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"Women's Space is Everywhere!"

- A Study of Narratives of Bordering and Gendering

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Abstract

In 2015/2016 Europe experienced a great influx of refugees. As a response to the high number of refugees, the countries of the EU has emphasised a strengthening of their borders, as well as implemented an externalisation of the European outer-borders to control the number of refugees coming to European territory. Consequently, we argue that a securitisation of refugees has been enforced as the EU constructs the refugees as a threat to societal and state-security. The EU employs measures to execute state sovereignty to ensure the cultural and social homogeneity of their country. Consequently, the restrictions on asylum legislations and strengthened border controls makes border-crossing in the present European context challenging, difficult and unsafe. Thousands of people are forced to undertake more dangerous routes to avoid detention and repatriation. In the current situation, more women and children are fleeing than ever before.

The present thesis seeks to examine how refugee women experience crossing borders when they are forced to flee. We look into how the refugee women perceive differentialities between borders, as well as their chosen strategies. We apply the method of narratology, as it will help us understand how the refugee women experience their movement to and within the borders of the EU. Furthermore, narratology will assist us in exploring how the different situational positions of the women affect their experience, as well as which strategies they employ on their different routes. We thereby employ a gender-perspective, as our conducted narratives are told by women.

The thesis builds its research on the narratives of three female refugees, each experiencing border-crossing to and within the EU differently. We also conducted participant observation during a conference in Hamburg called “International Conference of Refugees and Migrants: The Struggle of Refugees – How to go on? Stop war on Migrants! 2016”. Moreover, we outline a contextual overview of the present border-regime in Europe, and analyse the narratives and the observations in Hamburg in the light of such context.

We argue that the refugee women navigate through a male-centred field, demonstrated in asylum legislation, the EU border regime and the Hamburg Conference. The refugee women are excluded from the political sphere, excluded from the narrative authority and are thus left navigating within a victimising role. The victimising discourse related to refugee women is also evident in the manner in which female migration often is framed within the field of human trafficking or through domestic labour migration, linking migrating women to the private sphere.

Furthermore, the narratives of this study demonstrate that the interviewed women define the EU-border system as based on security and violence, which directly affects the manner in which they are navigating. We claim that the strategies employed by the female refugees are gender-specific, and furthermore predominantly stems from a feeling of being exposed to a gendered insecurity - and that the strategies employed has the aim of enhancing their own security. We identify which measures they use to enhance their security, and recognize means as financial capital, travelling with a male protector, or in groups as common strategies taken to navigate the border-regime. Furthermore, we recognize visibility/invisibility as a strategic, to either make oneself invisible for men who are considered as threats, or gendering; to make oneself visible - by using gender to be seen as either a victim or someone in need of protection.

Thus, we find that processes of bordering become processes of gendering, demonstrating the dialogical relationship between the manner in which the interviewed women conceptualise the EU borders and how the EU borders simultaneously construct the women within a framework of an essentialised ‘female refugee experience’. This dialogical field, defined by connotations on safety and uncertainty, fundamentally affects how the interviewed women are navigating.

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1. Introduction

IDA, MARIE, SILJE: The present thesis explores an exceptional period in European history as the many displaced human beings seeking refuge in the European Union (henceforth the EU) has resulted in many of the member states to draw on their right to state sovereignty - resulting in the closing of borders and implementation of stricter asylum legislation. The present border controls have serious consequences for those whose aim is to seek asylum in the EU, as the tightening's situate already vulnerable people in even more dangerous situations. They are now forced to undertake dangerous routes to reach their destination as the safer routes to Northern Europe are closed off. In the past, it was predominantly male refugees who fled to Europe, many with the prospects of bringing their families through family reunification. However, now, many women and children are forced to undertake the dangerous routes to and within the EU.

Consequently, the majority of refugees seen today are women and children, now navigating in dangerous fields to reach the EU. We explore this episode through turning to the narratives of those who are ultimately affected by these changes.

We thereby present the following research questions;

How are female refugees narrating their movement to and within the EU and in which ways is gender reproduced in the context of 'the refugee experience' and the EU border-system? What strategies are the interviewed women employing to navigate the EU border-system and how are these strategies gender-specific?

The process to reach the above research questions started with our experience in Hamburg, Germany, where we in February 2016 attended a conference called "International Conference of Refugees and Migrants: The Struggle of Refugees – How to go on? Stop war on Migrants! 2016" (henceforth the Conference). The aim of the Conference was to create a shared solidarity and network amongst refugees and activists and provide an equal platform for everybody to participate in. We attended the Conference with the hope to gain knowledge on issues connected to the border - crossings of female refugees.

Contrary to our expectations, the female refugees who took part in the Conference were both physically and theoretically placed within a specific sphere, which reproduced essentialising and stereotypical gender-roles of refugee men and, particularly, refugee women. This was exemplified in the way the debates and seminars concerning refugee women were put in a specific spatial environment - a house container without basic facilities, called the "Women's space" - and furthermore in a specific thematic environment as the seminars mainly concerned issues of the body. The second day of the Conference the women organised a demonstration in which they protested against being reproduced as apolitical victims. This experience led us to asking new questions about the experiences of female refugees and borders and worked as a sort of platform for our theoretical understanding. Moreover, we realised the importance of interviewing refugee women about their experiences, as their voices are generally missing in the public debate.

The refugee women who took part in the Conference were silenced or not heard, which gave the men the authoritative role in creating the dominant narrative. Thereby the narratives of the refugee women were not represented at all, or presented in an essentialist manner, building on a view of 'the refugee woman' as corporeal, apolitical and a victim. From this point of view, we found that there is a lack of knowledge of refugee women's different situated knowledge and experience, which reflects the complexity this knowledge represents. Thereby, the significance of listening to and documenting narratives on refugee women's conceptualisation of the EU borders and experiences of border-crossings, was clear to us.

1.1. Disposition of the thesis

In the first section of the thesis we present the context to which the Conference and the narratives are set; that is the current political border-politics in Europe, the situation of female refugees on their way to Europe and within Europe. In the second part of the thesis we present the method that we have applied when conducting and processing the collected material and data: semi-structured interviews and narratology. In the third part of the thesis an outline of the different theories is provided; feminist standpoint theory, gender-roles and migration, theory on security and violence and social

navigation. In the fourth section of the thesis is the analysis of our data, supported by the chosen theories. We have divided the analysis into three parts; one emphasizing the perspective of borders, the second looks at the Conference in Hamburg and the third and last part of the analysis focus on the narratives; each narrative is given a section. As the narratives are different, theories are also applied with different emphasis. The fifth section of the thesis is an overall discussion of the analysis, thematically divided. The sixth and final section of the thesis is the conclusion in which we complete the analysis and discussion in a conclusive reflection on our findings.

2. Context Chapter

In this chapter we explore the EU border system, as well as the individual borders of EU member states and the specific context concerning women who migrate. Hereunder we also investigate the concept of family reunification. This chapter provides us with a contextual background, in which our empirical data is situated.

2.2 Borders, the EU and within

In September 2015 Europe experienced a high influx of refugees to its countries, and the responses from the EU and its member states have been diverse and unpredictable. It is said that more than a million refugees arrived in Europe during the previous year, predominantly via the Mediterranean Sea, to the shores of Greece and Italy. The increase in the number of refugees resulted in political and military strengthening of outer EU borders, as well as the internal ones (BBC: 04.03.2016).

2.3. External Borders of the EU

SILJE: It has become a rather acknowledged and established practice for the EU to continue to externalise its border - externalising here understood as deploying means to stop irregular migration outside the EU territory, before it actually reaches the EU borders (Lemberg-Pedersen 2012: 2). FRONTEX, an organ established by the EU whose aim is to protect the outer borders of Europe, operate along the borders of the European countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. FRONTEX also operates at sea,

with a mandate to protect Europe from illegal migration, and therefore employ ships to catch the refugees before they actually reach Europe. It is argued by scholars that there is a securitisation of immigration in EU domestic policies, where the refugee is posed as a threat to European welfare and security, and furthermore that FRONTEX was built as a direct response to this perception of the refugee (Guild in Edler 2013: 6-7). The notion of securitisation is further elaborated in the Theory Chapter. Crossing the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe is the most common way of movement, and due to the operations at sea by FRONTEX, refugees are forced to use more dangerous routes to reach Europe and avoid detention by FRONTEX border guards (Lemberg-Pedersen 2012:2-3). The consequence of the externalisation of the border is that thousands of people die at sea, before reaching Europe (Houtum & Boedeltje 2009: 228).

MARIE: On March 20th 2016, the EU signed a deal with Turkey to prevent irregular migration flows to the EU. The deal states that new irregular migrants that arrive in Greece will be returned to Turkey. In return, EU member states will accept one Syrian refugee from Turkey, for everyone send back, and speed up visa liberalisation for Turkish nationals (The Economist: 11.03.2016). Human Rights Watch highlights how Turkey closed its last two officially open borders on November 23, 2015, to Syrian asylum seekers. Syrians, who are spotted as they try to cross the border, are pushed back to Syria and thereby Turkey is forcing them back to a war zone.

Turkey has ratified the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (henceforth the Refugee Convention) but have not ratified the 1967 protocol, which means that Turkey only acknowledge people fleeing from the EU before 1951 as refugees. Turkey must respect the principle of non-refoulement, as they are part of the international refugee law and international human right law (Human Rights Watch: 23.11.2015). The principle of non-refoulement prohibits rejection of asylum seekers at borders that would expose them to any threats (UNHCR, refworld: Note on the Principle of Non-Refoulement). The deal has been criticised based on the idea of Turkey as a ‘safe third country’. If it is determined that an asylum seeker came via Turkey, a ‘safe third country’, they can be considered as ‘irregular’ and thus be eligible to be repatriated (The Economist: 11.03.2016).

2.4. Internal Borders of the EU

SILJE: The EU member countries and EU citizens have for many years enjoyed the well-established Schengen agreement, which entails free movement of people between the internal borders of the Schengen area. However, as with the increase of movement between the EU countries, increased border controls and closed borders have become a remedy of effect, and threaten to force the Schengen agreement to an end (European Commission: 04.03.2016). The majority of the refugees have arrived in Greece, Italy and Hungary. A way to employ migration control is through the Dublin Regulation. This states that an asylum seeker is obligated to seek for asylum in the first EU country he or she enters (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2011: 400).

There have been intense discussions of the disproportionate burden-sharing between the EU member states, resulting from the Dublin Regulation, which has placed most of the responsibility for the newly arrived individuals on the southern European member states (BBC: 04.03.2016). In September, the EU decided to make an active move to ease the pressure on the southern European states; a relocation scheme was introduced, and was to ensure the relocation of 160.000 refugees in the Southern European countries, and transfer them to other European countries experiencing less pressure. However, Dimitris Avrampoulous, the Migration and Home Affairs Commissioner to the EU, stated that the relocation of refugees has failed severely with only 272 refugees being moved by the beginning of 2016 (The Express: 14.01.2016). As the Southern countries in Europe are not getting the help asked for, and furthermore promised by the EU, they have responded dramatically by closing their borders imminently and with prompt effect (BBC: 04.03.2016).

Below in this text is an outline of the most discussed approaches taken by EU countries to minimise the influx of refugees to European soil, seen from a border perspective. The women we have interviewed have not all been affected by the present state in Europe as they arrived earlier. However, the outline demonstrates an increased tendency of what refugees are faced with when coming to Europe.

2.5. The Balkan-Route

Serbia, Macedonia, Slovenia, Hungary and Austria are countries that operated mostly as transit zones for refugees, travelling through on their way to Northern Europe. In early February 2016, the five countries presented a new scheme for how to register refugees at the border. The new strategy will employ stricter border control between the countries involved, and a strengthening of the system for collecting identification and biometric details from the refugees, so to make sure of who is a legal refugee, with the right to protection under international human rights law (RT.com: 19.02.2016). As a result of the closed borders and increased border control, thousands of refugees are stranded at the border between Macedonia and Greece. Austria's Minister of Interior has given a statement saying that the Balkan-Route will remain closed permanently, and that those refugees who are planning to travel this way should be notified and not given false hope that there is any way of passage through these countries (Al-Jazeera: 10.03 2016).

In September, Hungary closed its borders to Serbia and Croatia with effective remedies. The Hungarian right-wing Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, decided to build what has later been referred to as the *"Great Wall of Europe"* as a dramatic response to the influx of refugees coming to Hungary to seek asylum, or passing through the country on their way to Northern Europe, mostly Germany (The Daily Mail: 17.09.2015). Another example, of the political climate in the area of forced migration and refugees within the EU becoming tighter, is Austria who received approximately 90.000 refugees in 2015. As a response to the high number, and an even higher number of people passing through, they have introduced a daily limit of people who can enter the country, and whom can register for asylum (The Guardian: 29.02.2016).

Situation at the Greek-Macedonian Border

As stated above, many of the Balkan countries have closed their borders, Macedonia being one of them. The closing of this border has led to thousands of refugees being stranded in Idomeni, a Greek border town between Greece and Macedonia. More than 13.000 people are trapped in Idomeni with nowhere to turn and no chance to continue further within Europe. There is said to be about 6-7000 people spread out in the surrounding region. The situation has been called a humanitarian crisis, as the camps

where the refugees are held are overcrowded and the sanitary conditions are increasingly deteriorating with the ever-increasing number of people arriving in Idomeni on a daily basis. It has also been reported that the Macedonian border police have used tear gas and soft bullets on those trying to cross the Macedonian border, with Greek border police observing in the distance, not interfering in the horrific event occurring on the other side of the border (Al Jazeera: 06.03.2016).

Northern Europe

Germany, along with four other EU countries, and six member states to Schengen, have made a statement that they wish to prolong the temporary border checks, so as to control the flow of refugees entering their territory (Reuters: 23.01.2016). The border control was introduced by Germany in September, and is in effect at the border between Germany and Austria. Germany first announced a ten-day control that was later extended to 20 days, and has been extended ever since. At present, Germany wants the border control to be in place indefinitely (EU Observer: 21.01.2016).

Denmark and Sweden

On the 4th of February, Sweden implemented a strict border control on the Danish border, allowing no one without identification documents to cross the border. The Swedish border control is a response to the high influx of refugees to Sweden during the fall/winter 2015 (The Guardian: 04.01.2016). On the 4th of January 2016, as a response to the Swedish implementation of border control, Denmark imposed border control on the Danish-German border. The Danish border control does not reject everyone at the border: those who wish to seek asylum in Denmark can enter, but those who wish to travel through Denmark, either to Norway or Sweden will be rejected at the border (Politiken: 04.01.2016). The border control is temporary, but has continuously been extended up until now (Politiken 01.04.2016).

MARIE: We choose to highlight the case of Denmark as the Danish government has implemented particularly strict asylum tightenings (Altinget: 13.11.2015). In the wake of the Danish asylum tightenings, the Danish Minister of Integration, Inger Støjberg, alongside with the Danish government, published advertisements in Lebanese newspapers to keep Syrian refugees from entering Denmark (The Daily Mail:

08.09.2015). Moreover, with the asylum tightenings followed new legislation, amongst others a three year waiting period for family reunification. Moreover, the tightenings allows for increased detention of asylum-seekers, as well as a limitation of judicial review for detainees (Altinget: 13.11.2015). The state prison of Vridsløselille now functions to imprison rejected asylum seekers in up to 23 hours per day (Amnesty International: 01.05.2016). The above mentioned case with Denmark is of importance to our project, as our interviewees Huda and Steer have been affected by them since they are living in Denmark.

2.6. Women on the move

IDA: In this section we outline previous research on female refugees navigating borders and the asylum system, to further contextualise our empirical data.

Until recently, the discourse on the movement of women has been seen through the narrow lens of human trafficking – portraying the woman as a victim, a being without agency who forcefully, or out of desperation, find themselves trafficked in Europe, consequently engaging in prostitution and sexual labour (Plambech 2014: 384). The political discourse, and the public media discourse distinguish the women into two groups: they are either victims or criminals. Those who do not fall within the category of being a victim - a vulnerable woman with no power to change the circumstances she initially was forced to engage in - are looked upon as illegal migrants – who do not have the right to compassion or humanitarian assistance in Europe (Plambech 2014: 384-385). Migration governance in Europe is usually subsumed with a humanitarian ideal of providing aid to those who suffer – the woman trafficked to Europe is a *"deserving suffering body"*, but being an undocumented migrant, she is also not worthy of European protection. When a woman herself is seen as to have willingly crossed a border, entering a European country without permission, she exerts a level of agency not fitting to that of a victim, and her consciousness over own choices deem her to be a criminal rather than a victim (Plambech 2014: 385).

According to Jacqueline Bhabha, female asylum seekers are usually not considered to be conventional refugees. This is generally explained through three different, but connected, factors. One is that international refugee law builds on a male paradigm, as

gender was not mentioned as a ground for persecution in the Refugee Convention. The second one is within the scope of institutional ideology, meaning that those who work with administering asylum applications assume a male-centred understanding of persecution, deeming asylum claims that deviate from this norm to be apolitical. The third factor concerns the procedural domain, in the sense that state practice has implemented these discriminatory asylum policies, which do not consider gender-specific claims. In her article "Demography and Rights: Women, Children and Access to Asylum" Bhabha studies the accuracy of these explanations (Bhabha 2004: 228-229).

In the 1980s and 1990s feminist scholars and women's rights organisations started to raise the issue of gender blindness in the asylum procedure. The gender-specific dimension of human rights violations, as for example rape and coerced female genital mutilation was increasingly considered as a form of persecution. Furthermore, gendered activism, for instance cooking for opposition activists, was in some cases recognised as belonging to a political group. That female asylum seekers in many occasions are still seen as apolitical and as victims has, according to some, been a disadvantage, and to others, an advantage for the women. On the one hand women often do not fit into the male-centred understanding of what constitutes an asylum claim. On the other hand, the fact that female asylum seekers are often seen as victims can be to their advantage, as it can enhance their credibility in the asylum process (Bhabha 2004: 230-231).

According to Bhabha neighbouring countries of so-called "refugee producing countries", hold a much larger population of female refugees than male refugees. At the same time, there are far more male asylum seekers than female in countries, which are receiving many asylum seekers (Bhabha 2004: 232). The explanation for this is that there is insufficient access for women to reach the necessary formal and informal structures enabling migration. Furthermore, women are more often affected by their family status and generally have less access to economic resources. Nevertheless, Bhabha states that there has been a small increase of women migrating as strategy for escaping gender-related oppression (Bhabha 2004: 235).

Bhabha comes to the conclusion that women are not apparently disadvantaged in the actual asylum process, but that the actual issue lies in the access to asylum systems.

According to the statistics women are actually more likely to gain asylum than men. One explanation for this is that the group of women who manages to access the asylum systems generally have more severe claims, another is that a large part of the asylum seeking women come from countries with high recognition rate (Bhabha 2004: 236-238).

Alison Gerard and Sharon Pickering study in their article "Gender, Securitization and Transit: Refugee Women and the Journey to the EU" how functional border sites, situated on the external EU borders, function in a gendered manner. According to Gerard and Pickering it is difficult to determine how many women who are crossing borders outside the legal framework, but many studies point towards an increase of women crossing borders. They state that research focusing on gender and refugee protection mainly concentrates on experiences in the refugee camp (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 340-342). The women interviewed in their study all travelled from Somalia to Malta (via Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya and across the Mediterranean). The interviewees explained the situation of being in transit through different themes; *"…exposure to violence, conditions of accommodation, incarceration, how long the journey took and how safe it was…"*. The outcome of these different themes was mainly reliant on financial capital, but also on gender (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 344).

According to Gerard and Pickering it is clear that men and women who travel through the Sahara are subjected to different forms of violence. While men are generally threatened with being subjected to violence (and/or are actually being subjected to violence), women are generally threatened with being subjected to sexual violence (and/or are actually being subjected to sexual violence). Furthermore, extortion and negotiation are relevant aspects that appear in the narratives, as well as the possibility to avoid being exposed to violence through financial capital. Some women who did not have the financial means to pay their way through the desert, had to pay through sexual services (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 346-347). The amount of resources of the women who took part in Gerard and Pickering's research also determined the conditions of the boat they travelled with from Libya to Malta. This includes both social and capital resources, as being part of a specific social network could mean a more secure boat (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 351).

According to Amnesty International, women who travel alone and women who travel with children express that they feel specifically insecure in transit areas and camps in Hungary, Greece and Croatia, as they have to sleep in the same area and use the same sanitary facilities as large groups of men. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that smugglers in some instances target women who are travelling alone, as they are seen as more vulnerable. Three women who took part in the study state that smugglers tried to coerce them into doing sexual favours (Amnesty International: 18.01.2016).

Several of the women also describe violence performed by the police in Greece and Hungary. One of the women was locked in a closed facility, together with many others in Hungary and speaks of police violence against a woman who asked to be released. Another woman states the following about her experience in Greece:

> *"People started screaming and shouting, so the police attacked us and was hitting everyone with sticks. (...) I was crying and was separated from my mother. (...) I showed them my arm and a police officer saw my arm and laughed, I asked for a doctor, they asked me and my mother to leave."*
> (Amnesty International: 18.01. 2016).

From the previous research found on this subject it is clear that female refugees are exposed to gender-specific violence and obstacles when crossing borders. The gendered discourse on women and trafficking affects how women who choose to migrate are generally viewed upon, as they deviate from the norm of considering female refugees to be victims. Furthermore, the asylum claims made by female asylum seekers still seem to be considered as deviating from the masculine norm in some sense, as women are seen as less political and more as victims. Gerard and Pickering outline the conditions and experiences of women fleeing from Somalia and Malta who are currently in transit. The article offers an important aspect of the functions and practices of one of the external borders of the EU.

The report from Amnesty International provides us with an outlook on the more recent situation, as it was published in January 2016. Moreover, the testimonies found in the report are given by women who are in a somewhat similar situation, as the women we have interviewed, making the material important for us to consider. The important and relevant theoretical concepts found in the academic articles of this section, as for

example victimisation and security, are further defined and discussed in the Theory Chapter.

Our research, which builds on the interviewed women's narratives, is mostly situated within the borders of the EU, but also somewhat on the external borders. While the women we have interviewed also talk about their experiences of being in transit, their stories were not told in a situation of transit and the narratives are thereby situated in a different context. Through these narratives the understanding of the gendered dimension of routes and borders within the EU, a political field that is constantly changing and fluctuating, can be broadened.

2.7 Family Reunification

MARIE: We highlight the concept of family reunification, as its relevance is demonstrated by recent restrictions on the definition and legislation on family reunification. These tightenings will inevitably influence how strategies are planned out, for women on the move. As it has been stated, more women and children are on the move today than previously, with many of them wishing to seek family reunification with family members who have made it to Northern Europe. When in Flensburg, Pia told us how some are now divided, with no prospect of reunification, due to stricter asylum procedures and to the implemented border control between Denmark and Germany, keeping asylum seekers out from entering Denmark or Sweden (Field Notes: 28.02.2016). We thereby focus on Denmark as an example of these restrictions.

On November 13th 2015 the Danish right-wing government presented 34 proposals on asylum tightenings, which were implemented in law on January 26th 2016. Hereunder, the highly debated legislative proposal of L87 was presented (Jyllands-posten: 26.01.2016). L87 includes a prolonged waiting period for family-reunification. Only after 3 years of living in Denmark will it be possible to apply for family reunification, *"Pure poison"* according to The Danish Refugee Council (Politiko: 07.12.2015).

Both the Geneva Convention and the Additional Protocols repeatedly link the protection of the child to the maintenance of *family life*. They stress that

"…families should be kept together, and every effort made to promote the reunion of families separated by reason of armed conflict" - the goal is to preserve family life and the natural process of child development (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2011: 476). Furthermore, The EU Family Reunification Directive states that spouses and unmarried minor children are eligible of third country national sponsors. Article 5 (3) of the directive requires that a family reunification application must be submitted and examined while the family member is still outside the EU Member State territory where the sponsor resides. Member States can derogate from this provision (Handbook on European Law relating to Asylum, 2016).

Karen Jacobsen, professor in political science and consultant for UNHCR states that, *"The political marginality of refugees and asylum seekers often means that governments can implement rapid changes in policy (in either positive or negative directions) with impunity"* (Jacobsen 1996: 678) which Denmark, with the introduction of L87 is a clear example of. This touches upon a key point, namely that of the principle of state sovereignty.

Gallya Lahav argues that family reunification arose because of global factors, relating to both the international system and the character of migration (work labour) and points out that the interest between individual versus state rights, both embodied in international law, were compatible as long as liberal democracies sought to maintain free markets and open borders. Then, when the global economic recession and stagnation of the 1980s came, so did a change in migration patterns, curtailing immigrations and strengthened state interest (Lahav 1997: 353-354). The state's obligation to individuals and the state's right to sovereignty is essential to understand, not only the development of family reunification policy, but also the strengthening of the state in controlling family migration (Lahav 1997: 368).

Lahav concludes that family reunification only exists as a privilege, granted to the individual based on 1. The right to travel, and 2. The right to family life, safeguarded internationally by human rights, but states that no international instrument can establish family reunification as a fundamental right (Lahav 1997: 369).

> *"Although the right to exist one's country is generally recognized as a human right, the corresponding right of a person to enter a country other than his or her own has not developed, since no state allows the unlimited and unpatrolled crossing of its borders"* (Lahav 1997: 349).

The right of the Convention Refugee is simply overruled by the sovereignty of the state. This explains yet another reason that allows for asylum tightenings, such as the L87, to be implemented.

Yet another issue remains, causing despondency for asylum seekers. In all of these instruments, the term of 'family' has not been defined. In the 2004 EU Qualification Directive, the EU sought to define a 'common policy on asylum' to ensure that member states apply common criteria for the identification of those generally in need of protection. Article 2(f) of the Directive addresses the definition of 'family members', which matches EU law and practise of many European states, but do not necessarily match with the international concept and practises (Goodwin-Gill and McAdam 2011: 60-61). In line, Gallya Lahav stresses how there is no universally accepted definition of the family, because cultural, social, and religious norms influence the way families are constituted in different societies (Lahav 1997: 359). Another important aspect is the role of the woman. Elenore Kofman argues that migration is gendered, which becomes evident as women entering through family-related migration are not just the followers of the male primary refugee and that familial considerations also apply to men, even if it is not acknowledged (Kofman 2004: 256).

These restrictions have serious consequences for the people who are still on the move. As the first influx of asylum seekers entering the EU were predominantly men, it has been stated that more and more women and children are entering the dangerous routes in order to reach 'safety' on the shores of Europe, redeeming their right to seek for asylum. In reality, these restrictions will mean that the safe routes secured by family reunification, will not be available and will most likely push more women into dangerous and unknown land.

3. Method Chapter

In the Method Chapter we firstly go through the different considerations we make in connection to data generation and data collection, including our role as researchers as well as our method for performing the interviews and coding them. Secondly, we introduce the method of narratology, which serves as a method for reading and analysing the narratives found in the interview material.

3.1. Data generation

MARIE: The collecting of narratives is done through semi-structured interviews, since semi-structured interviews seek to gather descriptions of the interviewee's world of life, with the purpose of interpreting the meaning of the described narratives as well as opening up to a dynamic conversation - giving the interviewer a glimpse into the lived experiences of the interviewee (Kvale & Brinkmann 2008: 144).

The present thesis is largely based on data generated from our fieldwork. The fieldwork expands from participating in the Conference in Hamburg, to visiting Refugees Welcome in Flensburg, Refugees Welcome in Rostock as well as an asylum-centre in Roskilde, Denmark. The fieldwork from Hamburg is conducted as observation and partly participant-observation, while our fieldwork conducted from Flensburg, Rostock and Roskilde includes semi-structured interviews, group interviews as well as observation.

Our main interviews were all conducted with young women, which we take into consideration as their age can have influenced their social positions as well as strategies employed.

Why interview women?

SILJE: Today, women and children who are crossing the borders to Europe make up for approximately 60 % of those who arrive via the Mediterranean Sea, coming to the shores of Greece. UNICEF published the numbers in a press release on the 2nd of February 2016, stating that this is a dramatic increase, as in September 2015 this

number was only 27% (UNICEF: 02.02.2016). With the new statistics and overview of refugees arriving in Europe, it becomes evident that women and children account for the dominant group. As to narrow our research, we have decided to focus on women, as there is a lack of female perspectives on movement, and their stories are rarely told (Gerard & Pickering 2012: 338-339).

As written in previously mentioned report from Amnesty, interviews with female refugees have shown that they are vulnerable on their journey to and within Europe, facing violence, assaults and rape. In the report, 40 interviews with female refugees in Northern Europe were carried out. The women had travelled from Turkey to Greece, and from Greece through the Balkans on their way up to Northern Europe (Amnesty International: 18.02.2016). Many of the women interviewed witnessed of physical assaults and financial exploitation at every stage of the journey. The assaults were usually from their smugglers, security staff or other refugees. (Amnesty International: 18.02.2016).

3.2. Empirical data

Fields of research, context of the interviews and gatekeepers

MARIE: To conduct the interviews and to find possible interviewees, we needed to use our connections. A gatekeeper is someone who gives the researcher access to a field. The gatekeeper can be someone who is familiar with the group of interviewees, which can deem to be both positive and negative for the research, especially when interviewing a vulnerable group as refugees and asylum seekers who might have very difficult stories to tell (Liempt and Bilger 2010: 125).

Hamburg

SILJE: As mentioned, we attended a three-day conference in Hamburg, which was initiated in collaboration by the group ‘Lampedusa’ in Hamburg, as well as politically active refugees from Berlin and Hannover, with the aim of creating a powerful network of refugees and migrants to create a platform for reflection and learning. The Conference was held in the big art venue ‘Kampnagel’ and was fully packed with refugees, migrants and activists from all over the world. Contrary to what we had hoped, we did not conduct any interviews at the conference due to time constraints and

the fact that we were unable to find an interviewee who had not been living in Germany for several years. Therefore, our fieldwork from Hamburg was conducted as participant-observation.

Flensburg

Marie, one of our group members, functioned as a gatekeeper during our trip to Flensburg. In Flensburg we were introduced to Pia from Refugees Welcome, through a common friend of Marie, who helped us get connected to the organisation (Field Notes: 28.02.2016). Pia works at the Refugees Welcome facilities, situated at the central train station of Flensburg. Our hope was to interview female asylum seekers arriving at the station, but due to the newly implemented Danish border control and closing of the Danish border, the asylum seekers pursued new routes, and therefore left the facilities in Flensburg empty. Pia explained, that one of the new routes was with ferry from Rostock to Trelleborg, Sweden. We therefore extended our field trip to Rostock, as we heard many women and children were now awaiting their opportunities in the small seaport of Northern Germany.

Rostock

In Rostock we managed to reach out to the organisation Rostock Hilft through their Facebook page and here we got connected to Ulrikke, a representative of Rostock Hilft. She became our gatekeeper in Rostock, as she was the one who introduced us to the women we came to interview (Field Notes: 11.03.2016 and Field Notes: 12.03.2016). She got us in contact with Katayun, Sabor, Sara and Nillem. Our first interview was conducted as a group-interview at a café located in a small shopping mall.

We met with our interviewees in Rostock after participating in a political rally, which aimed to focus on women's rights and female empowerment (Field Notes: 11.03.2016). All the interviewees were active participants in the rally, and therefore we consider them to be politically engaged women. Katayun was the eldest and held a speech at the rally about women's rights, and she was the one who introduced us to the other women when we were at the café. She came to Germany five years ago, from Iran, with her young daughter. She arrived in Germany by plane, which is why we did

not make use of her narrative, as she did not have a direct experience with border - crossing, but provided us with information about the field in Rostock. Katayun spoke English, and so did Nillem, who was the youngest of all of the women we interviewed in Rostock, at only 18 years old.

Nillem had come to Rostock during the fall of 2015 and her movement through Europe and the EU borders provided a strong narrative. She had some close family members elsewhere in Germany. Sabor was another woman from Iran, who had come to Germany with her two young children. She did not speak much English, so Nillem helped with the translation. The fourth and last woman we spoke to in Rostock was 27-year old Sara, who had fled from Afghanistan with her husband. She had then become a mother of two, while having her asylum case tried in Norway. After a dramatic deportation, her family is now awaiting their asylum case in Rostock (Field Notes: 11.03.2016).

Roskilde

Silje, another member of our group, had previously interned with the Red Cross, through which she had become accustomed with a group of women who had come to Denmark as refugees. When we looked for women to interview that would fit our scope of research, she came to think of Huda and Steer. She then contacted Huda, who lives in Roskilde asylum centre, a former psychiatric ward called Skt. Hans, and she was willing to be interviewed and also helped us get in touch with Steer (Huda: 18.03.2016). We interviewed Huda first, at a cafe in Copenhagen, but she was also present at the interview with Steer. Our second group-interview, with both Huda and Steer, took place at Roskilde Asylum-centre in an activity room. Luckily, we had the room to ourselves as the residents were mostly sleeping during the day or attending school. As Silje's familiarity with the two women might pose an ethical and subjective dilemma in an interview situation, she did not take on a dominant role in the interview situation, but was merely present as to make the women feel comfortable sharing their stories. The Gatekeeper is usually someone close to the narrators, in this manner the interview situation will be arranged by someone who has the trust of those interviewed (Liempt & Bilger 2010: 125-126).

The narrative of Huda differs contextually from the others, as she came to Europe before the two other main narratives, she did not experience the present EU border-regime, and also navigated in a different route. She came from Algeria and furthermore, Libya, whilst both Steer and Nillem came from Turkey and travelled through the Balkan-route by foot.

Both Huda and Steer have their Red Cross internship with New Times, a newspaper written by and for asylum seekers (New Times). Here, they work as journalists writing stories about life in Denmark and the political situation relating to asylum. Huda came to Denmark some years ago with her twin sister and her brother. She is a Palestinian-Algerian (Huda: 18.03.2016). Steer, a Syrian woman, came to Europe during the summer of 2015. She experienced border-crossing close up, as she made her way from Turkey to Vienna by foot (Steer: 22.03.2016).

3.3. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews

MARIE: As we have now outlined the context of the field, we turn to the specific methods used while assembling empirical data.

Participant observation and the conference in Hamburg

Participant observation is to be understood as describing the conditions in which the fieldworker seeks to participate in, and observe the activities of a field. Participate simply means to take part in, while observation means keeping a distance (Hastrup et.al. 2011: 31). In practice, participant observation depends much on getting access into the desired field. Therefore, the researcher is depending on establishing relations that will function both as gatekeepers and as subjects (Hastrup et.al. 2011: 61). In Hamburg, we gained access to the Conference, by being both students and activists in Copenhagen. By using participant observation at the conference, we were able to collect useful data. The insights learned in Hamburg contributed with knowledge that supported our qualitative interviews, by creating food for thought, and thereby became a stepping-stone to our chosen themes.

Interviews in Rostock and Roskilde

Applying interviewing as a method in one's research helps highlighting the narrative dimensions of the human presence. As such, there is no distinction between participant observation and interviewing. Interviews must be viewed as social events in which the interviewer is a participant observer. It is important to take into consideration, that the researcher may play a more dominant role in terms of when and where the interview takes place and who is present, as well as through the kinds of questions asked (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 120).

Semi-structured interviews, gaining access and role of the interpreter

The semi-structured interview enables the researcher to share into the world of the interviewees and get an insight into their experiences, from their own perspective. The semi-structured interview is in some ways controlled by the themes the researcher has an interest in, but at the same time, it allows for the interviewee to have an influence on the themes, which is of importance as we are interested in the nuances of the interviewee's narratives.

In practice, the semi-structured interview builds on a preparation, in the form of an interview guide (Hastrup et. al. 2011: 77). The interview guide helped us, to both keep in line with the aim of the project, but also to ask questions that does not necessarily have to be in the guide (Hastrup et. al. 2011: 77). When developing our interview guide, we focused on asking questions that allowed for the interviewee to open up and we avoided asking leading questions that would disrupt the narrative. We organised the guide through themes with head questions and follow-up questions (Hastrup et. al. 2011: 77). In order to organise and help the process of analysing our field notes and data from the interviews, we made themes out of the data material applying the method of coding. There is no requirement that the categories from the data can only be assigned to one theme (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007: 153), therefore, some categories overlap. We have applied the method of coding with a semi concept-driven approach based on theory read beforehand and after the interviews were conducted (Brinkmann & Tanggaard 2010: 47). After we coded the interviews and field data into categories, we focused on what is analytically interesting dividing the categories into

themes such as; *security and violence, gender-roles, social navigation* and *financial capital.*

Making use of group-interviews is a useful technique to allow for interpersonal dynamics to play out, adding valuable insight to the interpretation of an event. The researcher has to be aware of the fact, that group dynamics can impact the interaction and response-patterns within the group (Frey & Fontana 1991: 176). In our case the first group-interview was not planned out from the beginning, but we saw that the trust between the women helped them to share their stories and open up.

In line, some criticism can be found, particularly from feminist research, when making use of an interpreter in qualitative research, especially when it involves asylum-seeking women. This is because there is a risk in the research process that can be the direct result of ignoring issues related to power and authority (Berman & Tyyskä 2011: 186). Berman and Tyyskä argue that issues of power can be reduced or eliminated, if there is a mutual respect and if the interpreter is incorporated in the project as a research partner (Berman & Tyyskä 2011: 186). In our case, we did not hire an interpreter from outside, but got the necessary help from the women who were already a part of our research project. We experienced that they had mutual respect for each other as well as good intensions.

Women to Women

SILJE: Oakley describes, in the book "Doing Feminist Research", the role between the interviewer and the subjects, and the process of the interview itself

> *"…the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee is non-hierarchical, and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship"* (Oakley 1981: 41).

When conducting interviews with women about, what are, no doubt, sensitive matters, perhaps specifically gendered, it could be to our advantage because we are all women. There is no patriarchy or gendered hierarchy between us, which will make the interview more intimate (Oakley 1981: 46-47). When women interview women,

according to Oakley, it becomes personal to a greater extent. When women interview women, there is no wish to reproduce the women into stereotypes that earlier have been created by predominantly men. Instead, women being interviewed by women will intentionally promote a new awareness, stemming from the women themselves, an awareness which has not been accounted for during history (Oakley 1981: 48-49). However, although the gendered hierarchy between the interviewer and the interviewee, evades due to all participants in the interview being of the same sex, that is not to say that there are no other established relations between us, or to say that there will not be other power relations present that might affect the interview situation.

In conventional patriarchal societies there is a masculine, and a feminine psychology. The divisions have, throughout history, generated two social groups in society; the dominant one and the subordinate. Women have seen to adhere to the latter. The characteristics of the subordinate group have usually been an increased sensitivity and irrationality, as well as being disadvantaged materially. As Oakley describes it, these are some of the characteristics produced in the discourse of ethnic minorities (Oakley 1981: 38-39). In textbook methodology on interviews, the interviewer is usually masculine, and therefore this domination might become apparent in an interview situation with women; therefore, when women interview women, the interview can be more levelled (Oakley 1981: 39).

We found that gaining access to informants was not easy at all. This experience turned out to be very valuable to us, as it gave us an understanding of how non-accessible especially female asylum-seekers are. In every circumstance of our interviews, a gatekeeper has created the trust needed from the women to gain access. In this manner, our gender turned out to be a form of gatekeeper as well, as we learned that the role of gender gained us access to an area that is not open to men. Thus, the characteristics of the researcher can either stand as a barrier for conducting the research, or as a helping hand. Other characteristics such as age, nationality and ethnic identification might also shape relationships with gatekeepers and people under study in important ways (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007: 73). In the same manner, participating in the debates and discussions in the “Women’s space” at the Conference was allowed because we are all women in our group. Had we been men, we would not have gained access.

Secondary Material

As part of our data material, we make use of secondary data in the forms of newspaper articles, academic articles as well as reports published by Amnesty International and UNICEF. As there is little academic research on the current situation related to refugees and the EU borders, we use newspaper articles and reports to gain this information. Nevertheless, we are aware that the reports from Amnesty International and UNICEF might be influenced by their agenda.

3.4 Narratology as method

IDA: *"Narratology is the theory and study of narrative and narrative structure and the ways they affect our perception"* (Czarniawska 2010: 58). The reason for using the method of narratology for this thesis, is that it will assist in understanding how women in different situational positions experience their movement to and within the borders of the EU and which strategies they employ on their different routes. Through the assistance of interviews with female asylum seekers who have crossed borders we receive narratives of their individual lived experiences. This allows us to explore the particular context of borders within and towards the EU from different views, in terms of power and gender. Through these narratives of female refugees, which are not often told and heard, we hope to problematise and add important nuances to the idea of what a border entails in both theory and in practice.

The difference between a narrative and a story is that a narrative is a set of chronological events, while a story is put together in a way that is meant to be logical. Barbara Czarniawska further on describes a narrative as a form of knowledge, a form of social life and a form of communication. She presents a narratology that is inspired by post-structuralist theory, in the sense that regularities, patterns and connections are tools that are utilised to analyse a narrative. One way to employ narratology is to investigate how a story is being made, which is a form of sense-making process. At first a narrative is often told chronologically and events are explained in a causal manner, but when actions and events are connected into a plot with a point, the narrative reforms into a story. In that sense it does not follow chronological time, but kairotic time, which means that it is based on a set of meaningful events (Czarniawska 2010: 60-61).

To explain how to analyse the making of a story Czarniawska uses the example of a live radio broadcast, which revolves around three dimensions: *the chronicle* (what is happening), *the mimesis* (how does it look) and *the emplotment* (in which a logical structure to make sense of the event is presented). When creating *the emplotment*, there are three operations that are employed: *creating characters, attributing a function to single events* and *finding an interpretive theme,* which gives the events a meaningful sequence (Czarniawska 2010: 61-62).

Marita Eastmond suggests some further elements of analysis that should be taken into consideration when using personal narratives. The narratological researcher has to

> *"... distinguish between life as lived, the flow of events that touch on a person's life; life as experienced, how the person explains and ascribes meaning to what happened, drawing on previous experience and cultural repertoires; and life as told, how experience is framed and articulated in a particular context and to a particular audience."* (Eastmond 2007: 249).

Furthermore, it is of importance to be aware of the fact that a narrative that concerns the past is affected both by the present situation and by the imagined future (Eastmond 2007: 249).

Narratives produced in interview situations

Czarniawska explains that an interview situation can be seen as a micro-site for the production of narratives (or an opportunity to circulate them). In some interview situations, as for example when the aim of the interview is to receive a historical description, answers to interview questions are often given in a narrative manner spontaneously. To further enhance the possibility to receive an actual narrative in an interview situation the researcher can use the idea of a plot, which means that both the logic of succession and the logic of transformation are engaged. Through engaging the logic of transformation, several other elements follow; there can be a paradigm shift, a force and a counterforce or a specific event or action forcing the transformation. These additional layers change the narrative into a story or plot (Czarniawska 2010: 64).

Eastmond states the importance of considering one's own role as a researcher when interpreting and representing narratives, adding a fourth analytical dimension: life as text. The cultural assumptions and personal experience of the researcher can affect the representation and interpretation of the narrative as a form of filter, through which the narrative is poured. This is something that the researcher has to be aware of when transforming narratives of lived experiences into text (Eastmond 2007: 249-250). As we are a group of three individuals writing this thesis, we bring different experiences to the table. This can be of our advantage when we are interpreting, as it gives us a more diverse point of departure. Nevertheless, it is of great importance that we consider our role at both the interviewing stage and the interpreting stage of the research process.

Narratology in the field of refugee studies

Eastmond put forward the strengths and limitations of narratology as a method, in particular in the field of forced migration. Through narratives the interviewee is seen as an 'experiencing subject'; the manner through which the interviewee is making sense of her experiences is understood as one truth. The researcher thereby avoids generalising the interviewees' narrative as another example of "the refugee experience" (Eastmond 2007: 248-249). In terms of making order of a narrative it is important to recognise that most refugees are in the middle of their narrative, which means that they are still in the process of experiencing. Even though we can assume that some degree of change is an important feature of a refugee's life, we do not know, and should not assume that we know, what these changes entail, as it can depend on personal, political and contextual factors. Through acknowledging this we open up for the possibility to analyse common experiences of particular social groups (which of course also includes variations within the group) (Eastmond 2007: 252-254).

Building on the work of Hannah Arendt, Michael Jackson explores the politics of storytelling. Arendt has written extensively on the power of storytelling and how it can transform the private into an action of public meaning. Jackson argues that this goes both ways, as public meaning can transform into the private sphere through storytelling (Jackson 2013: 34). Expanding on that view on storytelling, Jackson studies how stories help people in situations of displacement and violence. Storytelling can have an empowering effect, as it creates the opportunity to balance and integrate our own

personal view within the context of the worldview of others, confirming our place in the institutional framework of a state, nation or community (Jackson 2013: 58).

In situations of displacements and violence, there is a risk that stories are not told or not heard as the institutional context and thereby the institutional recognition is missing (Jackson 2013: 58). Jackson finds that these untold or unheard stories is at the expense of the individual's social existence, it is: *"…the presence of others who see and hear what we hear that assures us of the reality of the world and ourselves…"* (Arendt in Jackson 2013: 58-59). When exploring violence and storytelling, Jackson engages with the issue of trauma. Trauma can be considered a very private and non-sharable experience (Jackson 2013: 62).

Using the examples of war veterans from New Zealand and Aboriginal children in Australia, Jackson finds that it is easier to come across stories of physical violence, while the more abstract experience of being reduced to a non-being, is something that is often untold (Jackson 2013: 66-67). That these stories are not being told may derive from the sense of shame. The construction of shame has in that sense function in the process, which obstructs the transformation of stories from the private of one's self to the sphere of public recognition (Jackson 2013: 68-69).

Moving on to the specific contexts of displacement, Jackson discuss how violent situations, as for example war, destroy the inter-subjective routines, relationships and movements that enforce the relationship between the public and the private. These violent events often lead to two different situations, which both include some kind of fleeing; either life moves onto the open road or into transit camps and countries of asylum. The route of the open road frequently means no private sphere, while the transit camp and country of asylum puts lives in privacy and passivity (Jackson 2013: 82).

The situation of being in flight is often experienced as a form of social death, which is deeply connected to shame. This form of shame does not necessarily come from the feeling of guilt, but from losing one's social context (Jackson 2013: 82-83). That loss leads to a situation in which one is no longer viewed from the eyes of familiar faces, but from the view of the unfamiliar or the anonymous (as the face of bureaucracy):

"... who one is are eclipsed by the external definition of what one is in the eyes of others." (Jackson 2013: 82). Through losing one's institutional framework and through being subjected to the national gaze, the private domain is often where one feels that it is possible to exercise one's freedom (Jackson 2013: 83).

That the lives of people in crisis, including the lives of people in flight are in some ways not narratable, is not only dependent on losing a social context for narration. The coherence and chronology of a narrative, created through space, time and characters is often broken. The events in life that are connected to the flight are scattered and have little connection to life before the flight (Jackson 2013: 103-104). Furthermore, even if one has the possibility to speak one's native language when sharing a narrative, a language often lacks the words to cover the most traumatic experiences of a narrative (Jackson 2013: 106). The trauma of a refugee, and thereby the story of a refugee, stays open as long as their family is not reunited, as long as their country of origin is still in an uncertain situation and as long as the shock of the flight continues (Jackson 2013: 107).

According to Jackson there are two spheres of governance in our lives: 'the immediate sphere', which includes family and friends, where we feel that we have knowledge and that we matter, and 'the wider sphere', which we know less about and in which our voices are unheard and our actions are without effect. All human beings are trying to find balance between these spheres, to get a sense of control and power over one's own life. Stories are a tool for regaining this balance (Jackson 2013: 112). If the refugee flight transforms the refugee from a subject (who I am) to an object (what I am in the eyes of others), stories can be a way of reclaiming humanity and to regain power and agency (Jackson 2013: 115).

As Eastmond mentions there are advantages in employing the method of narratology in the field of refugee studies, as the method allows for the interviewees to be 'the experiencing subject' and we can thereby examine structures and patterns, without claiming a particular 'refugee experience'. Jackson's studies on storytelling in situations of displacement furthermore provide us with tools to be aware of the particular field the narratives we have assembled, are situated in. As for example it is of importance that we bear in mind that some traumatic experiences can be too difficult

to narrate, especially since all of our interviews were conducted in English, which is not the native language of any of the interviewees. Jackson's studies also demonstrate the difficulties in analysing patterns and structures in a narrative, while at the same time avoiding to generalise lived experiences.

Feminist theory and narratology

Marion Gymnich outlines how a feminist approach to narratology has developed the method (Gymnich 2013). Initially narratology was used to analyse the structures of narratives, without considering factors as for example gender. With the emergence of so-called contextualist narratology, meaning a narratology that takes the context of the narrative into consideration, gender started to appear as an important element. The reason why, the context in which the narrative is produced needs to be considered, is the assumption that narratives are affected by its cultural, political and historical framework. In 1986 Susan Lanser criticised classical narratology for its shortcomings in considering the context of the narrative, in particular gender, and suggested that gender was to be seen as a narratological category. This form of narratological approach has been called "hybrid narratology", as it combines narratology with feminist theory (Lanser in Gymnich 2013: 705-706).

Feminist narratology initially received a lot of criticism and was regarded as radical at the time. Feminist narratology was considered not to work towards the aim of narratology, that is to objectively describe narrative structures. To answer this criticism feminist narratologists have questioned the objectivity of an assumed gender-neutral approach. To come to terms with the weaknesses in structural narratology, feminist narratologists have suggested new analytical categories, building on the idea that narrative structures are affected by social and cultural power relations (Gymnich 2013: 707-708). One of the core concepts is that of 'narrative authority'. One manner, in which narrative authority is manifested, is the power relation between the narrator and the characters that are created within the narrative. As the narrator is seen as the source of the story, he or she is given the authoritative role by readers or listeners (Gymnich 2013: 709).

During the 1990s there was a paradigm shift in feminist studies, as gender theory emerged. The major shift is the notion that gender is socially and culturally constructed and reproduced. This development has opened up for further analysis in feminist

narratology, as it enables an analysis of the socially constructed role of all genders, in other words the 'gendering' of narratives (Gymnich 2013: 711-712). The idea of feminist narratology as a hybrid narratology has also encouraged the emergence of other hybrids, as for example postcolonial narratology. To avoid an essentialist approach and take the full context into account, the role of gender in narratives has to be considered in connection with other categories, as for example ethnicity and class (Gymnich 2013: 713).

"Narratives are made up of multiple, intersecting, overlapping stories, some which are told, others are suppressed, or deliberately not expressed (Porter 2015: 48). Elisabeth Porter employs the method of feminist narratology, or more specifically gendered narratives in the context of transitional justice. She clarifies her view of gendered narratives as something that applies to narratives given by both women and men. Nevertheless, Porter focuses on women in her article, which she explains through claiming the absence of women's stories in the context of transitional justice. Similar to Gymnich, Porter states the importance of taking an intersectional approach, that is to include factors as class, ethnicity, religion, age, disability and marital status and analyse how these factors intersect with each other (Porter 2015: 36).

Porter further underlines the importance of analytically considering the gendered dimension of narratology through an example: in conflict, women who are exposed to the same form of violence as men, are often affected in other ways, due to the cultural, social and economic meanings that gender entail. Furthermore, women are often exposed to specific forms of violence. *"Hence, stories about both insecurity and security help to reveal gender-specific, culturally particular ways that violence impacts men and women differently"* (Porter 2015: 39-40). Furthermore, central concepts, as for example security, are not gender-neutral, which is exemplified through the context of a refugee camp, where women are afraid of using the bathroom when it is dark outside, as they fear that they will be assaulted on their way there (Porter 2015: 40).

Through employing a feminist approach to narratology we acknowledge that there are specific experiences within the experience of fleeing that are gendered. One example of this is the form of violence that one is at risk of being subjected to or is subjected to, which according to Porter is often gender-specific (Porter 2015: 39-40). Both violence and security are central concepts, that often have gender-specific experiences

connected to them and therefore we investigate the several dimensions of these concepts in the Theory Chapter.

Furthermore, we recognise that the manner in which the narratives are framed is gendered. We contextualise the data, with the assistance of the Context Chapter, to understand the framing of the narratives in our research. Feminist narratology also opens up for taking more factors than gender into account, as for example class and ethnicity and we elaborate on the importance of these factors within the narratives of our research in the Analysis Chapter.

4. Theory Chapter

In this chapter we present the theories we employ to gain a deeper understanding of our empirical and secondary data. *Feminist Standpoint Theory* includes concepts such as situated knowledge, which helps us analyse the refugee women's experience through their narratives, exploring theories of *social positioning* and *situated experience,* as well as *parallel processing*. In order to investigate our conducted narratives, we employ different conceptions of borders such as the social, political and spatial *perception of borders* as well as their functionings to understand the field in which the refugee women navigate.

The theoretical approach we take is thus manifold, as we further apply theory on *gender relations* exploring expressions of masculinity and femininity in relation to migration. This is exemplified in the chosen strategies applied by the women, and therefore we make use of theory on *social navigation* to examine navigational possibilities and strategies employed. Moreover, to understand the women's lived experiences we apply theory on *liminality*, *security* and *violence.* Violence and security are both applied from a state level, exploring the *securitisation* of the EU border-system as well as on a societal and human level, exploring violence and security as experienced by the refugee women.

4.1 The Refugee and the Migrant

SILJE: We begin the Theoretical Chapter with a discussion on the concept and definition of 'refugee', with the purpose of situating our own position in this discussion. The legal definition of a refugee, as written down in the Refugee Convention is as follows;
Article 1 a (2);
(The term refugee shall apply to any person who)

> *"As a result of events occurring before January 1951 and owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, or is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality or being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it* (the Refugee Convention, Resolution 2198*).*

The 1967 Protocol to the Refugee Convention has taken out the time limit and the geographical limit so that it can be applied to anyone, wherever and whenever (the Refugee Convention, Resolution 2198). The above definition of a refugee is the legal one outlined in the Refugee Convention, signed and ratified by the states in Europe (the Refugee Convention, Resolution 2198). However, there is another discussion of just how far reaching the terminology of what constitutes a refugee transcends. Liza Schuster argues that it is not whether or not one meets the legal criteria that makes one a refugee, but instead it is the reasons for which one has to flee that constitutes whether or not one is a refugee. Coming to Europe and not receiving refugee status, in other words becoming a "failed" asylum seeker, does not diminish the initial reasons for fleeing. There is a wider terminology for applying the term refugee, which builds on moralistic and ethical considerations, rather than a strictly legal one (Schuster 2011: 1393). We have therefore decided to use the term refugee on all those who are fleeing war, conflict and persecution, but who might not yet have received the legal status as a Convention refugee.

The humanitarian discourse on refugees has created an imaginary refugee, in need of protection by stronger states. The imaginary refugee lacks agency and willpower and is ultimately surrendered to the compassion of others. When the refugee does not fit into the created imaginary of itself, they will not receive the compassion or help from the stronger other. They are not seen as the Conventional Refugee portrayed in the media and by humanitarian organisations (Zetter 2007: 172-173).

In the media, and the general discourse on refugees and migrants, a division has been created between refugees and migrants, in the sense that political desperation prevails economic desperation. Migrants are often portrayed as "bogus" asylum seekers, only entering Europe to seek prosperity and welfare (Webber et.al 2012: 4). Migrants are essentially in Europe because there is no farmland, no job, no economic opportunities in their homelands to feed and clothe their family. But as they come to Europe, to receive minimum wage, they are often categorised as illegal migrants, as many may not have obtained a legal work permit (Webber et. al. 2012: 4-5). Forced migrants are leaving their home countries for just as complex reasons as the refugee, however their movement is in essence voluntary when comparing to those who flee war and conflict (Zetter 2007: 179). Roger Zetter argues that due to stricter immigration rules, and the securitisation of the migrant that; *"...Refugee status has remained the only systematic and relatively accessible entry-route for large-scale, globalized migration."* (Zetter 2007: 180).

Based on the negative connotations connected to term migrants, we have decided not to use the word, or make a division between a refugee and a migrant, but, as mentioned earlier, use the term 'refugee' in a wide sense.

4.2 Feminist Standpoint Theory & Gender-roles

IDA: In this section we explore feminist standpoint theory, with a specific focus on the concept of situated experience and situated knowledge. We then continue through explaining our theoretical view on gender relations and gender-roles in migration. This allows us to focus on the experiences of the interviewed women, while at the same time analysing the roles of both men and women, as men are also part of the interviewees' narratives.

Standpoint theory and situated knowledge

> *"… a standpoint theory is one that gives light to the specific circumstances and insider knowledge available only to members of a certain collective standpoint. This collective need not to be a group in the strictest sense of the word but rather a shared location identified by heterogeneous commonality. … the idea of a collective standpoint does not imply an essential overarching characteristic but rather a sense of belonging to a group bounded by a shared experience."* (Encyclopaedia of Social Theory 2005: 1).

Feminist academics have tried several different methods to approach the making of general knowledge about gender, while avoiding generalising and thereby taking differentiated experiences and standpoints into account. Through employing feminist standpoint theory, we consider women's experiences as a central component to understanding political relations and realities of gender. It is thereby possible to explore how women's experiences differ from the experiences of other genders, through analysing women's specific social positions (Holland & Ramazanoglu 2002: 60).

Nevertheless, there are different ways of adopting a feminist standpoint within one's research, depending on which position the researcher takes on. Through outlining previous research and usage of feminist standpoint theory, Holland and Ramazanoglu find five characteristics that seem to unify the diverse forms of feminist standpoints:

1. *A feminist standpoint explores relations between knowledge and power.* This means that the different forms of power that is connected to the women in different fields, shape their lives and knowledge.
2. *A feminist standpoint deconstructs the 'knowing feminist'.* This second point refers to make the researcher's social location visible. Through taking power relations between women into account, it is possible to comprehend gendered power relations from a more complex and diverse point of view.
3. *A feminist standpoint is (albeit problematically) grounded in women's experiences, including emotions and embodiment.* The third point raises the

discussion of how we gain knowledge of women's experiences through exploring the relations between experience, knowledge and reality.

4. *A feminist standpoint has to take account of diversity in women's experiences and the interconnected power relations between women.* To understand the differences and common features of women's experiences the researcher has to acquire knowledge about specific gender relations in specific social locations, including specific forms of power, relationships and social situations.
5. *Knowledge from a feminist standpoint is always partial knowledge.* The last point refers to knowledge as being both 'not-total' and 'not-impartial'. This does not mean that feminist standpoint knowledge cannot be general from a local, regional or global view, but that it cannot be seen as universalising (Holland & Ramazanoglu 2002: 64-66).

According to Nancy Hartsock, one of the principal intentions with the feminist standpoint theory was to avoid the naïve idea of a "woman's viewpoint", in the sense that a standpoint is to be seen as a project and not something that is inherited (Hartsock in Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002: 317) To maintain and hold this form of analytical stance, the concept of situated knowledge is employed. Situated knowledge is based on the understanding that a person's *"…knowledge, values, goals and, with them, one's political practices and involvements…"* are affected by one's social position, meaning that situated experience transforms into situated knowledge (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002: 321, 325). Nevertheless, the importance of viewing situated knowledge, not as instantly connected to social positioning, but in connection to social practices (that are influenced by social positioning but also by other factors) is stated (Dorothy Smith in Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002: 317-318).

Another theoretical position that has to be considered when employing standpoint theory is to define what constitutes a group. A group can be people who are located in the same social positioning, or share the same identity community, or people who share a social network or political community. When defining our understanding of group as a concept we employ Stoetzler's and Yuval-Davis' conceptualisation as a point of departure; we acknowledge that not all women share the same thoughts, feelings and ideas, which allows space for agency. Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis furthermore view standpoint theory as dialogical, in the sense that 'the group' and 'the individual' are positioned in a tension that is unresolved (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002: 318). Yuval

Davis' article "Women, Globalization and Contemporary Politics of belonging" from 2009 argues that globalisation is paradoxical in relation to the group and the individual. Yuval Davis argues that even though globalisation has given women access to many fields in which they did not have access to before - we can also see that cultures and communities revert backwards as a return to the "authentic" and reinforce stereotypes of womanhood and manhood and in that way re-establish gender-roles to same extent as before (Yuval-Davis 2009: 2).

Feminist standpoint theory assists us in understanding the dialogical relationship between structure and agency and 'the group' and 'the individual'. The interviewed women move within a field, in which social structures are prevalent, that is the borders within and towards the EU. These structures concern gender, which is our main focus, but also class and ethnicity. These structures are very much present in the narratives assembled in this study, but we also view strategies and agency as a prevailing theme. Through feminist standpoint theory and theory on social navigation we are able to analyse the relationships between these themes. Another important point that we take with us from feminist standpoint theory, which is also mentioned in the section on narratology, is the importance of considering our role as researchers in the analysis.

Parallel processing

MARIE: Another form of situated knowledge is found in the complexity of the concept 'parallel processing' defined as subconscious re-enactments of past events.
In the article "Forget about it: Parallel Processing in the Srebrenica report", Eelco Runia, draws on the concept parallel processing, which derives from psychoanalytic supervision

> *"... when you are caught up in a parallel process, your behaviour repeats key aspects of what there is to know about what you're studying – in a way, however, that you yourself don't understand"* (Runia 2004: 295).

In this manner, Runia argues that people have a tendency to repeat the problems they are studying and thereby states how a parallel process occurs when difficulties experienced in one environment are replicated in another environment (Runia 2004: 297).

Given its origin Runia explains parallel processing in its operative form in the case of a therapist/patient relationship – what he refers to as "in absentiae" and the supervision from the therapist. The key to this operative is the therapist, referred to by Runia as 'the middle-man' as the paralleling occurs when he (the middle-man) unconsciously identify with the patients and thus *"enact this identification, and elicit responses from the supervisor that replicate the difficulties they themselves have encountered*" (Runia 2004: 299). Thereby identification becomes a precondition for parallel processes to take place (Runia 2004: 301). Thus, parallel processes are important from a theoretical and societal point of view (Runia 2004: 297) and is of relevance to our project as the concept contributes to the understanding of our empirical data from Hamburg and in our understanding of the EU border-system.

4.3. Gender-roles and migration

As mentioned in the Contextual Chapter, female asylum seekers are generally seen as deviating from the male norm, which frames the understanding of what constitutes a refugee. In this section we explore gender-roles in migration. We start by introducing Fassin's conceptualisation of moral economy and bio-politics.

In Fassin's article "Compassion and Repression: The Moral Economy of Immigration Policies in France", Fassin investigates the compassionate repression seen in the refugee camp of Calais in the Sangatte Centre organised by the Red Cross, housing refugees from Kosovo, Kurdistan and Afghanistan (Fassin 2005: 362). After being blocked from reaching Britain, as the English Channel was closed of, the refugees were trapped in a place that soon turned into a place of confinement (Fassin 2005: 363). Thus, Fassin argues, that the Sangatte Centre exemplified paradigmatic of tensions between the discourses and practices of compassion and repression in the politics of immigration and more specifically of asylum in Europe stating, *"... the moral economy of contemporary Europe"* (Fassin 2005: 665). In this sense, the moral economy defines the contemporary bio-politics considered as the politics that deal with the lives of human beings (Fassin 2005: 366).

When constructing refugees as victims, it subjects them into beings of 'bare life' (Agamben in Fassin 2005: 367). Agamben argues

> *"The refugees thus occupy a central place in our moral economy because they reveal the persistence of bare life in contemporary societies: deprived from their human rights by lack of citizenship, they can only claim to stay alive"* (Agamben in Fassin 2005: 367).

Fassin thereby makes a distinction between the two; *zoë* meaning being alive (bare life) and *bios* as a social presence in the world (full life) (Agamben in Fassin 2005: 367). Thus, Fassin states that our world is characterised by *"the separation between humanitarianism and politics"* (Fassin 2005: 367). This is very much in line with Plambech's discussion on the manner in which female migration is generally framed, which is within the framework of human trafficking, giving migrating women the role of the *"deserving suffering body"*. Plambech states that this framework results in that women who migrate are considered to be either helpless victims of human trafficking or criminalised illegal migrants (Plambech 2014: 384-385).

IDA: Katarzyna Kwapisz Williams challenges the discourse of victimhood and vulnerability that is often in practice when discussing female refugees. Her study is based on the narratives of Polish refugees who were forced to migrate to Australia after the Second World War. Kwapisz Williams states that while the discourse revolving refugees in general and female refugees in particular has focused on trauma and helplessness, there is a growing trend towards focusing on their agency. Victimising discourse can have a negative effect, in the form of disempowering consequences on the self-image of refugees, which might not correspond to how refugees actually view themselves. Considering gender-roles, the journey of male refugees is often seen as a "challenging quest", while for female refugees without support and security provided by men it is a "tragic struggle" (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 437-438). Nevertheless, even though migrating can be a tough and sometimes tragic struggle, it has also proved to be a possibility for some female refugees to gain new roles as protectors and providers (El-Bushra in Kwapisz Williams 2014: 438).

Kwapisz Williams then continues by outlining the context of the narratives of her study. In the Polish national context the framing of gender is in is in many ways influenced by the church, the nation and the family, creating men as the heroes and protectors, who are protecting the country and women as taking care of the family and as the mother of the nation. Female refugees are seen as being particularly vulnerable

both in an economic and in a physical sense, the latter as they risk being subjected to sexual violence, leading to stigmatisation. Building on the discourse of men as protectors, women can also be marginalised in the sense that they are seen as belonging to their husband or brothers, who are the "real heroes". Even though female refugees can in fact be vulnerable to these forms of exposures, the narratives of the Polish women in the study demonstrate a far more diverse understanding of women's lives in displacement (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 441-442).

When Polish refugees were sent to Australia women and children were put in camps, while men were sent to work as part of a two-year contract they had to sign to be resettled in Australia. The narratives from the camps were therefore mainly told by women. One thing that is prevalent in both narratives from forced labour camps in Germany and refugee camps in Australia is that the women connect a sense of being powerless to their bodies. In the forced labour camp the women were forced to strip down, something that was particularly connected to shame when having their menstruation. A pregnant woman living in a refugee camp in Australia explains that she avoided to shower during the day, as people would comment on her body. These narratives can be seen in connection to women often experiencing their bodies as a source of shame and as many women experience that their bodies are being looked at they are considered to be more corporeal than men (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 444).

Kwapisz Williams also finds that there is a strong sense of nationhood in the camp, even though that is something that is generally associated with masculinity, as the men were considered to be the protectors of the nation (Young in Kwapisz Williams 2014: 444). That the camps were nationalised spaces is demonstrated in the narratives. As for example one of the women say that when Australians were harassing them they would stand strong and thereby "*…maintained our faith, native language and Polish culture…"* (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 444). When leaving the camp and continuing to the next step of resettlement, many of the women in the study expressed a sense of regaining agency. While maintaining their role of protecting their children, several women were also willing to negotiate Australia as a form of home. Many studies that were made on people who were resettled in Australia pointed at men being more vulnerable in the resettlement stage and had a stronger feeling of displacement than women (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 447).

Kwapisz Williams conclude her study through stating that gender plays an important role in how reality is explained and understood. However, gender is one of several marginalities that have an impact, why it is also important to consider factors as ethnicity and class. The narratives that are considered demonstrate the intersection of these factors and furthermore, their fluidity. Narratives of displacement demonstrate a range of gender expressions, no matter if they are told by women or men. To be in a situation of displacement can allow for men and women to act beyond traditional gender-roles and national gender ideals. This shifting in gender-roles is not to be understood as constant; in situations of displacement traditional gender-roles are sometimes reinforced and sometimes undermined, which illustrates the complexities of gender relations. By recognising this complexity and fluidity in gender-roles it is possible to move beyond the traditional notion of men as heroic and women as victims (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 451-452).

Even though Kwapisz Williams' article is very much relevant for our research, there is one perspective missing, which also touches upon gender-roles: the role of masculinity and men as posing a threat. As these gendered concepts are part of the narratives told by the women we have interviewed, we also include a perspective on this discourse. Katarzyna Grabska study how UNHCR implement gender-mainstreaming in refugee camps and what form of gender-roles that are assumed as a point of departure for the mainstreaming.

Regarding the role of men and masculinities, humanitarian workers often referred to them as 'perpetrators of violence' and 'guardians of patriarchy'. This form of discourse, that male refugees are considered to be possible perpetrators of violence and female asylum seekers possible victims, is also present in the reports that we have reviewed in the contextual chapter (Amnesty International 2016 and UNHCR 2016). According to Grabska's study some men who took part in her study felt threatened as more power was given to the female refugees (as for example ration cards). At the same time as there was a development of increased material power to women, there was an increase in domestic violence, rape and forced marriage in the camp (Grabska 2011: 89).

As we discuss in the section on feminist narratology, the manner in which narratives are told are often gendered. Through understanding gender-roles in narratives of

displacement as fluid, we open up for a more complex and diversified analysis, as a way to move beyond stereotypical understandings of men and women in migration. Furthermore, Fassin provides us with an insight on the humanitarianism and asylum seekers in general and is accompanied by Plambech's specific focus on women who migrate and victimisation.

Even though Grabska's study is situated in a very different context than our research (it takes place in Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya), it demonstrates a gendered discourse that is also relevant to the narratives in our study. It is thereby of importance for us to explore the possible prevalence of these discursive elements in the lived experiences that the assembled narratives constitute.

4.4. Refugees and liminality

SILJE: Liminality depicts a state of being, a phase in the life of the individual which is circumstantial. Refugees, through the mentioned research, continuously experience such state, as the process of movement and seeking asylum can be seen to be a state of liminality, an in-between two categories. Through narratives of female refugees we seek to illuminate their reflections and perception of lived experiences and their own circumstances.

In 1909, Arnold Van Gennep introduced and established the sociological term and concept of "*liminality".* Van Gennep divided the concept into three analytically separate phases. It describes and investigates the transformation from one social status to another - for example, the transformation from childhood to adolescence, from boy to man. Liminality is the term when one is neither nor, one is neither boy nor a man. It is a state of being where a persona is caught between two statues, when one is not fully recognised as either or (Wels et. al. 2015:1). The three phases are thus, if looking at the classical example of the transition from boy to man; the phase when the individual is a boy, the liminal phase (commonly referred to as the in-between state of being) and the phase when one has transitioned into a man (Wels et. al. 2015: 1).

Although Van Gennep was the one who introduced and coined the term "liminality", his work was not translated into English until the 1960's. The term was then re-

introduced by the anthropologist Victor Turner, who established a new way of understanding the concept of liminality. He applied the term in a much broader sense than his predecessor, Van Gennep. Instead of applying the concept in its conventional and traditional form, Turner used it to describe any state of liminality, be it a physically manifested one, or a more abstract form of liminality which can be related to identity-formation and social class (Wels et. al. 2015: 1-3).

When applying the concept of liminality to refugees it means to be caught between two different societies, between old and new surroundings. When one looks at the classical example of liminality given by Van Gennep, one might apply the example on the circumstances of refugees. Adults, in the sphere of adolescents are treated with ambivalence in society; they are granted recognition and respect in certain appointed situations or spheres in society. However, as with children, they are denied that recognition and respect in other spheres (Camino 1998: 30). Linda Camino conducted a study of adult Latin-American refugees who had resettled in an urban area in the United States. Her conclusion of the study was that identity-formation was created as a basis on the phase of liminality experienced at one point by every one of them. Images and connections to their homeland was created, and given high value, although Camino perceived such connection as overly emphasized. The Latin American refugees had a strong need to create an identity and strong sense of self so as to move on and into the phase of being recognised as a full member of society with a clear sense of self-being (Camino 1998: 30, 37-39). Camino describes the Drop-In Centre for the Latin American adults as a place where their liminality physically manifested, as it was marginalised place, with people who was caught in Turner's in-between state of being (Camino 1994: 38).

Patricia Hynes in her book "The Dispersal and Social Exclusion of Asylum Seekers: Between Liminality and Belonging" argues that it is the structures in the asylum system, as well as the borders created by the societal and governmental system that helps establish and reinforce the state of liminality for refugees and asylum seekers in the Northern countries and especially, where she conducted her own study, in the UK. She argues that it is the barriers to accessing public and social services, the geography and the structural dimensions of the asylum system that contributes to socially exclude the asylum seeker, as well as enhance the feeling of liminality. Hynes believes that it is

the *"asylum system and dispersal system"* that creates stereotypical images and characters of the asylum seeker, and furthermore, that the system is designed on the presumption that "one-size-fits-all" and she calls it *"policy-imposed liminality"* (Hynes 2011: 155-156).

As Camino, Hynes argue that the policy-imposed liminality meet resistance by the asylum seeker, who tries to fight the liminality by remaking their identity and a sense of belonging. Usually, this occurs by enforcing pre-existing identity and bonds to their home countries, as well as creating new social networks (Hynes 2011: 156). Hynes argues that asylum seekers remake their identity and sense of belonging as a coping mechanism to the liminality forced upon them, and, are themselves moving towards inclusion and social integration outside of the realm of policy-mechanisms created to enhance integration. They resist the liminality by themselves through creating ways that will produce a sense of belonging (Hynes 2011: 156-157).

Liisa Malkki, as Hynes also argues, through her research, that when refugees are categorised, they themselves categorise – however; they create new categories for themselves (Hynes 2011: 175). Malkki, in her study of Hutu refugees living in camps and comparing them to the Hutu refugees living in the city, discovered that the Hutu refugees living in the city produced a kind of "situational identity" to make themselves invisible in the society they found themselves in (Hynes 2011: 175-176). For the refugees in the camps, the stage or phase of liminality came more as a single established phase that was looked upon as temporary or a passing stage while waiting for return to their homeland. Liminality, however, for the Hutu refugees living outside the camp, and in the city, that seemed to be apparent was a *"continuum of both liminality and belonging"* (Hynes 2011: 176-177). They lived in a system that imposed categories on them, and furthermore, imposed, through the structural system and policies, liminality upon them. They fought back, on this categorisation and liminality, by re-establishing themselves and adapting to the situation through new identity formation. Thus, liminality can occur differently in the asylum camp- or centre, to the liminality experienced outside the asylum centre when living in the host society (Hynes 2011: 177).

In Liisa Malkki's article *"*The Rootings of Peoples and the Territorialisation of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees" from 1997 we are introduced to the concept of liminality, which is applicable for the research of liminality experienced and endured by refugees (Malkki 1997: 32). The above mentioned has given a general introduction to the concept of liminality as it was firstly coined and how it has developed throughout anthropological history, and now, Mallki places the term, through the above article, in context to the field in which we seek to investigate.

Malkki argues that identity has, throughout history, largely been connected to the soil. One has found his/hers identity within own national borders and through the familiar culture in which one adheres to. She raises the question of what happens to those who have been forced to flee war – do they simply leave their identity behind? She criticises classical and traditional anthropology in that it has always categorised the world into nations and people, with distinct identities and senses of belonging to the soil that one has been born on (Malkki 1997: 32-34). Because of this division, the social categorisation of people connected to the soil, a refugee becomes an uprooted person, someone who has no connections to the land. A refugee becomes someone without identity, someone difficult to define – a liminal person (Malkki 1997: 24-26).

The refugee then, becomes an outsider in society, someone who does not fit into the societal convention of belonging somewhere. As Malkki argues to there is a *"moral and spiritual need"* to belong somewhere, and therefore the refugee becomes viewed upon as an abnormal being – someone who lacks both moral and spirit (Malkki 1997: 30). If one drives the connotation even longer, the asylum centre upon which the asylum seekers reside in, then becomes the physical manifestation of such liminality, as Hynes discussed earlier. It becomes the place of abnormality, a place without a spirit or a moral, filled with those who do not belong anywhere.

4.5. Border Theory

MARIE: As such, there is no generally defined theory on borders. It is an overall view amongst scholars that the beginning of the 1990s offered new approaches within social and political science to reshape the pre-understanding of borders as fixed and static, into embracing socio-politics. New approaches have been offered by different scholars

in order to create a border theory. These approaches entail a perception of borders as constituting both context and concepts, embracing contextual differentialities (between and within state borders). Moreover, the concept of temporality should be taken into account as well as addressing the compilation of territory and morality.

Chiara Brambilla explains how the transition from the concept of borders to that of *"*bordering" won ground. The move away from the classical approach in which borders are seen as naturalised, static territorial lines and delimitations of sovereignty, followed in the aftermath of the Cold War with the (re)emergence of new territorial claims. Brambilla states that, changes due to globalisation, have on the one hand led to greater integration and global consciousness and, on the other, to a renewed demand for certainty, identity and security followed by the spread of protectionist policies on the economic level and feelings of anti-immigration (Brambilla 2015: 15). The shifting focus of borders as static territorial dividing lines to socio-cultural and discursive processes and practices, meant that border research entered an interdisciplinary field, combining political science, geopolitics, human and cultural geography, anthropology and sociology (Brambilla 2015: 15).

In the same manner, Anssi Paasi states that scholars have theorised new forms of spatiality, emerging from the power of globalisation and the accompanied new flows and networks, which some scholars have suggested leads to a 'borderless world' following a retreat of the nation-state (Paasi 2009: 213). And yet, Paasi argues, we see a persistence of bounded territorial spaces. Although there was a general view of the world moving into being borderless, a group of researchers inspired by Foucaultian bio-politics theorised the persistence of territory as a calculable matter and termed it 'calculable territory'. With 'calculable territory' follows the understanding that territory can be analysed by the production and reproduction of territorial power relations and in practicing territoriality (Paasi 2009: 215).

Thereby it can be stated that concepts of territory is rooted in socio-political affairs, where boundedness are processes embedded in the production and reproduction of social relations. Thus territory exists in social practises such as *classification* by area, *communication* of boundaries and *control* over access to areas. This implies that borders should be seen as 'all over' territories and therefore be located in broader

societal practice and discourse (Paasi 2009: 215-216). Having specified that there is more to borders, than the old classical view of borders being simple lines dividing territory between nation-state sovereignties, a common 'border theory' remains to be defined by scholars. In his article "Bounded spaces in a 'borderless world'", Paasi asks the question of, *"What is Border Theory"* (Paasi 2009: 222). With the inclusion of Yuval-Davis, Paasi argues that to succeed, a border theory should be bound to a national-political context

> *"Borders and boundaries, identities and difference construct and determine to a large extent the space of agency, to the mode of participation in which we all act as citizens in the multi-layered polities to which we belong"* (Yuval-Davis in Paasi 2009: 221).

Scholars who do not succeed in being context-bound will put forward somewhat useless theories based on their own knowledge, thus creating dominant narratives on borders, such as the concept 'borderless world' (Paasi 2009: 221). So, context in the production of academic knowledge on borders is crucial. Nevertheless, Paasi doubts whether or not there can be any generally valid 'border theory', as universal statements rarely coincides with individual borders. Moreover he states that it would undermine the fact that knowledge in social sciences is situated knowledge and is bound up with positionality (Paasi 2009:222).

Together with context, Paasi suggest that a conceptual approach to a border theory would help to recognise territoriality in practice, what he terms as 'conceptual invariances' (Paasi 2009: 224). These 'conceptual invariances' would gain an understanding to the socio-spatial boundary making processes that exists between several spatial scales and thereby entail the relation between human action and social structures in the production and reproduction of collective meanings associated with borders (Paasi 2009: 226), such as discourses of 'us' and 'the other' and hidden elements of power within society, such as flag days and other elements of national iconography located in nationalist practises (Paasi 2009: 228). Thus it is established, accordingly to Paasi, that 'borders are everywhere', and in order to succeed with a 'border theory', it should imply a complexity of the *contexts* of borders, which would force scholars to reflect on their *concepts*.

Following this line of thought, in "Exploring the Critical Potential of the Borderscapes Concept", Brambilla is outlining alternative critical approaches to borders with the concept of 'borderscapes' as a way to conceptualise borders. She uses the concept of borderscapes, firstly introduced by Elena Dell'Agnese in 2006 (Brambilla 2015: 20), to provide a political insight into critical-border studies including ethical and normative issues of in/exclusion (Brambilla 2015: 18). Furthermore, the borderscapes concept provides a conceptual complexity of discourses, practices and relationships that highlights endless definitions and shifts in definitions between inside and outside, citizens and foreigners, hosts and guests across state, regional, racial, and other symbolic boundaries (Brambilla 2015: 19).

Borderscapes

The concept of borderscapes is therefore much in line with Paasi's understanding of 'borders as being everywhere' and can be used as a conceptual tool to question the complexity of the dynamics through which border landscapes are produced (Brambilla 2015: 21). Furthermore, there is a double meaning to borderscapes. Borderscapes both serve as being a political tool for ordering reality, from the exercise of power in space (hegemonic borderscapes), and as a context from which discourses and practises can originate, which enables alternative thinking to the static exclusivity of landscapes of dominant power (counter-hegemonic borderscapes) – in other words a transition from 'politics of being' to a 'politics of becoming' (Brambilla 2015: 24).

Brambilla argues that a way to abandon the socially constructed idea of refugees as being 'needy' is through the use of participatory methods (Brambilla 2015: 29). Adopting borderscapes as method applies a shift from a fixed knowledge on to a knowledge that recognises experiences and representations (Brambilla 2015: 29). Thus, the borderscapes concept presents a performative method of inclusion, as well as a view of the border as a changing fluid field of (geo) political, economic, social, and cultural negotiations, taking into account the spatiality and temporality of borders, and that borders are inherently unstable and infused with movement and change (Brambilla 2015: 27).

In his article "The complex temporality of borders: Contingency and normativity", Adrian Little explains how borders within Europe today represent a 'complex temporality', stating that borders represent a set and structural division of countries, creating stability and safety – however, when borders close, the unpredictability of the borders, the usual characteristic of the border itself loses its symbolic and practical meaning of imposing order. This exemplifies another point – even if the territorial space of borders is persistent over a period of time, it does not mean that the practical or symbolic meaning of the border remains the same (Little 2015: 432-433).

When discussing the concepts of borders as 'all over territories' as presented by Paasi and the concepts of 'us' and 'the other' mentioned above, we turn to understandings of the socially constructed national identity. In the article "Bordering, Ordering and Othering" Henk Van Houtum and Ton Van Naerssen, relate the concept of bordering to practices of 'othering', arguing that concepts of identity have gained a more central place in the geographical debate, with the securing and governing of the 'own'. To understand the othering they highlight how, *"State territory hardly ever covers a homogeneous population, yet it claims to represent and imagine one"* (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 126). This simplifies how creating one's 'own' can be seen as a spatial strategy. Territorial human strategies classify space and communicate a sense of place as well as enforce control over a place - and in doing so, are able to displace others (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 126). Thus, the making of a unique, exclusive place goes hand in hand with governing practices of exclusion and purification (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 127).

Houtum and Naerssen argue that normative values of different social systems meet at the borders. This implies the governing and preserving of values, and can thereby be seen as the testing ground of our present economic order (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 129). They highlight the double standards and the impact of finance, as to whether states are willing to open its borders, where entrepreneurs and famous footballers can gain access easily but people without papers or economic resources are left knocking on the door waiting for a solidarity act (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 129), exemplifying the dynamic and complex connections between money, power and space as well as the coincidence of territory and morality. Thereby, borders can be understood as doing

various things at uneven and different speeds, which underlines the uncertainty aspect of borders (Little 2015: 441).

This selective openness creates a problem between human rights and the protection of sovereignty (Sassen in Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 129). In the extreme end of the imagined border continuum is the complete open or complete closed borders - the degree of openness dominates liberal economic debates and the degree of closure dominates the debate on immigration of refugees (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 128). Today, the political climate within the EU is highly dominated by the latter.
In order to concretise the concept of borderscapes and understand the territorial strategy of the contrast between closeness and openness to the movement of money but not to the movement of people, we turn to Martin Lemberg-Pedersen.
In Lemberg-Pedersen's article "Losing the Right to Have Rights: EU Externalisation of Border Control", he explains, with a focus on Europe, how this closed system dogma of othering based on a nationalistic political imagination, transforms refugees into misplaced existences, as they go against the established order of things and thereby fails to question refugees fundamental rights (Lemberg-Pedersen 2015: 395). So, when discussing borders and border control, Lemberg-Pedersen emphasises how borders are diffuse and highly based on networks (Lemberg-Pedersen 2011: 393).

This became evident when the EU in 2010 signed an agreement with Gaddafi concerning Libya's capturing of asylum seekers potentially wishing to seek asylum within the EU. According to Lemberg-Pedersen, this exemplifies how the control of borders is separated from the physical location of the border, exemplifying the concept of borderscapes. Thus, the mobility of EU's borders is dependent on the virtual flows of information and data exchange (Lemberg-Pedersen 2015: 396). This is also what Lemberg-Pedersen terms as 'externalisation'. EU nation-states complement their policies on migration control across their territorial boundaries, with initiatives that realise this control beyond their territory, where some actors export this control, while others agree, more or less willingly, to host it (Lemberg-Pedersen 2015: 398). Externalisation can thus be seen in international negotiations, external governance and extra-territorialisation (Lemberg-Pedersen 2012: 35).

Borderscapes is by Lemberg-Pedersen suggested to be

> *" ...useful analytical tool for understanding the multiple abstractions of knowledge, practices and technologies at work in EU border control highlighting the fact that the EU borders change over time according to political and administrative processes"* (Lemberg-Pedersen 2012: 35).

Lemberg-Pedersen further explains that border control should be seen from a geopolitical point of view, as border control re-territorialises geographic spaces. Thereby, Lemberg-Pedersen defines borderscapes as *"multidimensional abstractions of knowledge and technologies"* (Rajaram and Grundy-Warr in Lemberg-Pedersen 2012: 36). With this, Lemberg-Pedersen argues that EU externalisation can be seen as a complex process of borderscaping, opening up borders as a socio-geographic space supported by technologies, infrastructures and actors. This becomes evident in the way the EU and/or its member states negotiate specific agreements related to migration control with third countries (Lemberg-Pedersen 2012: 37)

From this, a conclusive statement would be that a border theory should be constituted by *context*, while implementing *concepts* to embrace differentialities and discourses. Although this section has not presented a defined theory on borders, several concepts will be used with the purpose of taking context into consideration. Today the political climate within the EU is dominated by a 'closed system dogma' of othering, as presented by Lemberg-Pedersen above. In order to analyse how the 'closed system dogma' affects female refugees on the move, we examine the relationship between bordering and gendering. This is done with the assistance of Brambilla, who suggests that in order to humanise borders and understand the complexity of border processes as constructed, an applicable method is the performative method of situating oneself into the research field, which we have done when interviewing the women as well as participating in the Hamburg conference.

To broaden our conceptual understanding, we apply Paasi's theory of 'conceptual invariences' in order to investigate in which ways the women change their strategies during their move and why. This is in accordance with the normative critical perspective found in feminist theory that is exploring the dialogical relationship between structure and agency. Thereby, we are able to explore how the EU border-

regime conceptualises refugee women as well as how refugee women conceptualise borders. In short: how processes of bordering become processes of gendering.

4.6. Theory on security and violence

In order to understand and analyse the functions and manifestations of the EU borders, we apply theory on securitisation, with a focus on the concepts of state and societal security, which allows us to interpret the recent border-related developments in Europe. We then turn to a discussion on the concept of 'human security', which broadens the understanding of what security entails, followed by a theoretical conceptualisation of violence. The notion of security can be defined as including two elements: first, a threat and second, a referent object - meaning an object's degree of vulnerability to a threat (Betts 2009: 60).

The traditional view on security within International Relations has tended to see the referent object as the nation-state, and the source of threat to be the military capability of other states (Betts 2009: 60). Developing the view of the state being the referent object and the threat being military forces, Critical Security Studies argues that bringing social life into the equation, allows for the environment, welfare, immigration, refugees etc. to also be considered as either the referent object or as threats (Wæver 1995: 1). It thereby opens up to the construction of immigration, asylum, and refugees as a threat - or the state being a threat, instead of being the referent object.

State and societal security

These new understandings of what can be perceived as a threat is together with Ole Wæver introduced by the Copenhagen school, through the concepts of 'societal security' and 'state security'

> *"State security has* sovereignty *as its ultimate criterion, and societal security has* identity. *Both usages imply survival. A state that loses its* sovereignty *does not survive as a state; a society that loses its identity fears that it will no longer be able to live as* itself*."* (Wæver 1995: 13).

Societal security, thereby underlines how external threats are often seen as a threat to values and identities, rather than material entities and thereby challenging the 'we' in opposition to 'others' (Betts 2009: 71). State security is dependent on the sovereignty of the state to maintain its identity and culture. Wæver argues that this no longer seems possible as border control and economic policies are determined more and more at the EU level, where in the past a threatened nation could call on its state to act (Wæver 1995:14).

Securitisation

Drawing on constructivism the theoretical concept of 'securitisation' can be seen as the way an issue is constructed into being a security issue, resulting in a political outcome (Betts 2009: 75). Thereby, securitising an issue means moving a theme or issue into the field of security, and thereby framing it as a 'security issue' (Wæver 1995: 18). To explain further, in order for something to become a security issue, it has to be expressed through what the Copenhagen School terms as a 'speech act',
"By uttering "security", a state-representative moves a particular development into a specific area, and thereby claims a special right to use whatever means a necessary to block it" (Wæver 1995: 6).

When terming an issue as a security issue through a speech act, it legitimates actions that would otherwise not be legitimate - thereby allowing 'whatever means' (Betts 2009: 71). In this manner, the connection between societal security and securitisation becomes obvious, in the way refugees are perceived as a security threat, which have paved the way for

> *"... derogations of human rights, the suspension of civil liberties, (...) reinforced border control, forcible deportation, and* refoulement, *practices which would generally be associated with addressing military threats to national security."* (Betts 2009: 72).

Securitising an issue can thereby be a helpful method imposed by the power holders or elites to regain control over an issue and thus an issue is considered to be a security problem when the elites declare it to be (Wæver 1995: 6). When securitising an issue,

the discourse of the subject changes. This is exemplified in the way the media and political rhetoric uphold the association between asylum seekers and refugees on the one hand, and terrorism and threats to economic and societal security on the other hand (Betts 2009: 72).

Currently, the EU exercises externalisation of the European borders through implementing border control and closing national borders within the EU. In the light of these actions, we employ the concepts of 'societal security' and 'state security', to examine in what ways refugees are constructed as a security issue. Furthermore, applying the concept of securitisation to our project enables a state-level investigation of the 'referent object', which we argue is the refugees, and in which ways the state opposes a threat onto them. This overall serves us with a contextual perspective, setting the scene for the narratives of the female refugees.

Human security and gender

IDA: The concept of 'human security' derives from two different strands, which are both connected to the Cold War. The first strand is linked to a discussion on disarmament and development in the sense that the massive amount of resources that were spent on arms and the military were argued to be better utilised in the development sector, solving problems related to poverty and disease. This form of thinking about security in a broader sense and not as a concept that is only relatable to the nation-state and territories was widely used in UN reports during the 1990s. In 1994 the United Nations Development Program (henceforth UNDP) referred to seven types of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political. Only one of these securities, the personal security mentioned safety from violence (Kaldor 2014: 86).

The second strand connected to the origins of the notion of human security proceeds from a discourse on human rights. In 1975, the Helsinki Agreement states a definition of human security before the concept was yet used (Kaldor 2014: 87). Again, the wider notion of what security entails is used, as it includes the protection of individuals. Furthermore, it states the responsibility of the international community to protect

human rights, as understood in the UN Charter on Human Rights (Evans in Kaldor 2014: 87).

A compromise between these strands (human development and human rights) can be found in the following quote

> "*Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. …It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity."* (Ogata and Sen in Kaldor 2014: 88).

Another discussion connected to human security is the debate on who the concept is actually for. According to Giovanna Campani human insecurity pushes women to migrate in the hope to reach a situation of human security. Nevertheless, women often find themselves in new situations of human insecurity while migrating and also when reaching their destination. The strong security discourse relating to refugees and stricter border controls, generally does not protect or enhance the human security for refugees (Campani 2012: 162). Refugee policies that are only based on the notion of nation security, build on the idea of protecting 'our citizens' against 'the others', which in itself results in a situation of insecurity for refugees. Campani states that this would be best solved through combining the concepts of state security and human security when creating policies (Campani 2012: 164).

Moreover, many feminist scholars have criticised conceptual discussions on security for being too state-centric. This is not solved through simply "adding women". Instead there is a need for developing the several ways of understanding, conceptualising and explaining security as a social phenomenon (Shepherd in Marhia 2014: 52). Several of these critiques focus specifically on the relationship between violence and security in the sense that security is seen as a *"…discursive field and practice of (gendered and gendering) power".* From this critical view the discourses and practices on security are considered to reproduce gendered, gendering and gender-based violence (Marhia 2014: 52).

That some migration policies are legitimised through the notion of 'our citizens' and ' the others', can be connected to the idea of societal security. The tension between state security, societal security and human security raises the question of who security measures are made for. Through employing an approach of human rights on the idea of human security, there is an apparent critique on the way that security is managed in situation of crisis: with a focus on 'our citizens', which results in neglecting the human security of the many who are not part of this group. The concept of human security also opens up for an understanding of gendered experiences of security and insecurity and the manner in which systems that operate to maintain security manages within a gendered framework.

Violence

Johan Galtung has broadened the notion of what violence entails through adding several dimensions to the concept, moving beyond the act of physical violence (Galtung 1969: 168). Galtung defines six dimensions of violence. But before these dimensions are outlined there is a need to make a distinction within the concept of physical violence: between the form of violence that somatically hinders a human being (biological violence) and the form of violence that limits the movement of human beings. One obvious example of the latter form of physical violence is imprisonment, while the uneven distribution of public transportation is a more abstract form. The first dimension entails a distinction between physical violence and psychological violence. Galtung defines psychological violence as actions that decrease mental potentialities. These actions include lies, threats, brainwashing and indoctrination (Galtung 1969: 170).

The second dimension is that of a negative and positive approach to influence, meaning that in some situations a person is punished while doing something that is considered to be wrong, while at other times a person is rewarded for doing something that is considered to be right. Even positive influence or a system of awarding can be seen as violence, as it affects the manner in which people act (Galtung 1969: 170). The third dimension that has to be considered is the question of whether or not someone has been hurt as a result of the alleged violence. According to Galtung violence can have occurred even though no one is physically hurt. When a person or nation is acting

violently, for example through testing nuclear arms, there is an actual threat of physical violence, which can result in psychological violence (Galtung 1969: 170).

The fourth dimension concerns the question of whether or not there is an object or person who acts. This is the most important dimension, as it touches upon the distinction between structural and direct (or personal) violence, which is a fundamental distinction to make to understand Galtung's conceptualisation of violence. When there is an actor who performs violence, the violence is considered to be personal or direct. When there is no obvious actor, it is considered to be structural violence (Galtung 1969: 170). Structural violence can furthermore be understood as *"... built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances."* (Galtung 1969: 171). The power to decide over resources is unfairly distributed and when people are starving and this is objectively possible to avoid, structural violence has occurred (Galtung 1969: 171).

The fifth dimension considers the distinction between the intentional and the unintentional. This is important since the notion of guilt often is connected to the degree of intentionality. According to Galtung this view of guilt fails to take the occurrence of structural violence into account, since its focus is on intended violence. The sixth and final dimension is based on the distinction between manifest and latent violence. Manifest violence is violence that is possible to observe in the current situation. Latent violence has not yet happened, but there is a real risk that it will happen. This means that the situation is so unstable, that a very small provocation could result in violent acts. Within the interconnection between personal violence and latent violence, the personal violence is present the day, hour and minute before the first shot or fistfight. Due to lack of protective measure, the realisation of violence is always near (Galtung 1969: 172).

In 1990 Galtung developed his conceptualisation of violence through adding the notion of cultural violence. The cultural is understood as religion, ideology, language or art, which can all be used to legitimise direct or structural violence. One important note is that cultural violence is not a way of understanding whole cultures as violent, but certain aspects of particular cultures. Galtung explains that violence studies must consider two problems: *"...the use of violence and the legitimation of that use."*

(Galtung 1990: 291). Through employing the concept of cultural violence, it is possible to study the legitimisation of violence (Galtung 1990: 292).

Furthermore, direct violence can be seen as an event, structural violence as a process and cultural violence as an invariant (or constant) (Galtung 1990: 294). It is generally possible to see a pattern in which cultural violence reaches direct violence through the use of structural violence. Studying the example of ideology Galtung turns to nationalism, through which the values of 'the self' is glorified and the value of 'the other' is degraded, constituting a form of cultural violence. From that point of departure structural violence is possible, for instance through the process of exploitation. When 'the other' is dehumanised, the step towards direct violence is not far away (Galtung 1990: 298).

Galtung's understanding of structural violence assists us in comprehending the structures of the field in which the interviewed women are navigating while traveling into and within the EU. Furthermore, the concept of cultural violence is a way of understanding how different ideologies functions and manages within varying contexts. If one considers the EU border-regime to function as a form of ideology, it is possible to analyse the structural and direct forms of violence, which this regime creates in the specific context that the interviewed women have managed to reach Denmark or Germany. When employing Galtung's broadened understanding of violence it is important to consider that this conceptualisation does not require intentionality behind the violence and that a threat of violence also is a form of violence.

4.7. Social Navigation

SILJE: In this section we outline the concept of social navigation with a focus on previous research on gendered navigation. We are aware that the context of social navigation in Vigh's article concerns mostly a male perspective, however, we also bring forth other articles, which solely focus on female social navigation.

From an anthropological perspective, social navigation has become a well-established concept whose aim is to illuminate the strategies and movement of individuals in difficult and complex situations. It seeks to discover the different means employed by

individuals from day-to-day, to give meaning and increase the quality of life under, for example, conflict and war (Vigh 2009: 419-420). Navigation is here understood as the movement in fluid fields and landscapes, with different actors in a varying social context – with the agency of the individual as the core producer of meaning to his or her own life circumstance. Social navigation adds the perspective, and insight into the intertwined relation between the agency of the individual, the social forces surrounding the individual, and the changing circumstances and system the individual operates/moves in (Vigh 2009: 419).

Henrik Vigh, in his article "Motion Squared: A second look at the Concept of Social Navigation" from 2009, aims at providing an analytical, and theoretical understanding of social navigation. The author spent two years in the West-African country Guinea-Bissau, where he conducted fieldwork amongst the inhabitants in the capital city Bissau. The circumstances, in which the inhabitants of Bissau find themselves in, are that of war and conflict, uncertainty and poverty. Everyday life for the inhabitants is, much like that of the asylum seeker, festered with the struggle to persist under adversity and oppression. Social navigation thus becomes the struggle to add value, social recognition and a certain degree of social worth in, what are a flux and unpredictable system (Vigh 2009: 421- 422). Vigh talks of the presence of a social hyper-vigilance, an acute awareness of the constant change in the surrounding environment in the natural system of things, always being prepared for the worst, and ready to move in whichever direction a new situation might lead them to. The people in Bissau does not passively observe the flow of people around them or their own circumstances, but are actively alert and constantly scan the situations around them to detect possible changes and threats (Vigh 2011: 99).

Navigation is seen as the connection between what Vigh emphasise as; *the socially immediate,* and *the socially imagined*. It is related to how individuals move in the present, but also how they move in relation to prospective goals for the future. He furthermore elaborates, that the opportunities that emerge from here and now produce strategies for how to navigate towards the future, a better future (Vigh 2009: 425-426). There are two dynamics, or aspects of social navigation; the navigation of the individual, and the formation and navigation of the social community surrounding the individual (Vigh 2009: 426).

Vigh mentions Bourdieu in direct relation to the responding individual, and micro/macro perspectives necessary to understand the concept of social navigation. Pierre Bourdieu, a French anthropologist emphasises that the world as we know it, is established by the acts of individuals which are reproduced continuously throughout, and that such acts stem from the individual's perception of surrounding society. Bourdieu furthermore explains that the perception of the individual is pre-constructed, and is, in simple turns, formed on established social forms (Grenfell 2012: 45). Bourdieu investigates how the social structure and the agency of the individual can come to reconciliation. One of Bourdieu's key concepts is the "Habitus" – that is the relational view that the individual, and the society acts and navigate according to their perception of the world. Their positional perspective provides insight into why they act or move the way they do (Grenfell 2012: 49). When looking at how the youth in Bissau navigate in everyday life, their actions can be explained by their positional perspective, and seen as a reactionary response to the surrounding community. They are pre-dispositioned to act in a certain way, as they were born into a society of dispute, conflict and poverty (Vigh 2009: 426-427).

Women Navigating in Conflict and After Conflict

Refugees socially navigate within a system of uncertainty and rapid change – establishing skills for how to cope under these circumstances of temporality. Mats Utas in his article "Victimicy, Girlfriending, Soldiering: Tactic Agency in a Young Woman's Social Navigation of the Liberian War Zone" depicts the life of a woman by the name Bintu, and her strategies for manoeuvring amidst war, desperation and conflict (Utas 2005). Women in war have generally been depicted as victims, however, the production of the female narrative as a victim has developed and somewhat altered over the course of time. Statistics in the Liberian Civil War show that two to four per cent of those actively fighting in the war were in fact women (Utas 2005: 404 - 405). Utas wants to further the depiction of women as conscious agents; strategically navigating the field as soldiers, and actively making use of the opportunities that arise from the circumstances they find themselves in (Utas 2005: 406).

The women in war-torn Liberia interchangeably switch between a self-representation of victimhood and soldiering - depending on which situation they are in. The women are carefully aware of their relations to the surroundings, managing their relationship to other soldiers, boyfriends, other women, commanders etc. The change between victimhood and empowerment in the form of active participation in the war is their form of social navigation within the field. The common picture of women kidnapped by rebel groups is in stark contrast to another reality, where the woman herself actively chooses to join the rebel group, in the form a soldier or as a girlfriend of a commander or high rank soldier, in order to protect herself and her family. The latter demonstrates that women in war zones, experiencing immense hardship, have a strong sense of agency and make choices with the aim of reaching a higher social position or economic prosperity (Utas 2005: 408-409). There is no linear relation between victimhood and being a survivor, as the women Mats Utas met with changed between victim and survivor, depending on the social context they found themselves in (Utas 2005: 426).

Vigh argues that people in conflict and under immense pressure read their social environment, and distinguish the different social categories, defining who is a friend and who is an enemy, who it is strategically clever to be with and whom to avoid (Vigh 2011: 103). This awareness of the social categories is evident throughout the story of Bintu, who is the main character in Mats Utas' article, as she navigates to her best abilities in a war-torn landscape.

In Liberia, the concept of "girlfriending" amongst young women in vulnerable positions became relatively normal. Girlfriending means, to be involved with a man for the sake of receiving protection. In Bintu's case, as she expressed herself, it was not an emotional decision to stay with the men; it was a mere strategic decision. What became common amongst the women was to be engaged with one man, and seeing another one at the side, so that if something happened with the man you were with, the other one would function as a "backup" – and the women would secure themselves for always being protected. This was highly dangerous, as women had been killed for less than an affair earlier, but nevertheless, it was a conscious assessment made by the women, executing agency in the situation (Utas 2005: 424-425). The women in the war-torn country of Liberia can represent to a certain yet limited degree, the women who are navigating in direct conflict, but there are navigational strategies that manifest in the

everyday lives of refugee women, who have escaped conflict and have to manoeuvre in the system of a foreign country.

Lenette, Brough and Cox, in their article "Everyday Resilience: Narratives of Single Refugee Women with Children" have taken a close look at how women exert resilience in their lives once taken out of a previous situation of poverty, war and conflict. The women all reside in Australia, where the fieldwork was conducted (Lenette et. al. 2012). Resilience is in the article defined as "*...an extraordinary atypical personal ability to revert or "bounce back" to a point of equilibrium despite significant adversity"* (Lenette et. al. 2012: 637). This is highly applicable to the circumstance of the refugee, who has endured immense hardship, but still in varying degrees, has to be resilient in order to resettle and establish themselves in a new country. Lenette, Brough and Cox argue that despite the normal discourse of resilience as a strategy employed in extraordinary situations, they emphasise solely the resilience exercised by the women on a daily, ordinary basis (Lenette et. al. 2012: 639). However, the authors furthermore argue that "resilience" in the article does not necessarily focus only on those who "bounce back", but emphasises the relational responsibility between the individual and the social space surrounding the refugee woman. Resilience does not need to be observed "in action", but "everydayness" can be seen as an achievement by the women themselves, facing a new day in a unfamiliar place (Lenette, et. al. 2012: 640).

The study revealed that many of the women could not identify the specific coping strategies employed in everyday life, but nevertheless they were facing them head on. That in itself can be considered an act of resilience. Furthermore, the study revealed that resilience is an on-going process, which not only occurs in specific stages, but are shown in situations where the women have to conciliate with shattered dreams of the future, lack of educational opportunities and a significant lack of economic resources to which the woman have to imagine a new future, and create new dreams and goals for herself and her family (Lenette, et al. 2012: 645 - 646).

Resilience has earlier been connected to overcoming poverty, limited education, trauma and barriers relating to language. However, when observing the refugee women, it becomes evident that resilience is executed everyday, in every situation,

simply by facing every challenge met, and dealing with it (Lenette et al. 2012: 650-651).

According to Vigh

> *"Social navigation entails simultaneously moving toward a distant future location or condition (that is, movement towards future positions and possibilities), and making one's way across immediate and proximate oncoming changes and forces of the near future* (Vigh 2009: 429).

As we can see, with the narratives of women in conflict, women on their way from conflict and women who have reached Europe all exert different strategies and employ such to navigate in the specific landscape they find themselves in. Be it as a victim or as a participator in direct conflict and war, it becomes evident that all the women make conscious, strategic choices that are to enhance their own situation, and improve their immediate circumstances, but also safeguard and protect them in the future.

Our aim is to understand, through the narratives of female refugees, how they socially navigate under the present European border-regime. Social Navigation maps the navigational structures of individuals who experience immense pressure and vulnerability, and how they manage/ navigate under such states.

5. Analysis

In this chapter we divide the analysis into three sections; a contextual analysis on the present border-regime of the EU using theory on *borders* as well as *state security, societal securit*y and *human security*. This is relevant to our project, as our interviewees have navigated the border-system within the EU. Moreover, an investigation of the border system is essential for the understanding of the circumstances and the field the women find themselves in. The second part is an analysis on the empirical material assembled at the Hamburg conference. The section is divided in two: first, an analysis of our experiences of the Conference using theory on *gender-roles, victimisation* and *parallel processing.* Second, we apply a

narratological analysis of our findings using theory on *narratology* and *feminist standpoint theory*. Finally, we analyse our main narratives given by Nillem, Steer and Huda, supported by the narratives from Sabor and Sara. This is done using all of our theories as presented in the Theory Chapter, but in different manners in accordance with the different circumstances of the different narratives.

5.1. The Borders of EU

SILJE: The overall response to the increased influx of refugees in late 2015 and early 2016 has been to strengthen the physical EU borders and implement strict asylum policies. It becomes evident, that as with the perception of borders, the concept of borders has changed from its naturalised and static manifestation to that of a flux, increasingly contextualised concept (Brambilla 2015:15).

Currently the EU, with the opening and closing of borders come to represent unpredictability and uncertainty in which derogates from the usual understanding of borders that are to create stability and systemic order (Little 2015: 432–433). The shifting of borders, and the unpredictability is a direct reflection of the social and political situation in Europe at present (Brambilla 2015: 17). This further demonstrates the dialogical relationship between borders, sovereignty and territory and the concepts of citizenship, individual and collective identity and the othering of those who do not adhere to the same territorial space as one self. (Brambilla 2015: 16).

The political and social discursive climate within the EU at present has its impact on the border-regime established within and around Europe as a continent. There is a tendency in Europe of political parties arguing for stricter immigration control, with direct effect on the borders of Europe, which we have seen transforming at rapid speed, going from open to closed from one day to the other. The political parties use negative discourse portraying the great influx of refugees as a threat to the natural order of the border system and the welfare within each state, persuading the audience, constituting the social, to support the border-regime acts (Guild in Edler 2013: 6-7).

The political construction of the refugee as a security threat, a threat to a shared identity amongst the inhabitants, of not only the EU but also as to the identity of single

states, has justified the current border-regime (Wæver 1995: 13). Brambilla sees the manifestation of new borders, and tighter border control as a form of liberating the politically imagined, which in turn will produce other categories of us/them and inclusion/exclusion on the social and cultural arena (Brambilla 2015: 18).

The borders we see today, in Europe, are mere physical manifestations of the political and social climate of inclusionary/exclusionary politics. When the Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, decides to build a wall (The Daily Mail: 17.09.2015), it is a physical manifestation of what in essence is played out inside the Hungarian borders, the wall is a manifestation of the established construct of a threat to the national identity (Brambilla 2015: 19). Borders are discursive landscapes according to Brambilla, because they need to be justified and legitimised by the general public, and thus the political institutions need to produce convincing discursive features of why the implementation of borders, and border control needs to be in place (Brambilla 2015: 21). It is clear that the discursive landscape in Europe at present, strengthening the borders as a response to the influx of refugees shows measures of inclusionary/exclusionary politics.

Thousands of refugees are stranded in the Greek border-town of Idomeni because Macedonia has decided to close its borders completely and Austria has decided on a daily number of people who are allowed to enter their territory (The Guardian: 29.02.2016 and Al Jazeera, 06.03.2016). This act of demonstrating power is, according to Paasi, one way for the EU states to manifest the territoriality of the state, through the control of immigration and, in the case of Austria, the quotas, giving nationalism a territorial shape, according to Paasi (Paasi 2009: 213). The control of immigration and the establishments of quotas are state-level territorial responses. However, the territorial also becomes evident in the lives of the citizens residing in the state, on a daily basis. They are, as Brambilla has mentioned before, the entities, which the state needs to protect, and the reason for exerting territorial sovereignty. One can then see the territory and the boundedness to the territory as the process of production/re-production of social bonds (Paasi 2009: 213).

The borders of Europe, not naturalistic in essence thus becomes a social construct mirroring the political climate within a significant and relevant context – they are

temporary and fluid, and a reactionary measure to the present influx of refugees (Brambilla 2015: 27). The temporality of borders, the instability produced to enhance stability produces a paradox, a lived uncertainty (Little 2015: 433), not only for the people residing in Europe, but also for the refugees seeking to find refuge in the safe countries of Europe (European Commission: 04.03.2016 and BBC: 04.03. 2016).

The great paradox of the current EU border landscape, and even the discursive EU border landscape, have, with the understanding of temporal borders as introduced by Adrian Little, to some degree had a backfiring consequence. The unpredictability of present European borders has resulted in the borders losing their practical and natural function of imposing order (Little 2015: 433-434). As seen with the example of the refugees living under horrid conditions in Greece, and with the unequal burden-sharing amongst the European states - it has created disturbance and unease amongst the member states of the EU. The Southern European States are pushed to the limits as to capacity on their welfare institutions and apparatus, refugees are suffering in Greek border towns, and Macedonian police is using teargas against the refugees as they are trying to cross their borders illegally (Al Jazeera: 06.03.2016). Furthermore, the states of Northern Europe have imposed a strict border control and immigration policy resulting in a greater burden on the Southern-European states. The usually functioning Schengen-agreement is facing a collapse, and the well-established EU-system is facing severe difficulties in uniting the EU-member states (European Commission: 04.03.2016). The order usually generated from the borders has the opposite effect as Europe is trembling under the new border-regime.

Houtum and Naerssen apply similar conceptualisations of borders as Adrian Little, and their idea of the border, can be directly applied to the European context of externalising the borders in Southern Europe. They argue that the borders are here to create an order, however, inherent with the concept of border lays also the presumption of the "other". When creating new borders, one simultaneously reproduce a spatial difference, an "us" and "them", a reproduction of identity and space (Houtum & Naerssen 2001: 128). This is evident in the border-regime in all of Europe, however, especially evident in the practice of FRONTEX in the Mediterranean Sea , which will be elaborated further in the forthcoming section on security (Guild in Edler 2013: 6-7).

5.2. Security

MARIE: In this section we argue why refugees can be seen, in today's political scene, as the 'referent object' constructed as a threat to the EU and its member states' national identities.

Securitisation and European externalisation

As stated, Lemberg-Pedersen argues how externalisation can be seen as a complex process of borderscaping, reflecting shifting political paradigms. This becomes evident in various ways. One way to exemplify externalisation can be found in the Dublin Regulation as it relies on the responsibility of the asylum-seeker to seek asylum in the first nation-state reached within the EU. Another way externalisation functions within the Dublin Regulation is through the practise of returning asylum-seekers through repatriation agreements, to the country in which they sat foot in first (Goodwin-Gill & McAdam 2011: 400). In this manner, it could be argued that the Dublin Regulation functions not only to secure the control of refugees but also to protect the borders of Northern states within the EU.

The EU border agency FRONTEX constitutes another example of externalisation. FRONTEX has a mandate to protect Europe from illegal migration, and therefore employ ships to catch the refugees before they actually reach Europe (Lemberg-Pedersen 2012: 37). Thereby exemplifying how the EU border-system functions to secure the control of refugees, seen with the establishment and practices of FRONTEX, resulting in an externalisation of EU responsibility (Lemberg-Pedersen 2015: 407). According to Lemberg-Pedersen this demonstrates how border control withholds a moral and political dilemma between a state's rights to sovereignty and the refugees' right to seek and be granted protection in states other than their own (Lemberg-Pedersen 2015: 394).

It is argued by scholars that there is a securitisation of immigration in EU actions, as the immigrant is posed as a threat to European welfare and security, and furthermore in the manner in which FRONTEX was built as a direct response to this perception of the immigrant (Guild in Edler 2013: 6-7). Thus, the European asylum-policy system can be seen as a form of border control as it seeks to keep refugees away from the

European borders, thereby entailing Brambilla's concept of borderscapes as a political tool for ordering reality, from where discourses and practices originate (Brambilla 2015: 24).

Moreover, FRONTEX bears witness of a perception that Europe has an imminent threat from the Sea, where the refugees pose a threat to the European system. As the EU try to keep the refugees out, they unavoidably create a perception of the refugees as constituting a security issue (Wæver 1995: 18). Thereby, it becomes evident how there is a strong discursive difference in who constitutes the citizens of Europe, and who does not, as it is manifested in the physical practice of FRONTEX. The refugees are seen as the others, and new borders are closed as to not let the others be producers of change in the national order of things (Lemberg-Pedersen 2011: 393)

Another way to exemplify externalisation, as mentioned in the theory chapter, is when the EU or its Member States negotiate specific agreements related to migration control with third countries. This became evident with the EU/Turkey Deal signed in March 2016.

The EU/Turkey deal

In order to understand the securitisation of refugees, it could be argued that a specific 'speech act' expressed by the EU is hard to find, but FRONTEX practices and actions such as the EU/Turkey deal speak for themselves.

Several problematic aspects of constructing refugees as a threat, becomes evident in the EU/Turkey deal, concerning both criminalisation and discrimination of refugees. The externalisation of the deal can be seen as a move away from a common solution of receiving asylum-seekers, as the deal pushes refugees back situating them at the external borders of the EU, stopping refugees from reaching Greece. Furthermore, Karen Jacobsen argues that when refugees becomes the responsibility of the army (Turkish military at the borders - The Economist: 11.03.2016) then

> *"... refugees are more likely to be seen as an extra burden on existing resources and workloads or, in the case of the army as a potential threat to*

> *security. As a result, more negative refugee policies are likely to be pursued"* (Jacobsen 1996: 661).

With this, it is arguable that the refugees are seen as a security threat.

Moreover, the deal is implementing the deportation of refugees from Greece to Turkey, which implies that those refugees who have reached the shores of a Greece will, according to Human Rights Watch be held in detention and that this detaining of asylum seekers is coordinated with the EU (Human Rights Watch: 14.04.2016). In this manner a criminalisation of refugees is taking place, which again could be argued to construct refugees as a threat to the EU, better left outside. A final indicator which demonstrates the EU's reluctance to aid the refugees is the way the EU/Turkey deal only allows Syrian natives to enter the EU (The Economist: 11.03.2016), in this manner it is a discriminative form of externalisation, worsening the conditions for other nationalities. Thus, the situation of today's refugees can be viewed upon as a security issue, being an external threat to the EU. In this way, the securitising of refugees can be exemplified with the EU/Turkey deal, standing as the 'speech act' (Wæver 1995: 18).

The case of Denmark

The right to sovereignty becomes evident in the newly asylum tightenings imposed in the Northern countries of the EU. As mentioned in the Theory Chapter, when terming an issue as a security issue through a speech act it legitimates actions that would otherwise not be legitimate, thus implementing 'whatever means' paving the way for derogations of human rights (Betts 2009: 71). Thus, the association between refugees on the one hand and terrorists on the other hand is established. In the case of Denmark, the Danish proposals and implementations on asylum constraints and tightenings, later followed by Sweden and Germany, can be seen as moving towards the national interest of the state protecting their national identity and culture. The published advertisement in Lebanese newspapers exemplifies the reluctance from the Danish government to aid Syrian refugees. Moreover, it stands as a case of othering, as refugees are not seen upon as people in need but as a burden to the Danish welfare system. The case of housing rejected asylum seekers in the Danish state prison Vridsløselille further

exemplifies criminalisation of refugees (Amnesty International: 01.05.2016). Overall, the Danish asylum tightenings exemplifies Galtung's concept of cultural violence, in which 'the self' is glorified and the value of 'the other' is degraded (Galtung 1990: 298).

In this manner the European refugee crisis reflects the dilemma of nation-states' right to sovereignty and refugees' right to seek asylum in a safe country. Even though there is no document standing as a 'speech act' from the EU, we argue that their action with the case of the EU/Turkey deal speaks for itself, as refugees are constructed as a security issue. The case of Denmark stands to exemplify the way in which refugees are constructed as a societal and state threat (Wæver 1995: 13), and how refugees are repeatedly criminalised when constructed as a 'security issue'.

5.3. Violence, the EU border system and human security

IDA: The increased focus on state security and construction of refugees as both a state and a societal threat are part of the creation of an (ever-changing and not consistent) border-regime. This section of the analysis focuses on the idea of cultural violence and structural violence and its possible presence within the EU border system. In a forthcoming part of the analysis, in which we solely concentrate on the data found in the interviews, this part functions as a form of context and background to further comprehend the occurrence of physical and psychological violence.

The EU border system can in a sense be understood as a form of cultural violence, as it lies on ideological and political ideas, which legitimise the use of violence in certain situations (Galtung 1990: 292). As presented in the previous section on state security and securitisation, refugees are constructed as societal and state threats (Guild in Edler 2013: 6-7), which can be regarded as a manner through which certain structurally violent actions, as for example stricter border controls and asylum policies, can be legitimised.

Particular EU actions as for example the EU/Turkey deal can be considered as a form of physical violence (Galtung 1969: 170), as it physically hinders refugees to continue

their travels from Greece (Washington Post: 11.04.2016). The manner in which different EU states have threatened or warned to close their borders or tighten their asylum laws (BBC: 04.03.2016) can moreover also be understood as a form of violence. This form of politics that is meant to send threatening signals, is a form of physical violence through the act of *psychological violence*, which is decreasing of mental potentialities (Galtung 1969: 170). As refugees try to navigate and manage the increasingly restrictive EU border-regime, these threats (psychological violence) can lead to people avoiding to take specific routes, which means that it turns into a practice of physical violence as it hinders the movement of people. Another important example is the fact that many people die on their way to reach Europe (Houtum & Boedeltje 2009: 228). Even though the intention of stricter border controls and asylum policies is not to create a situation in which people die when trying to navigate around these policies, it can, through Galtung's definition still be considered as a form of physical violence.

The increasingly restrictive asylum policies, within the EU countries, are an example of structural violence. To illustrate the idea of restrictive asylum policies as structural violence we consider the increasingly restrictive understanding and implementation of family reunification, which is a trend that can be found in (among other countries) Denmark and Sweden (Jyllandsposten: 26.01. 2016). *Structural violence* is defined as violence that has no obvious actor, which is manifested in unequal power and unequal life chances. It does not matter if there is no violent intention behind an action that ultimately leads to violence, as it is the actual outcome of violence that is defining the action (Galtung 1969: 171). To limit the possibility to attain family reunification is an act of structural violence against refugees overall, but against female refugees and children in particular. The reason why female refugees are particularly affected by this form of legislative development is that women's access to the formal and informal structures that enable migrating are often inadequate (Bhabha 2004: 235). Thus, through limiting family reunification, many women are restricted from migrating. Moreover, the fact that women do not have access to resources that facilitate migration to the same extent as men can in itself be thought of as structural and physical violence.

It is also possible to argue that there is a presence of *latent violence* in the EU border-regime. Latent violence is a form of violence that has not yet happened, but a very small provocation could lead to a violent situation. This form of situation is due to lack of protective measures and a high pressure stemming from structural violence (Galtung 1969: 172). The constantly changing EU border-regime, which has resulted in structurally violent acts as well as acts of direct violence directed at refugees, is in a very tense situation in which the threat of violence are always present.

There are additional examples of structural, physical and psychological forms of violence and we go further into these examples, as well as the gendered dimension of violence in a later stage of the analysis.

Human security

The EU border system tends to concentrate on state security over the human security of "non-citizens", which is a trend that is especially evident in recent developments. Campani emphasises the risks connected to only consider state security when creating migration policies, as it leads to severe situations related to the human security of refugees (Campani 2012: 164). As mentioned above, stricter policies on family reunification is one example that generally disadvantages refugee women. In this context the feminist critique against the general usage of security as a state-centric concept is very relevant. The lack of attention given to the human security of refugee women leads to an insecure situation for these women. Even though this is not the intention, it is a form of physical violence (hindering the movement of people), based on structural violence (unequal power and unequal life chances).

From a critical feminist point of view, security is considered to be a *"…discursive field and practice of (gendered and gendering) power."* (Marhia 2014: 52). In the forthcoming sections of the analysis we consider the gendered forms of security and violence within the structures of the EU border system.

5.4. Analysis of Hamburg material

As mentioned in the introduction we attended an international conference on refugees and migrants in Hamburg. The experiences and ideas we got from this conference resulted in many ideas and pages of field notes. The Conference was held with the purpose of constructing a powerful network of refugees and migrants, in order to establish a platform for reflection and learning, in collaboration with the group 'Lampedusa' in Hamburg, politically active refugees from Berlin and Hannover as well as European activists. The Conference was held in a big industrial building turned into an art venue called 'Kampnagel' in outer Hamburg (Field Notes: 26.02.2016). It was divided into different events, with small workshops around the venue and big panel-debates in an auditorium (the main scene).

Although we know this conference was established to create understanding and networking amongst political refugee groups and activists, and that our experience was overall positive, we argue that the Conference reproduced gender-roles, situating the refugee women (not the female activists) in a victimising role outside the political sphere. We analyse our empirical data from the Hamburg conference, using theory on *gender-roles, victimisation* and *parallel processing, feminist standpoint theory and narratology*

Experiencing the Hamburg Conference

MARIE: In this section, we go through the establishment of different perceptions and attitudes toward refugee women, experienced at The Conference.

The panel discussions

As we attended the first panel-debate we were surprised to see the lack of women represented on the main scene (Field Notes: 26.02.2016). Initially we thought of it as a coincidence, but after witnessing refugee women continuously being left out of the political debates, the Conference seemingly represented an unfortunate patriarchal structure (Field Notes: 26.02.2016). The lack of female refugee representatives on stage is problematic, as they are thereby not given the platform to publically share their narratives and central aspects and knowledge is lost, which we will elaborate on further in the last section of this chapter.

The construction of refugee women as apolitical can be explained from Bhabha's notion that women's asylum claims are often seen as deviating from the norm, as the asylum system assume a male-centred understanding of persecution (Bhabha 2004: 228-229). Following the constructed view of being apolitical, refugee women are often subjected to being victimised (Bhabha 2004: 230-231). This is also mentioned by Plambech, who states that the victimisation of women who migrate, stems from them being viewed through the lens of human trafficking. Thereby, women who demonstrate agency through migration and opposes the victimisation are distrusted and not viewed as genuine victims and are at risk of being viewed as illegal migrants (Plambech 2014: 385). In line, Fassin argues how

> *"… the legitimacy of the suffering body has become greater than that of the threatened body, and the right to life is being displaced from the political sphere to that of compassion"* (Fassin 2005: 371).

In this manner, Fassin argues that when constructing women as victims, women's life is reduced to that of 'bare life' (Fassin 2005: 371). Thus, victimisation of refugee women reduces them from political individuals into being in need of humanitarian compassion. In this way, keeping refugee women out of political discussions could be interpreted to be 'helping' the women, intentionally or not. Through subjecting women to bare life, their diverse history and individuality are ignored (Fassin 2005: 371).

This opens up to yet another issue; that of seeing refugee women as a homogenous group. By depriving the refugee women who were attending the Conference of their diversity and ignoring their different experiences and political agendas, the Conference excluded them the political altogether. In this way, the lack of female refugee representatives could be interpreted as the reproduction of patriarchal systems.

Moreover, the women who did get to participate in the panel discussions were European activists (Field Notes: 27.02.2012). This exemplifies how it is the *refugee women* who are being constructed as apolitical and subjected to victimisation and not *women* per se. Female asylum seekers being considered as deviating from the (masculine) norm, and constructed into being apolitical and seen as victims in a

constellation of solidarity, could be argued to counteract the purpose of the Conference. This unintentional enactment can be seen as a case of parallel processing. As a form of situated knowledge, the European activists identify to such a degree with the refugees creating a relation or *identification* as explained by Runia as a precondition for a the parallel processing to take place (Runia 2004: 301).

The "Women's space"

As mentioned above, the Conference had made sure that the participating women had a 'safe space' for women only. This was a space where female refugee women and female activists could meet, and discuss and share their experience, without any male presence. The "Women's space" thereby took into consideration that not all women were comfortable discussing their experiences amongst men, which is hard to argue against. Nevertheless, we found it difficult to locate the "Women's space" area, even one of the organisers referred to it as *"a bit tricky"* (Field Notes: 26.02.2016) and were surprised to find a house container in a little spot sheltered by trees and bushes, finding it a bit ironic to place a "Women's space" far away from the main building, with little light and surrounded by trees and bushes for safety reasons (Field Notes: 26.02.2016).

Entering the "Women's space" our gender functioned as a gatekeeper. The small space was cosily decorated with carpets and pillows on the floor, a table with food, and some benches alongside the walls. As the workshop began to take shape, we quickly noticed the lack of facilities such as a board, projector screen, microphones, interpreters, restroom facilities and chairs. The only facility installed was a small tea-kitchen (Field Notes: 27.02.2016). The male participants, however, had easy access to electronic equipment and translators, where the women had to come up with solutions and find translators amongst the participants (Field Notes: 27.02.2016). Once again, the Conference resembled unfortunate presumptions of women, where the traditional view of women belonging to domestic affairs was exemplified through the only instalment in the "Women's space" (the tea-kitchen), as opposed to the men having access and agency. Yuval-Davis discus gender-roles and how female refugees are often situated within traditional roles of women, as domestic workers and in the sex industry. This, she argues, creates perceptions and attitudes specific to women (Yuval-Davis 2009: 4).

In this sense, it could be argued that the Conference failed at moving the refugee women from the concept of *belonging* to the concept of *politics of belonging* as presented by Yuval-Davis. To differentiate between the two concepts, *belonging* is the emotional attachment of feeling 'at home' and 'feeling safe' (Yuval-Davis 2009: 8), in this manner resembling the "Women's space", where the small homely environment was supposed to meet the women's expectations of feeling safe, or the organisers expectations of how the women would most likely feel safe. On the other hand, the *politics of belonging* is outlined as

> *"… comprises specific political projects aimed at constructing belonging in particular ways to particular collectivity/ies, which are the same time being constructed themselves by these projects in very specific ways"* (Yuval-Davis 2009: 8).

Yuval-Davis argues that political projects of belonging tend to naturalise gender-roles, as it was a part of the feminist involvement in women's emancipation. Thus, it could be argued that at the Conference, the European female activists were part of being constructed as belonging in the constellation of the Conference (humanitarian assistance) and in the same time constructing themselves (as organisers) as belonging. Conflicting with the failing to remove the refugee women from the view of *belonging,* subjecting them to a form of control (Yuval-Davis 2009: 9), understood as not being part of the political sphere at the Conference. Thereby, the refugee women are constructed to fit the position of being traditional bound, apolitical women (as a group), and stuck in a construction of safe belonging in the "Women's space".

The refugee women never move to the point where they construct themselves, as the activist women, and thus, not following the development of *belonging* into *politics of belonging,* as they are reduced to victims and a group of refugee women. Conversely seen, the organisers of the Conference show a lack of understanding of this mechanism, as they repeat key aspects of constructing the refugee women in a victimising manner (Runia 2004: 295). In this way the organisers (unconsciously) repeat and reproduce mechanisms they are trying to battle such as sexism, discrimination and oppression of female refugees, as they replicate them in the

environment of the Conference and thus, the Conference becomes a case of parallel processing (Runia 2004: 297).

The Resistance of the Refugee Women

SILJE: In this section, we analyse the reaction of the refugee women and activists at the Hamburg Conference when they experienced suppressive mechanisms as the ones mentioned above. Kwapisz Williams, states that victimisation can have a disempowering effect on the self-image of refugees, which might not correspond to the way in which refugees see themselves (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 437). This became evident during the last day of the Conference, where the women self-organised a rally to claim their position and agency at the Conference.

Castles and Miller argue in Yuval-Davis article, that there is a *"feminization of migration"* which, to simplify it, means to adhere characteristics to the female asylum seeker and refugee, that perhaps does not manifest itself in the everyday life of the female refugee (Yuval-Davis 2009: 4). Yuval-Davis argues that there are constructed symbols connected to the refugee woman which constitutes that she is someone outside of the collective, but at the same time the one who brings honour to the same collective (Yuval-Davis 2009: 9).

The women, refugees as well as European activists, organised a march to demonstrate against their marginal place/space at the Conference, where they gathered a rally that went from the "Women's space" to the main scene, shouting, *"Women's space is everywhere"*. The demonstration ended at the main scene, where the women took over the main stage and held their panel discussion there (Field Notes: 27.02.2016).
The women's sudden uproar at the Conference in Hamburg, and the unexpected takeover of the main scene does not fit with the presupposed image of the refugee woman as a mere victim without agency and not able to engage actively in the struggle of bettering her own circumstances (Kwapisz William 2014: 437-438). The woman, and female "heroism" through difficult times have been depicted as both passive and submissive as well as the common perception of the woman as "suffering in silence" (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 441). Once again, the women at the Conference were not those of a silent, passive and submissive character – but their engagement and direct

participation to improve their own circumstance became evident as they spoke with a loud and clear voice again being made voiceless and spoken for by men (Field Notes: 27.02.2016).

There is an apparent gendered division in the perception and discourse of refugees – which was manifested and reproduced in the small milieu at the Conference in Hamburg. The men, who were the dominators in all panel discussions, were portrayed as being the provider of safety and the protector of the female refugee, reproducing a stereotypical view of gender-roles (Kwapisz William 2014: 441-442). The stereotypical gender-roles of the man and the woman were present in the structural patterns of the Conference, however, the women demonstrated, as seen in the uproar that they were conscious beings, with a strong agency, making the same choices in providing safety and enhancing their own situation. One of the women from the Conference, while on stage, spoke of the choice she had to make to get to Europe; *"I am not stupid, I had to play stupid. I paid with my own body to get here (on the way from Greece to Turkey). I crossed the water – I am not stupid"* (Field Notes: 27.02.2016).

Another woman contemplated, also on stage, that there was a hierarchy between the panel-participators, and that the "Women's space" was the reflection of the patriarchy, and, that once again, women were to stand behind the man. She finished her loud connotation by stating; *"NO we are not victims! We will not be victimized!"* In this way strongly opposing the victimisation experienced at the Conference while further stating, "*We are not only supporters of the case, who stand behind the man, we are in front as well"* (Field Notes: 27.02.2016). This demonstrates the findings of Kwapisz Williams when concluding her study with the finding of a dialogical relationship between a political agency and femininity; of a woman who inhabits characteristics that goes against the classical, gendered understanding of the woman. She found that the female refugees inhabited characteristics that in its usual sense would exclude each other, but nevertheless did not. In accordance with Kwapisz Williams findings, the women had characteristics typically connected to femininity while at the same time, actively involved in the surrounding society (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 444-445).

Further on, another female activist took over the microphone and stated

> *"I expected a nice place, but still mentally I have to fight men* (because they got access to facilities) *I don't want to fight anymore! We are fighting the 'Lagas'* (asylum centres) *we need them to be closed!"* (Field Notes: 27.02.2016).

Thus, giving a strong indication that women experience this type of generalisation and victimisation elsewhere, reflecting a general mechanism in the refugee-regime. Another female refugee joined in the discussion arguing, *"It is not only white solidarity and male refugees! There is human refugees and THEN women refugees!"* (Field Notes: 27.02.2016). In this sense, she is expressing a lived experience of being marginalised and subjected into being a female refugee instead of a (human) refugee, on the same level as men. Moreover, this further points to the fact that the European activists is also by the refugee women experienced as having more agency.

To further exemplify the lack of understanding of the replication of gendered stereotypes stands the episode of a male organiser. With the intention to show his solidarity with the refugee women and apologising for the unfortunate outcome, he ended up once again subjecting them into being mere mothers, sisters, wives, and undermining their individuality

> *"He explained that he was Sudanese and would like to share something. As a refugee, he had seen his mother and sister exposed to violence – without finishing the crowd of women quickly interrupted with statements such as, "We will not be victimized"* (Field Notes: 27.02.2016)

Moreover, this further highlight the lack of understanding towards giving the women the possibility to talk for themselves and hold power over their own narrative, but finds that it is acceptable for him to talk on their behalf, thereby depriving them from their narrative - giving him narrative authority (Gymnich 2013: 709).

Overall, as seen with the demonstration of the women at the Conference, we witnessed women who were highly political, highly engaged, and highly visible. They protested against the gendered roles forced upon them at the Conference, and did not themselves

identify with the characters of the female refugee that have been produced over time. They refused to stand behind a man, and not being given a voice. There is no doubt when saying that the women wanted to share their narratives and become the dominant/embrace the authoritative role when sharing her story (Gymnich 2013:709).

Feminist standpoint theory, narratology and the Hamburg Conference

IDA: In this section we contextualise our data material from Hamburg using *feminist standpoint theory* and *narratology*. The knowledge presented at the Conference represent a specific narrative on the situation of refugees overall and, as this is our focus, specifically female refugees. While trying to understand specific events and situations, as for example the Conference, we turn no narratives.

"Narratives are made up of multiple, intersecting, overlapping stories, some which are told, others are suppressed, or deliberately not expressed" (Porter 2015: 48).

One of the central aspects of creating a narrative is the emplotment, through which characters are created, a function is attributed to single events and an interpretive theme is found (Czarniawska 2010: 61-61). Michael Jackson underlines the importance of having the possibility to tell one's narrative. As understood by Hannah Arendt, there is a power in storytelling, in the sense that it transforms the private into an action of public meaning through which one hopefully gains public recognition (Arendt in Jackson 2013: 34). Jackson adds, that storytelling also has the power to transform public meaning into the private sphere (Jackson 2014: 34). These views on narratives demonstrates the importance of being able to share your narratives with other people, both in the sense that sharing narratives creates historical chronicles and to have the power to construct a platform for public recognition. From this point of view, it is problematic that the refugee women attending the Conference in Hamburg were not given the platform to publically share their narratives. In that sense, the refugee women attending the Conference, were not able to regain the balance between, what Jackson calls the immediate sphere (in which we feel we have knowledge and importance) and the wider sphere (in which we experience that we lack power and our voices are not heard) (Jackson 2013: 112). This is particularly relevant in the context of refugees as the flight risks transforming the refugee from a subject to an object, through which who or what you are is only reflected in the eyes of others (Jackson 2013: 115).

In accordance with feminist narratology, the failure of not including the narratives of female refugees at the main platform of the Conference can be explained by the concept of narrative authority. Narrative authority is the manner in which the narrator is given the authoritative role by readers and listeners, which thereby gives the narrator the power to create the characters, the functions to the told events and the interpretive theme (Gymnich 2013: 709). The narrative authority can in that sense be understood as a form of manifestation of power. By not including female refugees in the main discussions and seminars on political organisation and resistance, the narrative authority was given to the men who spoke at the seminars.

Feminist narratology builds on a critique of the objectivity of a gender-neutral approach towards narratives (Gymnich 2013: 707). This approach towards the female refugees at the Conference is in a sense both based on an idea of narratives as gender-neutral and that it would not bring anything new to the discussion to include women and at the same time on an understanding of refugees as stereotypical in terms of gender, as the women were designated a specific space and specific themes, building on a stereotypical understanding of the ”female refugee experience”.

To summarise, the female refugees at the Hamburg conference counteracted classical perceptions of refugee women, with their resistance to the suppressive mechanism they experienced, such as the constructed victimisation and the repeating exclusion of women in the political sphere. These mechanisms could arguably be seen as a case of parallel processing, as the organisers reproduced stereotypical views of female refugees and performed such attitudes towards the women at the Conference.

By not including the female refugees in the political discussions, the narrative authority is given to the male participants and thereby it could be understood as if narratives are (in the view of the organisers) gender-neutral, as they did not include women. Thus, reproducing a stereotypical view of women, where corporeal issues such as genital mutilation is to be discussed in the private and thereby replicating the subjection of women to consists of the body while at the same time failing to encompass the diversity found in the narratives of the refugee women into the equation.

5.5. Analysis of the Narratives

By the use of narratology and the theories outlined earlier, we now turn to the analysis of the narratives of Steer, Nillem and Huda, and use the shorter narratives of Sabor and Sara as contextual, supportive narratives. Applying narratology as a method, allows for an insight into different 'truths', interviewing the 'experiencing subject' and thereby avoiding generalising the interviewee's narrative, as another example of 'the refugee experience' (Eastmond 2007: 248). In the first section of the chapter, we look into the constructions of the interviewees' narrative as in accordance with narratology as presented by Czarniawska.

The difference between a narrative and a story is that the narrative follows a *kairotic* line, meaning that is predominantly based on specific events that are emphasised by the narrator; that is events that is given more importance in the narrative; the so called *emplotment* in the story (Czarniawska 2010: 60-61). Therefore, in the following analysis, we have decided to recognise such *specific events*. Usually, there is a *logic of succession*, which means that the narrative is straightforward; it is told in a chronological order (Czarniawska 2010: 64). The essential components of a narrative are, according to Czarniawska, the recognition *of central characters* (Czarniawska 2010: 62). We have therefore, in every narrative, analysed who the main characters are. Furthermore, we have recognised the *interpretive theme,* which is the logic and the meaning given to the specific events by the narrator (Czarniawska 2010: 61-62). We also analyse to see if there is a *logic of transformation* in the narrative, of the narrator*;* that is the so-called paradigm-shift in the narrative, and it *"consists in the passage from one equilibrium to another. An "ideal" narrative begins with a stable situation, which is disturbed by some power or some force"* (Todorov in Czarniawska 2010: 64).

We emphasise the specific events that are given importance by the narrator, and furthermore analyse these events by applying theory. We find the theoretical themes to be that of security, border, liminality and strategies.

Nillem

MARIE: Nillem is an 18-year-old Iranian woman, with a narrative that bears witness of being assaulted by men on her way to and through Europe. At the same time, her

narrative reflects a strong opposition of being viewed upon as a victim because of her gender. It should be mentioned that Nillem is making a conscious choice of leaving Iran, where she is not exposed to an immediate threat but rather is determined to get a new life, opposite to the oppression she experienced in her everyday-life in Iran. Despite advice given by her family, she disregarded them and crossed the EU border at sea and continued her way to Germany through the Balkan route, alone. Her wish was to be reunited with her mother and sister, who had left Iran for Germany 9 months prior, when she had been too scared to follow, a decision she greatly regretted.

Perception of borders

The kairotic time becomes evident in the manner Nillem gives attention to the different border experiences. What has clearly been the most influential event is the crossing at sea, which is a continuous theme in her narrative - in other terms the EU border. Nillem faces trouble remembering differences between the national borders within the EU, listing them with the help from Sabor (also an interviewee) *"Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia (Estonia), and Austria"* (Nillem: 11.35). This could arguably reflect her expectation to reach safety within the EU by Greece, and therefore did not see other borders as important. In this manner, her movement within the EU is more defined by contexts such as power relations (gender) and safety, than by experiences of crossing (individual/national) borders as she mostly tell us about Turkey, Greece and Germany, explaining her journey very shortly

> *"(From Turkey) 7 hours we were in the camp and after 15 days we come with a ship, not very good, very old. I was alone. 6 hours in the sea and then we come to Athens and then we come to Germany"* (Nillem: 05.00).

The recurring themes for Nillem's narrative are thus mostly based on safety as explained in relation to gender and with the other important event in her narrative; the boat-trip from Turkey to Greece, *"Yes, difficult with boat – first time at sea! The boat, we come to Turkey – it's very difficult. Man in Turkey with German, he told me; if you don't go in the boat I kill you. I'm very afraid of the water!"*(Nillem: 05.00.) She waited 15 days in Turkey to board the ship *"When I was coming for the ship, the ship was for 80 persons but come with 150 persons – not easy!"* (Nillem: 05.12). Today she suffers from her experience of being on the boat, as she felt very unsafe and thus it

made a big impression on her, *"Not safe! Yes, not safe! Very difficult and then uhm…now every night when I sleep, I dream about the ship, the water, and the people. And I dream about of the water…you know…and the swimming"* (Nillem: 16.18) It seems as if the reaching of Europe gave her a sense of security, although she still felt targeted by men.

When explaining her route to Germany, Nillem seems a bit disoriented about which borders she has crossed and whether she registered or not. In Greece she wrote down her name, but is not sure if she registered *"I don't know, I had my name the first place"*(Nillem: 57.00). Her difficulty pointing out specific events at the individual borders, could be seen as a confirmation of Jackson's view regarding how events in life, that are connected to the flight, are often scattered and (especially when not speaking one's native language) a language often lacks the words to explain the most traumatic experiences of a narrative (Jackson: 2013:106). Nevertheless, she expresses a sense of safety as she got to Germany stating, *"When I come to Germany, the police very good behaviour"* (Nillem: 13.55). We learned that Nillem's mother had originally planned out to go to Sweden, and when asked into it, Nillem simply replied *"Yes, but they say to us Sweden don't let you stay. Yes, the first time my mother and my sister said they were trying to go but now here – you come back!"* (Nillem: 33.45) as Nillem wanted to stay with her mother, she did not try to seek for asylum in Sweden.

Characters

Nillem characterises herself as being brave opposite her (female) family members explaining, *"All the women said to me, my family very big, and they said you going to have problem"* (Nillem: 29.35 min). In this manner, her understanding of herself deviates from the cultural Iranian norm, as her female family members warned her about leaving Iran.

A main character in Nillem's narrative, is her 'other mother' Sabor who both functions as a part of her narrative while at the same time is sitting next to Nillem as we spoke. Nillem introduces us to Sabor pointing at her, *"This is another strong woman"* (Nillem: 36.00) and thus her role as a character in Nillem's narrative, emerges into becoming a character of her own narrative, whom we will return to.

Overall, the narrative of Nillem does not involve strong characters other than herself (as she met Sabor in Rostock). This could be explained based on the view that she is travelling alone.

There is however an important character to be found in the role of, and her relation to men, which at the same time is intertwined with her perception of security. Throughout her narrative Nillem undergoes a transformation, when adapting to her surroundings as a strategy to avoid being situated with men. According to Czarniawska, having specific elements of transformation, as seen in Nillem's narrative, changes the narrative into a story (Czarniawska 2010: 64). These events and their following strategies, unavoidably implies liminality.

Liminality

Liminality is thus created by events or actions forcing a transformation in identity on the individual. As a minor aspect Nillem explains how she had to endure the dirty conditions on the way stating, *"When I go, my mother told me, you are very clean – hard core clean!"* (Nillem: 11.35). Thereby Nillem had to toughen up, in order to endure the move from Iran to Germany.

Reflecting on her experiences after reaching Rostock, Nillem explains

> *"But the way very changed me. And now I'm feeling very tired about my mind. I have a very hard time and every time I should use my mind (interrupting herself)...and I'm without my family and without my friends"* (Nillem: 17.53).

Further stating that, *"Now, I'm alone in one room and I have problem with men"* (Nillem: 31.35). These statements reflect how Nillem has endured a lot under her move, which she now suffers from. At the same time she expresses a pride of having made the trip all by herself, enduring the horrid conditions as she reflects

> *"Now I can think this way, because I think to myself; how you coming here? Because at sea…when finish the sea…really all the people think new life! Women are strong and very brave!"* (Nillem: 36.00).

As Hynes argues, structures in the (Northern) European asylum system help establish and reinforce the state of liminality for refugees, by socially excluding them and thereby enhancing the feeling of liminality (Hynes 2011: 155). Nillem shows opposition and agency to this continuously liminality by involving herself in political activities for refugee women in Rostock, through her friendship with Katayun, an Iranian refugee woman working for Refugees Welcome in Rostock. This is what Hynes explains happening, when refugees are trying to find a foothold, breaking the liminality by creating ways that will produce a sense of belonging (Hynes 2011: 156).

Thereby, Nillem's involvement in political activities produces a sense of belonging by being part of a group, finding female solidarity amongst the activists as well as establishing a new identity for herself, *"Today, when Katy (Katayun spoke at the rally in Rostock) speak about woman – for the first time I think we are strong! New life!"* (Nillem: 47.06). Furthermore, the involvement in political activities is also a form of social navigation, as it is a strategy to improve her situation. Thus Nillem is producing a sense of belonging by being part of a new social network, with a 'New life' prospect as she engages in political activities and thereby resisting the liminality imposed by society.

Specific events

The most meaningful events highlighted in Nillem's narrative is the crossing of the Mediterranean, reaching the shores of Greece and the constant fear of being assaulted by men.

Nillem rationalises why she exposed herself to danger, when she reflects on her experiences of living in Iran

> *"In Iran, were the first die for the women. But now we coming here the hard way, maybe we dead, maybe…but now we are coming here! When I talk to women from Syria, they told me killing - Bang, Bang, Bang! They see dead people, family, friends…But in Iran, all women are dead in mind"* (Nillem: 59:30).

This emphasises Nillem's situated knowledge as she further expresses how,

"(…) my family came here before (…) And I listen, the women is very important in Germany. In Iran, I cannot study the teacher…and the police – you cannot for the women" (Nillem: 26.00). Thus, Nillem came to better her chances in life, explaining her hopes for the future to contain an education, *"Because coming (…) I want to be dentist or about the head technician (psychologist)"* (Nillem: 31.35). In this way, Nillem is making sense out of the events exposed to her, as she had no choice after her beliefs, but to leave Iran. This was done alone and by crossing the sea - an action with great influence on Nillem as she has hydrophobia (Nillem: 43.27). Thus, these events contribute to the understanding of Nillem's narrative, and the development she has undergone through them, as explained through situations of liminality.

Her fear of men is highlighted with an episode from a Turkish refugee camp, where she experienced an assault performed by a group of men

> *"If it was just for women – yes good! But I think the problem with all the man, because when they see you are alone girl, they want to use you. If they see your room, they are coming in your room (…) Now this happened to me* (men trying to come to her room) *I'm very nervous and I can't sleep. And when they* (men) *come in, I really want them to shut up when coming to girl"* (Nillem: 22.38).

In this manner, Nillem is making a point out of women's position as being threatened when they are alone. This episode stands as an important event in Nillem's narrative, establishing her characterisation of men as perpetrators as opposed to heroes. Similarly, her fear of men is proven to be right, providing her with a situated knowledge affecting her chosen strategies.

Strategies

As explained in the theory chapter, social navigation stands as the agency of the individual. In this manner, the first strategy employed by Nillem could arguably be the very move from Iran, moving towards the 'socially imagined' establishing a 'new life' (Vigh 2009: 226). Thereby, Nillem was moved by the 'socially imagined' future as opposed to her situated knowledge on her life prosperities in Iran, explaining the reason for her move as

> *"I'm very afraid of the water I have phobia. But when I'm at sea I said; I go or I dead! Because I can't go back! Then you can't go! You love the study – you can't (...) We were alone me, my mother and my sister in Iran. Iran – a lot of trouble and the police come to you and very bad behaviour! I chose to go on the sea"* (Nillem: 43.27)

When analysing Nillem's narrative, navigational strategies become evident as in accordance with Vigh's concept of social navigation. These strategies entail: *Visibility/ invisibility, travelling in a group and paying for security.* These strategies are unavoidably intertwined.

The first strategy of being *visible or invisible*, becomes evident in the beginning of Nillem's narrative, when she gave a false statement of her nationality, as Iranians do not share the same privileges as Iraqis: *"The Iranian are not allowed to come here, I should say I'm from Iraq. I say I'm from Iraq and it is so bad, because they don't let Iranian people come here* (crossing the Turkish border) *But very very difficult way"*(Nillem: 11.35). This statement improved her move, as she gained access she otherwise would not have gained. Furthermore she states, *"They (refugees) are coming with their uncle and family, and they* (EU governments) *want from the Syria a lot of people. But I'm alone from the Iran"* (Nillem: 36.00). This indicates that making her identity *invisible* for the EU governments will further help her case, as it allows for her to blend in with other groups of refugees. This is similar to Malkki's discovery of Hutu refugees' 'situational identity' making them invisible in society (Hynes 2011: 175-176).

Being both alone and a woman contributes with a gender-differentiation as she is constantly trying to keep out of sight of male refugees, *"When I'm afraid I don't sleep with anybody* (she is hiding*)* (Nillem: 52.25 min) and further when Nillem states how *"I want to be ugly so nobody looks at me"* (Nillem: 52.28). This indicates a form of gender-specific insecurity as men are characterised as a threat, which we return to in the section of security and violence. Nevertheless, *visibility* can be an advantage, which is exemplified in the meeting with authorities, "*The Police hit me but it was an accident and apologised when they see I'm woman"* (Nillem: 27.15). In this case her

gender worked to her advantage and can be seen as an act of gendering. This exemplifies how strategies of gendering becomes implicit in strategies of bordering, as one's gender can work both in one's favour as well as against it. Performing strategies of being visible or invisible thereby becomes act of gendering, intentional or not. As Nillem mostly performed the strategy of invisibility, differences of gender becomes more evident, as she is trying to shelter herself from being alone with men. A strategy employed to avoid this, is joining a group for example that of a family.

The second strategy of *travelling in a group* is established when Nillem states, "*All the girls travel with brother and together in a group (…)"*(Nillem: 52.25). And further how *"It is good to travel many together! A lot of the man – very fight together!"*(Nillem: 54.10). Nillem further explained how she protected herself, *"I find family around and felt safe. The woman, man and two children"* (Nillem: 25.07) Here, it should be noted that she does not emphasise being in company with a man (as a protector) but that the constellation of belonging to a group or a family made her feel safe. Moreover, Nillem exemplifies the safety of being in a group with her experiences in a refugee camp, located in Rostock. Here she faced several difficulties, when the facilities provided, forced her to sleep in the same room as men. At this time she met Sabor, an Iranian woman travelling with her two children at the ages of 12 and 20 years, with whom she grouped together with, expressing her gratitude *"When I come to Rostock I'm more relaxed and I have my other mother here* (Sabor)*"* (Nillem: 26.00) achieving the security of being part of a family.

The third strategy of *paying for security* appears in Nillem's narrative. When sharing her experiences, Nillem does not speak a lot about her mother and sister, or their role in her movement, as her focus is on the experience of being alone. Nevertheless, it becomes evident that she is, although to a limited extent, in some cases, able to pay for increased security. When travelling with the ferry to Athens she explains how

> *"(I) was sitting on the top outside. It was very cold. But where we stayed, not good! So, I had money, I paid money to one of the ship and I had a room alone in the ship. But other women with children with no money, they could not get a room on the boat – they had to sleep outside"*
> (Nillem: 57.00).

In this manner, capital allows for her to find security, a privilege not shared by all. This adds yet another dimension to the notions of security and navigation, namely that class becomes an important element of making out strategies (Gymnich 2013: 713), which we return to with the narrative by Sabor.

Security and violence

The overall theme of Nillem's narrative, is securing herself from being assaulted by men, performing several strategies in order to avoid such a situation. Therefore, Nillem's concept of safety unavoidably becomes related to that of gender. The discourse of viewing (especially) female refugees as being marginalised and belonging to their husbands or brothers, who is predominantly seen as heroes (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 441-442), is in Nillem's case reversed. Her narrative counters the perception of men as protectors as men throughout her narrative are experienced as perpetrators.

> *"Really it's very bad, it's very hard! And it's…for the women…because on the way I'm alone and girl – and a lot of men! You should very take care about yourself, because all the men see you and want to make use of you and it's very bad!"*
> (Nillem: 16.18)

This statement reflects how security is not gender-neutral, as explained by Porter (Porter 2015: 40), which is exemplified in the way she characterises men as a threat. Thus, her narrative states that violence is gender-specific as female refugees are exposed to other threats than men are. The gender-specific violence, is in accordance with Kwapisz Williams explanation on how refugee women see themselves more corporeal than men, as they are more likely to be objectified (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 444) supported by Nillem when she expresses how she wishes to be ugly (Nillem: 52.28) Similarly supporting the view of female refugees as being more vulnerable, as they risk being subjected to sexual violence (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 441-442).

Another aspect of men as a threat can be found in the way Nillem portrays them as aggressors, as in accordance with Porter (Porter 2015:39), once again the opposite of

being ‘heroes’. The first time this becomes evident, is on the very crowded boat from Turkey to Greece

> *“A lot of the men – very fight together! (…) And the ship, very bad time! Very black and for six hours and waves…A woman very afraid and yelling at her husband for making her coming and the husband slapping her many times! All the men afraid! It is normally the women afraid calling God!”* (Nillem: 54.10).

In this way, Nillem witness how men are taking on (in her view) traditional female gender-roles when showing fear. This opens up for the two following aspects: firstly, how gender-roles move beyond traditional and cultural notions of men as heroic and women as victims, when being in a situation of displacement it allows for a shift in gender-roles, which exemplifies the complexities of gender-relations and fluidity of gender-roles as explained by Kwapisz Williams (Kwapisz William 2014: 451-452). Second, how Nillem’s experience of men as constituting a threat of violence, is a form of violence, as it can be understood as psychological violence, as expressed by Galtung. This is exemplified in the way Nillem has to navigate around men, which is in accordance with Galtung’s understanding of psychological violence as a constraint on human action (Galtung 1969: 171).

It is obvious that Nillem has felt threatened travelling alone; which is why she employs strategies throughout her way, in order to manoeuvre around situations imposing possible threats to her. Overall, this could again indicate that the border-regime as a system (with no obvious actor) is a form of structural violence, as it constitutes unequal power relations, resulting in unequal possibilities and thus resulting in gendered navigation for female refugees (Galtung 1969:171). This differentiation between the genders becomes evident in the narrative of Sabor, adding yet another dimension to the case, when analysing her experiences of facing discrimination.

Sabor

Sabor contributes to the interview but due to lacking English skills, Nillem translates and also speaks on behalf of Sabor. In this manner, Nillem is (although it is with good

intentions) dominating Sabor's narrative, which is why we only mention Sabor's experiences briefly.

The narrative of Sabor opens up to a consideration encouraged by feminist narratology, in which the role of gender in narratives has to be considered in connection with other aspects such as ethnicity, marital status and class. When analysing Sabor's narrative it becomes evident that she lacks access, as she is an Iranian single mother, with little financial resources, and with lacking English skills (Porter 2015: 36), and thereby emerges as a very marginalised woman.
In Sabor's narrative, the main characters are her two children: a son and a daughter in the ages of 20 and 12 years. When asked if she felt safe having her 20-year-old son by her side, she explained with the translating by Nillem *"(…) her son is without experience and he is young and was very afraid"* (Sabor in Nillem: 40.40) and is thereby not seen as a protector but as a child.

The main events of Sabor's narrative are the boat-trip to Greece and her experiences of being discriminated as an Iranian woman. Sabor explains how she came to Germany through the same route as Nillem

> *"We coming with the boat and the boat broke! We don't know how we come, because all thinking we dead! The water, and the boat…down, down down! That was the boat to Greece"* (Sabor in Nillem: 39.05)

In the same manner as with Nillem, our short talk with Sabor does not open up to an understanding of the different borders, but rather the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea stands as the seminal event.

On the differencing of ethnicity Sabor states how Iranian's are more exposed and marginalised than other refugees stating, *"They separate us so we sleep in trees and walking 15 hours. Very cold! Then all the people coming this way like animal. Really, really afraid!"* (Sabor in Nillem: 43.27 min) Moreover, Sabor explains (with Nillems words) how Iranians are not accepted in Serbia

> *"… but for the Iranians – not allowed! They* (Sabor and her children) *come in secret and if the police find out – not good! Estonia (Macedonia) the police see them, and they walking fast. Then the police chase them to black water* (a pond) *and the people coming and she* (Sabor and the children end up) *in the water and with wet dress running from police! Very cold – and losing one shoe* (both laughing) *and dangerous! My daughter cry!"* (Sabor in Nillem: 48.28)

These events emphasise how some refugees have a stronger or weaker position due to ethnicity, gender and/or class, as well as how women are not only affected by their gender, but also by other categories which have an influence on the chosen strategies. So, when discussing processes of gendering, aspects such as ethnicity and class have to be taken into the equation.

Overall, certain aspects of violence thus becomes gender-specific; security is not gender-neutral, as Nillem explains several strategies to avoid being situated in the company of men, as they impose a threat to her. It further becomes evident that not only gender plays an important role to deploy strategies but also aspects such as ethnicity and class, as explained by Sabor. As Jackson argues, refugees are often reduced to being what they are in the eyes of others, and thus loses control over their own integrity (Jackson 2013: 115). In Nillem's case, she is not only being objectified because she is a refugee, but because of her gender (and would be because of ethnicity if she had not claimed to be Iraqi). This enhances her need to succeed and demonstrates a lot of self-determination to reach her goal of a 'new life'. In accordance with Eastmond, it is important to consider the fact that a narrative concerning the past is affected by both the present situation and the imagined future (Eastmond 2007: 249). In this manner, it should be taken into consideration that Nillem has not finished her 'journey'; although she has reached Germany, her asylum process is still underway. Nillem is thus in the middle of her narrative as she is still experiencing, and thereby her narrative remains open (Jackson 2013: 107).

Steer

IDA: Steer is 21 years old and studied law at university before she had to flee from the Kurdish area in Syria where she grew up. Steer told us that she fled Syria because she

did not want to fight for the Kurdish army, as she did not want to use weapons or kill people (Steer: 01.30). Furthermore, Steer's mother has already fled to Denmark, which is why her goal is to go to there. When we interview Steer she has recently received the news that she has been granted asylum in Denmark. The interpretive theme of Steer's narrative is multi-layered and is filled with expectations and nuances. One thing is prevalent throughout the narrative; it involves several turn-of-events, but also a strong determination to ultimately not give up.

Perception of borders

Steer's conceptualisation of borders is mainly based on her experiences in connection to border authorities, but also on rumours and information about borders. Steer first tells us about trying to cross the border between Turkey and Greece

> *"So we passed the river and went to Greece, but at that point the police catch us. (…) They sent us back to Turkey. It was night and they threw our phones in the river.* (Steer: 04.45). Her next experience is between the border of Bulgaria and Serbia: *"We were a lot of people, like 200 people. It was a very, very big van, like a truck. I was very sick that night, I threw up everything I ate. I could not walk or stand or see. (…) We stay for three hours in the truck before we reach some forest and then we climb a mountain and then we pass the border between Sofia and Serbia."*
> (Steer: 27.34).

The third border-crossing is that of Serbia and Hungary,

> *"We find some cars in the night and we give them a lot of money. (…) They had to deal with the police and every five minutes they would stop us and we have to give them money until we can pass the border. We find a big river; we have to pass it. The guys said: "We have two children with us, we cannot pass there, it is very dangerous." But we had to pass."* (Steer: 32.45).

Steer tells us that there were a lot of organisations helping around the Serbian-Hungarian border, but that they could not receive help as they had heard that those who left their fingerprints had to continue to and stay in Germany.

There were a lot of rumours surrounding fingerprinting and the Hungarian police

> *"Don't worry, it's without fingerprint, you can go to the police. (…) Some said: "Don't trust them, we had to fingerprint and you only have the choice to go to Germany". And it was very confusing".* (Steer: 33.52).

> *"And we passed the border that morning. We have to go through the jungle without fingerprint and without the police." (…) They asked for our fingerprints at the police office. We told them that we cannot, because Denmark does not accept fingerprints from your country. If we fingerprint here they will send us back to Germany."*
> (Steer: 35.22).

Steer, her sister, her aunt and her nephews were then imprisoned in Hungary for eight days.

> *"After eight days they bring us to court and they say to us: "Because you did not fingerprint we will bring you back to Serbia and it's not allowed for you to come back to Hungary for three years". And I was really sad because it was really our only chance to pass Hungary to Vienna. We were crying a lot all of us that day. No hope. That day they sent us back to Serbia was the day Hungary would close its border for the refugees not to pass."*
> (Steer: 41.20).

> *"We were so confused on what to do. (…) So I meet some journalist from Germany (..) And he said: "So my advice for you is that there are 2000 refugees waiting on the border of Hungary so go join them and he showed me the way on GPS. (…) He didn't know when they would open the border, but hopefully you will not fingerprint there he said."* (Steer: 44:09).

> *"They didn't open and we take a bus to go to Croatia. They said you should go to Slovenia. …but I saw a policeman and asked him because the train didn't move. They tell me: "This train is never moving and why do you wanna go to Slovenia? We have problem with Slovenia, it is danger for you to cross the border." (…) … he said OK, the train can leave because Hungary will accept 500 people. After one hour they move the train to Hungary and they received us and put us on a fast train to Vienna."* (Steer: 47.20).

Steer then passed the borders between Austria and Germany and Germany and Denmark, but these border-crossing are a much smaller part of her narrative. What is clear is the fact that reaching Vienna and leaving Hungary behind, is a very important step in the sense of feeling safe. She told us that the policeman in Vienna said

> *"Just being behind the lines means you are safe now. In Vienna there was an organisation who helped us, if we wanted to stay or go to Germany or further. So they put us on a train."* (Steer: 50.02).

> *"In Germany they stop us because we are in an illegal way. They were so kind to us and said: "Don't be worried, you are safe now, you are in Germany. We went to a camp and there's some men with cars that go to Hamburg. We asked if we could join if we payed money and they said OK. In Hamburg, I have an uncle there, and he bought tickets for us from Hamburg to Denmark."* (Steer: 52.33).

Steer then tells us about the train from Germany to Hamburg

> *"They came and asked for papers and passport - but many of them didn't speak English so they don't' understand but said:" Sweden, Sweden, Sweden". We were the only family in the train that wanted to stay in Denmark."* (Steer: 53.02).

Steer's conceptualisation of the different European borders demonstrates the variations found in the individual borders in terms of conception and function. As Paasi argues

there is a socio-spatial boundary-making process involved in the practice of bordering (Paasi 2009: 224). This process is based on the relationship between human agency and social structures, which means that it involves power structures, as well as widely dispersed discourses on 'us' and 'them' (Paasi 2009: 228). Steer conceptualises the borders between Turkey and Greece as well as Bulgaria and Serbia as very physical experiences, as she had to walk difficult routes (climbing mountains and walking through the forest) and stay in an extremely crowded van even though she was very ill at the time. Another interesting event that occurs in connection to the Turkish-Greek border is when the Greek police throw Steer and the other refugees' phones in the river, which demonstrates the importance of the phones as a tool for information and security when border-crossing. It can be seen as a form of practice of control, performed by the Greek border police.

When Steer reaches the Hungarian border, her understanding of the border is very much connected to the officers she meets that are managing the border in different manners. She experiences the border towards Hungary as strong, both physically and bureaucratically, and associates it with fear and uncertainty. It is furthermore the Hungarian border and its controlling practices (as for example leaving fingerprints) that most of the rumours revolves around. As Steer is imprisoned she experiences the practice of the Hungarian border as a form of criminalising procedure. The experiences revolving the Hungarian border can furthermore be seen as a form of manifestation of the uncertainty and shifting state of borders, which Brambilla argues reflects the social and political landscape (Brambilla 2015: 17). Steer understands the arrival in Vienna as reaching safety. Even more so as the police officer tells her that she is "behind the lines" and that means safety. Steer conceptualises the borders between Austria-Germany and Germany-Denmark in a much softer mode. In Germany, Steer is of the understanding that she is travelling illegally, but even in that situation it seems as she was not afraid and she was certain that she would reach her goal (Denmark).

Characters

There are several characters in Steer's narrative and we go through the characterisation of most important and prevalent characters throughout the narrative.

Steer is characterising herself as a very complex character throughout her narrative, as neither a victim nor a hero. She gives a very diverse portrait of herself, in which she is not glorifying herself and her role. Steer told us that she wanted to give up several times and how important her relations with other people have been for her to have the strength to keep on going. In the following quote it is evident that she is experiencing both situations in which she feels strong and situations in which she is feeling weak.

> *"My mother said: I thought you would be stronger! But I am strong – it's the first time for me when people say: I will hurt you if you don't give me money! (…) I can't be strong the whole trip. And in jail… I studied law in Syria to become judge and in jail they make you a criminal and it's a really bad feeling and make you a weak person."* (Steer: 01.06.31).

This quote also demonstrates the manner in which the experience of being imprisoned affected both her self-perception and how she believed other people perceived her.

Steer talks about this form of *transformation* several times

> *"It was really bad because you feel like if something bad happens to you, you don't have a government asking for you. You just get a number for how many get lost of how many that are dead in the sea. (…) Now I don't have a government behind me – now people will say: "Oh she is Syrian, well it's normal for Syrians to get lost or dead or drown in the sea."* (Steer: 55.37).

This process can be understood as a logic of transformation, through which the imprisonment is a form of force behind the transformation (Czarniawska 2010: 64). This part of Steer's narrative can also be connected to what Jackson calls losing one's social context, which is something that often happens during flight as the refugee is no longer viewed in the eyes of the familiar but in the eyes of the unfamiliar bureaucracy (Jackson 2013: 83). Furthermore, it can be seen as a form of "policy-imposed liminality", through which a system or policy imposes a stereotypical view of refugees; in this case a highly criminalising construction of the refugee (Hynes 2011: 155-156).

Steer's mother is a prevalent character throughout Steers's narrative. She is a very important force in the narrative and in many ways Steer's motivation not to give up in very difficult situations. Furthermore, as Steer's mother has already been in Denmark for two and a half years, she is also the character who determines the goal of Steer's journey (Steer: 10.10). When Steer talks about her image of Europe before coming there she says: *"I was so excited because my only image was seeing my mum and hold her. (...) I only thought about my mum, when I could hold her and kiss her again and not about the trip at all."* (Steer: 01.06.26). It is evident that Steer's mother provides a form of protection and security, which demonstrates the importance of female solidarity in situations of displacement.

In a way, Steer's mother manages her journey, as she is the one who several times sends money to the smugglers. One example of this is found in the following quote from Steer's narrative

> *"If you don't want to pay a lot of money there is the sea way and it's very cheap, it's only 1.500 Euro for each. But my mum refused, because she is scared about that way."* (Steer: 01.09.12-01).

As Steer and the rest of the group she travelled with were walking through the Bulgarian forest for several days, Steer almost gave up.

> "*My aunt got mad and said this is for your mum, you have to complete. Then they call my mum by international phone and my mum said: you have to do this for me, stand up, you have to have courage (...) At that point I stand up and I told her that I will complete the way."* (Steer: 19.10).

Another example of the importance of Steer's mother is the following *"My mum calls the smuggler and tell him that if you don't do anything for our kids we will kill you in Istanbul and do something bad to you."* (Steer: 27.02).

The smugglers, who Steer characterised as a necessary evil, that is people that she had to receive assistance from even though they made her feel unsafe and scared. Steer tells us that to be able to flee Syria you have to find a smuggler, especially if you are

Kurdish, as there is a risk that the Turkish police will not let you leave Syria (Steer: 01.50). Steer and her sister and two other families first tried to travel from Turkey to Greece with the assistance of a smuggler, but they were captured by the police at the border and sent back to Turkey (Steer: 04.24). *"We were very scared of the smuggler; they were like crazy people* (Steer: 04.36).

Nevertheless, Steer's characterisation of the different smugglers they use along the way varies.

> "*We found one, he was Kurdish from Syria. Actually they are not smuggler, they just work for someone, I think a foreign person. They are not smugglers actually. He tells us it's expensive way, we will go by Bulgaria, the jungle. It will only be by car, you will go like a princess and not use your feet."* (Steer: 08.26).

It seemed as Steer had more trust and understanding for the second smuggler and that this could be connected to the fact that he was Kurdish. Steer was then subjected to several disappointments and unsafe situations during the route through Bulgaria, which is further elaborated in a later stage of the analysis.

The smugglers who actually led the way through Bulgaria were again characterised as a threat *"It was the first time in my life I met bad people like them. They just ask for money."* (Steer: 23.52). Steer and the people she was traveling with then called the Kurdish smuggler in Turkey who had arranged the route

> *"Why are you so bad with us? You are from Syria too. And he said: I swear to God, I don't know why they do that to you. At that point we know that he is not a big smuggler, he is just working to find people."* (Steer: 27.10).

During a large part of Steer's route through Europe she travelled with (among others) a group of refugee men. These men are in many ways characterised as heroes and an important source of support in Steer's narrative.

> *"Actually the guys helped us. He would catch my hand all the time, because I could not walk by myself."* (Steer: 18.52). *"In a lot of point the guys told us: you can do it! And encouraged us and no bad boys can do anything bad to you and at that point you feel safe. (…) I was sick so somebody put me on his back and said he would do anything for me. (…) They are really good guys. Without them we wouldn't have reached Denmark."* (Steer: 59.27).

Steer also told us a story from her experience in Serbia

> "*We stay in a hotel (…) But the guys cannot find a hotel because it is so crowded (...) and the guys slept at the station. We could not sleep because we were thinking about them and we called them and said: it's OK if you come, we don't' mind even if we are girls. Come take a shower and go back to the station. And they said: no, it's OK, we will sleep here."* (Steer: 30.29).

Steer demonstrates a clear gendered dimension to the dependency on the men: *"We had to stay with them because we are girls, we cannot travel alone."* (Steer: 32.23).

On the border between Serbia and Hungary, Steer, her sister and her aunt are separated from the refugee men. *"I cried a lot that morning. (…) I felt like no one could protect me. They would do a circle around us to feel safe."* (Steer: 01.02.05).

The manner through which Steer characterises the smugglers versus the refugee men she travelled with is a form of characterisation that also can be found in the studies of Kwapisz Williams. According to Kwapisz Williams men who migrate are often conceptualised as protectors and heroes (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 441-442). It is evident in Steer's narrative that she considers the refugee men she travelled with to have the function of protectors. On the other hand, the men who work as smugglers, as well as other men in power (the owner of the house in which they resided in Bulgaria) are characterised as threats and are discussed in violent terms. Grabska studies how men who migrate often are portrayed as perpetrators of violence (Grabska 2011: 89). In Steer's narratives, the refugee men are not the threat, instead other men in power; the smugglers, the owner of the house and the Hungarian border officers and police

officers are considered to create situations of vulnerability. Moreover, there is an additional gendered dimension to the relationship between Steer and the Kurdish smuggler. He states that she should travel like a princess, and not use her feet (Steer: 08.26). The smuggler thereby seems to consider Steer as specifically vulnerable, as she is a woman and might feel more responsible as they are both Kurdish. This event also demonstrates that Steer' s social position, that is with a strong social capital affects the manner in which the smuggler is addressing her.

Furthermore, the importance of nationhood is demonstrated in Steer's narrative. Steer expresses another form of understanding for the smugglers who are Kurdish, like herself, but it is also apparent that she has higher expectations on these men, leading to a higher degree of disappointment when they subject her to insecure situations. This sense of nationhood is often associated with masculinity, as men are generally seen as protectors of the nation while women are "the mother of the nation" caring for the family (Young in Kwapisz Williams 2014: 444). The relationship between Steer and the Kurdish smuggler thereby demonstrates the high degree of fluidity found in gender expressions during situations of displacement.

Specific events

In this section we go through some specific events, which are attributed a function by the narrator (that is Steer) (Czarniawska 2010: 61-62). These events are also a form of mapping of Steer's journey, that are arranged in a manner that is not chronological or geographical, but indicates the importance which she ascribes to these events.

The first event actually took place before the flight. Steer told us how her mother had applied for family reunification for her and her sister to come to Denmark.

> *"It is only under 18 who is allowed. When the new government came it was like… the old government said: your girls will come to you, don't worry about that. … when the new government came, they refused her. …we were waiting and waiting, hopefully to come by airplane, to not do all of this trip. (…) The day my mum called me and say they refuse; the second day we get out from Syria."* (Steer: 10.19).

This part of the narrative demonstrates Steer's understanding of how the change in Danish politics, personally affected her situation. Steer seemed to see this particular event as the trigger for deciding to leave Syria and travel to Denmark, using a route that is deemed as insecure and expensive.

The second event takes place in the Bulgarian forest, where Steer and the rest of the group of refugees got lost, since the smuggler could not find his way. Steer narrates the difficulties during this experience and how she felt

> *"I was getting really mad and tired and I was like we had two kids of my aunt with us. (…) We didn't sleep. …we were really tired and cold and the climbing was very dangerous."* (Steer: 17.28). *"The third day we were up in the mountain, I sit there and I told him I cannot walk anymore. You go, I wanna die here, you go complete your way."* (Steer: 18.52).

It was in this difficult situation that Steer called her mother, which is mentioned earlier in this section. That particular event of wanting to give up, but remembering the goal of her journey; to meet her mother, is in a way distinctive for the turn of events that shapes Steer's narrative.

The third event takes place in a house in Sofia, Bulgaria. Steer had already gone through several disappointments and obstacles when the smuggler called them with hopeful news

> *"… he said: you will go to that house and take a shower and sleep very well. We said: "God bless us that he found some solution for us and it will be the last miserable thing in our trip."* (Steer: 24.25).

Steer describes the house as follows,

> *"We cannot find a place for our feet, not to sit but for standing. It was very crowded with a lot of men and families. One of the men who owned the house were shouting: "Don't make a sound! I will kill you!" My sister said: "He cannot talk to us like this! They said: "You cannot do anything*

because he put us in this house. (…) Just please sit here." She was crying and saying: "I can't find a place to sit." (Steer: 25.25).

This very threatening situation has a function in Steer's narrative, as it demonstrates how she experienced a form of despair. Her sister tried to reclaim their agency, but was just told that there is no point and that she had to conform to the current situation to be able to continue their journey.

The fourth is when Steer, her sister, her aunt and her aunt's nephews were imprisoned in Hungary. Since they wanted to continue their journey to Denmark they refused to give their fingerprints to the Hungarian authorities.

"The police he put his hand on my sister like this and he forced her to get up and said: "Go to fingerprint, come on". He pushed her and said: "You have to go! It's for police not for asylum seekers". And then we said if it is only for police we will do it, we do not want to print for asylum seekers in Hungary." (Steer: 37.36).

"They said: "You have to get naked and then a lady searched us. She took everything. We stayed in jail for eight days and we don't know why." (Steer: 40.28).
"We really need a lawyer to understand what is happening. We felt crazy. They took our shoelaces so we didn't kill ourselves. First I didn't understand but after three days I understood. You feel like you are criminal." (Steer: 57.59).

This event in Steer's narrative has meaning in the sense that Steer feels personally criminalised, which goes against her earlier self-perception. Furthermore, she tries to makes sense of what is happening, but as she is not informed the event is very difficult to comprehend.

The fifth event occurs when Steer reaches Vienna.

> "*When we reached Vienna the policemen told us: "Don't worry, you are safe now". And it was such a big relief to hear that, those are the best words in your life when you want to be safe. And I thought it's finished."* (Steer: 50.10).

This quote demonstrates that the event to be able to move from the "Balkan route", and closer to her goal has the function of making Steer feel more safe. In a sense this also makes it evident that the manner in which the public authorities connected to the borders treated Steer was fundamental for her feeling of being safe or unsafe.

Strategies

In Steer's narrative it is clear that *the socially imagined* affects the manner in which she acts in *the socially immediate* situation (Vigh 2009: 425-426). As previously mentioned Steer imagines meeting her mother all the way throughout her journey (Steer 01.06.26-01.08.08). Steer's mother is also the character, which manages her journey, as she holds the financial capital, which Steer's movement depends on. When studying Steer's narrative from a social navigation perspective we find four different strategies or themes: *visibility/invisibility, traveling in groups, the act of gendering* and *paying for security.* These strategies are in many ways connected to each other.

The first strategy, *visibility/invisibility* is particularly visible in the sense that Steer manages to travel through Hungary, even though she was told that she could not come back to Hungary for three years. At that time there were so many refugees waiting at the Hungarian-Serbian border, that Steer and her fellow travellers would not be visible when they took the train through the country, towards Vienna (Steer: 47.20). This strategy was possible to employ in the immediate situation, as Steer was one of thousands of refugees. But the strategy is also reliant on the fact that Steer was given information about the situation by a German journalist, which demonstrates that what one knows directly affects the manner through which one navigates, which confirms the idea of situated knowledge.

The second strategy, *traveling in groups*, has two different dimensions to it. Steer employs the strategy in the sense that she is traveling with her sister, aunt and nephews but furthermore in the sense that she travels with a group of refugee men. According to Steer the men she travelled with provided her with a sense of safety and support (Steer: 59.27). It is clear that Steer felt unsafe and it is furthermore clear that this has a gendered dimension to it. Steer goes as far as saying *"We had to stay with them because we are girls, we cannot travel alone."* (Steer: 32.23). This quote establishes the conscious strategy of travelling with the men.

The third strategy, *the act of gendering*, is very much connected to the strategy of traveling with men she trusted. In Steer's narrative it sometime seems as she is gendering her actions, that is, acting in accordance with how women are generally assumed to act. She told us that she was just about to give up several times during her movement, and that she is assisted by, or persuaded by her mother, her aunt or the men she is travelling with (Steer: 19.10-20.48). This could be a strategy of what Utas call victimicy, to demonstrate agency through acting as a victim to be able to receive support (Utas 2005: 408-409). On the other hand, it is also possible that Steer actually also experienced a situation in which she felt was hopeless, and that she truly did not know how to continue.

The fourth strategy, *paying for security*, is in many instances a gendered strategy. This strategy is confirmed by Gerard and Pickering, who find in their study that the possibility for women to avoid violent situations is deeply connected to their access to financial capital (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 351). In Steer's narrative it is clear that her mother is paying more for her not to be forced to take unsafe routes, that is the route across the Mediterranean

> *"We went to the sea in Turkey and saw people who bought life vests I and felt sorry because they are going to be dead (...) my sister said they don't have a choice if they are going to die in Syria or die in the sea."* (Steer: 01.08.26).

Steer's mother also pays more so that Steer does not have not walk (which she ultimately has to do anyways) (Steer: 01.09.12). Steer says: *"And in each country there*

is like a price for us. We were afraid to reach a new country because another surprise would wait for us." (Steer: 01.04.00). This strategy of paying more so that Steer will be as safe as possible, can build on the notion that the journey towards and through Europe is more unsafe for women, which makes the financial aspect more fundamental for female refugees.

Security and violence

Since the themes of security and violence are such dominant themes in Steer's narrative we go through the specific occasions that are connected to these themes here. According to Campani, female refugees often flee situations of human insecurity to reach human security, but find themselves in situations of insecurity on the route to the imagines safety (Campani 2012: 162). This process is of course also relevant for men who flee. Nevertheless, there is a gendered dimension of security found in Steer's narrative, as for example the fact that all the people that have power over her situation while migrating, besides her mother and herself, are men. The smugglers are men, she travels with other men that she conceptualises as powerful in the sense that they provide security and the policemen and border officers are men. Steer told about several occasions when she felt unsafe, as for example

> *"There was a fight between the people with our smuggler in Turkey. Our smuggler refused to bring people, to give people to that mafia. They said we will bring your people to the police if you don't give us money. (...) It was really terrifying, but we had to go with them because we had no one else"* (Steer: 20.52)

In Bulgaria, Steer and her sister are threatened in an overcrowded house, by male owner. The man threatens to kill them if they are not quiet and it is clear that Steer experiences the situation as deeply violent (Steer: 25.23). This is an example of direct psychological violence and of latent violence, when one relatively small act could lead to a violent situation (Galtung 1969: 172).

There is also an example of structural violence, which is violence, which has no obvious actor, resulting in unequal life chances (Galtung 1969: 171); when Steer and her sister are rejected family reunification. This decision is the force behind Steer's

decision to leave Syria using a smuggler (Steer: 10.19), which is a route that is connected to far more insecurity than leaving Syria and entering Denmark through family reunification. In that sense it is an act of physical violence, as Steer is physically hindered in her movement. This particular example also indicates a gendered form of insecurity; in the sense the possibility for family reunification often is a particularly important route for women, due to the lack of formal and informal structures enabling migration for women (Bhabha 2004: 235).

Furthermore, Steer is imprisoned in Hungary without receiving the information on the reason for the imprisonment (Steer: 40.28). She told us about the difficulties of the experience

> *"In jail I did not talk to anybody. My sister was singing all day for my aunt who was crying. She was trying to do something for my aunt and telling her: "Don't worry, you are not a criminal."* (Steer: 01.16.03).

The imprisonment physically hindered Steer's movement, making it an act of physical violence. On the one hand, we know the actor - that is the Hungarian state. On the other hand, the criminalising experience this resulted in in Steer's case (Steer: 57.59) is an act that has no obvious actor, making it an act of psychological and structural violence (Galtung 1969: 171). While in prison, one also sees that Steer experience a liminal transformation - gradually losing her strength and willpower as she reverted inwards, surrendering to the system, becoming quieter everyday (Hynes 2011: 155).

Huda

SILJE: We met with Huda at a café in central Copenhagen opposite of her workplace at the Red Cross, where she interns as a journalist. She is a 20-year-old Palestinian woman who has spent her entire life, up until the present, in Algeria (Huda: 00.21). We ask her to share the story with us, of her life in Algeria, her movement to Europe, and her thoughts and reflections of the past and present.

The *logic of succession* in the narrative of Huda is straightforward (Czarniawska 2010: 64). It follows a logical path as she tells it in a chronological manner; from her way to

Libya from Algeria to her stay in Libya where she was captured in a house for almost a month by the smugglers, then the dramatic movement to Europe via the Mediterranean Sea and her travel through Europe to Denmark, and furthermore, her time spent in Denmark so far.

Perception of Borders

Huda came to Europe not by her own choice, but because her brother decided it was the best thing for her and her sister (Huda: 20.06) However, she did not expect the crossing from Libya to Italy via the Mediterranean to be as tough as it proved to be. When asked if she would still have left had she known of the hardship, she replied; "*No not all"* (Huda: 8.37). When asked of her expectations of Europe she replied;

> *"...And then after one month, I reach Europe, I am a citizen here. I am allowed to study and work, to be like everyone – normal. But then I came here and found myself around thousands of asylum seekers"* (Huda: 9.03).

Huda's somewhat narrow understanding of Europe as a continent becomes evident when she reminisce. It is striking, that she in fact did not think of the different borders within Europe, but rather, saw Europe as a collective entity, and that once she had crossed the Mediterranean her struggle would be over as she had entered Europe. She expressed that when she finally reached Europe and Italy she relaxed

> *"Yeah, I was sleeping the whole way. When they asked me how you reach Denmark I said; "Algeria, Libya, Italy and Denmark". Because I did not know, I was sleeping the whole way* (Huda: 14.49).

At sea on her way to Europe, the boat she travelled with experienced trouble with the engine, which dramatically resulted in Huda and the rest of the refugees being stranded in the middle of the Mediterranean. At one point a French oil ship approached them, but said that they could not help them with transport to Italy, as that would be illegal. This was Huda's first encounter with European border-politics, manifested in the French crew's hesitation in providing crucial aid to their boat in distress. Their reaction, and Huda's encounter with the EU border-regime, is a strong witness of the reactionary measures taken by the European states, a social construction of an invisible

border that is the physical mirror of the European political discourse on refugees, and response to the sudden influx of refugees (Brambilla 2015: 27). Huda thought that she would come to Europe and live like everyone else, and be normal. Instead she is faced with the reproduction of difference, between an "us" and "them" – the citizens of Europe in need of protection against the imminent threat from the sea (Lemberg-Pedersen 2011: 393).

Characters

Huda did not herself make a conscious choice to leave for Europe *"I was just following my brother, I was so blind, I was just throwing the whole responsibility on my brother"* (Huda: 22.28). The logic she applied to her own circumstances and the events in her narrative thus becomes apparent, in that she followed her brother's decision of what was thought to be better for her, and that people in extreme situations act accordingly (Huda: 22.28). At one point, as the smugglers were helping the refugees on board the boat that were to take them to Europe, Huda and her sister experienced yet another traumatising moment when she lost sight of her sister, after the smugglers were throwing the refugees on board the boat, which left her sister almost crushed as two men landed on top of her without notice. She explains what happened in these words

> *"And that's when I lost my sister, or, I didn't loose her, but I lost sight of my sister. And I look and there was like two huge men just sitting above her, like relaxed. So I started yelling and pushing, saying; "Don't you even feel that there is a girl just under you? So that way I pulled my sister"* (Huda: 7.04).

Huda travelled to Europe accompanied by her sister, and her older brother. Her brother and sister thus becomes central characters in the narrative of Huda, which also illuminates from her emphasis of their role throughout her narrative. Huda depicts her brother as the saviour, the character representing the good, whilst the smugglers stand in stark contrast, as they represent a threat or a force of no good (Czarniawska 2010: 62). This becomes evident when asked if she travelled alone or in company with someone, when she resonated with astonishment, *"Yes of course! My brother, I mean if*

he wasn't there, I don't know what would have happened" (Huda: 5.26) and later she continues saying

> "*… I felt lucky that I have my brother, it must be so much harder on them* (the other female refugees)*, and they had no one to protect them. I mean, I had my brother to protect me"* (Huda 5.40).

She points to an event that occurred in Libya where they had to go many people in one car, and her brother spoke to the smugglers, ensuring that his sisters would sit in front with him, and not be alone in the back of the car with the other men. The other girls had to go lay down with the other men in the back of the car. Huda adheres to Islam, and as she expresses it, it is not accepted to be around other men so close, and she explained that for the other girls, such features as religious beliefs and dignity had to be put aside during their journey. In her words *"they had to drop all that… yeah they lose their dignity doing that. I felt that"* (Huda: 5.52).

Huda also emphasised the role of her brother more than that of her sister, he was the caretaker and protector of the two of them. She did not herself speak of the emotions she felt during her travel, but expressed the emotions of her sister while crossing the Mediterranean Sea

> "*Today we sail, and it was windy, and the waves were high. My sister starts crying and said: "I want to go back for my mother". And I said you can't, you can't just jump out and swim back. And even if we did that, there will be police there. And they will catch us and put us in jail"* (Huda: 11.20).

She portrays her sister, who had to be convinced or even saved in some situations, as weaker than herself. It is clear that Huda sees herself as the rational, stronger person in their relationship, and that she needs to take care of her sister, as in the next statement where she explains her reaction when they were being saved at sea by another boat

> *"And they threw the net at us, and said that the women and children should come first. But then that did not happen, as soon as they threw the net, all the men stood up and started pushing each other, and even some of them*

> *were thrown in the water. I did not move in my place, and I just looked at the people acting crazy. I felt like I need to be patient, and strong, and I wait for them to come up and then I get up and they saved the people in the water"* (Huda: 12.19).

One might argue that Huda projected some of her own feeling of being scared and out of control, when sharing the reaction of her sister, which is not uncommon when sharing narratives from traumatising episodes in life (Jackson 2013: 69). To suppress emotions, or even connect emotions of weakness to that of shame is common after experiencing trauma. However, the authenticity of her story does not diminish because of her lack of expressing own emotions, rather, Jackson puts it in these words

> *"Rather, the "truth" of any remembered trauma is both selective and practice… As such every story told blends a desire to do justice to experience and a calculated interest in producing effect that will improve the storyteller's lot"* (Jackson 2013: 69-70).

This also becomes evident in the narrative of Sara, when talking of her experiences that were traumatising. One day when Sara was out of their house in Norway, she came back to find that her family had been deported to Afghanistan, without her

> *"One day I got home and my children and my husband were not there. My children were very small, my son 3 years old and my daughter 6 years old. My neighbour they had some information about my family that they had been sent to Afghanistan. Then I went to Germany. I had to be at the hospital for two weeks. I had no information about my family"* (Sara: 01:07:00).

Powerless to her own situation, Sara experienced a horrifying separation from her family, to which was so traumatic to her she had to be hospitalised for several weeks and affects her to this day;" *It has been a trauma for us. Now I meet with a therapist every week"* (Sara: 01:12:02). One might say that Sara exerts resilience to her own situation, instead of being helpless, as she faces the trauma and her own circumstances by getting help, dealing with the burden of past experiences every day (Lenette et al.

2012: 650-651). This goes against the usual portrayal of female refugees as helpless and victims, when one could turn it around, and see it from a perspective that she is seeking help, and getting it (Kwapisz Williams 2014: 437-438).

When a person experience trauma, it is often difficult to vocalise and put words to the emotions, and create a narrative. First now that Sara is united with her family is she able to talk about the traumatic event

> *"Before it was so, so hard. If someone asked me to tell my story I could not. Now I have repeated it many, many times. Now it's not…It's not easy but better"* (Sara: 01:14:01).

It is common for refugees not to be able to talk about the trauma until they are out of the situation that caused the trauma (Jackson 2013: 106-107).

When talking of the smugglers, it becomes evident that they did not fill much of Hudas reflections. When she did try to characterise them, she portrayed them in a negative manner, usually in situations where she felt threatened

> *"So they* (smugglers) *were just throwing people* (into the boat)*, they didn't care if it was a man or a girl, woman or baby, they were just throwing them all over each other"* (Huda: 7.04).

Specific Events

The interpretive theme in Huda's story is clearly her narrative of the movement to Europe (which was seen to be the final destination, as Europe did not represent many countries, but rather one united continent with no internal borders) (Huda: 9.03), and her present life in Denmark. The strategic choices she made along the way, and how she socially navigated within the field of movement and in the Danish asylum system, depicts an awareness of her own circumstances, and demonstrates agency to improve and secure her own situation.

An important event in the narrative of Huda is the crossing of the Mediterranean Sea. At one point, when they experience engine problems, they are approached by another

boat reluctant to provide aid, Huda was the one who helped convince the crew to help them, as she was one of the few who spoke English. She recollected the appalled surprise of the refugees when realizing that the French oil ship might not help them

> "*He said: "Because I have no right to sail you to Italy*". "*And they* (refugees) *start crying and pushing and say; "Hey translate this" - because I was the only English speaking person. And they said; "Don't take us back to Libya, they will put us in jail"* (Huda: 15.55).

Also, when Huda experienced losing her sister, and the two men sitting on top of her it is evident that this was a shocking and traumatic experience for her, as she elaborates on the episodes, it is clear that it made an impact on her. Here it is also clear that Huda connects men as the source to most of the insecurity experienced during her journey. Huda, and her sister experienced *manifested* and *direct* violence in this episode, however it might as well be some degree of cultural violence, where women are not seen as valuable as men, or maybe insignificant even, allowing for this episode to occur (Galtung 1969: 170-171).

Strategies

In difficult situations, individuals tend to categorise their surroundings as to create an overview in the chaos, and differentiate between who is a friend, and who is an enemy (Vigh 2011: 103). While in the centre in Rødby, Huda said that she mostly stayed in her room, as there were predominantly men in the centre, and she did not feel safe as one of very few girls amongst so many men. So she stayed in her room, and kept to herself, and employed the strategy of only going outside either very early or very late, when the men were sleeping (Huda: 26.02). She made herself invisible by staying in her room; only leaving at times where she thought it would be safe. She explained it in these words

> *"I stayed two weeks in Sandholm, and 6 months in Rødby. That sucked, because it was mostly men and we were few girls* (Huda: 25.30). She continues by saying; *"In these 6 months, I like, imprisoned myself inside the room. Because I could not go out with all these men, and the looks on their*

> *faces, it's just not ok. Because I escaped from that in Algeria, and I came to Denmark and I found the same thing"*
> (Huda: 26.02).

She employs the strategy of becoming invisible, almost hiding,

> *"So all my days were my nights, and my nights were my days, and I just go shopping for once a week, and I cannot even go and cook. I cannot cook, but just to make food, we have to go late at night, or early in the morning. Because then the men are sleeping and my brother would come and knock on the door and say there is no one in the kitchen, you can go and cook something now"* (Huda: 26.02).

Travelling with her brother was a strategic move that would prove to enhance her own security, and also makes a distinguished reference to the gendered aspect of crossing borders. It is evident that women or girls travelling without a male protector face an increased level of assaults and violence (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 346-347).

In Huda's story, there is no imminent or sudden transformation; but rather, a gradual and slow transformation becomes evident as she elaborates on the main events that compose her story (Czarniawska 2010: 62). She experienced being locked up in a house in Libya for almost a month, then the horrid movement across the Mediterranean Sea to the shores of Italy and to the confinement in an asylum centre in Rødby, in Denmark. She herself reflects on it; *"That was horrible, six months. I felt it was a waste of my life"* (Huda: 26.55). As mentioned above, Huda said she just wanted to be normal, to be a citizen, to study – to realise her dreams. Instead she had to endure a terrifying journey, a realisation that she and her family were not special, but surrounded by thousands of people in the same situation, and now, placed in an asylum centre, still awaiting to start over in Denmark. The liminality experienced by Huda, the state of being in-between, of old and new surroundings, waiting for recognition, is something, which is clear in her narrative (Camino 1998: 30).

Huda said that the past six months, which predominantly were spent in an asylum centre in Rødby in Denmark, was a waste. She spent most of her days in her room,

excluded from the surrounding society (Huda: 26.02). One might argue that the tendencies shown in Huda's life in the centre mirrors a state of being that is produced through a *"policy-imposed liminality",* in which she is restricted from access to public services and life outside the centre by the general asylum system (Hynes 2011: 155-156). Hynes furthermore argues that the centre in which the refugee reside in becomes the physical manifestation of such liminality, which is evident in Huda's narrative. As with Hynes, Malkki argues that the liminality imposed on the refugee is because they are seen as abnormal individuals, they lack morals and spirit, as they are rootless (Malkki 1997: 30). This is strengthened in Huda's story, as the centre she resided in in Rødby was located close to a prison, the physical manifestation of a place of abnormality. The inmates sometimes crowded the outside public facilities of the centre (Huda: 27.06).

Huda expressed feeling marginalised in the centre, unsafe due to the high number of men and the often-occurring visits from the prisoners. One might argue that Huda experienced a level of Galtung's indirect, structural violence. Such violence occurs when the system places a person in a situation where he or she has to be in a field where he/she continuously experience exclusion, marginality and liminality (Galtung 1969: 170-171). Huda experienced all of the three states above, as she was confined to her room most of the time, not able to interact in the surrounding society, feeling a great level of human insecurity.

Security

The trip at sea, from Libya to Italy was very dangerous, and Huda said that it was not at all what she expected *"In my head it was not like this at all, I thought we would be in a ship where everyone would have their seat. But that was not the case"* (Huda: 8.37). During her crossing, as the boat experienced engine trouble, she quickly realised that the trip over the Mediterranean Sea was not secure

> *"So we got to the medium boat, it stopped after 15 minutes, and then the smuggler, we thought he was a captain who knew how to sail a boat, but he said; "Hey does anyone know how to fix a boat?" And I said; "Aren't you the one who is suppose to know that?". But he didn't know, and you could*

see that he is just a teenager or adult, like 18 or 19 and nobody would fix it" (Huda: 9.29).

Here, Huda takes on a role in which she is not dependent on the protection of her brother, but shows responsibility, and furthermore, agency in a situation of pressure.

While on the move, Huda many times emphasised poor sanitary conditions, and gendered insecurity experienced when trying to access sanitary facilities. She said that often the men and women had to use the same toilet, and as a women they had to pair up and go together so as not to be exposed to the threat of going alone as men were constantly watching those women that wanted to use the public facilities

"The men were sleeping on the floor, so we had to step on them to reach the bathroom. And a lot of women were covering themselves, just because there are a lot of men. It was not good. A woman couldn't just go by herself. If a woman was going she had to tell her friend; "Hey come with me, I feel scared to go through all these men", so we had to go in groups to the bathroom" (Huda: 5.00).

She elaborates, *"So if you want to go to toilet a lot of men will be sitting here, and you will be shy and ashamed to go to the toilet. And they will just be staring at you, it was so scary"* (Huda: 3.05).

These experiences, along with the experience on the boat, where her sister disappeared under two men, were part of the gendered insecurity she felt and thus this exemplifies how security is gender-specific.

Huda and her sister wanted to start a new life in Europe, as Huda revealed her expectations to study after settling. However, during her movement, she and her sister, on the basis of being women and despite having their brother with them, experienced great insecurity. The consequence of wanting to go to Europe to increase their own level of human security, decreases their human security while moving, or in other terms, produces insecurity for the sake of security. The strict border-regime in Europe

jeopardises the human security of many women; as they have to go through less secure means to get to Europe (Campani 2012: 162).

The narrative of Huda shows how women and girls are safer when accompanied by a male, and not travelling alone. It shows that the European border-regime decreases human insecurity, and creates a politically and socially discourse of difference between "us" and "them", of those who are European citizens and not. It furthermore emphasises the marginality experienced as not only being a refugee, but being a female refugee, as Huda and her sister many times during their travels experienced insecurity due to their gender. In various situations Huda employed conscious strategic manoeuvres to improve her own level of safety and improving her own circumstance. Sara and her husband also experienced the criminalisation, and difference between "us and them" on their journey through Europe. They came to Norway after crossing the Mediterranean Sea *"We moved from Afghanistan to Iran, and then, then we crossed from Iran to Turkey and after 24 hours we walked in the mountains. Then we went to Greece by boat"* (Sara: 78.00). When finally in Greece, the Greek police placed Sara and her husband in prison. They spent two weeks in the prison

> *"In Greece I was about two weeks in jail, I was pregnant and it was the last month. Because we tried to get out of Greece because we wanted to move north, but the police found us, and then put in jail. I was released because I was pregnant, and I couldn't stay in jail"* (Sara: 78.00).

The criminalisation of refugees, and the securitisation of the refugee become evident as Sara and her husband are placed in prison, treated like criminals, alongside other criminals. As Wæver emphasises, there is a connection between securitisation and societal security, which is eminent in the narrative of Sara, as she and her husband are seen as a threat to European security, and furthermore imprisoned as a means to divert their further journey throughout Europe (Betts 2009: 72).

There were some recurring themes in every interview, which transcended across their narratives; security, violence, relationships, expectations, liminality and borders - these are further explored in the forthcoming discussion. However, each of the narratives emphasised the aspects differently.

Sara and Sabor were shorter narratives, but they still provide strong, supportive narratives to those of Steer, Nillem and Huda. Evident in all of their narratives is the great trauma experienced while fleeing, and the insecurity felt as female refugees.

6. Discussion

We have divided this section into a discussion of borders, the lived experiences at the borders, violence and security, the victimising discourse and then the strategies employed by the different narrators when navigating during their movement.

6.1. EU Borders: a source of stability or instability?

MARIE: When discussing the experience of crossing borders, we argue that borders is an increasingly contextualised concept. This becomes evident in the way borders are unpredictable, as they are affected by the political and social aspects from within their nation (Brambilla 2015: 15-16). This unpredictability is argued to be caused by the dialogical relationship between borders, state sovereignty and territory, and moreover, with the concept of citizens – those who belong, thus liberating the political imagined resulting in the construction of the 'others' (Brambilla 2015:18). The EU and its border system are in that sense rather seen as a form of ideology, based upon nationalistic forms of cultural violence to exclude 'the other' from entering.

In this sense, we argue that the social and political sphere of nation states move into physical manifestations of closed border systems, impacted by the actual political and social climate of exclusion. This manifestation represents how borders as a social construct is reflected in the political climate, within a specific context, becomes temporary and fluid giving borders a reactionary measure to the present influx of refugees (Brambilla 2015: 27). Thereby causing a lived uncertainty for the people seeking to find refuge in the safe countries of the EU - which might not be that safe after all.

To exemplify, we turn to the cases of the Hungarian border and the EU/Turkey deal, which both stand as cases of securitisation, creating refugees as a societal threat, and externalisation with an intentionally exclusion. First, as argued, the Hungarian border control reached new levels with the establishment of a wall which can be seen as a case of *"giving nationalism a territorial shape"* as argued by Paasi (Paasi 2009: 213). Second, the EU/Turkey deal suggests a reluctance of giving the necessary aid to refugees as they are criminalised and once again constructed as a threat and thus performing an act of externalisation. We further argue that EU initiatives such as FRONTEX, bears witness of a perception, that the EU is facing a threat from the sea, thus raising the question of who FRONTEX is built to protect; the boat refugees or the external borders.

As stated above, we argue that the EU border system can be viewed upon as a form of cultural violence, entailing nationalism as understood by Galtung (Galtung 1990: 292), as it is based on ideological ideas legitimising uses of violations, as seen with the EU-Turkey deal. In this sense, the EU border system functions as a source of instability rather than stability. Or in other terms creating stability for the sake of EU-citizens, rather than those trying to cross its borders and seek refuge.

From discussing the consequences resulting from constructing refugees as a societal threat follows a deeper discussion and understanding of lived experiences. In this manner, the conducted narratives exemplify reflections on our understandings of borders, and further helps conceptualise borders as experienced.

Conceptualisation and lived experiences of borders

IDA: We now turn to the situated knowledge, presented by the interviewed women in their narratives, regarding the borders of and within the EU. It is clear that they conceptualise the borders in different manners, which demonstrates the shifting function of borders, specifically when borders are understood as a contextualised concept (Brambilla 2015: 17). In accordance with feminist standpoint theory we appreciate the importance of exploring different forms of situated knowledge, deriving from different social positions and social practices (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis 2002: 317-318). In the field of EU borders and migration, the situated knowledge of

migrating women in different social positions are not represented as the dominant narrative, resulting in a lack of knowledge.

Nillem conceptualises the EU borders in terms of being safe or unsafe. She is not sure which actual borders she has crossed within the EU, but puts most emphasis on reaching the dry land of Greece after a hazardous boat trip from Turkey (Nillem: 05.00). The different borders within the EU are not significant for Nillem's perception of borders, instead she conceptualises surviving the boat trip and reaching the EU as the key border to manage. Steer, on the other hand, has a very vivid memory of the different borders she crossed to reach Denmark. Steer's situated knowledge before crossing the borders is very much based on rumours, which are then either confirmed or denied. In that sense Steer's knowledge alters through her social experience. The reason why Steer has more knowledge on the individual borders of the EU can be that she has a strong social capital, as she travels with her sister and her aunt and has her mother to manage her journey. In Huda's narrative she also relies on her social relations, but in a different manner. Her brother manages the trip, so that she does not have to have knowledge on how to cross the different borders within the EU.

It is clear that most of the rumours Steer hears about revolves around the Serbian-Hungarian border. The border towards Hungary plays a very important role in her narrative as she is imprisoned for not leaving fingerprints (Steer: 37.36), and is in a sense similar to the significance that Nillem ascribe to reaching Greece. Huda's strongest memory of border-crossing is the boat trip between Libya and Italy, which was a very dramatic experience as the boat broke in the middle of the ocean (Huda: 11.20). Nillem, Steer and Huda all have very traumatising experiences from these different border-crossings, and it is likely that the borders that encompasses the most difficult and traumatic experiences also involves more rumours than others. Alike Nillem, Steer assigns the concepts of being safe/unsafe to the different borders. When reaching Vienna (leaving Hungary behind) it is evident that Steer does not fear the forthcoming border-crossings in the same manner (Steer: 50.10).

6.2. Violence and security

In all the three main narratives of this thesis, violence is a recurring theme in different ways. In our analysis we find that the EU border system can be understood as a form of cultural violence (Galtung: 1990: 291) as it is a system, based on a collection of ideas, which can have the function of legitimising violence. Steer experiences situations of structural and direct violence that are in immediate connection to the functions of migration control; she is denied family reunification and is imprisoned in Hungary.

It is clear that the human security of some, that is refugees, is jeopardised through the current functions of this system. Furthermore, it is clear that security and violence are not gender-neutral concepts. There is often a lack of formal and informal resources for women to be able to migrate (Bhabha 2004: 235), which demonstrates the gendered dimension of cultural and structural violence. This is evident in all of the narratives as all of the interviewed women rely on either (or both) a strong (preferably male) social and financial capital, which they conceptualise as being essential for them, as women, to migrate as safe as possible. We now discuss different examples of these violent outcomes with a specific focus on the gendered dimension, through studying the narratives with the assistance of secondary literature.

Within the theme of safety there is one consistent factor in the narratives: the relationship to men. Nevertheless, one thing that is important to note is that this factor is differently manifested and conceptualised within the different narratives. Throughout Nillem's narrative she mentions the constant fear of men, both male smugglers and other men who are, as herself. Nillem feels as if she is more visible to other men as a woman travelling by herself. This form of negative visibility can also be found in Huda's narrative, as she very much connects the sense of safety to sanitary conditions and gives examples of how women would avoid going to the bathroom by themselves because the men were staring (Huda: 5.00). Similar examples can also be found in the Amnesty report; in which it is stated that women sometimes are targeted by smugglers due to their assumed vulnerability (Amnesty International: 2016). This constant feeling of feeling threatened of violence from men in their surroundings can be understood as a form of gendered latent and structural violence.

Steer and Huda both conceptualise some men as heroes, while others as perpetrators. The men that they see as heroes, Huda's brother and the men Steer travel with, are all considered as essential to reach a sense of security. Huda and Steer see the smugglers as men that they need to turn to, to be able to reach human security, but also as sources of uncertainty and threatening situations. They all tell stories of threatening situations in connection to the smugglers and describe their relation to the smuggler as dependent on the transaction of financial capital, which again proves the constant existence of latent violence. The finding that women who are migrating experience a strong connection between access to financial and social capital and level of safety, is further confirmed by Gerard and Pickering's on the conditions for women migrating through the Sahara Desert (Gerard & Pickering 2012: 351).

"We will NOT be victimised"

MARIE: When analysing the Hamburg Conference, one consistent theme becomes apparent; the reproduction of stereotypical gender-roles and victimising perceptions towards refugee women. It is clear that these perceptions were pervasive throughout the Conference, which we argue is due to an unconscious act from the organisers' side. The lack of female refugee representatives on stage constructs the idea of female refugees as apolitical victims, depriving them their desired agenda. Moreover, when kept out of the political sphere, the female refugees are situated within traditional gender-roles.

In accordance with feminist standpoint theory, the situated experience of the women is neglected when the refugee women are not given time to speak at the panel debates. Consequently, we argue, this reproduces a stereotypical view of women in general and refugee women in particular. This is exemplified in the manner in which the women were given a "Women's space" to discuss corporeal issues (Kwapisz William 2014: 444). From the above, we further argue that referring the women to the "Women's space" is preventing the women from transforming the private (such as important discussions on genital mutilation) into an action of public meaning, resulting in never giving the power to transform stereotypical perceptions of women, into realistic views (Arendt in Jackson 2013: 34). Depriving the refugee women from such a forum, exemplifies the parallel processing of the reproduction of stereotypical gender-roles,

performed by the organisers of the Conference, giving instead the organisers and the male participants the narrative authority (Gymnich 2013: 709). Thus, we argue that when the organisers allow for the exclusion of female refugee representatives, they allow for a replication of classic gender-roles and for a victimisation of refugee women, which contradicts the agenda and goal of the Conference. Moreover, it becomes evident that there is a clear gendered division in the perception and discourse of refugees, which is manifested in the establishment of the 'Women's space'.

The direct discourse of victimisation, from the system, imposes liminality on the female narrator, manifesting them as victims, reproducing the stereotypical gendered perception of female refugees (Hynes 2011: 155-156). When the system victimises the women, and as seen in Hamburg the male refugees and activists victimise the women, the two fields reproduce women as victims – to the point where the female refugees themselves come to see themselves as victims, or even strategically make use of such stereotypical discourse to receive protection and sympathy. One might see the system as an important factor, and a starting point for why the female narrator's experience liminality.

It is clear, however, that as the women managed to rebel against the perception of being in need of humanitarian compassion and taking over the Conference, they contradict the imposed stereotypical perceptions women are measured from, in all states of the refugee-regime - from the border-system to grass-root initiatives and proving them wrong.

In this sense, the Conference can be viewed upon as a micro scale study of the refugee-regime, in which female refugees are likewise subjected to being mothers, wives and sisters instead of humans, as stated by one of the female refugees taking over the stage (Field Notes: 27.02.2016). The female refugee similarly explains the 'Lagas' to be places in which women have to fight for equal rights and gaining the same access as men (Field Notes: 27.02.2016).

6.3. Strategies

SILJE: In all of the narratives, the narrators; Nillem, Huda, Steer, Sara and Sabor move toward what Vigh introduced as the *socially imagined* – a prospective future that are to enhance their quality of life and provide safety and new opportunities (Vigh 2009: 425-426). However, as their reasons for movement can be seen to represent factual variations in reasons refugees flee; Steer's socially imagined, as she is fleeing an imminent threat more so than the others, thus becomes safety and security. Those are the dominant factors that bring her to Europe. Nillem's socially imagined, as well as with Huda, becomes that of furthering their quality of life – equality and the possibility to educate. As Nillem depicts it; they are escaping a gradual mental death, rather than a physical death. The move towards the socially imagined can be seen as the founding strategies for all of the women; they are leaving their countries to better their chances prospectively. Inherent in their understanding and perception of Europe is that their lives will be better there, and thus they need to go there – one might say that their situated knowledge springs out of the socially imagined. There is a clear connection between experience, knowledge and reality – Nillem, Steer and Huda, in varying degrees, as they are different individuals, all deposit a *knowledge* of Europe, perhaps a construction, but nevertheless a positional knowledge that based on their lived experience in their national countries convince them to undergo the long journey to Europe (Holland & Ramazanoglu 2002: 64-66).

The narratives reveal different forms of social navigation, different strategies employed – all dependent on the context the women are in. Some of these strategies employed are not gender-specific, but are strategies that are undertaken or adheres from other reasons than their gender. As seen with Sabor, a single mother from Iran who does not speak English, she is marginalised for reasons other than her gender - factors such as ethnicity, social positioning that does not necessarily entail gender, and limited means to communicate in the landscape on her way to Europe are reasons that does not relate to her gender.

Navigation and strategies in the landscape of forced movement are employed for as different reasons, as the individuals employing them are different. Male refugees are also dependent on financial capital to better their circumstances, and might be just as

marginalised, perhaps in other ways, as the female refugees. However, there are other gender-specific strategies, some overall themes in the narratives of the women. Evident in all narratives is the strategy of visibility/invisibility. In Steer and Nillem's context, invisibility is employed to hide from the government/the system, in Huda's narrative invisibility is employed, to a greater extent, to hide from other men seen as a threat to her security. The women undertake a *situational identity*, fitting for the specific context they are in (Hynes 2011: 175 – 176). They all move in groups as a form of strategy, protecting them from the men. Huda firmly believes that being accompanied by a man directly enhances her chances, whilst Steer employs *the act of gendering*. There is a connection between the act of gendering and that of becoming visible – Steer can be seen to gender her behaviour as to fit into a stereotypical role of being a victim so to receive protection from the men surrounding her (Utas 2005: 408-409). Such gendering, becoming visible as a woman, is a strategy that differs from Nillem and Huda, who in many situations did not want to receive attention as women. Nillem even saw an advantage as a woman if not being beautiful, as that would make her more invisible to the other men. One might say that the act of gendering, the becoming visible/invisible are all gender-specific strategies, however contextualised, but perhaps also distinguished in the sense that as the women are different, so are their navigational means.

Steer and Nillem, to a greater extent, also employ a highly gendered strategy – they have the financial means, to improve their security, however to a limited degree (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 351). Nillem is able to sleep inside, sheltered from the men, and Steer, with the help of her mother, are able to pay more to make the journey convenient for herself and her sister. It becomes evident that making use of capital is a strategy, however, not gender-specific, but perhaps more important as a woman is more exposed on her journey (Gerard & Pickering 2013: 344, 346-347).

7. Conclusion

IDA, MARIE, SILJE: We now conclude the present thesis through answering our proposed research questions, using the findings presented in the analysis and discussion.

We start by exploring the manners in which ***"gender is reproduced in the context of 'the refugee experience' and the EU border-system?"*** that is, the field in which the interviewed refugee women are situated in, as well as navigate within.

When looking at the observations from the Conference in Hamburg, and seeing it as a micro-milieu, representing the overall environment - it becomes evident that the women are perceived, created and replicated within a stereotypical frame, where the female refugee is situated. This is leaving an apparent gendered division in the perception and discourse concerning refugees. Thus, the assumed gendered division affects the context of refugees in the overall 'refugee experience'.

The contextual foundation of asylum-related legislation is based on prejudiced perceptions of women. The notion that female asylum claims is seen as deviating from the norm, is exemplified through the male-centred understanding of persecution. This form of generalisation constructs refugee women as a coherent group of apolitical individuals in need of humanitarian assistance, which unavoidably leads to a victimising process, further subjecting the women to being mere 'bare life', as the victimisation reduces the refugee women from being political individuals into being in need of compassion. This undermines the individuality and diversity of the refugee women as human beings, and overlooks aspects such as social position, class and ethnicity.

Consequently, we argue that these stereotypical mechanisms generate the perception of women as having a shared experience, the so-called "female refugee experience". In this sense, expected preconceptions of refugee women create a reproduction of essentialist gender-roles, leaving the refugee women to navigate within a patriarchal system, being subjected into being victims. This, we argue, is a case of parallel processing from the basic structures of the EU system as it replicates women as apolitical, disadvantaging their case. The EU-system thus forces the interviewed refugee women to navigate within a suppressive field of unknown land. To the women we have interviewed, the EU border system does not constitute a source of stability, but rather a source of instability, essentially motivated through the protection of the sovereignty of the EU member states, disregarding international obligations of

protecting people in fear of persecution. As the external and internal borders of the EU mirror the political climate, the interviewed refugee women experience the borders as sources of uncertainty and unpredictability. Thus highlighting the dialogical relationship between borders, state sovereignty and territory, as well as reflecting the perceptions of 'others' against the perceptions of a collective identity of nationality. The political and social discursive climate in the EU at present is thereby argued to impact the EU border-regime and thus resulting in the liberalisation of the imagined.

In this sense, we argue that the EU border-regime imposes a form of structural and cultural violence, which is affecting female refugees in a gendered manner. The lack of gendered concern within the field of human security, the ignorance of the female perspective; that there is a difference in the concept of human security for men and women is something we argue is evident. The human security is claimed on behalf of refugees as a whole group, without recognising the different gendered needs for protection. This unrecognised attention towards female refugees leads to an insecure situation as it creates unequal access to protection between men and women.

We argue that these stereotypical gender perceptions within the EU border-system is being replicated and thus the processes of bordering is seen as processes of gendering, as female refugees are continuously left confronted with their gender as they are forced to strategically navigate around men, in order to obtain security on the unsecure routes to the EU.

We now turn to the manner in which the interviewed women are ***"narrating their movement to and within the EU"***.

Through the different narratives we find that there is one central theme through which all of the narratives are framed; the lack of or presence of safety and that the borders they cross are defined as manifestations of uncertainty and violence. Thus, the notion of safety seems to be the concept that defines Nillem's, Steer's, and Huda's conceptualisations of borders. In that sense it is clear that the changes in the EU border-system results in inadequate protection in terms of the human security of the interviewed women. Furthermore, the concept of safety, as presented in the narratives, is in many ways gendered. Steer, Nillem and Huda all conceptualise men who in

different manners have some power over their route as threatening to their security. The functions of the EU border-regime are manifested in different manners in the different narratives; Nillem is experiencing that the fact that she is Iranian is a disadvantage as she is not viewed as a "genuine refugee", Steer is imprisoned in Germany for refusing to give fingerprints and Huda has to convince a French ship crew who are hesitant to rescue them, even though they are drifting in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea.

Nevertheless, it is of importance to consider the different social positions, other than gender, from which Nillem, Steer and Huda are moving from to understand the differences in their experiences and their manner of narrating their movement. Steer holds a lot of social and financial capital, which can indicate that there is a relationship between the social and financial position. Steer's strong social and financial capital is evident in the manner in which she is able to pay for a more secure journey and the fact that she has several social relations through which she gains knowledge of the different borders.

Steer's conceptualisation of the different borders is thereby multifaceted and based on both rumours and lived experiences. Huda's understanding of borders mainly concerns the Libyan-Italian border, which can stem from the fact that her brother managed their journey, but also that Huda's narrative takes place in another time than the other two. Huda travelled before the so-called refugee crisis, which led to the closing of the EU's external and internal borders. Thereby the manifestations of the different EU borders might not have been as evident as it was at the time Nillem and Steer started their movement. Nillem and Huda, both conceptualise their whole journeys as a transformation, through which they will gain a new life. This may derive from the fact that Nillem flees gender-related oppression and Huda, who is Palestinian, and therefore can have experienced a form of marginalisation in Algeria. These difficult situations and the imagined notion of a better situation in Europe can have created a view of the journey as a transformation towards a new life.

We now continue with the last part of the research questions; ***What strategies are the interviewed women employing to navigate the EU border-system and how are these strategies gender-specific?***

The social and financial capital of the narrators demonstrate the different outset they all have for their movement to and within Europe; which become evident in their choice of strategies. Huda has little knowledge of the EU border context, and to a greater extent relies solely on her brother for protection and navigation in the border system. Her social positioning appears to be higher due to the presence of her brother throughout the journey. In the narrative of Steer, which differs from Huda, we see that she has a high social positioning, and social capital, due to the availability of financial capital. She relies, as with Huda, on family to help her through the journey. Her mother is able to increase the social positioning of her daughter, and increase her safety by using financial resources to better her positioning in some cases.

Nillem, perhaps to a smaller extent, has some financial capital, although her social positioning is weaker as she is travelling alone without any form of protection. In some cases she was able to, with the financial means, for example have her own room, and in that way increase her own security. However, she tries to a greater extent than Huda and Steer to stay invisible as a strategy to better her own security. Invisibility and visibility is employed by all of narrators, but Steer more through a gendered visibility and Huda and Nillem more so on a gendered invisibility, trying to hide from men, as seen as a threat to their security. Steer however, demonstrates agency through managing the stereotypical discourse on women being helpless and victimised, as she received help and protection from men on her travel through Europe.

We have to take into consideration that the narrators are all relatively young women, in their late teens or early twenties, which again demonstrates the importance of assembling narratives from different point of views. The strategic choices might have been different had they been older or having the responsibility for children.
The situated knowledge that the different narrators inhabit varies according to their own situation. As Steer and Nillem are travelling by foot through Europe, they are somewhat dependent on the rumours and information they hear about the different borders, and navigates thereof. After reaching Italy, Huda does not seem to navigate after the remaining borders, but rather her brother is the one who has the information, and she follows him. Although Huda is following her brother, she sees that as a strategic choice, moving in a system where gender-roles are reproduced, and therefore

she, along with the other narrators has to adapt to it, and make use of such reproduction.

As the narrators are moving towards the socially imagined, they all have different degrees of situational knowledge, which is why they employ different means to navigate in the European border-regime. What they all navigate from is insecurity. What they navigate towards is safety; Huda with her brother, Steer with financial capital and Nillem by trying to make herself invisible or not seen on her journey. What seems to represent insecurity is either the border system or men, or in some cases both. Although the different social and financial capital possessed by the female narrators affects their circumstances, and their navigation, the overall field in which they navigate in is the EU border-system and its functions, making it the common platform.

We cannot say with certainty that male refugees do not employ similar strategies as female refugees; however, what we can say is that the overall strategies employed by the interviewed women can be traced back to a feeling of gendered insecurity and are thereby employed in a gendered manner. What is evident in all of the strategic choices is the presence of a strong and conscious agency, employing active remedies to improve and better their own circumstances.

In conclusion, the narratives assembled in this study constitute an important, diverse and in many ways gendered form of knowledge. As established by standpoint theory, a feminist standpoint is always partial knowledge, which demonstrates the importance of assembling, documenting and analysing additional narratives from refugee women. In the current situation when more and more routes and borders towards and inside the EU are closed off, leading to appalling situations for people in displacement, the need of hearing and acknowledging other voices than the voices of EU states is imperative.

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