies, and the factors influencing this production are ethnicity, nationality, and gender. Drawing upon the works of Nicholas De Genova, Suvendrini Perera, and John Torpey, I discuss how bodies are patrolled and policed as they enter the EU from their sea voyage. In particular, it illustrates how routine sea patrol and the management of bodies at Moria serve as the sites of production. Viewing body-politics through the scales of temporalities, this thesis attempts to grasp the migratory patterns and encounters on the island. The spatial dimension is reconceptualized de-territorially – as temporary temporal zones. This open up new areas of discussion, adding to the established works of Melanie B.E. Griffiths and Kristen Sarah Biehl. The fieldwork for this research was conducted in the capacity of trainee on voluntary basis at Lighthouse Relief (LHR). As is discussed in the following section, the chosen field for this study is richly embedded in the history of migration flows and population exchange across what now is the new EU migration regime.

Mapping the context

Although 2015 is referred to as the peak year of refugee and migrant influxes in the recent past, the history of forced migration between Greece and Turkey dates back to 1923.

[5] Ibid.
[6] https://www.lighthouserelief.org/

In the volume of a book exclusively dedicated to the study of the forced migration of 1923 and its consequences, Renée Hirschon writes that the "compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey involved the movement of about 1.5 million people. It had profound long-term consequences, radically changed all aspects of life in the Aegean region and…undoubtedly has poignant contemporary relevance."[7] In her in-depth historical analysis of the events leading up to the exchange of populations Hirschon situates the treaty, which enabled the forced migration, within creation and rise of modern states in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Ottoman Empire was already on the verge of collapsing with the burgeoning nationalist movements in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. The Balkan Wars of 1912-13 exacerbated the upheaval when there was an exodus of Muslim refugees from the Balkans relocating to the region of Anatolia (Asia Minor). The Lausanne Convention, signed on 30th January 1923, was an attempt to unmix people, in order to mark the final phase in the Ottoman history.[8]

The compulsory exchange of the Lausanne Convention involved "Turkish nationals of the Greek orthodox religion established in Turkish territory" and the "Greek nationals of the Moslem religion established in Greek territory".[9] This population displacement was de facto absolute, based on the criteria of religion and nationality as per the Convention, and refused entry for the displaced to return to either territory.[10] Eftihia Voutira, in her study of the biopolitics of forced migration with an emphasis on Greece, highlights the role of "grannies" willing to help within local contexts of crisis. [11] Since many members of this elderly

[7] Renée Hirschon, "'Unmixing Peoples' in the Aegean Region", *Crossing the Aegean: An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey* 12 (2003): 3.
[8] Ibid., 3-4.
[9] Ibid., 8.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Eftihia Voutira, "Securitising the Mediterranean? Cross-border migration practices in Greece", Chapter 4 in *Forced Migration: Current Issues and Debates* (2018): 60-73.

community in local contexts identify as "survivors of the Asia Minor catastrophe", their desire to help and be useful in the contemporary context is felt as a moral obligation.[12]

Skala was no exception to this tradition. The local elderly community, including the grandmothers, has contributed in moments of dire crisis. One of the participants interviewed for this ethnography was a descendant of a family who had been affected by the 1923 population exchange. Giannis Skenderoglou, interviewed in his capacity of the coordinator of Mo Chara, the Refugee Rescue (RR)[13] rescue boat, commented that:

> My grandpa came to Lesvos from Turkey in 1924…both grandpas. Izmir [in Turkey] was burnt… was a big catastrophe. Greeks have always been migrants because Greece has always been in war…. 1924 was like a genocide, all along the coast of Turkey. Grandparents came here before the genocide started. All the houses along the sea [point to the road leading away from Skala's central square] were built for the Turkish-Greek refugees' settlement. The center [Goji's, where we were sitting] was where the main village was. [Pointing to that road again] they're still called the settlement area.

This demonstrates that references to the past were frequently made while undertaking active humanitarian aid roles within the current context of migration. The legislation regulating the contemporary migration flow from Turkey to Greece is the EU-Turkey deal.[14] Proclaiming to "break the business model of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk, EU and Turkey signed this agreement to end irregular migrants from entering into the EU from Turkey. Migrants whose asylum application is found to be "unfounded or inadmissible" according to the Asylum Procedures Directive are liable to returned to Turkey. Moreover, Turkey must ensure the non-opening of any new land or sea routes for the migrants to cross over into the EU.[15]

[12] Ibid.
[13] Another local NGO at Skala, worked in close collaboration with LHR.
[14] Council of the EU, "EU-Turkey statement, 18th March 2016", Press Release 144/16, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/pdf
[15] Ibid.

Structure

This thesis focuses on one route which falls within the regulation EU-Turkey deal – the ten-kilometer stretch of the Aegean Sea between the shores of Turkey and Lesvos. Chapter 1 discusses the methodology developed to conduct the ethnography, offering a perspective from a hybrid positionality.[16] Prohibited from recording formal interviews or collecting official testimonies of the refugees and migrants, the chapter argues that the restriction imposed ethically protected the incoming refugees and migrants. This chapter demonstrates what the work means in reality for a full-time NGO worker, and draws from the repository of material gathered during my fieldwork using a participant observation method. The focus of Chapter 2 is on the ten-kilometer stretch of the Aegean Sea between Turkey and Greece, which sets the stage for Nicholas De Genova's "border spectacle."[17] I argue that land and sea borders are being re-cartographed through the practice of official sea patrol, which serves at the sites of producing illegal bodies. The incorporation of the sea as an extension of the land border is demonstrated. In Chapter 3, I discuss the techniques in which nationality, ethnicity, and gender are utilized in the production of bare lives[18] in the refugee hotspot of Moria. I argue that these techniques result in bare lives being positioned unequal to one another. Chapter 4 brings in the discussion on temporal realities, and the contribution of NGO interventions. Using informal testimonies of refugees and migrants that were shared with me, I demonstrate how the outlook on time is shaped by their temporal dislocations in these spaces of transit.

[16] Binaya Subedi, "Theorizing a 'halfie' researcher's identity in transnational fieldwork," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 19:5 (2006): 573-593.
[17] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1180-1198.
[18] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (1998).

Literature Review

In this section I review some of the key texts from the existing scholarly literature on migration studies while adopting a biopolitical approach. It is subdivided according to the central themes addressed in this thesis. The thematic delineations are: migration history, border zones, biopolitics of bare life, and temporal uncertainties.

Migration history

The works selected under this theme base their analyses on a critique of the preexisting nation-centric focus predominant in this field of literature. Nation-centric approaches take on the study of migration trajectories from the perspectives of nation-states, establishing a myopic relationship between migration flows and the national narratives of the respective nation-states. The texts reviewed below not only critique this nation-centric approach but also propose newer lens of analysis to study migration trajectories.

Donna R. Gabaccia[19] writes that the nation still serves as "an important scale" for migrants of the twentieth century and that nation-states continue to be an indispensable element constitutive to shaping modern transnational histories of migration.[20] Through her project Italians Everywhere, she learns that the place given to migration in the "general accounts of Italy's national history are fundamentally incorrect" and goes on to conclude that non-Italian historians have engaged with and treated Italian migration more exhaustively and accurately than historians from Italy.[21] On the other hand, the nation-states receiving Italian migrants have either denied the phenomenon altogether or have acknowledged its role in

[19] Donna R. Gabaccia, "Is Everywhere Nowhere? Nomads, Nations, and the Immigrant Paradigm of United States History", *The Journal of American History* The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History: A Special Issue 86:3 (1999): 1115-1134.
[20] Ibid., 1117.
[21] Ibid., 1122.

nation-making.[22] She focuses on one such receiving state in her article, the United States, and demonstrates the "myth of nation building" through the American immigration paradigm operating on "a highly selective tale".[23] Gabaccia's important contribution underscores the need for alternative scales and concepts for writing migration history, and critique nation-centric historiographies by developing a transnational focus.[24]

However, as others in this field have argued, adopting a transnational approach in an attempt to circumvent the pitfalls of a nation-centric focus in the study of migration studies does not always disable the underlying assumption that nation-states are the natural units into which the society is organized. Andrew Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller have characterized this tendency in the field of migration research as "methodological nationalism".[25] They write that the "globalization fever"[26] led anthropologists and sociologists with ethnographic inclinations to advocate a new kind of migration, which they termed as "transnationalism".[27] The focus on research in migration studies swiftly shifted to studying transnational ties, impact of modern communication technologies, demise of the nation-state and rise of identity politics, experiences of the diasporic communities, "long distance nationalism" and "cross-border citizenry".[28] Wimmer and Glick Schiller correctly point out that these newly developed areas of study and conceptual imaginary nevertheless, emerge from the fundamental understanding of nation-states being the primary unit of social and political organization. Such an understanding makes national borders as grids within which one locates themselves, and from which any possibility of a trans(border) or cross(border) study may commence. The word "trans*national* semantically refers us to the non-trans*national* or

[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid., 1133.
[24] Ibid., 1123.
[25] Andrew Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation-state building, migration and the social sciences", *Global Networks* 2:4 (2002): 301-334.
[26] Ibid., 321.
[27] Ibid., 322.
[28] Ibid., 322-323.

simply to the national as the entity that is crossed or superseded".[29] The aim of this thesis is neither to unravel a truer version of the society via claiming or hinting that some reality to that effect may exist, nor is it to factor out the role that nation-states and their borders play in the context of migration flows. The task for the future, as Wimmer and Glick Schiller have illuminated, is to adopt a sense of "methodological fluidism".[30]

In her historiography on the "rapid integration of gender" into historical accounts within migration studies in the late twentieth century, Suzanne M. Sinke notes the influence shaping such analyses is the historian's changing relationship with temporality.[31] This changing relationship has increased awareness in the field regarding integrating "multiple scales of analysis."[32] For historians, Sinke explains, the 'past' isn't just a scale ready to be compared to the present without establishing the relationship between the two. This is important to keep in mind in a temporal analysis of migration studies, as migration develops as much as through time as that of across space.[33] Migration is articulated by Sinker in her article as a "type of human movement", which shifts the focus from narratives encircling zones of settlement.[34] Similarly, this thesis also adopts the approach on migration in terms of migration in movement, as opposed to spaces of permanent settlement of any kind.

The thesis is a close study of gender and temporality as key themes of analysis that are central to the study of migrants and migrant bodies. This shift of focus is in tune with the advocacy for feminist "bottom up" and ethnographic approaches which emerged in the late 1960s[35], as well as an attempt to tread on the road ahead as proposed by Wimmer and Glick

[29] Ibid., 324.
[30] Ibid., 324-327.
[31] Suzanne M. Sinke, "Gender and Migration: Historical Perspectives", *International Migration Review* 40:1 (2006): 83-99.
[32] Ibid., 98.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid. 83.
[35] Ibid., 85.

Schiller through methodological fluidism. Although framed within the idiom of Scylla and Charybdis,[36] the attempt here is to reconceptualize the territorial imagery through tapping into the transient nature of temporalities.

Borders and Bodies

Going beyond the theoretical precepts of methodological nationalism as discussed above, John Torpey explains how nation-states have monopolized the authority to legitimize or illegitimize movement across internal and external borders.[37] National boundaries are not the only marked borders in this grid that Torpey discusses, but also analyzes the dynamics of the internal borders as demarcated by the sovereign nation-state. The focus here is on national borders which are used as markers on territories, oceans, and bodies traversing across them.

John Torpey argues that a large number of studies focusing on state formation have analyzed states' ability to "penetrate societies", without shedding light on the means adopted to implement such practices.[38] He puts forth the imagery of the nation-state extending its reach to embrace societies, both on a mass and individual level, in order to obtain total grip of their national territorial grid. It is not enough for nation-states to be able to simply penetrate their internal domains with the act of exercising legitimate control, but "states *must* embrace societies *in order to* penetrate them effectively".[39] This embracing act of the nation-state is carried out by codifying identity of each individual in tangible written documents, such as passports, identification (ID) cards, driver's license, and so on.[40] States have monopoly over publishing documents in this genre, as well as prime license over granting it to individual

[36] Andrew Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-state Building, Migration, and the Social Sciences," *Global Networks* 2:4 (2002): 326.
[37] John Torpey, "Coming and Going: On the State's Monopolization of the Legitimate 'Means of Movement'," *Sociological Theory* 16:3 (1998): 239-259.
[38] Ibid., 240.
[39] Ibid., 244.
[40] Ibid., 241-255.

bodies. I will focus on two key outcomes of this monopolization process. First, a relationship between human bodies and the state apparatus is established, which as Torpey argues, is much akin to the underlying tenet of ju-jitsu – a person's body is used against their own selves. This is determined by the possession of state-licensed ID cards; the lack of which conveys the illegality of the person(s) concerned. To have a legitimate relationship with the state, a person must possess any one of the state-sanctioned ID cards to legalize themselves - their bodies and identities.[41]

Secondly, this monopolization process ensures that state apparatuses are the only institutions which can produce legitimate identification and authorize movement. For instance, without a legal identity, a person is illegal in the first place in terms of their very existence, whether or not they move territorially is of secondary consideration. Through the marking of bodies as legal or illegal, the states balance their "reach" with a consolidated "grasp".[42] Through establishing the binaric categories of legal versus illegal, nation-states exercise their sovereign power to embrace societies, by producing illegal bodies. Susan Bibler Coutin, in her ethnography of spaces of non-existence, illustrates the mechanisms through which undocumented bodies are rendered non-existent.[43] In these deterritorial zones, where physical presence of bodies unregistered mark their no-existence, there exists multiple temporalities. These temporal realities are sometimes characterized by timelessness and void, sometimes by illegality.[44] The embracing arm of the nation-state then, through the production of illegality both territorial and deterritorial, brings individual bodies under its sovereign power reach.

[41] Ibid., 241-249.
[42] Ibid., 244.
[43] Susan Bibler Coutin, "Illegality, Borderlands, and the Space of Nonexistence," *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity* (2003): 171-179.
[44] Ibid., 175-176.

Torpey's analysis of the means adopted by the state to regulate mobility can be seen as the way nation-states methodically reinforce their existence in the material world. The pitfall of 'methodological nationalism' as critiqued by Wimmer and Glick Schiller as a theoretical precept is being upheld by nation-states in the physical dimension through techniques of surveillance. Nicholas de Genova, while discussing the U.S.-Mexico border, writes that "the Border" serves as the "exemplary theater for staging the spectacle" of the illegal body, or as he calls it, "the illegal alien".[45] The invisibility, or elusiveness, of the law needs a visible component to bear evidence of its operation. Whether or not individuals possess passports and ID cards, the document(s) determining legality or illegality of the body, is unknowable without actual inspection. Such inspection practices are carried out in the border regions run parallel with staging the "spectacle" of law enforcement, where the construction of illegality through surveillance becomes a naturalized fact.[46]

Borders become the sites of the 'spectacle', in addition to the location at which migrant illegality is produced. Before moving ahead, a crucial element pertaining to the geographical landscape of this ethnographic study needs to be revisited. While discussing borders, bodies, and surveillance of bodies crossing borders, the constituents of a 'border' needs elaboration. Whereas De Genova bases his analysis on land borders, the border under scrutiny for this thesis comprises of both territorial and oceanic components. As explained in the introduction, the Greek and Turkish landmasses are separated by a ten-kilometer water stretch, the Aegean Sea. This stretch of water serves as the stage for the 'border spectacle' in this study. I argue that national borders are not just limited to territorial landmasses but expand their threshold to incorporate sea/oceanic spaces as well.

[45] Nicholas de Genova, "Migrant 'Illegality' and Deportability in Everyday Life," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 31 (2002): 436
[46] Ibid.

Suvendrini Perera, in her study[47] on corpo-graphies on oceanic water, extensively illustrates the complex ways in which the "…entrenched understandings of the ocean as elementally distinct from land" is tied to the practices of othering the "gendered and raced transnational subaltern refugee subject" from the normative "liberal state" and the "liberal subject".[48] Water is fundamentally "unmade", signifying the politics which severs water from the land, and is treated as a borderland in itself, "…a space of stasis, suspension…death".[49] The corpo-graphy of unmaking water does not equally encompass all bodies; it applies only to the other of the liberal subject of the liberal state, which is, the transnational refugee subject. The tale of the white male on the ocean is woven around adventure, discovery, and romantic death. Whereas in case of the non-white subaltern refugee subject travelers, there are concerns of security, terrorism, us versus them ethical checks, and eventually, closing off borders to refugee boats.[50] Oceanic water is further unmade from the land with the notion of the physical fixity and limitation of national borders to territorial landmass. Maritime travel for the refugee body is then, an act of transgression, in stark contrast to the white male traveler set out on an adventure to discover new lands. Perera argues that the practice of making borders territorially bounded is specifically "designed to block transnational subaltern bodies on the move".[51]

My intervention in this discussion, informed through participant observation in the field, adds a new chapter of to the process of making and unmaking waters from the land. Contrary to the operations of the Australian situation as outlined by Perera, I demonstrate in Chapter 3 the quotidian practices through which national borders are mapped out on the sea.

[47] Suvendrini Perera, "Oceanic corpo-graphies, Refugee Bodies and the Making and Unmaking of Waters," *Feminist Review* 103 (2013): 58-79.
[48] Ibid., 64.
[49] Ibid., 65.
[50] Ibid., 58-79.
[51] Ibid., 63-65.

These invisible demarcations on the sea are made real by maintaining them through national coast guard patrol. The contrast between Australia and Lesvos deepens further when we take into consideration that both are islands. Perera describes how the Australian border security operates from the notion of a "…homeland perceived as under siege".[52]

Whereas Australia is an island nation-state (and continent), Lesvos is also an island, located between Greece and Turkey. In case of Lesvos, the separation from the territorial landmass exists on a dual dimension: one, from the Greek mainland under whose sovereign jurisdiction it lies, and two, from Turkey. As stated earlier, the focus herein is on national borders, therefore, this thesis is established on the latter strand of the duality. From this angle, the Aegean Sea operates as the oceanic borderland between Greece and Turkey. Perera describes how the Australian border security operates from the notion of a "…homeland perceived as under siege".[53] The land and water components of the Greece-Turkey border are mutually constitutive. Perera also illustrate the difference between bodies undertaking the maritime voyage. This clearly demonstrates the importance of situating the subject crossing the border, and the disparate repercussions and narratives around it. For the racialized, gendered, sea voyager, the traversing is an act of transgression, an opportunity for the creation of illegal bodies. While moving onto the next subsection, we need to keep in mind the sovereign practices which produces illegality at border sites through rendering racialized and gendered bodies illegal.

Biopolitics of Bare Lives

Beginning from a reading of Aristotle which distinguishes the simple act of living (*zoe*) from living a good and qualified life (*bios*), Giorgio Agamben centralizes "bare life" in

[52] Ibid., 71.
[53] Ibid.

his book, *Homo Sacer*.[54] He writes that "bare life, that is, the life of *Homo Sacer* (sacred man)" is of one who "*may be killed and yet not sacrificed*."[55] The way in which 'bare life' resides in the *polis* is through its own state of exclusion. In today's modern democracies, this state of exception has become the common norm, where 'bare life' is solely included into politics through its exclusion.[56] The figure of the refugee poses a challenge to modern nation-states as it brings to the surface the foundation on which modern democracies lie, that is, the 'state of exception'. He argues that rights which are guaranteed for all individuals based on the simple fact of their birth – or biological life – is only preserved (and conferred) within the figure of the citizen. "Rights are attributed to man…solely to the extent that man is the immediately vanishing ground (who must never come to light as such) of the citizen."[57]

Through the process of exclusive inclusion, Agamben explains the politics of bare lives, which exist outside the figure of the citizen, and dwell in a state of exception. Agamben has been critiqued by several scholars on his interpretation of Aristotle with regards to the distinction between *zoe* and *bios*. James Gordon Finlayson develops a thorough critique of Agamben's (mis)interpretation and use of *zoe* and *bios* in his biopolitical paradigm.[58] He re-reads and reinterprets key concepts in Aristotle's work – the distinctions between "mere life" as "*zēn*" and the "good life" as "*eu zēn*" – and asserts that "there is no evidence in Aristotle's *Politics* to support any of the central claims Agamben makes in support of his thesis".[59] However, the only remedy proposed by Finlayson in his critique to the grave misreading of Aristotle by Agamben is to regard *Homo Sacer* as "a literary text, the value of which is

[54] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (1998): 8.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Bid., 1-12.
[57] Ibid. 128.
[58] James Gordon Finlayson, ""Bare Life" and Politics in Agamben's Reading of Aristotle," *The Review of Politics* 72:1 (2010): 97-126.
[59] Ibid. 115.

largely immune to the fact that its claims are untrue or unwarranted."[60] In this thesis, I do not adopt this line of critique, as neither a corrective reading of Aristotle is the aim here. Nor does relegating Agamben's work seem constructive to advancing our understanding of his main concepts – ones that remain useful to the study of how migrant bodies are policed.

The critical approach I adopt while reading and implementing Agamben draws upon the interventions of scholars advancing gendered and racial critiques of the current migrant regime. In her work on contemporary American social policy on welfare mothers, Anna Marie Smith critiques the strict compartmentalization of the *zoe* and *bios* into distinct spheres. The *oikos* (home) and the *polis* are not strictly demarcated, which is demonstrated by the citizen who operates as a member of the *polis* as well as the patriarch, or head of the household (*oikos*). "The citizen has to adopt a different leadership posture when he applies himself to the task of heading the household" than performing the duties of a member of *polis*.[61] Smith shows through her analysis the regulatory practices by the polis upon the oikos, such that it certainly does concern itself with household (and reproductory) issues, breaking the binaric compartmentalization. *Zoe* and *bios* need not exist in mutually exclusive spaces.

Alexander G. Weheliye, in his study on the link between slavery and sexuality through the lens of pornotropes, critiques Agamben's exclusion of states of exception within the legal order, such as imprisonment, slavery, and torture.[62] Biological lives – for instance, he mentions blackness – within the legal framework – unlike the *homo sacer*, who lies outside legal jurisprudence – are reduced to bareness as part of the normal order. The zones which produce bareness, within the legal order, are not characterized as zones of exclusion by Agamben. His theory only addresses bareness of lives when it is situated outside the normal

[60] Ibid., 124.
[61] Anna Marie Smith, "Neo-eugenics: A Feminist Critique of Agamben," *Occasion: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities* 2 (2010): 9-10.
[62] Alexander G. Weheliye, "Pornotropes," *Journal of Visual Culture* 7:1 (2008): 69.

order, to be included by exclusive inclusive. Contra Agamben, Weheliye illuminates through the concept of 'pornotroping' that bareness of lives is produced within the normalized, legal jurisprudence.

I adopt Weheliye's reading of Agamben in this thesis to analyze the material collected from my fieldwork. Through elaborating on certain practices within the refugee camp Moria, I discuss different techniques in the management of bare lives. Drawing from the discussion of the previous subsection, the production of bare lives within the camp space builds on the production of illegality at border sites. The common denominator, as I show in Chapter 4, is the nationalities and ethnicities of the refugees and migrants. Nationalities and ethnicities serve as the parameter for the sovereign along which bareness is produced. The literature reviewed refers to an underlying sense of a reductive process, through which individuals are stripped to bare lives. I argue that the creation of bare lives is not a linear process, instead through certain mechanism they are placed along a spectrum of bareness.

Temporal Uncertainties

In this final subsection, I engage with certain texts which address the temporal nature of the migratory reality. The bodies of refugees and migrants, illegal and bare, are living beings experiencing this trajectory with every step. As mentioned at the end of the first subsection regarding a bottom up approach, this is the space where their lived realities feature in. As sad earlier, this thesis conceptualizes migration in terms of movement. Temporality is one way of making an attempt to map this movement.

Kristen Sarah Biehl, in her work on uncertain governmentality in the asylum regime in Turkey, discusses the "emotional and psychological distress in asylum seekers" who await

a decision on their asylum cases.[63] The asylum regime of Turkey – through subjecting the asylum seekers to uncertain decision-making, narrating case histories in asylum interviews which rekindle their trauma, and placing security controls on their mobility – "deliberately rules out feelings of security" by effectively and repeatedly placing asylum seekers at the borders.[64] She proposes that living in a state of limbo does entail a kind of "agency in waiting", in which feelings of boredom, frustration, or helplessness can turn into hopes for the future. In the space of uncertain temporal governmentality, where hope is being created and recreated throughout the asylum procedure, the refugees are disciplined into the subjectivity of kind of "proper refugeeness".[65] Biehl's focus is more tailored to the temporal realities of the refugees as experienced in relation to the asylum process.

Time as a resource in the lives of refugees is further explored by Melanie B.E. Griffiths in her ethnographic study on immigration detainees and refused asylum seekers in the UK.[66] She enumerates four experiental temporal categories – sticky time or slowness, suspended time or timelessness, frenzied time or frantic change of pace, temporal rupture or a sudden dramatic break in the experience of time. Through these four categories of temporal realities, she argues that neither extreme in the pace of time has shown positive effects on the refugees. Griffiths' therefore, advocates "making time", or techniques through which time is managed in order to be utilized in one's favour. This would entail acquiring a sense of the days, and clocking it into routines, schedules, developing plans, and so on.[67]

Similar to Biehl and Griffiths, this thesis addresses temporal experiences of refugees and migrants within the paradigm of seeking asylum. Unlike the previous two studies

[63] Kristen Sarah Biehl, "Governing Through Uncertainty: Experiences of Being a Refugee in Turkey as a Country for Temporary Asylum," *Social Analysis* 59:1 (2015): 60.
[64] Ibid., 69.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Melanie B.E. Griffiths, "Out of time: The temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40:12 (2014): 1991-2009.
[67] Ibid., 1993-2004.

mentioned, a key dimension this thesis brings to the discussion of uncertain temporalities among refugees is the interventionist role of NGOs. As I demonstrate in the last chapter, the experiences of temporality among the refugees and migrants residing in Moria are formed through inhabiting several lived temporalities, of the past and present, in a way that the focus shifts from the speed of time.

Conclusion

A transnational approach to migration studies runs an equal risk of committing what it attempts to avoid: the problem of methodological nationalism that has infiltrated the ways in which we discuss scale, space and bodies. Although not feasible to overlook the role of security practices of a nation-state in entry routes, this thesis attempts to shift the focus towards the ways in which bodies, who are in continuous movement, perceive and shape these borders. The analysis goes further to the domain of temporalities, to explore the depth of body-politics they are subjected to and the ways in which they negotiate the same. Temporal experiences are not shaped in a vacuum. They are rife with the spectrum of politics on the body. This thesis is a journey across this spectrum.

Chapter 1 – Methodology

1.1 Introduction

In order to gain practical expertise in the field, I chose the 'Applied Track' specialization offered by my program. My area of interest was zones which acted as entry points for refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants into Europe. This specific interest was predominantly inspired by the works of Nicholas De Genova, who writes about the "border spectacle" along the US – Mexico border.[68] De Genova illustrates how state power "…performatively activates the reification of migrant 'illegality' in an emphatic and grandiose gesture of exclusion"[69] at the site of national borders. This grand gesture of exclusion is followed by its "obscene supplement", the "…disavowed subterranean inclusion of 'illegal' migration".[70] De Genova explores how nation-state borders act as a theatrical stage for the creation of migrant legality and illegality, through the act of border policing and rhetoric of securitization.

Included in the theoretical framing of my analysis is the work of De Genova and an engagement with the works of Suvendrini Perera, Susan Bibler Coutin, Melanie B.E. Griffiths, Ratna Kapur, and Giorgio Agamben, all of whom helped me establish a solid theoretical foundation before the internship. Perera's depicts how the embodiment of land and sea borders in the bodies of refugees, which are unmade and made through recording events in its line of vision, bear "witness to terror".[71] Coutin brings to the discussion a nuanced approach to examining spaces of nonexistence, thus emphasizing that the

[68] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1182-1185.
[69] Ibid., 1181.
[70] Ibid., 1186.
[71] Suvendrini Perera, "'They Give Evidence': Bodies, Borders and the Disappeared," *Social Identities* 12:6 (2006): 642.

"undocumented has its own characteristics, temporalities, and dimensions."[72] Physical existence is not enough to exist legally, and the lack of official documentation renders this space illegal altogether.[73] In her study of temporalities amongst asylum seekers, Melanie B.E. Griffiths analyses the way in which time is experienced by refugees. Her classification is based on the axis of the speed with which time is experienced: be it slow and 'sticky' time or a frenzied time depending on their position within the refugee regime. Griffiths concludes her discussions by putting forth that either extreme in terms of the passage of time could be harmful and recommends utilizing time in one's favour by optimizing its presence productively.[74]

Having acquainted myself with the ongoing discussions around borders, spaces of existence and non-existence, producing migrant illegality, and the ensuing temporal uncertainties, I decided to opt for recording oral testimonies for this project. Soon after receiving a confirmation from Lighthouse Relief regarding the acceptance of my internship, I requested a meeting over Skype to inform them about the ethnographic study I had envisioned to carry out. This would need to be combined with my duties as a trainee of the Emergency Response Operations team at LHR, and I needed to be aware of the feasibility and permissibility of my project. During the Skype meeting, I learnt that all trainees needed to sign a Code of Conduct at LHR which had a couple of restrictions. The chief clause affecting this project was that no trainee was allowed to interview any of the refugees. It was explained to me in detail that the camp at Skala was by function one of transit in which

[72] Susan Bibler Coutin, "Illegality, Borderlands, and the Space of Nonexistence," *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity* (2003): 174.
[73] Susan Bibler Coutin, "Illegality, Borderlands, and the Space of Nonexistence," *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity* (2003): 174-179.
[74] Melanie B.E. Griffiths, "Out of time: The temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40:12 (2014): 1991-2005.

refugees were accommodated till the bus to Moria arrived. Their stay at Stage II lasted only for a couple of hours.

I agreed to the restrictions laid out by LHR, and in return, I was allowed to carry out my research project within the said framework. I was permitted to interview employees at LHR, employees of other NGOs, and fellow trainees. I had the option flexibility of working with other NGOs if I chose, after completing the minimum three-week requirement for LHR. Although conducting formal interviews with refugees was strictly barred, I gathered that there was room for negotiation when it came to collecting data for research. Their argument for prohibiting formal interviews was since none of us were trained in psychology and/or handling trauma patients, we should not dig up wounds as we lacked the infrastructure for its treatment. LHR, unlike many other NGOs with specific criteria for trainee recruitment, accepted volunteers from diverse backgrounds. Counseling skill-set was not a prerequisite for traineeship. Moreover, given the limited time spent at Stage II, as it was a transit camp, conducting interviews would become practically impossible.

1.2 Why Skala?

Figure 1: Complete map of Lesvos. Indicates Skala Sikamineas along the northern shoreline. (Published by OnTheWorldMap, http://ontheworldmap.com/greece/islands/lesbos/lesbos-tourist-map.html)

The village of Skala Sikamineas, located on the north shore of Lesvos, still had a lot of potential for me to carry forth the project I had envisioned. Firstly, the stretch of the Aegean Sea between Turkey and the northern tip of Lesvos made Skala and its neighbouring villages/towns the first point of land contact for dinghies. Within the scope of LHR's emergency response operations were landing duty or Stage I, the transit camp or Stage II, and spotting functions, which also fell under the purview of Stage I. The duty of spotting required us to perform day and night shifts of scanning the Aegean Sea, from the shores of Turkey to those of Lesvos, to keep a watch of incoming dinghies. Landing duty entailed the team on duty to be on the site of the dinghy, in order to distribute water and cater to emergency needs,[75] and transport the people to Stage II from the shore. Once in Stage II, the team on

[75] Depended on the situation; for instance, if someone immediately needed to see the doctor, or if the group needed emergency blankets and hand warmers, or if someone needed to be carried in a stretcher, so on.

duty was responsible for distribution – of dry shoes, socks, clothes, blankets, water, and tea – and ensuring everyone who needs medical assistance has been attended to. Whereas Stage I had the potential for me to explore De Genova,[76] Perera,[77] and Coutin[78] within the field, Stage II could add a novel lens to Griffiths' analysis of uncertain temporalities. Moreover, I considered myself fortunate to be able to avail the option of being a flexible researcher in that space.

When I read about Moria before leaving for Lesvos, I began thinking of ways in which I could get entry into the refugee camp. Since LHR did not have an operational base beyond Skala, entering Moria would have had to be a completely independent enterprise. Agamben's analysis of the *zoe* and *bios* – biological life and qualified life respectively – and the sovereign power which reduces human beings to bare life were some concepts which I aspired to research within the confines of the refugee camp. Qualified life has been conceptualized in terms of citizenship – that is, one's relationship with the framework of rights guaranteed to individuals – and the denial of which entails the deprivation of basic rights.[79] Ratna Kapur, in her study of citizenship claims through the lens of the historical colonial trajectory in India, demonstrates the way in which "citizenship remains poised along the axis of inclusion and exclusion", depending the "subject's ability to conform to or mimic the colonial power". Kapur concludes by explicating that the notion of universal or transnational citizenship is both inadequate and flawed while attempting to describe the case of the migrant subject's claims to citizenship. Citizenship, she argues, is being utilized as an

[76] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1180-1198.
[77] Suvendrini Perera, "Oceanic corpo-graphies , Refugee Bodies and the Making and Unmaking of Waters," *Feminist Review* 103 (2013): 58-79.
[78] Susan Bibler Coutin, "Illegality, Borderlands, and the Space of Nonexistence," *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity* (2003): 171-202.
[79] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (1998): 126-135.

"operational strategy" in order to be eligible to certain rights and benefits.[80] Through this internship, I imagined I would be able to witness some parts of the lives of the refugees spent within a refugee camp and positing their claims via engaging in protests.

Lastly, in almost every article I read on Skala, they spoke about the sea rescue missions carried out by the locals. The news articles portrayed Skala Sikamineas as a small fishing village committed to the mission of sea rescue and aiding refugees. In 2015, the peak year in which thousands of dinghies arrived on the shores of Skala, local fishermen went out in their fishing boats to rescue dinghies stranded on the sea. I came across a certain fisherman named Stratos Valiamos, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, for his voluntary sea rescue contribution to the Greek refugee crisis. He was referred to as a hero, although according to him it was the most natural course of action. When fishermen like Valiamos went out for their catch of the day, they encountered numerous dinghies which had holes, insufficient fuel to reach the shores, engines stopping midway, and people holding onto dear life on the sea. In such a situation, he and fellow members of his community, helped rescue people from the sinking dinghies over several days and nights. At that time, there were no NGOs like LHR, with a well-formed team of trainees and sophisticated equipment. They said they did it because it felt like the right thing to do.

During the course of my three-month internship, I encountered Stratos almost every day, multiple times. In one of my interactions with my landlady, she mentioned that her husband too rescued several refugees during that time. He was a fisherman, and every day would set out early in the morning as per the routine. Another local woman, who volunteered as a nurse at the NGO called IsraAid mentioned that she and her husband were frightened and overwhelmed at the sight of hundreds of dinghies approaching the shore in 2015. From a

[80] Ratna Kapur, "The Citizen and the Migrant: Postcolonial Anxieties, Law, and the Politics of Exclusion/Inclusion," *Theoretical Inquiries in Law* 8:2 (2007): 567-569.

distant, it looked like Turkey might have declared war, she humoured. Skala was a tiny fishing village with endless stories. We shared these stories amongst ourselves, and passed it onto the new trainees.

1.3 Skala Sikamineas in Ethnography

As discussed above, the local community in Skala were committed to the cause of the arriving refugees and migrants. We as trainees were told, during our orientation, that NGOs did not suddenly create a new tradition of sea rescue. Rather, their aim was to assist the local community to uphold a tradition of their own. They filled in the gaps with the necessary equipment and resources. Their attempts to protect refugees from being interviewed at a time they were vulnerable formed the core ethical concern which led me to develop a methodology based on a mutual form of information exchange.

In the following sections I outline some of the methodological approaches of scholars from which I have benefitted considerably, in terms of situating myself and this study in the fields of both Lesvos and feminist ethnography.

1.3.1 Ethnographic methods

Within a few days of work at LHR, I was able to fathom the magnitude of performance this internship entailed. I recalled the agreement between LHR and me regarding working with several NGOs after the third week. However, I chose to situate myself in Skala and build a firm foundation for this study. There were a few reasons guiding this decision. To begin with, many NGOs in Mytilene have strict criteria in terms of recruitment. One of the predominant skills-set was having a legal background, and the second, possessing nursing qualifications. Instead of being able to focus on my duties as a trainee at LHR, alongside my obligations as a researcher, the application process to another

NGO appeared to be an avenue I did deem fit to risk. Moreover, the scope and potential of being a full-time trainee based in Skala stood a chance to be neglected. Splitting my time between more than one NGO would have also entailed that I settle with an overview of their operations and the situation in general, lacking the time and space to develop in-depth reflections.

Lila Abu-Lughod writes making similar decisions in her ethnographic study of the Awlad Ali Bedouins. In a sex segregated society like that of the Awlad Ali, Abu-Lughod felt that she needed to choose one world over the other, in order to explore its full potential and establish deeper connections. Initially she tried going back and forth between the two worlds, she writes, and then she realized the need to declare her "loyalties firmly in order to be accepted in either". She found boring the limited range of topics that were covered during her conversations with men, whereas relations with women were more informal and unifying. This partial view on their society was offset with "positive gains" such as close interpersonal connections, women's interests and concerns, and discovering the "importance of a genre of personal poetry" within their community.[81]

Abu-Lughod's concerns and the resultant choice she made echoed my motivations as well while I chose to stick with LHR for the three-month internship duration. After a month, I began to feel that I was not gathering enough data, and missing out on the wider picture of the situation this island faces. Everyone spoke of Moria, protests at Mytilene, how the refugees survived, their asylum cases, and so on. Increasingly, I started to feel the need to visit Mytilene for a few days to conduct at least a part of my research there. "Skala is like a bubble", I told some of my fellow trainees, who agreed in comparison to Moria.[82] Over one

[81] Lila Abu-Lughod, ""Fieldwork of a Dutiful Daughter", in Soraya Altoriki and Camilla Fawzi El-Solhi eds., *Arab Women in the Field: Studying Your Own Society* (1988): 149-152.
[82] Quotation from informal conversations.

such conversation with an independent volunteer at Skala, I found a middle ground to cater to both concerns. It would be near impossible to witness the dynamics within Moria, and the NGOs in Mytilene, in all its complexities if I cannot devote adequate time to each one of them. However, a more achievable approach would be to connect with people who work at these NGOs and within Moria, and interview them to collect the relevant data for my research. Rachael helped me immensely to establish contacts in Mytilene, all of whom later became my interviewees. Stepping into her network empowered me to increase the pool of information I had been collecting, interact with multiple people in different capacities, and as a result broaden the scope of my project to a great extent.

Such connections and networking were based on interpersonal trust and recommendations. Similar to Abu-Lughod's choice of declaring her loyalty to one world, my decision to continue being a full-time trainee at Skala helped me to establish closer connections and develop deeper insights of the field. The methods I developed have been influenced and informed by this partial perspective, as I illustrate below.

Farewell dinners and Goji's formed an intricate and significant aspect of the social fabric in Skala. Since trainees joined on voluntary basis, there was a constant inflow and outflow of people. Hardly anyone left the village without a proper farewell meal. This was also an occasion where it was more likely to meet and converse with the entire group of trainees and NGO workers, than compared to any other meeting during off-shift hours. Goji's café served as the prime location around which our social lives revolved. It was our most common meeting point. The café allowed us to sit for hours to chit-chat, work on our laptops, or collectively watch the FIFA World Cup. Valerie Yow, in her discussion on techniques of interviewing, enumerates certain recommendations in order to "build rapport" with the

interviewees prior to and during the interview process.[83] She writes, "Everything you do before the interview will contribute to the establishment of the character of the relationship between the interviewer and narrator."[84] She suggests meeting them prior to the interview at a convenient time, chatting and using some humour, and explaining the research project at hand. The frequent farewell dinners and atmosphere at Goji's provided the stepping stone for establishing such rapport. This was the space of the "preliminary meeting".[85]

Along with elaborating on the tools and skills-set needed to conduct oral history interviews, Yow also discusses at length ways in which the interviewer must consciously make the narrator comfortable. "The interviewer should express appreciation that the narrator is offering his or her time to answer questions," and motivate the narrator by giving "positive appraisal."[86] Before or after most of the interviews, the interviewee would express their concern of whether any of the information they shared would help me in my thesis. "I am interested to see how you include all of this in your thesis," one of the interviews expressed, after sharing her narrative. Most of the times I responded with humour, "Yeah, I am waiting to find out too. It's a surprise!" On that occasion, a fellow trainee joined in, saying "One day I will wake up and see my thesis is written. Wow, such a great thesis, it wrote itself."[87]

Although I adopted Yow's recommendations extensively, this couldn't be carried out as an oral history project. Keeping in mind the ethical concerns drawn by LHR, I re-adjusted the initially intended methodology for the research to settle for semi-structured interviews with NGO workers, and gather informal testimonies of refugees and migrants. While conducting this semi-structured and open-ended interviews, every effort was made to

[83] Valeria Yow, "Interviewing Techniques," Chapter 4 in *Recording Oral History* (1994): 92.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid. 92-95.
[86] Valeria Yow, "Interviewing Techniques," Chapter 4 in *Recording Oral History* (1994): 97.
[87] The quotations are excerpts from a conversation between the interviewee, a fellow trainee, and myself.

familiarize the interviewees with my project, and provide the option of following up the interview later if they had time constraints. Scheduling interviewees with full-time NGO workers involved in emergency response implied not only finding a suitable time convenient for them, but also be flexible if they had to leave immediately to attend an urgency. Conducting close-ended interviews would have not only eliminated the element of comfort and ease established, but also hamper the range of topics covered, and insights shared. In the case of the refugees and migrants, we were not allowed to probe, but we were allowed to listen. During most of these encounters, the step forward to initiate conversation was taken by them, a point which I take up in the second half of the next section.

1.3.2 India – Budapest – Lesvos: Is the "halfie" enough?

Whereas institutional loyalty was not a problematic area, my positionality seemed to be a question mark for most people. With varying degrees of politeness and humour, I would be asked, "You came all the way here from India? Why?" The underlying tone was, "Why, aren't there any problems in India?" This was asked in various ways, such as "no refugees India?" or "Why so, so far?" I initially used to start out by explaining that I was a student in Budapest, and this was part of my Master's thesis. Few days later, I figured out a slightly easier and shorter way to respond, "I study in Budapest. I am here to complete an assignment for my university" which soon was shortened to, "I am a student in Europe actually".[88]

The numerous levels of surprise and implicit questioning can be appropriately summed up in a particular conversation I had had with a Romanian shepherd. Ciprian frequently visited us at Korakas, during the night spotting shift, and chatted for a few hours. When I introduced myself to him, he was equally shocked. "I have never seen anyone from India before!" he said. He continued to say that he always encountered volunteers here from

[88] These were informal conversations that I had engaged in.

Spain, France, UK, or USA. He had never heard of an Indian volunteer before. Knowing he was from Romania, I started talking Budapest. He said he had heard of the city, but never been there, so he did not know anything about it. I kept thinking of ways to bridge the gaping unfamiliarity between us. Eventually, I asked him if he liked Palinka, as I recalled someone in Budapest had once casually mentioned that the drink that Romanian roots. Ciprian seemed overjoyed that I knew about Palinka, although, that was yet another surprise.

Drawing from Abu-Lughod, Binaya Subedi problematizes the status of "halfie researchers" in the context of his fieldwork on Nepali schools.[89] For researchers with an "in-between status", such as the "halfie", the use of rigorous reflexivity "calls for the need to be more open and accountable to how one has participated in research and produced knowledge."[90] He speaks about the dichotomies between the 'home' and 'field' of the researcher, which have been mutually exclusive for traditional scholar from the west. His own hybrid identity is an outcome of migration, and argues that contemporary connections between the local and the global cannot be overlooked during fieldwork.[91] My status as a researcher in Skala was caught in a similar complexity and in-betweenness of embodying a hybrid identity owing to my own migration trajectory. Unlike Subedi, my 'home' and 'field' did not coincide and in that regard, I was the proper outsider alright. This explains the questions and surprised reactions mentioned above. I was an Indian, who for some unconvincing reason, had chosen to come to a tiny village on Lesvos to partake in aiding refugees. My nationality was not included in the select few.

Within a couple of weeks, there were a limited number of trainees who joined our teams adding more diversity, being citizens of the select few countries nonetheless. Their

[89] Binaya Subedi, "Theorizing a 'halfie' researcher's identity in transnational fieldwork," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 19:5 (2006): 573-593.
[90] Ibid., 575.
[91] Ibid., 576-579, 587-589.

positions were quite akin to Subedi's. The reason why my positionality further enriches the complication the 'halfie' status carries is multifaceted. First, my field is within a European context, and the researcher is non-white. Keeping in mind the contemporary trends of global flows that Subedi refers to, the researcher in this case herself embodies a hybrid identity. This is due to my education at an American university situated at the heart of Central Europe, possessing the language skills to communicate with the refugees and migrants, and choosing a field of study which is not my home. "Why Skala?" or "Why Lesvos?" was a query which, perhaps, never received a satisfactory response from me. People in my position were largely from the UK, USA, Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, and so on. The questions they were asked, as part of colloquial parlance, was "What made you interested in this job?" The distinction was stark.

My status of the unintelligible other was counterbalanced by my language skill-set. It was just another normal day at Stage II, and the team on duty was busy with distribution of dry clothes and carrying out the standard procedures. All of a sudden, I heard a language being spoken which I could recognize. Soon, I figured out it was Urdu and I was being able to follow the conversation. In excitement, I called out to the team leader in-charge saying, "I can understand what they are saying!"[92] My team leader smiled and encouraged me to talk to them. Having a translator at Stage II was way more efficient. The tasks were performed quicker, at the same time establishing an implicit bond of comfort with the refugees. Not having to battle with communication, by searching for words in English, was a welcome relief for both parties.

Communication and bonding with the refugees for me was undeniably the most fulfilling element in this enterprise. Even those who did not speak Hindi or Urdu, after

[92] Phrase from a conversation between a fellow trainee and myself.

guessing my country of origin, started singing the Bollywood songs they knew. They said they did not understand the language, but had some songs memorized, and loved watching Bollywood movies. They would talk about Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan and asked me if I liked their performances.[93] This unforeseeable connection took me by surprise; one, I did not know the international reach of Bollywood, and two, I had no clue that some aspects of my life which I took for granted would add a unique edge to my research. It was during such conversations that they would share with me stories about their journeys, families, condition at their home countries/cities/villages, and so on. This formed the backdrop of informal testimonies that I draw upon for this research.

After rejoicing over Bollywood, the same question found its way back to me. "You came all the way here, for?" and "You have come so far from India all alone?" Their tone had a different sense of amazement, more like wonder than curiosity. Yet again, I started with the long version of the story. Conversations became confusing and abrupt with this ***version. So I cut it short yet again, "I came here to study". Then they would ask, "Where's your family?" India, I would say. One woman I met in Mytilene, at an NGO called One Happy Family, insisted that I take her phone number. If I needed anything, since I was not travelling with a family or in a group, I should certainly call her. I politely excused myself out of this offer, with the result of her staring at me blankly for a few seconds with a face filled with incomprehension. Such interactions soon led to the point where they figured out that I did not travel to Europe on sea, I crossed continents legally o****n an airplane. Not only did the legal versus illegal entry draw a boundary between us, but also the sea versus air voyage; the latter was known to them as very expensive. Taking these moments of uneasiness into consideration, I reexamined my role as a perceived insider simply owing to***

[93] Names of two very popular Bollywood actors.

the linguistic and cultural components. Despite the common binding elements, I was still the outsider, who had the privilege to enter Europe legally.

1.3.3 Observer-observee status

The above-mentioned reflections made me revisit a conversation I had had with a fellow trainee on my first shift at Korakas. To initiate friendly conversation, he said "So for an Indian, you speak really good English!" I don't remember much of what I had said in the conversation, as all I can remember was being extremely offended at such a casual disregard of a two-hundred-year colonial history. Later I heard from another trainee that I had called the former person a racist for that statement. I agreed that it was quite likely.

The rigorous feminist reflexivity that Subedi refers to requires much more self-criticality than taking one's own position at face value. Being a non-white researcher in a western space did not erase the privileges I possessed. It created a different structure of hierarchy with an asymmetrical understanding of the non-white other. But the notion of the other is not as binaric as it is conceptualized, just as all Indians do not have the same proficiency in English homogenously. English proficiency in India is as heterogeneous as the divergent and complex migration trajectories of each individual.

In these continuous efforts of negotiating my positionality, which comprised of multiple levels of inclusions and exclusion, I gradually began to become conscious of the way I was being observed. Enacting the role of a participant-observer, an equal amount of my time was invested in observations and reflections, alongside performing the duties of a trainee as a participant. But it would not have sufficed to have only observed from my standpoint, without also being aware of the way I was being observed. It wasn't until a few weeks later that I realized that I was, subconsciously, viewing myself through the perspective of those

around me. This made me both conscious and cautious of the way I presented myself. No matter how careful, this position was one of being vulnerable.

For Ruth Behar, anthropology is about embarking on an irreversible journey through a long tunnel where the exit cannot be seen, but one keeps moving forward, step by step.[94] She further writes, "loss, mourning, the longing for memory, the desire to enter into the world around you and having no idea how to do it, the fear of observing too coldly or too distractedly or too raggedly, the rage of cowardice, the insight that is always arriving late, as defiant hindsight, a sense of the utter uselessness of writing anything and yet the burning desire to write something, are the stopping places along the way."[95] These few lines of Behar capture exceptionally well some of the stops I have had during my fieldwork. To navigate through the field with the idea of not knowing, of not gathering enough information, and wondering at the same time that if all the events can be retold and written with the accuracy with which it was experienced were ongoing concerns.

My principal concern during fieldwork, as it appeared to me, was being able to collect adequate data and be privy to trusted information. When I started to study the way I was being observed, I began to be even more critical of my role. Behar talks about the "oxymoron" of participant-observation, the participant participates but needs always keep any eye on everything.[96] This explains my position considerably, as how much can you observe while participating? Moreover, I was situated differently than most of the participants, someone who has come all the way from India to study the migration crisis on Lesvos for an assignment in a Hungarian university. Not only was I participating and

[94] Ruth Behar, "The Vulnerable Observer*"* Chapter 1 in *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart* (1996): 2.
[95] Ibid., 3.
[96] Ibid., 5.

observing, but I also found myself engaged in contemplation of bridging the gap between me and the rest of the participants.

1.4 Conclusion

My attempt here was to bring forth the very problematic, complex, and uncomfortable elements one faces and actively negotiates while conducting an ethnographic study. It was to open the "Pandora's box"[97] and move ahead with its hybrid and messy components. During the course of this internship, not only have I learnt about the field and from the people associated with it, but also walked through the long dark tunnel of anthropology without a map.[98] The map at times needs to be built along the way, from the tools available on the various stops in the journey, as demonstrated above through interview formats. As writing from a vulnerable position, about a situation which is vulnerable, takes "greater" skill" and nuance, to avoid the humiliation of the "I" in the text to be read as boring,[99] I have attempted to share the journey along the tunnel to the reader.

[97] Ibid., 19.
[98] Ruth Behar, "The Vulnerable Observer," 1-33.
[99] Ibid., 13.

Chapter 2 – Aegean on Patrol

2.1. Introduction

One of the main sub-operations carried out by the team at LHR, called the Emergency Response Operations (ERO) team, was the day and night spotting duty. During a spotting shift team scans the ten-kilometer stretch of the Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey. The spotters acted as watch-guards of the sea, taking note of the activities which took place within the shift hours. Spotting was regarded by some as the "most essential, yet most thankless task" performed by the team.[100] It was essential as it served as the first step in the chain of the emergency response actions. It was the spotting team which informed the field coordinator of LHR when a dinghy was spotted. It was the spotting team which noted the activities of the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG),[101] the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG),[102] and Frontex.[103] This activity of scanning was crucial to spot incoming dinghies, any dinghies in danger, and assess the behaviour of the official vessels. This relay of information was indispensable as it alerted the LHR field coordinator and the landing team to reach the spot where the dinghy was seen to be heading towards, with minimal delay.

Through the lens of a spotter, this chapter will demonstrate the way in which official vessel patrol on the Aegean extend national borders from the territorial landmass upon the sea space. I argue that borders on the sea were routinely created through the activity of border policing, which was inscribed upon certain bodies attempting to cross them. Drawing from Nicholas De Genova's concept of the "border spectacle",[104] I illustrate the practices on the

[100] Summarizing several informal conversations about spotting duty
[101] Official Greek coast guard on sea
[102] Official Turkish coast guard on sea
[103] European Border and Coast Guard Agency patrolling the Aegean
[104] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1180-1198.

Aegean Sea which creates a security 'spectacle' of its own. This 'spectacle' is unpacked in through the land and sea perspectives on the patrol. This border policing is limited to the refugee and migrant vessels (dinghies mostly, sometimes speed boats) crossing the border as I explicate below, and therefore, the nature of this patrol is racialized. The border becomes relevant and consequential to only certain bodies crossing it, as is also argued by Suvendrini Perera by contrasting the white male voyager with the refugee transgressor.[105] In the end, I discuss the impact of such border practices on the bodies of refugees and migrants.

2.2 Determining the border

2.2.1 Land Spotters

The task of spotting was divided into day and night shifts. The night shift took place at location, right next to the coastline, called Korakas. The venue of the day spotting was at Lepetimnos, which was a location at a geographical elevation from the coastline. The key difference influencing the border determination between the day and night spotting venues was the difference in topography. We had technical equipment to our aid, although the depiction and reading of the events at sea differed.

Korakas happened to be my first shift at the ERO team. It had a lighthouse on the tip of its shore, from which LHR draws its name. I was told during my training, that the reason why dinghies head towards Korakas at night is because of the flickering light from the lighthouse. Although its purpose was to warn boats to away from that zone, to refugees and migrants, it served as the guiding light in the darkness of the night. I got a glimpse of the dangers of the coastline while hiking up the hill to the small shack – the site of night spotters.

[105] Suvendrini Perera, "Oceanic corpo-graphies, Refugee Bodies and the Making and Unmaking of Waters," *Feminist Review* 103 (2013): 58-79.

The Greece-Turkey border was close to Korakas, than compared to Lepetimnos. This was due to the tip of the coastline which extended further in the sea. The principal device which aided us to estimate the distance at night was the night vision camera. By following the instructions of the device to read nautical miles, the spotters were able to determine the distance. In daylight, we used a telescope and maps[106], which was where the estimation relied on sheer practice and experience.

Figure 2: Map indicating Korakas, and the topography of the coastline. (Source: ResearchGate, https://www.researchgate.net/figure/A-snapshot-from-a-live-Google-map-used-by-the-SSAR-elements-in-northern-Lesvos-showing_fig2_302892895)

[106] These are maps internal to LHR, and I did not have permission to utilize them for this study

As mentioned, day spotting at Lepetimnos depended on the use of a telescope, maps, and the accuracy of estimation. One again, the topography between Korakas and Lepetimnos played a crucial role. It was not only because the spotting team needed to include the length of the landmass in-between Lepetimnos and the coastline while calculating the nautical miles, but also because the border imagery on the sea shifted owing to the topography. The emphasis on estimation is due to the fact that what we were estimating – the border – was a visualization of a concept projected onto the sea. It was not like the topographical differences between Korakas and Lepetimnos, or the beach between Skala and Korakas, which one could see in the physical world. It was a line drawn on the Aegean which we had to conceptualize, chalk out in maps, and explain ways in which the topography shifted the same on the sea.

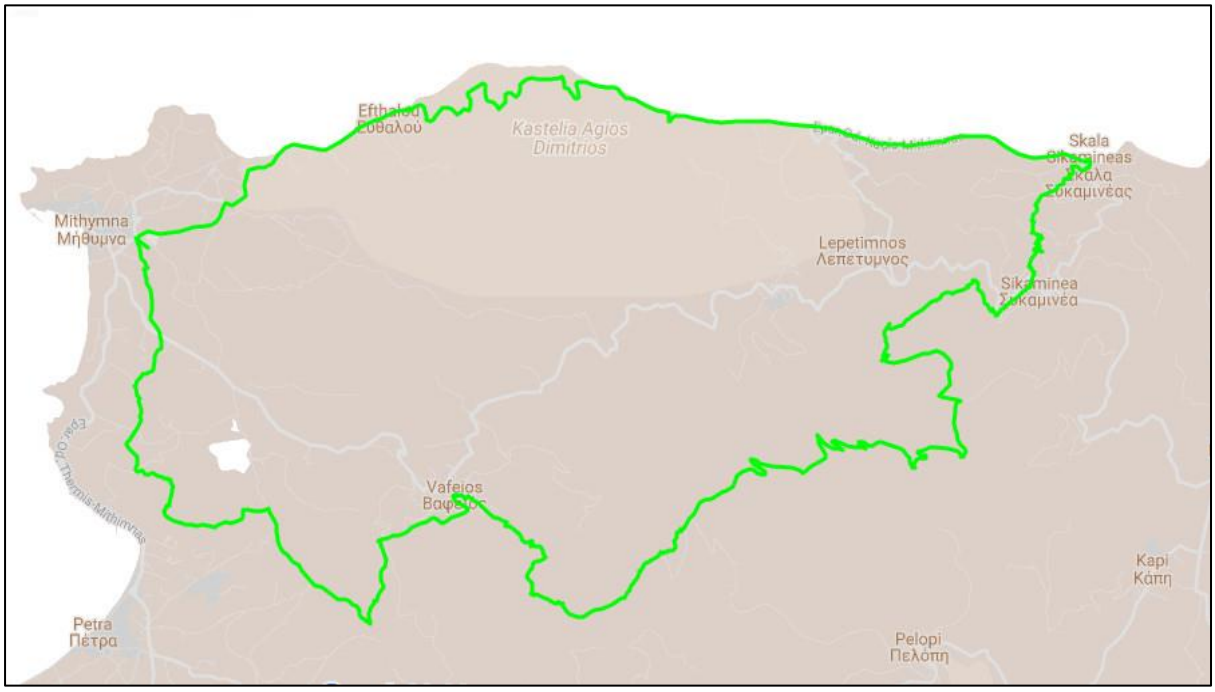

Figure 3: Map indicating Lepetimnos. (Source: Lesvos Trail 2017, https://lesvostrail.eu/en/races-2017/)

This border on the sea came to life with the intervention of official coast guard patrols. There were certain times scheduled during the day when the spotters would see the HCG and TCG on their patrols, maintaining the respective borderline. The border was most visible and concrete during the acts of policing. From the depiction of vessel sizes, as seen through the telescope and night vision camera, a spotter could tell distance of the official vessel with relation to the border. The border is the farthest the HCG or Frontex could sail from us, and border is also the nearest look we could get of the TCG. The official intervention of national coast guard vessels to police the border is what I refer to as a re-cartography of the Aegean Sea.

Suvendrini Perera, in her study of borderlands, argues that the oceanic waters is seen "…elementally distinct from land", to demarcate the limits of the nation-state in order to "block transnational subaltern bodies on the move."[107] Taking the island-continent Australia as her case study, she argues that the unmaking of water from the land creates a production site of "terror and zone of death."[108] This "necropolitical landscape" for the subaltern refugee subjects is created via normalizing the "condition of siege" among the Australian populace.[109] The body-politics of the refugees and migrants, in Perera's case study, is marked by the act of unmaking water from the Australian landmass. This denotes that the national border is drawn encircling the landmass, denying the entry to any subaltern subject(s).

As elucidated above, national borders on the northern shore of Lesvos are mapped following an entirely contrasting technique. Water is not unmade from the land while drawing the border, instead, the landmass incorporates a section of the sea. Land and water are mutually constitutive in the national border imagery within the ten-kilometer stretch of

[107] Suvendrini Perera, "Oceanic corpo-graphies, Refugee Bodies and the Making and Unmaking of Waters," *Feminist Review* 103 (2013): 64-65.
[108] Ibid., 66.
[109] Ibid., 69-72.

the Aegean Sea. The chief cause behind this routine patrol can be traced back to the 2016 EU-Turkey statement.[110] This agreement between the European Union and Turkey aims to contain the flow of "irregular migrants crossing from Turkey into Greek islands."[111] The statement mentions that they shall be returned to Turkey. On the other hand, migrants arriving in the Greek islands will be registered, but if found inadmissible in accordance to the Asylum Procedures Directive, they too shall be returned to Turkey. Moreover, Turkey must take the necessary measures "to prevent new sea or land routes for illegal migration" entry into the EU.[112] The stretch of Aegean under discussion is one such route for illegal migrant entry.

The EU-Turkey deal forms the bedrock of the routine patrolling of the Aegean Sea. On several occasions while spotting, spotters would report of interceptions taking place on the Turkish side of the sea. It happened in this manner. A dinghy was spotted, the team would keep an eye on it, and convey the distance and bearing to the field coordinator. Before it could reach the border, we would see the TCG speedily approaching the dinghy, and circling it to create bigger waves. This immobilized the dinghies movement, and they were taken back to Turkey. This was one of the 'spectacles' we spotted, which I term as the spectacle of pushback.[113] Turkey's attempts to contain and restrict the flow of refugees and migrants have been studied by scholars, such as Kristen Sarah Biehl.[114] In her study of "protracted uncertainty" among the asylum seekers in Turkey, she illustrates how this border security paradigm governs the daily lives of the refugees – for instance, restricted to live in satellite cities designated by the government, prohibitions on leaving the city of residence, and so on.

[110] Council of the EU, "EU-Turkey statement, 18th March 2016", Press Release 144/16, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/pdf
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Pushback was the term used by the ERO team.
[114] Kristen Sarah Biehl, "Governing Through Uncertainty: Experiences of Being a Refugee in Turkey as a Country for Temporary Asylum," *Social Analysis* 59:1 (2015): 57-5.

She writes, "…asylum seekers face the risk of being identified as an illegal migrant in Turkey, which can lead to police brutality, arrest, detention… and deportation."[115] After a dinghy had been intercepted, the refugees and migrants on it were arrested, and faced similar police brutality as discussed by Biehl. To this point I shall return at length in Chapter 4.

Before moving onto the next section, we need to examine the implication of this border security paradigm on the bodies of refugees and migrants, and understand how this serves as a site producing illegality. The official vessels maintained the border, so did the cargo ships, the fishing boats, passenger ferries, and so on. We understood that NATO warships could cross the border, although such occasions were rarely spotted.[116] The only other vessel on sea which crossed the border, without any alarm or concern, was sail boats. On one occasion, during off-shift hours, two fellow trainees and I encountered a person who had sailed to Skala from Turkey on this sail boat. Through this conversation, the smoothness of the commute across the sea was communicated. I later confirmed from the ERO team that sail boats had permission to cross the border. They were not subject to any border control.

The security paradigm on the Aegean, through the routine acts of patrols, operated as the sites which produced migrant illegality. The spectacle of security to "…end the human suffering and restore public order" is the very act marking refugee and migrant bodies as the subaltern transgressor – in stark contrast to the male voyager on a sail boat – and producing the narrative of illegal entry.[117]

[115] Ibid., 70.
[116] I am speaking within the time-frame of my fieldwork. By warships I am referring to the Greek and German NATO in particular
[117] Council of the EU, "EU-Turkey statement, 18th March 2016", Press Release 144/16, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/pdf ; Suvendrini Perera, "Oceanic corpo-graphies , Refugee Bodies and the Making and Unmaking of Waters," *Feminist Review* 103 (2013): 58-79.

2.2.2 Sea Spotters

In this subsection, I discuss the task of sea spotting. Sea spotting was carried out by the Refugee Rescue (RR) rescue boat, called Mo Chara. RR was another local NGO based in Skala, and worked in close collaboration with the LHR team. The goal of sea spotting was to fill in the gap if the land spotters missed any activity on sea. New routes on the sea were often taken by the boat crew, especially those which were hidden from the range of the land spotters' scan, and those which had a dangerous coastline for a dinghy to land.

With permission from the Greek authorities, Mo Chara could only launch once a day, unless a dinghy was spotted, then they needed further permission. Both the land and sea spotting teams were encouraged to be familiar with the perspective of either teams. On one occasion, I had joined the boat crew for during their daily scan. Due to the presence of digitized maps on the boat, estimating the distance of the border was much quicker. We went up to a certain distance, but refrained from getting any closer to the border. Why could not we go as close to the border, I asked the boat crew. The response was that it would unnecessarily raise an alarm. Since one could not exactly be sure of where the precise demarcation lied, sailing too close to the border will cause trouble.

This conveyed a certain sense of monopoly of movement only official coast guard vessels had in relation to conceptualized border area. John Torpey, in his study of the state's monopolization of the legal means of movement, argues that "states *must* embrace societies *in order to* penetrate them effectively".[118] He explicates that by the issuing of ID cards, passports, and son, states officially document bodies and regulate their movement. Any movement outside the framework as prescribed by the state is then, termed as illegal. The

[118] John Torpey, "Coming and Going: On the State's Monopolization of the Legitimate 'Means of Movement'," *Sociological Theory* 16:3 (1998): 239-259.

patrol practices and border security regime operating on the Aegean is an illustration of the state in its embracing act on societies. Unlike in Perera's analysis, the "condition of siege" of the Australian island-continent does not function in a similar manner on the Aegean. The border security regime resonates closer to Torpey's analysis. the monopoly of this embracing act resides with states.[119] This was the reason why all non-official vessels were kept at bay. Moreover, through extending the border on sea, the state achieves to expand its embracing arm further. Through this monopoly and patrol, borders were being rescaled. In the following section I will discuss the way in which, after this rescaling of the border, the state still balances its "reach" with a consolidated "grasp".[120]

2.3 Sites of Illegality

In the previous section I have illustrates the spectacle of pushback. In what follows I demonstrate the spectacle of immobilizing the dinghy and the spectacle of the smuggle. De Genova writes that the "Border Spectacle may be most extravagantly illustrated in the classic examples that cluster around the patrolling and policing of geographical, and the physical frontiers of nation-state territoriality."[121] The spectacles of immobilization of the refugee dinghy and the spectacle of framing a smuggler do not precisely occur at the Greece-Turkey border. I argue that within the border security regime there are various sites where similar spectacles, such as the extravagant spectacle De Genova describes, serve to produce migrant illegality.

2.3.1 Immobilizing the dinghy

Once a dinghy had crossed the border and was in Greek waters, either the HCG or the Frontex would immediately rush to its location on the sea. If the dinghy continued its normal pace of movement on the sea, the official vessel circled around it. This caused bigger waves,

[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid., 244.
[121] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1182.

and the dinghy was immobilized. As spotters, we were trained to identify dinghies on the water. It was usually grey is colour, which sometimes made it difficult as it camouflaged in the water. Seen through the telescope or a night vision camera, it was absolutely flat. It was recognized by the zig-zag trail it left on the water. These bigger waves put this vessel at risk, and by force, it had stop.

Reading by the word of the EU-Turkey statement, one would imagine another pushback taking place. However, what took place after the previous step was the official vessel asked the dinghy to follow it to the shore.[122] The dinghy landed, people disembarked, and the landing team reached the scene, so on and so forth the protocol followed. The spectacle of enforcement was necessary. Without the presence of the official vessel, the dinghy would have reached the shore, and from the protocol would follow. However, without the presence of the official coast guard presence, the border security regime would not come to life. This created the "scene" where "border enforcement performatively activates the reification of migrant 'illegality' in an emphatic and grandiose gesture of exclusion."[123] Going back the discussion on estimating exactly where the border was demarcated, the focus of the border security regime is not so much on the exact demarcation of the border, as it is on these micro-sites where the scene of migrant illegality can be created. These multiple micro-sites of border enforcement within the border security paradigm operate to produce migrant illegality at every stop.

2.3.2 Framing the smuggler

The next stop in this paradigm was the spectacle of the smuggler. The EU-Turkey agreement states that "Turkey and the EU also agreed to continue stepping up measures

[122] Fortunately, the dinghies landed safely.
[123] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1181.

against migrant smugglers and welcomed the establishment of the NATO activity on the Aegean Sea," and further, that in order to "break the business model of the smugglers and to offer migrants an alternative to putting their lives at risk, the EU and Turkey today decided to end the irregular migration from Turkey to the EU."[124] Frequently questions were asked by the Port Police during a landing trying to detect the smuggler.[125] On such occasions, the driver of the dingy/boat was most liable to framed.

Although such questions were part of the standard procedure, they were addressed as inquiries not leading to any arrests. However, on one occasion an arrest had take place. After the dinghy had reached the shore, the LHR landing team followed the protocol of distributing water and other necessary items. It was a narrow road along the coastline, and we were occupied in ensuring that everyone was safely on one side, avoiding the commute of cars. Suddenly, we (landing team) saw a young refugee boy being handcuffed. He was wet from head to toe, indicating that he had climbed down the slope to the coastline after which he was arrested.

> Trainee 1: Did you see what just happened? Why are they arresting him?!
>
> Me: I don't know I didn't! How is he all wet?
>
> Trainee 2: He was trying to restart the dinghy. They think he is the smuggler. But look [pointing at the water] how did he think he would escape that?!

The coast that day was surrounded by all the border coast guard vessels. On side it was the HCG, and on the other, the Frontex. At a slight distance, the Greek NATO warship was stationed. They were blocking the coast from all three sides.

[124] Council of the EU, "EU-Turkey statement, 18th March 2016", Press Release 144/16, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/pdf
[125] Port Police – land crew of the HCG.

The arrest took place at such a spectacle of the heightened presence of the border security. When such spectacles did not take place, the interrogations of 'who is the driver' operated as the channel of enforcement. The security paradigm ensured that the border was felt at each stop in the trajectory of the refugees and migrants. If the act of patrolling served the function of demarcating the border, these enforcement mechanisms made the border exist within the bodies of the refugees and migrants.

These spectacles – spectacular on some occasions and not so spectacular on others – also performed the function of embracing societies.[126] Torpey discusses that in order to embrace societies – carried out by the issuance of ID cards, passports, so on to official document bodies – the "reach" of the state cannot be more that its "grasp".[127] Following this logic, the state's grasp must also be balanced its reach. As discussed, the practices of the border security regime on the Aegean extends to the sea, in a way that both land and sea borders are rescaled. I argue that to adjust within this new scale and to balance its reach and with its grasp, the inclusion of the refugee and migrant bodies within the security paradigm performs the embracing act of the state. This explains why there no pushbacks from Greek waters. De Genova further writes that the scene of inclusion is '…always accompanied by its shadowy… obscene supplement", which is the "subordination of their labour."[128] The obscene supplement in this case is not the subordination of labour, but the subordination of their lives, by reducing them to bareness. The state completes its action of embracing bodies

[126] John Torpey, "Coming and Going: On the State's Monopolization of the Legitimate 'Means of Movement'," *Sociological Theory* 16:3 (1998): 239-259.

[127] Ibid., 244.

[128] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1184.

the bodies of the refugees and migrants, through the security paradigm which creates their illegality and, on that pretext, sends these bodies to the space of exclusive-inclusion.[129]

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have unpacked the border security regime operating on the stretch of the Aegean Sea, in-between the territorial landmasses of Turkey and Greece. Through recounting the tasks of day and night spotting, I shed light upon the routine patrol practices of the border guard vessels. I have argued that through the act of patrol, the national border on the sea is visually conceptualized. The official vessels have monopoly over creating this visualization.

Through the spectacles of immobilizing the dinghy and framing the smuggler, I have demonstrated the capacity of the 'border spectacle' of De Genova to operate, and enforce the security paradigm, through multiple micro-sites within the larger regime. The border security regime does not only enforce and mark the border on the site of the border, but also ensures that they are carried by the bodies of the refugees and migrants who cross them. In this way, the border security paradigm creates illegality and inscribes them on bodies of the refugees and migrants.

[129] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (1998).

Chapter 3 – Bare Lives in 'Hell on Earth'

3.1 Introduction

It was the second day after I joined Lighthouse Relief that I received my first call to be on duty at the transit camp at Skala, which we colloquially referred to as Stage II. I received the call during off-shift hours but enthusiastically agreed regardless. Until the bus to Moria arrived, they spent their time at Stage II. This was an occasion where they had to wait overnight for the bus. In such situations, different teams of trainees were appointed at Stage II in rotation, to ensure that there was always someone to reach out to in case if anything was needed. I recall that I was still writing my final term papers, and so after a quick training at Stage II, my fellow trainee and I divided our duty-time in micro-shifts.

On occasions like the one on that day, we went a little further beyond our role of simply providing humanitarian aid. We played with the kids, asked everyone from time to time if they were feeling alright, and tried our best to answer when they had greeted us with a plethora of questions. These conversations easily drifted into topics such as life, family background, country of origin, purpose of coming to Greece, plans for the future, and so on. At the beginning, I felt a little anxious as to how to interact with them. I did not want to overwhelm them further than they already were, but also did not want to come across as disinterested to hold a conversation. This delicate balance was maintained by allowing them to take lead the conversation. Most often with me, the conversation starter was Bollywood. After conveying their fandom for Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan, the questions would drift towards more serious topics.[130]

[130] Names of two famous Bollywood actors.

This chapter deals with life of the refugees inside camps. It is based on formal interviews with NGO workers and insights from many such informal conversations. I discuss the events and practices within both Stage II and Moria; the former as the site of my fieldwork, and the latter, through information gathered from the interviews conducted. The production of 'bare lives' through management of camp life is the central focus of this chapter. Drawing from Agamben's analysis of *zoe* and politics of the "corpus", I argue that the distinction between bare life and the qualified life, *bios*, is neither absolute nor binaric.[131] They are intricately woven into the daily life inside a camp, and are experienced differently by refugees of different nationalities. All lives within a refugee camp are not equally bare, and this asymmetry in their statuses of being bare is what qualifies some lives over others. In this sense, both *zoe* and *bios* co-constitute each other, operating outside the framework which characterizes *bios*. In the following sections below, I demonstrate with the aid of three instance the inequality among bare lives within the refugee camp of Moria.

3.2 Spectrum of bareness

Giogio Agamben in his book *Homo Sacer* discusses the figure of the sacred man, *homo sacer*, "who *may be killed and yet not sacrificed*."[132] Through addressing divergent positions adopted by modern scholars explaining the ban on sacrifice coupled with the absence of punishment, Agamben concludes the *homo sacer* to be a limit concept.[133] He further writes that "modern democracy does not abolish sacred life but…disseminates it into every individual body, making it into what is at stake in political conflict."[134] It is bare life that is at stake in modern politics, he argues. Agamben reexamines the 1679 writ of *habeas corpus* to demonstrate that "It is not the free man and his statues and prerogatives…but rather

[131] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (1998): 123.
[132] Ibid., 8.
[133] Ibid., 72-74.
[134] Ibid., 124.

corpus that is the new subject of politics."[135] He figure of the *homo sacer* is explained through the concept of bare life, which is the new body and subject for modern politics. The sacred man, existing in the space of exception, is included in the legal realm through its exclusion. The "realm of bare life" which is outside the normal legal order, or qualified life (*bios*), is included by the logic of exclusive-inclusion.

In the following subsections, I discuss the production of the bare lives and the zone of exclusive-inclusion. Through analyzing the concept of bare lives on three dimension – ethnic violence, processing of asylum cases, and reported medical cases – I argue that bareness of lives is multilayered. Applying the lens of ethnicity, nationality, and gender, I illustrate the politics within the state of exception.

3.2.1 Violence By Bare Lives, On Bare Lives

During the first ten days of Ramadan, our team did not receive arrivals on the north-shore of Lesvos. This sudden interlude and empty Stage II unusually disquieting. Since our training kept us on high alert, the unexpected calmness carried with it a sense of disbelief. I found myself caught amidst conversations of its merits and demerits. The sentiments were a mixture of expressing concern and relief, as it meant people were not putting their lives at risk on the sea, and despair, as it meant we could not carry forth our functions in delivering aid.

Such musings came to an end few days later after an incident of violence broke out in Moria. This was the information that was made known to us: Syrian Kurds were attacked by non-Kurdish Syrians, soon joined by non-Syrian Arabs, over the proper observance of Ramadan rituals. No one could exactly narrate the specifics of the incident. The closest

[135] Ibid.

version I heard was that some Syrian Kurds were seen to drink water during the fasting hours. There was an argument, which broke into a fist-fight, which turned into a bloody encounter. The victims had to be hospitalized, and the last word we heard was that some casualties could not make it out alive. This was a situation of grave crisis, as it was no longer safe for the remaining Syrian Kurdish families to continue living inside Moria. Given the volatility of the situation, Syrian Kurds were evacuated from Moria immediately, and accommodated in other temporary locations.

One such temporary location was Stage II. The atmosphere was extremely tense. Seven Syrian Kurdish families were relocated to Stage II. It had to host two hundred and fifty-two people in a capacity for only a hundred and fifty for half a week. Authorities from Mytilene had reached Skala to convince the families to head back. They were vehemently against this idea. They felt they were being lured back into Moria, and eventually the family heads came to the decision of walking to Mytilene on foot and taking charge of their own journey. After walking for a while, the refugees and migrants returned to Stage II, realizing the challenges to reach Mytilene on foot. At this point, the mayor of Skala instructed the gates of Stage II be closed, compelling them to agree to be re-located as the authorities deemed fit. Ultimately, they had to comply.[136]

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the bodies of these refugees and migrants are rendered illegal at the site of the border, as well as through multiple locations within the Eu border security regime. These illegal bodies of refugees and migrants, therefore, lie outside the framework of legal jurisprudence. They lie in the state of exception. As Agamben discusses, the rights of an individual is preserved within the framework of the citizen, which establishes the link between birth and the nation. The figure of the citizen in turn, keeps the

[136] They accommodated in alternate NGO spaces, and did not have to go back to Moria.

two terms intertwined, so that the rights attributed to an individual only occurs on the grounds of citizenship. The figure of the refugee, then, challenges the very foundation of citizenship.[137] Situated outside the zone guaranteeing rights, and a qualified life (*bios*), is what renders the lives of the refugees and migrants bare.

However, Agamben's 'bare life' is not sufficient to explain the events which unfolded during Ramadan. To state that the figure of the refugee (and migrant) exists in the state of exception eliminates a whole different range of power dynamics within this state of exception. The state of exception situates lives in relation to the nation-state, the sovereign authority. If bare life is at the center of modern politics, as Agamben has argued, then the political asymmetries among bare lives cannot go unaddressed.

Alexander G. Weheliye critiques the Agambian state of exception, and call our attention to what the law masks, within the normal legal framework. He highlights the spaces within the juridico-political order where reduction to bare life is institutionalized and normalized. Weheliye brings into his analysis the examples of "slavery, imprisonment, and the torture in the Abu Ghraib prison"[138] to illustrate that bare lives do not only exist outside the formal legal system, against which they seem to be bare. Instead, lives are reduced to kinds of bareness within the "the normal order" and these practices assume "cultural normalness".[139] According to Weheliye, "*homo sacer*ization attempts to conjure a sphere more 'fundamental' to the human than race, it is but another term for racism."[140] His common denominator is racism and blackness, saying that "blackness is the state of exception".[141]

[137] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer* (1998): 126-135.
[138] Weheliye, 69
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid., 70
[141] Ibid., 69

Approaching Weheliye's analysis from a reverse angle, instead of asking what the law masks, I ask, what is masked within the Agambian state of exception? In the case of the Ramadan violence, it was a clash between ethnicity. Ethnicity becomes the yardstick which renders some lives in a refugee more bare than others. They become victims of violence by members within the state of exception. Agamben's figure of the *homo sacer* is unable to encompass the complexity of bare lives in refugee camps. Ethnicity – nationality and gender, as we shall see in the following subsections – plays a major role influence the dynamics of bare lives in this refugee camp. This engenders the notion of a spectrum of inequality, in terms of the bareness of their lives.

3.2.2 Fast-track Vulnerability

While ethnicity served as the yardstick for bareness, in the asylum process nationality determined vulnerability. The process for seeking asylum was encircled with high levels of unpredictability. In most discussions, the only worthwhile information one could take away was that "it really depends on the officer".[142] Sometimes the appointment for the first interview was scheduled in a year or two, and sometimes the decision was made within a year. Through my multiple questions and interactions, at times with social workers from legal backgrounds, the picture was still ambiguous. Was it due to bureaucratic inefficiency and/or negligence that took asylum applications months and years to be processed? Or was it also based on structural biases, based on which certain cases were processed faster than others?

One of my interviewees, who had initially joined LHR, was a volunteer for two and a half months at European Lawyers in Lesvos operating in Moria. Her role was to serve as a translator, from Arabic to English and vice-versa, and prepare the refugees for the actual asylum interview. Prepping was done through conducting mock interviews. The nature of the

[142] Summarizing multiple conversations.

cases she helped with mostly concerned family reunification and minors. Danyah did confirm that processing of asylum cases depends on the case worker on duty:

> …asylum case processing depends on your case worker and who processed it. Sometimes it is fast, and sometimes slow.

She goes on to mention that some case workers were quite efficient. As a result, on some occasions the asylum cases were processed within a relatively shorted duration of time. On the other hand, some others would take several months, or even years. It varied according to the attitude of the case officers, was the general belief.

It certainly had a role in the asylum case processing, but the key principle underlying the process was the condition of vulnerability. It was performed through the institutionalized diagnosis of classifying refugees and migrants into categories.[143] When I asked Danyah what exactly was asked in asylum interviews, she mentioned that the mock interviews conducted to prep them had three parts, which was structured closest to the real interviews. The first part of the interview contained questions about personal information; the second part determined whether they were vulnerable or not, including questions regarding their health; the third part entailed the question of if they were not vulnerable, then why did they not seek asylum in Turkey.

> Me: How did they determine the vulnerability status? Were there different categories, characteristics, or something to that effect?

Danyah said there were certain categories and accordingly, the respondents were grouped.

[143] The field material in this section relies for the major part on the information gathered from interviewing Danyah.

Danyah: Ah… let me remember. There were six in total – single women with children, pregnant women, incurable disease, torture, PTSD, and gender-based violence.

There was a brief pause, and then she continued:

There were also vulnerability statuses – A and B. A meant not strong, and B meant very strong. So for example if a Syrian has a B4, or B6, or B1, they automatically get permission to leave the island. There is also the fast-track procedure, which is only for the Syrians.

The fast-track procedure, I learnt from her, was literally what the term meant – asylum application of Syrian refugees were processed faster than applications from other nationalities. The practical implication was that they can skip the queue of asylum applications through this process. I probed further into the purpose of the A and B designation on vulnerability statuses.

Danyah: So it works like this – if someone from Iraq gets a B6, it is less equal to a Syrian person getting B6, because of the fast-track.

In addition to the fast-track process, there was something else which I noticed during my brief stay in Mytilene and did not comprehend. I learnt that refugees from some nationalities, who initially stayed in Moria and applied for asylum get accommodation in apartments in the city, at a time when their application is still in process. Danyah goes onto say that this system of granting vulnerability statuses was not in practice until very recently, perhaps until year ago, although she couldn't recall the exact timeline. The vulnerability

status decides whether the applicant is exempt from being sent back to Turkey or not.[144] This system of vulnerability assessment was highly problematic, as it

> …made people do things which were unnecessary…do things to get into the categories to get out of the island.

Secondly, it gave rise to a culture of bribery. Vulnerability statuses could be purchased at a cost of 500 Euros, let's say for a B6, so that the refugee/migrant could then leave the island. Another document which was on high demand was an official letter from the doctor, stating that the person concerned needs treatment away from the island. A phenomenon cited by most in the field was reports of deliberate cases of self-harm – for instance, unaccompanied minors cutting their wrists – in order to draw attention to their plea.

The demand for these vulnerability statuses sheds light on how vulnerability becomes a desired status in the asylum process regime. This sheds light on the multi-faceted nature of bareness of lives when viewed through the lens of nationality. Here, nationality is ascribing a certain status on each individual. The refugees and migrants living within Moria are not completely bare to begin with, their nationalities play a role in determining their asylum case processing.

Through the practice of vulnerability statuses and their purchase, the feature of *bios* does not remain limited members within the normal legal jurisprudence. This distorts the notion that *bios* is a characteristic element for only citizens of the *polis*. Drawing from Aristotle, Agamben distinguishes *zoe* as "simple natural life" and *bios* as the "qualified life",

[144] This is also laid out in the EU-Turkey deal, "Migrants arriving in the Greek islands will be duly registered and any application for asylum will be processed individually by the Greek authorities in accordance with the Asylum Procedures Directive, in cooperation with UNHCR. Migrants not applying for asylum or whose application has been found unfounded or inadmissible in accordance with the said directive will be returned to Turkey".
Council of the EU, "EU-Turkey statement, 18th March 2016", Press Release 144/16, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18/eu-turkey-statement/pdf

the "good life".[145] To get entry into the ancient *polis*, it was not enough to simply have mere life, as politics "…is not an attribute of the living being as such, but rather a specific difference that determines the genus *zoon*."[146] We have discussed how bare life is included in the legal order through its exclusion.[147] We have also addressed the challenges the figure of the refugee poses to the modern nation-state, as it breaks the link between birth and nation.[148] The desire to acquire or purchase a status signifying one's vulnerability, to process one's asylum application, was essentially to be granted an ID card which officially registered one as an asylum seeker. One of the benefits of that card was it permitted travel beyond the island. The asylum seeker's card was not as powerful as a passport, or other ID documents a citizen possess, but it did guarantee certain rights. We can understand this as a limit concept of rights, the larger framework being preserved within the figure of the citizen. I argue that the vulnerability statuses, based on nationality, operated on a dual mechanism to produce bare lives. One, it reduced lives of those from other nationalities – such as those from Iraq to those from Syria. Second, by elevating certain bare lives over others, it certified them as more vulnerable, or barer than others. Nationality was used as the yardstick of bareness.

3.2.3. Psychosomatic Vulnerability

Going back to the six categories of vulnerability, we see that three pertain to health, two to women directly, and one to violence based on gender. Based on my interview with two full-time medical coordinators from two different NGOs, I learnt that in addition to gender based violence, refugees from the African nation-states report past experiences of sexual abuse. These stories come to the surface as instances of PTSD and flashbacks, where both men and women speak of the sexual abuse they have either faced in their countries or in the

[145] Agamben, 1-2
[146] Ibid., 2
[147] Ibid., 1-12
[148] Ibid., 131-134

detention centres in Turkey, or both. Marta and Tuva, the two interviewees, did not touch upon the legal vulnerability category which Danyah was privy to. Nonetheless, what came forth through their interviews was a stark resonance to the afore mentioned categories, and from which I will draw to further unpack what constitutes vulnerability in this context. In the what follows, I streamline the discussion to the nature of the medical cases received, the patient demographics, and the reporting style.

In contrast to the fast-track process, where Syrian nationals are given higher priority in vulnerability statuses, the gendered and racial angles in the medical story reverse the logic of bareness as discussed in the previous subsection.

Marta Heras, the medical coordinator at DocMobile at that time, gave me an overview of the cases she deals with at the NGO One Happy Family (OHF). Two broad categories can be delineated: one, patients with chronic diseases like respiratory infections, diabetes, and hypertension. Two, patients with cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Marta adds that most of the patients with cases of prior rape, SGBV, and STD are refugees from African countries, for instance, Congo, Gambia, Sudan, and Mauritania. I asked her if it were only women subjected to this treatment, and men arrived unharmed. She said that for both men and women alike, sexual abuse was prevalent. She mentioned that the abuse had already taken place, at their homes and/or Turkish detention centers, and in Moria certain psychosomatic symptoms surfaced. Usually the story unfolded with abdominal pain, anxiety, depression, flashbacks, insomnia, and PTSD.

Tuva, medical coordinator of the NGO IsraAid at that time and former volunteer at Moria Medical Support (MMS), confirmed the same in her interview. Both said that sometimes, especially single African women, were trafficked to Turkey, and then become

victims of sexual abuse perpetrated by Turkish officials. Tuva enlisted the same symptoms as Marta, and that both men and women faced sexual abuse. However, she added:

> …Women are groomed to be sexually abused and then they think its normal…

It is because, Tuva explains, women never came to report their medical cases or seek help on their own. They were always brought in by men, who had "zippers down" or "pants undone and halfway open".[149] Her team at MMS saw this as a pattern: men bringing in women who were crying from flashbacks of sexual abuse, and found out that such reactions happened mostly during a current sexual intercourse. This is also where she explains what she terms as rape.

> You can't blame them [women]… they completely rely on men, so [they] don't complain on them…

This means, the sexual intercourse within Moria is often with manipulated consent, underlying Tuva's words, which she sees as rape anyway. She narrates an anecdote of a particular refugee man bringing different women to their chamber with every new arrival, falling within the same pattern explained above. The team at MMS came to the conclusion that those women were being groomed. The second anecdote she shares, which she also mentions as her most traumatizing case so far, explains the purpose behind such sexual grooming. Tuva narrates the story of a young couple from Afghanistan, wherein the male partner had convinced his female partner to have sexual intercourse with other men in lieu of money. The money earned was spent in the well-being of them both and the mother of the female partner. On one such occasion, Tuva says, the girl was intoxicated, and then the sexual intercourse had taken place.

[149] Quotations noted during the interview.

Whereas Tuva highlighted the fact that women never approached her team on their own, they were always brought in by men, Marta highlighted another aspect of the reporting patter. She noticed a distinct story-telling style between Africans on one hand, and the Arab and Afghan women on the other.

> Marta: African people had no problem to tell the story… they talk about rape stories [directly]. It usually starts with "back pain since rape in my country…"

The same story, for Arab and Afghan women, would start with something like "I have a gyny problem…" said Marta.[150] Another fact which I had heard from a lot of sources in Skala and Mytilene, which was also confirmed by Marta, was that women living in Moria had to wear adult diapers to avoid visiting the toilet at night.[151] The men's and women's toilets are adjacent to each other, and there were incidents of women getting attacked and raped at night when they went to the toilets.

We see that most of the cases are African men and women, and Arab and Afghan women. However, it was stressed over both interviews that it was worse for African people. While speaking about grooming, Tuva also made a point that is worse for Africans because they are treated like animals. She also went on to make a parallel between a puppy who was born inside Moria but adopted by a volunteer. The owner and the puppy were set to fly to another country, whereas human beings lived trapped inside the "hell on earth".[152]

The dynamics of gender and race shed light on the racial and gendered dimensions of the body-politics of refugees and migrants. Suvendrini Perera illustrate how bodies, being the

[150] Excerpts from interviewing Marta.
[151] This came up in another interview, with Sonia from the NGO Bashira
[152] If there was one phrase regarding Moria which everyone who I interacted with repeated, was that it was "hell on earth".

bearers of political meanings and recorded fear, give evidence on both physical and psychosomatic levels. Through the testimony of Amal Basry, a woman who survived the sinking of the SIEV X in 2001, Perera shows the way in which Basry's was unmade, and remade on the ocean, encapsulating everything the events that fell within her line of vision. Basry's testimony goes onto draw a connection between her PTSD flashbacks of the sharks on the ocean, and then current condition of breast cancer. I argue in a similar vein regarding the bodies experiencing SVGB IN Moria. The repeated flashbacks, and symptoms such as body ache, act as conduits causing a momentary temporal dislocation. During those moments, they relive the reality of the past along with the present. The technique of grooming female bodies underscores the unequal power dynamics existing within this space. Bare lives are being groomed and conditioned, to engage in sexual intercourse in lieu of money, which repeatedly unmakes and remakes bareness on their bodies.

3.3 Conclusion

The previous chapter discussed the EU border security regime, and the multiple sites and "spectacles" of migrant illegality.[153] It also addressed the question of who crosses the border, and argued that such practices led to the re-cartography or rescaling of the Aegean on the bodies of refugees and migrants. The current chapter delved deeper into the techniques of producing migrant illegality. With the interventions of the axes of ethnicity, nationality, and gender, I have demonstrated the spectrum within which bareness of lives were produced in Moria. This spectrum of bareness unfolds to unmake and remake bodies, along the three axes, which have shown to impact both its physical and psychological realities. The limitations of the Agambian notion exclusive-inclusion have been underlined; it neither thoroughly explores nor covers the range in which bareness can be produced in a refugee camp. This is

[153] Nicholas De Genova, "Spectacles of Migrant 'Illegality': the scene of exclusion, the obscene of inclusion," *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies* 36:7 (2013): 1180-1198.

so because Agamben demarcates the management of life into two distinct spheres of *zoe* and *bios*. Adopting Weheliye's critique of the binary between the realms of *zoe* and *bios*, I have shown, through the material collected during fieldwork, that these two elements interact in complex ways in the creation of bare bodies. Bodies are not only reduced to a lower status, from *bios* to *zoe*, but also made to desire vulnerability, get temporally dislocated, in the zone of bareness. The temporal dimension of the bare, illegal refugee and migrant bodies forms the central focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 4 – *Musafir*

4.1 Introduction

Each time I waved goodbye to the smiling faces on the bus headed to Moria, outside the gates of Stage II, I increasingly began feeling uncomfortable at the inevitable reality they were about to encounter. In spite of their repeated and diverse queries about what lies next, we were extremely cautious in our responses to not break their morale. We had to delicately balance the truth and cautiously relay any necessary information. Our team collectively performed a crucial although temporary function. Stage II was the last step in our reach of providing humanitarian aid. We were aware ephemeral nature of the outcomes of our functions, keeping in mind the broader migration trajectory which was envisioned by the refugees themselves.

After a few weeks of my traineeship at LHR, this discomfort gradually and firmly took the shape of a hypothesis. Initially, the hypothesis would sound like 'Skala is a bubble' or 'Skala serves as a zone of shock absorber' for the refugees and migrants in-between Turkey and Moria. This chapter focuses on the contrasting temporal realities the refugees and migrants have traversed during their journey of migration. As is demonstrated in the following sections, the to and fro movement between the temporal realities is what this chapter taps into. At each point in their journey, as we seen through the previous chapters, the intervention and interplay between various factors influence the politics on the refugee and migrant bodies. Through analyzing the movement between temporal experiences, this chapter establishes the imagery of the *Musafir*. Suzanne M. Sinke, in her study on the inclusion of the category of gender in migration scholarship, notes the ways in which the historian's changing relationship with temporality informs such analyses. While underlining the need for multiple scales for analyses – such as the global, national, and the local – she explains that

temporalities of the past aren't simply scales that one can compare with the present, and establish a connection. What needs to be explored is how do these scales connect, and how are they related. Migration trajectories also need to take into account that migration develops both through temporalities and spaces.[154]

Sinke also shifts the focus in her article from settlement zones to conceptualizing a kind of migration in motion.[155] Drawing upon a similar approach, this chapter does not perceive the temporal realities of the refugees and migrants to be fixed or settled. It might run the risk of appearing in that manner as they were living in Moria, and at various stages of progress in their asylum cases. The imagery of the *Musafir* unpacks the notion of migration in movement, or migration in a state of flux, through the road of temporal realities. This is the key theme of the chapter. Moreover, viewing the migration trajectory though the lens of the *Musafir* is also an attempt to imagine this journey through the perspective of "the gendered and raced transnational subaltern refugee subject."[156] *Musafir* – in Hindi, Urdu, Persian, and Arabic – means 'a traveler'. This provides an alternate frame to view the otherwise "transgressive mobility" of illegal bodies.[157]

4.2 Turkey – Skala – Moria

I begin this section by recounting some of the informal testimonies shared with me at Stage II. These often began by bringing into sharp contrast the treatment they received in Turkey, to the one they were experiencing at that time in Skala. Recalling these temporal

[154] Suzanne M. Sinke, "Gender and Migration: Historical Perspectives", *International Migration Review* 40:1 (2006): 83-99.
[155] Ibid. 83.
[156] Suvendrini Perera, "Oceanic corpo-graphies, Refugee Bodies and the Making and Unmaking of Waters," *Feminist Review* 103 (2013): 64.
[157] Ibid.

encounters will help me establish the reason behind the hypothesis that I mentioned above. Some of these informal testimonies I recount below.

> …the kind of treatment we received from you people… our faith in humanity has been restored. Turkey, being a Muslim country, does not treat Muslims from other countries humanely. What can we say? This [Stage II] is very nice. We are very happy to have made it here. – A man from Afghanistan.
>
> …the worst [sea journey] is over. From the moment we were received at the dinghy, we knew that from now everything will be better. And now we are here [Stage II] … you people are so nice, you are taking care of us so much us… Whatever lies next, I am sure it will be good. – A man from Pakistan.
>
> Where are you from, India?" I nodded saying yes. "I am from Iran… this is my husband [pointing to husband] and this is my son [pointing towards her son]. "In Iran, not good. In Turkey, same problem again. More bad in Turkey. – A woman from Iran.

Comparisons to the time they spent in Turkey did not need any prior enquiring. These existed side-by-side to their expressions of gratitude for the way in which they were received by our team. They mentioned that their faith had been restored, and they were hopeful again. Sifting through the multiplicity of stories and individual narratives, there were some common patterns which could be determined. They made it to Turkey from their home countries – Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Republic of Congo, Gambia, and so on – and either worked briefly, or lived in detention centers. The people who worked complained that the "mafia" took all their original documents, and at times huge portions of their monthly income. For instance, the Pakistani man mentioned above, worked as a tailor in Turkey before embarking on the journey to Lesvos. I was called in to aid as a translator during his brief interview with the UNHCR staff on duty at Stage II. When I asked him about his documents, he answered by saying the mafia had raided his house one day and took away his passport, and all other identification documents. Later, I learnt from my fellow team members that such incidents in Turkey were commonly reported by many refugees.

These conversations went on to include descriptions of physical pain:

> "We walked in the jungle for days… our legs hurt, our whole body aches. We also hid in the jungle to not get caught [by Turkish officials]. And then finally, we went to the dinghy." – this was the most common story.
>
> "Can we see the doctor?" Someone would ask. I would say yes, and ask in return about the problem they were experiencing. "We have fever. Our whole body hurts. We had to stay in the jungle for a few days before the sea journey, which is why."

This style of providing evidence through narration brings me to draw in Perera's analysis of how bodies moving across oceanic spaces become "ongoing bearers of powerful political meanings."[158] Writing in the Australian context of oceanic borderlands and "threshold spaces", Perera illustrates through the testimony of Amal Basry how bodies are unmade and remade, and at any given point of time "neither while nor singular".[159] During the sinking of the SIEV X in 2001, Basry's body detached itself and began recording the events that fell within her line of sight. For twenty two hours while she was in stuck in the oceanic waters, she was a witness to "…children dying…dead babies, desperate parents, families dying one by one…"[160] Basry also mentions recalling vividly how she felt in those moments, being able to still taste the sea and smell the death she feared, and her nightmares cause a pain which she equates to the sharks tearing apart her soul.[161] Her testimony, as Perera records and argues, not just reveals what she had to bear herself but instead also acts as a medium which has witnessed certain terrifying events occurring to others in her immediate surroundings.

In a similar manner, each of the informal conversations I have engaged in either at Stage II provide evidence of the events they experienced or had to bear witness to along their

[158] Suvendrini Perera, "'They Give Evidence': Bodies, Borders, and the Disappeared", *Social Identities* 12:6 (2006): 638.
[159] Ibid., 642.
[160] Ibid., 640.
[161] Ibid., 640-641.

journey. The informal testimonies of violence which I encountered are distinguishable from the one Perera bases her analysis upon, as mostly the refugees spoke about Turkey. The struggles they had to undergo to get to the dinghy and leave the shores formed the central theme of their stories. Whereas Perera's focus is on the events recorded by bodies on oceanic borderlands, the refugee bodies arriving on the northern shores of Lesvos had more testimonials about what it took for them to reach the sea.

Drawing from Perera and Sinke, we see that the refugee and migrant bodies crossing the narrow stretch of the Aegean carry with temporalities across national borders which they were constantly negotiating with the space. The past (Turkey) and the present (Stage II, Skala) do not only share a simple connection wherein the once adverse circumstances turned into restored faith. Through each retelling of their lives in Turkey, their bodies relived the temporal reality being described. Their bodies still carried the pain and aches throughout. Much like Basry's ordeal on the ocean, the bodies of the refugees and migrants carried with the jungle they had to hide in for days. Their bodies witnessed being unmade and remade in this process.

Temporalities are being made, unmade, and remade through the bodies of the refugees and migrants. The process of unmaking and remaking is what allows the *Musafir* to travel across the embodied temporalities. Before delving into the discussion of temporalities in the NGO spaces in Mytilene, the disillusionment of Moria needs to be addressed. One of the refugees at One Happy Family (OHF), who volunteered as a nurse at DocMobile, reflected that:

Initially when we had landed here, they treated us so well. We thought this good treatment will continue. But then when we came here [Moria], we were shocked to see the complete opposite of what we had expected. It is even worse from what we came from. Only

if we knew they would treat us like this here [Moria]…But at least I work here. I try to do my bit, and help around.

The sentiments expressed in these testimonies go back and forth between Turkey, Skala, and Moria. However, each of the three spaces lends a different temporal experience for them, from which emerged readjusted statements. The narrator above also expressed that if she knew this (Moria) was where she would have to live, she would have never left home. The key point here is that these realities, however contradictory, were not experienced in compartments. Coupled with the tone of disregard for leaving home, she mentions volunteering at OHF in a positive light.

4.3 Temporal Scales

In this section, I address the activity of navigating across temporal experiences and embodying a multifaceted time-and-space reality. This is analyzed through the works of Melanie B.E. Griffiths and Kristen Sarah Biehl. In her study of uncertain temporalities among refugees and asylum seekers, Melanie B.E. Griffiths classifies into categories various ways in which time is experienced and managed.[162] She mentions four categorizations: sticky time, suspended time, frenzied time, and temporal ruptures. She describes 'sticky time' as the period when time passes by slowly, to the point that it becomes oppressive in its own right. This is most often experienced over the delay in asylum case processing, bureaucratic red-tapism, waiting in long queues, where practicing patience is the only option available. 'Suspended time' is the feeling when time seems to halt, in a sense as it appears to have stopped moving. Griffiths explains this through the comparing the events in one's life with that of the pace of events unfolding in the lives of people surrounding us, or even the passage

[162] Melanie B.E. Griffiths, "Out of time: The temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40:12 (2014): 1991-2009.

of time reflected in seasonal changes. 'Frenzied time' is when asylum seekers are made to experience a rushed change of pace in time without any former warning. Finally, 'temporal ruptures' occur when there is a sudden turn of events, and the pace of time undergoes dramatic shifts. Frenzied time and temporal ruptures are differentiated from each other, even though the latter may cause frenzy and the former may cause a shift. Frenzied time refers to the change of pace in time, in the sense that it signifies a transition of the pace of time. On the other hand, a temporal rupture is a sudden break, or unpleasant fracture, within the same pace of time experienced.

Elements of these temporal categories can be found in the narratives discussed above. An instance of a temporal rupture would be the event of the mafia raid conducted in the Pakistani man's home in Turkey. During my fieldwork, I did not have any encounters with any refugee or migrant who shared experiencing a sense of frenzied time. Sticky time was experienced in varying degrees by different people, as this relied mostly on individual asylum case processes. As discusses in the previous chapter, vulnerability determined in terms of nationality had a major impact on asylum cases. The stickiness of time was, in some cases, made less sticky through the NGO spaces as will be discussed below. Suspended time was not experienced in the way Griffiths describes it in her work. The comparison was not with others, or the events unfolding in their lives, but with past temporal realities inhabited by the same individual. This is beyond the scope of suspended time as discussed by Griffiths. As seen through the examples of the constant comparisons between Turkey, Skala and Moria, and the condition of one's own life, their hopes and belief systems, they were comparing their past to their present. This is what I refer to as moving through temporalities.

4.3.1 One Happy Family

Griffiths recommends that the best way to utilize time as a resource is to "make time."[163] This entailed making plans and schedules to get a sense of the passage of time.[164] The refugees and migrants I encountered in the NGO called One Happy Family (OHF) were this a space to make their lives productive. Not only were they clocking time, but actively engaging in the management of the NGO, which gave them a sense of productivity and dignity. The hypothesis that I mentioned early on this chapter led me to take a short research break from LHR – for seven days – to study the migration trajectory that unfolded beyond Skala. I visited two NGOs during that time.

The first NGO I visited was the One Happy Family. It operated as a day center where refugees and migrants were welcomed to spend the day and involve themselves in various activities. They also took on leadership roles and were in charge of major NGO functions. This gave them a sense of importance, identity, and responsibility. They were also given an opportunity to practice the skills they used to perform back in their home countries. The concept behind this space was to provide for the refugees a dignified existence. Getting a glimpse of the NGO space is vital for establishing the means through which they attained their goal.

Rike, a full-time employee and whom I interviewed later, agreed to greet me and walk me through the NGO. She explained to me the daily hours, and the different activities that the refugees could engage themselves with. At first, there was an open space where they usually played football. Behind the ground, there was a gym and further behind, a small garden. Adjacent to the gym, a few feet away, was the doctor's clinic and a couple of feet ahead, was

[163] Melanie B.E. Griffiths, "Out of time: The temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40:12 (2014): 1993-2004.
[164] Ibid.

a fenced zone where a children's playground was being built. A few steps below, from the clinic and the playground was a space exclusively for women. This space comprised of a small concrete building, where women could gather to talk, listen to music, practice needlework, pray, and so on. Once we entered the main building from the football grounds, there was a main hall with a tiny coffee corner at the end. This was the main gathering hall in which everyone had their meals and chatted. All meals were prepared at OHF for refugees, volunteers, and employers alike by the staff at the kitchen. During the time of my visit, there were two Rohingya refugee men, one from Myanmar and the other who had lived in Bangladesh for a while, who were the main chefs. Their culinary skills were praised by all.

The corridor leading up to the main hallway had an IT room, a salon, and another space covered with dark-coloured curtains. Rike explained that this was supposed to give the feeling of a theatre. There were various groups huddled up between pillows in every level of the staircase-like structure within, intently watching a movie I did not recognize.

Coming out of the main hallway from the other end, there was the kitchen on the right. We walked further to a library on wheels – a small car library which had books in several languages, such as Arabic, Farsi, and English. Further ahead from the library, there was a space used as a school for children. Adults could sign up for language classes as well. Classes were held regularly.

Rike mentioned that the entire spaced was managed by refugee volunteers. The barber at the salon was a refugee himself. He used to be a barber back in his home country, and volunteered to continue practicing his skills here at OHF. The IT space had a refugee volunteer in-charge who had the necessary IT skills. Taking care of the security of the place was also carried out by refugee volunteers. They wore the appropriate fluorescent sleeve-less jackets with their names etched onto it. It gave them a sense of pride. OHF also had an

internal monetary system resembling an income. Their currency was the Swiss drachma, a reference to the ancient Greek monetary unit. Drachmas could be earned through participating in a variety of tasks, and then used for purposes such as, paying for a haircut.

The place was filled with refugees over every single day of my visit. The day center operated in full swing. Over the interview, I asked Rike about the challenges she faces at work.

> The biggest trouble is that we are always in this limbo of a day center… limbo of never knowing what's going to happen next… having no major impact on their [refugees'] asylum cases or politics. Our work is limited to the day space only. There is low perspective for the future.

Having said that she added:

> But even then it is important to do this [work]. It makes the present a bit more bearable for them… If you give trust to the people, treat them equally, humanity works again. Here they can spend the day productively at the center.

Rike's sentiments were echoed by in all of the conversations I had with the refugees at OHF. With most of them I communicated in Hindi, Urdu, or Bengali. While speaking at length with the two chefs at OHF, they expressed similar feelings.

> "We cook… what else is there for us to do here…" I asked, "Do you like cooking?" One of them responded, "no, not really. But now, we are here. We cook."

This conversation took place partly in Hindi and largely in Bengali. Although cooking wasn't their passion, their tone did not convey any distaste with their culinary commitments. Neither did they cook on a regular basis before in their home countries, nor do they wish to do this activity on a permanent basis to make a living. The man from Myanmar was expecting his asylum status card, to which the man from Bangladesh responded, saying:

> …once I receive my card, I also plant to leave. For many more days will I stay here cooking?

This time, there was a sense of displeasure in his voice. For the time being, the current arrangement did not evoke any negative feelings. However, anyone who contemplated the long term, expressed treated this phase as exceedingly temporary. This was reflected in yet another conversation regarding learning languages. When I had walked down to the women's center, I saw most of them busy in needlework and chatting amongst themselves, so I sat in the benches outside. I did not recognize the language. Before the next round of greetings and interactions, I wanted to take a few moments to absorb all the information I was gathering. Soon, few women gathered in the benches around me. A few minutes later, one of them spoke to me in Hindi asking if I was Indian. This is how the conversation began, which led to them sharing their excitement over Bollywood songs, movies, and actors. One of them women, who did not speak Hindi but through her friend made sure I knew she was a huge fan of Bollywood, expressed that she ardently wanted to learn Hindi. She wanted me to sing one of her favourite Bollywood songs, and said that I should visit her camp in Athens and impart Hindi language courses. After a few minutes, I asked her, through the friend who was translating, why would she want to learn Hindi? Isn't it more useful that she learnt Greek? Her friend did not bother relaying that message to her, but answered:

> "No… we don't want to learn Greek. Why should we, for what purpose? We are *musafirs*…we are here today, but we don't want to stay here for long. Who knows where we will be tomorrow."

Once again, the tone did not convey any sentiment of sadness, entrapment, or displeasure. What it did convey was an understanding of the uncertainty of their situation. Their statements conveyed a sense of temporality, in which they saw themselves as *musafirs*, caught up in a temporary situation.

The space of the NGO OHF provided a space for the refugees and migrants to "make time."[165] The spatial dimension is vitally important here. It stands in stark contrast to the living conditions in Moria. It provides a platform for those willing to continue practicing their earlier professions. Going back to the point of unmaking and remaking temporalities, the refugees and migrants attending the day center NGO their temporal realities each day, and unmake this reality as they return to Moria. Unlike the contrast between Turkey, Skala, and Moria, which lies in the more immediate temporal reality, the attempt to recreate their lives as it were at home is also made. Drawing from Sinke, the scale of the past does not share a simple connection with the scale(s) of the present. For refugees and migrants too, it is not a simple relation drawn. It was filled with attempts of constant negotiation. This process of continued back and forth was influenced, as demonstrated in this chapter, by dimension spatiality. The imagery of the *Musafir*, I argue, captures this migration in movement through navigating the past and present scales of temporality.

4.3.2 Bashira

The second NGO I visited was Bashira. It operated as an exclusive women's day center. Officially opened in the month of August 2017, the NGO hosted from ninety to a hundred women refugees and migrants on a daily basis. Through my interview with Sonia, the Program Manager at Bashira, I learnt that their aim was to be an advocacy organization for protecting the rights of women. They followed a very strict code of conduct and standards of confidentiality. The volunteers working at Bashira were made privy to only specific cases and were not allowed to disclose any of the information.

[165] Melanie B.E. Griffiths, "Out of time: The temporal uncertainties of refused asylum seekers and immigration detainees," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 40:12 (2014): 1993-2004.

Due to these restrictions, I wasn't able to interact with the women who visited Bashira, as visitors were not allowed at that time. Their aim was to establish a safe and protected space for women. To open such a space to the public could to the exploitation of these women. The principal element that I gathered from our interview, and my visit to the NGO itself, was that it served as a space where women could relax, engage in collective activities, pray, bathe, and feel peaceful.

Hygiene was a severe issue which featured in most of the interviews regarding Moria. Bashira provided women with bathing facilities, as Sonia said, they should be allowed to have a dignified life. She mentions that she detests being thanked, as it is their right to have access to basic amenities. The most frustrating aspect for her is to see these "amazing, strong women" who have the potential but not the opportunity to follow their dreams.[166] Bashira along with its facilities and infrastructure tried to make the lives of the women a little better.

While studying uncertain governmentality in the asylum regime in Turkey, Kristen Sarah Biehl introduces the notion of a kind of "agency in waiting", through which feelings of frustration can turn into hopes for the future. [167] Although she discusses the Turkish asylum regime specically, we see the principle behind this agency working in the space of the two NGOs elucidated above. They are providing a space for the refugees and migrants to exercise a kind of agency which is created within these spaces. The aspired aim of Bashira, to become an advocacy organization in the near future, coincides within the framing of agency. Through providing, a safe space, women were encouraged to express themselves freely. This was a micro-step towards developing agency.

[166] The quote and the entire section is based on the interview with Sonia.
[167] Kristen Sarah Biehl, "Governing Through Uncertainty: Experiences of Being a Refugee in Turkey as a Country for Temporary Asylum," *Social Analysis* 59:1 (2015): 69.

4.4 Conclusion

The key theme addressed in this chapter was the multiple temporal realities the bodies of refugees and migrants carried across from Turkey to Skala, then to Moria, and to the day centers in Mytilene. I have argued that this was a kind of migration in movement, where the refugees and migrants were in the constant task of navigating through past, recent past(s), and present scales of temporalities. Temporal experiences and voyages are influenced and shaped by the spatial dimension as well.[168] The spatial dimension is paramount in their experiences, and recollections of temporal realities. This has been shown through the contrast and comparisons between Turkey and Stage II, Stage II and Moria, Moria and the home country, and Moria and the NGO spaces Based on one of the informal conversations I had participated in at OHF, a woman shared her perspective of the *Musafir*. The *Musafir* serves as an alternate concept for viewing the refugee and migrant bodies as a voyager, traversing across the dimensions of time and space. Temporal and spatial realities are rescaled – through navigation, migration in movement – within the imagery of the *Musafir*.

[168] Suzanne M. Sinke, "Gender and Migration: Historical Perspectives", *International Migration Review* 40:1 (2006): 83-99.

Conclusion

This thesis has addressed the range of political activity on the bodies of the subaltern, gendered, and racialized[169] refugees and migrants, crossing over from Turkey to Lesvos – and through Greece, into the EU – as its central theme. It has demonstrated that multiple and multifaceted scales exist when it comes to drawing national borders, management of life in a refugee camp, and negotiating and navigating through temporal experiences and realities.

In the second chapter of this thesis, I have shown the ways in which official border coast guard patrol on the Aegean Sea – operating within the framework of the EU-Turkey agreement of 2016 – performed the border security regime. In this paradigm, territorial borders are extended to sea spaces, and the act of routine border patrol on the sea is what made the visualization of the concept of a border plausible. Not only did this security regime establish borders on the sea, but created numerous sites of enforcement in and around the border. Producing illegal bodies of refugees and migrants, at the border site and other micro-sites of enforcement, was the purpose of the regime's practices.

In the third chapter, I have shown the production and management of bare lives within the refugee camp of Moria on a spectrum, including the axes of ethnicity, nationality, and gender. I have argued that Agamben's state of exception is not enough to explain the complex dynamics among bare lives in this zone of exclusive-inclusion. All the three axes – ethnicity via ethnic violence and killing, nationality through determining vulnerability, and gender through revealing psychosomatic vulnerability – are conceptualized as scales producing bare lives on a spectrum within Moria. This puts the bare lives, within the zone of exception, at a relation of asymmetry to one another. This hierarchized asymmetry has the potential for – as

[169] Susan Bibler Coutin, "Illegality, Borderlands, and the Space of Nonexistence," *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity* (2003): 171-179.

demonstrated – violence upon other bare lives, violence upon oneself to prove vulnerability, and grooming certain other bare lives to be physically and psychologically vulnerable in lieu of money.

The last chapter establishes the imagery of the *Musafir*, a Hindi and/or Urdu word which means 'traveler'.[170] Building on several encounters and informal testimonies shared with me by refugees and migrants, I illustrate the ways in which they embody and navigate through temporalities of the past, recent past(s), and the present. The relationship between these three were analyzed through their narratives which included contrast and comparison in evaluations of their past and current temporal experiences. The relationship between the temporal scales is one characterized by constant movement; a kind of migration in movement.

This research is an attempt to tread on the path of "methodological fluidism".[171] It has attempted to circumvent the pitfalls of a nation-centric approach by studying the multiple scales which impact the bodies of refugees and migrants along their trajectory of migration. Migration is viewed from the point of a journey. It hopes to offer new insights and perspectives to the study of refugee and migrant bodies on the island of Lesvos.

[170] Also has the same meaning in Persian and Arabic.
[171] Andrew Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation-state building, migration and the social sciences", *Global Networks* 2:4 (2002): 301-334.

Appendix 1

Interview Questions

1. Personal information –
   i) Name, age. Would you like to remain anonymous? What has been your past work experience? Why did you choose to come here and work?
   ii) How do you link your previous work experience with your current efforts and contributions?
   iii) What made you choose this exact location and organization to fulfill your motives/goals?

2. Scope of operation –
   i) What position are you in/ What roles and functions does that entail?
   ii) In order to carry out these functions, did you take some prior training? What were the skills that you already possessed which made you eligible for your role?
   iii) What is the extent of your interaction with the authorities on scene? How often do you have to interact with the mayor of Skala, or the Hellenic Coast Guard (HCG) and/or the Frontex?
   iv) While carrying out your functions, do you collaborate with other local actors on the scene?
   v) If yes, who are these actors? How did you establish such a collaboration? How often are the meetings (if any) and what are the issues which are discussed?
   vi) During such a collaboration, or simply working on a scene where more than one set of interests need to take into consideration, what are the challenges that you have faced?

vii) What are some of the challenges that you have faced in general? Could be local, regional (island-oriented), or national or all of them

viii) What is the current status of relationships or tone of communication with the HCG and other authorities? Do they support us in our mission and efforts? Do they place obstacles?

ix) What is the stance of the local inhabitants of Skala vis-à-vis the refugees and incoming dinghies? Does it affect them adversely, or are they welcoming in their approach?

x) Is there anything, given your active involvement in the field, that you feel needs immediate attention and/or is neglected? What are those gap areas that you find worrisome?

xi) Given your commitment to this cause, what are some things that you would like to see improved about the current situation? Are you currently undertaking any project/initiative addressing the same?

xii) Is there any incident, anecdote, insight, or anything else, that you would like to share, and I have missed out in this conversation?

3. Specific according to the role of the interviewee –

i) What are the different types of cases that you deal with on a regular basis? (for instance, for medical trainees/volunteers the questions are what are the kinds of illnesses they most frequently treat; for an interviewee working as a translator for a lawyer's NGO, the question was what are various kinds and types of asylum cases and how differently are they processed (if at all differently, however, always differently it was)

ii) What are the specific negotiation and communication strategies that you used while trying to work on a task which involved more than one actor?

iii) During operations, did you encounter any conflicts – of the nature that threatened to hamper the implementation or effectivity of the task? If yes, please mention examples of the conflicts, its nature, parties involved and their respective interests, and what were the resultant conclusions to reach the next step

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